

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

- Bulu-Ewondo Creole, Ewondo, Bantu

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): EWO

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- Southern and Central Cameroon, West and Central Africa. (latitude 6.00 °N, longitude 12.00°E)

1.4 Brief history:

“Before colonization, Cameroon was a territory of diverse climatic zones populated by a variety of peoples and polities. The Muslim states in the north traded with trans-Saharan merchants and Arabic peoples. The coastal peoples in the south traded with Portuguese and Dutch seafarers beginning in the late fifteenth century. In 1884, Cameroon became a German protectorate (Kamerun). The Germans were defeated by British and French forces in 1916, and the territory was divided between those nations in 1916. In 1922, the French and British zones became League of Nations mandates, with the French controlling over 80 percent of the national territory. Those zones were transformed into United Nations Trustships in 1946. The frontier between the French and British zones cut through the territories of several ethnic groups, particularly the Bamiléké and Grassfields peoples of the western highlands. This later served as an impetus for the reunification of those zones at the time of independence. French Cameroon (Cameroun) became independent in 1960, and after a plebiscite in 1961, British Cameroon gained independence. The southern part of the British territory joined the Federal Republic of Cameroon, while the northern part, ethnically united with the Hausa-city states, joined Nigeria. In 1965, Cameroon came under single-party rule. It was renamed the United Republic of Cameroon in 1972 and the Republic of Cameroon in 1984.” (History and Ethnic Relations: *Emergence of the Nation*.)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

Missionaries:

- The Ewondo speaking people are predominantly Christian (68%)
- This is divided up into different segments of Christianity including; 40% Roman Catholic, 15% Protestant, 10% Independent, and 35% other sects of Christianity (this includes 7% Evangelical).
- Missionaries have helped this culture to establish many Evangelical churches.

Schools:

- There are free public schools or subsidized private and religious schools
- One of the highest attendance rates in Africa
- Girls attendance is much lower than boys because of cultural norms
- A mixture of French and English instruction
- Literacy rate is at 67.9% (77% Males, 59.8% Females)

Governments:

- Strong central government controlled by a President.
- Cameroon’s government is based off of French Civil Law.
- French Civil Law: A two category (Judicial Law and Public Law), four part system (Civil Law, Criminal Law, Administrative Law, and Constitutional Law).
- There is a lot of government corruption.

Powerful neighbors:

- France is a powerful ally and former colonial ruler of Cameroon.

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- Cameroon divided into 5 major geographical locations:
 1. Coastal plains; hot, humid, densely forested, average elevation of 90 meters
 2. South Cameroon Plateau; Equatorial rainforests, alternates between wet and dry seasons (less humid than coastal plains), average elevation of 560 meters, **location of the Ewondo.**
 3. Cameroon Range; mountain chains, hills, plateaus, a volcano, mild climate, fertile soil, highest point is 4,085 meters
 4. Adamawa Plateau; average temperature of 71.6 degrees Fahrenheit average of elevation of 1,100
 5. Northern lowland region; savannah scrub and grass vegetation, sparse rainfall, high median temperatures, average elevation of 300-350 meters

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density:

- 41,000 total population size
- Village sizes vary (rural, suburban, urban)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- Agriculture; crude oil, timber and finished wood products, cotton, cocoa, aluminum and aluminum products, coffee, rubber, and bananas.

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- Livestock
- Fishing-20,000 tons of seafood per year.
- Bushmeat- The hunting of wild animals, especially great apes and other primates (gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, ect.)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: none found

2.4 Food storage: none found

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- In the Ewondo culture, women grow the family's food, and men provide the meat and grow cash crops.

2.6 Land tenure:

- Land ownership passed from father to offspring
- Can be sold or traded

2.7 Ceramics: none found

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- Major export markets: France, United Kingdom, Spain, South Korea, and Italy.

2.9 Food taboos: none found

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- Ewondo use canoes and other types of boats for fishing
- Ewondo participate in the sport of canoe racing

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

- Males: 5'7"
- Females: 5' 3.5"

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): none found

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- Urban areas: 13.18 years of age
- Suburban areas: 13.98 years of age
- Rural areas: 14.27 years of age
- Not a single instance was found of a Cameroonian girl menstruating before the age of 11.

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- In a study, 50% of patients who had recently given birth were under the age of 20, 85% were under the age of 35.

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- Approximately 4.25 children to every mother
- "The average Cameroonian family is large and extended."

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): none found

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

- 22% of women are married between the ages of 15 and 19.

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: none found

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- Both monogamous and polygamous marriages are practiced.
- Some women prefer the companionship that comes along with polygamous relationships.

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

- Husband may pay his bride price in livestock, agriculture products, or other products requested

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- Male children inherit the belongings or their father
- Titles/honors and powers will be inherited from the father

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: none found

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

- "Human rights activists accuse police and military forces of mistreating and even torturing criminal suspects, ethnic minorities homosexuals, and political activists."

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): none found

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?

- Fathers take credit for their offspring
- Offspring live with mothers in their fathers compounds

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")

- The mother's role in procreation is to care for and raise the children.

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

- 29% of women use contraceptives

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

- "According to a recent report on AllAfrica.com, almost half a million rapes are recorded each year in Cameroon (although the actual number is likely much higher due to the reluctance of victims to speak out)."
- "A survey in 2009 by the Inter Press Service news agency (IPS) revealed that 20 percent of women in Cameroon have been raped at one point in their lives, while another 14 percent said they had escaped a rape attempt."
- 10% of rapists are believed to be soldiers.

- Often time's rapists are family members, friends, or other individuals the woman trusts.
 - Only about 5% of rapists are actually convicted.
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
- People of the Ewondo tribe tend to want prefer marriage to someone of the same social and economic caliber as themselves.
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?
- In a study, 30% of women who had recently given birth were single.
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: none found
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?
- If a mother dies, generally the other wives of a man or close relatives of the woman will raise the children.
 - During a study period "there were 34898 deliveries and 4069 cesareans were performed. There were 11014 obstetric complications and 249 maternal deaths were recorded."
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females
- 1.01 males: 1 female
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: none found
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): none found
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? none found
- 4.24 Joking relationships? none found
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations
- Titles and honors passed from father to the next generation of males.
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: none found
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
- There is a formal wedding ceremony in which sheep, chicken, goat, or cattle meat is served to the guests.
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?: none found
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)
- No preference
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?
- Traditionally, marriages have been arranged.
 - More recently, individual choice in marriage has become more and more prevalent.
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: none found

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):
- 4.18 Cannibalism?

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):
- Small rural villages have chiefs
 - The country of Cameroon is ruled by a president
- 5.4 Post marital residence:
- Rural areas have compounds which are composed of the male head of the household who is surrounded by his wives and children.
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:
- 5.8 Village and house organization:
- Because of a lack of water in the more rural communities, multiple groups must share their water supply in order to farm.
 - Negotiations and compromises must be made in order to make sure water is split evenly between different members of the community.
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):
- Compounds are created in a manner that surrounds the man with his wives and family.
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?
- The Ewondo sleep inside of compounds with their family.
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:
- 5.12 Trade:
- Major export markets: France, United Kingdom, Spain, South Korea, and Italy.
 - Trade between and within tribes, within country, and between other African countries.
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- High degree of social inequality
- Hierarchical relations between members of the same group
- Age and gender play a huge role in social status (older > younger, male > female.)
- Wealthy members of society have concrete buildings that are brightly colored with high walls around them. “Those houses have flower gardens and interior furnishings such as upholstered furniture and armoires”
- The poorer members of a society “live in mud houses with thatched or corrugated iron roofs, sparsely furnished with beds and stools made of local materials. “
- “Styles of dress also vary by class; the wealthiest can afford Italian leather shoes to accompany the latest European and African wardrobes, while poorer people wear cloth wrappers and secondhand European-style clothing.”
- Wealthier individuals are also generally able to speak Ewondo as well as English.

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

- Many RCR’s take place on the days of Christian Holy days
- Many RCR take place at a specific age
- Girl’s transformation into a woman takes place during her first menstrual cycle.

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): none found

6.2 Stimulants: none found

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

- Hold funerals at the time of a person’s death.
- It is believed that the best time to procreate is when the woman’s menstruation cycle has just ended and “the blood has partially dried” so that it may mix with the males sperm to create a fetus.
- Rituals are held to promote fertility
- There is a ritual which signifies a girl’s transformation into a woman at the start of their first menstruation cycle.

6.4 Other rituals: none found

6.5 Myths (Creation):

- Religious beliefs on creation related to Christianity and Islam.

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- “Music and dance are integral parts of Cameroonian ceremonies, festivals, social gatherings, and storytelling.”
- Traditional instruments include; bells (worn by dancers), clapping, drums, flutes, horns, rattles, scrapers, stringed instruments, xylophones, and whistles.
- Wood carving and sculptures are prevalent arts and crafts used for commercial, decorative, and religious purposes.
- Literature and film based off of European and African themes
- Sports are advocated throughout the entire country.
- Traditional sports include: wrestling, canoe racing, and running.
- Also participate in sports such as soccer.

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- Women must memorize and follow very specific guidelines in puberty rituals.

6.8 Missionary effect:

- Many groups celebrate Christian holy days such as Good Friday, Easter, and Ascension.

6.9 RCR revival: none found

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- Funerals and death “reaffirmed belonging of urban elites to their village of origin”
- People are particularly concerned with death caused by witchcraft.
- In many tribes, death is made public by women crying out.
- In some tribes, close family members will shave their heads
- A year after death, it is believed that the deceased has become an ancestor.

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?: none found

6.12 Is there teknonymy?: none found

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

- 68% Christian
- This is divided up into different segments of Christianity including; 40% Roman Catholic, 15% Protestant, 10% Independent, and 35% other sects of Christianity (this includes 7% Evangelical).
- There is also a small portion of the population that is Muslim
- Small portion of native tribal religions

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

- Paint women’s bodies in red ochre and animal fat to symbolize her passage into adulthood when she begins her first menstruation cycle.

7.2 Piercings:

- Generally do not pierce their bodies.

7.3 Haircut: none found.

7.4 Scarification:

- Use of animal products in rituals and ceremonies (fats and skins)

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

- In the ritual that signifies a girl's passage into womanhood, she is adorned in a goat skin skirt, red ochre, and animal fat.

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- Animal skins
- Body Paints (ochre, animal fats)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- Traditional dances either separate men and women or exclude one gender from participating all together.

7.8 Missionary effect:

- The Ewondo people often celebrate Christian holy days.

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: none found.

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: none found

8.2 Sororate, levirate: none found

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): none found

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them): none found

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