

Fulani

1. Description

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

The Fulani language is spoken by the Fulu people in West Africa, including Senegal, Cameroon, and Sudan. It is part of the Niger-Congo language family (1).

There are five main dialects of the Fulani language: Futa Toro, Futa Jallon, Masina, Sokoto, and Adamawa (4).

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

The ISO code is ful (2).

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

The Fula people are predominately in western Africa, from Guinea and Senegal to Cameroon and Central African Republic, including Mali, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. The latitude ranges from approximately 5.8 to 14.7 degrees north, and the longitude from 15.6 degrees west to 19.6 degrees east (3).

1.4 Brief history:

The Fulani people are considered the largest nomadic group in the world, and their origins are quite disputed. They are considered to have lighter skin and straighter hair than their other African counterparts, and some Africans even refer to them as white people. They are descendants of nomads from North and sub-Saharan Africa. They were the first people in western Africa to convert to Islam (5).

The Fulani people have beginnings dating back 1000 years to the Senegambia area, and in the 18th and 19th centuries, the vast majority of these people converted to Islam (4).

The Fulani people are said to have come into existence during the 8th-11th centuries when the Berber people in northern Africa migrated south and mixed with the people in the Senegal region of western Africa and eventually became the largest group of nomadic people in the world (8).

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

When the Fulani people converted to Islam, they initiated jihads, or holy wars, in West Africa. The first people to convert to Islam, the Fulani people are very influential in much of West Africa and are considered a “political and economic force.” Instead of being influenced, they are the influencers and continue to be missionaries of Islam throughout western Africa. They continue to “conquer much of West Africa” (5).

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

West Africa, where the Fulani people predominately live, has high temperatures and is wet and humid throughout the year. The southern part of West Africa is considered a rain forest and has two rainy seasons from May to June and again in October. The northern part is still fairly humid and has a wet season from June to September. The humidity is sometimes reduced by a dry wind that blows in from the east from the Sahara Desert (6).

There are also many animals unique to West Africa, such as the West African Manatee, the Pygmy Hippopotamus, the Black Colobus Monkey, the West African Dwarf Crocodile, the Zebra Duiker, and the White-Breasted Guinea Fowl (7).

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

There are more than 6 million Fulani people. They are considered among the most “widely dispersed and culturally diverse peoples in all of Africa.” There are two different types of Fulani: nomadic/pastoral and settled. The pastoral Fulani move with their cattle throughout the year, and settled Fulani mainly live in villages and cities permanently (4).

When the Fulani people do live rurally, their communities are fairly spread out. Some villages have a population of 100 or more, and the huts are scattered into groups of two or three homes (8).

2. Economy

Because there are so many Fulani people, some have thrived while some find themselves in poverty. However, most “simple to well enough to provide the basic requirements for living.” This includes their clothing (two to three outfits), meals (meet minimal nutritional requirements), and tools and equipment necessary to carry out tasks of daily living. The largest sector of their economy is the cattle business, however many people do not own cattle due to increasing hardships. Many Fula people farm as well (8).

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

The Fulani meals consist mainly of a porridge called nyiiri, which is made of flour from grains like millet, sorghum, and corn. They also eat soup made from tomatoes, onions, spices, and peppers, among other vegetables (4).

The Fulani people also eat rice as a staple crop and the chief vegetables of these people are corn, beans, red pepper and yams. The Fulani people also consume fruits such as plantains and the roots of cassava. (9).

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

The Fulani are heavy consumers of milk products such as yogurt, milk and butter (4).

It is very rare for a Fulani to eat meat, and because cows are used mainly for dairy, most Fulani would “choose not to eat beef.” Milk products are the main source of protein, and they are very valued and cherished in this culture. It is also strongly against culture for a Fulani to consume goat meat (8).

The Fulani only slaughter their cattle if the animal is sick or dying. Though the wealthier Fulani in the cities do purchase meat for meals, most do not eat pork because of religious reasons (11).

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

The Fulani value “being brave and fearless,” and many important rituals include the use of weapons. When two boys reach coming of age, they hit each other with spears and laugh instead of show pain. Because of deaths due to this ceremony, this is now against the law but still continues to be practiced (10).

2.4 Food storage:

For the Fulani that manage farms, millet is harvested during the months of September and October. Most of the grain is then stored in small storage houses near the farms (8).

The plantain tree has leaves that are used to wrap food for storage and to protect food from the outside elements, such as rain (11).

2.5 Sexual division of production:

The Fulani people have a strict division of labor based on age and sex. The males tend the cattle, work the fields, or work full-time in the city. Many males are scholars or teachers of the Muslim religion. Women manage the household, cook, clean, and care for the children. The majority of the married women are housewives, but a few do work (4).

Women milk cattle and sell dairy products. The adolescent males move the herds, and the elders make political decisions and negotiate with others to ensure the safe movement of the herds through various farmlands (12).

During the non-farming seasons, men spend their time repairing their home, digging/re-digging wells, and preparing their fields for planting. They also weave items such as leaves into ropes, tall grasses into the tops of huts, and other plants to make the walls of huts. A woman does the household tasks and can take hours preparing the family’s dinner. Water is necessary to be retrieved for the meal, so a woman goes to a well, which can be over a mile away, and carries one or two full buckets over her head all the way back to her home. Women also do laundry, collect wood, shop for ingredients that go into the meals, and care for children. They also weave dried grass to make items such as mats (8).

2.6 Land tenure:

Land tenure is both held by and inherited through the patrilineage. The oldest son always receives the land from his father who then gives it to his oldest son, etc. Land tenure and rights and tenure have becoming increasingly important in recent years (12).

2.7 Ceramics:

The Fulani people are not as involved in artwork such as ceramics and pottery as neighboring cultures because they have the belief that these activities “violate their code of conduct and bring shame upon them.” However, the Fulani women do make handicrafts such as weavings, knitting, and baskets. Fulani men are rarely involved in the production of crafts (12).

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

The Fulani engage in long-distance trade, usually cattle, with the Hausa people (12).

2.9 Food taboos:

There are many taboos about cattle, the Fulani people’s main source of food through dairy. The number of cattle a person owns is a sign of his wealth. Owning cattle is considered a complete honor and privilege. Because of this, the people strictly avoid eating a cow unless it is sick or dying (10).

An additional taboo involves goats. If someone eats a goat’s meat, it is believed by the Fula people that he or she will become a leper. Additionally, the Fulani believe that if an infant drinks milk from a goat, he or she will itch (8).

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

There is not much use for canoes and watercraft by the Fulani people because though many of the countries the group is located in are connected to the Atlantic Ocean, the majority of the people participate in activities of daily living on land without the necessity for water craft (4).

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

The average male adult height measured in a study entitled “Cardiovascular disease risk factors and diet of Fulani pastoralists of northern Nigeria” was 1.69 plus or minus .07 meters.

In the same study, the average female height was 1.59 plus or minus .06 meters (13).

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

In the same study listed in 3.1, the average adult male weight was 57.5 plus or minus 8.8 kilograms.

The average female weight was 50.6 plus or minus 8.0 kilograms (13).

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

The average age at menarche is said to occur at 16 (14).

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

A woman is said to begin conceiving at 17 and have her first child no later than 20. It is against custom for woman to go a year married to her husband without conceiving (14).

An average male has his first child in his mid-twenties (15).

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

Fulani women are encouraged to give birth to as many children as possible, and they generally continue conceiving/childbearing to the age of 50. By the time she reached menopause, the average Fulani woman will have given birth to five to seven children. The average size of the Fulani household is 6.15 (15).

Because males traditionally have multiple wives, he can have up to 20 children (16).

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

Fulani woman generally give birth to the majority of her children before the age of 30, but “the spacing of birth is random.” Birth control is not practiced, and women are encouraged to have as many children as possible. This causes birth rate to highly exceed the death rate (15).

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

A man usually marries between the ages of 18 to 22, depending on his financial situation. He must have enough money to give to his future wife's family so they can purchase items for the home and the wedding. It can take five to ten years for a man to save this money, and this occasionally causes a man to not marry until he reaches his late twenties. A man must only take additional wives if he can support them.

A female commonly marries between the ages of 13 to 15 and usually by the age of 16. Some girls are even married by the age of 10 (8).

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

Fulani marriages ending in divorce is very rare, amounting to only 2 percent. For those who do divorce, remarriage within one year is very likely (15).

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

The vast majority of marriages are polygynous, and the average male has between two and four wives in his lifetime (15).

A Fulani man is allowed up to four wives, and every wife is to bring cattle with her to the marriage (16).

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

A male is allowed up to four wives, and each wife brings cattle to the marriage. At the marriage ceremony, the father of the bride transfer one of his cattle herds to the groom, which legalizes the marriage (16).

In order for a man to take a wife, he must be able to financially support her. When a man proposes, he presents money to the bride's family. With this money, they purchase the items needed to establish a new home and pay for the wedding (8).

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

Lineage members inherit the man's cattle and widows. Many Fulani inheritance rules follow general Islamic laws. A man always gives his belongings to his oldest son upon death. The women in the family are rarely given belongings because they are son inferior to men in the rural areas. (16).

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

Females are to have utmost respect for her father, and women have "two essential roles in Fulani society": sister and daughter. It is shameful for a man to enter his daughter's home, so upon marriage, a father and his daughter rarely interact. However, a man shows great love and affection toward his grandchildren, which is meant to show affection for the daughter as well. Additionally, mothers and daughters tend to the father and sons. The majority of a child's training is given by the mother, and the father is very distant throughout the child's life (16).

Though most learning is through the mother, boys follow their fathers to learn how to tend to the cattle and work on the fields (8).

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

Homosexuality is frowned upon and rarely occurs because of the arranged marriages (4).

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

The Fulani people prefer endogamy. The first choice for marriage is to marry a "patrilateral parallel cousin." If that is not possible, it is preferred for partners to share a great-grandfather, a great-great grandfather, or a patrilateral cross cousin (16).

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

A male tries to conceive as many children as possible throughout his life and is constantly trying to procreate with his multiple wives (16).

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

It is during a child's conception that a man and woman "unite" (18).

A woman's status increases with each child she has, especially with the birth of males (16).

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

There is no substantial evidence found. A man conceives with his wife as often as possible.

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

The Fulani people are rarely raped, but the Fulani men do rape women from other tribes, especially the men who are herdsmen. They invade the farms of other ethnic groups, and many have a high percentage of raping the women (19).

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)

It is preferred for a man to marry his parallel cousin (on the father's side), and if this isn't possible, a man looks for his wife to share a great-grandfather, a great-great grandfather, or a cross cousin (16).

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Women are to never enjoy sexual freedom after marriage, but before marriage, "no special value is placed on virginity." The Fulani men actually expect women to bring sexual experience to the marriage (16).

Celibacy is very rare among people, even before marriage (8).

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

There is no evidence of this. A man may have children from multiple women, but these women are his wives (4).

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

If a mother dies, it is up to her daughters to raise the sons. A girl learns at a young age how to tend to the needs of males, including her brothers. A child is also brought up with the help of other women on the compound (16).

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

The sex ratio as of 2009 is as follows:

- At birth: 1.04 males per 1 female
- Under 15 years: 1.03 males per 1 female
- 15-64 years: 0.85 males per 1 female
- 65 years and older: 0.73 males per 1 female
- Total population: 0.92 males per 1 female

4.22 Evidence for couvades

There is no significant evidence of couvades among Fulani females.

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

There is no significant evidence for different potential fathers for the Fulani people.

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

The wife and children are expected to respect and obey their husband/father. The Fulani man is the head of the family (4).

4.24 Joking relationships?

When the Fulani people are not working, they spend the majority of their time socializing, which includes talking and joking (25).

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations

The pattern of descent among the Fulani people is generally patrilineal (16).

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

A girl is taught at a very young age that there are to be “no sexual relations of any kind with brothers.” The most incest the Fulani people practice is marrying one’s cross or parallel cousin (16).

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

The bride is not present at the marriage ceremony. The ceremony occurs when the bride’s father gives one of his herds to the groom. This legalizes the marriage. The can also be a more typical Islamic wedding ceremony, called kabbal. Here, neither the bride nor groom may be present. A marriage is publicly acknowledged when the bride moves to her husband’s village, which is called bangal. The women of her new village come to welcome her to the village (16).

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

Naming ceremonies of a child bring the entire family and neighbors together. Following Muslim practice, the naming ceremonies take place seven days after a child is born. The imam from the local mosque comes the morning of the ceremony and announces the child’s name for the first time. A sheep is killed, and a large meal is cooked. Usually, the child is named after someone, and the child’s tokora, or namesake, is present and have special obligations at the ceremony (21).

A married woman is never allowed to speak the name of her husband, in-laws or first-born child. If another person shares the name as one of those people, she is forbidden to say their name as well (8).

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

Because marriage is generally between extended families, they are usually between members of the same community (4).

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

Most marriages are arranged, sometimes even before the birth of the children to be married. It is based off of both social status and familial relations. However, there are some examples of the Fulani people marrying based on “love and affection” (8).

Male family members arrange the marriage for their children, and these matches are usually made between relatives and social equals (4).

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

Because marriages are arranged when the children are at such a young age, there is no evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who (16).

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

There is no documented percent of adult deaths due to warfare because the Fulani people live a very peaceful existence, even with other ethnic groups such as the Yoruba people (22).

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

As said above, the Fulani people are very peaceful with little violence between both ingroups and outgroups. However, the Fulani do have the tendency to be suspicious of other people, even other Fulani people who are not from their own clan. Trust is developed slowly in order to break down this suspicion (23).

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

The Fulani people are very peaceful, so this is not applicable.

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

Because the Fulani people are so large and span across many countries of western Africa, they often interact peacefully with other societies (22).

The Fulani people have established many trade routes throughout West Africa, and they herders often go to local markets and interact with its people, both Fulani and non-Fulani (5).

4.18 Cannibalism?

There is no evidence of cannibalism among the Fulani people.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

For the vast majority of Fulani people who live in rural settings, they live in villages that are quite spread out. The huts are scattered into groups of two or three, but a village can have a population of up to 100 (8).

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

Currently, 8 percent of the Fulani population is completely nomadic. These people are always moving around with their herds throughout West Africa (8).

The pastoral Fulani move with their cattle for a great portion of the year. These people live in very small, temporary camps that are easily dismantled as the people move with the cattle in search of pasture and water (4).

The mobility routes established by the Fulani in West Africa provide “extensive links” in this region that fosters “economic and political ties between otherwise isolated ethnic groups” (17).

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

The Fulani political systems are based off of clientage and competition. A powerful Fulani man, in order to gain political office, must compete among other men for the right to rule. This can be done through showing his large following of both individuals and families. When a person agrees to become a client of this man, he or she offers gifts and political support in exchange for “the security of knowing that a person with political power would be looking out for the interests of the subject” (17).

5.4 Post marital residence:

After marriage, the wife moves into her new husband’s village, which is called bangal. The women of her new village greet the wife and welcome her into their village. This is considered a rite of passage for women (16).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

Because the Fulani people live in such a great portion of Africa and in several countries, there is no evidence of territoriality among these people.

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

It is very rare for a Fulani woman to interact with a male who is not an immediate family member. However, it is very common for females to interact with one another. Women go to markets to buy and sell products, and while there, they meet with women from other nearby villages to “catch up on the latest births, deaths, marriages and other important news.” Additionally, many men and women visit one another’s homes in between markets, and the Fulani are known to be very “hospitable” (8).

Children begin to learn of the Fulani culture by accompanying their parents in work and social interaction, including to the compounds of relatives and friends (24).

Children of the same ages from groups called fedde and go through rites of passages together and are tied together by friendship throughout their entire lives (25).

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

When the people are not working, they put much emphasis on friendship and social relationships. This includes storytelling and joking (25).

5.8 Village and house organization:

Everyone in a village is likely related in some way, so the village is actually like a “big family.” The houses themselves consist of thick walls made of mud mixed with cow dung and straw. These thick walls keep the house warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Many houses are surrounded by high mud walls and large courtyards. Some homes in smaller villages, though, are much more simple huts or tents (25).

The majority of the homes in the villages are quite scattered into groups of 2-3 (8).

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses):

A female lives with her parents until marriage, when she moves to her husband’s home and village. The villages are very family-focused, and the majority of people live with their immediate families (8).

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

On warmer nights during the summer, families sleep in the fresh air of their courtyards under the stars (25).

In the typical Fulani grass hut home, there is generally room for three beds, which are raised off the ground and have a solid wooden foundation covered by a millet stalk mat (8).

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

The Fulani social structure is organized into (in descending size) the ethnic group, clan, lineage, family, and Ruga. The ethnic group is the entire Fulani population who all share the same common ancestor. The clan consists of between 1000 and 5000 members, and they share historical ancestry and traditions. The lineage is comprised of 500 to 1000 members and has closer historical ancestry than the clan. The family is made up of 5 to 15 members and is “the smallest political unit organized around a patrilineal homestead.” Finally, the Ruga is the household, which consists of a man, his wife/wives, their unmarried children, and dependent parents. The Ruga is headed by the oldest, strongest male of the family (8).

5.12 Trade:

Dairy products are traded between the Fulani people for agricultural products and luxury items (17).

A major activity for women is to trade milk at nearby markets, which is called cippal. Any milk that is not consumed by the family is traded for items such as a measure of millet or cash. This allows the woman to earn much of the family’s income (25).

When a man trades, it is usually over long distances and usually involves cattle (12).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

The Fulani are highly stratified into 12 castes, which is grouped into six social classes: torroove, rimva, subálveas, seve, jawave, and nyenyve. The first class is the wealthiest and most powerful and includes religious leaders and chiefs. Social interaction is rarely with different social classes, and weddings never cross class lines. The classes are based on male lineage groups (24).

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

The vast majority of the Fulani people are Muslim (99 percent), and a very small percentage is Christian (0.04 percent, less than 2,000) (23).

Much like standard Islamic practices, the Fulani people pray five times per day, learn the Holy Scriptures in the Koran by heart, and fast during the daytime for one month every year. They also have the duty to make a pilgrimage at least once to the Islamic holy land in Mecca. On special Islamic holidays, people pray in thanks to Allah, spend time with relatives, eat special meals and exchange gifts that include gowns and cloth (4).

The Fulani people were one of the first African tribes to convert to Islam through jihads, or holy wars (8).

The most wealthy and powerful Fulani people are the most religious and allocate the most time to the religion, and the poorer ones adhere to the religion much less strictly (17).

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

Though the Fulani people adhere to Islam, it is common to also find people with the belief that “certain people possess supernatural powers.” The Fulani will frequently visit local practitioners, such as medicine men and witch doctors, who are also Muslim religious leaders (8).

6.2 Stimulants:

The use of stimulants, such as drugs and alcohol among the Fulani is very rare and against their Muslim beliefs (24).

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

Aside from the naming ceremonies (4.28), there are several other rites of passage rituals among the Fulani. At the age of 7, boys are circumcised, which is followed by a small ceremony at his family’s home. This signifies the time the boy performs herding or farming activities. Girls begin helping their mothers at this age. Girls marry during their early to mid-teens, boys remain “handsome young men,” or sukaa’bem until they reach their twenties, during which they obtain a farm or start a herd and marry. There are many ceremonies to prepare the bride and groom for their marriage. An additional rite of passage is when a man reaches age and is known as a ndottijo, or someone who has acquired wisdom over the years (4).

In the sharro ceremony, which signifies a young man’s coming of age, two adolescent boys take turns hitting each other with walking sticks. Showing outward pain is forbidden, and the boys are instead expected to laugh when they are hit (8).

6.4 Other rituals:

The cattle in Fulani tradition are so special and cherished, and it is a tradition to loan a cow to another until she has a calf, which is called a habbanaya. The habbanaya is very prized, and there is a ceremony to celebrate its birth (10). The cows are considered so special by the Fulani that it is said that “one cannot speak Fulani without a cow” (21).

6.5 Myths (Creation):

Despite the Muslim religion the Fulani have a tradition that recounts the origin of their people pre-Islam. This story states that both the first Fulani family and the cattle emerged from a river and then began migrating across Africa and gave birth to children who went on to found the various Fulani groups (4).

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

Art and music are a part of daily life for the Fulani, and music is played often, from singing to drums to flutes to horns. Decorative art is usually in the form of architecture, and Fulani women make many handicrafts such as weaving and knitting. Dancing is very popular among Fulani children, and the dances are performed for close friends and kin or in the marketplace. Additionally, the Fulani also enjoy sports and games, such as a traditional form of wrestling and boxing (4).

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

The sex differences in RCR of the Fulani people are virtually the same as in the non-ritualistic aspects of society.

6.8 Missionary effect:

Among the first western African groups to convert to Islam through jihads, the Fulani people continue to be missionaries of the Islamic religion (5).

6.9 RCR revival:

Because Islam is a popular worldwide religion, its revival is not necessary among the Fulani people.

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

The Fulani do not believe in afterlife but instead believe each person lives on from generation to generation through loved children. This is one of the main reasons why having many children is so sought after (24).

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

There is no documented taboo of naming dead people

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

There is no known teknonymy.

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

Muslims believe that there is one unique god called Allah and that he alone should be worshipped. They believe that an angel brought Allah's last message to the world through the Koran to the prophet Muhammad. Much like Christianity, Muslims believe that there will be a day of judgment. They also believe in Al-Qadar, which is divine predestination, which means that human beings have the freewill to choose from right and wrong (26).

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

Beauty is very important to the Fulani people, and this is shown through tattoos they put all over their bodies. The Fulani women put much emphasis on their lips and often make them a blackish color through the use of Henna or tattooing on the mouth (5).

The Fulani culture uses black henna to cover entire hands, forearms, feet, and shins during rituals such as weddings, baptisms, and other special holidays (24).

7.2 Piercings:

The piercing of the ears is widely practiced among the Fulani and marks the life stages of an individual (24).

7.3 Haircut:

The Fulani people pride themselves on their hair decoration. Many women wear scarves around their heads, and for special festivals, women may take up to four or five days to dress their hair. One example of an intricate hairstyle is taking two days to braid the hair and then weaving in coins and amber. The various hairstyles depend on one's sex, locality, age and social status (24).

7.4 Scarification:

Scarification among the Fulani people is not widespread.

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

Jewelry, a symbol of status and wealth, is very special to the Fulani people. The women wear jewelry lavishly from materials such as gold, silver, bronze, beads, and amber. The men wear jewelry minimally (24).

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

Women prepare for ceremonies for days and dress up very lavishly through jewelry and intricate hairstyles. Temporary tattoos through the use of Henna are very common during rituals and are put all over the body. These tattoos are considered very beautiful and are a cherished part of this society (24).

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

Clothing styles vary greatly among these people, but married men and women generally follow the modest Islamic dress code. The men wear trousers, large gowns, and caps, and the women wear wraps and blouses. Married women wear veils when they leave their household. Younger Fulani people dress much more elaborately, adorning themselves with jewelry and headdresses and braided hair (4).

7.8 Missionary effect:

Because the vast majority of the Fulani people are Muslim, they follow many of the styles and dress codes of the Islam religion. However, their traditional clothes still exist, but usually with younger people (4).

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

Fewer and fewer people wear the traditional clothing in favor of the more Islamic adornment, especially after they are married. Younger people, however, do dress more traditionally (4).

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

When old enough, girls look after their younger siblings. The males of the family are considered superior to the females no matter the age (4).

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

There is no evidence of sororate or levirate marriages in this culture.

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

The children of a person's mother's sisters and father's brothers are called brother and sister, not cousin in Fulani. However, the children of a person's mother's brothers and father's are considered one's cousin (24).

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- A mother attempts to lengthen her young children's noses by pressing them between her fingers, stretching, and squeezing hard (16).
- The Fulani people have a very high infant mortality rate of 19.47 percent (8).
 - One in ten children will die before age one, and one in five children will die before the age of six
- It is very difficult to determine the age of a Fulani person because no records are taken of their births. Memory recollection is the sole determination of age, and they can remember their age only if they were born during years with memorable events (8).
- A young woman is prohibited from looking her fiancé in the face (16).
- There are approximately 14 million Fulani speakers in West Africa (27).



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