



## Article

# Independent State, Federal State, or Unitary State? Age, Gender, and Regional Differences Among Anglophone Cameroonians

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**Abstract:** For the past 8 years, Cameroon has been witnessing a deadly conflict between anglophone separatist fighters and the Cameroon military over the form of governance. This study seeks to highlight anglophone attitudes and preferences towards forms of governance, as well as the differences between men and women and between northwesterners and southwesterners, i.e., the inhabitants of the two English-speaking regions in Cameroon, with respect to this question. In addition, it explores the relationship between age and attitudes toward the form of state. In a sample of 314 participants, the results show that men were more supportive of an independent state than women, but women were more supportive of a federal state than men. On the other hand, support for a unitary state, the current form of state, was extremely low, and there was no significant difference between men and women. Also, this study shows that there is no significant difference between anglophones from the northwest region and anglophones from the southwest region in terms of their support for an independent state, a federal state, and a unitary state. Lastly, the results indicate that there is a significant positive correlation between age and support for an independent state, a significant negative correlation between age and support for a federal state, and a nonsignificant negative correlation between age and support for a unitary state. The implications, limitations, and recommendations of this study are discussed as well.

**Keywords:** independent state; federal state; unitary state; anglophone conflict; Cameroon; gender differences



Academic Editor: J. Edwin Benton

Received: 5 November 2024

Revised: 8 January 2025

Accepted: 10 January 2025

Published: 14 January 2025

**Citation:** Nshom, Elvis. 2025. Independent State, Federal State, or Unitary State? Age, Gender, and Regional Differences Among Anglophone Cameroonians. *Social Sciences* 14: 40. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14010040>

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## 1. Introduction

For the past 8 years, Cameroon has been going through a deadly conflict between anglophone separatist fighters and the Cameroon military over a change in the form of governance. This conflict has led to the death of more than six thousand people, the destruction and burning of hundreds of villages, and the displacement of more than one million people. The anglophone conflict, as it is commonly referred, has created the biggest humanitarian crisis in the history of the country, with close to two million people left in need of humanitarian assistance (Annan et al. 2023). The conflict emerged in 2016 as a protest movement organized by the “Cameroon anglophone Civil Society Consortium” (CACSC) made up of anglophone lawyers and teachers who marched on the streets protesting the marginalization, assimilation, and francophonization of anglophones in Cameroon in the legal and education sectors. Even though the crisis re-emerged in 2016 as a protest movement, the genesis or root of the conflict is buried in the colonial history of the country (Nshom et al. 2024).

Cameroon was colonized and partitioned by Britain and France after the defeat of Germany in the First World War. France took 80% of the country and Britain took about 20%, and both introduced their languages and governing systems in their respective territories. Britain introduced English in British Southern Cameroon and France introduced French in French Cameroon (Bang and Balgah 2022; Beseng et al. 2023; Folefac and Ani 2022; Ezemenaka and Ekumaoko 2022; Shulika and Tella 2022). In addition, “the justice system (Common Law), the education system, the currency and social norms followed the British model” (International Crisis Group 2017). France, on the other hand, administered French Cameroon according to its policy of assimilation. As such, “France’s social, legal, and political norms shaped the centralist political system” (International Crisis Group 2017, 2022). This resulted in both English and French Cameroons developing very distinct political, social, linguistic, educational, and legal cultures.

French Cameroon gained its independence from France and became the “La République du Cameroun”, or the Republic of Cameroon, in 1960. On the other hand, British Cameroon overwhelmingly voted in a referendum on 11 February 1961 to unite with La République du Cameroun because of concerns over its economic viability to exist on its own. As a result, both Cameroons reunited to form the Federal Republic of Cameroon, a two-state federation, with Ahmadou Ahidjo as its first President (Bang and Balgah 2022; Beseng et al. 2023; Folefac and Ani 2022). Unfortunately, in 1972, President Ahmadou Ahidjo unilaterally abolished the federation and introduced a unitary state. In addition, he renamed the country from the Federal Republic of Cameroon to the United Republic of Cameroon, despite resistance from anglophone elites. When Cameroon’s current President, Paul Biya, succeeded Ahmadou Ahidjo in 1982, he changed the country’s name back to the Republic of Cameroon (the name French Cameroon had following its independence from French rule). In addition, he “removed the second star which represented the anglophone part of the country from the flag” (African Business 2018; International Crisis Group 2017).

The abolition of the federation by Ahmadou Ahidjo opened the door for the assimilation of anglophones into the predominantly French culture, the loss of administrative systems, and the political and economic neglect and marginalization of the English-speaking regions of the country (see Chiatoh 2019; Ezemenaka and Ekumaoko 2022; Fonchingong 2013; Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997, 2019; Morris-Chapman 2019; Shulika and Tella 2022). There have been several protest movements over the years advocating for change. Some anglophone activists and elites have advocated for a return to a federation, and others have advocated for a separation and a restoration of anglophone independence and autonomy (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997; Shulika and Tella 2022).

The most successful anglophone protest movement against the marginalization and assimilation of anglophones in the history of the country was that of 2016. This particular protest movement garnered massive attention and support among English-speaking Cameroonians in the diaspora. Amidst negotiations and deliberations between the leadership of CACSC and representatives of the government of Cameroon, the protest leaders insisted that the only way to address the root causes of the conflict, which is the marginalization and assimilation of anglophones in Cameroon, was to give anglophones greater autonomy by returning to a federal system of government, but the government was not willing to entertain any discussion surrounding this (Nshom et al. 2024). The dead end in the negotiations led to the arrest and imprisonment of the leaders of the protest movement by the Cameroon government. Also, the military began using excessive violence to crack down on protesters. On 1st October 2017, the Southern Cameroon Ambazonia Consortium United Front (SCACUF) (the new leadership of the protest movement after the arrest and imprisonment of the former) commemorated the anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Ambazonia from British rule, declaring the English-speaking parts of

the country independent from Cameroon. This gesture was marked by mass protests and demonstrations in different parts of the northwest and southwest regions of Cameroon. This led to confrontations between the military and demonstrators (Beseng et al. 2023; Shulika and Tella 2022). Several anglophones were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, and killed. At this point, many anglophone individuals and activists who previously clamored for a return to a federation began clamoring for a separation from Cameroon. Several separatist groups emerged and picked up arms to fight for the independence of the anglophone regions. The conflict transitioned from a protest movement against the systemic discrimination and marginalization of the anglophone minority in Cameroon and a call to reinstate the federal structure to a separatist conflict and a call for the restoration of the independence of the English-speaking regions of the country (Nshom et al. 2023, 2024).

Research into anglophones' preferences towards forms of governance is extremely limited. Previous studies on this phenomenon suggest that anglophone attitudes towards forms of governance are mixed. Some anglophones are in support of a return to a federation, while others are in support of autonomy/independence. Moreover, research that seeks to understand the differences among anglophones in their preferences towards forms of governance does not exist. Based on the previous literature, only two studies have examined anglophone attitudes towards forms of governance. In the first study, Nshom et al. (2024) examined the association between perceived discrimination and preferences towards a form of governance (a federation and Independence). In their study, they found that perceived discrimination significantly predicted support for independence but not support for a federation. Moreover, both forms of governance were equally supported. In other words, "there was no significant difference between support for independence and support for a federation" (p. 340). In another study, Nshom et al. (2023) examined support for the unitary state, the current form state in Cameroon among anglophone individuals, and found that the unitary state in Cameroon is perceived as a realistic and symbolic threat among anglophones. The perception of threat was found to predict attitudes towards the unitary state. Moreover, the unitary state was also found to be significantly related to their preferred form of state (federation or independence). In contrast, one opinion survey conducted by the Coalition for Dialogue and Negotiations (2020) found that more than 80% of anglophone Cameroonians were supportive of an independent state of Ambazonia and that they believed independence was the best solution to the conflict. However, one of the limitations of these studies is that they do not consider differences between men and women (gender differences), differences between northwesterners and southwesterners (regional differences), and differences between age groups. This study's goal is to fill these research gaps in the literature concerning this conflict in Cameroon. It explores gender, regional, and age differences among anglophones with respect to their attitudes toward forms of state governance (independent state, federal state, and unitary state). As such, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ1: To what extent do anglophone men and women differ in their attitudes towards forms of state (independent state, federal state, and unitary state)?

RQ2: To what extent do northwesterners and southwesterners differ in their attitudes towards forms of state (independent state, federal state, and unitary state)?

RQ3: What is the relationship between age and attitudes towards forms of state (independent state, federal state, and unitary state) in Cameroon?

In an attempt to examine age, gender, and regional differences in anglophones' preferences towards forms of state, this study focuses specifically on preferences towards an independent state, a federal state, and a unitary state. The rationale for this is that these were the most popularly contested and debated forms of governance by the time the data were collected. This study significantly contributes to the little but growing literature on

anglophones' preferences towards forms of state in Cameroon by exploring the extent to which they differ based on their gender, region of origin, and age. This adds another dimension to the already existing literature on anglophones' preferences towards forms of state in Cameroon. Anglophones are often lumped together as one homogenous group when it comes to their attitudes. However, this study highlights how different anglophones are based on demographical characteristics with respect to their attitudes towards forms of state. On a practical and a policy level, this understanding is useful in attempting to design interventions that address the needs and desires of anglophones while taking into account demographic characteristics and differences. As such, this study makes both a theoretical and a practical contribution.

## 2. Method

### *Participants and Procedures*

This study utilized a quantitative approach. As such, data were collected using an online questionnaire. The researcher used Google Forms to design the questionnaire, after which the questionnaire was disseminated online through several online platforms. The survey link was distributed on social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp. The researcher made use of personal and professional networks, friends of friends, and social media influencers in Cameroon to disseminate the online questionnaire. According to the University of Jyväskylä and the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK, if your research does not involve the collection and processing of personal data or meet certain criteria (see [Jyu 2024](#)), it is usually not mandatory to go through the ethical review process. As such, this study was exempt from the ethical review process. In order to ensure anonymity in the study, the research made sure that no question requesting personal information was asked. Because of this, the risk associated with participation was extremely minimal. The survey was available online from 1 July to 31 July 2019, and it took 15 min at most to complete the survey. In addition, participation was free.

In total, 314 respondents completed the online questionnaire. A total of 220 (70.1%) were men, and 94 (29.9%) were women. According to the data, the age range was 19 to 70 ( $M = 31.79$ ). Furthermore, 0.3% of participants reported having no formal education, while 0.6% possessed a first school-leaving certificate. Additionally, 1.6% held an ordinary-level certificate, 11.1% achieved an advanced-level certificate, 48.4% attained a bachelor's degree, 33.1% completed a master's degree, and 4.8% earned a doctoral degree. According to the data, 165 (52.5%) of the participants were from the northwest region while 149 (47.5%) were from the southwest region. The data also indicated that most of the respondents were Christians (293, 93.3%). On the other hand, 3 (1%) respondents were Muslims, up to 5 (1.6%) of the respondents chose "other religions", while 5 (1.6%) identified as atheists. Lastly, 8 (2.5%) of the total number of respondents did not identify with any religion.

## 3. Measures

The online survey included the following measures: support for an independent state, support for a federal state, and support for a unitary state. Moreover, demographical variables, such as region of origin, age, sex, education, economic status, and religion, were included in the questionnaire. Refer to Table 1 for descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among the study variables.

**Support for an independent state:** In order to understand the extent to which anglophones are supportive of an independent state, participants were asked to indicate how favorable or unfavorable they felt towards the independence of Southern Cameroon. Independence is understood in this study to be "a kind of collective action, whereby a group (whether officially recognized as a legitimate political subunit or not) attempts to

become independent from the state that presently claims jurisdiction over it and, in doing so, seeks to remove part of the territory from the existing state" (Buchanan 1991, p. 75). This scale was made up of one item with the following exact question: "How unfavorable or favorable do you feel towards the restoration of the independence of Southern Cameroon?" Participants responded on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates "extremely unfavorable" and 10 indicates "extremely favorable." Higher scores reflect greater support for an independent state, while lower scores indicate less support. Previous studies have also utilized this measure (see Meleady et al. 2017; Nshom et al. 2023, 2024).

**Table 1.** Means, standard deviations, and correlations for the study variables.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)
(1) Support for a federal state	6.44	0.65	-		
(2) Support for an independent state	6.31	3.36	−0.43 **	-	
(3) Support for a unitary state	2.28	1.08	0.11	−0.22 **	-

Note: \*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

**Support for a federal state:** In this study, federalism is understood to be "a constitutional mechanism for dividing power between different levels of government so that federated units can enjoy substantial, constitutionally guaranteed autonomy over certain policy areas while sharing power in accordance with agreed rules over other areas. Thus, federalism combines partial self-government with partial shared government" (Bulmer 2015, p. 3). Support for a federal state was assessed by asking participants to rate their feelings toward a federation on a scale from 1 (extremely unfavorable) to 10 (extremely favorable). As a one-item scale, it was worded as follows: "How unfavorable or favorable do you feel towards a federation?". Participants responded on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates "extremely unfavorable" and 10 indicates "extremely favorable." Higher scores reflect greater support for a federal state, while lower scores indicate less support. Previous studies have also utilized this measure (see Meleady et al. 2017; Nshom et al. 2023, 2024).

**Support for a unitary state:** To measure support for a unitary state, participants rated their feelings about the current form of state on a scale ranging from 1 (extremely unfavorable) to 10 (extremely favorable). This was a one-item scale, and the exact wording was as follows: "How unfavorable or favorable do you feel towards the current form of state in Cameroon?". Greater support for a unitary state is reflected in higher scores, whereas lower scores signify weaker support for a unitary state. Previous studies have also utilized this measure (see Meleady et al. 2017; Nshom et al. 2023).

#### 4. Results

Overall, the findings indicated that support for a unitary state or the current form of state was extremely low ( $N = 314$ ,  $M = 2.28$ ,  $SD = 2.41$ ), while support for an independent state ( $N = 314$ ,  $M = 6.31$ ,  $SD = 3.36$ ) and a federal state was high ( $N = 314$ ,  $M = 6.44$ ,  $SD = 3.25$ ).

To address RQ1, which sought to explore gender differences in support for forms of state, independent sample t-tests were conducted with sex (1, female; 2, male) as the grouping variable and the three different forms of state as the testing variables. The results indicated that men ( $N = 220$ ,  $M = 6.77$ ,  $SD = 3.30$ ) were significantly more supportive of an independent state ( $t(312) = -3.80$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) than women ( $N = 94$ ,  $M = 5.23$ ,  $SD = 3.28$ ). While men were more supportive of an independent state than women, the results indicated that women ( $N = 94$ ,  $M = 7.05$ ,  $SD = 3.01$ ) were significantly more supportive of a federal state ( $t(312) = 2.19$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) than men ( $N = 220$ ,  $M = 6.18$ ,  $SD = 3.31$ ). On the other hand, the results indicated that there was no significant difference between women ( $N = 94$ ,  $M = 2.54$ ,



$SD = 2.54$ ) and men ( $N = 220$ ,  $M = 2.16$ ,  $SD = 2.35$ ) with respect to support for a unitary state, i.e., the current form of state ( $t(312) = 1.28$ ,  $p = 0.20$ ).

In addition, Cameroon is made up of 10 regions, and 2 of the 10 regions are English-speaking regions. These include the northwest and southwest regions. In order to address RQ2, which was aimed at exploring regional differences—that is, differences between anglophones from the northwest and southwest regions—with respect to preferences towards different forms of governance, independent sample t-tests were conducted with the region of origin (1, northwest; 2, southwest) as the grouping variable and the three different forms of state as the testing variables. The results indicated that northwesterners ( $N = 165$ ,  $M = 6.33$ ,  $SD = 3.22$ ) did not significantly differ from southwesterners ( $N = 149$ ,  $M = 6.57$ ,  $SD = 3.28$ ) in terms of their support for a federal state ( $t(312) = -0.66$ ,  $p = 0.51$ ). There was also no significant difference between northwesterners ( $N = 165$ ,  $M = 6.53$ ,  $SD = 3.27$ ) and southwesterners ( $N = 149$ ,  $M = 6.07$ ,  $SD = 3.46$ ) in terms of their support for independent state ( $t(312) = 1.20$ ,  $p = 0.23$ ). Lastly, northwesterners ( $N = 165$ ,  $M = 2.05$ ,  $SD = 2.17$ ) and southwesterners ( $N = 149$ ,  $M = 2.53$ ,  $SD = 2.63$ ) also did not differ significantly in terms of their support for a unitary state ( $t(312) = -1.78$ ,  $p = 0.07$ ).

Lastly, to address RQ3, which examined the relationship between age and attitudes towards the different forms of state, a Pearson correlation analysis was computed on SPSS. The results indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between age and support for an independent state ( $r = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), a significant negative correlation between age and support for a federal state ( $r = -0.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and a nonsignificant negative correlation between age and support for a unitary state or the current form of state in Cameroon ( $r = -0.08$ ,  $p = 0.14$ ).

## 5. Discussion

This study had two main objectives. The first was to examine the differences in attitudes toward various forms of state governance in Cameroon—-independent, federal, and unitary states—between men and women. The second aim was to explore the differences in attitudes toward self-governing forms of state between northwesterners and southwesterners. Finally, this study also aimed to investigate the relationship between age and attitudes toward the different forms of state in Cameroon.

First, support for an independent state and support for a federal state was high. In addition, this study revealed that men were more supportive of an independent state than women, but women were more supportive of a federal state than men. Previous research on gender differences in attitudes towards the form of state is hard to come across. Previous studies in other contexts have also shown mixed results. For example, some studies in the United Kingdom have similarly shown men to be more supportive of independence than women (Ashcroft 2014), just like in this current study; others have not found a significant difference between men and women (Leith and Sim 2023); while others have suggested that men are slightly less likely to support sovereignty than women (Blais and Nadeau 1992). As a result, this study argues that context matters. Every context is different, and findings should be understood within the context of their respective study. This may also explain why, within the context of this conflict, men have been more active and involved in the process of political mobilization and the fight for the independence of the English-speaking regions. On the other hand, the fact that women are more supportive of a federation than men implies that women are more open to maintaining and enhancing the union between anglophones and francophones, and that they may place more value in the political, economic, and social relationship and connection that has been created between anglophones and francophones over the years since unification than men.

On the other hand, support for a unitary state was extremely low, and there was no significant difference between men and women. This implies that a unitary state, or the current form of state, is the least desirable form of state among anglophones in general when compared with support for an independent state and a federal state, irrespective of gender. This is important because it highlights how dissatisfied anglophones are with the current form of state in Cameroon. Anglophone men and women are equally dissatisfied with the status quo and want a change in the form of the state (see [Nshom et al. 2023](#)). This is evident in the fact that attitudes towards the current form of the state have been found to predict support for other forms of state such as support for independence and support for a federation. Moreover, research has also shown that anglophones believe the unitary state is a realistic threat and a symbolic threat to them ([Nshom et al. 2023](#)). A realistic threat is a threat to the economic, physical, and political well-being of a group, while a symbolic threat refers to a threat to aspects such as the group's culture, language, way of life, worldview, and religion just to name a few ([Riek et al. 2006](#)). This implies that anglophones link or blame the current form of state for their plight in Cameroon. This certainly explains why there is very little support for it generally, with no significant difference between men and women. It is important to remember that when the crisis started in 2016, the protest leaders believed that a change from the current form of state to a federal state was the only solution that would solve the problems anglophones are facing in Cameroon. On the other hand, the Cameroon government insisted that the form of state was non-negotiable ([Nshom et al. 2024](#)). However, this study highlights the fact that dissatisfaction with the current form of state is widely shared among anglophone Cameroonians, irrespective of gender. Therefore, based on the results of this study, it is suggested that discussions regarding the current form of state be incorporated into any dialogue as it is a significant issue in the conflict among anglophones.

Cameroon is made up of ten regions. Two of these regions are English-speaking, namely the northwest and southwest regions. Another goal of this study was to examine whether there were any differences between anglophones from these two English-speaking regions. This study showed that there was no significant difference between anglophones from the northwest region and anglophones from the southwest region in terms of their support for an independent state, a federal state, or a unitary state. The region of origin did not make any significant difference in their preferences and attitudes. This finding highlights the fact that anglophones have the same attitudes, feelings, and preferences towards these different forms of state irrespective of their region of origin. Both northwesterners and southwesterners are unified with respect to the extent to which they want or do not want any of these forms of state; i.e., they are not divided. This is important because it has been argued that President Paul Biya has historically used a "divide and rule" approach to matters concerning anglophones. A "divide and rule" approach creates division and tension among anglophones and puts northwesterners and southwesterners at loggerheads with each other as a way of distracting their attention from the things that matter. Based on this unified front with respect to what they want, irrespective of their region of origin, it is recommended that anglophones be taken seriously. This probably explains why this conflict is still ongoing.

Moreover, another important finding of this study centers on the relationship between age and these different forms of state. This study showed that older anglophones were more supportive of independence and less supportive of a federation. In other words, support for an independent state was stronger among older participants, while support for a federation was stronger among younger participants. On the other hand, there was no significant relationship between age and support for a unitary state. Older people may be more supportive of an independent state because of the probability that they are closer to the

history of the country. Some of them might have witnessed Cameroon's transition from being a British territory to a federal state and a unitary state; as such, they may feel more frustrated and angry with how things have turned out or with the status quo. It can also be expected that they will perceive higher levels of group discrimination and, consequently, will be more open to an independent state than a federal one. On the other hand, younger individuals grew up under President Paul Biya's regime or, at least, after the reunification of the two Cameroons. This implies that younger anglophones have only lived within the context of the union between English and French Cameroon. It can be argued that this context is what they are accustomed to. This implies that younger anglophones may be more likely to value the union and connection between the two Cameroons than older anglophones. This probably explains why, in this study, there is a significant negative correlation between age and support for a federation. Lastly, the nonsignificant relationship between age and support for the current form of state also suggests how dissatisfied anglophones are with the current form of state irrespective of age. This study shows that anglophones are unsupportive of the current form of state, irrespective of gender, age, and region of origin.

Even though this study makes a valued contribution to the literature, it also has limitations. First, the sample size was not big, and data collection was conducted online, which excluded individuals without internet access. This likely contributed to the sample being highly educated. Therefore, caution should be exercised when making generalizations. Due to financial and human limitations, and security concerns on the ground, the data could only be collected online. Additionally, due to resource constraints, a random sample was not possible; instead, a purposive convenience sample was used. This is evident in the imbalance in the ratio between men and women. As a result, the data or sample may not be representative of the entire anglophone community. In addition, it is acknowledged that this topic can be a sensitive topic for some people in Cameroon. Even though anonymity was guaranteed, some people might have approached the questionnaire with suspicion. Moreover, it was not possible to monitor or prevent duplicate submissions; thus, even though there was no evidence of duplicate submissions, the possibility cannot be completely ignored. Lastly, it is also recognized that attitudes are dynamic and not static. In other words, they change depending on several factors. These data were collected in 2019, and these attitudes were impacted by the state of the conflict at that time. It is acknowledged that if the data were to be collected at another time, the results could be different. Thus, it is recommended that the results and conclusions of this study be viewed and understood with consideration of the dynamics of the conflict around the time the data were gathered.

Future studies will benefit from a longitudinal approach. Being able to compare attitudes towards the different forms of state at different strategic times of the life cycle of this conflict will provide a clear picture of the dynamic nature of these attitudes. It is also recommended that future studies consider studying these phenomena with a more recent, bigger, and more representative sample. This will provide a more representative and current picture. In addition, future studies should consider the role of other demographic factors, such as education, economic status, religion, religiosity, etc. This will throw more light on how differently anglophones feel towards these different forms of state based on these variables. Lastly, future studies should consider exploring differences between anglophones and francophones on their attitudes toward the forms of state. This will shed light on the extent to which these preferences are connected to their status within Cameroonian society and the extent to which it is shared by francophones in Cameroon.

## 6. Conclusions

Even though the literature on this conflict has been growing, there is still a need for empirical studies on this conflict that focus on anglophone individuals. This study



contributes to filling some of the knowledge gaps concerning this conflict. It highlights what anglophones want as a form of state in Cameroon, the differences between men and women, the differences between northwesterners and southwesterners, and the role of age. Based on these findings, it is recommended that in the event of a possible inclusive dialogue, discussions surrounding forms of governance should not be avoided. This is especially important because the Cameroon government has, over the years, avoided such conversations (Nshom et al. 2024). In addition, on a practical level, interventions for men may be different from interventions for women as men are more supportive of a separation while women are more supportive of a federation. In other words, gender matters when it comes to what anglophones want as a governing form of state. On the other hand, interventions should also consider age as a factor because older anglophones are more supportive of a separation while younger anglophones are more supportive of a federation. Lastly, the non-significant difference between men and women, northwesterners and southwesterners, and age with respect to anglophone's preference for the current form of state clearly suggests that the current form of state is undesirable among anglophones irrespective of gender, region of origin, and age. This should significantly inform policy interventions and any opportunity for dialogue and negotiation.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** Ethical review and approval were waived for this study because no personal information was collected or processed and the study did not meet any of the criteria requiring ethical review according to the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity, TENK. As a result, there is no approval code assigned to this study. According to the University of Jyväskylä or The Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK, if your research does not involve the collection and processing of personal data or meet certain criteria established by TENK, your study is exempt from the ethical review requirement: <https://www.jyu.fi/en/research/responsible-science/human-sciences-ethics-committee/tarvitseeko-tutkimuksesi-eettista-ennakkoarviointia>.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

**Data Availability Statement:** The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors on request.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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