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How Do People Feel About Arguing in Cameroon?

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Abstract: The Republic of Cameroon has experienced armed uprisings beginning in 2016. In these dangerous times, we collected data bearing on how people felt about interpersonal arguing. Are they willing to argue? Is disagreement rare because it might be dangerous? Is arguing seen as a potentially constructive activity, or one carrying risks rarely experienced in quieter Western nations? This is the first data collection from the continent of Africa concerning issues of orientation to interpersonal arguing.

1. Introduction: Cameroon

Cameroon is located in the center of the Central African Region. It currently has a population of about 25 million people. The country was historically colonized by two colonial masters, Britain and France, who left a colonial legacy of an official English-French bilingualism and biculturalism. These have been the bone of contention in the country ever since the two parts of the country – the British Southern Cameroon and La Republique du Cameroun – gained independence in 1960 for the French–speaking La Republic du Cameroun, and 1961, for the English-speaking British Southern Cameroon. Besides this historical fact, Cameroon also has a plethora of about 250 national languages and diverse ethnic cultures which combine to make the discourse on the identity of a Cameroonian very complex and offers diverse perspectives on the concept of argumentation.

1.1 Public life and discourse

From the political and media perspectives, Cameroonians are generally intolerant of other people's views and opinions. This is visible and even more palpable in the Anglophone Crisis that has torn the country apart since 2016.

Although the Cameroon constitution guarantees freedom of the press, in practice the threat of government censorship generally prevents opposition viewpoints from appearing in print, especially in the government-controlled press, and even goes a long way to deter such viewpoints from being aired on private television channels. Censorship and harassment of journalists is common in Cameroon because various provisions in the Penal Code and the Military Court (ML) Law, deal with conduct such as sedition, defamation, and abuse, all considered to be abusive of the freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution. The offences, 'contempt' in Sections 152-3, 'seditious cries' in Section 235, 'false news' in Section 240, and, the 'propagation of false

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news' in Section 113.15 all share a common feature: their 'public' nature, whereby they either relate to public figures or involve a threat to public peace. The offence of 'contempt' which imposes the most serious restriction contained in the Penal Code to free expression, is defined in Section 152, and may take the form of contempt against the President, or any person exercising the 'whole or a part' of his prerogative, or any foreign head of state, according to Section 153(I).

Such an offence and the defense of truth, are so politically repressive that they tend to hold citizens permanently in fear because it has been argued that even the defense of truth, thought to be a safeguard, does not deter a regime determined to prosecute its critics and opponents. The trauma and expense of somebody of modest means going through a trial, with the risk of imprisonment, is enough of a deterrent except for a few die-hards. Moreover, who would decide what is true and what is false? These necessarily call for highly subjective judgements as seen in some cases. Examples are the Affaire Etat du Cameroun C/Cilestin Monga, Njawe Pius and Le Messager, Douala, 1991 in which the accused were later found not guilty of insulting the Head of State in January 1991, and the recent arrest and incarceration of Mimi Mefo and Manch Bibixy within the course of the Anglophone crisis that started in 2016, all for expressing their opinion and reporting facts on political issues relating to the Anglophone crisis.

In fact, a party in power could stifle open debate simply by prosecuting its critics under vague provisions in the Penal Code and the MC Law. This judicial tradition has only spasmodically been followed in Cameroon, where judges have often shown themselves to be more regime-minded than the regime itself. Maybe this is inevitable in a system where their appointments, promotions, transfers, suspensions, and dismissals are at the discretion of the executive. This is contrary to the view expressed by the Supreme Court of the United States when it declared in 1964: "debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide open, and ... may well include vehement, caustic and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials."

1.2 Private life and discourse

At the interpersonal level, living in today's society exposes everyone to some degree of annoying or offensive criticisms and comments, which must be borne as part of the price of social co-existence and interaction. This notwithstanding, the extent to which people are free to express themselves depends on several variables, such as their history, culture, and traditions, and the influence of internationally agreed standards of civilized behavior and propriety.

Therefore, subject to some of the elementary considerations of behavior enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whatever restrictions should apply are a matter for each country. One of the authors is a Cameroonian and has noticed that in Cameroon, the communication lines between husbands and wives, parents and children, teachers and their charges are often not fluid, especially when they have divergent opinions.

According to a study carried out by a sociologist in Cameroon, parents are finding it increasingly difficult to communicate with their children and at the same time, children are embarrassed to discuss sensitive topics with their parents. For example, excerpts from an interview show that Martin Mbog, a 22 year old student in June 2011, moved into a room to live on his own near the university campus in the Cameroonian capital, Yaoundé. "'I wanted to live closer to the university,' Mbog, says. But there was also too much tension between my father and I." He further declares that, "Every time I start a conversation with my father, we end up arguing, whatever the topic. He can't tolerate anyone who has an opinion different from his. Our relationship is

deteriorating day by day. That's why my mother thought it wise that I leave the house." Mbog says he just isn't very close to his parents.

"My father is very easily offended. He criticizes everybody's choices and feels frustrated when you don't consider his opinion. We are like strangers. We can spend two to three months without talking to each other," complains Mbog. This is an indication that the two are unable to communicate, resulting in lack of understanding.

Sociologist Roger Melingui explains this inevitable dialogue breakdown, by what he calls a "clash of cultures":

> In the context of globalisation, for example, intergenerational dialogue is complicated for the older generation of Africans. A few years ago, children were considered to be dependent, and too young to think or make decisions for themselves. Today, children do have rights. With the internet and other information and communication technologies of today, children are more open to the world and more mature. It's something some parents may not understand."

According to Yaoundé psychologist Iris Efoa,

> The breakdown in dialogue between parents and children is caused by a combination of several factors, such as education, social background, personal history of the parents and even their temperament.

The intolerance of divergent political opinion that has taken center stage in Cameroon has trickled down to be displayed in different forms of violence amongst its population. There is the civil war that erupted in about 2015 and is tearing the country apart. This began with the Anglophone corporate and civil society making demands on the government and quickly degenerated into separatist and secessionist demands. This war is reported to have left about 3000 people dead, about 6000 internally displaced and about 40,000 as refugees in neighboring Nigeria, and many villages razed in the North West and South West Regions (Equinox TV News, International Human Rights Watch Report). The violence is also so common in schools that scenes of physical aggression among students are shown both on TV channels and circulated on social media. There was a recent case of a student who stabbed his teacher to death in Lycee de Nkolbisong, one of the government high schools in the nation's capital Yaounde. Some of this outbreak of violence comes as a result of the fact that some teachers still consider their students as charges who must listen and obey and brought to some kind of submission. This in no way justifies the killing of the teacher but can explain the degree of frustration in a child who is not listened to.

All these considerations, both public and personal, would seem to require individual citizens to give some thought to whether and how pointedly they express their views. Whether these recent social circumstances dominate people's natural tendencies to argue, and the ways they would ordinarily argue, justify investigation.

2. Arguing orientations

The purpose of this study is to generate a descriptive outline of the main respects in which citizens of Cameroon orient to the activity of interpersonal arguing. We have chosen measuring

instruments that return useful information about many of the broad categories of thought and reaction that people have when anticipating, remembering, or participating in face-to-face argument. These measurements are common to the whole global project (Hample, 2018), permitting comparisons from one nation to another. Our measurements are in three broad categories: motivations for arguing (or not); understandings of the nature of interpersonal argument; and emotional reactions to the experience of face-to-face disagreement.

Motivations are assessed by two instruments: argumentativeness (Infante & Rancer, 1982) and verbal aggressiveness (Infante & Wigley, 1986). Argumentativeness is the predisposition to engage in disagreement about the merits of an argument. Content-relevant reasons are given and countered, evidence is provided and evaluated, and conclusions are tested, and argumentativeness is the inclination to do these things. This merit-based arguing largely matches the sort of thing taught in informal logic courses. Verbal aggressiveness, in contrast, is the motivation to engage in *ad hominem* arguments. The arguer, not the argument, is the target of disputation. Arguers can be insulted, disqualified, denigrated, and so forth. Both argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness are aggressive predispositions, but their targets differ: the merits for argumentativeness and the opponent for verbal aggressiveness. These measurements indicate the levels of these two predispositions.

Understandings of interpersonal argument are captured by the argument frames instruments (Hample, 2003, 2018). This inventory of measurements falls into three general frames. The first, self-oriented, deals with four personal goals for arguing. These are instrumental or task reasons (to get something), domination (to overwhelm the other), identity display (to show one's commitments), or play (to argue for entertainment). The second set of frames has to do with the degree to which an arguer connects constructively with the other arguer. Here, we measure blurting (blurters do not take the other person into account), cooperation (which is more constructive than competition), and civility (the idea that arguments are engaging but polite interactions). The last general frame is reflective sophistication, and only has one measurement. This is called professional contrast, and it invites people to agree or disagree with argumentation professionals on various judgments about arguing. For instance, is arguing an invitation to violence, or an alternative to it? Scores on these instruments are interpreted to reflect one's understandings, experiences, and aims, simultaneously.

The third main focus of the study is to describe people's emotional reactions to the prospect of face-to-face conflict. The instruments here are the taking conflict personally scales (Hample & Dallinger, 1995). Six things are measured. Direct personalization is the degree to which the person takes conflict personally, and is a general guide to all the scales. Stress reactions are a more specific measure, and this score indicates how stressful disagreement is for the respondent. Third is persecution feelings, the sense that people start arguments with the respondent in order to victimize him or her. The next two measures are a pair, positive and negative relational effects. These are estimates of conflict's potential to improve or damage personal or workplace relationships. Finally, positive valence is a summary measure that indicates the degree to which people think that conflicts are positive or negative personal experiences. Those who personalize conflict have high scores on direct personalization, stress reactions, persecution feelings, and negative relational effects. They have low scores on positive relational effects and valence.

Together, these measures afford an interesting initial description of how the experience of interpersonal arguing is motivated, understood, and felt. The global project quickly revealed that nations very often differ on their average scores on these measures, and that the measures could not even be depended upon to have consistent correlations with one another from one country to

another (Hample, 2018, Ch. 7). Since we have no data on any of these instruments from Cameroon (or even any plausibly comparable African nation), we have no legitimate basis for hypotheses. Instead, we offer research questions, which roughly parallel those addressed in various other nations.

RQ1: Do men and women in Cameroon differ in their arguing orientations?
RQ2: Do arguing orientations in Cameroon differ from those in France and/or the U.S.?
RQ3: What are the correlational patterns among arguing orientations in Cameroon?

3 Method

3.1 Procedure
Respondents were given surveys on paper, filled them out at home, and returned them. They completed the English-language version of the instruments. Data were collected in the Francophone part of the country.

3.2 Respondents
Respondents were 59 Francophone students studying English as a second language, enrolled in an M.A. program at the second author's institution. Of these, 36 (61%) were men and 23 (39%) were women. Age was not collected but the second author estimates that respondents were in their early 20s.

3.3 Data problems
Once the data had been entered into a spreadsheet, the authors noticed that several lines of data were identical. This was confirmed with the "identify duplicate cases" function in SPSS. The probability of two people genuinely providing identical answers on 1-10 scales for this many items is infinitesimal. Since we did not see obvious patterns of one number (e.g., 5) being repeated for long runs of items, we concluded that for groups of duplicate answers, one person had actually done the survey and that that respondent's answers were then copied by other students. We found about five groupings of identical responses. We eliminated all the duplicates, but retained one data line from each group. The original data set had appeared to contain responses from 84 people. After eliminating duplicates, we ended with 59. This was a substantial data loss, and justifies some reserve about the quality of the surviving data.

3.4 Instrumentation.
Self-reports using a 1-10 scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) were used for all instruments except Professional Contrast, which used a semantic differential format for its 1-10 answers. Table 1 reports descriptive statistics for all measures, including the Cronbach's alpha estimate of reliability. The normal standard for this measure is .70, and Table 1 shows that a number of the instruments did not achieve ordinarily acceptable internal consistency. The note to Table 1 also details that many items needed to be dropped from the standard instrumentation to obtain the reported reliabilities. When this instrumentation was used in France (Dufour & Hample, 2018), reliabilities were generally acceptable and typically higher than those reported in Table 1, particularly in the case of the final set of measures. Reliabilities have also been acceptable in the other nations included in this project. Low reliabilities make statistical tests more conservative, because measures with lower reliability have more error to swamp real effects. As a consequence,

tests of differences between means are less likely to be statistically significant, and correlation coefficients will tend to be closer to zero.

Measures were in the three general classes mentioned above: argument motivations, understandings of interpersonal arguing, and emotional reactions to interpersonal disagreement.

Motivations were assessed by two instruments, argumentativeness (Infante & Rancer, 1982) and verbal aggressiveness (Infante & Wigley, 1986). Each of these measures has two subscales, and previous international work shows that these must be reported separately (Hample, in press, 2018). For argumentativeness, the scales are argument avoid ("I try to avoid getting into arguments") and argument approach ("I have a pleasant, good feeling when I win a point in an argument"). For verbal aggressiveness, the subscales are VA-Antisocial ("If individuals I am trying to influence really deserve it, I attack their character") and VA-Prosocial ("When others do things I regard as stupid, I try to be extremely gentle with them").

Understandings of the nature of interpersonal arguing were assessed with the argument frames instruments (Hample, 2018, Appendix). This battery includes three general frames. The first, personal goals, includes utility ("Argument is a way to get what you want"), dominance ("When I'm in an argument, I feel like I always have to win"), identity display ("I use arguments to gain respect"), and play ("Arguing is sometimes just a way of passing the time between two friends"). The second group of frames reflects the degree to which respondents understand that the other arguer must be taken into account in a constructive way. These scales include blurting ("I argue without thinking before I speak"), cooperation ("I think it's important in arguing to feel flexible"), and civility ("Arguments involve hostility"). The final frame examines argumentation sophistication and has only one measure, called professional contrast. This assesses the degree to which respondents agree with judgments common in the professional argumentation community. Respondents indicate which of two phrases best describes arguing (e.g., uncontrolled emotionality versus reason-giving, and dominance versus issue resolution). The subscale is scored so that higher scores indicate more agreement with professionals.

The last group of instruments aims to access people's emotional reactions to interpersonal arguing, and is measured with the taking conflict personally instrumentation (Hample & Dallinger, 1995). These six scales include direct personalization ("It really hurts my feelings to be criticized"), stress reactions ("Sometimes when there are a lot of conflicts in a week, I feel like I'm getting an ulcer"), persecution feelings ("I think that some of the people that I often have conflict discussions with really like to pick on me"), positive relational effects ("Conflict can really help a relationship"), negative relational effects ("Conflict discussions can really jeopardize friendships"), and positive valence ("Conflict is an intensely enjoyable kind of interaction"). People who take conflict personally have high scores on direct personalization, stress, persecution, and negative relational effects, and low scores on positive relational effects and positive valence.

3.5 Comparison data
To provide context and plausible comparisons, we compared the present data to that collected in France (Dufour & Hample, 2018) and from U.S. undergraduates (Hample & Irions, 2015). France was chosen because Cameroon was partly a French colony until 1960, and France continues to influence national culture, for example because many citizens speak and read French (our respondents were Francophones). The U.S. was chosen because the theories and instrumentation used here originated in the U.S., and the U.S. has been used as a common point of comparison

throughout the global research project. This is the first data of this sort originating from any part of the African continent.

4 Results

4.1 RQ1: Do men and women differ?
The first research question inquired whether men and women in Cameroon had different scores on our various indices of arguing orientations. Table 1 displays the male and female means for all measures. Of the 18 comparisons, only two were significantly different. This small proportion of sex differences has precedent in the global studies, roughly comparable to results from India, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, and Portugal, but clearly different from other nations that produced more frequent sex differences (U.S., China, Chile, and Netherlands; summarized in Hample, 2018, pp. 228-229). Although the comparisons in this study have lower statistical power than in previous studies (see note to Table 1), Cameroon appears not to be very sex-typed insofar as approaches to interpersonal arguing are concerned.

The two significant differences in Table 1 concern civility and stress. Women had higher scores on both measures. When sex differences have been observed in other nations, the women have had the higher scores on stress, but the civility differences have been about evenly divided between men and women (Hample, 2018, pp. 228-229). The present results indicate that Cameroonian women found interpersonal disagreement to be more stressful than the men did, and that they regarded interpersonal arguing as more civil than men did. Possibly, the higher stress levels resulted in the women being more careful to be polite and cooperative in their arguing.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for All Instruments, and Male/Female Comparisons for the Cameroon Sample

	# Items	alpha	N	Mean	SD	Males Mean	Females Mean	t	d
ArgAvoid	6	.65	58	4.85	1.29	4.86	4.84	0.05	
ArgApproach	10	.70	57	6.90	1.13	6.74	7.16	-1.40	
VAAntisocial	10	.70	58	5.01	1.32	5.15	4.80	0.89	
VAProsocial	8	.72	57	7.08	1.36	6.85	7.41	-1.55	
Utility	6	.72	56	6.32	1.36	6.40	6.19	0.55	
Dominance	5	.72	58	5.87	1.62	6.12	5.50	1.46	
Identity	6	.78	58	6.94	1.64	7.08	6.74	0.77	
Play	4	.71	58	5.85	1.55	5.99	5.64	0.85	
Blurting	9	.67	56	5.18	1.16	5.34	4.94	1.26	
Cooperation	6	.60	58	6.91	1.17	6.76	7.13	-1.18	
Civility	5	.63	57	6.82	1.53	6.36	7.50	-2.95**	.81
ProfContrast	6	.85	34	7.55	1.84	7.32	7.78	-0.73	
DirectPersnl	7	.65	52	4.33	1.19	4.49	4.04	1.31	
Stress	2	.62	52	5.01	2.12	4.57	5.83	-2.11*	.62
Persecution	6	.66	52	5.22	1.33	5.29	5.09	0.51	
PosRelatn	7	.60	52	5.60	1.06	5.78	5.26	1.70	
NegRelatn	5	.55	51	6.36	1.16	6.31	6.47	-0.46	
PosValence	3	.49	52	7.00	1.51	6.95	7.10	-0.35	

Note. The following items were dropped to improve reliabilities, using the ordinary ordering of the published scales: Argument Avoid (1, 12, 14, 16), Verbal Aggressiveness-Prosocial (5, 10), Utility (2, 7), Dominance (4), Identity (5, 6), Blurting (10), Cooperation (5, 8), Civility (2, 3, 4, 5, 9; these were the positively worded items), Professional Contrast (4), Stress (23, 27, 30), and Positive Valence (3, 13, 16, 28, 34). Sample sizes for the sex differences tests were male ($n = 34$-35) and female ($n = 18$-22), except for Professional Contrast where both subsamples were 17; t-tests were corrected for unequal sample variances when necessary. Power (independent samples t-test) for subsample sizes of 35 and 20 at alpha $= .05$ (two-tailed) and $d = .3$ is .19; for $d = .5$ is .42; for $d = .7$ is .60.

*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$

4.2 RQ2: Does Cameroon differ from France and the U.S.?

The second research question aimed at comparing Cameroonian results from those obtained in France and the U.S. No other data from the African continent is available, and these nations were selected for comparison and to contextualize the Cameroon results. Results of the analyses of variance are in Table 2.

Of the 18 comparisons, all were statistically significant. Follow-up tests were conducted to discover which of the nations was significantly different from the others. In about half the tests, Cameroon produced the highest scores, raising the possibility that Cameroonians simply give more positive answers across the board. However, Cameroon had the lowest scores on two other measures, and middling responses on the remaining ones. So we do not appear to be seeing a general response bias.

In the block of motivation measures, Cameroon had the highest scores for argument-approach, verbal aggressiveness (antisocial), and verbal aggressiveness (prosocial). The argument-approach result was particularly strong, indicating that Cameroonians have more motivation to engage in arguing than respondents in France or the U.S. Cameroonians were also more willing to be antisocial than the other two nations, which is another sort of aggressiveness. However, they were also most insistent on being prosocial, and were intermediate on avoidance. So the Cameroonians exhibited a somewhat balanced eagerness to engage in interpersonal arguing.

The frames instruments also distinguished Cameroon from France and the U.S. This result was confined to the first frame goals, those reflecting personal motivations for arguing. Cameroonians were most willing to argue for instrumental reasons, to assert their dominance, to display their personal identities, and to play. The main contrast was with France, with the U.S. being in between. These first frame goals also imply willingness to engage because they reflect common reasons for participating in arguments. For the other frames, those involving constructive connection to the other arguer and general reflective sophistication, Cameroon took an intermediate position between France and the U.S.

The last group of measures is the taking conflict personally battery. Here, too, Cameroon was distinguishable. Cameroonians were less likely than respondents from France or the U.S. to feel direct personalization or stress, but had higher scores for the feeling of being persecuted and positive valence for face-to-face conflict. The results for direct personalization, stress, and valence are consistent with the general pattern of Cameroonians being relatively unhesitant about arguing, but the persecution results do not fit that pattern. Here again, we find a somewhat balanced general willingness to engage in interpersonal arguing.

Table 2
Mean Comparisons of Cameroon, France, and the U.S.

	Cameroon	France	U.S.	F	Hi	Low
ArgAvoid	4.85	4.48	5.77	67.00***	US	Fr
ArgApproach	6.90	6.07	5.76	19.00***	Cam	
VAAntisocial	5.01	4.28	4.58	6.29**	Cam	
VAProsocial	7.08	6.68	6.36	9.54***	Cam	
Utility	6.32	4.39	5.32	75.57***	Cam	Fr
Dominance	5.87	2.95	4.44	85.60***	Cam	Fr
Identity	6.94	5.22	6.57	90.89***	Cam	Fr
Play	5.85	4.10	4.44	19.23***	Cam	
Blurting	5.18	4.27	5.11	27.48***		Fr
Cooperation	6.91	5.57	6.83	72.41***		Fr
Civility	6.82	8.12	6.26	184.91***	Fr	US
ProfContrast	7.55	7.05	6.29	18.41***		US

Direct	4.33	5.73	5.82	18.43***		Cam
Stress	5.01	5.85	5.70	4.74**		Cam
Persecution	5.22	3.92	4.59	18.68***	Cam	Fr
PosRelatn	5.60	5.17	6.02	24.44***	US	Fr
NegRelatn	6.36	6.46	6.06	5.40**		
PosValence	7.00	5.04	4.12	79.12***	Cam	US

Note. Typical samples sizes were Cameroon (57), France (223), and U.S. (441). Duncan's post hoc test was used for follow-up comparisons, and did not reveal any subgroup differences for Negative Relational Effects. When one nation had a higher score than the other two, only a "Hi" entry appears; when one nation had a lower score than the other two, only a "Low" entry appears; and when each nation was different from the other two, both a "Hi" and a "Low" entry appears.

**$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$

4.3 RQ3: Correlational patterns

The dynamic connections among the various measures are indexed by the patterns of correlations in the data. These are displayed in Table 3. Perhaps because of the low statistical power (see note to table), significant correlations are less common than in the results from other nations that had larger samples.

The patterns among the motivational measures have become of special interest as the research program has developed. The two argumentativeness measures (approach and avoid) were theorized to be opposites, as were the two verbal aggressiveness scales (antisocial and prosocial). Opposite measures would produce substantial negative correlations. This has been the case in the U.S., where the theories developed, as well as Germany, China, France, Portugal, and Japan (Hample, 2018, p. 234). Here, the correlation between approach and avoid was .01, and that between antisocial and prosocial was .10. While not significant, these results are obviously not substantial and negative. Similar patterns have appeared for India, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates. In Cameroon, as in several other nations, neither approach and avoid nor antisocial and prosocial are opposites. The positive correlation between approach and antisocial conforms to U.S. theory because both are aggressive motivations, but the positive association between avoid and antisocial needs explanation.

Within the frames battery, the first order frames have generally correlated positively among themselves and with blurting. That pattern is evident in Cameroon as well. The constructive orientations (cooperation, civility, and professional contrast) also typically correlate positively among themselves, but that pattern is not clearly evident in Table 3. In fact, the only statistically significant correlation in this group is the negative one between civility and professional contrast. U.S. theory offers no obvious explanation as to how expectations of civility would produce low professional contrast scores.

Emotional registrations of conflict are indexed by the taking conflict personally scores. The normal pattern is for the personalization measures (direct, stress, personalization, and negative relational effects) to form one cluster (positively correlated), and the optimistic measures (positive relational effects and positive valence) to be positively correlated, with many negative correlations between the two clusters. None of these patterns appeared clearly in Table 3. In fact, one apparent oddity is evident: a positive correlation between feeling persecuted and expecting positive

relational outcomes. The positive correlation between positive and negative relational effects has appeared before, and merely reflects the expectation that interpersonal conflict could have either good or bad effects on social connections.

Table 3
Correlations Among Variable Groupings

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Arg Avoid							
2 Arg Appr	.01						
3 VA Anti	.27*	.36**					
4 VA Pro	.10	.21	.10				
1 Utility							
2 Dominance	.31*						
3 Identity	.49***		.29*				
4 Play	.28*	.34**	.42***				
5 Blurting	.21	.18	.10	.23			
6 Cooperatn	.30*	.08	.28*	.07	-.15		
7 Civility	-.16	-.08	-.10	-.02	-.26	.01	
8 ProfContr	.12	.03	.02	.07	-.14	.25	-.37*
1 DirectPers							
2 Stress	.04						
3 Persecution	.36**	.10					
4 PosRelatn	.11	- .02	.37**				
5 NegRelatn	.16	.37**	.34*	.40**			
6 PosValence	-.21	.10	-.07	- .02	-.06		

Note. Sample sizes for these correlations were in the range 51-58 except for those involving Professional Contrast, which were 34. Power for a sample size of 50 and alpha = .05 for $r = .15$ is .18; for $r = .30$ is .56; and for $r = .50$ is .97.

*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$

5 Discussion

5.1 Typifying Cameroon
Our results offer a first sketch of how people in Cameroon orient to the experience and possibility of interpersonal arguing.

We found that men and women tend to be similar in their orientations, only being distinguishable in their felt stress and expectations of civility (women were higher on both). However, the degree of argument motivation, other understandings of arguing, and other emotional reactions to arguing were indistinguishable between men and women.

We discovered that, compared to France and the U.S., Cameroonians had more energetic engagement with the possibility of arguing, whether indexed by the motivation measures or the

personal goals scales in the frames battery. Negative emotional reactions to the experience of arguing were less noticeable in Cameroon than the other two nations, with the exception of persecution feelings, which were high in Cameroon. On matters of cooperativeness, civility, and general sophistication about arguing, Cameroon was comparable to both France and the U.S.

People of Cameroon do not regard approaching versus avoiding arguments as a choice. In fact, those impulses were essentially unconnected to one another, as were the aims of being antisocial versus prosocial. In the last two sentences, "versus" is a U.S.-originating word, and would probably not ever have occurred to someone enmeshed in the cultures of Cameroon, because the assumption that the pairs are opposite is apparently alien there.

In short, citizens of Cameroon are quite willing to argue face-to-face, and men and women have equivalent impulses in this regard. Their expected levels of cooperation and civility are not unusual, however, suggesting that they may not have quite the disciplined politeness that we have found in several other nations with high engagement tendencies. But we see no evidence that they are particularly rude or unpleasant, with the exception of their high score for antisocial verbal aggressiveness, which might point to routine use of *ad hominem* remarks.

5.2 The need for a local theory of argument
Several of the results we have reported are difficult to incorporate into the originating U.S. theories about these arguing orientations. The low power of the statistical tests implies that replication with a larger sample is needed. But on the assumption that the present results are reproduced, several results need to be explored by people with native understandings of what Cameroonian life is like.

One of these is the general absence of sex differences. The rarity of sex differences observed here is fully precedented, but local explanations would be valuable. When sex differences appear in various nations, they show a general pattern of the men being more aggressive and less socially worried about arguing, whereas the women are more avoidant and more concerned about interpersonal repercussions (Hample, 2018). This may not have been revealed in the present data, but the Cameroonian author has observed that typically Cameroonian women withdraw or give in on an argument sometimes, not because they think they are wrong but because they might be considered 'talkative and rude' if they insist on making their point. Also this kind of withdrawal is considered a show of respect especially to one's husband, most especially if the argument is taking place in public. The men on the other hand would often insist on having the last word, just to prove their 'manliness' and dominance. It is often said that women are not supposed to talk when men are talking even when the men know they would take advice from their women in private on many issues.

In the past, the sex differences have been more pronounced in nations with advanced Western economies and less sex-typing has appeared in less Westernized nations, although this pattern has not been exact (Hample, 2018, pp. 228-229). This is somewhat confusing because the feminist values that originate from the West put men and women at par, but less-Westernized communities such as Cameroon still have sex stereotypes that assign certain social roles to the different sexes. Things are also changing fast as girl-children are being educated to see that there is nothing wrong in making their voice heard and taking their place alongside their brothers especially if they have the capability to do so. Many more girls go to school now and even do the sciences more than they used to do in the past when it was the prerogative of the boy-child. This notwithstanding, people still raise eye brows when a girl-child is doing things traditionally reserved for men, like motor mechanics, electricity, building and construction, carpentry etc., or when a boy-child plays with a doll, cooks, wears make-up, etc.

Sex-typing or its absence would seem to need local explanations referencing family life, treatment in schools, and availability of various occupations to women. Qualitative investigations using interviews or observations of local fiction (novels, music lyrics, television shows) might also be informative. Another interesting source of information can be proverbs and common children's stories (e.g., Goodwin & Wenzel, 1979).

Similar investigative procedures might lead to useful local theorizing on several other fronts. How can we reconcile Cameroon being unusually high on both antisocial and prosocial impulses? Why do people with high scores for persecution feelings also estimate that conflicts can improve interpersonal relationships? And why do Cameroonians feel that interpersonal disagreement has equal affordance for improving or damaging social relationships? Even the other results that are more generally consistent with the global patterns might very well have different explanations in Cameroon than in other nations.

Finally, given Cameroon's current and very regrettable political circumstances, how do the daily stress of possible warfare and expectable worries about own and family security affect how one talks to other people? Perhaps people simply avoid saying anything controversial or critical. Or perhaps people are unusually selective about whom they argue with. It is hard to imagine that living in the middle of a civil war would not affect people's arguing orientations, but we found no stand-out results in this study to be informative on that matter.

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