

Antecedents of gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon

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ABSTRACT: The urban landscape of Northern Cameroon is dominated by gated enclaves, a distinctive housing phenomenon which resonates a situation of well built gates, walls or fences which encircles the houses, in the most parts, totally and completely such that the houses are not seen from the outside. However, one might be deceived by looking only at the gates and drawing conclusion that these are true features of urbanization because inside these gates, one expects to find a building of contemporary standard that suits the quality or standard of the gates, walls or fences. But what one finds behind the gates are undesirable buildings or housing units which do not suit the quality of the gates and the affluence of today's urban centres in which we live. Consequently, they represent 'pseudo-urbanisation' and/or 'urban shadows' which is just a shade of the 'real' urbanization, causing urban centres to emerge as "urban-villages". Urban villages poses problems to the urban landscape because they do not only transform the form but also the functioning of the urban centre, thereby negatively affecting urban development as it creates its own unique urban pattern which constitutes an impediment to sustainable urban development. They therefore pose adverse effects on all scales of urban development from micro, macro and total. Through field surveys (observation, interviews and participatory approaches), in-depth case study and the published literature, this study investigates the antecedents of gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon and makes salient recommendations for policy action towards urban sustainability. The findings demonstrate that gated enclaves owe their antecedents to socio-economic and natural factors, including culture and the pursuit of lifestyle (21%), security/insecurity (7%), the system of housing/land tenure (17%), poverty (19%), conservatism (5%), heritage/inheritance (30%) and poor floristic biodiversity (1%). For urban centres in this region to be sustainable, this study advocates that the urban planning and management stakeholders should seek suitable and most efficient planning approaches or responses to deal with the phenomenon and the implementation of a regional housing policy favouring the provision of low cost, affordable and decent housing infrastructure in order to meet the housing needs of its residents.

KEYWORDS: *Gated enclaves, housing, urbanisation, urban development, Northern Cameroon*

I. INTRODUCTION

Housing provides a frame for living (Wanie, 2008). Besides food, clothing, access to education and health care, water supply and electricity, housing also constitutes one of man's basic necessities for survival or livelihood. This assertion corroborates Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs postulated in 1943 in which he identified the three fundamental needs crucial to survival to include food, clothing and shelter (Wanie *et al.*, 2017). Housing is more than the mere physical dwelling in which we live. Housing equally involves interior space, equipments and furnishing; exterior space and importantly its relationship to the surrounding neighbourhood or community. The study of housing is important to the Urban Geographer because the housing type of a particular 'geospace' is a function of man's relationship with his environment, a term referred to as *Cultural Landscapes*. This is strongly the case in Northern Cameroon where the developments of gated enclaves have resulted to a distinctive urban form throughout the region. This could be observed in towns and neighbourhoods across the region such as Maroua, Garoua, Ngaoundere, Kousseri, Kaele, Yagoua, Mora, Mokolo, Poli, Tcholerri, Guider, Lagdo, Dembo, Tibati, Meiganga, Tignere, amongst many others, even as one transects the region from Adamawa to the Far North, passing through the North.

Representing forms of housing which significantly transform the structure of towns, gated enclaves have always been a focal point of interest for researchers dealing with urban problems (Csizmady, 2011). In urban centres of Northern Cameroon, just like many other cities the world over, individual housing units are increasingly becoming gated, fenced and walled. Here, both old and newly emerging housing developments (private or individual homes-some of which are rented or leased to the public) could be found retrofitted with

barriers such as gates, walls and fences. The populations mostly residing the Northern Region of Cameroon and experiencing the erection of the gates, walls or fences is relatively homogeneous in ethnicity, occupied mostly by Fulani Muslims, a people whose culture and lifestyles cherish privacy. Hence, the desire to live behind gated, fenced or walled houses (gated enclaves). This study investigates the antecedents of gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon and makes salient recommendations for policy action towards urban sustainability.

The study area (Northern Cameroon) is a vast geographical region situated in the dry sudano-sahelian belt of Cameroon spanning 3 regions namely: Adamawa (Ngaoundere), North (Garoua) and Far North (Maroua) (Fig. 1). The different regions are located at the geographical coordinates of 7°20'N and 13°30'E, 8°30'N and 14°00'E and 11°00' and 14°30'E respectively. The surface area covered by Northern Cameroon stands at 164,027km² distributed as follows: Adamawa (63,701km²), North (66,090km²) and Far North (34,263km²).

As of 2013, Northern Cameroon registered a total population of 7,246,295 inhabitants as follows: Adamawa (1,131,978), North (2,311,179) and Far North (3,803,138). With the high rate of population growth experienced in the region (>2.5% annually), it is expected that these figures have more than doubled within the last 5 years. The region is also made up of a population with diverse customs, religion and migration history, though the Fulani people who practice Islam dominate the population. They are mostly made up of paleo-nigritics, neo-Sudanese and pastoral nomads who practice mostly primary activities such as agriculture, livestock and fisheries (Ahidjo, 2012).

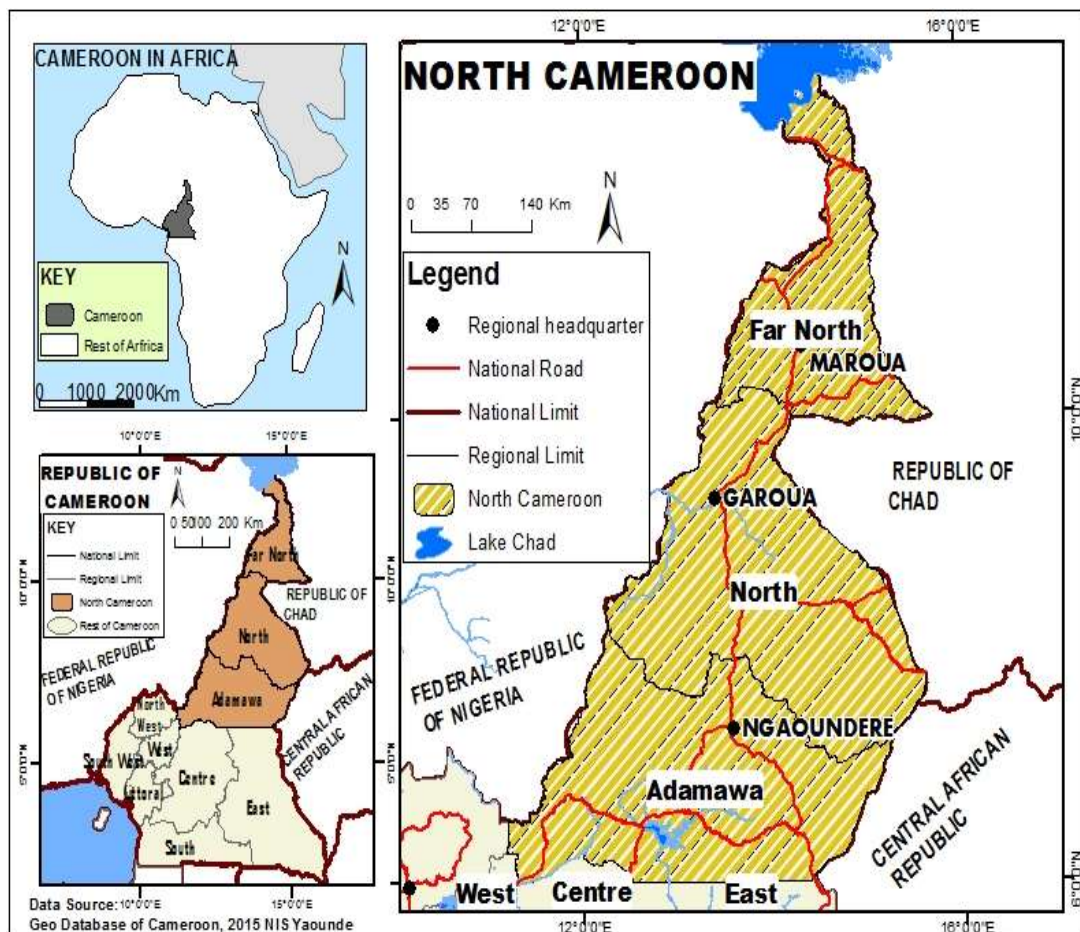


Fig. 1. Location of the study area. Source: Modified from Ahidjo (2012)

II. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The gating phenomenon is not without problems. Their developments in the urban landscape are not without cost (Damstra, 2001), as could be clearly observed in urban centres in Northern Cameroon. Gated developments produce adverse effects on all scales of urban development (micro, macro and total). As Webster *et al.*, (2002) cited in Grant and Mittelstead (2004) alarmed, gated developments or enclaves:

“Challenge the spatial, organizational and institutional order that has shaped modern cities”

Gated housing developments have transformed the urban landscape of Northern Cameroon into an “urban-village”. This is what Blakely and Synder (1997) referred to as “city perches”, representing neighbourhoods with particular character or exclusive homes. They give rise to a diversity of negative impacts on urban development (Ghonimi *et al.*, 2010). As such, they do not only impact negatively on the daily life patterns of people but also distort the urban form and functioning (Moobela, 2003).

Another problem associated with the development of this international phenomenon is exclusion and social inequality, segregation, fragmentation, discrimination and separation. The gatings have led to division, fragmentation and separation which are bad forms as they are not a holistic approach for urban development, and not being compatible with most government’s context as is the case in Cairo (Ghonimi *et al.*, 2010). In fact, in one of the pioneer studies on the phenomenon, Blakely and Synder (1997) considered gated enclaves as a new form of discrimination. Their presence therefore could lead to tension and sometimes conflicts of land use between the government (represented by the local planning authorities) and its residents. Csizmady (2011) warns that due to their barricaded nature, conflicts are likely to arise in gated enclaves not only with those living in the surrounding areas, but also among those living inside the development itself because as far as there are substantial differences according to status and interests, there are potential sources of conflict within the relatively homogenous community as well.

Also, unlike in the developed world whose enclaves are prestigious (secured, guarded, wealthy, attractive, distinct), gated enclaves in the global south, especially in urban centres in Northern Cameroon are undesirable and do not suit the context of today’s urban landscape in which we live. To make a bad situation worse, they have become omnipresent and ubiquitous in the urban landscape across cities and towns in the region making planning solutions onerous.

More so, the need for housing everywhere exceeds the supply. Gated enclaves compound the already existing housing shortage in urban centres in the region thereby impacting negatively on housing markets. Their development theoretically limits the quantity (and quality) of housing by privatizing (enclosures) what otherwise could have been public spaces and limiting access to many. Most of the houses inside the gates or fences are ill-planned and with no coherent architectural style. Most of them also continue to remain underequipped with basic livelihood amenities such as electricity, pipe borne water supply, adequate waste disposal facilities and good drainage and sanitary conditions. Despite their ever increasing emergence and associated challenges on the urban landscape, planning authorities in the region remain nonchalant, failing to pass suitable urban planning laws or policies to appropriately deal with the phenomenon. As such, their development remains sustained in the urban milieu in this region.

Given the above problems associated with gated enclaves in Northern Cameroon and other urban centres the world over, this study investigates their antecedents in urban centres in Northern Cameroon and makes salient recommendations towards policy actions by the urban planning stakeholders for sustainable urban development. It sets out to address the following research question: What are the antecedents of gated enclaves in Northern Cameroon? In other words, what factors drive gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon?

III. CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

If research on this important global urban phenomenon (gated enclaves) is expanding today, it is thanks to the most influential and objective authors (Blakely and Snyder, 1997), who wrote one of the most influential pieces on the subject in their work entitled *Fortress America*. Other authors on the same subject have equally recognised their work as being the most influential, objective and mainstream on the subject (Minton, 2002). Their work provides one of the first typographies on the subject (Johannes, 2012). In this section, the conceptual and empirical literature on the subject has been reviewed. These focuses, amongst other aspects, on their appellations, characteristics, types, disparities in the developed and developing countries, roots and impacts on the urban landscape.

III.1 Gated enclaves: A manifold of definitions

Gated enclaves, communities or enclosed neighbourhoods (Landman and Schönsteich, 2002) are a global phenomenon (Glasze, 2003; Webster, 2002) all cited in (Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004), which is sweeping across the globe (Moobela, 2003). Gated enclaves are an urban and housing issue, referring to a type of housing or residential development inside the urban fabric whose borders are characterised by physical barriers such as gates or walls or fences or barricades of any type (cement, card board, padlock and key, grass,

etc). They have become a significant, if not yet dominant, developmental design on the urban and sub-urban landscape especially in a country such as the United States (Nonnemaker, 2009). It is a new trend in urban formation (Johannes, 2012). They equally represent an emergent urban pattern in many cities of the world and a key debate facing an urbanising globe (Ilesanmi, 2012). The term is now a cliché among planners, politicians, developers and the public alike (Karen, 2008). They have raised interesting questions and have resulted in widespread debate around their likely future impact on urban life in countries such as South Africa (Landman and Schönsteich, 2002), with cities in Northern Cameroon such as Ngaoundere, Garoua and Maroua not left out.

There is no common agreement on the meaning or definition of gated enclaves. Definitions and perceptions of the concept are many, vast and vary considerably, resulting in a multitude of interpretations regarding types and meta-types (Landman and Schönsteich, 2002). In the same way as there are differences in their appellations, they have no universally accepted definition. In the literature, there is no single definition and no common consensus regarding the concept (Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2007). Nevertheless, most explanations of the concept revolve around housing developments that restrict public access, through the use of gates, barriers, walls and fences; or through the employment of security staff or other systems to monitor access (Ilesanmi, 2012). Some definitions of gated enclaves are offered below:

A broad definition of gated enclaves is given by Blakely and Snyder (1997) as residential areas with restricted access such that normally public spaces have been privatized. In their book "Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States" which stands as the first ever written documentation about gated enclaves, Blakely and Snyder (1997b), gave a general definition as "physical privatized areas with restricted entrance where outsiders and insiders exist" (Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2007). Another definition by Webster *et al.*, (2002) cited in Baycan-Levent and Gülümser (2007) considers gated enclaves as part of the trend of suburbanization that is based on the creation of self-contained, separate communities with carefully constructed identities as well as the typical patterns of the rapid spread of proprietary urban communities of the 21st century.

On her part, Landman (2002) defines gated communities as areas which are physically walled or fenced off and usually have a security gate or controlled access point with a security guard. They are a generic term that includes enclosed neighbourhoods that have controlled access through gates or booms across existing roads and security villages and complexes, including lifestyle communities which provide their enclosed residents with a range of non-residential amenities such as schools, offices, shops and golf courses (Landman and Schönsteich, 2002).

Hook and Vrdoljak (2002) holds that the term 'gated community' or gated enclaves lends itself to the amalgamation of the spatial and the social; 'gating' referring to a form of spatial fortification and 'community' to an organized social body of persons. They are security developments with designated parameters, usually walls or fences, and controlled entrances that are intended to prevent penetration by non-residents. According to the authors, gated enclaves refer to both the physical barricading and the attempt to create privatized, restricted-entry living spaces.

Landman (2000) cited in Moobela (2003) referred to gated enclaves as a physical area that is fenced or walled off from its surroundings. Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) defined gated enclaves as a housing development on private roads closed to general traffic by a gate across the primary access. The developments may be surrounded by fences, walls, or other natural barriers that further limit public access.

Atkinson and Blandy (2005) further considered gated communities as walled or fenced housing developments, to which public access is restricted, characterised by legal agreements which tie the residents to a common code of conduct and collective responsibility for management, thus emphasizing the governance dimension of gated enclaves.

Blakely (2007) conceptualizes gated enclaves as residential developments with restricted access to non-residents, such that spaces normally considered public have been privatized, thus focusing on the public-private space dialectic.

Fellman *et al.*, (2007) considered gated enclaves as a master-planned community, a fenced or walled residential area with checkpoints staffed by security guards and access limited to designated individuals and identified guests.

Another commonly cited definition of gated enclaves is residential areas that are enclosed by walls, fences or landscaping that physically prevents entry (Karen, 2008). This definition also usually includes discussions of restricted access to all portions of the community from the surrounding community (Low 2003; Blakely and Snyder 1997 all cited in Karen, 2008).

Ijibola *et al.*, (2011) defines the modern form of gated enclaves as form of residential community or housing estate containing strictly-controlled entrances for pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles, and often characterized by a closed perimeter walls and fences.

This study conceptualises gated enclaves in the context of Northern Cameroon as housing units whereby gates, walls or fences encircle the houses, in the most parts, totally and completely such that they cannot be seen from the outside. However, the buildings inside the gates do not suit the quality or standards of the gates, walls or fences that have been erected to encircle the house. It represents a scenario whereby the gates, walls or fences have been well built but without any commensurate desire to build a modern standard house like the gates, walls or fences. While the gates, walls or fences are standard, solid and good looking, the buildings or structures inside the gates remain ill-planned, makeshift, underequipped and undesirable in the urban landscape, which has implications on the form and functioning of the urban landscape.

III.2 Gated enclaves: Galloping emergence/trend on the urban landscape

Hook and Vrdoljak (2002) traced the existence of gated enclaves back to the 1800s in America. Nevertheless, no world region is exempted from this phenomenon. In the past two decades, increasing numbers of people globally are turning to gated enclaves (Genis, 2007) cited in Ilesanmi (2012). In parallel to the increasing diversity and multiplicity, gated communities have increasingly become a major trend in the housing market in both developed and developing countries (Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2007). They have radically transformed urban environment with their different characteristics in which social segregation and identity features have become more prominent and strict than in the past. Over the past fifty years, gated neighbourhoods have been built in great numbers mostly in major cities and seaside settlements in the United States, Mexico, Brazil, and China, but by the end of the 20th century, the wave also reached Eastern Europe, where with the boom in private housing, this phenomenon is slowly starting to dominate the sphere of major residential development (Csizmaday, 2011). Although most extensively documented in the United States where large proportion of new communities are becoming gated (30% in Calabasas, Los Angeles for example) (Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004; Le Goix and Webster, 2006), gated enclaves are appearing in many other countries, including Argentina, Australia, the Bahamas, Brazil, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Latvia, Portugal, South Africa, and Venezuela, Britain, France, Nigeria, etc. Notwithstanding, gated communities are fast moving from the US cities to the UK and other European cities (Moobela, 2003). In the city of Istanbul for instance, gated enclaves emerged in the 1980s with the impact of globalization and liberal socio-economic policies (Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2007). They have also massively emerged in Maroua city.

III.3 Gated enclaves: A myriad of appellations

Numerous appellations have been ascribed to the global phenomenon of gated enclaves in the different regions of the world by researchers. These include “fortified enclaves” (Caldeira, 2000; Atkinson and Flint, 2004); “gated enclaves” (Grant, 2003 cited in Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2007) or “enclosed neighbourhoods” (Landman, 2000c cited in Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2007). In South Africa and elsewhere, some writers use the term ‘gated community’ (Landman, 2000 cited in Moobela, 2003; Blakely and Snyder, 1997a-b; Davis, 1992a-b; Landman, 2000a-b; Low, 2003 all cited in Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2007; Landman and Schönteich, 2002). A number of other terms are also used, such as “enclosed developments”, “suburban enclave”, “urban fortress”, “security-park”, and “security village”. The policies of some local authorities refer to them simply as ‘road closures’ (Ibid). Moobela (2003) termed them “fortress village”. In Brazil, gated enclaves are sometimes referred to as “enclosed developments”, “closed condominiums”, “fortified enclaves” or simply “fenced-up areas” (Landman and Schönteich, 2002). Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) clarify the difference existing between “walled” and “gated” communities. Though they are sometimes seen as synonymous, difference exists in terms of their levels of enclosure.

III.4 Gated enclaves: Non-homogenous in character

Regarding their characteristic features, Blakely and Snyder (1997) enlightens that eight features can be used to define and differentiate gated enclaves. These include (1) functions of enclosure, (2) security features and barriers, (3) amenities and facilities included, (4) type of residents, (5) tenure, (6) location, (7) size, (8) policy context. Another most prominent feature of gated communities is that they are gated such that one cannot enter and exit freely without having to be a member or at least getting access permission. The concept is characterised by residential areas with restricted access (Moobela, 2003). The central feature of gated enclaves is the collective legal and social framework which forms the constitutional conditions and legal terms under which residents subscribe to the occupation of these developments, in combination with their unique physical features (Atkinson and Blandy, 2005). One other common feature of gated enclaves is usually that they are privately managed residential communities (Ilesanmi, 2012).

III.4 Gated enclaves: Variation in types or categories

Gated enclaves also differ in types. Some authors talk of gated enclaves as only one part of a larger phenomenon of enclosed areas including shopping malls and fenced-in housing estates, while others interpret the term to refer to all fenced-in areas or controlled access spaces or, in other words, as the collective name for such urban developments (Landman and Schönteich, 2002).

Four major categories of gated enclaves exist according to Blakely and Snyder (1997), based on their main interest areas as follows (1) typology of Blakely and Snyder on North American gated communities (1997b), including other 5 types of gated communities in the American, British and Australian context by Burke (2001), (2) typology developed by Luymes (1997), (3) the typology of Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004), (4), the typology of Blakely and Snyder, while adding considerations of the characteristics of amenities and facilities, the level of affluence, and the type of security features and spatial patterns.

In the US, three main types of gated developments could be identified (Blakely and Snyder (1999) cited in Hook and Vrdolkak (2006) and Blakely (2007) cited in Ilesanmi (2012); (1) Lifestyle communities, which are those in which gates and walls delineate areas for the pursuit of leisure activities and the protection of neighbourhoods, where local authorities could no longer adequately protect them from various forms of urban violence. Living in such gated enclaves often involves a certain lifestyle choice, in which the wealthy and upper-middle class combines resources to enjoy leisure and maintain local security, (2) the prestige/elite community feeds on exclusionary aspirations and the desire to differentiate. Here, gates symbolize social status, prestige, distinction and some measure of security, especially on the social ladder. These include enclaves for the rich, famous or affluent, and executive home developments for the middle-income earners, (3) security zone gated enclaves, where the fear of crime and intruding outsider is the prime motivation for defensive fortifications. In addition, by marking their boundaries and restricting access, residents try to build and strengthen the feeling and function of neighbourhood enclave safety. Rental and lower-income residents sometimes constitute a substantial portion of such gated communities. Besides these three (lifestyle, prestige and security zone enclaves), can also be added historical enclaves (Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004).

A seven-fold classification of gatedness has also been established (Dixon *et al.*, 2004 cited in Ilesanmi, 2012), based on the following features (1) physical barriers (walls, gates, doors, trees/hedges/greenery, speed bumps), (2) technological barriers (surveillance cameras and videos, security alarms, access via swipe card or the intercom), (3) 'manned' surveillance (security patrols and the 'front desk' barrier), (4) signs and markings, (5) design features (narrowing or partly obscuring entrances, colour or texture changes, walls, doors, gates with no handles or levers), (6) natural surveillance (being observed by residents) (7) implicit signals (closed unmarked doors and gates).

III.5 Gated enclaves in the US: A diffusion or expansion of experience

Studies on gated enclaves in the US where the first study on the phenomenon (Fortress America) was conducted are elaborate. The global spread of gated enclaves has been triggered by the experience of the US (Environmental Planning A, 2002 cited in Moobela, 2003). In Europe, the number of gated enclaves does not anywhere near approach their number on the American continent (the US most especially) (Csizmady, 2011). The first modern lockable housing development (gated enclaves) in the US can be traced back to Los Angeles in 1915 (The Guardian of March 15, 2003 cited in Moobela, 2003). Estimates of the number of people who live in gated communities within the United States vary from 4 million to 8 million (Architectural Record 1997 cited in Low, 2001). One-third of all new homes built in the United States in recent years are in gated residential developments (Blakely and Snyder, 1997). Another estimate holds that over three million households and eight and a half million residents live in over thirty thousand gated communities across the United States (Sorkin, 1997 and Soja, 2000 all cited in Hook and Vrdolkak, 2006). One in six Americans (some 50 million people) lives in subset master-planned gated enclaves in the South and West, even though they are increasingly common everywhere in the country. They projected that by 2005, 10 million Americans were living in these middle and high income gated enclaves within communities (Fellman *et al.*, 2007). In 1965, there were some 500 gated enclaves in the country alone (Moobela, 2003). In their study of US enclaves, Fortress America, Blakely and Snyder (1997) suggests that gated communities in the USA housed about three million dwelling units by the mid-1990s. The census count increased that to four million by 2000 (Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004). In Orange County for instance, approximately half of the 40,000 housing units in unincorporated areas are gated. Of the 153 housing units for sale in January, 1999, 68% were gated (Damstra, 2001).

Consequently, the number of gated enclaves in the US has kept increasing. Large proportion of new communities in the US is becoming gated, contrary to other countries where gated projects typically appeal to relatively small, affluent elite (Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004). Notwithstanding, gated enclaves are not just an American phenomenon but are increasingly found in all parts of the world. More and more guarded residential

enclaves have been sighted in such stable Western European states as Spain, Portugal and France; India; Turkey; United Kingdom; Austria; Argentina; Brazil; Venezuela; Lebanon; China; Russia; South Africa; Malaysia; Saudi Arabia; etc. The disparity between gated enclaves in the developed and developing countries is stark. While there are many similarities between gated communities throughout the world, there are a number of important differences between gated enclaves in these two world regions (Landman and Schönteich, 2002). In Europe, gated enclaves are most common along the mediterranean coasts of Spain and France, Greater Lisbon, Vienna and Berlin where they offer second summer housings (Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2004a) Turkey met with the phenomenon of gated communities after the 1980s by the formation of a new mass housing legislation (Baycan-Levent and Gülümser, 2007). The global south is no exception to this global phenomenon. In South Africa, gated enclaves have experienced phenomenal growth since the 1990s, especially in the metropolitan areas of Gauteng (Landman and Schönteich, 2002). This is a similar situation in urban centres in Northern Cameroon where the rapid proliferation of gated enclaves has become the order of the day.

III.6 Gated enclaves: Multitudinous developmental factors

Various reasons have been advanced for the proliferation of gated enclaves the world over. Citing studies by Denyer (1978), Oliver (1987) and Bagaean and Uduku (2010), Ilesanmi (2012) linked gated enclaves to the global socio-historic patterns of enclosure ranging from the historic ‘fortress’ settlements in diverse traditional settings, walled hamlets, to current American models and the new transformations of the gated concept in rapidly urbanizing settings in Asia and Latin America. Examples of historic gated homesteads and cities include archaeological evidence from the Nile River valleys, Mesopotamian kingdoms, and Greek and Roman territories, Roman castles, etc. The author further attributed the proliferation of gated enclaves to status-related motives, including the perceived exclusivity and other attributes of social status that gated living can ascribe. He however remarks that gated enclaves may not follow sharp class based distinctions, but may be driven by a combination of factors. Colonial precursor also contributes to contemporary gating as is the case with Government Reserved Area (GRA) in Nigeria (Ilesanmi, 2012). The GRA are fortified enclaves of residences for the rich, ruling elite, which reflected the status-related factor. Lagos is one good case in point (Uduku, 2010 cited in Ilesanmi, 2012) where except for the palaces of traditional rulers which have historically had gates, the concept of separation from society by creating barriers and gates, is recent to urban life. The author also ascribes the development of gated enclaves to thematic style, utilitarian purposes of security and defence, or a transient fashion or fad.

Blakely (2007), equally cited in Ilesanmi (2012) identified the contemporary driving factors for gated enclaves to fall into three broad interrelated categories: security/privacy, status/prestige, and style/fashion. Nonnemaker (2009) equally confirms earlier studies (Landman and Schönteich, 2002; Caldeira, 2000; Low, 2001, 2003; Touman, 2002) stipulating that fear of crime, desire for privacy/seclusion, the search for homogeneity, and lack of trust in public government to be the main reasons why gated enclaves have developed to become popular today. Landman (2002) further linked the rise of gated enclaves to social ills, such as the rise of crime rates, resulting in people moving into highly regulated communities that are secured by physical barriers and privatised security companies. Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) notes that the option of living in gated developments appeals to those who feel they cannot rely on public regulations and political processes to protect their homes or their neighbourhoods from unwanted uses or people. According to Landman and Schönteich (2002), gated enclaves especially in the developing countries (including Cameroon) proliferate due to the state’s inability to protect the life and property of all its citizens resulting to the formation of private alternatives to crime prevention and control.

In an area like Tampa, Florida in the USA where crime is a high-profile problem is characterised by gated enclaves, which accounts for four out of five home sales of \$300,000 or more (Fischler 1998 cited in Low, 2001). In the landscape of South Africa cities, Landman (2002) attributes this growing phenomenon of gated enclaves and their huge proliferation in varying forms over the past two decades mainly to the escalating crime rates and fear of said crime, but acknowledges that there are other reasons, including financial investment, lifestyle choice and a “lack of trust in governments to protect citizens from both crime and environmental decline”. Fellman *et al.*, (2007) posits that with private security forces, surveillance systems monitoring common recreational areas such as community swimming pools, tennis courts, and health clubs and often with individual home security systems, the walled enclaves provided a sense of refuge from high crime rates, drug abuse and other social problems of urban America.

Roitman (2010) cited in Ilesanmi (2012) presents two broad classes of factors influencing the expansion of gated enclaves; structural and subjective. The structural causes relate to (1) globalisation of the economy, which leads to growing urban social inequalities, the processes of advancing social polarisation and an increase in foreign investments, (2) more specific concerns about the withdrawal of the state from the

provision of basic services, including security, leading to a rise in urban violence and the privatisation of security. Roitman (2010) further identifies five main subjective causes resulting from individuals' desires, interests, perspectives and opportunities, namely, increased fear of crime; a search for a better lifestyle; desire for a sense of community; a search for social homogeneity; and aspirations for higher social status and social distinction within particular social groups.

Also, Csizmady (2011) observed three partners behind the growing success of gated enclaves in Central and Eastern Europe. First, real estate development companies, supported by Western European and Israeli capital, have exploited the market niche appearing after the termination of massive state-financed housing projects. Second, due to the strong proprietary spirit emerging after the regime change, large numbers of home-buyers are waiting for the opportunity to buy safe, comfortable new homes in an orderly environment. And third, local governments and other city offices gladly assist in these developments, since the depreciated housing stock and their constant financial problems prompt them to strike deals with investors as fast as possible, thus also freeing themselves from their obligation to renovate neighbourhoods.

Residential segregation also accounts for the proliferation of gated enclaves. In Santiago, the capital city of Mexico, with some 5 million inhabitants as in many Latin American cities, the proliferation of gated communities is part of a larger process of change in residential segregation patterns (Sabatina and Salcedo, 2007). The authors further attributed the proliferation of gated enclaves to both demand side and supply side factors.

In the US, different factors have been put forth for the development of gated enclaves. To begin with, Blakely and Snyder (1997) traced gated enclaves in the country back to the late 19th century era of the wealthy who built private streets to insulate themselves from the masses, but they remained a relative rarity until large master planned communities emerged in the 1960s. The authors also observed that Americans are electing to live behind walls with active security mechanisms to prevent intrusion into their private domains. Karen (2008) posits that the following factors contribute to the growth of gated enclaves in the US (1) increasing community cohesion, (2) governance tactics (governing fear and the culture of fear), (3) tenure. Low (2001) notes that at the turn of the twentieth century, secured and gated communities in the United States were built to protect family estates and wealthy citizens, exemplified by New York's Tuxedo Park or the private streets of St. Louis. Gatings in the US is also a response to late-twentieth-century changes in urban North America (Low 1997 cited in Low, 2001). Economic restructuring during the 1970s and 1980s produced a number of social and political changes as a consequence of uneven development resulting from rapid relocation of capital (Harvey 1990; Smith 1984 cited in Low, 2001). Mike Davis (1990, 1992) cited in Low (2001) argues that the creation of gated enclaves and the addition of guardhouses, walls, and entrance gates to established neighbourhoods is an integral part of the building of the "fortress city."

In countries such as Argentina or Venezuela in South America or Lebanon in the Near East-with little urban planning, unstable city administration, and inadequate police protection, not only rich but also middle class citizens are opting for protected residential districts. In China and Russia, the sudden boom in private and guarded settlements reflects in part a new form of post-communist social class distinction, while in South Africa gated communities serve as effective racial barriers (Fellman *et al.*, 2007).

III.7 Effects of gated enclaves on the sustainability of urban landscape

Regarding their effects, gated enclaves have been noted to have the potentials to affect cities now and in the future. Le Goix and Webster (2006) reports that in many countries in the world such as the USA, South Africa, China, Brazil and many others including Cameroon, the spontaneous actions of entrepreneurs have spawned a new urban product (gated enclaves) that will have a major impact on the form and function of future cities. Moobela (2003) warns that at the rate at which the gated regime is moving, the search for such an appropriate balance between the extent to which the gated community regime should be allowed to grow on one hand and the retention of the open space mixed use type of the urban setting on the other should be a matter of urgency before the entire urban setting becomes a fortress village enclosed behind the gates.

Despite the abundant body of literature existing on gated enclaves as presented above, research on their antecedents in urban centres in Northern Cameroon has not been investigated. Given that global interest in the phenomenon is fast growing, this study accounts for their antecedents and makes salient recommendations to urban planning and management stakeholders in the region for policy actions towards urban sustainability. This will scientifically expand knowledge by help of in-depth case study on the already existing literature on the phenomenon.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was largely descriptive in design. Complementary methods were carried out. These include a review of relevant literature and filed work. The review of relevant literature involves documentary review in the analysis of journals, articles and publications.

Field work was carried out to obtain primary information via interviews through a participatory approach with heads of households of 90 gated housing developments from a preliminary mapping exercise (Table 1) identified and coded through field surveys in the three regional capitals of Northern Cameroon (Ngaoundere, Garoua and Maroua). Other field methods were through direct observations and the use of 2 field assistance in the cities of Ngaoundere and Garoua respectively who had a mastery of both the subject of study and *Fulfulde*, the language of the Fulbe which is widely spoken in the region as a *lingua franca*. Field work was carried out in two phases. The first phase ran from January to July 2017 in Maroua and Garoua. The second phase was covered between the 24th to the 30th of June 2018 in Ngaoundere. Throughout these periods, emphasis was paid on the antecedents of gated enclaves. The collected field data was analysed descriptively.

Table 1. Coding designations of the sampled gated enclaves in Maroua, Garoua and Ngaoundere (Cameroon)

S/N	Urban centres	Geographical coordinates	Coding Designation
1	Maroua	10°35"N and 14°19"E	MA 1-30
2	Garoua	9°19"N and 13°23"E	GA 1-30
3	Ngaoundere	7°22"N and 13°37"E	ND 1-30
Total	-	-	90

Where, MA 1-30 = Gated enclaves in Maroua; sampled gated housings 1-30

GA 1-30 = Gated enclaves in Garoua; sampled gated housings 1-30

ND 1-30 = Gated enclaves in Ngaoundere; sampled gated housings 1-30

In line with Jonanes (2012), this research made use of a single case study (Northern Cameroon) in order to understand and expand on the literature on gated communities or enclaves. This was also done in order to gain a more meaningful understanding of the antecedents of gated enclaves largely absent in the current literature. As De Vaus (2001) cited in Johannes (2012) posits, case studies:

“Emphasize an understanding of the whole case and seeing the case within its wider context”

Nevertheless, case studies have their advantages as well as disadvantages. Maroua, Garoua and Ngaoundere cities in the Far North Region of Cameroon were strategically selected because of the preponderance of gated housing developments in these cities, tying to assertions by De Vaus (2001) cited in Johannes (2012) that case studies “means that we know something of the characteristics of a case before the case study proper begins [...] because the case study meet particular characteristics”. The collected data was descriptively analysed.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon resonate a housing scenario where gates or walls or fences have been built to surround a house in most cases completely such that the house cannot be seen from outside. Nevertheless, the quality of the building inside the gates or fences are undesirable and do not suit the quality of the gates or fences. Such housing schemes have massively developed across both the urban and sub urban landscape of Northern Cameroon. The following 7 socio-economic and natural factors (Figure 2) were obtained from the respondents as the driving factors or antecedents of gated enclaves development or emergence in the urban landscape in the region.

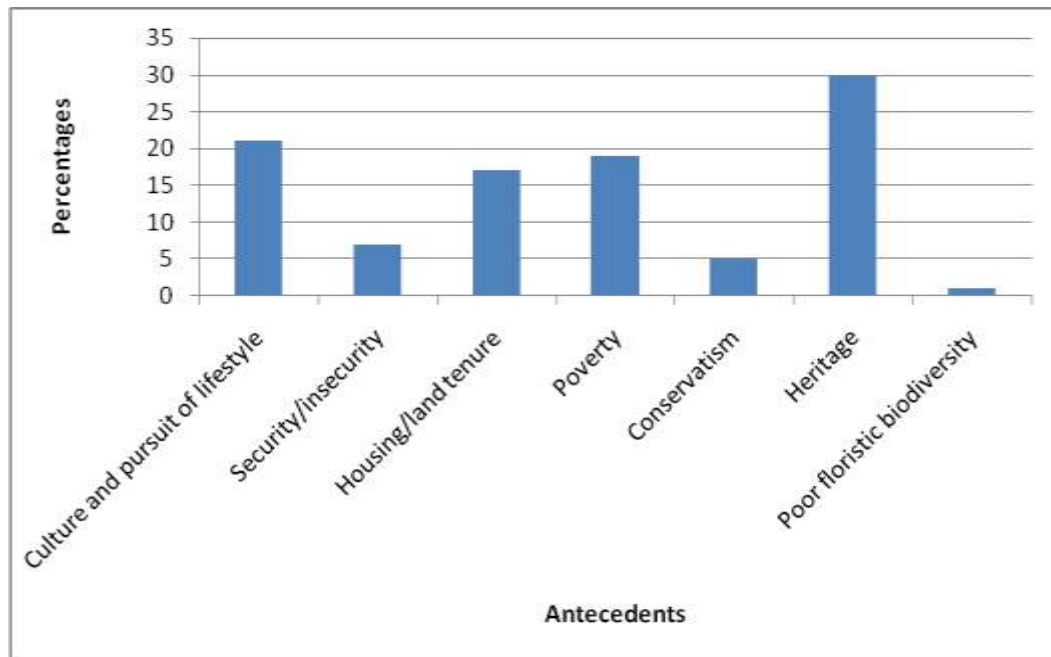


Fig. 2. Analytical results of the antecedents of gated enclaves in Northern Cameroon
Source: Field Work (2017/2018)

Analytical results from the respondents in Figure 2 present the following 7 socio-economic and natural driving forces accounting for the development of gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon in order of importance:

- Heritage/inheritance (30%)
- Culture and pursuit of lifestyle (21%)
- Poverty (19%)
- Housing/land tenure (17%)
- Security/insecurity (17%)
- Conservatism (5%)
- Poor floristic biodiversity (1%)

V.1 Antecedents of gated enclaves in Northern Cameroon

The antecedents of gated enclaves in urban landscape in Northern Cameroon include the following:

1. Heritage/inheritance

The first factor accounting for the development of gated enclave in urban centres in Northern Cameroon is heritage/inheritance. Thirty (30) per cent of those who occupy such housing schemes inherited them either from parents or other relatives, and they will further hand them over to their children and other generations still to come. The settlement is seen as a family heritage that should be preserved seriously for the children from one generation to another especially as the children have to build on the family land in the future.

2. Culture and the pursuit of lifestyle

Also, culture and the pursuit of lifestyle of the indigenous population who occupy this area is another driving force of gated enclaves. Northern Cameroon is mostly occupied by Muslim Fulbe (Fulanis) who are Islamic pastoralists and numerous Muslims. These are people who practice the Islamic religion and cherish privacy. Their lifestyles encourage them to separate, segregate or fragment themselves from others, especially women who go out very rarely. Shopping, for instance, in the region is mostly done by men with women remaining indoors. Separation, segregation or fragmentation has now become a culture trait (a unit of learnt behaviour according to Fellman *et al.*, 2007) of the indigenes. One way of manifesting such separation is to erect gates or walls or fences around the borders of individual homes, hence the proliferation of gated enclaves which is an old tradition in the region. This corroborates previous studies on the subject by Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004); Sabatina and Salcedo (2007); Moobela (2003); Lianos (2003) cited in Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) and Low (2001). In Latin America for instance, Sabatina and Salcedo (2007) equally observes that walls and fences represent a cultural trait. Moobela (2003) equally considers fragmentation and separation as a crucial issue arising from the debate about gated communities in urban centres. The author notes that gated communities tend to physically isolate a specific area from its surroundings and create zones of restricted access within the urban

existence which leaves motorists and pedestrians with little room for getting round thereby resorting to alternative routes which may take longer. On their part, Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) explains that in some cultures, walls shelter certain members of society (for example, women) from the curious gaze of strangers and in ancient cities in Asia, the nobility often separated themselves from the masses with extensive walls and guarded gates. Privacy clearly has substantial appeal to the most affluent in contemporary cities and accounts for extensive use of visual barriers such as gates, walls or fences in this study. In some cases, authorities may elect to keep their agents enclosed. For instance, military bases may include housing for troops, separating soldiers from those they patrol; the great wall surrounded Berlin from the 1940s until 1989 and refugee detention camps. Lianos (2003) cited in Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) adds that in such cases, gates functioned not only to keep others out, but to lock a defined group inside. Low (2001) remarks that:

“Separation encodes class relations and residential (race/class/ethnic/gender) segregation ... permanently in the built environment”

3. *Poverty*

Another driving force in the development of gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon is poverty due to the lack of financial means to build. Field results reveal that this form of housing is erected by people who are retired without having built a house during the period that they were in active service. While on retirement, they do not have the possibility to build decent housing due to the lack of financial means. This is worsened by the usually large family size (5-9 in 42% of cases sampled) which equally constitutes financial burden to most families as children attend school, sought medication, food, etc. This ties with earlier studies by Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) who observed that the poorest of the poor may find themselves enclosed in gated public housing projects, refugee detention centres, or foreign worker compounds, all these constrained by their circumstances to be set apart from the fabric of the city.

4. *Housing/land tenure*

Furthermore, the housing/land tenure regimes also constitutes a driving force of gated enclaves in the region. The housing tenure here is mostly characterised by absentee landlords, homeowners or land developers. As such, some 17% the house owners construct gated enclaves solely for rental (leasing) purposes. They live in other houses different from the gated enclaves that they have constructed. This contradicts studies by Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) that many gated projects target owner-occupiers. They therefore do not find the need, or are under any pressure, to erect a decent or modern structure on the land that belongs to them since they live elsewhere.

The land tenure is also such that the land developers own the land on which they develop (private lands) and so have the right to develop it the way they want for whatever purpose they deem necessary. Wainwright (2002) cited in Moobela (2003) observes that as gated communities are built on privately held land, they can formulate rules and regulations regarding the expected conduct of the members of the particular community. This is exactly the case with gated enclaves in this region which are individual and privately owned housing developments built on privately owned lands.

5. *Security/insecurity*

Another driving force of gated enclaves in urban centres in the region is Security/insecurity. This can be explained in two ways: past and present. In the past, gated enclaves developed due to the real or perceived fear of the emergent middle-class and affluent regarding encroaching crime or ‘contamination’ from people of lesser socio-economic status. Security/insecurity issues here involve fear of theft, crime, and arm robbery, drugs, trafficking, amongst others by the affluent and emerging middle class.

More recently, insecurity from Boko Haram terrorist group in the Lake Chad Basin is another factor. Most of the post-2012 gates have emerged due to insecurity caused by the desire to protect from the nefarious activities of Boko Haram through bomb blasts, hostage taking for ransome and kidnappings in the region. In the city of Maroua for example, Boko Haram has already orchestrated three major bomb blasts resulting to property damage and loss of lives, creating the need for the erection of walls or fences around individual homes for security purposes. Many other studies conducted in different contexts show that the fear of crime is a leading motivation to move to a gated community (Brandt 1998; Campos and García 2004; Low 2001; Sobarzo 2002; Suárez 1997; Wilson-Doenges 2000 all cited in Sabatina and Salcedo, 2007). Arguments such as the one that attributes fencing to rising crime rates (Caldeira 2000; Low 2003) have tended to be uncontested in the specialized literature. Psychologically and physically, many gated estates are assumed to be designed to protect residents from the fear of intruders (Ilesanmi, 2012). Blakely and Synder (1997) echoes that the residents of suburbs and cities turn to separate gated enclaves in an attempt to thwart crime, reduce traffic, and create livable neighborhoods. On his part, Blandy (2007) cited in Ilesanmi (2012) suggests that the privatization of public

space and the fortification of the urban realm, in response to the fear of crime, have contributed to the increase in gated enclaves. Bagaen (2010) cited in Ilesanmi (2012) equally identifies fear and privacy as significant factors for gated enclaves in the United States and South Africa. In Asia and Africa, gated enclaves are solutions for daily problems like high crime rate and ethnic conflicts (Landman and Schöntiech, 2002; Glasze and Alkhayyal, 2002; Jürgens and Gnad, 2002) all cited in Baycan-Levent and Gülümser (2007).

6. Conservatism

Furthermore, gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon have also developed due to conservatism. Some household heads of such houses, especially those who inherited them, have no intention or determination to improve the building standard. They rather prefer continue staying in the houses that they inherited. A repeated response given by some of the household heads interviewed was:

“My parents lived here, so I find no need to change things. My children will also continue to live here”

7. Poor floristic biodiversity

Finally, poor floristic biodiversity in this region is another antecedent of gated enclaves in urban centres. This region's geographical location in the sudano-sahelian milieu of Cameroon renders it naturally unfavourable for the growth of dense vegetation, contrary to what obtains in the well watered southern portion of the country. Due to the water stressed nature of the region also, artificial plant species such as eucalyptus cannot be cultivated because the eucalyptus consumes huge quantities of water for their growth. Consequently, the region is deficient in vegetation which is highly used as a building and construction material source in Cameroon. Some of its occupiers therefore can only build gated enclaves behind the gates or fences with suitable alternative materials at their disposal such as mud bricks, cardboards, corrugated and roofing sheets.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The development of gated enclaves is a worldwide phenomenon, with Northern Cameroon not left out. This study has revealed that gated enclaves in urban centres in Northern Cameroon owe their antecedents to socio-economic and natural factors, including culture, the pursuit of lifestyle, security/insecurity, housing/land tenure, conservatism, poverty, heritage and poor floristic biodiversity. Based on the several adverse effects attributed to the phenomenon of gated enclaves in the urban landscape wherever they are found, this study recommends the following to the urban planning and management stakeholders in the region for policy actions towards urban sustainability:

For the sake of urban sustainability, urban planning and urban management stakeholders should seek suitable, right and most efficient planning approaches or response to deal with the phenomenon, especially now that the world has left its rural past behind as the twenty-first century records an increase in the number and proportion of urban dwellers. For the first time in human history also, more than half of the world's population now live in cities and towns. Also, because poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere, the phenomenon requires regional analysis of the associated problems and the implementation of regional housing policies and decent housing infrastructure provision by the Cameroon government and her partners locally, regionally and at the national and international levels in a view to meet the housing needs of its residents. It is recommended that urban managers should equally seek a balance through a range of housing provisions such as the imposition of housing standards and uniform building codes or provide alternative low-income housing to the indigenes.

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