



# Interest of Gain and Good Neighbourliness in Cameroon: A Logistic Analysis

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## Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to study the consequences of interest of gain on good neighbourliness in Cameroon. According to Bergalli [1], corruption is an indicator of change in the forms of social interaction: the interest of gain becomes the most important of the interests that weave the social bond. At this point, in a relation of mutual assistance, help during difficult times can decrease because there is nothing to gain by helping. Using survey data from the National Institute of Statistics on 9,222 households in 2014, estimates from a logit model show that the fact that corruption is a major problem for the country decreases the probability of getting help from neighbours in difficult times. The interest of gain has led to a deterioration of good neighbourliness in Cameroon.

*Keywords: Good neighbourliness; corruption; interest of gain; logit model.*

## ABBREVIATION

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty organization

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Following the news, especially the war between Ukraine and Russia, according to several

observers, it is mainly a war between the great world powers. Russia, for its part, avoids being exposed through its neighbours (Ukraine) to external attacks from NATO countries (United States).

Thus, in a world where living together is a necessary condition for prosperity and peace for

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all, it seems that individual interest, the desire for power and domination prevail over collective well-being. Indeed, according to the Grains of Peace Foundation, living together is defined as the capacity and consent of inhabitants, in an environment of social and cultural diversity, to share their living space harmoniously. Work on living together focuses more on couples (Manting, [2]; Rhoades and al, [3]; Haas and Whitton, [4]; Henderson and al., [5]; Guetto and al, [6]; Song and Lai, [7]) than on groups of individuals (Hankins, [8]; Musah, [9]) or on good neighbourliness between countries (Asare and Siawe, [10]).

However, despite the phenomena of globalisation, the development of information and communication technologies, social networks and the professional integration of women, the neighbourhood remains important for individuals and decision-makers throughout the world. It is an important part of the social identity of individuals. In this perspective, the neighbourhood plays a big role, for the elderly, children, those who work at home and the unemployed, the sick or the disabled. At the international level, the neighbourhood is of interest to the United Nations organisation in dealing with the complex economic, ecological problems of the planet. At the national level, it is more the positive attributes of neighbourhood that need to be nurtured or revived, namely mutuality, solidarity, and a sense of shared responsibility and destiny. Finally, "as a focal point of social research, the neighbourhood (if defined and operationalised) will continue to be a rich laboratory in which to explore broader processes of fluidity, change and stability" (Forrest, [11]).

Fometeu [12] in his advocacy for the construction of an African neighbourhood law states that the neighbour is a "service" brother, thus highlighting the help that the neighbourhood constitutes for individuals on this continent. While the legal texts aim to fight against bad neighbourhoods (noise pollution and so on), good neighbourliness is encouraged and can be defined as a relationship of friendship or brotherhood, of mutual assistance. This work focuses on mutual assistance part.

In Cameroon, the Anglophone crisis has given rise to much debate on social cohesion and living together. An analysis of the televised debates reveals two main conclusions between the parties. Firstly, social cohesion is presented as a

manifestation of living together. This is conditioned by the requirements of good governance, while it is a political option according to the authorities (Esse, [13]). Speaking of political will, Avodo Avodo [14], through an analysis of four types of political discourse, finds that they give each citizen a sense of belonging to the same nation. Regarding the requirements of good governance, one of the responses to the Anglophone crisis has been to strengthen the decentralisation process with the regional council elections of 6 December 2020. In the same vein, Tchitchoua and Onana [15] find that deepening the decentralisation process reduces corruption (bad governance) in Cameroon.

Pascal Boniface [16] shows that corruption is a global phenomenon, with civil society movements against it everywhere, mainly the corruption of political leaders. Using microeconomic analysis on African data, Lavallée and al [17] find that ethnicity factors, traditionally emphasised in Africa, do not play as clear a role in corruption as the literature pretends. This suggests that corruption is a systemic problem. "Corruption is also an indicator of changing social habits and forms of interaction: the interest of gain becomes the most important of the interests that weave the social bond" (Bergalli, [1]). At this point, in a relation of mutual assistance, help during difficult times can decrease because there is nothing to gain by helping.

Cameroon is and remains ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world according to the corruption perceptions index (144<sup>th</sup> in 2013 and 2021). Thus, the objective of this article is to study the consequences of interest of gain on good neighbourliness in Cameroon. To our knowledge, there are no studies on this link. The rest of the paper is divided into three parts: methodology, results and interpretations, and conclusion.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Method of Analysis**

This study uses the logit model introduced by Berkson [18] to analyse the consequences of interest of gain on good neighbourliness in Cameroon. Indeed, multiple logistic regression makes it possible to explain a binary variable Y from qualitative and/or quantitative variables. The variable Y follows a Bernoulli distribution with

parameter  $p$  and the logistic transformation allows us to write:  $\text{logit}[P(Y_i = 1|X = x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)] = \ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \dots + \beta_n x_{in}$  (1) or again  $P(Y_i = 1|X = x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) = \frac{e^{\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \dots + \beta_n x_{in}}}{1 + e^{\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \dots + \beta_n x_{in}}}$  (2)

The coefficients of this model are estimated by the maximum likelihood method. They allow several interpretations to be made:

The sign of the estimated coefficient  $\hat{\beta}_i$  makes it possible to say that the explanatory variable acts positively or negatively on the probability of success (of receive help from neighbours in difficult times)  $p$  relative to the reference probability (of failure).

The odds ratio  $e^{\hat{\beta}_i}$  greater than unity means that individuals who exhibit a particular modality of the explanatory variable are more likely to receive help from neighbours in difficult times than individuals who exhibit another modality of

this variable (reference modality), or the more the variable in question increases, the greater the chance of receiving help from neighbours in difficult times, and vice versa.

The marginal effect, on the other hand, measures the consequences of the variation of an explanatory variable on the predicted probability of success (probability calculated from the estimated values  $\hat{\beta}_i$  introduced in equation (2)). In effect, it is an arithmetic average of the individual differences between the probability predicted for one value of the explanatory variable and that predicted by another value of this variable, the other variables remaining fixed. Thus, it allows us to say that belonging to a category linked to a modality of the explanatory variable reduces or increases the probability of getting help from neighbours in difficult times. This last interpretation is therefore more informative than the others.

## 2.2 Definition of Variables

**Table 1. Summary of the different variables and their modalities**

Variables	Modalities
<b>Variables of interest</b>	
Can neighbours help you in difficult times? (good neighbourliness)	No Yes
Corruption is a major problem for the country? (corruption)	No Yes Don't know
<b>Control variables</b>	
Can you read or write a simple sentence in French?: (French)	No Yes
Can you read or write a simple sentence in English?: (English)	No Yes
Level of education	No level Primary Post primary General secondary 1 General secondary 2 Technical secondary 1 Technical secondary 2 Superior
Religion	No religion Catholic Protestant Animist Other Christians Other religions
Age	The set of natural numbers
Living conditions in relation to neighbours	Better less as don't know

We added seven control variables to the model:

The living conditions of the household in relation to those of the neighbours: it is easy to expect help from neighbours when their living conditions are higher or equal to ours.

The other control variables are own characteristics, which may lead the individual to expect help from neighbours in return during difficult times.

The age of the household: the older you are, the more compassionate your neighbours are, i.e. it is easier to get help from your neighbours.

The religion of the household: religion through its values of neighbourly love promotes good neighbourliness.

Educational level: the household's knowledge of how to live together can also lead to neighbours

coming to its aid. Indeed, school curricula can also promote living together (Patel, [19]), and thus good neighbourliness.

The handling of official languages (English and French): For a country like Cameroon which has two hundred and forty ethnic groups and more than two hundred dialects, the adoption of two official languages (French and English) is a priori an instrument for the improvement and development of human relations, and therefore good neighbourliness.

In the table above, the first modality of each variable represents the reference one.

### 2.3 Data and Characteristics

The data for this study come from the National Institute of Statistics and cover 9 222 households that underwent the last household survey in Cameroon in 2014.

**Table 2. Descriptive statistics**

Good neighbourliness	Corruption		
	Yes	No	Don't know
Yes	3 998	344	332
No	4 100	243	205

## 3. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

**Table 3. Summary of results**

Explanatory variables	Coefficient	Odds ratio	Marginal effect
Corruption :			
Yes	-0,25*** (0,08)	0,77	-0,06*** (0,02)
Don't know	0,01 (0,12)		
Educational level :			
Primary	-0,15** (0,07)	0,86	-0,03** (0,01)
Post primary	-0,12 (0,20)		
General secondary 1	-0,23** (0,10)	0,79	-0,05** (0,02)
General secondary 2	-0,34*** (0,12)	0,71	-0,08*** (0,03)
Technical secondary 1	-0,25* (0,13)	0,77	-0,06* (0,03)
Technical secondary 2	-0,40** (0,16)	0,67	-0,09** (0,04)
Superior	-0,68*** (0,14)	0,50	-0,16*** (0,03)
French :			
Yes	-0,008 (0,06)		

Explanatory variables	Coefficient	Odds ratio	Marginal effect
English :			
Yes	-0,28*** (0,06)	0,75	-0,06*** (0,01)
Living conditions in relation to neighbours :			
As	0,42*** (0,06)	1,52	0,10*** (0,01)
Less	0,12* (0,07)	1,12	0,03* (0,01)
Don't know	-0,05 (0,68)		
Religion :			
Catholic	-0,05 (0,12)		
Protestant	0,04 (0,12)		
Other Christian	-0,26* (0,14)	0,77	-0,06* (0,03)
Muslim	-0,06 (0,12)		
Animist	-0,17 (0,16)		
Other religions	-0,16 (0,24)		
Age	-0,002 (0,001)		
Constant	0,48*** (0,17)		
LR Chi-square	317,10***		

\*, \*\*, \*\*\* significance at 10%, 5%, 1% and (.) standard deviation

In the table above, marginal effects and odds ratios are calculated only for those variables with a significant coefficient. The results (marginal effects) show that the fact that corruption is a major problem for the country decreases the probability of getting help from neighbours in difficult times. The interest of gain has led to a deterioration of good neighbourliness in Cameroon. The Chi-square statistic shows that the model is globally significant. This means that the variables of the model can explain the phenomenon studied in a global manner.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The objective of this paper was to study the consequences of interest of gain on good neighbourliness in Cameroon. Using multiple logistic regression, we found that the fact that corruption is a major problem for the country decreases the probability of getting help from neighbours in difficult times. The interest of gain has led to a deterioration of good

neighbourliness in Cameroon. An extension of this study to other forms of social interaction is highly desirable.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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