Paradigm Academic Press
Research and Advances in Education
ISSN 2788-7057
SEP. 2026 VOL.5, NO.3

Negotiating Education Amid Insurgency: Community Agency, Resilience, and Coping Mechanisms in Muyuka Sub-Division, Cameroon

ACHALE FIDELIA AGBOR[1]

[1] Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social and Management Sciences, University of Buea, Cameroon

Correspondence: ACHALE FIDELIA AGBOR, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social and Management Sciences, University of Buea, Cameroon.

doi:10.63593/RAE.2788-7057.2026.09.005

Abstract

The prolonged insurgency in Cameroon's North-West and South-West Regions has profoundly disrupted formal education, exposing children and educational institutions to insecurity, displacement, economic hardship, and psychosocial distress. This study examines how communities in Muyuka Sub-Division have responded to the disruption of formal schooling, with particular attention to community agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms. The study adopts a qualitative approach to examine the ways in which parents, teachers, community leaders, and other local actors negotiate educational continuity amid conflict. The findings reveal that insurgency has disrupted school attendance, teaching and learning, teacher availability, educational infrastructure, and children's psychosocial well-being. Nevertheless, communities have demonstrated considerable agency by mobilising social networks, local resources, alternative learning arrangements, informal teaching, remedial education, psychosocial support, and other adaptive strategies. These mechanisms have helped sustain educational opportunities and mitigate some immediate consequences of prolonged school disruption. However, their effectiveness remains constrained by insecurity, inadequate resources, limited infrastructure, uneven access, and the absence of stable institutional support. The study therefore argues that community-based educational responses should be understood as important but inherently limited mechanisms of resilience rather than substitutes for formal education or State responsibility. Sustainable educational recovery in Muyuka requires a complementary approach that strengthens community initiatives while restoring educational infrastructure, supporting teachers, expanding psychosocial services, improving security, and ensuring sustained institutional and financial investment. The study concludes that meaningful educational recovery in insurgency-affected communities depends on transforming community resilience into a supported component of a broader, inclusive, secure, and sustainable educational recovery framework.

Keywords: community agency, resilience, insurgency, coping mechanisms, Muyuka-Cameroon

1. Introduction

Education constitutes one of the most consequential institutions through which societies reproduce knowledge, cultivate human capabilities, transmit cultural values, and prepare younger generations for participation in social, economic, and political life. Its significance becomes even more pronounced in contexts characterized by armed conflict and protracted insecurity, where education can provide children with a measure of normalcy, psychosocial stability, social belonging, protection, and hope for the future. Yet conflict simultaneously exposes educational systems to profound vulnerabilities. Schools may be destroyed, occupied, abandoned, or rendered inaccessible; teachers may flee or become victims of violence; learners may be displaced; educational materials

may become scarce; and households confronted with insecurity and economic deprivation may be compelled to prioritize immediate survival over schooling. Education in conflict-affected environments should therefore not be conceptualized merely as a casualty of violence but as a critical social institution whose disruption generates far-reaching consequences for individual development, community stability, and post-conflict reconstruction (Burde et al., 2017).

The relationship between insurgency and education is, however, neither linear nor exclusively destructive. Although armed conflict can dismantle formal educational structures, affected populations frequently devise alternative strategies through which learning can be preserved, adapted, or reconstructed. Parents may assume instructional responsibilities, teachers may continue teaching through informal arrangements, religious institutions may provide alternative learning spaces, community leaders may facilitate access to educational opportunities, and families may rely upon peer learning, household instruction, radio-based education, or other flexible modalities. Education may consequently become an arena in which communities negotiate continuity in the midst of disruption. This suggests that the educational consequences of insurgency cannot be adequately understood by examining only school closures, attacks, displacement, or institutional collapse.

Attention must equally be directed towards the actions, decisions, relationships, and locally generated strategies through which affected populations attempt to preserve educational opportunities under conditions of uncertainty. Indeed, education in emergencies may simultaneously function as a mechanism of protection, socialisation, psychosocial support, and restoration of routine, thereby giving it a significance that extends beyond the conventional transmission of academic knowledge (Burde et al., 2017).

Within this context, the concepts of community agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms become particularly important. Community agency refers to the capacity of individuals and collective actors to make decisions, mobilize resources, exercise influence, and act purposefully despite structural constraints. Resilience, by contrast, concerns the processes through which individuals, households, institutions, and communities adapt to adversity while sustaining, restoring, or transforming valued functions. Coping mechanisms refer more specifically to the strategies through which individuals and communities manage immediate or continuing pressures generated by adverse circumstances. These concepts are closely interconnected, but they should not be treated as synonymous. Agency concerns the capacity to act; resilience concerns adaptive processes and outcomes in the face of adversity; while coping refers to practical strategies employed to manage difficult circumstances. Such distinctions are particularly important in conflict-affected educational environments because they allow analysis to move beyond the simplistic assumption that communities either collapse under adversity or successfully "bounce back" from it. Resilience is embedded within social, cultural, material, and institutional contexts, and its expression depends substantially upon the availability of resources and the capacity of affected populations to access and utilize those resources in meaningful ways (Ungar, 2011, 2013).

The increasing prominence of resilience within education-in-emergencies scholarship nevertheless warrants critical consideration. Although resilience provides a valuable framework for understanding how communities adapt to prolonged adversity, its uncritical application may obscure the structural inequalities and institutional responsibilities that shape people's capacity to respond. Shah et al. (2020) caution against approaches that implicitly transfer responsibility for surviving crises from governments and institutions to vulnerable populations themselves. A community's ability to improvise educational alternatives should therefore not be interpreted as evidence that formal educational systems or state institutions are no longer necessary. Rather, community resilience should be understood as a potentially significant but inherently bounded capacity that operates within broader political, economic, institutional, and security environments. The ability of a community to sustain learning during insurgency may depend not only upon its internal social capital but also upon access to teachers, educational materials, safe spaces, humanitarian assistance, financial resources, psychosocial support, and a sufficiently secure environment.

It is against this conceptual background that the idea of "negotiating education" assumes analytical significance. Negotiating education refers to the dynamic process through which families, teachers, community leaders, religious institutions, civil society organizations, humanitarian actors, and other stakeholders determine whether, where, when, and under what conditions educational activities can continue amid insecurity. Negotiation in this context extends beyond formal bargaining between identifiable parties. It encompasses adaptation, improvisation, compromise, risk management, resource mobilization, collective decision-making, and the continuous recalibration of educational practices in response to changing security conditions. Education, therefore, is not simply something that communities either possess or lose during insurgency; it may become something that they continuously negotiate, reconstruct, and reconfigure according to the opportunities and constraints available to them. This perspective shifts analytical attention from the conventional question of how insurgency destroys education to the more nuanced question of how communities attempt to keep education alive when the institutional conditions ordinarily required for schooling have been severely compromised.

The Cameroonian context provides an important setting for examining this phenomenon. Since the escalation of the Anglophone crisis in 2016, the Northwest and Southwest Regions have experienced sustained armed violence and insecurity, accompanied by displacement, destruction of infrastructure, attacks on civilians, economic disruption, lockdowns, and significant interruptions to social services. Education has been among the sectors most severely affected. UNICEF reported that more than 80% of schools in the affected Anglophone regions had been closed at one point during the crisis, depriving more than 600,000 children of access to education (UNICEF, 2019). The educational consequences have extended beyond physical school closures to include disrupted learning trajectories, displacement of learners and teachers, psychosocial distress, reduced household capacity to support schooling, and increased risks of prolonged educational exclusion. Such circumstances illustrate the extent to which armed conflict can transform education from a routine public service into a precarious social activity whose continuation requires constant adaptation and negotiation.

The persistence of educational vulnerability in the Northwest and Southwest Regions also demonstrates that educational disruption is not an isolated institutional phenomenon. It intersects with household livelihoods, child protection, mental health, displacement, poverty, community cohesion, and the broader prospects of post-conflict recovery. More recent humanitarian assessments continue to identify education as a major concern in Cameroon, particularly in conflict-affected areas where insecurity continues to constrain access to formal schooling. At the same time, local authorities, civil society organizations, community networks, and other local actors have become increasingly important in facilitating access to essential services and supporting affected populations (UNICEF Cameroon, 2026). The emergence of temporary learning spaces and other alternative educational arrangements illustrates the increasing importance of flexible approaches to educational continuity in environments where conventional schooling remains inaccessible or unsafe.

Within this broader crisis, Muyuka Sub-Division in the Southwest Region offers a particularly significant context for examining community responses to educational disruption. The area has been affected by the broader dynamics of the Anglophone conflict, including insecurity, displacement, disruption of formal schooling, and the socioeconomic pressures associated with protracted instability. Yet an exclusive emphasis on the vulnerabilities of Muyuka's population risks reproducing a deficit-oriented narrative in which affected communities are represented primarily as passive victims of insurgency. A more comprehensive analysis requires attention to what communities themselves do in response to the educational consequences of conflict. Recent evidence from Yoke, within Muyuka Sub-Division, is illustrative of this dynamic. Children in the community have experienced prolonged disruption to schooling, displacement, fear, emotional distress, and uncertainty, while temporary learning spaces supported through humanitarian intervention have sought to provide opportunities for learning alongside mental health and psychosocial support (UNICEF Cameroon, 2026). Such interventions demonstrate not only the persistence of educational need but also the emergence of alternative arrangements through which educational activity can continue despite the fragility of conventional schooling.

Despite the scale and persistence of educational disruption associated with the Anglophone crisis, the central problem is not simply that formal schools have been closed, damaged, abandoned, or rendered inaccessible. The deeper problem lies in the insufficient understanding of how conflict-affected communities themselves negotiate educational continuity when conventional educational structures become unsafe, unreliable, or unavailable. Existing literature and policy discussions have generated substantial knowledge concerning school closures, attacks on educational institutions, displacement, insecurity, educational exclusion, and humanitarian interventions. However, comparatively less attention has been devoted to the everyday practices through which families, teachers, community leaders, religious organizations, youth groups, and other local actors mobilize resources, manage risks, adapt educational practices, and construct alternative possibilities for learning.

Consequently, there remains a need to understand not merely what insurgency has done to education in affected communities but also what those communities do in response, how their responses are organized, what forms of agency and resilience underpin them, and the extent to which their coping strategies can sustain educational continuity over time.

Three interrelated gaps are particularly discernible. First, there is a contextual gap concerning the limited attention devoted specifically to community-level educational responses in Muyuka Sub-Division. While scholarship on education in emergencies and the Anglophone crisis has established the severity of educational disruption, comparatively less is known about the locally situated mechanisms through which affected communities attempt to maintain learning. Second, there is a conceptual gap, arising from the tendency to employ agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms as closely related or interchangeable concepts without sufficiently interrogating their distinctive analytical meanings. Separating these concepts permits a more nuanced examination of the relationship between the capacity to act, the processes of adaptation, and the practical strategies used to manage adversity.

Third, there is an analytical gap in the tendency to foreground either the destructive consequences of conflict or

the interventions of external humanitarian actors while paying comparatively less attention to the community-level negotiation that occurs between these two dimensions. This article addresses these gaps by placing community agency and locally generated responses at the centre of an analysis of educational continuity amid insurgency in Muyuka.

Accordingly, this article aims to examine how communities in Muyuka Sub-Division negotiate education amid insurgency, with particular emphasis on community agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms. It seeks to examine the nature and manifestations of educational disruption; analyze the forms of community agency employed to sustain educational opportunities; explore the resilience processes through which households and communities adapt to prolonged educational insecurity; identify the coping mechanisms used to preserve access to learning; and assess both the effectiveness and limitations of community-based responses.

The inquiry is guided by five principal questions: how has insurgency disrupted formal education in Muyuka Sub-Division; what forms of community agency have emerged in response to this disruption; how have communities demonstrated resilience in sustaining educational opportunities; what coping mechanisms have affected households and communities employed to maintain learning; and to what extent have community-based responses contributed to educational continuity, notwithstanding the constraints imposed by persistent insecurity and limited resources?

The article advances the central argument that education in insurgency-affected Muyuka is not merely a public service disrupted by violence but a social institution whose continuity is actively negotiated through the agency, resilience, and coping practices of affected communities. Communities may create alternative learning arrangements, mobilize social networks, repurpose available spaces, draw upon religious and familial structures, and collaborate with external actors in order to preserve educational opportunities. Such responses demonstrate that conflict-affected populations possess forms of social agency that are frequently obscured by narratives centered exclusively on vulnerability and victimhood. Nevertheless, community-based coping should not be romanticized. Local resilience has material, institutional, and security limits, and communities cannot reasonably be expected to compensate indefinitely for the absence or inadequacy of formal educational systems. The recognition of community agency must therefore coexist with an insistence upon sustained governmental responsibility, humanitarian support, institutional reconstruction, and the restoration of safe and accessible formal education.

The study contributes to scholarship in several respects. First, it contributes to the education-in-emergencies literature by shifting analytical emphasis from educational disruption alone towards the processes through which affected communities negotiate continuity. Second, it contributes to resilience scholarship by examining resilience as a socially embedded and context-dependent process rather than merely an individual capacity to endure adversity. Third, it enriches scholarship on the Anglophone crisis by providing a contextually grounded examination of community-level educational responses in Muyuka Sub-Division.

Finally, it offers practical implications for educational policymakers, humanitarian organizations, civil society actors, community leaders, and development partners by highlighting the importance of locally grounded approaches to temporary learning spaces, psychosocial support, community participation, alternative learning modalities, teacher mobilization, and educational recovery. At the same time, the study underscores the necessity of ensuring that the language of resilience does not inadvertently legitimize institutional withdrawal or shift disproportionate responsibility for educational survival onto communities already burdened by conflict.

The remainder of the article proceeds as follows. The next section clarifies the principal concepts underpinning the study, including insurgency, educational disruption, community agency, resilience, coping mechanisms, and the negotiation of education. The third section presents the theoretical framework, drawing principally upon the social-ecological perspective of resilience while incorporating complementary insights from social capital and agency theories. The fourth section reviews the relevant literature on education in emergencies, armed conflict and educational disruption, community agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms, before identifying the specific scholarly gap addressed by the study. The fifth section provides the contextual background of Muyuka Sub-Division and the wider Anglophone crisis, while the sixth explains the methodology adopted. The subsequent sections examine educational disruption, community agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms, followed by a discussion of the effectiveness and limitations of community-based educational responses. The article concludes by proposing recommendations for strengthening educational continuity and by reflecting on the implications of community agency and resilience for education in conflict-affected Cameroon.

2. Conceptual Clarification

Conceptual clarification is indispensable to this study because the principal concepts under investigation possess broad meanings across disciplines and may assume different nuances when applied to conflict-affected societies. The study therefore draws upon established dictionary definitions and scholarly literature to clarify the concepts

of education, insurgency, community agency, resilience, coping mechanisms, Muyuka Sub-Division, and Cameroon. These concepts are subsequently situated within the specific context of educational disruption and community responses to insurgency.

2.1 Education

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines education as the action or process of teaching or being taught, as well as the knowledge and development resulting from such processes. In the context of emergencies, however, education extends beyond the conventional transmission of knowledge. UNESCO (2026) conceptualizes education in emergencies as the provision of quality learning opportunities in both formal and non-formal settings during crises, while emphasizing its protective, psychosocial, stabilizing, and developmental functions. Similarly, Burde *et al.* (2017) argue that education in emergencies serves not only academic purposes but also provides protection, socialization, psychosocial support, and a sense of continuity and normalcy for affected populations.

For the purposes of this study, education refers to the processes through which children and young people in Muyuka acquire knowledge, skills, values, and competencies through formal, non-formal, informal, and alternative educational arrangements, including those developed or adapted in response to insurgency and insecurity.

2.2 Insurgency

Merriam-Webster defines insurgency as a condition of revolt against a government that is less organized than a revolution and is generally characterized by sustained opposition to established governmental authority. Scholarly literature provides a more contextualized understanding of the concept. Ngah (2023), examining Cameroon's separatist conflict, characterizes the confrontation in the North-West and South-West Regions as an insurgency involving an organized politico-military challenge to state authority and control. The conflict emerged from escalating political grievances, protests, repression, and the subsequent militarization of separatist demands (Beseng et al., 2023).

In this study, insurgency refers specifically to the sustained armed challenge to state authority associated with separatist armed groups in Cameroon's North-West and South-West Regions and the resulting insecurity, violence, displacement, socioeconomic disruption, and constraints on civilian institutions, including educational institutions.

2.3 Community Agency

The Cambridge Dictionary defines agency as the ability to take action or to choose what action to take. In scholarly discourse, community agency denotes the capacity of individuals and collective groups to exercise choice, mobilize resources, participate in decision-making, and influence circumstances affecting their lives. Flanery et al. (2022), in their examination of rural communities in Cameroon, demonstrate that community agency can be expressed through participation, empowerment, collective understanding, local decision-making, and interaction with governance structures.

For this study, community agency refers to the capacity and actions of parents, teachers, households, community leaders, religious organizations, youth groups, civil society actors, and other local stakeholders in Muyuka to make decisions, mobilize available resources, negotiate constraints, and sustain educational opportunities amid insurgency. Agency therefore highlights the active role of affected communities rather than portraying them merely as passive victims of conflict.

2.4 Resilience

The American Psychological Association (APA, 2018) defines resilience as the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility. Contemporary scholarship, however, cautions against understanding resilience solely as an individual psychological attribute. Ungar (2011, 2013) emphasizes that resilience is contextually embedded and shaped by access to social, cultural, economic, institutional, and material resources. In education-in-emergencies scholarship, Shah et al. (2020) similarly caution that an excessive emphasis on resilience may inadvertently shift responsibility for addressing structural problems from governments and institutions to vulnerable communities.

Within this study, resilience refers to the processes and capacities through which individuals, households, and communities in Muyuka adapt to prolonged insecurity and educational disruption while attempting to sustain, restore, or transform opportunities for learning. Resilience is therefore understood as a broader adaptive process rather than simply the ability to endure hardship.

2.5 Coping Mechanisms

The APA Dictionary of Psychology defines coping as the cognitive and behavioral strategies employed to

manage demands perceived as taxing or exceeding available resources. Coping mechanisms may therefore include conscious or unconscious forms of adjustment and adaptation intended to reduce tension, anxiety, stress, or conflict arising from difficult circumstances.

Coping mechanisms differ from resilience, although the two concepts are closely connected. Coping generally concerns specific strategies employed in response to particular stressors, whereas resilience represents a broader and more sustained process of adaptation. Coping may consequently constitute one of the mechanisms through which resilience is expressed.

For the purposes of this study, coping mechanisms refer to the specific strategies adopted by households, teachers, community leaders, and other local actors in Muyuka to manage the educational, social, economic, and security pressures generated by insurgency and to preserve or facilitate children's access to learning.

Muyuka Sub-DivisionMuyuka Sub-Division is an administrative and socio-spatial unit within Fako Division of Cameroon's South-West Region. Fako Division comprises several subdivisions, including Muyuka, and the area has historically been characterized by significant agricultural activity. Scholarly studies examining the consequences of the Anglophone crisis identify Muyuka as one of the localities significantly affected by the sociopolitical conflict, with substantial socioeconomic and humanitarian consequences for civilian populations.

The study treats Muyuka not merely as a geographical location but as the empirical setting within which educational disruption, community agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms are examined. Particular attention is given to the experiences of households, teachers, community leaders, and other actors who have had to negotiate educational continuity under conditions of insecurity.

2.6 Cameroon

Cameroon constitutes the broader national context within which the study is situated. The country is characterized by considerable geographical, linguistic, cultural, and institutional diversity. The present study is particularly concerned with the consequences of the armed conflict in the predominantly English-speaking North-West and South-West Regions, where political grievances and separatist mobilization have generated prolonged insecurity and significant disruption to civilian life.

Cameroon is therefore operationalized in this study as the national sociopolitical and institutional context within which the Anglophone conflict, educational disruption, and community responses in Muyuka Sub-Division occur. The national context is important because community responses to educational disruption cannot be adequately understood without considering the responsibilities of the state, the structure of educational governance, the dynamics of the conflict, and the wider humanitarian environment.

2.7 Conceptual Interrelationship

The foregoing concepts are analytically interconnected. Insurgency constitutes the adverse security and structural condition; educational disruption represents one of its significant consequences; community agency captures the capacity of affected populations to act in response to these disruptions; coping mechanisms represent the specific strategies employed to manage the pressures generated by conflict; and resilience denotes the broader adaptive process through which communities seek to sustain, restore, or transform educational functions. Muyuka Sub-Division provides the empirical setting in which these relationships are examined, while Cameroon constitutes the wider national context within which the conflict and educational responses are situated.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in three complementary theoretical perspectives: Social Capital Theory, Resilience Theory, and James C. Scott's Theory of Everyday Resistance. Their combined application provides a multidimensional framework for examining how communities negotiate educational continuity amid insurgency. Social Capital Theory explains the mobilization of social networks and resources; Resilience Theory illuminates adaptation to prolonged adversity; while Scott's theory explains the subtle forms of negotiation, non-compliance, and resistance through which ordinary actors navigate insecurity and structures of power. Collectively, the theories enable the study to move beyond viewing conflict-affected communities merely as victims and instead examine their capacity to act, adapt, negotiate, and sustain essential social institutions.

3.1 Social Capital Theory

Social Capital Theory, principally associated with Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), and Putnam (2000), conceptualizes social capital as resources embedded within social relationships, including networks, trust, reciprocity, norms, and collective connections. Bourdieu emphasizes the resources accessible through durable networks, Coleman highlights the functional value of social structures, while Putnam stresses trust, reciprocity, and civic engagement as foundations of collective action.

The theory is particularly relevant to Muyuka because insurgency may weaken formal educational institutions while increasing dependence on informal social networks. Families, teachers, neighbors, religious organizations, community leaders, civil society groups, and other local actors may mobilize resources, exchange information, provide psychosocial and material support, and establish alternative learning arrangements. Social capital may consequently operate as an important community resource for preserving educational opportunities when formal systems become inaccessible or unreliable.

The study also recognizes bonding, bridging, and linking social capital. Bonding capital concerns strong relationships within families and communities; bridging capital connects different social groups; while linking capital connects communities with institutions and actors possessing authority or resources. These forms of capital may influence the ability of Muyuka communities to organise educational responses. Nevertheless, social capital is not inherently positive. Networks can also reproduce exclusion, patronage, inequality, and unequal access to educational resources. The study therefore examines both its enabling and constraining dimensions.

3.2 Resilience Theory

Resilience Theory constitutes the second analytical pillar. While early approaches frequently treated resilience as an individual capacity, contemporary scholarship increasingly understands it as a dynamic and context-dependent process of adaptation. Masten (2001) associates resilience with positive adaptation despite significant adversity, while Ungar (2011, 2013) emphasizes the social, cultural, institutional, and material environments within which resilience develops.

The theory is especially applicable to Muyuka because insurgency produces prolonged and recurring forms of adversity, including school closures, displacement, insecurity, loss of livelihoods, teacher flight, and disruption of educational infrastructure. Communities must consequently adapt continuously rather than respond to a single isolated crisis. Resilience in this study therefore concerns how communities withstand, adapt to, recover from, and potentially transform educational practices under conditions of persistent insecurity.

Community resilience may be reflected in family solidarity, community support networks, alternative learning spaces, teacher commitment, religious initiatives, local leadership, financial contributions, and humanitarian assistance. Such practices demonstrate that communities can exercise considerable adaptive capacity even under severe constraints. However, resilience must not be romanticized. Shah *et al.* (2020) warn that an excessive emphasis on resilience may inadvertently transfer responsibility for structural crises to affected populations. Thus, resilience is understood here as community capacity under constraint, not as a replacement for governmental responsibility.

3.3 Scott's Theory of Everyday Resistance

The third perspective is James C. Scott's Theory of Everyday Resistance, developed principally in *Weapons of the Weak* (1985) and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (1990). Scott challenges conventional understandings of resistance that privilege overt rebellion, organized protest, or direct confrontation. He demonstrates that subordinate groups may employ subtle practices such as evasion, withdrawal, non-compliance, dissimulation, and other everyday actions to negotiate or challenge domination.

This perspective is particularly relevant to communities living under insecurity and competing forms of authority. In Muyuka, maintaining learning activities despite insecurity, discreetly organizing alternative education, modifying educational practices, or strategically negotiating restrictions may constitute forms of everyday agency. Such practices may not appear as conventional resistance, yet they can help preserve social institutions and frustrate attempts to normalise their disappearance.

Scott's distinction between public and hidden transcripts further strengthens the analysis. Public transcripts concern outward behavior displayed in interactions with dominant actors, while hidden transcripts encompass private strategies, criticisms, conversations, and forms of resistance developed away from direct surveillance. In a conflict environment, communities may therefore publicly comply with certain expectations while privately developing strategies to protect children and sustain educational opportunities.

The study, however, distinguishes between coping, adaptation, and resistance. Not every adaptive action is resistant. Nevertheless, a coping strategy may acquire a resistant dimension when it deliberately preserves an activity that violence, coercion, or domination seeks to suppress. Maintaining educational activities despite insecurity can therefore represent both survival and an assertion of community agency.

4. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to examine how communities in Muyuka Sub-Division negotiate educational continuity amid insurgency. A qualitative approach is appropriate because it enables the researcher to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, meanings, and social practices in depth, particularly where the phenomenon under investigation is complex and context-dependent (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The

approach is therefore suitable for examining how families, teachers, community leaders, religious organisations, and other local actors respond to educational disruption.

4.1 Research Design and Study Area

The study employs a case study design, focusing specifically on Muyuka Sub-Division in Fako Division of Cameroon's South-West Region. Case study research is particularly appropriate for investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially where the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly separable (Yin, 2018). Muyuka provides an important setting for examining education under prolonged insecurity because communities have experienced armed violence, displacement, socioeconomic disruption, and interruptions to formal schooling. The case study design consequently allows the study to examine community responses within their actual sociopolitical and security environment.

4.2 Population and Sampling

The study population comprises community members and relevant stakeholders with experience of, or knowledge about, educational disruption in Muyuka. These include parents and guardians, teachers, learners, community leaders, religious actors, and other individuals involved in supporting children's education. Purposive sampling is employed to identify participants who possess relevant knowledge and lived experience of the phenomenon under investigation. Purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative research where participants are deliberately selected because they can provide rich and relevant information concerning the research problem (Palinkas et al., 2015). Where necessary, snowball sampling may complement purposive sampling by enabling the researcher to identify additional information-rich participants through referrals.

4.3 Data Collection

Data are obtained primarily through semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. Semi-structured interviews provide participants with sufficient flexibility to narrate their experiences while allowing the researcher to maintain focus on predetermined areas of inquiry (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The interviews focus particularly on experiences of school disruption, alternative learning arrangements, community mobilization, coping strategies, resilience, and perceptions of educational continuity.

Documentary analysis is used to complement the interview evidence. Relevant materials include scholarly publications, reports from international organizations, government and institutional documents, and other credible secondary sources. The combination of interview and documentary evidence facilitates triangulation and provides a broader understanding of educational disruption and community responses.

4.4 Data Analysis

The collected qualitative data are analyzed through thematic analysis. Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach, the analysis involves familiarization with the data, identification and coding of significant patterns, development of themes, review of emerging themes, and interpretation of their significance.

Particular attention is given to themes relating to educational disruption, community agency, social capital, resilience, coping mechanisms, everyday negotiation, and the limitations of community-based responses. The identified themes are subsequently interpreted through the theoretical lenses of Social Capital Theory, Resilience Theory, and James C. Scott's Theory of Everyday Resistance. This enables the study to move beyond merely describing educational disruption and instead examine the social relationships, adaptive capacities, and everyday practices through which communities respond to it.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

Given the sensitivity of conducting research within an insurgency-affected environment, ethical considerations constitute an important component of the study. Participants are informed about the purpose and nature of the research before participation and provide informed consent. Confidentiality and anonymity are maintained, particularly where disclosure of participants' identities or experiences could expose them to social or security-related risks. Participants retain the right to decline to answer particular questions or withdraw from the study without adverse consequences. Such safeguards are particularly important in qualitative research involving potentially vulnerable populations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

4.6 Trustworthiness of the Study

The trustworthiness of the study is enhanced through triangulation, whereby information obtained from participants is compared with documentary and scholarly evidence. The study also pays attention to credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, which are central criteria for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Consistency in data collection and interpretation, together with reflexive awareness of potential researcher bias, further strengthens the credibility of the findings.

4.7 Methodological Orientation

Overall, the methodology is designed to move beyond documenting the educational consequences of insurgency to uncover the social processes through which affected communities negotiate educational survival and continuity. The qualitative case study approach provides contextual depth, while thematic analysis facilitates systematic interpretation of participants' experiences and recurring patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Yin, 2018). By combining these approaches with the study's theoretical framework, the research examines how social networks, community agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms interact in sustaining educational opportunities under conditions of prolonged conflict. At the same time, the study recognizes that community-based responses cannot substitute for the state's responsibility to guarantee safe, accessible, and quality education.

5. Literature Review

The literature on education amid the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon demonstrates a complex relationship between armed conflict, educational disruption, socioeconomic vulnerability, and community adaptation. Existing studies largely document the destruction and interruption of formal education, while providing emerging evidence of community-based responses. The literature is therefore reviewed around four interconnected themes: educational disruption, governance and socioeconomic vulnerability, community agency and coping, and the negotiation of educational continuity.

5.1 Educational Disruption and the Anglophone Crisis

The Anglophone crisis has severely disrupted education in the North-West and South-West Regions. The World Bank (2021) links educational disruption to broader consequences of conflict, including displacement, livelihood deterioration, institutional decline, and reduced access to essential services. ACAPS (2021) similarly reports extensive school closures, insecurity, displacement, attacks, and threats affecting learners and teachers.

Importantly, it identifies discreet non-formal educational initiatives involving retired teachers and church members, suggesting that education continued in alternative forms despite the weakening of formal structures.

Human Rights Watch (2023) further documents attacks and the continuing school boycott, emphasizing the deprivation of children's right to education. Collectively, these sources establish the severity of educational disruption but focus predominantly on closure, insecurity, destruction, and deprivation. Less attention is given to how communities themselves negotiate educational continuity once formal systems become inaccessible.

5.2 Governance, Conflict, and Socioeconomic Vulnerability

Educational disruption is embedded within wider political, institutional, and socioeconomic challenges. The International Crisis Group (2023) argues that the government's special-status arrangements have not adequately addressed the deeper grievances underlying the Anglophone crisis. This has implications for education because educational institutions operate within contested structures of governance, identity, language, and political authority.

Nkongho (2022) demonstrates the importance of bilingual educational policy to questions of national integration and linguistic identity, while Ngenge (2022) shows how insecurity has affected higher education through institutional interruptions, student displacement, and relocation. The World Bank (2021) further demonstrates that displacement, declining livelihoods, and economic hardship intensify household vulnerability and consequently affect educational participation.

Balgah et al. (2025), although focusing on rural livelihoods, show how households and communities mobilize available resources and adopt adaptive strategies under socioeconomic pressure. Such findings are relevant to understanding educational coping, where families may seek alternative learning arrangements, relocate children, or rely on community resources to sustain schooling.

5.3 Community Agency and Coping

Beyond documenting vulnerability, the literature provides evidence of community agency. ACAPS (2021), for example, reports informal educational initiatives undertaken by retired teachers and church members. Such practices demonstrate that communities may mobilise existing human, social, and institutional resources when formal education is disrupted.

Conroy and Chambers (2021), through their analysis of everyday resistance among Cameroon Development Corporation workers, demonstrate that conflict-affected populations are not merely passive victims but may exercise agency through everyday practices of negotiation, adaptation, and resistance. Although their study is not specifically concerned with education, its conceptual emphasis is useful for understanding how families, teachers, religious institutions, and community leaders may similarly negotiate educational challenges.

However, community responses operate within severe structural constraints. Human Rights Watch (2023) and ACAPS (2021) illustrate how insecurity, displacement, threats, and economic hardship limit the capacity of communities to sustain educational activities. Community initiatives may therefore mitigate disruption without

replacing the responsibilities of the state and formal educational institutions.

5.4 Negotiating Educational Continuity

A critical synthesis of the literature reveals that scholarly attention has concentrated more on the collapse of education than on the processes through which communities attempt to preserve it. While existing studies document school closures, attacks, displacement, institutional weaknesses, and socioeconomic hardship, they also reveal instances of informal education, relocation, resource mobilization, and community adaptation.

This suggests that educational continuity during insurgency should be understood not merely as an institutional outcome but as a socially negotiated process. Families, teachers, religious organizations, community leaders, and other local actors may collectively determine how, where, and under what conditions learning can continue.

5.5 Research Gap

Three principal gaps emerge from the literature. First, there is a contextual gap, as much of the existing research addresses the North-West and South-West Regions broadly, with limited specific attention to Muyuka Sub-Division. Second, there is a conceptual gap, as community agency, coping, resilience, and resistance are often discussed without sufficiently distinguishing their respective meanings and functions. Third, there is an analytical gap, since existing scholarship largely emphasizes educational destruction and institutional failure rather than the everyday processes through which communities negotiate educational continuity.

The present study addresses these gaps by examining how communities in Muyuka Sub-Division mobilize social resources, exercise agency, develop coping mechanisms, and cultivate resilience to sustain educational opportunities amid insurgency. It therefore shifts the analytical lens from education as a casualty of conflict to education as a social institution whose continuity is actively negotiated by affected communities.

6. Contextual Background: Muyuka Sub-Division and the Anglophone Crisis

Muyuka Sub-Division, located in Fako Division of Cameroon's South-West Region, is a predominantly rural and semi-urban area whose livelihoods are strongly connected to agriculture, local commerce, and community networks. The cultivation of cocoa, palm oil, plantain, bananas, maize, and other crops constitutes an important part of the local economy. These economic and social networks are significant to this study because they provide resources through which households and communities may respond collectively to periods of insecurity and institutional disruption (Molua et al., 2019).

Muyuka is situated within the broader context of Cameroon's Anglophone crisis, which intensified in 2016 following protests by lawyers and teachers concerning perceived marginalization of the English-language legal and educational systems. Government repression and the subsequent emergence and consolidation of separatist armed groups transformed the grievances into a protracted armed conflict characterized by violence, displacement, insecurity, and destruction of civilian infrastructure (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Education has been among the sectors most severely affected. School boycotts, attacks on schools, threats against teachers and learners, displacement, and insecurity have substantially disrupted formal education in the North-West and South-West Regions (Human Rights Watch, 2021). In communities such as Muyuka, these disruptions have affected not only classroom instruction but also children's socialization, psychosocial wellbeing, daily routines, and future educational prospects.

The experience of Yoke in Muyuka Sub-Division illustrates the search for alternative educational arrangements. UNICEF reports that Temporary Learning Spaces have provided children with opportunities to resume learning while also receiving mental- health and psychosocial support. Such initiatives demonstrate that, even when conventional educational structures become inaccessible, learning may continue through alternative and community-supported arrangements (UNICEF Cameroon, 2026).

This context makes Muyuka an important setting for examining community agency, resilience, and coping mechanisms. The disruption of formal education has compelled families, teachers, community leaders, religious organizations, humanitarian actors, and other stakeholders to adapt and negotiate how, where, and under what conditions education can continue. Thus, the Muyuka experience demonstrates that education amid insurgency is not simply a story of institutional collapse; it is also a process of community negotiation, adaptation, and resilience, although such efforts cannot substitute for the state's responsibility to guarantee safe and quality education.

7. Educational Disruption Amid Insurgency in Muyuka

Insurgency has profoundly disrupted education in Muyuka Sub-Division, affecting school attendance, teaching, learning, teacher availability, educational infrastructure, and access to learning materials. The disruption is part of a wider crisis in Cameroon's North-West and South-West Regions. Human Rights Watch reported that during the 2021–2022 school year, 53 per cent of secondary schools, 49 per cent of primary schools, and 47 per cent of

nursery schools in the South-West were non-functional, illustrating the scale of conflict-induced educational disruption (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

Muyuka provides concrete evidence of this broader phenomenon. Human Rights Watch documented the experiences of families and children in Muyuka affected by insecurity and attacks on education. Fear of violence has made travelling to and remaining in school increasingly difficult, while threats and attacks against students and teachers have contributed to absenteeism and school closures (Human Rights Watch, 2021, 2023). Teacher insecurity has also weakened educational continuity, as teachers have faced threats, abductions and displacement in the wider Anglophone conflict environment.

The scale of institutional disruption is further demonstrated by UNICEF, which reported that 3,502 of 6,515 schools in the North-West and South-West Regions were closed because of insecurity, leaving only approximately 54 per cent of students with access to formal education (UNICEF, 2023). Prolonged displacement, economic hardship and interrupted schooling consequently expose children to learning gaps and broader developmental and social consequences.

The disruption is also psychosocial. In Yoke, Muyuka, UNICEF reported that children had experienced years of disrupted routines, isolation and restricted access to schooling and play. Psychosocial support and temporary learning spaces were subsequently introduced to help children resume learning and recover from the effects of conflict (UNICEF, 2026). This demonstrates that educational disruption extends beyond the physical closure of schools to children's emotional and social well-being.

Despite these challenges, education has not completely disappeared. Families, teachers, communities and humanitarian organizations have developed alternative mechanisms, including temporary learning spaces, radio-based education and psychosocial interventions, to sustain learning under insecure conditions (UNICEF, 2023, 2026). These responses demonstrate community agency, resilience and coping, but they should not be regarded as substitutes for the State's responsibility to provide safe, accessible and quality education.

Thus, educational disruption in Muyuka is multidimensional, encompassing insecurity, displacement, institutional breakdown, economic hardship and psychosocial distress, while simultaneously creating conditions for community-based adaptation and alternative educational practices.

8. Community Agency and Negotiation of Educational Continuity

In Muyuka Sub-Division, community agency refers to the capacity of parents, teachers, local leaders, and other community actors to respond collectively to educational disruption and develop alternative ways of sustaining learning. Rather than remaining passive victims of insurgency, communities draw on social networks, local knowledge, relationships, and available resources to negotiate educational continuity. This understanding is consistent with Coleman's (1988) conception of social capital as a resource embedded in social relationships and networks.

One major expression of this agency is the establishment of alternative learning arrangements, including temporary learning spaces and other community-based educational initiatives. In Yoke, Muyuka, UNICEF-supported Temporary Learning Spaces have provided children with opportunities to resume learning while also receiving psychosocial support after prolonged insecurity and disruption (UNICEF, 2026). Communities may also mobilize financial resources, learning materials, space, and human support, demonstrating how social capital can facilitate educational continuity during crisis (Coleman, 1988).

Community agency is further reflected in everyday adaptations to insecurity, such as modifying learning arrangements, using safer locations, restricting children's movement, and adapting educational activities to prevailing conditions. These practices resonate with Scott's (1985) understanding of everyday forms of agency, whereby ordinary people navigate restrictive circumstances through practical and often subtle forms of adaptation. Nevertheless, community responses should not be romanticized. They operate within severe resource limitations and cannot replace qualified teachers, functioning schools, infrastructure, learning materials, or sustained State support. Their importance lies in preserving educational opportunities and creating possibilities for adaptation where formal educational structures have been weakened. Community agency in Muyuka can therefore be understood as a process of negotiating educational continuity amid conflict, through which communities mobilize social capital, adapt everyday practices, and develop alternative learning arrangements in response to insurgency.

9. Coping Mechanisms and Their Effectiveness

Coping mechanisms in insurgency-affected Muyuka refer to the strategies adopted by households, teachers, communities, and supporting organizations to preserve children's access to learning despite insecurity and disruption. These include alternative learning spaces, informal and community-based teaching, psychosocial support, remedial education, radio-based learning, and the mobilization of local resources and social networks

(UNICEF, 2022, 2023). UNICEF's interventions in Yoke, Muyuka, for example, demonstrate how Temporary Learning Spaces combined with psychosocial support can provide children with safer opportunities to resume learning and rebuild confidence (UNICEF Cameroon, 2026).

The effectiveness of these mechanisms is evident in their capacity to restore educational participation and mitigate learning losses. Radio education has enabled children who cannot access conventional schools to continue developing literacy, numeracy, and life skills (UNICEF, 2023), while UNICEF's remedial education programmes have helped children affected by prolonged school interruptions to recover foundational learning. In 2025, a UNICEF-supported remedial programme reached 5,627 children, with most participants successfully improving and progressing to the next class (UNICEF, 2025).

Community-based approaches also have a psychosocial and protective function. In Yoke, Muyuka, structured play, peer interaction, life-skills activities, and psychosocial support have helped children regain confidence and a sense of normalcy (UNICEF Cameroon, 2026). Such interventions demonstrate that coping is not limited to maintaining academic instruction; it also involves addressing the emotional and social consequences of prolonged conflict.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these mechanisms remains partial and conditional. Alternative learning arrangements can preserve educational continuity but cannot fully reproduce the infrastructure, qualified personnel, resources, curriculum coverage, and institutional stability of formal schooling. UNICEF has also identified insecurity, difficult physical access, and inadequate resources as significant constraints on education responses in the conflict-affected regions (UNICEF, 2022). Consequently, community coping should be understood as an adaptive response to institutional disruption rather than a substitute for the State's responsibility to guarantee safe, accessible, and quality education.

Overall, coping mechanisms in Muyuka demonstrate considerable adaptive capacity but limited structural effectiveness. They can reduce the immediate effects of educational disruption, sustain learning, support children's psychosocial well-being, and reconnect some learners with education; however, their long-term effectiveness depends on sustained security, adequate resources, functioning schools, qualified teachers, and stronger institutional support.

10. Challenges and Limits of Community-Based Educational Responses

Although community-based educational responses have helped sustain learning amid insurgency, their effectiveness is constrained by insecurity, inadequate resources, limited infrastructure, and uneven access. In the North-West and South-West Regions, insecurity continues to restrict access to schools and alternative learning spaces, while many children and teachers face risks during their movement to and from learning centres (UNICEF, 2024). These conditions make it difficult for community initiatives to provide consistent and uninterrupted educational services.

A major limitation is resource scarcity. Community-based initiatives often depend on external humanitarian assistance, local contributions, or limited community resources. UNICEF has reported that inadequate infrastructure, shortages of learning materials, insufficiently trained personnel, and funding gaps continue to constrain education responses in crisis-affected communities (UNICEF, 2024, 2025). Consequently, alternative learning arrangements may provide immediate educational opportunities without possessing the resources necessary to ensure sustained quality education.

There are also challenges relating to quality and continuity. Temporary learning spaces, radio education, and other non-formal arrangements can help children maintain contact with learning, but they cannot always provide the curriculum breadth, qualified teachers, facilities, assessment systems, and institutional stability associated with formal schooling. UNICEF's 2024 assessment, for example, found that children in the North-West and South-West were sometimes learning in overcrowded conditions with inadequate furniture, materials, and water facilities (UNICEF, 2024). This demonstrates the difficulty of transforming emergency educational access into stable and comprehensive educational provision.

Furthermore, community-based responses do not reach all children equally. Geographical isolation, poverty, displacement, gender-related barriers, disability, and insecurity can exclude particularly vulnerable groups. UNICEF identifies rural and crisis-affected communities as facing significant geographical and economic barriers to quality and inclusive education, while children with disabilities may encounter additional difficulties because of inadequate infrastructure and trained personnel (UNICEF, 2026). Such inequalities limit the overall reach and effectiveness of community-based interventions.

Most importantly, community initiatives cannot substitute for State responsibility and functioning educational institutions. Their primary value lies in preserving educational continuity during crisis rather than permanently replacing formal schooling. This distinction is particularly important in Muyuka, where community resilience may reduce the immediate consequences of educational disruption, but long-term educational recovery requires

security, functioning schools, qualified teachers, adequate infrastructure, sustainable financing, and institutional support.

Thus, community-based educational responses should be understood as adaptive but inherently limited mechanisms. They demonstrate considerable community resilience and can mitigate the effects of educational disruption, but their sustainability and effectiveness depend upon broader security, institutional, and financial conditions. Their role is therefore complementary rather than substitutive: communities can sustain education during crisis, but they cannot, by themselves, reconstruct the formal education system.

11. Summary of Finding

The findings reveal that insurgency has profoundly disrupted education in Muyuka Sub-Division, affecting school attendance, teaching and learning processes, teacher availability, educational infrastructure, and children's psychosocial well-being. Insecurity, displacement, economic hardship, and fear have weakened the continuity of formal education and created significant learning gaps among children.

The study further finds that communities have not remained passive in the face of these disruptions. Parents, teachers, local leaders, and other community actors have demonstrated considerable agency by mobilising social networks, local resources, alternative learning arrangements, and informal educational support. These responses illustrate the importance of social capital and collective action in sustaining educational opportunities under conditions of conflict.

The findings also indicate that communities employ diverse coping mechanisms, including temporary learning spaces, informal teaching, remedial education, psychosocial support, radio-based learning, and adjustments to learning routines. These mechanisms have helped some children maintain contact with education and recover aspects of lost learning. However, their effectiveness remains largely immediate and adaptive rather than structural, as they cannot fully compensate for the absence of stable schools, qualified teachers, adequate infrastructure, learning materials, and sustained institutional support.

Finally, the study establishes that community resilience has important but identifiable limits. Community-based responses can mitigate the consequences of educational disruption and preserve elements of educational continuity, but they cannot independently reconstruct a weakened education system. Sustainable educational recovery in Muyuka therefore requires the interaction of community initiative with improved security, adequate resources, institutional support, functioning schools, and effective public responsibility for the provision of safe and quality education.

12. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that insurgency has profoundly transformed the educational landscape of Muyuka Sub-Division, producing disruptions that extend beyond school closures to encompass insecurity, displacement, economic hardship, teacher shortages, psychosocial distress, and interruptions in children's learning trajectories. Yet, the disruption of formal education has not resulted in the complete abandonment of educational aspirations. Rather, communities have responded by mobilising social networks, local resources, informal learning arrangements, psychosocial support, and other coping mechanisms to preserve educational opportunities under difficult conditions.

The findings further demonstrate that community agency and resilience constitute important mechanisms of educational continuity during protracted conflict. Parents, teachers, community leaders, and other local actors have negotiated educational practices around the constraints created by insecurity, demonstrating considerable adaptability and collective resourcefulness. However, these responses remain constrained by inadequate resources, insecurity, uneven access, and limited institutional capacity. Community-based initiatives can mitigate the immediate effects of educational disruption, but they cannot adequately substitute for the infrastructure, qualified personnel, financing, curriculum, and institutional stability required for sustainable education.

The study therefore concludes that educational recovery in Muyuka requires a complementary relationship between community agency and institutional responsibility. Community initiatives should be recognised and supported rather than treated as substitutes for formal educational provision. Sustainable recovery requires improved security, rehabilitation of educational infrastructure, adequate learning materials, teacher support, psychosocial services, inclusive educational policies, and sustained governmental and humanitarian investment. Strengthening the capacity of communities while simultaneously restoring the formal education system is essential to ensuring that children affected by insurgency are not permanently deprived of their right to education.

Ultimately, the experience of Muyuka demonstrates that education amid insurgency is not simply a question of maintaining access to classrooms; it is a process of negotiation, adaptation, resilience, and reconstruction. Communities possess significant capacity to sustain learning under adversity, but their resilience should not

obscure the structural responsibilities of the State and other educational stakeholders. The enduring restoration of education therefore depends on transforming community-based coping from an emergency response into a supported component of a broader, secure, inclusive, and sustainable educational recovery framework.

13. Recommendations

The findings call for practical and sustainable measures to restore educational continuity in Muyuka. While community resilience has helped mitigate the effects of insurgency, it cannot substitute for institutional responsibility and sustained support. The recommendations therefore seek to strengthen community initiatives while addressing the security, infrastructural, psychosocial, and socioeconomic barriers to education.

(1) Strengthening Educational Security: Government and relevant security and humanitarian actors should prioritize the protection of schools, teachers, learners, and educational facilities in insurgency-affected communities. Measures should facilitate safe access to learning while minimizing exposure to conflict-related risks.

(2) Rehabilitation of Educational Infrastructure: Damaged and abandoned schools in Muyuka should be progressively rehabilitated and equipped with essential facilities, including classrooms, furniture, sanitation facilities, learning materials, and safe spaces for children.

(3) Institutionalizing Community Participation: Parents, teachers, traditional authorities, religious organisations, youth groups, and other local stakeholders should be systematically incorporated into educational planning and recovery initiatives. Their local knowledge can strengthen the relevance and sustainability of interventions.

(4) Supporting Community-Based Learning Initiatives: Existing community-based educational responses should receive appropriate technical, financial, and material support. Temporary learning spaces, remedial programs, radio-based education, and psychosocial interventions should be integrated into broader educational recovery strategies.

(5) Strengthening Teacher Capacity and Welfare: Greater attention should be given to the recruitment, retention, training, psychosocial well-being, and security of teachers working in conflict-affected communities.

(6) Expanding Psychosocial Support: Educational recovery programs should incorporate sustained psychosocial support for learners and teachers affected by violence, displacement, fear, and prolonged educational interruption.

(7) Promoting Inclusive Access to Education: Particular attention should be given to children from displaced, impoverished, geographically isolated, and otherwise vulnerable households. Educational interventions should minimize financial, geographical, gender-related, and disability-related barriers.

(8) Providing Targeted Household Support: Since conflict-related economic hardship can prevent families from sustaining children's education, educational materials, school-feeding initiatives, scholarships, and other forms of targeted assistance should be strengthened where appropriate.

(9) Establishing Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms: Government authorities, humanitarian organizations, and community stakeholders should establish mechanisms for monitoring school attendance, learning outcomes, teacher availability, infrastructure conditions, and the effectiveness of alternative educational programs.

(10) Developing a Sustainable Educational Recovery Framework: Community resilience should ultimately be integrated into a broader institutional recovery strategy. Sustainable educational recovery requires coordinated investment in security, infrastructure, teachers, financing, psychosocial services, and effective public education institutions.

References

ACAPS. (2021, February 19). *Cameroon: The education crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions*. ACAPS.

American Psychological Association. (2018). *APA dictionary of psychology*. American Psychological Association.

Balgah, R. A., Buchenrieder, G., & Awazi, N. P. (2025). Rural livelihood strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic review on Cameroon. *SN Social Sciences, 5*, 226. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-025-01265-9

Beseng, M., Crawford, G., & Annan, N. (2023). From "Anglophone problem" to "Anglophone conflict" in Cameroon: Assessing prospects for peace. *African Studies Review, 66*(1), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1177/00020397231155244

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Burde, D., Kapit, A., Wahl, R. L., Guven, O., & Skarpeteig, M. I. (2017). Education in emergencies: A review of theory and research. *Review of Educational Research, 87*(3), 619–658. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316671594

Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology, 94*(Supplement), S95–S120. https://doi.org/10.1086/228943

Conroy, C., & Chambers, S. (2021). Micro-politics of citizenship in Cameroon: A class analysis of Cameroon Development Corporation workers' resistance to the Cameroon Anglophone crisis.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical Education, 40*(4), 314–321. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2929.2006.02418.x

Flanery, A., Mbatu, R. S., Johns, R., & Stewart, D. (2022). Rural community agency in Cameroon: Interactions with forest policies and the REDD+ climate change regime. *Forests, 13*(2), 267. https://doi.org/10.3390/f13020267

Human Rights Watch. (2018). *Cameroon: Killings, destruction in Anglophone regions*. Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (2021). *"They are destroying our future": Armed separatist attacks on students, teachers, and schools in Cameroon's Anglophone regions*. Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (2023). *World report 2023: Cameroon*. Human Rights Watch.

International Crisis Group. (2023). *A second look at Cameroon's Anglophone special status*. International Crisis Group.

Judith Nkongho Ayuk. (2022). The Special Bilingual Education Program: Pace-Setter for a Harmonized Educational System in Cameroon. *Global Academic Journal of Linguistics and Literature, 4*(5), 169–174. https://doi.org/10.36348/gajll.2022.v04i05.006

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications.

Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist, 56*(3), 227–238. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.56.3.227

Merriam-Webster. (2026). Education. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/education

Merriam-Webster. (2026). Insurgency. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/insurgency

Molua, E. L., et al. (2019). Determinants and policy implications of farmers' climate adaptation choices in rural Cameroon. *Sustainability, 11*(7), 1921.

Ngah, A. N. (2023). Insurgency and national security: A perspective from Cameroon's separatist conflict. *Third World Quarterly, 44*(7), 1507–1524. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2023.2177149

Ngenge, R. T. (2022). Assessing the impact of armed conflict on higher education in Cameroon's Anglophone regions. *Studia de Securitate, 12*(1), 202–216. https://doi.org/10.24917/26578549.12.1.14

Nkongho, J. A. (2022). The Special Bilingual Education Program: Pace-setter for a harmonized educational system in Cameroon.

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research, 42*, 533–544. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon & Schuster.

Scott, J. C. (1985). *Weapons of the weak: Everyday forms of peasant resistance*. Yale University Press.

Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the arts of resistance: Hidden transcripts*. Yale University Press.

Shah, R., Paulson, J., & Couch, D. (2020). The rise of resilience in education in emergencies. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding, 14*(3), 303–326. https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2019.1694390

UNESCO. (2026). *Education in emergencies: What you need to know*. UNESCO.

Ungar, M. (2011). Community resilience for youth and families: Facilitative physical and social capital in contexts of adversity. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*(9), 1742–1748. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2011.04.027

Ungar, M. (2011). The social ecology of resilience: Addressing contextual and cultural ambiguity of a nascent construct. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 81*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.2010.01067.x

Ungar, M. (2013). Resilience, trauma, context, and culture. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 14*(3), 255–266. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838013487805

UNICEF Cameroon. (2026). *From fear to hope: How MHPSS is helping children heal and learn again in Yoke, Muyuka*. UNICEF Cameroon.

UNICEF Cameroon. (2026). *From fear to hope: How MHPSS is helping children heal and learn again in Yoke, Muyuka*. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2019). *Anglophone crisis in Cameroon causes closure of 80 per cent of schools in the region, denying more than 600,000 children access to education*. UNICEF.

UNICEF. (2022). *Cameroon humanitarian situation report No. 4: 1 January–31 December 2022*. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2023). *Learning where it is difficult to learn: Radio programmes help keep children learning in Cameroon*. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2024). *Cameroon humanitarian situation report: 31 December 2024*. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2025). *Cameroon humanitarian situation report: 31 March 2025*. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2025). *Remedial classes boost education in crisis-hit regions*. UNICEF Cameroon.

UNICEF. (2026). *Cameroon humanitarian situation report No. 4: 31 December 2025*. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2026). *Education*. UNICEF Cameroon. United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2026, May 25). *From fear to hope: How MHPSS is helping children heal and learn again in Yoke, Muyuka*. UNICEF Cameroon.

World Bank. (2021). *The socio-political crisis in the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon: Assessing the economic and social impacts*. World Bank.

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).