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**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND GENDER
POLICY IN CAMEROON : THE CASE OF MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT AND THE FAMILY.**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	i
DEDICATION	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF ANNEXES	xi
ABSTRACT	xii
RESUME	xiii
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: PROBLEM OF THE STUDY	4
1.0 INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY	4
1.2 FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM.....	5
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	8
1.3.1 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION.....	8
1.3.2 SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS	8
1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	9
1.4.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE.....	9
1.4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	9
1.5 INTEREST OF THE STUDY.....	9
1.5.1 TO THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT AND THE FAMILY	9
1.5.2 TO THE FEMALE	10
1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY	10
1.6.1 GEOGRAPHICAL DELIMITATION.....	10
1.6.2 THEMATIC DELIMITATION.....	10
1.7 CONCLUSION.....	10
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK	11
2.0 INTRODUCTION	11
2.1 DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	11
2.1.1 Information.....	11
2.1.2 Communication	12
2.1.3 Technology.....	12

2.1.4 Information and Communication Technology	12
2.1.5 Gender	12
2.1.6 Policy	13
2.1.7 Gender Policy	13
2.2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	13
2.2.1 NATIONAL GENDER POLICY	13
2.2.2 National policies and strategies for women’s empowerment.....	14
2.2.2.1 The Women in Development Policy	14
2.2.2.2 The National Population Policy Declaration	15
2.2.2.3 The Poverty Reduction plan	15
2.2.2.4 The Growth and Employment Strategy Paper	15
2.3 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER ISSUES IN CAMEROON	16
2.3.1 Situational analysis of gender issues in the social sector.....	16
2.3.2 Analysis of the status and roles of women and men.....	16
2.3.3 Women and men in the Cameroonian traditional society	16
2.3.4 Women and men in the Cameroonian modern society	17
2.3.5 Analysis of gender issues in the area of education.....	17
2.3.6 Providing education to girls and boys at primary level	17
2.3.7 Providing education to girls and boys in secondary education	18
2.3.8 Providing education to girls and boys in tertiary education.....	18
2.3.9 Vocational Training	18
2.4 Situational analysis of gender issues in the area of economy and employment	19
2.4.1. International Legal Instruments for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Woman.....	19
2.4.2 Public Institutions	20
2.4.3 Other public administrations	21
2.4.4 Local Councils	22
2.5.1 Political Measures.....	22
2.5.2 Legal Measures.....	22
2.5.3 Health domain,	23
2.5.4 Domain of culture	24
2.5.5 Results	24
2.5.6 Limitations of actions taken	24
2.5.7 Development policies.....	24
2.5.8 Social Affairs.....	24
2.5.9 Stakes and Challenges.....	25
2.6 AFRICAN UNION GENDER POLICY	26

2.6 1 Objectives of the African Union Gender Policy.....	27
2.7 GENDER INEQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA	27
2.8 HIGHER EDUCATION IN CAMEROON	30
2.9 SEVEN MAIN BENEFITS OF GIRLS' EDUCATION TO SOCIETY.....	31
2.10 THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION.....	31
2.11 MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS	32
2.12 THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)	33
2.13 THE CAMEROON'S CONSTITUTION	34
2.13.1 Family Code	34
2.13.2 Employment	35
2.13.3 EDUCATION.....	35
2.14 Some Factors Affecting Gender Inequality in Education	35
2.14.1 Marital Status.....	36
2.14.2 Tradition.....	36
2.14.3 Religion.....	37
2.15 Gender Equity and Women Empowerment: The Road Half-travelled.....	38
2.16 The Need for Greater Commitment: The Road Ahead.....	40
2.17 Keeping Promises	42
2.18 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT).....	42
2.18 ICTS AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN WOMEN	43
2.19 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK.....	44
2.19.1 INTERPERSONAL CONTACT THEORY BY ALLPORT	44
2.19.2 B. F Skinner's (1988) Theory of Operant Conditioning.....	45
2.19.3 Operant conditioning and Learning of ICT	46
2.20 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS.....	48
2.20.1 GENERAL HYPOTHESIS.....	48
2.20.2 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS	48
2.21 DEFINITION OF VARIABLES	49
2.21.1 INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	49
2.21.2 DEPENDENT VARIABLE	49
2.21.3 SYNOPTIC TABLE	49
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....	52
3.0 INTRODUCTION	52
3.1 TYPE OF RESEARCH.....	52
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN	53
3.3 AREA OF STUDY	54

3.4 POPULATION OF THE STUDY	54
3.4.2 ACCESSIBLE POPULATION	55
3.5 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE	55
3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS	55
3.7 VALIDATION OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENT.....	57
3.7.1 Face validity	57
3.7.2 Content validity	57
3.7.3 Reliability of instrument	57
3.8 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	58
3.9 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS	58
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS ...	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
4.0 INTRODUCTION	59
MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION	59
1.3.2 SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS	59
4.1 Preliminaries or Demographic profile of the respondents	59
4.2 CHOICE OF CAREER THROUGH ICT	63
4.3 INFORMATION	64
4.4 COMMUNICATION.....	65
4.5 TECHNOLOGY	65
4.6 ICT AND GENDER	66
4.7 VERIFICATION OF THE HYPOTHESIS	68
CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS AND PROFESSIONAL IMPLICATIONS.....	69
5.0 INTRODUCTION	69
5.1 INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS	69
5.1.1 CHOICE OF CAREER THROUGH ICT	69
5.1.2 INFORMATION	70
5.1.3 COMMUNICATION.....	70
5.1.4 Technology.....	71
5.1.5 ICT and gender	72
5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	73
5.3 PROFESSIONAL IMPLICATIONS	73
5.3.1 TO THE GOVERNMENT.....	73
5.3.2 THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT AND THE FAMILY	74
5.3.3 WOMEN	75
5.3.4 TO THE SOCIETY	75

5.3.5 CONCLUSION	75
5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	75
GENERAL CONCLUSION	76
REFERENCES.....	77
APPENDICES.....	80

DEDICATION

To My parents, Mr Kwalar Ernest and Mrs Kwalar Winifred

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ICT :** Information and Communication Technology
- CEDAW:** Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.
- PRSP:** Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
- NGP :** National Gender Policy
- HIPC:** Highly Indebted Poor Countries
- GPHC :** General Population and Housing Census
- NAPWID:** National Action Plan for Women in Development
- MDGs :** Millenium Development Goals
- EFA :** Education For All
- GESP :** Growth and Employment Strategy paper
- UNESCO:** United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UPE:** Universal Primary Education
- BPA:** Beijing Platform for Action
- UNCSTD:** United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development
- MINPROFF:** Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Family
- PIHE :** Private Institution of Higher Education
- MINEFOP :** Ministry of Employment and vocational Training
- WEC :** Women's Empowerment Centre
- ASCA :** American School Counselor Association
- NGOs :** Non- Governmental Organizations
- SPSS :** Statistical Package for Social Sciences
- ILO :** International Labour Organization

IAI : African Institute of Computer

MINPROFF : Ministere de la Promotion de la Femme et de la Famille

MINESEC : Ministere de l'enseignement Secondaire

UNICEF : United Nations Children Emergency Fund

UN : United Nations

LIST OF FIGURES

-Theory of change

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1.1 _____ **Number of respondents**

Table 4.1.2 _____ **marital status of respondents**

Table 4.1.3 _____ **Age Range of the respondents**

Table 4.1.4 _____ **Level of Education of the Respondents**

Table 4.1.5 _____ **Religious Background**

Table 4.1.6: _____ **Representative table of those interviewed**

LIST OF ANNEXES

-Questionnaire

-Research Attestation

-Transcript of those interviewed

ABSTRACT

This study entitled ‘‘Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy’’ was designed to verify whether ICT has an influence on gender. To this effect, a general research question was asked: To what extent can choice of career through ICT influence gender policy? Three specific questions were formulated from the main research question as follows :

SRQ 1: To what extent can information influence gender policy?

SRQ 2 :To what extent can communication influence gender policy ?

SRQ 3 To what extent can technology influence gender policy?

The research questions were formulated to guide the investigation. The review of literature was done using theories and national gender policy. The type of research carried out was qualitative and the instrument used for data collection was interview guide. The interview guide was administered in the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the Family. 20 respondents were interviewed. Choosing of the respondents was by random sampling of the accessible population. The data was analyzed following the themes of the interview guide. It was discovered that lack of interest, limited sensitization and laziness impedes women in ICT.

. Recommendations were made and suggestions given. It was recommended that the Government should evaluate regularly the extent which the decisions are translated into concrete results so as to rectify areas where gender policies do not exist , remedy the existing gender policies and allocate appropriate human and material resources for implementation Also, Government should provide grants and other resources to support men and women who are willing to pursue academic career in the domain of ICT because many do not attain their goals due to financial and material constraints. As suggestion for further studies, a different population like United Nations Workers or UNICEF workers can be used. At the end of this research, a general conclusion was given that ICT is essential for advancement and women should be encouraged in that domaine.

RÉSUMÉ

La recherche intitulée ``Technologies de l'information et de la communication et politique du genre'' a été menée pour vérifier si les TIC ont une influence sur le genre. A cet effet, une question générale de recherche a été formulée à savoir à quel niveau le choix de carrière à travers les TIC influence la politique du genre? De cette question, découle trois questions spécifiques qui ont aidé le chercheur à énoncer une hypothèse générale : Il existe une relation entre le choix de carrière à travers les TIC et la politique du genre. Trois hypothèses de recherches ont été formulées comme suit dans notre étude :

H R 1: Il existe une relation entre l'information et la politique du genre.

H R 2: Il existe une relation entre communication et la politique du genre.

H R 3: Il existe une relation entre technologie et politique du genre.

La recherche de cette étude s'inscrit dans un devis qualitatif avec l'interview comme principal instrument de la collecte des données. Celle-ci a été effectuée au Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme et de la Famille où 20 répondants ont été interviewés. Dans y parvenir, nous avons utilisé la technique d'échantillonnage aléatoire simple à partir de la population accessible. De plus, les données issues des entretiens ont été analysées en rapport aux thèmes du guide

À l'issue du travail, des recommandations ont été apportées et des suggestions faites. En effet, le Gouvernement devrait régulièrement s'assurer de promesse faite aux populations en posant des actes concrets, des décisions prises pour rectifier les aires ou lieux où les politiques du genre ne sont pas appliquées. Ceci pour remédier aux difficultés qui existent, allouer des ressources humaines et matérielles nécessaires à leur implémentation. L'Etat devrait donner les moyens matériels et financiers aux hommes et femmes qui voudraient poursuivre leur carrière académique dans le domaine des TIC, car la plupart n'y arrive pas. Comme suggestions pour des futures recherches, des populations différentes du travail (OIT), les Nations Unies ou de l'UNICEF peuvent être choisies. À la fin de cette recherche, une conclusion générale a été tirée à encourager les femmes dans le domaine de TIC.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are understood to include computers, the rapidly changing communication technologies (including radio, television, mobile telephone and Internet), networking and data processing capabilities, and the software for using the technologies. ICTs provide us with the capacity to have access and apply information and disseminate knowledge in all kinds of human activities, thus giving rise to the information- or knowledge-based economies and societies. These have the potential to create new types of economic activity and employment opportunities, thereby improving the quality of daily life. For example, ICTs are changing the way business operates through e-commerce applications, and have brought improvements in health-care delivery. As an information and knowledge-based tool, ICTs can enhance networking, participation, and advocacy within society. They also have the potential to improve interaction between governments and their citizens, fostering transparency and accountability in governance as a result. Information and communication technologies could give a major boost to the economic, political and social empowerment of women, and the promotion of gender equality. This potential will only be realized if the gender dimensions of the Information Society – in terms of users' needs, conditions of access, policies, applications and regulatory frameworks – are properly understood and adequately addressed by all stakeholders. Poverty, illiteracy, lack of computer literacy and language barriers are among the factors impeding access to the ICT infrastructure, especially in developing countries, and these problems are particularly acute for women. Women's access to ICTs is constrained by factors that go beyond issues of technological infrastructure and socio-economic environment. Socially and culturally constructed gender roles and relationships remain a cross-cutting element in shaping (and in this case, limiting) the capacity of women and men to participate on equal terms in the Information Society.

UNESCO (2004) believes that unless gender issues are fully integrated into technology analyses, policy development and programme design, women and men will not benefit equally from ICTs and their applications. In Section 1 the evolution of the international debate on gender and information technology is sketched out. Section 2 contrasts the impact of infrastructural and gender specific constraints on women's capacity to exploit the potential of the new information and communication technologies in different world

regions. The cross-cutting role of gender in determining participation in the information society, and the issues this raises, are explored in Section 3. Strategies, initiatives and best practices aimed at addressing these issues, and at bridging the gender divide, are considered in Section 4. Finally, Section 5 puts forward a range of actions to be considered by the various stakeholders involved

Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) are radically transforming how we live and work, our future opportunities, our societies, and our economies. ICT in Education Policy can connect education transformation to important social and economic development goals, such as promoting gender equity and reducing the gender gap. Gender gaps in education and use of ICT are holding women and girls back from tapping their potential. About two-thirds of illiterate adults in the world are women

Nancy Hafkin (2002) Decades of experience have shown that without explicit attention to gender in policy, gender issues are not considered in implementation. Despite the views of many government policy makers that a well thought out general policy benefits all, there is no such thing as a gender-blind or gender-neutral ICT policy. Governments also say that the fact that they already have a gender equality policy prevents the need to spell out gender issues in every sectorial policy. On the contrary, there is much evidence to show that “policy-making in technological fields often ignores the needs, requirements, and aspirations of women unless gender analysis is included” (Marcelle 2000, 39). Without specific attention and action, the benefits are not equal to men and women, and it is inevitably women who are left out. As Sonia Jorge notes: The evidence lies in the facts: women are vastly under-represented in government, business, political and social institutions; men still hold most of the management and control positions in telecommunication companies and regulatory or policy making bodies; regulatory decisions are made without any impact analysis; service licenses are attributed to companies without equal opportunity policies and controlled mostly by men. (Jorge 2001)

The gender divide is one of the most significant inequalities to be amplified by the digital revolution, and cuts across all social and income groups. Throughout the world, women face serious challenges that are not only economic but social as well as cultural – obstacles that limit or prevent their access to, use of, and benefits from ICTs. Improved understanding and awareness of these challenges, but most importantly of the opportunities that ICTs could provide for women, are important steps towards bridging the gender digital

divide and towards transforming it into digital opportunity. The involvement and engagement of women in the Information Society on an equal footing with men will directly contribute to improving the livelihood of people, making it more sustainable and thereby promoting the social and economic advancement of societies .Women represent the main economic force in most developing countries. As economies become more and more information-driven, the issues of women's access to and use of ICTs is growing in importance for both developed and developing economies. The ease with which information and communication technologies can transmit and disseminate information for development is well recognized. But women's access to ICTs cannot be assumed to occur "naturally" when gender-blind approaches and technologies are implemented. As a result of profound, gendered applications and implications of ICTs in employment, education, training and other areas of life, women need encouragement and support to take their rightful place in the information revolution. Women are underrepresented in all decision-making structures in the ICT sector, and this undermines the negotiation of gender-sensitive investment decisions and introduction of innovative patterns, policies and standards in the ICT sector. Equitable access to ICTs and the autonomy to receive and produce information relevant to women's needs and concerns are central to women's empowerment, and to the construction of an Information Society .

CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the following: Formulation of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, delimitation of the study, significance of the study, and conclusion.

1.1 CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate how ICT influences gender policy. The implementation of the universal primary education (UPE) in 1996 brought an increment in the number of women who are in school. Despite the increment, there is still gender inequality. In universities, education of women in particular has been a minority as students occupy positions of academic managers (MugishaBaine, 2010) Women's empowerment promotes universal primary education. In order to develop education and training, the government has to ensure that gender policies should apply to all fields of life

Despite the lack of gender-specific quantitative data, project-level qualitative data have established that ICTs are not gender neutral. ICTs impact men and women differentially, and in almost all cases women have many disadvantages that result in their having less access to the technology and therefore less use of it. The policy implication of this disparity in information access, especially for developing countries, is that unless special interventions are made, most women will not benefit from the information society to the extent that men do. If ICTs were gender neutral, affecting men and women equitably, it would not be necessary to pay special attention to women, and sex-disaggregated statistics would not be needed for policymaking. Without both of these considerations, women will continue to have fewer opportunities to benefit from the myriad possibilities of the information age. Data are needed at microeconomic (i.e., project) level. The research concluded that overall, men in Africa have greater chances than women to benefit from ICT. Additional findings from the study included the following: A gender digital divide exists in the six francophone countries. The composite indicator of women's participation in the information society was 0.65, meaning that women have 35% fewer opportunities and benefits than men with regard to ICT. The summary index,

however, masks some larger disparities in certain areas of the study. While there was some gendered disparity in access (approximately 10%), it was much larger in terms of capacity to use ICTs and the knowledge conveyed by content, and larger still in participation in ICT decision making. Women tend to use the Internet and cell phones more for personal and social use in the six West African countries, while men use them more for professional or work-related reasons. Men in West Africa tended to feel threatened when women used cell phones and accessed the Internet, seeing it as destabilizing to relationships and viewed such unsupervised activity by women as inappropriate. Many cases were reported of men monitoring the cell phone and Internet use of their partners. According to one woman from Cameroon: “My husband won’t let me have a cell phone; I have asked him several times to get me one. He answers that if I want a divorce, I just have to say so” (Gender and ICT Network, 2006)

1.2 FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 is generally regarded as a watershed in understanding of information technology as a powerful tool that women could use for mobilization, information exchange, and empowerment. Beijing was also the first international conference at which important issues relating to women, information and communication technology were discussed. Poverty, lack of access to telecommunications infrastructure, language barriers, computer non-literacy and illiteracy hamper women’s use of ICTs, including the Internet. As a contribution to the Beijing conference, the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) carried out a comprehensive set of studies on the relationships between gender, science and technology, and development. This work showed convincingly that there were significant gender differences in levels of access to, control of, and benefits accruing from a wide range of technological developments. Specifically in relation to ICTs, in large part, the problem lies with the global lack of gender analysis in ICT policy and program delivery. Furthermore, apart from the internal barriers felt by many women (fear of technology, lack of self-confidence, etc.) that restrict their use of ICTs, gender-specific structural barriers reinforce women’s lower usage of ICTs compared to men. These barriers include inequalities between men and women at decision-making levels that constrain women’s participation in shaping

the role of ICTs as a development tool. Gender inequality in ICT is seen mainly in the professional domain.

Women's marginalization from ICTs may also mean that they will benefit less from the educational and employment opportunities that will become available through ICTs, as well as access to health systems and other social services, thus perpetuating and deepening existing gender inequalities. One Women's capacity to exploit the potential of the new information and communication technologies as tools for empowerment is constrained in different ways in different regions .For society as a whole, ICTs offer immense possibilities for reducing poverty, overcoming women's isolation, giving women a voice, improving governance and advancing gender equality. But this potential will only be realized if the factors that contribute to the current gender digital divide are recognized and addressed. Women's access to ICTs is not a simple question of whether there is a computer connected to the Internet that women can use. Numerous other issues are just as important in determining whether women can access technology. Women, because of their biological and social roles, are generally more rooted than men in their communities. Hence women are often more aware than men of the social, economic and environmental needs of their own communities. In most societies, including in poorer ones, the advent of ICTs opens up possibilities of access to a global pool of knowledge, so long as potential users have access to adequate infrastructure and possess relevant skills. Information about reproductive health over the Internet can, for example, save or improve lives of many women (and men) facing the hazards of AIDS in Asian and African countries socio-cultural and institutional barriers .Socio-cultural barriers refer to those factors that subtly or explicitly impel certain groups to censor their speech and behaviour, or exclude themselves from particular activities, in the belief that these are not intended for them. Generally, women have less access than men to ICT facilities where they exist. Numerous invisible barriers limit women's and girls' participation in the Information Society. One of the more pervasive but intractable problems is "technophobia," or fear of technology. Women often have complex relationships with technology and machines as a result of being socialized over time to believe that machines and technology are a man's domain and not for women and girls, thus generating a gender bias in attitudes towards studying or using information technology. Once girls do enter school, they are discouraged from studying science and technology, either consciously or unconsciously, by parents' and teachers'. In some countries in Africa and the Pacific, girls are encouraged to get married or get a job rather than pursue further education. In many of these countries, there is a social

preference for boy children, and decisions to invest in boys' education are often made at the expense of girls, who are required to help with domestic chores at home for all or part of the school day. The "leaky pipeline" phenomenon means that fewer women enter into the science and technology fields, limiting the number of women scientists and technologists in academia, research and development, and at senior positions in the ICT arena. Gender biases against women in the cultures of university and research institutes also strongly influence the level of women's participation in university and research institutions

For a nation to develop well, all citizens both male and female must be able to contribute. Previous research has shown that women and girls are poorly placed when it comes to ICT. Women find it difficult to rise from the knowledge society. Those who are literate technologically and electronically connected are dynamic and creative actors, they remain the minority. Females have less access to education in general and to science and technology education in particular. They also have less access to skills training that should build their capacities better. (Huyer, 2006). If women who represent a little more than half of the world's population, about 51% of the population of Cameroon are left out of the educational system and if their capacities are not properly built, then the development process of the country is handicapped.

A study by Ledin et al (2007), reveal that girls suffer because they miss out opportunities to socialize, acquire knowledge and gain skills and the sense of autonomy needed to improve their personal well-being. Each additional year of schooling increases an individual's earnings by more than 15%. Education also improves women's health and gives them a greater say in their lives.

A research by Hafkin and Targgart (2001) has shown that the most important thing to do in order for women to take full advantage of the benefit of ICTs is by educating them. This has to be at the literacy, scientific and technology education levels. If gender dimensions of ICTs in terms of access and use, capacity building and employment opportunities and potentials for empowerment are explicitly identified and addressed, ICT can be a powerful catalyst for political and social empowerment of women and the promotion of gender capacity (Tchombe, 2008)

Cecchini (2002) and Kenny (2002), as quoted by Arun et al (2006), hold that ICTs are already seen to have the potential to contribute to other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) such as economic development and poverty alleviation. These researchers also hold

that ICTs can be used to fight gender inequality ,empower women and facilitate female academic competence and economic development .However ,the roles and needs of women in ICTs are not often noticed or recognized especially at the educational level. ICT for development needs more people trained and experienced in gender awareness and analysis in order to bring beneficial out comes that includes as many women as possible. This is particularly the case in critical areas of ICT and policy making and regulation .When one looks at the Cameroon NICI plan drawn up in 2004,you realize that no attention is given to gender related issues (Tetang, 2007)

Inculcating women in ICT is very essential as their talents can be used for economic growth .Full involvement of women in science and technology is essential for global economic development and environmental sustainability. Women are the backbone of every community as they provide necessities like education at home and in school, water ,fuel, nutrition and health care to their community

In the world today, there are only 26 female presidents and in Africa there are 3 female presidents. In Cameroon, out of the 36 ministers, only 6 are women ,out of 100 senators, 20 are women. There are 180 parliamentarians ,56 are women. There are 8 state universities in Cameroon. Six are headed by men and the other two are headed by women. The University of Buea is headed by a female vice chancellor (Prof Nalova Lyonga) and The University of Bamenda is also headed by a female vice chancellor (prof Therese Akenji). The remaining 6 state universities are headed by men.This reinforces the issue of gender discrimination or inequality.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this study, we shall distinguish the main research question around which the three specific research questions will revolve

1.3.1 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent can choice of career through ICT influence Gender Policy?

1.3.2 SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- To what extent can information influence Gender Policy?
- To what extent can communication influence Gender Policy?

- To what extent can technology influence Gender Policy?

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary(7th edition) Objective is something that you are trying to achieve. In the framework of research in education, objective can be defined as the goal to be attained; the action which one wishes to see it realized. In this study we distinguish two types of objectives which are general and specific objectives.

1.4.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To study the relationship that exist between choice of career through ICT and Gender Policy

1.4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

We have three specific objectives which are:

- To investigate the relationship that exist between information and Gender Policy
- To examine the relationship that exist between communication and Gender Policy
- To scrutinize the relationship that exist between technology and Gender Policy

1.5 INTEREST OF THE STUDY

This research is significant to the government, policy makers, men and women at large mindful of their conceptions on ICT and gender policy. Information and communication technology involves technology arising from scientific and technical projects in an increasing interconnected world brought about by technical advances to all sectors of society. ICTs are a driving force in reshaping the world's economic, social and cultural configurations. Rapid changes and innovations within the society require policies that will favor both genders.

1.5.1 TO THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND THE FAMILY

- Provide the government with evidence and reasons to foster its zeal for adequate implementation of gender policies
- Enable the government to adopt policies to better improve ICT and gender issues
- This research will encourage the ministry to organize seminars that will bring in zeal and determination to females to face the challenges out there without any phobia because when a woman is educated, a nation is educated.

1.5.2 TO THE FEMALE

This research will bring about boldness in the female to engage in any field of life especially in ICT.

1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

For this research to be accurate and precise, the researcher had to limit the study so as to determine the boundaries. The researcher is not interested in the rural areas because they are limited in ICT as compared to urban areas.

1.6.1 GEOGRAPHICAL DELIMITATION

This study was carried out in Yaounde where the researcher could possibly meet female staffs working in the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family. Also, Yaounde is the capital city and most innovations in ICT and gender begins here so that policy makers can easily monitor and get results before proceeding to implement in other regions.

According to the Flourishers Educational Publishers (2010), Yaoundé, the town of the seven hills is the political capital of Cameroon, capital of the centre region and head quarter of the Mfoundi Division. Yaoundé was founded on the 17th February 1889 by the Germans.

1.6.2 THEMATIC DELIMITATION

Amongst the many factors linked to gender policy, the researcher decided to focus on ICT. The variables of the study was choice of career , information ,communication and technology . The researcher was carried out in the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family.

1.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter one which is the introductory part was made up of an introduction, formulation of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, delimitation of the study and significance of the study

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into two parts:

- ❖ The review of Literature
- ❖ Theoretical framework

The importance of this chapter in relation to its content can be viewed in the words of Borg and Gall (1988:98) which holds that:

Until you have learned what others have done and

What remains still to be done in your area of research,

*You cannot develop a research project that will contribute
to furthering knowledge in your field.*

Men and women are not able to access and use

ICTs equally [in Africa].. ..the fundamental reason

for this lies in the gender disparities found in

income and education (RIA, 2013)

theory must be characterized by simplicity .

2.1 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms will be defined in this study: Information, Communication, Technology, Information and Communication Technology, Gender, Policy and Gender Policy.

2.1.1 Information

World Book Student Dictionary (2001:385) says information is knowledge about someone or something, facts and data.

Dictionary of science and technology (1995:568) defines information as “a means of given data by the way in which it is interpreted ”.

Also information is that which can be communicated and understood by human beings. A message received and understood web encyclopedia 2006 cited by Alemanjoh2006.

2.1.2 Communication

Dictionary of science and technology (1995:223), communication is defined as “goal directed behavior used to influence other individuals”.

According to Cambridge advanced learners dictionary (2005:247), communication is the share of information with others by speaking, writing, moving your body or using other signals or the various methods of sending information between people and places especially official system such as post system, radio, phone, net etc

The World Student Book Dictionary defines communication as “a system of sending messages by telephone, telegraph, radio, television or the like.

2.1.3 Technology

World book student dictionary (2001:741) technology is all the methods and machines that people have developed and used to satisfy their needs and desires.

Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (7th edition: 1520), defines Technology as scientific knowledge used in practical ways in industry, for example designing new machines.

2.1.4 Information and Communication Technology

Tchombe and Mbangwana (2008), cited by Fonkoua (2008:16) define ICT a “technologies arising from scientific ,technical and technological progress in computer sciences, electronic and telecommunication.

Peter (1995) defines ICT as the umbrella covering all activities associated with computer based information systems. It is defined as a study, design, development, implementation, support or management of computer based information systems. It deals with how to use computer software and hardware and computer networks to produce, store ,protect, process, transmit ,and retrieve securely and efficiently the information.

According to Kennewell (2003), ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network, hardware and satellite systems as well as various services and applications associated with them such as video-conferencing and distance learning.

2.1.5 Gender

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (7th edition), defines gender as “the fact of being male or female”

According to Beth et al. (1997) gender refers to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female.

Carolina and Leach consider gender to be the role that one plays and also a way of distinguishing between a biological difference and social construction of maleness and femaleness.

Gender can be defined as a set of characteristics, roles, and behavior patterns that distinguish women from men socially and culturally and relations of power between them (Women Information Centre, 2005).

2.1.6 Policy

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (7th edition) defines policy as “a principle that you believe in that influences how you behave”

Miriam Webster defines policy as a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body.

Webster Dictionary defines policy as “A definite course or method of action selected (by government, institution, group or individual) from among alternatives and in the light of given conditions to guide and, usually, to determine present and future decisions”

2.1.7 Gender Policy

African Union defines gender policy as “An organisation’s policy that integrates gender in the mainstream of its programmes and activities, where the policy also designates institutional arrangements, responsibilities, management functions and tools/guidelines for mainstreaming “.

2.2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Ogolo (1995) ,as quoted by Mbenja (2010) says literature review is a review of past works in the area of the research being conducted. It also concerns on-going works related to the research under study.

2.2.1 NATIONAL GENDER POLICY

Half of the world’s population is made up of female. Population . In Cameroon, women make up nearly 50.5% of the estimated population of 19,406,100 inhabitants, according to the 2005 third General Population and Housing Census (3rd GPHC) results published in 2010. The growth rate of the female population from 1987 to 2005 is 10.1% as against 09.9% for males. Women are socio-economic agents required in all sectors. Although the situation has improved in several areas of national life, women’s participation continues to

be a cause for concern, because of persistent gender inequality in key areas such as education, health, economy, employment and environment. With a view to creating an environment that is conducive for equality between women and men, Cameroon found it necessary to adopt a National Gender Policy. At the national level, social policy is based on the ideals and principles of social justice, respect for human rights, good governance and democracy to achieve equality and equity between women and men. The government has made efforts which have led to significant actions for the empowerment of women. These actions have so far been developed within the framework of the Women in Development Policy, where emphasis has been laid on improving the living conditions of women and not on factors underlying their status. With a view to creating an environment that is conducive for equality between women and men, Cameroon found it necessary to adopt a National Gender Policy.

This National Gender Policy document has four main parts, namely:

- The general context of the National Gender Policy in Cameroon where the country's characteristics are described, national guidelines and development priorities, and Cameroon's position on the sub-regional, regional and international scene of promoting gender equality and equity;
- The situational analysis of gender in Cameroon which highlights these issues in various areas as well as women's empowerment mechanisms;
- Foundations of the National Gender policy which revolve around the concept, vision, values and principles, purpose, objectives, and strategic aspects;
- The institutional framework and implementation mechanisms which define implementation, coordination, consultation, monitoring and evaluation modalities of the Policy.

2.2.2 National policies and strategies for women's empowerment

Basically, these include the women in development policy, the national population policy, the poverty reduction strategy and the growth and employment strategy.

2.2.2.1 The Women in Development Policy

In 1997, the Cameroon Government designed and adopted its first policy document on women's empowerment, a document which defined government priorities and strategies in this area. This was the policy statement coupled with the National Action Plan for Women in Development (NAPWID). The seven areas of intervention in this document stem from the

twelve points selected within the framework of the Beijing recommendations. The seven areas of intervention include: improving living conditions of women, improving the legal status of women, developing female human resources in all vital sectors, ensuring effective participation of women in decision-making, protecting and promoting the girl child, fighting violence against women, and improving the institutional framework for effective integration of women in development.

2.2.2.2 The National Population Policy Declaration

This policy establishes the gender approach as a development approach and notably aims to universalize quality primary education, promote functional literacy for both gender and reduce gender disparity in all sectors of economic and social development.

2.2.2.3 The Poverty Reduction plan

The Government, in seeking solutions to the well-being of the population, successively prepared, using the participatory approach, a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) adopted in April 2003, and sector strategies in the areas of health, education, rural development, social development, etc. The PRSP has marked a milestone in the continuation of reforms by authorities since attaining the completion point under the enhanced debt relief initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). It adopted the following guidelines for gender equality: the improvement of the socio-legal status of women, the improvement of women's living conditions, the promotion of gender equality and equity, the promotion of family welfare, the strengthening of institutional mechanisms and the promotion of good governance.

2.2.2.4 The Growth and Employment Strategy Paper

The Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) adopted in August 2009, which is a revised version of the PRSP, has set out guidelines for gender equality in the following seven sectors: rural infrastructure, industry and services, governance, education, social and health services.

As concerns gender promotion, the Government will continue to educate parents and communities on allowing the young girls to enjoy equal access to education. In the same light, the Government and communities will ensure that girls are represented in all sectors including vocational training, higher education and employment. The GESP is the springboard of all development activities, including the National Gender policy which is based on its guidelines.

2.3 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER ISSUES IN CAMEROON

Gender equity and equality, which are real challenges in the search for social justice and respect of human rights, are a major concern to the national and international community. In Cameroon, despite a marked improvement in the situation of women, gender disparities and discrimination persist in many areas of national life.

2.3.1 Situational analysis of gender issues in the social sector

This analysis presents the status and roles of women and men, gender disparities in areas such as education (primary, secondary and tertiary), health as well as gender-based violence.

2.3.2 Analysis of the status and roles of women and men

The status of Cameroonian women depends largely on the perception that society has of their role. This perception is inherent in the traditions of different ethnic groups, which are an expression of cultural patterns internalized in the socialization process. It is worth noting that though declarations and opinions still sustain adherence to these traditional patterns, behaviors gradually distance themselves from them, due to drastic social changes. The traditions of different ethnic groups in Cameroon show that the distribution of roles between men and women includes women's empowerment, while respecting the man's authority.

2.3.3 Women and men in the Cameroonian traditional society

The different cultures have different treatments for the man and the woman and unequal social consideration. In general, national ethnic groups are meant to establish family links between women and men from a fundamental inequality between the man, who is the family head, and the woman, who is the mother and wife. The fundamental statuses are the basis of the roles of men and women, and relations of power and authority within the family, between spouses, parents and children, seniors and juniors. This differentiation is inculcated in children, girls and boys, in the process of socialization. That is what determines social values and norms to be acquired by women and men through rites, ceremonies, customs and behaviors.

Some religious and traditional beliefs confine women to their homes and will not tolerate their appearing in public places.

2.3.4 Women and men in the Cameroonian modern society

Urban development and access to new forms of information have led to changes in some social values. Both women and men are now exposed to new lifestyles and practices that contrast with traditional habits and thoughts. Faced with the prevailing changes, some women, who have become more aware of issues related to power relations and the influence of the dynamics of organized groups, assert themselves and suffer less male dominance.

In conclusion, it is important to note that the Cameroonian woman is still a victim of discrimination and oppressive situations. She is still confined to socio-cultural beliefs that hinder her full development. She hardly enjoys her rights in a strongly patriarchal society that leaves her with the sole responsibility of caring for the family and education of children. She is still regarded as a woman, the weaker sex, in a traditional society where men have almost (been naturally gifted with) everything: the family name, the land and children, because religious and cultural values are interpreted to favour them.

2.3.5 Analysis of gender issues in the area of education

There are two educational systems in Cameroon: the French system and the English system. In addition, there is a non-formal system of education for young girls and boys dropped out of the mainstream school. Moreover, there are denominational and traditional systems of education as well as special education programs developed for youth with specific needs, notably children with disabilities.

Education is provided by both the public and the private sectors. Women without education exceeded 1.7 times the men in a similar situation and there is growing inequality between girls and boys further up the educational ladder (91 women at primary level, 79 at secondary level and 44 at tertiary level, respectively per 100 men)

The different educational systems are marked by gender disparities in preschool, primary, secondary and higher education. There are also disparities between regions, especially between the highly educated Southern regions where the parity index between girls and boys is close to one, and the less educated northern regions where it is barely 0.6.

2.3.6 Providing education to girls and boys at primary level

Primary education is characterized by a higher number of educated boys as compared to girls, with differences varying from 8 to 16 percentage points between 1989 and 2009. The net enrolment ratio at the national level is 83.1%, being 88.6% for boys and 69.2% for girls.

At the regional level, gender disparities are more noticeable in the Far North and East. In the Far North region, for example, 69.2% of girls are enrolled in school against 98.3% of boys, which shows a differential rate of about 30%. The goal of universal primary education may not be achieved in the Adamawa, East, Far North and North Regions.

Nationally, the rate of primary school completion is 72.6% with 78.8% for boys against 66.4% for girls, a difference of 12 percentage points in favour of boys.

2.3.7 Providing education to girls and boys in secondary education

In secondary education, girls are also less noticeable than boys, though with a wider difference than at the primary level. In 2007, these rates were respectively 28% against 32%, with a difference of 5 points, showing improvement in girls' school enrolment.

2.3.8 Providing education to girls and boys in tertiary education

101 students enrolled in the six State universities and private institutions of Higher Education (PIHE) in 2007. In addition, women are as under-represented (less than 21% from 2003 to 2007) in science and technology in higher education as they are in secondary education. The number of women doing the sciences in State universities was 6,499 (20.8%) in 2003-2004 and 9742 (19.7%) in 2006/2007.

In private institutions, two facts are noteworthy: firstly, the slight overrepresentation (more than 50%) of female students accounting since 2005 for more than 50%; secondly, the fluctuation of this indicator above the minimum of 50%. It rose from (From) 53% in 2005 to 50.7% in 2006 and 53.1% in 2007 and 51.4% in 2008

2.3.9 Vocational Training

There are disparities in vocational training between girls and boys. In fact, in institutions placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP), girls made up 45.4% of the total enrolment against 54.6% of boys for the 2008/2009 academic year. The dropout rate in the area of vocational training is 14.2% for girls and 10.6% for boys..

Finally, the negative disparities in education and training for women could be explained by socio-cultural factors, family difficulties in meeting the costs of education and training, with preference given to boys' education, the assignment of girls to household and productive activities, early marriages and pregnancies, and poor perception of employment

and school opportunities. There are also school-related factors such as cosmetic free education, few educational opportunities, girls' exposure to violence, lack of separate toilets for girls and boys in schools, and the negative influence of stereotypes and discriminatory pictures against women in textbooks.

2.4 Situational analysis of gender issues in the area of economy and employment

Employment and work

Out of the 52.6% of the gainfully employed population, women make up 44.5% against 61.3% of men. Regarding the active temporarily unemployed, out of an estimated population of 3.0%, women form 2.2% against 3.8% of men. As concerns the unemployed active population in search of first-time employment, out of a total population of 6.1%, there are 5.6% of women against 6.5% of men. As regards pupils and students with no gainful employment, who form 17.8% of the population, the proportion of women stands at 16.4% as against 19.3% of men. (National Gender Policy)

Finally, more women than men face many difficulties that prevent them from expressing themselves on the job market. These include: overload of household tasks, lack of education and vocational training, and difficult access to funding.

2.4.1. International Legal Instruments for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Woman

There are instruments of general application which provide for gender equality, and instruments that are gender sensitive to enable women to fully enjoy their rights

The most important are:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, which emphasizes the principle of equal human rights without discrimination;
- The International Covenants of 16 December 1966, on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which provide opportunities for men and women to fully exercise their rights in the relevant areas;
- ILO Convention No. 100 on Equal Remuneration of 29 June 1951, which advocates the principle of equal pay for male and female employees for services of equal value;
- ILO Convention No. 111 on discrimination in employment on 25 June 1958, which aims to eliminate discrimination based on race, colour, sex, religion, politics, national or social origin,

in access to employment, training and working conditions. It also intends to promote equal opportunity and treatment;

- The Convention against Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 10 December 1984, which protects men and women against torture;

- The Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992, which gives women opportunities to enjoy the benefits of their traditional knowledge;

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 December 1989, which grants equal rights to both girls and boys;

- ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour of 17 June 1999 focusing on urgent prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour; it promotes an international legal standard to protect children from the worst forms of exploitation such as slavery, child prostitution and pornography; using children for unlawful activities (drug trafficking); all work described as dangerous by their nature or conditions under which if it is carried out may endanger the health (physical or mental), safety or morals of children (mining, agriculture, use of pesticides or chemicals, etc ...);

- The UN Convention of 2000 on Transnational Organized Crime and its two additional protocols to prevent, abolish and punish trafficking in humans, especially women and children;

- ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Trade Union Right of 9 July 1948, which guarantees employees and employers the right to establish organizations of their choice to promote and defend their interests, or to join organizations without prior authorization..

2.4.2 Public Institutions

National Mechanism for gender promotion: the ministry in charge of women's empowerment and gender issues. This department was established in 1975 with the creation of a department in charge of women's affairs. This was later transformed into a ministry in 1984 called the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MINCOF), the first government ministry with a mandate pertaining to women's empowerment. After several changes, the latter became the Ministry Women's Empowerment and Family (MINPROFF) on 8 December 2004.

Organized by Decree No. 2005/088 of 29 March 2005, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family is responsible for the drafting, implementation and evaluation of measures relating to respect of women's rights and the protection of the family. To this end, it ensures the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and the increase in equality guarantees in favour of women in political, economic, social and cultural domains; studies and submits to the Government, conditions facilitating the employment of women in the administration, agriculture, trade and industry; liaising with the relevant national and international policy organizations of women's empowerment; supervising organizations training women, excluding institutions under the supervisory authority of the Ministries in charge of Education and; studies and proposes strategies and measures aimed at enhancing harmony in families..

As concerns human resources allocated to gender, the staff of MINPROFF and its specialized technical units are insufficient in both quantity and quality. Furthermore, they have no proven expertise in gender issues, which makes it difficult for gender to be integrated into policies and programs.

Equally, infrastructure for socio-economic empowerment and the promotion of women's rights are proving to be quantitatively and qualitatively insufficient in view of their missions to protect women and the family.

Regarding financial resources, those allocated by the State to MINPROFF, despite a slight increase noted since 2006, remain very insignificant compared to the general State budget (0.26% in 2010). The insufficient mastery of Results Based Management (RBM) leads to a low consumption of financial and material resources made available by development partners and the government.

2.4.3 Other public administrations

The Presidency of the Republic and the Prime Minister's Office do not have an official in charge of gender issues. Other ministries, public and semi-public organizations each have a gender focal point responsible for ensuring the operational relay in gender mainstreaming, monitoring systems and advocacy aimed at guaranteeing the consideration of women's interests in the drafting, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of sector policies.

Some ministries and organizations have, within them, services or committees dealing with gender issues, notably: the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (Population Policy Unit), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Women's

Activities Service), the Ministry of Public Health (Gender Approach Promotion Bureau), the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (Gender Committee), the National School of Administration and Magistracy (Gender Committee) and the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms (Sub-Commission on the Rights of Vulnerable Groups in which MINPROFF is represented).

It is also important to note the development, in some universities and other institutions, of gender departments and/or courses leading to the award of certificates in the domain concerned.

2.4.4 Local Councils

Since the adoption of the orientation law on decentralization, Local Councils (LC) are responsible, among other things, for the management and maintenance of Women's Empowerment Centres (WECs), which are MINPROFF Specialized Technical Units. The contribution expected from Local Councils and Women's Empowerment Centres (WECs) as Specialized Technical Units of MINPROFF, with regard to reducing inequalities between the sexes, is seriously limited by the lack of qualified and adequate resources to ensure women's empowerment

2.5 Measures/actions taken to promote gender equality and gender equity

Measures relating to the promotion of gender equality are political, legal, economic and socio-cultural.

2.5.1 Political Measures

Political measures for the promotion of gender equality concern the gradual integration of women in the decision-making process especially in Government, Public Administration, state corporations and Diplomacy (Ambassador, Plenipotentiary Ministers). Women have started entering sectors that were once reserved exclusively for men such as territorial command as well as international and regional bodies. Equally, their access to defense forces and the penitentiary administration started taking place gradually from 1984.

2.5.2 Legal Measures

Cameroon has ratified almost all international and regional legal instruments on the protection of human rights. These texts have permitted her to carry out actions with positive effects in some social sectors like the education of the girl child, women's literacy, health

(specifically reproductive health) and the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV-AIDS/STI..

the Project “Operation 100 000 women by 2012”, which aims to train women in ICT;

- improved educational services for girls and women;
- the Cameroon Education Development Capacity-building Project (PASE), which promotes academic excellence for young Muslim girls;
- the Basic Education Program;
- the Support Program for Girls in Scientific Fields of Study;
- the Education for All Program;
- the provision of free primary education;
- the National Literacy Program;
- Supporting vocational training through scholarships;
- Facilitating access and retaining girls in fields considered “reserved” for boys;
- Continuing education for women in employment without qualifications.

2.5.3 Health domain,

The health sector strategy focuses on women within the context of reproductive health, whose priority areas are: mother and child health, family planning, the fight against STIs / HIV-AIDS, the fight against breast and genital cancers, care for the reproductive health of adolescents and elderly persons, and the fight against practices that are harmful to women’s health.

The Malaria Control Program responds to a need to care for pregnant women of whom 37.0% suffer from malaria, especially by providing treated mosquito nets and subsidizing generic drugs for the treatment of this disease.

The Women-Families Sector Plan for the Fight against STI / HIV-AIDS promotes the social mobilization of women and women’s associations for the fight against STIs and HIV-AIDS as well as the capacity-building of staff and leaders of women’s groups in the domain of communication for behavior change on the prevention of STI / HIV / AIDS.

2.5.4 Domain of culture

It is important to note the creation of a special allocation account to support cultural policy and encourage excellence in the creation, production and dissemination of intellectual works.

2.5.5 Results

The steps taken to promote gender equality and equity have yielded significant results in the areas of education, health and environment, economy, employment and vocational training, decision-making and participation in public life, law and women's rights.

2.5.6 Limitations of actions taken

Despite the multifaceted actions taken to promote gender equity and equality, we notice limitations at the political, economic, legal, and socio-cultural levels.

2.5.7 Development policies

At the economic level, the factors that limit actions to promote gender equality and equity are: the conditions and criteria for access to means of production which are an obstacle for women (access to credit, access to land, (**access to specialised education**) appropriate techniques and technology) and a poorly organized informal sector where women are most active. This increases the feminization of poverty.

2.5.8 Social Affairs

Despite measures taken to advance women, several factors compromise their social welfare and worsen their vulnerability, notably:

- early and forced marriages;
- the persistence of customs and cultural values contributing to the school drop out of girls;
- failure to control the sexuality and the woman's body (the woman's body and sexuality) by the woman herself ;
- the lack of interest by families, communities and the girls themselves in scientific fields of study; (the unfavourable playground for promoting women and girls in scientific fields of study);
- the feminization of HIV-AIDS/STI;

- the insufficient provision of reproductive health services, early motherhood, close and excessive births due to false beliefs, the poor knowledge of modern contraception techniques, the lack of information on sex education for women and men, girls and boys, unassisted childbirths, illegal abortions;
- the low (inadequate- in terms of beneficiaries and amount) social insurance coverage;
- the pressures (demands) on women when looking for employment and negotiating a labour contract exposes them to different forms of abuse traditionally recognized in the workplace, thereby increasing their vulnerability to gender-based violence.

2.5.9 Stakes and Challenges

From the situational analysis of gender issues in Cameroon, it emerges that the status of women is not sufficiently valued at all levels. The NGP focuses on key issues and challenges to be considered as levers for the establishment of an egalitarian society between women and men. From the situational analysis of gender issues in Cameroon, it emerges that the status of women is not sufficiently valued at all levels. The NGP focuses on key issues and challenges to be considered as levers for the establishment of an egalitarian society between women and men.

The stakes to consider are:

- the development of women's resources;
- the equal participation of women and men in governance at all levels;
- the economic empowerment of women in urban and rural areas;
- the extension of social protection to segments of the population that are not covered;
- the effective enjoyment and exercise by women of their rights;
- the equal access of women and men, girls and boys to education;
- access to basic social services;
- the improvement of mother and child health;
- the existence of a sustainable and healthy environment.

The challenges to be met include:

- the eradication of socio-cultural constraints that are unfavourable to the establishment of an egalitarian society;
- the eradication of gender-based violence;
- the provision of adequate basic social services;

- the eradication of the feminization of HIV-AIDS/STI;
- the elimination of poverty among women;
- the education, training and information of women, especially those in rural areas;
- (the education and training of women in specialised scientific and technology fields of study)
- the reduction of maternal and child mortality;
- the implementation of legal instruments for the promotion and protection of women's rights;
- the eradication of practices that destroy the environment.

2.6 AFRICAN UNION GENDER POLICY

Leadership role of women is recognized in all spheres of development, including their participation in decision-making at the international, regional and national level. This is reflected in the creation of platforms of action related to gender. It is in this context that the AU has developed a Gender Policy that focuses on closing the equality gap between men and women in general and particularly addressing gender inequalities which have resulted in women's disempowerments and the feminisation of poverty, in order to have a better understanding of the contribution of women in development.

This Policy provides a framework which will accelerate the realization of gender equality, fairness between men and women, non-discrimination and fundamental rights in Africa. Generally, this Policy is conceived as a tool to facilitate the advancement of Africa's political and social economic integration, guarantee that gender issues are included in the African agenda, accelerate gender mainstreaming, contribute to higher living standards and enhance the efforts exerted by African peoples to play their rightful role in a globalising world.

Furthermore, there is an increase in awareness of the crucial role of women in conflict, post conflict situations and in consolidation of peace, reconstruction and reconciliation. There is also a consensus in addressing gender issues in the peacekeeping sector, consequently gender mainstreaming is gaining prominence in the UN and also within the African continent. The desired effect and impact of this Policy is to offer opportunities for empowerment of women, guarantee their protection against violence and rape, as well as ensure their participation in public and economic life. To achieve this, a paradigm shift is inevitable. The Policy underpins the requisite need for identifying ways and means to foster interventions

focused on gender, such as the establishment of the African Women's Trust Fund and the reorientations of existing institutions to pay better attention to gender equality. Both women and men have worked for the liberation of the continent, and for the economic emancipation, solidarity and cohesion necessary for its integration and unity. Therefore, they should participate and benefit equally in development processes.

2.6 1 Objectives of the African Union Gender Policy

- ❖ Economic independence and equal access to resources
- ❖ Equal participation and access to economic opportunities in a globalizing world
- ❖ Equal participation in peace and security matters
- ❖ Equal representation in decision making and good governance and politics
- ❖ Equal access to education, livelihood and decent work opportunities
- ❖ Equal access to prevention, care, home based support and treatment of HIV/AIDS
- ❖ Equal access to ICT infrastructure and Applications, global alliance for IT development and building a sustainable e-future
- ❖ Eradication of all forms of gender based violence
- ❖ Improved women's health and reduction of maternal mortality
- ❖ Elimination of gender stereotypes, sexism and all forms of discrimination
- ❖ Participation of the media
- ❖ Food security and nutrition

2.7 GENDER INEQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Research shows that gaps exist in the representation of male and female in higher education. There has been criticism from some feminists towards the political discourse and policies employed in order to achieve the above items of "progress" in gender equality, with critics arguing that these gender equality strategies are superficial, in that they do not seek to challenge social structures of male domination, and only aim at improving the situation of women within the societal framework of subordination of women to men.

Sheila Jeffreys writes, "When women are encouraged to 'empower' themselves while leaving gendered power structures in place, the idea of empowerment could lead to blaming the women for their lack of progress". Indeed, it is the contentious meaning of the term "equality" itself that makes measuring gender equality "progress" inherently problematic.

Newman and White suggest that equality can be understood in three distinct ways: identical treatment, differential treatment, and fair treatment. Identical treatment is the claim that equality means the deployment of generalizing, abstract, content-less reason, unaffected with regard to the gender it addresses. This view assumes that gender differences are entirely socially constructed concepts, and that an underlying, gender-neutral human should be the target of equality. Next, the differential treatment notion of equality is the claim that biological ("sex") differences do, in fact, exist as tangible and real, and that structuring treatment around these differences is not unequal, so long as these biological differences are accurately defined (that is to say, so long as differential treatment is not random)

The third view, that equality is fair treatment, is in a sense a reaction to both of the previous two claims. Equality as identical treatment assumes that the criteria we use to define human nature is itself objective, neutral, and fair for each human, and differential treatment assumes that there are inherent, empirical, tangible, biological differences that the binary categories of male-female derive from.

Theorists like Judith Lorber, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler and many more attack both of these essentialist views, articulating that any claim to an underlying human nature is absurd. This is because what is to be a human is at bottom a product of constructive discursive discourses. As Judith Lorber puts the point: "the paradox of 'human nature' is that it is always a manifestation of cultural meanings, social relationships, and power politics "Furthermore, theorists like Catharine MacKinnon claim that all circulating articulations of this fictitious "universal human" actually reflect socially male biases. That is to say, unadulterated, objective, pure reason is merely a tacit disguise for patriarchal reinforcement. It is clear, then, how the identical treatment model fails on this view. Similarly, by this logic, the differential treatment is shown to merely use male rationality to define and construct the gender difference - as a result, true equality is precluded.

This tacit inequality in our sexual concept poses a particular problem, because Western Liberal Democracies are premised on descriptions of people that describe them as equal, yet this exists alongside a description of women and men that describes them in terms

that makes them unequal. So any claims that "Non-Western" countries are less gender equal than Western countries, for example, must not be too quickly accepted. Since this acceptance of inequality in sexes is perceived as a natural difference between men and women, it thus permeates into society relatively undiagnosed. Disguised as objective, the subjective/biased nature of these claims that equal treatment become particularly difficult to address. This allows the state/laws to appear to be gender-neutral and universally applicable, while ignoring the backdrop of the underlying forces that have structured our legal system and personal cognition in such a way as to promote equality of opportunity for social category male at the price of inequality for social category female. As Judith Lorber says; "it is the taken-for-granted of such everyday gendered behaviour that gives credence to the belief that the widespread differences in what women and men do must come from biology". On such a view, then, addressing equality must take on more than formal equality, and become "fair treatment". That is to say, the male paradigm cannot be seen as natural and objective, thus bias and preference and affirmative action to address past discriminations to women should be seen as furthering equality. Lorber describes the "bathroom problem" to articulate the inequality of overarching, gender-neutral laws. She articulates how men's bathroom norms are used as the standard by which to determine how many and how large public bathrooms should be. For various reasons, however, women make more frequent use of the bathrooms than men, and as a result there are too few bathrooms for women and sufficient amount for men.). This tacit structural underpinning of male dominance is particularly dangerous for it creates the space for certain instances of female oppression to be viewed and experienced as the woman's choice

Many researchers point out that gender bias and discrimination is still prevalent in contemporary children and young adult literature and continues to fuel hot debate(Garner,1993 ;Evans ,1998;Christensen, 2001 and Louie ,2001)

In general , people interact differently with men and women and boys and girls.(Lorber ,1940) .Moreover, boys outnumbered girls in special education programs by startling percentages as special services in education appear to be applied more liberally to boys than girls. Research shows that boys are preferred for testing for gifted programs twice as often as girls (Orenstein, 1994). The social factors that produce these gender differences operate in both institutional and informal settings. In some societies, cultural norms discourage interaction between women and men outside the family, and women may be uncomfortable in situations where men are present either as trainers or as peers. Even in

countries where women and men mix freely, women who are learning to use computers – in particular older women – may be uneasy if a man is in charge of the training. An awareness of these sociocultural and institutional barriers is essential if decision-makers are to shape remedial programs and design facilities that encourage women's participation.

There is a huge gap between women's and men's access to telecommunications infrastructure. Infrastructure is largely concentrated in the urban areas, while the majority of women in the developing world, particularly in Africa, are located in remote and rural areas. Simply stated, if the technology is not there, women cannot have access the way in which ICTs are used in developing countries is also a gender issue. Research has shown that most women in developing countries make limited use of ICTs, restricting themselves to email and email discussion lists, generally for advocacy and networking purposes. ICT usage is affected by factors like cost, limited bandwidth, and technical skills. To date, very few African women have used ICTs for business development, entertainment, educational purposes, or for information relating to the quality of life of either themselves or their families (such as health and nutritional information). Women face challenges in pursuing education at all ages due to lack of time to attend classes, family and domestic responsibilities, and socio-cultural practices that rate girls' education as less important than boys. Literacy and basic education for girls and women are central concerns for UNESCO. Following the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000), UNESCO has placed the six Dakar goals – which include a 50 percent reduction in female illiteracy rate and the elimination of gender disparities at primary and secondary levels – at the heart of its work during 2002-2007. Efforts to ensure the access of women and girls to technical, vocational and scientific education have also been intensified.

2.8 HIGHER EDUCATION IN CAMEROON

The French government and UNESCO assisted in creating the National Institute for University studies which was created in 1961. It became the Federal University of Cameroon in 1962 and offered degree programs in law, economics, arts, human sciences and pure sciences. Professional programs were also created at the School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM), School of Agriculture (ENSA), the military Academy (EMIA) and the school of Education (ENS) (Njeuma, 2003).

The years 1969-1971 saw the creation of new professional schools like the business school (IAE) in 1968, the medical school CUSS in 1969, the school of journalism ESIJY in 1970, the International relations Institute IRIC and the school of Engineering in 1971.

ENAM and EMIA were independent structures, separate from the Federal University. The University consisted of six (6) specialized schools (ENS, ENSA, CUSS, ESIJY, IRIC and ENSP) and 3 faculties which were Arts and Human sciences, science and law and economics). Admission into these specialized schools were limited with selection based on competitive entrance examinations. On the contrary, entry into the faculties was open to all holders of the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level or Bacculaureate.

2.9 SEVEN MAIN BENEFITS OF GIRLS' EDUCATION TO SOCIETY (May Rihain :2010)

There are seven main reasons why countries, their governments and even the private sector should care about educating girls. Ultimately, girl's education is a powerful force for catalyzing a virtuous circle of positive development outcomes.

1. More educated girls and women aspire to become leaders and this expands a country's leadership and entrepreneurial talent and skills.
2. Economic growth is faster when both girls and boys learn because it brings about equality in schooling.
3. Equal education means greater economic empowerment for women and equal opportunities for women and men to have jobs.
4. More educated girls and young women are healthier and as adults they have healthier children.
5. More educated mothers have more educated children, especially daughters.
6. More educated women are able to protect themselves and their families from the effects of economic and environmental shocks.
7. Education is valuable for girls.

2.10 THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

The Beijing (China) world conference on women in 1995, brought 189 governments and they adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The platform for action set out national and international actions for the advancement of women over the years until 2000. The Beijing platform for Action prioritized gender mainstreaming as the way of achieving gender equality .Lack of effective monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming outcomes made it difficult to know the effects of gender mainstreaming on

gender equality. One of the challenges lies with identifying criteria for assessment. One big criticism of the platform for action was that there was no clear measurable indicator against which to measure success or failure. *Declaration on Education for All (EFA)*

The Beijing Conference of 1995 provided a unique opportunity for women to become a critical part of the decision making process in matters relating to economic, political and social advancement the world over. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) thus touched on 12 critical areas of women's concerns, which include women's health, violence against women, media, increased resources for women, access to education, women's rights as human rights, improved economic and political participation and empowerment, the involvement of women in the decision-making processes, and the elimination of violence against women. A central concern of BPA is the reduction of the incidence of poverty among women given the fact that over 70% of women live below the poverty line in developing countries (UN, 1995). African governments have responded unequivocally to the burden of under-development by instituting continent-specific development goals and strategies, and recognising firm commitment to gender equality as the bait to development. As expressed in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), which was adopted in 1981 and became operational on October 21, 1986, member states established bodies to protect and promote human and people's rights. The most important obligation for each country is to *adopt legislative or other measures to protect the dignity of Africa and its peoples. Although ACHPR document did not specifically cater for gender equality in member states, the Charter nonetheless, provided the basis for other bodies to consider the issue of women's rights and gender mainstreaming. A good example of this is the 2001 ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, which has a section on the rights of women and children in member states.*

2.11 MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) are fundamentally a set of eight global goals for the achievement of basic economic and social rights for all, with time bound targets to be achieved by the year 2015(ECLAC,2009).The MDGs (2000) were to:

- 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- 2) Achieve universal primary education
- 3) Promote gender equality and empower women
- 4) Reduce child mortality

- 5) Improve maternal health
- 6) Combat HIV/AIDS , malaria and other diseases
- 7) Ensure environmental sustainability
- 8) Develop a global partnership for development

All these goals are relevant to gender. MDGs are accompanied by 16 global targets. The third goal which is promote gender equality and empower women has as target the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015 (waldorf,2004)

2.12 THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

The convention on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly has been ratified by over 90 percent of members of the United Nations-185 countries(as of 2nd may 2007) Countries that have ratified or acceded to the convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice .They are also committed to submit national reports at least every four years, on measures that they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations .The core goals of CEDAW is that of achieving equality of rights, obligations and opportunities before the law for women through the application of the anti-discriminatory clause that stipulates that:

“All citizens without discrimination on any group whatsoever have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment”’. The emphasis of the policy is women empowerment. Page 10 of the policy document, in articulating the goals of the policy, clearly states that it (the policy) draws heavily from national and international initiatives related to Women in Development. To this end, several strategic actions in different sectors were developed to create women-focused programs in education, science and technology, health, employment, agriculture, industry, environment, legal space, social services, politics and decision-making and media relations. All these were geared to close gender gaps in the status of women and men in these sectors

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly is often described as an ‘international bill of rights of women’. It codified women’s rights to equality in all spheres of

life as a global norm. The Convention provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men by ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in political and public life --- including the rights to vote and to stand for election--- as well as equal access to education, health and employment. State parties agreed to take all appropriate measures, including legislation and special measures, to ensure that women enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms. By 2001, CEDAW has been ratified by 170 countries including Nigeria, thereby making gender equality a universal norm.

As the world continues to show more interest in its own development, global policies, conventions, and agreements continue to accede to gender equality and women empowerment. Among these agreements are the following:

- Declarations and Platforms for Action of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All;
- The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Agenda 21);
- The 1993 Human Rights Conference;
- The 1994 International Conference on Population and Environment;
- The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing Conference)
- The 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with Goal 3 poised to achieve gender equality in the education sector by 2015;
- The 2000 Dakar Declaration on Education for All (EFA);
- The 2004 Solemn Declaration of African Heads of State on Gender Equality within the AU policy framework (particularly the NEPAD Strategic framework).

2.13 THE CAMEROON'S CONSTITUTION

Cameroon's constitution has always upheld the principle of gender equality. However there are many legal obstacles to gender equality. Local traditions are an important part of Cameroonian life and must often these traditions adversely affect the situation of women in the country

2.13.1 Family Code

The law states that the minimum age for marriage for women is 15 (18 for men) but many families give their girls out for marriage at the age of 12. Early marriage is common in

remote areas. 36% of women between age of 15 and 19 are currently married. Forced marriage is common in Cameroon. The husband usually pays bride price to the bride's family. When the bride price is paid, the girl is considered the property of the husband. In most cultures in Cameroon, when a married man dies, the widow is often forced to marry the deceased brothers. Polygamy is permitted by law and is deeply rooted in traditions. Over 50% of men have many wives.

2.13.2 Employment

In Cameroon, women account for only 13.5% of the structured sector work force. In the informal sector, 18% of enterprises are run by women. Women mostly contribute in food trade where they account for 81% of food sellers. Pregnant women are entitled to 14 weeks of maternity leave under the constitution. Though women cannot be terminated on the grounds of being pregnant, many times women are not chosen for jobs because of the maternity factor, (United Nations CEDAW, 1999).

2.13.3 EDUCATION

The constitution of Cameroon guarantees compulsory primary education for both genders. However, girls account for 46% of primary education and only 42% at the secondary level. In higher Education, females account for only 23% of students. This is mainly due to sending girls to school which is seen as unprofitable investment. In the far North Region of Cameroon, 64% of children who could be enrolled in education are not and the difference between enrolment rates for boys is 14%. Nationwide, the girls make up 9% less of the enrollment than boys (United Nations CEDAW, 1999).

2.14 Some Factors Affecting Gender Inequality in Education

Gaps exist between policy and practice and this section tries to look at some of the major challenges that have been experienced.

According to Logan & Beoku Betts (1996), women's participation in the educational system in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), cultural and social factors are identified and analysed under the headings

- Policy factors which result from government interventions in education

Educational quality factors (curriculum, teacher attitudes and expectations, textbooks and teaching/learning materials)

- Cultural and societal expectations of gender roles

Culture is defined as knowledge and ideas that give meaning to beliefs and actions and the tools which evaluate actions. Culture has great influence on the existence of gender gaps in education, how they are investigated and how interventions should be designed. The main cultural dimensions affecting girl's education were identified as (family roots, parental lineage and extended families (Stephens, 2000).

According to Colclough et al. Gender inequality in Sub-Saharan African Education is deeply rooted and comes from few problems confronting African society like poverty, gender roles, culture, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict and other crises like lack of infrastructure. The gender disparity in education is partly because of limited access. There are many other factors as will be seen below which greatly limits women's access to education.

2.14.1 Marital Status

Some gender roles have been defined according to our culture for married women and because of these gender specific roles some women are unable to climb the educational ladder. Similarly, women who are not also married are affected by these gender specifics. The Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2008) defines a gender role as a theoretical construct in the social sciences and humanities that refers to a set of social and behavioral norms that within a specific culture are widely considered to be socially constructed. They may reflect natural gender aspirations of the members of that gender identity or they may be politicized and manipulated which results in the oppression of people.

Gender roles develop through internalization and identification during childhood. Sigmund Freud said biology determines gender identity through identification of either the mother or the father. From birth parents interact differently with their children depending on the sex. Through these interactions parents can instill different values or traits in their children. The internalization of gender norms can be seen through the type of toys given to children (Wood, 2005) Education also plays an integral role in the creation of gender norms. (Vianello et al, 1990)

2.14.2 Tradition

Mathabe (2009) revealed in his studies that in most traditional African societies, girls were not regarded as "educational investments" and this was so because they were raised to get married and take care of family. If they went to school, it was just to enable them read and write. However few African ladies still studied.

Most of the studies carried out by the first Africa World Wide research grants program (1992) found that cultural factors largely determined girl's access to education. Most African countries are patriarchal in structure and patriarchal attitudes lead to discrimination against women. This patriarchal leads to preference for boys education because of reasons like:

- Boys are expected to care for their parents in their old age and to assist in caring for their siblings
- Boys become future heads of homes, they inherit property and ensure continuity of the family .Education is seen as that factor that prepares them to perform these functions
- Daughters are considered as temporary children because they will get married and move to their husbands, homes while boys will remain in the family. Investment in girls' education is seen as benefitting the husband's family.

NDZI (1998:63) Noted that customs such as preference of sons who would as is commonly believed uphold the family name has led to the neglect of the girl child. This makes boys aggressive and it is seen as intelligence, dominance and initiative. Thus cultural factors can hinder girls enrollment in schools because in most cultures, women are considered the bearers of indigenous or traditional culture especially where that identity is under threat.

Sama (1986:36) reveals that parents often have negative attitudes towards their daughter's education. This is because they think it is preferable to educate sons than daughters because sons are expected to support old parents while daughters are expected to get married and be supported by their husbands.

Pearson and Jennifer (2008) reveal that cultural norms causes sex discrimination in education.For instance some societies suggest that women should be mothers and be responsible for child bearing.

2.14.3 Religion

The religions of certain communities have a strong influence on gender inequality in higher education. According to Okojie (1996), reports hold that both Christianity and Islam hold stereotype views about women. Christianity is more supportive of female education than Islam. In most Muslim communities, female enrolment and completion rates are very low (Kenya, Ghana)

A study by Arusha (2010) reveals that primary influences on gender inequality in moslem dominated countries. Sama (1986:36) reveal that some parents do not like educating their daughters because they want to save them from the corrupt and spoiled society. Njock (1970), cited by Tchombe (1994) in a Bassa traditional set up, an ethnic group in Cameroon, mothers educate their daughters by inculcating in them acceptable attitudes and norms necessary for their further roles as wives.

2.15 Gender Equity and Women Empowerment: The Road Half-travelled

The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is not only a goal in itself, but also a means to an end, and the end is, incontestably, the attainment of sustainable economic and social development. In order to attain this objective, the full participation and partnership of both women and men is necessary both in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibilities for the raising of kids and the running of the household.

In many parts of the world including Cameroon, women are facing threats to their lives and health, given that they are overburdened with house and farm work. In Cameroon, women's abilities and knowledge are usually not recognized in the effort towards sustainable economic development. Many women in Cameroon, most of whom live in the rural areas, do not have the right to personal political and social opinions, their right to inherit property is, most of the time, checked through the use of customary laws and cultural practices. Violence against women, in Cameroon, is a common phenomenon; women are usually not allowed to form their own opinions when it comes to reproductive rights and health-related issues. They are simply required, by tradition, to abide by what their partners or spouses think about such important issues that, strangely, affect their lives directly.

Conscious of the great importance of women's participation in every aspect of life in a country like Cameroon, the government of Cameroon has identified with multilateral efforts to empower women, and it has taken some measures, at the national level, to ensure that gender equity and women empowerment become realities in Cameroon. At the national level, the government of Cameroon encourages the work of women's groups which turn to increase the awareness of women; many NGOs like Project Parity now operate in Cameroon to further the course of gender equity and women empowerment. Today, the government of the country has more women than it used to have. There exists today in

Cameroon a ministry of women's affairs, which is supposed to focus on issues affecting women in the Cameroonian society.

Similarly, the government has made it possible for all Cameroonians, without any distinction as to sex, to have access to primary school education, and access to secondary education has been facilitated through highly subsidized education; something which serves as an incentive to all Cameroonians, including women, who have the capacity and the ability to acquire the education that will help to empower them. Also, women studies have become part of the school curricula of some universities in the country such as the University of Buea, Cameroon, and the purpose of such programs is to ensure that gender issues are taught within schools so as to increase awareness about issues facing the Cameroonian woman in particular and women across the globe in general.

Government efforts in the area of education as a tool for women empowerment and gender equity tie in well with the U.N. assertion that "Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process". In the same vein, many women have been integrated into the political life of the country. More women now serve as members of parliament, mayors, municipal counselors and top party militants of the various parties that have been authorized to operate in the country increased number of women journalists in the country today, and women-related programs are very much encouraged in the public and private media. The constitution of the Republic of Cameroon recognizes the human rights of women and the U.S. Department of State 1999 Human Rights Report says "Women rights are recognized constitutionally in Cameroon" a point which buttresses this assertion. By enshrining the protection of the rights of women in the constitution, the government of Cameroon is making efforts, at the national level, to check the injustice Cameroonian women have suffered for a long time.

Furthermore, by initiating and encouraging change through the work of national and international NGOs, the government of Cameroon is acknowledging that "change requires policy and program actions that will improve women's access to secure livelihoods and economic resources, alleviate their extreme responsibilities with regard to housework, remove legal impediments to their participation in public life, and raise social awareness through effective programs of education and mass communication."

At the international level, Cameroon has always been represented at many international forums that seek to improve the quality of life for women across the globe. Cameroon was represented at the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) which ran from 5-13 September 1994 in Cairo, Egypt and at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China; which was held from 4-15 September 1995 where, like most countries, Cameroon reaffirmed its commitment to the “equal rights and inherent dignity of women and men and other purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Declaration on the Rights to Development.”

Moreover, by being part of the Beijing Declaration Platform for Action, the government of Cameroon was working to “ensure the full implementation of the human rights of women and of the girl child as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.” By making national and international commitments for action, including those made at conferences, the government of Cameroon recognizes the urgent need to take priority action for the empowerment and advancement of women. However, though the picture painted of the government of Cameroon in this research paper concerning gender equality and women empowerment smacks of a high level commitment on the part of the government, there is still a lot of ground work that the government has to cover in this regard. Many things still stand in the way of the Cameroonian woman in her effort to attain parity with the Cameroonian man. Some of these obstacles are both institutional and traditional.

2.16 The Need for Greater Commitment: The Road Ahead

It is important at this point to underscore that much of the progress made by the government in this regard is basically in the major cities of the country. The rural areas of the country that are seriously begging for these initiatives so that the rural woman can be released from the shackles of tradition and stereotype are not having access to the education they need and deserve. In these areas of the country, traditional laws, which have enslaved the woman and made her inferior to the man, still govern those who reside there. Girls are treated differently from boys in these areas, and in certain cases, the girls are not allowed to go to

school. They are, in certain circumstances, compel to marry against their wish and, in most cases, they marry men who are a lot older than they are. Though there are more women today than they were thirty years ago in the Cameroon public service, military and private sector, it must still be mentioned that women still face huge problems when it comes to employment. Certain career paths do not take the interest of women into consideration. At the level of the public service, women are not very conspicuous in most decision-making circles. They have been reduced to administrative assistants, communications officers and secretaries with little or no decision-making authority.

Besides, in order for most women to rise to prominent positions, they have to serve as sex objects to their bosses, especially those who are single. The ‘sex-for-promotion’ philosophy is unfortunately still present in Cameroon’s public service. This situation is worse in the private sector where there are no employment rules or, if they do exist, there are no independent bodies to monitor the employment process. In certain cases women have to sell their bodies in order to obtain jobs that they clearly qualify to do. Furthermore, with the prevailing economic crisis in Cameroon, women, especially teenagers, have been rendered vulnerable to the politically and economically powerful. The absence of tough government legislation and a strict monitoring or law enforcement agency in this regard makes any effort, especially by the non-governmental community a futile endeavor. While it should be mentioned that the protection of women rights and women equality are enshrined in the constitution of the country, it must be recalled that implementation of these noble ideas has encountered many obstacles. This therefore makes it impossible for women to enjoy the same rights as men. The U.S. Department of State Report on Human Rights published in 1999 confirms this by saying that “ Women rights are recognized constitutionally in Cameroon, but that women do not, in fact, enjoy the same rights and privileges as men...no legal definition of discrimination exists, and some points of civil law are prejudicial to women.” The report continues “Because of the importance attached to customs and traditions, laws protecting women often are not respected.” This explains, in part, the massive violence women, especially those in the rural areas suffer in the hands of their abusive husbands or spouses. In certain cases, when abused women report cases of violence to the police, they are advised to return to their homes in order to have the problems solved traditionally, and traditional laws have always held that men are superior to women and men have the right to correct their spouses in any way they deem fit. From this perspective, it is therefore obvious that when traditional laws take precedence over civil laws, a woman’s complaints are not dealt with

properly because of long-standing beliefs relating to women. Even when issues between a husband and a wife are taken to court, the honesty of any decision taken by the courts is always questionable because men dominate these courts, and most of the men heading the courts hold the same archaic traditional beliefs. This situation has been compounded by the increasing poverty and unemployment in Cameroon, which have affected women more than the men and the deeply rooted corruption that has overwhelmed Cameroon's judiciary. The New Internationalist supports this view in its country profile on Cameroon released in September 2000 when it says, "The judiciary is subject to political influence and suffers corruption and inefficiency...." Since men have greater political and economic power in Cameroon, they can easily corrupt members of the judiciary whenever they have problems with their spouses. The corruption the judiciary has suffered has led to gross injustice towards women. This unfortunate situation does not only frustrate efforts aimed empowering women, it also calls for immediate and urgent government action by way reforms as a means of granting women equality with men.

2.17 Keeping Promises

If the government of Cameroon has to live up to its international commitments vis-à-vis gender equality and women empowerment, it must reform its judiciary, ensure that civil laws take precedence over traditional law, allow both national and international NGOs and human rights groups to be involved in the employment process in the country, take legal action against those who seek to foster certain negative stigmas against women and, above all, pass legislation that will set employment quarters for women, be it in the private or public sector. The government must vigorously combat sexual harassment, sex-for-promotion and sex-for-employment philosophy so that they can become things of the past. If not, whatever initiative the government of Cameroon will take regarding women equality and gender equity, its efforts will be seen as inadequate and it will be accused of paying lip-service to the noble goal of gender equity.

2.18 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) is made up of facilities which help in the transmission and exchange of knowledge. It is used in all fields of life. Amongst the technologies for information and communication, the computer and the internet represent means of learning as they permit wide and rapid exposure to the world as well as enhance pedagogical practices. These technologies ameliorates the quality of education because they

are not only used as tools for the facilitation of cognitive development of learners but also as a means of exposure to their users (Tchombe ,2008).Mbagwana and Ondoua (2008) hold that this is the era of globalization and all sectors should benefit from ICT.

Education is undergoing constant changes like any other aspect in life. This is evident in the Development in the Educational sector through ICT .Evident in the effects of globalization which is as a result of emergence of the information and communication technology. The introduction and evolution of ICTs are changing the delivery of education, the role of teachers and it is also producing a shift from industrialization to information based society. Educational institutions around the world are forced to compete globally by engaging in entrepreneurial activities to sustain themselves in an uncertain and changing world (Mbangwana, 2008). According to Barbara Muller –Ackerman, chairman of the American School Counselor Association’s (ASCA) public relation committee, as quoted by Mbangwana (2008), children cannot be effective in tomorrow’s world if trained in yesterday’s skills. Globalization is shaping children, the future citizens of the world into intelligent `` global citizens’’ with a broad range of skills and knowledge to apply to a competitive information based society.

The millennium declaration adopted in 2000 saw the urgency in ensuring that the benefits of the ICTs to all.(United Nations, 2000).Girls and women included. This view brought revolution in education as learners were seen as the constructors of their own knowledge thus making them responsible for their learning and also accountable for the quality and use of that learning. ICT has the potential of stimulating economic growth, socio-economic development ,effective education and training. The benefits of ICT are unevenly distributed within and between countries, regions, sectors and socio-economic groups (United Nations, 2005). This uneven distribution is commonly referred to as ``digital divide’’ to describe the gap which exist. This divide is seen clearly in the Global Information Technology Report 2009-2010. This has remained the world’s most comprehensive and authoritative international assessment of impact of ICT on the development process and the competition amongst nations.

2.18 ICTS AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN WOMEN

Access to ICTs is not enough. Women need training to be able to use ICTs correctly. Training in ICTs tends not to be specifically gender sensitive .Training methods are often not customized to female needs. Hafkin &Targgart (2001) argue that social and cultural barriers do not also help matters. Women do not always have equal access to ICT facilities.

Frequently, information centres or cyber cafes are located in places that women may not feel comfortable visiting or that are culturally inappropriate for them to visit. Also, most communication facilities in developing countries are in offices or in shared public access points. Again, women have the problem of time given the fact that they have multiple roles to play, heavy domestic activities, scarce leisure hours and public centers are not open when women can visit. When cyber cafes are open in the evening, ladies feel insecure to stay there till late at night. Gender inequality in access and use of ICTs for women can be achieved by modifying schedules to suit women's hours and providing female support staff and trainers

Throughout the world, there are problems of attracting young girls to science and technology studies. The problem is worst in Africa. Many mathematics and science teachers in Africa hold outmoded views that girls do not possess scientific aptitude. Such views discourage female students (Hafkin & Targgart, 2001). Girls are mostly encouraged to enter the job market or get married rather than seek higher education. There is a presumption that ICTs are not for women. Fewer women know the international languages that dominate the internet, given their limited access to schooling. Women in rural areas are unlikely to acquire computer skills. Information literacy essentially involves using information contextually, a skill that women often lack (www.web.worldbank.org).

2.19 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Breheim and Kassin (1996) cited by Shu (2007:14) define a theory as "an organized set of principles used to explain observed phenomena". The authors go further to say a good theory must be characterized by simplicity, comprehensiveness, generativity and precision.

2.19.1 INTERPERSONAL CONTACT THEORY BY ALLPORT

Allport (1954) cited in Anderson (1990) put forward the interpersonal contact theory which supports workers development due to interaction. He proposed the importance of cognitive and affective change which is evidenced as a result of interpersonal contact with colleagues. This brings about the satisfaction of four conditions which include:

- Equality in terms of status
- Cooperative work
- Pursuing of common goals and a higher authority endorses the interaction

- This theory shows how interpersonal interaction can reduce the rate of gender disparity. Also, there is the importance of interactions with diverse colleagues. This theory emphasizes the fact that societal norms play a critical role in facilitating interactions. The society should create meaningful forums for both sexes to meet and share ideas thus bridging the gap. Interpersonal contact theory is related to this work because it takes into cognizance the inter-relation of both sexes. Cordial relationship favours conditions for gender equality and equity. This interpersonal interaction brings in the spirit of boldness in women thus making them to be courageous. By interacting with the opposite gender, learning takes place in all fields of life and especially in the technological, scientific, economic and political which are mostly seen by many societies as fields for the male folk..

2.19.2 B. F Skinner's (1988) Theory of Operant Conditioning

Skinner discovered that the pigeons associated whatever behavior they were doing at the time the food was rewarded and consequently repeated that action. Operant conditioning includes pairing through reinforcement and punishment. Reinforcement is something that increases the likelihood that a behavior will continue. Punishment is something that decreases the likelihood that a behavior will continue (Skinner, 1988). Both reinforcement and punishment have two types, positive and negative. Positive reinforcement is when something is added to increase the likelihood that a behavior will occur and negative is when something is taken away to increase the likelihood of a repeated behavior. Positive punishment is when something is added to decrease the likelihood of a behavior to occur and negative is when something is taken away to decrease the likelihood of a behavior to occur.

Skinner believed that learners could be conditioned to acquire desirable skills and behaviors; by breaking down learning into simple steps, and rewarding children after the completion of each step, learning can be more successful and enjoyable (Tambo, 2003:46). In the content of ICT and gender policy, behaviorism is firmly established in practice. It is most useful in ICT for identifying relationships between genders. ICTs can be used in operant conditioning to produce desired behavioral outcomes. B.F Skinner's behaviorist theory provides the theoretical support behind such practices as Behavioral Intervention Plans – contracting with ICT used for desired behaviors in exchange for rewards and technological know-how. However, the individual does not know beforehand the behavior or response that the learner will emit, but he or she knows what behaviors or responses he or she would like to

learn. If the individual makes these behaviors, the individual can also reinforce them (while ignoring all other responses) so as to increase the probability of those particular responses being repeated. An example of a powerful negative reinforcement is screaming when working on ICT tools because a tool like computer always gives direction. The sound is so annoying that it turns to disturb others.

Operant conditioning is very influential in education and can be used in learning ICT by both genders. Skinner stated that a good educational program needs to have clear directions, tasks broken into small steps, immediate feedback, and positive reinforcement. ICT related issues are equally taught using the concept of shaping. This is a type of reinforcement used to create a new behavior by guiding the subject towards a desired behavior. For instance, an ICT teacher helps a learner learn to manipulate ICT tools by reinforcement. There are simple steps that a learner can use in learning ICT before getting to the complex stages. When the individual uses the simple steps correctly, the individual may be reinforced with a positive statement “Good job” if there is someone teaching him or her. When learning alone, the reward will be that satisfaction of having learnt something new. The next step the student learns however is slightly more difficult, and the student will not receive the same reward unless he or she can perform more difficult task. To Skinner, all behaviors can be explained through applying the above principles of operant conditioning. In other words, the environment controls our behaviors and everything we do is in response to some type of reflex, reinforcement, or punishment.

Instead of focusing on associations between stimuli and responses, operant conditioning focuses on the effects of consequences on behaviors. The operant model of learning begins with the idea that certain consequences tend to make certain behaviors happen more frequently. As with responded conditioning, the original research about this model of learning was not done with people, but with animals. One of the pioneers in the field was a Harvard professor named B.F. Skinner, who pointed out many parallels between operant conditioning in animals and in humans (Skinner, 1938, 1948, 1988).

2.19.3 Operant conditioning and Learning of ICT

It is essential to ask whether operant conditioning equally describes learning in human beings. On this point, the respond is clearly “yes”. Operant conditioning deals with manipulation while learning of ICT and its application also has to do with manipulation of objects to get desired results. When the results are gotten; the results of manipulation is

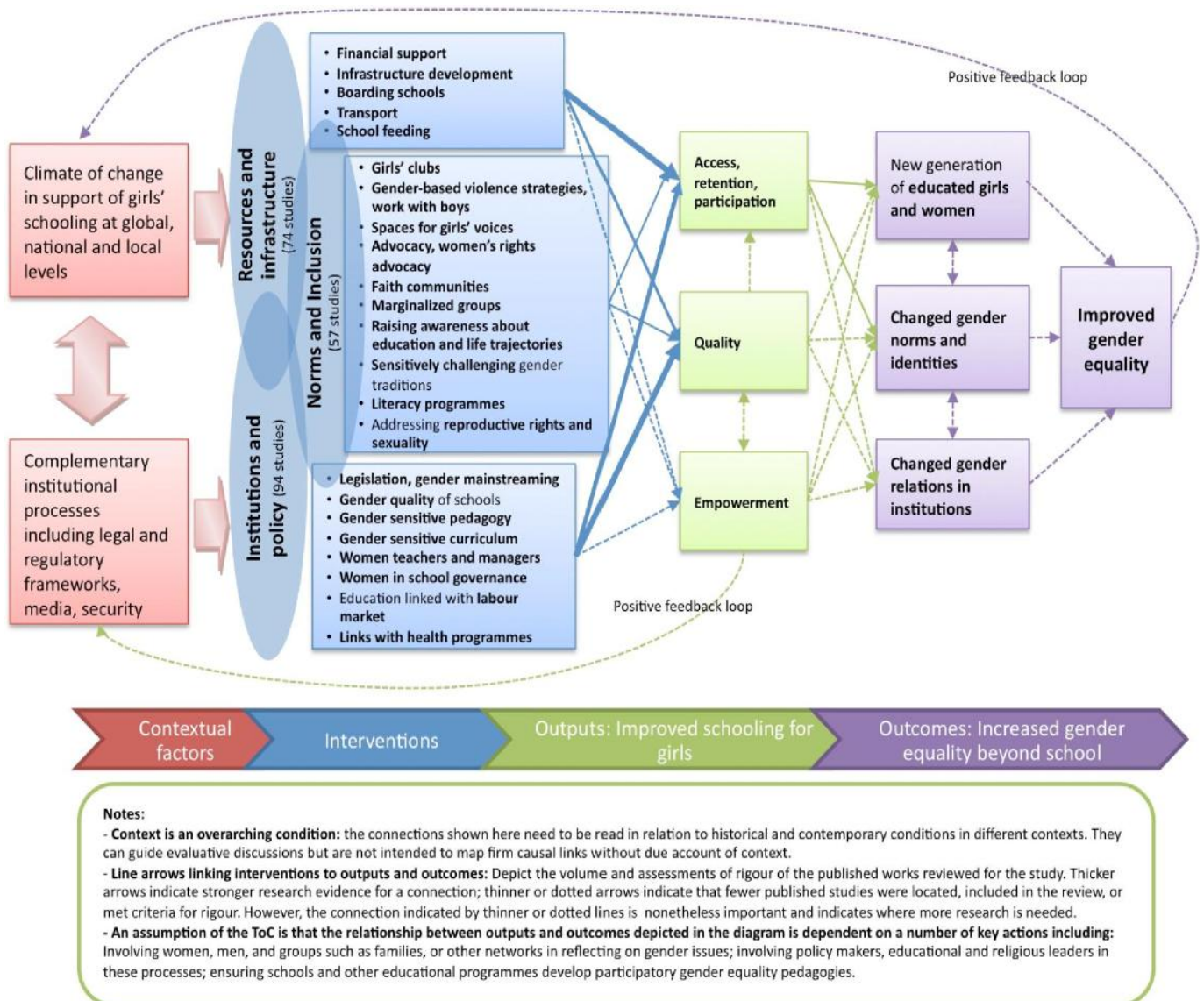
reinforcement the individual manipulating and it gives that zeal to manipulate and get more reward

Also, learning by operant conditioning is not confined to any particular level, subject area, or style of teaching, but by nature it happens everywhere. Besides, teachers are not the only persons controlling reinforcements; sometimes, they are controlled by the activity itself.

Since operant conditioning happens so widely, its effects on motivation are very complex. Operant conditioning can encourage intrinsic motivation to the extent that the reinforcement for an activity can sometimes be the activity itself. More often, however, operant conditioning stimulates both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation at the same time.

An important concern in discussing operant conditioning is its application to teaching and learning. The computer is like the laboratory (Skinner box) where Skinner and his associates developed the principles of operant conditioning. Positive reinforcement causes the reinforced behavior to increase in frequency. Rewarded behavior is therefore strengthened and is repeated in the future. Negative reinforcement equally causes the frequency of the behavior to be increased. The removal of the punishment serves to strengthen the behavior. Although punishment can lead to improved learning and behavior in some cases, the results of its use have been found to be very degrading. Punishment often produces side effects such as fear, hatred, dislikes, and a desire for revenge especially in those students who are punished. Recent research reveals that students work extra hard and learn effectively when rewarded for doing something right than when punished for doing something wrong (Charles, 1999). Thus teachers should use punishment only as a last resort. Besides, the timing of reinforcement and punishment is very important in behavior modification. Students behavior that the teacher wishes to discouraged should be punished immediately after it occurs. This is because, behavior that is not reinforced at once tends to be weakened; and behavior that is not punished at once tends to be strengthened. Besides, the frequency with which the behavior is reinforced is very imperative. Thus, if a teacher wishes to strengthen a particular student's behavior, he or she should reward it each time the behavior occurs (continuous reinforcement).

THEORY OF CHANGE (GIRLS EDUCATION EVIDENCE BRIEF)



2.20 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

From the topic of study, the researcher came up with the general and specific hypothesis

2.20.1 GENERAL HYPOTHESIS

There is a relationship between choice of career through ICT and Gender Policy

2.20.2 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS

- There is a relationship between information and Gender Policy
- There is a relationship between communication and Gender Policy

- There is a relationship between technology and Gender Policy

2.21 DEFINITION OF VARIABLES

2.21.1 INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

According to Makyinghome (2003) Independent variables are the conditions or characteristics that the researcher manipulates in order to determine their relationship with other state of affairs. The independent variables of the study are: choice of career through ICT, information, communication and technology.

2.21.2 DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Makyinghome (2003) defines dependent variable as those characteristics that are being predicted when statements of hypothesis are made. They change as the researcher manipulates the independent variable. The dependent variable of this study is gender policy.

2.21.3 SYNOPTIC TABLE

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS	THEMES	DIMENSION OF THEMES	INDICATORS
<p>MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION</p> <p>To what extent can choice of career through ICT influence gender policy?</p>	<p>GENERAL OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To study the relationship that exist between choice of career through ICT and gender policy</p>	<p>GENERAL HYPOTHESIS</p> <p>There is a significant relationship between choice of career through ICT and gender policy.</p>	<p>THEME 1</p> <p>Choice of career through ICT</p>	<p>Motivation - Difficulties</p> <p>-Knowledge of ICT</p>	<p>-scarce</p> <p>-none</p> <p>-typing</p>
<p>SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS</p> <p>1) To what</p>	<p>SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES</p> <p>1)To investigate the relationship that exist</p>	<p>Specific hypothesis</p>		<p>-how it is gotten</p>	<p>-service notes</p> <p>-newspapers</p>

<p>extend can information influence gender policy?</p> <p>2) To what extend can communication influence gender policy?</p> <p>3) To what extend can technology influence gender policy?</p>	<p>between information and gender policy</p> <p>2) To examine the relationship that exists between communication and gender policy.</p> <p>3) To scrutinize the relationship that exists between technology and gender policy.</p>	<p>1) There is a significant relationship between information and gender policy</p> <p>2) There is a significant relationship between communication and gender policy</p> <p>3) There is a significant relationship between technology and gender policy.</p>	<p>THEME 2</p> <p>Information</p> <p>THEME 3</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>THEME 4</p> <p>Technology</p>	<p>-how it helps career growth</p> <p>-How it is done</p> <p>-difficulties</p> <p>- Technological skills</p> <p>-how it helps in career growth</p> <p>-advantages</p> <p>- disadvantages</p>	<p>-internet</p> <p>-always current</p> <p>Work is done smoothly.</p> <p>-verbally</p> <p>-e-mail</p> <p>-written documents</p> <p>-Excel</p> <p>-power point</p> <p>-SPSS</p> <p>-Data analysis</p> <p>-tying</p> <p>- presentations</p> <p>Slows the task</p>
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			THEME 5 ICT and Gender	-what impedes women in ICT -what can be done to solve the problem	-ignorance -laziness -lack of means -training sensitization
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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the research methodology of the study which describes the procedure to be followed in realizing the work. This chapter will focus on research design , research site , research population

According to Amin (2005) , methodology is `` a strategy or procedure that is used for the collection of empirical data ‘. Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary (4th Ed) defines methodology as a system of ways of doing , teaching or studying something.

3.1 TYPE OF RESEARCH

The type of research used for this study is the qualitative research because it was deemed appropriate in acquiring in-depth information about the topic. This approach also seeks to know opinions and feelings about ICT and gender.

According to Bryman (1993, p. 46) ,qualitative methodology is `` an approach to the study of the social world which seeks to describe and analyse the culture and behavior of humans and their groups from the point of view of those being studied ‘. Also , Babbie and Mouton (2001) assert that qualitative research is an attempt to understand people in terms of their own definitions of their world. Qualitative research implies interpretative as it attempts to see how people make use of their lives.

Collins (1999) says that qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts , definitions , characteristics , metaphors , symbols and description of things and it is much more subjective and uses methods of collecting information , mainly individual , in-depth interview and focus groups. Blaxter, Hughes & Tight (2001) describe qualitative research as empirical research where the data is not in the form of numbers. The qualitative approach allows participants to share their experiences and give their points of view without the researcher being seen as the boss.

According to Burns and Groove (2005) , the characteristics of qualitative research research are:

- ❖ Qualitative research involves a broad and holistic approach that tries to understand and explain human behavior
- ❖ Also, it is humanistic because it is research with people and not on people.
- ❖ Again, it is naturalistic as it explains the phenomenon from a unique perspective of the respondent.
- ❖ Furthermore, it involves the qualitative researcher as the main instrument in the research process, using data, interview and observation.
- ❖ Finally, using data analysis which involves the individual interpretation of words and therefore interpretative as its focus on the words rather than quantities.

This researcher found qualitative research relevant for this study because data received from respondents or participants is real. A wide and diverse range of information is given through direct and face –to –face contact with participants. According to this qualitative approach, participants are able to express their opinions in a natural setting without any fear. As concerns this research, the participants spoke for themselves thereby emphasizing their human capacities.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Amin (2005: 210), a research design is a plan for carrying out a research project .A research design depends on the methodological orientation of the research.

A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between planning and the execution or implementation of the research . (Terre Blanche et al, 2002). The authors went further to say that a valid and coherent research design takes into account the decisions made relevant to four dimensions which include : the theoretical paradigm informing the research ,the purpose of the research , the context or situation within which the research is carried out , the research techniques employed to carry out and analyse the data .As a result, the intent of this study is to find out how information and communication technology can affect gender policy.

Kerlinger (1973) on his part thinks that a research design is a program that shows all what a researcher plans to do from the time he formulates the hypothesis to the time he analysis his data.

The research design used for this study is the exploratory research design. According to Polit and Beck (2008), exploratory research is aimed at investigating the full nature of the phenomenon, the manner in which it is manifested and the other factors with which it is related. Burns and Grove (2003) opine that exploratory studies are designed to increase the knowledge of the field of study.

Mouton and Prozesky (2001), give various reasons why the exploratory study is often used. Some of the reasons were: to satisfy the researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding, to test the feasibility of understanding a more extensive study, to develop the methods to be explored in any subsequent study, to explicate the central concepts and constructs of the study, to determine priorities for future research and develop hypothesis about an existing phenomenon.

3.3 AREA OF STUDY

This study was carried to explore, examine and describe how Information and Communication Technology can affect gender policy. The area of study is Yaounde. Yaounde is the head quarter of the Centre Region and the capital city of Cameroon. It is an administrative town. All the various ministries and even the presidential unity palace is found in Yaounde. This explains why Yaounde was chosen.

3.4 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Population according to Amin (2005 : 235) refers to the complete collection of all the elements (Units) that are of interest in a particular investigation. He also defines population as the aggregate or totality of objects or individuals having one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher and where inferences are to be made in as sampling study. It may be a complete collection of all the objects or people such as students, cars, animals, heads of households, plants, schools, books, farms, companies etc. The population of this study was the female staff of the Ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family. The population of the study is the total number of participants from which the sample is selected, due to practical and financial considerations, it is rarely possible to study all the members of the population (Mitchell & Jolley, 2004). Mbangwana (1999, p 73) defines population as ``a portion of the universe to which the researcher has access'.

3.4.1 TARGET POPULATION’.

It includes all workers in the ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the Family.

3.4.2 ACCESSIBLE POPULATION

This includes all the workers in in the ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family who were present at the time when the research was being conducted and were willing to participate voluntarily .

3.5 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

According to fraenkel et al (2000 :103), a sample in a research study is `` any group on which information is obtained. They equally define sampling as `` the process of selecting a number of individuals from a population , preferably in such a way that the individuals are representative of the larger group from which they are selected (p 671)

Amin (2005) says sampling is the process of extracting a portion of the population from which generalization to the population can be made. Sampling is the process used to select cases of inclusion in the research study. (Terre Blanche & Durreheim ,2002) To Kerlinger (1973) Sampling involves taking a portion of the population , making observation on this small portion and then generalizes the finding to the large population.

The sample of this study was the staff of the ministry of women empowerment and the Family. Random sampling was used , that is those available and were willing to work with the researcher.

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The instrument used for this study was interview guide that were carefully designed for data collection in accordance with the research objectives , questions and hypothesis. Open and closed ended questions were used .Closed –ended questions were used for easy analysis of some information .Open –ended questions were used for greater depth of responses to certain questions and some vital information that the researcher might have missed finding out. Interviews were also used which helped the researcher to bring in incidental comments ,on - the – spot explanations, facial and bodily expressions , tone of voice , feelings and gestures into the data collected. Qualitative data was gotten through interview which was intended to give freedom of expression to the respondents and consequently ensuring the validity of the responses .Also , interview questions made

respondents to give their experiences , feelings , beliefs and convictions about theme in question . The purpose of an interview is to allow the researcher to understand the experiences of other people as well as their meaning. (Terre Blanche &Durrheim ,2002).

The researcher has specific questions to ask but may ask additional questions to obtain more information. The questions should thus be directed to the participant`s experiences , beliefs , feelings , and convictions about the theme in question. Terre Blanche &Durrheim (2002) , hold that an interview is a more natural form of interaction with people. It gives the opportunity to know people more intimately and understand how they think and feel. The participants are able to give a more detailed picture of their perceptions and beliefs (Welman& Kruger ,2001)

According to O`Leary (2005) , the advantages of interview include relationship and trust ,provision of rich in-depth qualitative data which is verbal and non- verbal, flexibility to explore tangents and structure, standardized and quantified data. However , Creswell (2009) mentions the limitations of interviews as providing direct information filtered through the views of interviewees , providing information in a designated place rather than the natural field setting , the researcher`s presence may bias responses .

According to Burns and Grove (2005) ,The advantages of using an interview guide are:

- It is flexible and can allow the researcher to explore an in-depth meaning that cannot be obtained with other methods.
- Also, this method uses inter personal skills to facilitate cooperation and elicit more information.
- Again , questions are easily rephrased to increase understanding.
- Lastly , researcher will easily gather data from participants who may be illiterate , have low literacy level and may experience difficulties in completing a questionnaire.

When a participant is given the freedom to speak , the information obtained becomes more relevant and it allows the researcher to get more in depth information from participants.

3.7 VALIDATION OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

According to Mbua (2003), Validity is the accuracy with which an instrument measures what it intends to measure. Haridakis et al (2010) says validity refers to a study measuring what it intends to measure. Amin (2005 : 284) said validity is the most important idea to consider when preparing or selecting an instrument for use and that research instrument is said to be valid if it actually measures what it is supposed to measure. After the drawing up of the interview guide, the researcher presented these to two senior researchers and friends who read through and discussed a few points. Corrections and necessary modifications were made before it was presented to the supervisor of the work. She reviewed them in terms of their clarity and appropriateness to the needs of the study. This exercise was to ensure the face and content validity of the questionnaire and interview guide.

3.7.1 Face validity

When the interview guide were constructed, it was handed to the supervisor of the project who critically examined the items, checking their appropriateness and pointed out errors. All necessary corrections were made and face validity was ensured.

3.7.2 Content validity

To assess the content validity of the interview guide, the supervisor of this study examined each item that was constructed in relation to the objectives of the study. After making necessary corrections, she confirmed the relevance of the items to the objectives of the study. This exercise gave the interview guide content validity.

3.7.3 Reliability of instrument

Kerlinger (1973) opines that an instrument is reliable when it is consistent. According to Haridakis et al (2010), researchers commonly rely on methods that have a solid reliable sound track record. To test the reliability, the research instrument was passed through a series of individuals who were considered as judges and there was an agreement amongst these judges in terms of their responses given thus instrument is said to be reliable and valid. This is a characteristic method to test both validity and reliability of research instruments for purely qualitative studies and it is generally referred to as "accord into judge".

3.8 ADMINISTRATION OF THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

Having done the face validity and content validity, all the necessary modifications concerning the construction of the questionnaire and the interview guide, the questionnaire were administered to the sample population of the study. This was done using the face to face or the direct delivery technique as the respondents answered the questions independently. As we moved to the area of the study, we started with self-introduction to the respondents and then continued with the purpose of the study. We administered the questionnaire followed by the interview for each respondent. We considered the fact that all the subjects could not read and understand English well, we helped in interpreting the questions and read the proposed answers to them and we filled their responses in such cases.

3.9 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

De Vos et al (2005 :333) explain that data analysis is “ process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass collected “. The data analysis strategy for the study was content analysis using open coding (De Vos & Van Zyl ,1998) .This is also because this study is qualitative. This study is qualitative and an interview guide was used to collect data. The data will be analysed following the themes or main items that were found on the interview guide.

According to Mouton (1996) qualitative data analysis focuses on understanding rather than explanation of the phenomenon in a particular context or setting .Also, to Patton (2002 :432) “qualitative analysis transforms data into findings which involves reducing the volume of raw information, shifting significance from trivia, identifying significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveals.

Rubin, H. J & Rubin, I.S (1995) talked about the thematic approach which was used in this study in analyzing data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings obtained from the interview guide that was administered. This investigation was qualitative .This interview that was carried out was to make correspondents to give information on the research which was information and communication technology and gender policy. In this chapter, the researcher presents and analysis the data collected from the ministry of women empowerment and the family. The data was collected using an interview guide as can be seen in the appendix .The qualitative data is presented in the form of themes or sub- headings. This chapter is made up of analysis of the findings of each statement , an interpretation of the findings , limitations of the study and concludes with a summary of the findings.

In this chapter, it will be important to recall the research questions so as to provide direction for analysis. Research questions serve as guidelines for the interpretation of data collected from the field.This study was guided by the research questions below:

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extend can choice of career through ICT influence Gender Policy?

SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- To what extend can information influence Gender Policy?
- To what extend can communication influence Gender Policy?
- To what extend can technology influence Gender Policy?

4.1 Preliminaries or Demographic profile of the respondents

Table 4.1.1 Number of respondents

Respondents	number	Percentage
Female	15	75
Male	5	25
Total	20	100

Table 4.1.2 marital status of respondents

Marital status	Number	Percentage
Married	13	65
Single	7	35
Divorced	0	0
Total	20	100 %

Table 4.1.3 Age Range of the respondents

Age Range	Number	Percentage (%)
21 -35	6	30
36 - 50	11	55
51 +	3	15
Total	20	100 %

Table 4.1.4 Level of Education of the Respondents

Level of Education	Number	Percentage (%)
Undergraduate	5	25
Graduate	6	30
Post - graduate	9	45
Total	20	100 %

Table 4.1.5 Religious Background

Religious Background	Number	Percentage
Christian	19	95
Moslem	1	5
Total	20	100

Table 4.1.6: Representative table of those interviewed

POST OF RESPONSIBILITY	SEX	AGE RANGE	QUALIFICATION
State Agent	Female	36-50	Undergraduate
Chief of service for training	Female	21-35	Undergraduate
Mail Agent	female	36-50	undergraduate
Secretary	Female	36-50	Undergraduate
Chief of service for non-civil servants	Female	21-35	undergraduate
Chief of service for the promotion of the family	Female	21-35	graduate
Assistant Research Officer	Female	21-35	graduate
Chief of service for professional insertion Of women and young girls	Female	55+	graduate
Chief of office for out-going mails	Female	21-35	Post-graduate
Chief of service	Female	36-50	Post-graduate
Chief of service for the training of those on internship and professional	Female	51+	Post- graduate

management			
Chief of office for civil servants	Female	21-35	Post-graduate
Chief of office for market services	Female	36-50	Post-graduate
Sub- director in charge of gender	Female	36-50	Post-graduate
Chief of service in charge of popularisation	Female	36-50	Post- graduate
Sub-Director in charge of family protection	Male	36-50	Post-graduate
Sub-director for economic promotion of women	male	36-50	Post graduate
Chief of service for the protection of family and children	Male	36-50	Graduate
Chief of service for the promotion of women's rights	male	51+	Graduate
Chief of service for social promotion of women	Male	36-50	Graduate

4.2 CHOICE OF CAREER THROUGH ICT

The choice of career through ICT was the first aspect on which questions were asked. The researcher wanted to know what motivated the respondents to choose the career in which they were. Varied answers were given on this question. Some respondents said there was no motivation because they applied for jobs in the public service and when they were recruited, they were posted to the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family. To the people who gave this response, they had no choice but to work where they were posted without any motivational factor. All they needed was a job and could work where ever they were sent. Majority of the respondents gave this answer of no motivation. Two respondents were trained teachers from higher Teacher Training Colleges and what motivated them to work in that ministry is the fact that they were tired of holding the chalk to teach and did not want to teach again. Two other respondents said they had studied Women and Gender in the University of Buea and they love advocating for women and children's rights. Again some respondents said they graduated from ENAM as social workers and they were posted in MINPROFF. These social workers were not happy working there because what they read in school was not really applicable and they are disgruntled.

Also, the second question was asked if the respondents had difficulties in choosing the career and all of them said they had no difficulties. This can be justified by the fact most of them were not pursuing a specific career before they got their jobs. The third question in this section had to do with their knowledge in information and communication technology (ICT). All the respondents at least had knowledge in ICT as justified by the fact that they usually undergo training programs organized by their ministry.

Again, the fourth question was asked in this section if the knowledge in ICT helped them to further their career. All the respondents accepted and went further to say knowledge in ICT helps them to type their documents themselves, format and print. They also said ICT helps them to economize time and also treat documents at short notice. Moreover, majority of the workers had gone far in ICT because they can do power point presentations, work on word and do excel .All of these as they said is a plus to their lives and it brings about job satisfaction. Lastly, ICT helps them to do research on many issues and also helps in communication as information can be sent to colleague's e-mail addresses .The respondents hold that this knowledge helps them to do their work but this knowledge cannot cause an individual to be promoted. As concerns promotion, they mostly look at level of education before other factors.

Lastly in this section, they were asked if lack of knowledge in ICT can hinder an individual's career. All the respondents agreed and gave various reasons on why they thought so. There are reasons like lack of knowledge in ICT can slow down work because many will have to give secretaries to type rather than doing it themselves. Treating documents manually is time consuming and an individual who lacks knowledge in ICT will be so limited because we are in a world driven by ICT. Also lack of this knowledge brings in low self-esteem and there is no personal satisfaction. Again they said lack of knowledge in ICT makes work stagnant and dormant. It also hinders effective communication since nowadays communication is mostly done using technologies .

4.3 INFORMATION

This is the third section which has to do with information and how it affects career. The first question in this section had to do with how information is always gotten. The respondents said they always get information through service notes which is always sent to all offices. Also , the ministry has its magazine that carries information on their activities for the whole year .Another method in which they get information is by reading newspapers especially Cameroon tribune which is always distributed every day in Government Offices , listening to news over the radio , watching television and on the internet. As concerns information again, the various chiefs of services give information at their various levels, e-mails are used to send information and even through phone calls. The respondents say at some point in time information is passed verbally.

Furthermore, the second question in this section had to do with importance of this information in their career or how it helps them in their career. The respondents said the information gotten through the various ways above helps them to ameliorate their levels and most of the time they read good articles that help them in their field of work. Also, information helps them to do more research to upgrade and prepare for challenges ahead. The information aids them to see opportunities that are outside and also in the treatment of files. Moreover ,information gotten from the various sources makes them to know how other organisations work for the promotion of women and the family thus giving them a new insight. This however can help them to improve their own system .Lastly information is also gotten on how women can live and all this information also helps when they have round table discussions and seminars where opinions are shared.

The last question in this section had to look at the extent to which lack of information can hinder an individual's career. The respondents said lack of information causes the individual to be behind in all aspects because lack of information is deformation. Also, lack of information causes stagnation and the individual concerned will not live his full potentials. Other respondents said lack of information will retard the treatment of files and will also cause the individual to be backward . Again it was said that an individual who lacks information will not be able to make proposals because he is not informed and will always have to ask from others thus making his job boring. In the same light, the respondents said lack of information can cause people to miss big time opportunities and even jobs because they are not aware of happenings. Finally, when an individual lacks information, he always feels empty and inferiority complex can creep in. All the above information on how lack of information can hinder one's career was given by the respondents. All these responses given is in accordance to the fact that if an individual is not informed, then he is deformed.

4.4 COMMUNICATION

Communication is very important in all sectors of life. Human beings cannot do without communication. The first question in this section had to do the way in which the workers usually communicate. The respondents said they communicate verbally and at times it is written. The general ways of communication that the respondents gave was communication through service notes phone calls ,internet , e- mails , hand written documents , meetings with director ,fax and messages in phones. The service in charge of communication also sends out information .They also said communication in MINPROFF is two way that is from top to bottom and from bottom to top. Hierarchy and subordinates communicate well thus fostering their job.

As concerns difficulties encountered while communicating with the opposite sex, the respondents said they have no difficulties because the ministry of women's empowerment and the family is there to promote women's rights and as such there is no marginalization from the men. Communication is smooth amongst all the workers no matter the sex.

4.5 TECHNOLOGY

The first question in this section was on the technological skills that the workers possess as individuals. Some of them said they know only how to type and search things in the internet. Some respondents are more advanced because they know how to do power point,

Excel, work on word and do data analysis. Again, the second question in this section had to do with how technological skills help them to grow in their career. They said these skills first of all increases their curriculum vitae and also gives them psychological satisfaction. Also, When their boss needs information , they easily search and give him. Also, the respondents had the third question on the advantages that they have because of this technological competence. According to the respondents, the advantages of technological competences are many and they cited some depending on the competences that they possess. Some of the advantages given were that it makes work easier as they do things themselves rather than begging the secretary or paying an expert when it comes to complicated cases. Those who had knowledge in power point said it helps them in presentations in seminars and meetings. Few workers had knowledge in data analysis especially in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) .They said this knowledge helps them to analyse their data especially when they come back from the field and are writing reports. The respondents who had knowledge in excel said it helps them when they are doing work that has to do with tables and calculations. Finally, the last question in this section deals with the disadvantages of lack of technological competence .The disadvantages are enormous given the fact that we are in an era of technology. The disadvantages that the respondents gave is that lack of this knowledge makes work slow .Also, it hinders research because the ability to use the internet is lacking. Again , lack of this competence will cause the individual to always be behind because they will be begging people to help them. Furthermore , files will be treated late and time will always be wasted. Lastly, it is cost oriented.

4.6 ICT AND GENDER

This section carries the last set of questions that were on the interview guide. The first question here had to do with a measure that was put in place to encourage women in ICT.As seen on the National Gender Policy, concerning ICT and gender, we found out that there was the issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.The respondents were asked to talk on the measures that were put in place to achieve this. They said the operation 100,000 women by 2012 was brought about by Armand Claude Abanda of EIG. It was to start in 2005 and end in 2012.It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part .The women were drawn from the ten regions of the country. Finally more than 103,000 women were trained by 2012.This project was successfully achieved. Again , the respondents were asked to talk on the other measures that the ministry has put in place to encourage women in ICT. The

respondents said sensitization is always carried out so that women can be aware of the opportunities in ICT. Women are also encouraged to sell through the internet. The strategic area number one of the National Gender Policy talks about education and gender.

Furthermore, the respondents were asked if other ministries were involved in gender issues or MINPROFF handles it alone. The respondents said all other ministries are involved in gender issues and they have gender focal points. According to the respondents, these focal points ensure that gender issues are put in the policies and programs of their various ministries. MINPROFF monitors and coordinates the gender programs of other ministries. When other ministries are carry out programs on gender, they invite MINPROFF and civil society organisations. MINPROFF always supports the gender activities of other ministries for example, MINESEC recently organized a program to improve performance of girls in mathematics.

In addition, the respondents were asked if this issue of 30% of women in decision making is applicable in MINPROFF. The respond given was that the issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by the United Nations and African Union is talking about fifty/fifty. The respondents said MINPROFF makes efforts so that women can be involved decision making in all ministries. She also carries out studies and publishes so that the public can be aware of what is on ground. The respondents said there is improvement in women's involvement in decision making.

In the same light, a question was asked whether respondents have the ability to rise because of their knowledge in ICT. All the responses given by the respondents was no, reasons being that ICT helps them in doing work in the offices, increases their curriculum vitae but it's not considered for appointments or promotion. The respondents said level of education and longevity in service matters for promotion and not knowledge in ICT. On the other hand, a respondent who is so knowledgeable in ICT said it can help her as an individual to get a new job in addition to what she has. Also, she said this knowledge can earn her more income because she can analyse data for people and even become a consultant. The respondents said a worker who has knowledge in SPSS, data analysis and excel can generate more income because he will analyse data for those who cannot do it and he will have extra income. The third question in this section had to do with what impedes women in ICT. The respondents gave varied answers to this question. Some respondents said lack of time because women are always very busy with house hold chores, taking care of the children and the

entire family and many other activities that needs their attention. Other opinions held that lack of money impedes some women from getting into ICT. Again , the respondents said technophobia is another factor that impedes women from ICT. Also , some respondents said women are not motivated and some are not capable. Furthermore, some respondents said women what impedes some women is the thought that ICT is meant for men and that it is difficult. Moreover, some respondents said illiteracy and laziness impedes some women in ICT. In the same light, what impedes some women is ignorance and even negligence. Lastly, some women think they do not need ICT at all. They think ICT is meant for youths and not for the older generation. This is the opinion of some respondents. The last question in this section has to do with what can be done to encourage women in the Field of ICT. Almost all the respondents said there should be sensitization at the urban and local levels on the importance of ICT. The sensitization should be done in churches, markets, meetings and quarters. Some respondents said training programs should be organized and at reduced cost so that women can learn about ICT. Also , some respondents said multi – media centres should be opened where women can be thoroughly trained in ICT. Other respondents were of the opinion that scholarship should be given especially to women so that they can be encouraged to engage in ICT. One of the respondents said e – commerce should be encouraged so that ICT equipment will be bought on line

Finally, the respondents said for women who are already working who do not have interest in ICT, they should not have secretaries so that all the ICT work will be on their shoulders. With this method, they will be left with no choice than to learn ICT.

4.7 VERIFICATION OF THE HYPOTHESIS

This study had four hypothesis. The main research hypothesis and three specific hypothesis. From the research that was carried out in the field, it can be said that information and communication technology has a relationship with gender.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS AND PROFESSIONAL IMPLICATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter , we interpret and discuss the research findings with particular reference to the views of other theorists and authors cited in the literature review. Conclusions are drawn based on the interpretations and recommendations made. The difficulties encountered in the study will also be highlighted in this chapter. Finally suggestion for further research.

5.1 INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This study was aimed at investigating the link that information and communication technology has with gender policy. An interview guide was used as the main research instrument and data collected was analysed thematically using the exploratory research design. The results will be interpreted based on the various themes and the questions that were under the themes.

5.1.1 CHOICE OF CAREER THROUGH ICT

The aim of this theme here was to find out if there is a link between the ladies choice of career and ICT. The questions in this section had to do with what motivated them in choosing their career , the difficulties they encountered as females and how ICT can help them to further their career. From the responses that the respondents gave the motivation factor is very low. Only one respondent had a degree in women and gender studies from the University of Buea and had that motivation to forge ahead and work in the domain of gender. The other respondents who formed more than ninety percent were just job seekers and they fell under the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the family. They applied for jobs in the Ministry of Public Service and they were recruited and posted in the ministry of Women’s empowerment and the family. Also , the respondents had knowledge in ICT and it helped them in their job like in typing.

The responses given by respondents on how ICT helps them in their career is a motivational factor to learn more on ICT to ease their Job. B.F Skinner likens this to

reinforcement in that when the rat or bird manipulates and gets food, it encourages him to manipulate more. Also ,as ICT eases the job of the respondents, they try to do more and also learn other things.

MDGs are accompanied by 16 global targets. The third goal which is promote gender equality and empower women has as target the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015 (waldorf,2004). This explains why there are more ladies in this ministry.

“All citizens without discrimination on any group whatsoever have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment” (CEDAW). This point on lack of motivation is justified by this CEDAW opinion that all individuals need to secure livelihood and employment. The workers here just applied for jobs through the public service and were sent to the Ministry of Women’s empowerment thus to better their livelihood. CEDAW supports this first theme.

5.1.2 INFORMATION

Here, the respondents said they get information through service notes, newspapers , internet , radio and from watching news. This makes them current and also broadens their minds. The information related to their career helps them to grow. It is often said that if you are not informed, then you are deformed. .

In higher Education, females account for only 23% of students. This is mainly due to sending girls to school which is seen as unprofitable investment. In the far North Region of Cameroon,64% of children who could be enrolled in education are not and the difference between enrolment rate for boys is 14%. Nationwide, the girls make up 9% less of the enrollment than boys (United Nations CEDAW, 1999).

This aspect above comes in because parents lack information and are deformed by the fact that investment in women is unprofitable.

5.1.3 COMMUNICATION

As concerns communication, the respondents testified that it is always smooth. They communicate verbally, through phones, e-mails and written .There are no problems communicating with the opposite gender as their aim is to promote women.

In general, people interact differently with men and women and boys and girls.(Lorber ,1940) . Mathabe (2009) revealed in his studies that in most traditional African societies, girls were not regarded as `` educational investments’’ and this was so because they were raised to get married and take care of family. If they went to school, it was just to enable them read and write. However few African ladies still studied.

NDZI (1998:63) Noted that customs such as preference of sons who would as is commonly believed uphold the family name has led to the neglect of the girl child. This makes boys aggressive and it is seen as intelligence, dominance and initiative. Thus cultural factors can hinder girls enrollment in schools because in most cultures, women are considered the bearers of indigenous or traditional culture especially where that identity is under threat.

Sama(1986:36) reveal that parents often have negative attitudes towards their daughters education. This is because they think it is preferable to educate sons than daughters because sons are expected to support old parents while daughters are expected to get married and be supported by their husbands.

This opinion of the followed authors is justified by the fact that there is no communication amongst educated and uneducated people. Also many people do not read so as to know that educating girls is important and it’s their rights.

5.1.4 Technology

The respondents had at least basic knowledge in technology because training seminars are always organized for them .With this training, all of them can boast of at least typing documents in the office. Some respondents had other skills in excel ,power point , data analysis ,word and searching on the internet.

The opinion of the authors below gives the importance of technology. Amongst the technologies for information and communication, the computer and the internet represent means of learning as they permit wide and rapid exposure to the world as well as enhance pedagogical practices. These technologies ameliorates the quality of education because they are not only used as tools for the facilitation of cognitive development of learners but also as a means of exposure to their users (Tchombe ,2008).Mbagwana and Ondoua (2008) hold that this is the era of globalization and all sectors should benefit from ICT.

5.1.5 ICT and gender

On ICT and gender, the respondents said women who are not into Ict in this era driven by technology could have their reasons like; lack of interest , limited finances ,illiteracy ,give priority to other things , find it expensive or might not see the importance. Some respondents equally said technophobia ,laziness and negligence are some of the reasons why some women are not into ICT.

To encourage these ladies, respondents said multi- media centres should be opened to train them, sensitization tours should also take place, Training should be done at reduces cost and women should be motivated at all levels.

Sheila Jeffreys writes, "When women are encouraged to 'empower' themselves while leaving gendered power structures in place, the idea of empowerment could lead to blaming the women for their lack of progress". Indeed, it is the contentious meaning of the term "equality" itself that makes measuring gender equality "progress" inherently problematic.

Research shows that boys are preferred for testing for gifted programs twice as often as girls(Orenstein ,1994) The social factors that produce these gender differences operate in both institutional and informal settings. In some societies, cultural norms discourage interaction between women and men outside the family, and women may be uncomfortable in situations where men are present either as trainers or as peers. Even in countries where women and men mix freely, women who are learning to use computers – in particular older women – may be uneasy if a man is in charge of the training. An awareness of these socio-cultural and institutional barriers is essential if decision-makers are to shape remedial programs and design facilities that encourage women's participation.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly is often described as an 'international bill of rights of women'. It codified women's rights to equality in all spheres of life as a global norm. The Convention provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men by ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in political and public life --- including the rights to vote and to stand for election--- as well as equal access to education, health and employment. State parties agreed to take all appropriate measures, including legislation and special measures, to ensure that women enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms. By 2001, CEDAW has been ratified by170

Cecchini (2002) and Kenny (2002), as quoted by Arunal (2006), hold that ICTs are already seen to have the potential to contribute to other Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) such as economic development and poverty alleviation. These researchers also hold that ICTs can be used to fight gender inequality ,empower women and facilitate female academic competence and economic development .However ,the roles and needs of women in ICTs are not often noticed or recognized especially at the educational level. ICT

The opinion of the writers above is an indication that there are certain factors that hinder ladies and there are also certain things that need to be done encourage them.

5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The first limitation encountered was the fact that the researcher did not have an authorization from the minister of Women's Empowerment and the Family to do research in that ministry. Most of the workers available did not see the research attestation signed by the head of department for science of education as valuable because they are answerable to the minister. There was Resistance from some respondents to answer questions for fear that their names might be mentioned or published in the work with their opinions which might implicate them.

Some respondents gave a series of appointments on when they will be available for interview but did not respect the appointments.

Also, there was language difficulties encountered. This is because the interview guide was in English and more than 90% of the respondents were French speaking. The researcher had to make efforts to interpret the questions so that the respondents could better understand and give their responses .the researcher whose French level is just average also had no choice than to manage and interpret the questions.

5.3 PROFESSIONAL IMPLICATIONS

5.3.1 TO THE GOVERNMENT

In Beijing , member states affirmed their political will to promote gender equality by endorsing the platform for action. The Government should evaluate regularly the extent which the decisions are translated into concrete results so as to rectify areas where gender

policies do not exist , remedy the existing gender policies and allocate appropriate human and material resources for implementation.

Also, the government should equally use gender expertise in designing all policies and programs

Furthermore, Government should provide grants and other resources to support men and women who are willing to pursue academic career in the domain of information and communication technology because many do not attain their goals due to financial and material constraints. They should create awareness amongst women on how to get scholarship programs on ict as well as making sure that the available sponsorship planned for women reaches the target group.This is because poverty is a major factor that hinders female education.

In addition, government should reduce or eliminate the import duties on ICT equipment which are used for training .This will greatly reduce the high prices on soft and hard wares that we have in Cameroon.

The government should understand that capacity building is important for female staff and the needs for this is always changing. This will be a development process to increase their knowledge, skills and understanding and attitudes needed to bring about the desired developmental change.

Moreover, The government should see to it that talks should be given in schools on the importance of Information and Communication Technology to both male and female studies so that the techno- phobia that most girls have will die down .Sensitization programs should also be organized in community radio stations and in churches where people can learn about ICT and if possible women in the field should handle the programs.

In the same light, Government should make sure that gender equality should be implemented and should not only be theoretical. Women should hold posts of responsibilities that will encourage young ladies to emulate them.

5.3.2 THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT AND THE FAMILY

There should be compulsory initial and in -service training of officials in this ministry on the importance of Information and Communication Technology. This will give them insight into the weight that ICT have in the world today.

Again, policies should be put in place that will govern the training of female staff.

The ministry of women empowerment and the family should create ICT departments which will train female staff on current programs in ICT and technological advancement. In order to do this, the ministry can work hand in hand with the African Institute of Computer (I.A.I) and the department of women and gender studies in the university of Buea.

5.3.3 WOMEN

There is need to create awareness in women like men of the value of education. Women should be counseled on the benefits of Information and Communication Technology to their lives and career opportunities. This self-awareness will boost their self-esteem thus giving them the zeal to pursue ICT.

Women should liberate themselves from gender stereotypes of always thinking that her place is at home and not in school. Women should be courageous and daring and also believe that they can pursue their educational career alongside other roles.

Girls and women all need to be emancipated. They need to be sensitized and brought out of cultural believes that have tied them down. They need to be drilled on self-confidence during seminars and workshops.

5.3.4 TO THE SOCIETY

The society should stop promoting gender disparities. ICT is not meant for men as the society holds. Research has shown that when women learn how to use ICT, they mostly use the tools for education and communication.

5.3.5 CONCLUSION

While some of the recommendations may not sound new, they remain appropriate considering the under-representation of women in the field of information and communication technology. It serves as a constant reminder to women who need all the opportunities, encouragement and support to get into the field of ICT.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was carried out using the qualitative approach. Another researcher can carry out this study using the quantitative research method.

Also, this study can be carried out using a different population like United Nations Workers or UNICEF workers.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, Information and communication technology and gender policy are two phenomenon's that are a call for concern in this era. This era is technologically driven and there is a need for both gender to get involved in ICT in other to have better opportunities in life and to facilitate their own day to day activities ,ICT is not a man's thing as some people say. Women should not give opportunities to technophobia. They should brave it and get into the field of ICT for a better tomorrow. We live in a world of emerging trends through ICT. It is clear that if women are to take full advantage of information technologies, training needs to go beyond a focus on how to use the new communication tools. Training women in ICT must also involve education in how to find, manage, produce and disseminate information, and how to develop policies and strategies to intervene effectively in the shaping of ICTs. Women are capable of going to higher heights in ICT. They just need to be encouraged.

ICTs have created new economic and social opportunities the world over. The positive changes brought about by ICTs, however, have not touched all of humanity. Their use continues to be governed by existing power relations where women frequently experience relative disadvantage. Amidst this inequality are individuals and organizations that are working to use these technologies to further gender equality. In conclusion, it is clear that for women the world over access to ICTs is inhibited by factors that go far beyond questions of technological infrastructure and socio-economic environment. Socially and culturally constructed gender roles and relationships affect not simply women's One of the more pervasive but intractable problems is "technophobia, or fear of technology. Women often have complex relationships with technology and machines as a result of being socialized over time to believe that machines and technology are a man's domain and not for women and girls, thus generating a gender bias in attitudes towards studying or using information technology. Once girls do enter school, they are discouraged from studying science and technology, either consciously or unconsciously, by parents' and teachers' biases.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Dear Respondents,

I am a level 5 student in the Department of Science of Education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde . I am carrying out a research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.’’. This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please put the figures of the selected answers in the corresponding boxes.

PRELIMINARIES

Q1	Marital status Divorced	1) Married 2) Single 3)	
Q2	Age Range 3)51 +	1)21 – 35 2) 36- 50	
Q3	Level of education graduate	1)Undergraduate 2) graduate 3)post	
Q4	Religious background Moslim	1) Christian 2)	
Q5	Post of responsibility.		

THEME ONE : CHOICE OF CAREER THROUGH ICT

- 1) What motivated you to choose this career ?
- 2) Did you have any difficulties as a lady?
- 3) Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?
- 4) If yes , does that knowledge help you to further your career?
- 5) Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

THEME TWO : INFORMATION

- 1) As a lady, how do you always get information ?
- 2) How does this information help you in your career ?
- 3) To what extent can lack of information affect your career ?

THEME THREE: COMMUNICATION

- 1) How do you always communicate ?
- 2) What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

THEME FOUR TECHNOLOGY

- 1) What technological skills do you possess?
- 2) How does these skills help you to grow in your career?
- 3) What advantages do you have because you possess technological competence ?
- 4) What disadvantages do you have because you lack technological competence ?

THEME FIVE : ICT AND GENDER

- Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?
- What other policies have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?
- Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?
- If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?
- There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?
- DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?
- What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?
- What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

APPENDIX B

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix-Travail-Patrie
UNIVERSITÉ DE YAOUNDÉ I
ÉCOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE
DÉPARTEMENT DES SCIENCES DE
L'ÉDUCATION
SECTION : Science de l'Éducation



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace-Work-fatherland
THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I
HIGHER TEACHER'S TRAINING COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE OF EDUCATION
SECTION: Sciences of Education

ATTESTATION DE RECHERCHE

Je soussigné, Pr Pierre FONKOUA, chef de département des Sciences de l'Éducation, certifie que l'étudiant (e) nommée (e)

LIZETTE MUSHANG KWALAR

Est inscrit (e) au niveau V du département des Sciences de l'Éducation, Filière Sciences de l'Éducation de l'École normale supérieure de Yaoundé et poursuit actuellement un travail de recherche sur le thème suivant :

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY AND GENDER POLICY

Sous la direction de Prof MACHINDA BRIGITTE

Ce travail de recherche l'oblige à s'adresser à certaines institutions ou à certains services en vue de la collecte des données nécessaires à sa finalisation.

En vue de quoi la présente attestation lui est délivrée pour servir et valoir ce que de droit.

Fait à Yaoundé, le.....

Le Chef de Département



Pierre FONKOUA
Pierre FONKOUA

APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPT OF INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW WITH RESPONDENTS

For the purpose of confidentiality and trust worthiness of this research, the researcher used codes to represent the participants and the data collected from each of them. For instance R stands for researcher while R1 stands for respondent 1 ,R2 for respondent 2, R3 for respondent 3...just to name a few.

RESPONDENT 1

R : Good Morning Madam. I will like to introduce myself to you. I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde.. I am carrying out a research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.’’. This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings. I will like us to start with preliminaries like marital status. Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 1: Married

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 1 : 36-50

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 1 : Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 1: Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 1: Sub- director in charge of gender

R :What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 1 : I wanted to improve women’s status. I also wanted to work for the advancement of women because I felt that women are left behind in many aspects.

R :Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 1 : No

R :Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 1 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 1 : yes

R :Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 1 : Yes

R :As a lady, how do you always get information ?

R 1 : Through newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R :How does this information help you in your career ?

R 1 : It helps me to know the opinion of others about the advancement of women. It also helps me to know what other ministries are saying about women.

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 1 : It can make an individual to be ignorant of happenings thus limitation in progress.

R :How do you always communicate ?

R 1 : By mails, fax , telephones and e- mails.

R :What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 1 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R :What technological skills do you possess?

R 1 : Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R :How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 1 : Helps in typing , doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R :What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 1 : It makes work slow because the individual who lacks these skills will always rely on others for help.

R :Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 1 : It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part and those interested were trained. By the end of 2012 as it was targeted, more than 103, 000 were trained.

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 1 :Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R :Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 1 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R :If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 1 :Yes.MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R :There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 1 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations. The African Union is advocating for 50/50 in decision making. MINPROFF tries to put women in decision making. The ministry also carries out studies and publishes so that the public can be aware of what is on ground.

R :DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 1 : No. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.

R :What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 1 : ICT is part of science and few girls are involved in it. Generally, women like social media.

R :What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 1 : Sensitization should be carried out thoroughly.

RESPONDENT 2

R : Good Morning Madam. I am called LizetteMushangKwalar. I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.``. I have chosen MINPROFF as my case study. This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings. I will like us to start with preliminaries like marital status. Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 2: Married

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 2 : 36-50

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 2 : Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 2: Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 2: Chief of service in charge of popularisation

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 2 : I love working with women. In our society women are considered as second class citizens and I want to change that mentality.

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 2 : No. This is because co- workers have the same mentality and human rights.

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 2 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 2 : yes

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 2: Yes

R : As a lady, how do you always get information ?

R 2 : Through newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 2 : It eases work

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 2 : It can make an individual to be backward and lacking in many ways.

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 2 : By mails, fax , telephones and e- mails.

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 2 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 2 : Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 2 : Helps in typing , doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 2 : It makes work slow because the individual who lacks these skills will always rely on others for help.

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 2 : It was a training program and women were trained from different associations and nationally..

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 2 :Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 2 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities. Also MINPROFF works in collaboration with other ministries.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 2 :Yes.MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 2 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations. MINPROFF makes efforts so that women will be part of decision making in all ministries.This issue of 30 % is in Parliament..

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 2: No. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.

R : What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 2 : Women think that they are weak in technology due to cultural norms .They also think technology is for men and they do not make efforts.

R : What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 2 : Sensitization is important. This will make them to come out of such norms. There is no job that can be done only by men..

RESPONDENT 3

R : Good Morning Madam I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out a research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy''. My case study is MINPROFF so that is why I am in your office . This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings. I will like us to start with preliminaries like marital status. Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 3: Married

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 3 : 51+

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 3 : Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 3: Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 3: Chief of service for professional insertion of women and young girls

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 3: I had no motivation. I just needed a job.

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 3 : No. Men respect women .

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 3 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 3 : yes

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 3 : Yes

R : As a lady, how do you always get information ?

R 3 : Through Cameroon tribune, Television , internet , service note and listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 3 :It helps in writing reports and articles which help in the field.It gives me autonomy in reading and writing

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 3 : It hinders promotion and there is no personal satisfaction. can make an individual to be ignorant of happenings thus limitation in progress.

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 3 : By mails, fax , telephones and e- mails.

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 3 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 3 : Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 3 : Helps in typing , doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 1 : It makes work slow because the individual who lacks these skills will always rely on others for help.

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 1 : It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part and those interested were trained

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 3 :Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 3 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 3 : Yes.MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 3 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations.

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 3 : No. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.

R : What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 3 :No interest

R : What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 3 : Sensitization should be carried out because the women needs to be informed.

RESPONDENT 4

R : Good Morning Madam. I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out a research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.'' MINPROFF is my case study . This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings. I will like us to start with preliminaries like marital status. Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 4 :Single

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 4 : 21-35

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 4 : Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 4: Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 4:Assistant research officer

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 4: I read journalism in school and that is why I am working with the communication department of MINPROFF

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 4 : No

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 4 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 4 : yes .There is flow of information amongst colleagues.

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 4 : Yes. This is because most people work with the internet nowadays.

R : As a lady, how do you always get information ?

R 4 : Through calls , magazines ,newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 4 : It helps me to do research so as to upgrade my level. Also because of the information gotten, I am always prepared.

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 4 : It can make an individual to be stagnant and will not live his full potentials.

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 4 : By mails, fax , formally and informally, telephones and e- mails.

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 4 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 4 : Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 4 : Helps in typing , treating documents, makes work faster and doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 4 : It slows down output .It is also time consuming and material is wasted in writing.

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 4 : It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part and those interested were trained. By the end of 2012 as it was targeted, more than 103, 000 were trained.

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 4:Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 4 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 4 : Yes. MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 4 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations. I can not really say to what extent it is applicable.

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 4 : No. The knowledge helps me to be productive. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.

R : What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 4 : Technophobia ,Difficulties, they think it is expensive and they give priority to other things.

R : What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 4:Open multi- media centres , educate women on the importance of ICT, simplify training and reduce cost.

RESPONDENT 5

R : Good Morning Madam I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out a research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.’’. MINPROFF is my case study. This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings. I will like us to start with preliminaries like marital status. Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 5: Married

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 5 : 21-35

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 5 : Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 5: Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 5:Chief of service for the promotion of the family.

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 5 : What I studied in the university made me to work here. Also, I like advocating for women, children and family rights. .

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 5 : No

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 5 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 5 : yes.

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 5 : Yes. It slows down administration and uses much material.

R : As a lady, how do you always get information ?

R 5 : Through newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 5 : It helps me to treat documents at short notice .It also helps me to improve on my career and I know what is done elsewhere

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 5 : It can make an individual to miss a job because most jobs demand ICT

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 5 : By mails, fax , telephones, whatsapp and e- mails.

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 5 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 5: M S word ,data base ,lotus, Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 5 : I treat data myself, do presentation on power point which makes work vivid. It is convenient, comfortable ,reduces stress and gains time.

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 5: It is time consuming , cost oriented, work is slow and files are treated late..

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 5: Sensitization was carried out nationally and the training program was carried out successfully

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 5 :Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 5 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 5 : Yes. MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 5 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations. Minproff is trying its best so that women should be part of decision making.

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 5 : Yes. It can give me opportunity to get another job, bring in more income and I can become a consultant.

R : What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 5 : Time, money and no access to tools

R : What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 5 :Scholarship should be given, e-commerce should be encouraged and there should be on the job training in ICT.

RESPONDENT 6

R : Good Morning Madam. I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out a research on the topic "Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy." MINPROFF was chosen as my case study. So that is what brought me to your office and I will be very grateful if you give me some few minutes of your time. This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose.

R : Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 6: Married

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 6 : 36-50

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 6 : Post- Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 6: Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 6: Sub- director in charge of family protection

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 6 : No specific motivation

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 6 : No

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 6 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 6 : yes

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 6 : Yes

R : As a man, how do you always get information ?

R 6 : Through newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 6 : It helps me to know the opinion of others about the advancement of women. It also helps me to know what other ministries are saying about women.

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 6 : It can make an individual to be ignorant of happenings thus limitation in progress.

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 6 : By mails, fax , telephones and e- mails.

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 6 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 6 : Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 6 : Helps in typing , doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 6 : It makes work slow because the individual who lacks these skills will always rely on others for help.

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 6: It wasbrought about by Armand Claude Abanda .It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part and those interested were trained.

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 6 :Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 6 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 6 : Yes. MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 6 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations..

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 6 : No. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.

R : What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 6 :Most women do not have a high level of education compared to men. Also, culture hods them down. Most women are seen as house wives and they perform primary rules of giving birth and taking care of children. Again, there is personal complex and no zeal to do ICT.

R : What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 6: Promote education and Sensitization should be carried out thoroughly. Also, there should be positive discrimination by giving scholarship to women.

RESPONDENT 7

R : Good Morning Madam.I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out a research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.’’MINPROFF is my case study. This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings. I will like us to start with preliminaries like marital status.

R :Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 7: Married

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 7 : 36-50

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 7 : Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 7: Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 7: Sub- director in charge of gender

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 7 : I wanted to improve women's status. I also wanted to work for the advancement of women because I felt that women are left behind in many aspects.

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 7 : No

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 7 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 7 : yes

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 7 : Yes

R : As a lady, how do you always get information ?

R 7 : Through newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 7 : It helps me to know the opinion of others about the advancement of women. It also helps me to know what other ministries are saying about women.

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 7 : It can make an individual to be ignorant of happenings thus limitation in progress.

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 7 : By mails, fax , telephones and e- mails.

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 7 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 7 : Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 7 : Helps in typing , doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 7 : It makes work slow because the individual who lacks these skills will always rely on others for help.

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 7: It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part and those interested were trained. By the end of 2012 as it was targeted, more than 103, 000 were trained.

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 7 :Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 7 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 7 : Yes. MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 7 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations.

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 7 : No. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.

R : What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 7 : ICT is part of science and few girls are involved in it. Generally, women like social media.

R : What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 7 : Sensitization should be carried out thoroughly

RESPONDENT 8

R : Good Morning Madam. I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out a research on the topic "Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.". This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings. I will like us to start with preliminaries like marital status.

R : Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 8: Single

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 8: 21-35

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 8 : Post- Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 8 : Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 8 : Chief of service for civil servants

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 8 : I was recruited by MINFOPRA and sent to work in MINPROFF. I had no motivation.

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 8 : No. This is MINPROFF and there is no marginalization.

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 8 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 8 : yes

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 8 : Yes. It slows down the job.

R : As a worker, how do you always get information ?

R 8 : There are text from the ministry that we work with. Through newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 8 : It facilitates treatment of files .

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 8 : It can make an individual to always ask from colleagues thus boring. Also the individual will not be able to propose or go ahead.

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 8 : Meetings with directors, service notes ,verbally and written

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 8 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 8 : Internet skills , Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 8 : Helps in typing , doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 8 : It makes work slow because the individual who lacks these skills will always rely on others for help.

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 8 : It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part and those interested were trained. It was a success.

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 8:Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 8 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 8 : Yes. MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 8 : This is not followed strictly in all cases. This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations.

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 8 : No. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.

R : What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 8 : Most women think it is difficult and that it is for men.Technophobia also

R : What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 8 : In offices ,all workers should type their work themselves.This will push lazy workers to learn ICT.

RESPONDENT 9

R : Good Morning Madam. I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out a research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.’’. My case study for this research is MINPROFF.It will give me great joy if you help me to give answers to my interview questions. This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose.

R : Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 9: Married

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 9 : 51+

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 9 : Post- Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 9: Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 9 : Chief of service for internship training and professional management.

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 9 : I am a trained teacher and I was tired of teaching so I applied to change my ministry.

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 9 : No

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 9 : yes. We always do training in ICT

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 9 : yes. I treat documents alone and can only get a technician when need arises.

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 9 : Yes. It slows down work.

R : As a lady, how do you always get information ?

R 9 : Through newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 9 : It helps me to know the opinion of others about the advancement of women

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 9 : It can make an individual to be ignorant of happenings thus limitation in progress.

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 9 : By mails, fax , telephones and e- mails.

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 9 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 9 : Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 9 : Helps in typing , doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 9 : It makes work slow because the individual who lacks these skills will always rely on others for help.

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.What are the mechanisms that were put in place to achieve this ? Has it been achieved ?

R 9 : It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part and those interested partook.

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 9 :Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 9 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 9 :Yes.MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 9 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations. The ministry tries to put women in all decision making.

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 9 : No. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.

R : What in your opinion impedes women in ICT ?

R 9:Some women are not motivated. Some women are not apt .

R : What do you think can be done to encourage them ?

R 9 :Traning should be done.

RESPONDENT 10

R : Good Morning Madam. I am a level 5 student in the department of science of education in the Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde. . I am carrying out a research on the topic ``Information and Communication Technology and Gender Policy.’’ MINPROFF is my case study. This work is purely academic investigation to be included in a research work so please have confidence that the answers you give will not be exploited for any criminal purpose. Your response to these questions will go a long way to contribute to the credibility of my research findings

R : Are you married, single or divorced ?

R 10 : Married

R : What is your age range; 21-35, 36-50, 51+ ?

R 10 : 36-50

R : What is your level of Education (graduate ,Undergraduate or Post – graduate ?)

R 10 : Post- Graduate

R : Are you a Christian or Muslim ?

R 10 : Christian

R : What is your post of responsibility ?

R 10 : Chief of service

R : What motivated you to choose this career ?

R 10 : I am a trained teacher from higher teacher training college Yaounde and I didn't want to teach again so I applied for a change of ministry.

R : Did you have any difficulties as a lady?

R 10 : No

R : Do you have knowledge in information and communication technology ?

R 10 : yes

R : Does that knowledge help you to further your career ?

R 10 : yes

R : Do you think lack of knowledge in information and communication technology can hinder your career?

R 10 : Yes

R : As a lady, how do you always get information ?

R 10 : Through newspapers, service note , listening to the radio

R : How does this information help you in your career ?

R 10 : It helps me to know the opinion of others about the advancement of women. It also helps me to know what other ministries are saying about women.

R : To what extent can lack of information affect an individual's career ?

R 10: It can make an individual to be ignorant of happenings thus limitation in progress.

R : How do you always communicate ?

R 10 : By mails, fax , telephones and e- mails.

R : What are the difficulties you encounter while communicating with the opposite sex ?

R 10 : There are no difficulties in communicating with the opposite sex.

R : What technological skills do you possess?

R 10 : Excel ,power point , word and working on the internet.

R : How does these skills help you to grow in your career?

R 10 : Helps in typing , doing presentations during seminars and conferences .

R : What are the disadvantages of lack of technological skills?

R 10 : It makes work slow because the individual who lacks these skills will always rely on others for help.

R : Concerning ICT and gender policy ,we found out that there is this issue of operation 100,000 women by 2012.

R 10 : It was a training program and women were sensitized to take part and those interested were trained.

R : What other measures have been put in place to encourage women in ICT?

R 10 :Sensitisation is carried out always to encourage women in ICT.

R : Are there other ministries involved in gender issues or it's only MINPROFF ?

R 10 : All other ministries are involved in gender. They have gender focal points and MINPROFF monitors their activities.

R : If yes, Does MINPROFF monitor their activities on gender ?

R 10 :Yes.MINPROFF monitors all the activities that they carry which has a link with gender.

R : There is this issue of 30% in decision making, is this the case of MINPROFF?

R 10 : This issue of 30% of women in decision making was brought about by United Nations. I know the ministry is doing all so that women can be involved in decision making. I can not really tell if the UN decision is followed to the later.

R : DO you have the capacity to rise because of your knowledge in ICT ?

R 10 : No. Knowledge in ICT only facilitates the job.