

## 1. Description

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

-Society: Irigwe Alternates: Aregwe, Idafan, Iregwe, Kwal, Kwan, Kwooll, Miango, Nkarigwe, Nnerigwe, Nyango, Rigwe [1]

-Language: Nikarigwe, or Rigwe [1]

-Language Family: Niger-Congo (1532) – Atlantic-Congo (1436) Volta-Congo (1362) – Benue-Congo (975) – Plateau (55) – Central (11) – South-Central (6) – Irigwe [1]

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

-ISO code: 639-3 [1]

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

Location: 10°N / 8.5°E [1]

1.4 Brief history:

-The Irigwe are a traditional hoe agricultural based society on the western edge of the Jos Plateau in Nigeria. The tribe is divided into 25 semi-autonomous groups with no head chief to unite the groups, but they did unite occasionally for defense or head hunting raids. [4]

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

-In 1905 the British considered the Irigwe a threat to their rule and burnt many of their huts and granaries. Then the British set up a central tribal chief that was enforced by British arms. This tribal administration now has power over the section elders in everything except religious and ritualistic matters. [4]

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

-Forest cover with several sacred groves [3]

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

-Population Size: 17,000 [4]

-Mean Village Size: 25 semi-autonomous groups [3]

- Household groups consist of extended family [3]

## 2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

-grains [2]

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

-chickens and goats [3]

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

-spears and knives [3]

2.4 Food storage:

-each family unit has a grain storage hut

2.5 Sexual division of production:

2.6 Land tenure:

-Hoe Agriculture [2]

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

## 3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

## 4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

-extended families live together. [3]

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

-Primary marriages are arranged by the parents during adolescence, and are consummated soon after the female reaches adulthood. Secondary marriages are proposed by the males and can occur well into adulthood. [3]

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

-Divorce is rare among the Irigwe, but men and women often take other spouses in secondary marriages. [3]

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

-It is very common for men and women to have multiple spouses. [3]

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

-For primary marriages, the male provides a bride service through labor for several seasons to the bride's father. In secondary marriages, the male pays the female's father a gift of thirty to forty shillings. [3]

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

-Irigwe culture prohibits exogamy [3]

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

-Wives spend occasional nights with their secondary husbands, but the father is always the husband with whom the wife takes residence with. [3]

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

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

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

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

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

-Wives spend the occasional night with secondary husbands. [3]

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

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

4.22 Evidence for couvades

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

-The father of a child is always the man with whom the wife lives. [3]

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

4.24 Joking relationships?

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

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

-Incest is prohibited in Irigwe culture. Also a man is never to take a wife from his mother's section.[3]

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

-Primary marriages are complete when the wife takes up residence with her new husband. Secondary marriages are completed when the wife spends a night at the new husband's residence. [3]

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

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

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

-Primary marriages are arranged by the parents during adolescence. Secondary marriages are sought out by the man. A man cannot take a secondary wife from his own section, and no woman can have two husbands in the same section, but it does happen occasionally.

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

- At beer parties, fighting will often break out between men who share a wife. They usually get broken up before any serious damage is done. Co-husbands are polite to each other, but generally avoid one another. [3]

### **Warfare/homicide**

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

-Both intra-section and inter-section fighting is very rare. Squabbles at beer parties are broken up before any homicides occur. [4]

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:

-Each section holds around 600 people [2]

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

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

-Each section has a chief, and before British contact in 1905 there was no inter-section government. Now there is a chiefdom to govern all of the sections. High status men are called heroes. One could be a hero for hunting big game, having many wives, or being an outstanding farmer. [2] [3]

5.4 Post marital residence:

-Women go to live with their husbands [2]

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:

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

-Sleeping is done in huts [2]

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

5.12 Trade:

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

## **6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)**

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

-Each section is responsible for one or more ceremonies. [3]

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

-Doctors provide amulets to fight off sickness that is caused by witches [4]

6.2 Stimulants:

-Irigwe people drink beer at religious ceremonies [3]

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

-Ceremonies officially mark the end and beginning of the dry season [4]

6.4 Other rituals:

6.5 Myths (Creation):

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

-Drummers are present at religious ceremonies [4]

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect:

-About 5 percent of Irigwe are Christians since the British made contact in 1905. [2]

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

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

Irigwe sections are each responsible to one or more ceremonies. Witches are believed to bring sickness, and are often a reason for a wife to move with a new husband. Amulets are given to sick people to ward off witches. Some Irigwe have adopted Christianity or the neighboring cult of Dodo. [3] [4]

## **7. Adornment**

7.1 Body paint:

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

7.4 Scarification:

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

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

-Tradition Irigwe doctors prescribe amulets to ward of sickness. [3]

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

7.8 Missionary effect:

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

## 8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

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

## 9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

### Numbered references

1. Ethnologue [http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_language.asp?code=iri](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=iri)
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3. *Secondary Marriage and Tribal Solidarity in Irigwe, Nigeria* by Walter H. Sangree  
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