

Customs and traditional issues in promoting gender education at tertiary level in Cameroon

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Abstract: This article seeks to examine the role of customs and tradition in fostering gender education at tertiary level in Cameroon. The impact of traditional societies on the promotion of gender education in Cameroon is a vital premise to look at. Traditional societies through traditional norms, values, rites and practices constitutes some of the obstacles in enhancing educational equality at tertiary level, and as such factors prevents students especially female students from life-long learning, that is women and young girls are hindered from ascending to higher education. Hereby, preventing them from becoming pertinent actors in the socio-political and economic development of the nation. Within the context of this study the social learning theory by Dorothy Smith with the standpoint theory, which states “once level of education determines where he or she stands in the society” since women have limited access to tertiary education, they are also less represented in at the workplace and in public spaces. The study was carried out using the mixed method qualitative and quantitative research method whereby, the main instruments for data collection were the questionnaire, focus group discussion guide and interview guide. The simple random sampling techniques and the purposeful sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample size of 420 for the study. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. The statistical instrument used to analyze quantitative data was the Spearman rank correlation and the following results were obtained. Here hypothesis the p-value was less than the alpha, and the correlation coefficient was 0.657. Based on this we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that Customs and traditions significantly influence the promotion of gender education.

Keywords: customs and tradition, Education, promotion of gender, tertiary level.

I. INTRODUCTION

The government policy in Cameroon is that which aims at promoting gender equality in education where both women and men, girls and boys have equal opportunity and equal access to education. Education must once again become one of the cornerstone values of our world today, it must once again flourish, it must be instilled as a force of happiness, fulfillment and hope Mandela (1996). In Africa and specifically in Cameroon, under enrollment and school dropout are significant problems that impede ensuring inclusive equitable and quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all particularly among girls. Education empowers people for their role in the society and therefore education is of vital importance to promote the sustainable development of our global community. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that was adopted by the UN general assembly in (2000) and the initiative proposed

by the then UN secretary general, Kofi Annan during the 2002 world sustainable development (WSSD) in Johannesburg both underscore the role of education in improving peoples' lives. While it is broadly understood that literacy and education for all plays a crucial role in preparing people for their future in a highly connected interlinked and globalized world, indigenous education was once disrupted with western education, the elders who were those charged of educating the young generation could not effectively teach the young, their norms, values, traditional rites and cultural practices. However, this happened in our local communities (informal education), with the advent of formal education introduced by the west higher education in particular occupies an important position in shaping the way in which future generation learn to cope with the complexities of sustainable development.

The research problem

Many societies, in Cameroon stick to the ideology that a male child have an upper hand in the pursuit of education at higher levels, compared to the female child. This is born by the fact that many of these societies are of patriarchal origin or backgrounds and tradition contribute a lot in hindering or giving access to education to female child. With this state of event, a structural gender inequality is being maintained to the detriment of sustainable development. Owing to the fact that with the set-ups in these societies, men or the boy child is guided to be a bread winner tomorrow, while the female child or women as house keeper, there is bound to be discrimination, domination by the male child and the women are obliged to subordination positions in this vein, remain passive in front of men. The society also fail to consider women or female child as partners in development. These women and girls are not invited in making decisions that concerns all. As a result of this, they encounter the problem of “**Gender gaps in higher Education with its consequences being underdevelopment within our societies**” a problem which the researcher intended to investigate.

Problem Statement

Equality in Education is a Universal Challenge, the millennium development goal 2, calls for every boy and girl to complete primary schooling is the only goal that is universal in its scope. As such, it reminds the world and the educational community of the need to focus explicitly on those children who might currently be excluded from the classroom.

Children living in poorest communities and the most impoverished households are less likely to be enrolled in or be able to regularly attend school, as are children in rural communities, children with disabilities and those living in armed conflict.

Traditionally, some reasons for the gender disparities in STEM participation have been investigated, including gender differences in attitudes and beliefs, such as the valuing of various STEM domain (Eccles et al, 1993. Ceci et al. 2014, Lounemam et al; 2015 Chergon et al. 2017). One of this relevant underlying practice that might be driving gender differences in STEM participation are traditional gender role belief about responsibilities and behaviors deemed appropriate for woman and Men (Eccles, 1987, Williams and Best, 1990) predict aspirations choices and occupation out comes (Eccles et al; 1990). However, the long term impact of traditional gender role beliefs on STEM participation is understood. In the current study, the researcher addressed this gap by investigating the role of traditional societies in promoting gender education long term association of traditional gender rate beliefs in schooling with subsequent educational and STEM occupation, all attainment in adulthood for females and male using a longitudinal date set spinning over many years. In the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) number four stress on ensuring inclusive equitable and quality education and promote life –long learning opportunities for all. This goal lay emphasis on eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education and at all level preferably by 2035. Obviously, this situation is of concern to policy makers for equity reasons based on this struggle to narrow the gender gap in education, the Cameroon government has also formulated a policy aimed at reducing the gender gaps and if possible achieve gender equality in education at all levels. A traditional society in the promotion of gender education in the country brings about slow growth and development in the economy.

Despite the efforts made by the government, international communities in the promotion of education, there still persist inequality in the education of young boys and girls in Cameroon. The traditional and educational systems are structured in a way that maintains the inequality that exist between boys and girls. For instance, the existence of boys and girls schools perpetuate inequality in education, more so, the textbooks that are used in schools depict boys are taught, rough and mentally skilled people who are adventurous while girls are depicted as soft, gentle people who enjoy carrying out household chores or duties. Even the uniforms for boys and girls are different with girls' uniforms not being suitable for rough play or tree climbing that boys favor.

The Main Objective of the Study

The principle aim of this study was to examine the role of customs and tradition in the promotion of gender education in Universities in Cameroon. It seeks to unveil how harmful traditional and cultural practices have hindered women and girls more than men and boys access to tertiary education.

Especially with reference to communities that uphold gender imbalances between men, boys and women and girls.

Specific Objective of the Study

To assess how customs and traditions are the root cause of gender inequality in Tertiary education in Cameroon.

Main Research Question

The research was guided by one principal question;

What is the contribution of traditional societies, in the promotion of gender education at tertiary level in Cameroon?

Specific Research Question

How does customs and traditional societies influence the promotion of gender education at tertiary level in Cameroon?

II. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Principal Hypothesis

Ha: There is a link between the culture of traditional societies and promotion of gender education in Cameroon Universities

Ho: There is no link between the culture of traditional societies and promotion of gender education in Cameroon Universities.

Specific Research Hypotheses

Ha2: Customs and traditions influences the promotion of gender education at tertiary education in Cameroon

Significance Of the Study

This study is important because it will help stakeholders, the government, traditional authorities, civil society organizations and educationist to understand the importance of gender education in the psychosocial development and growth of the regions and the nation. This study, will help the government to orientate her programs in the formulation of policies, programs in the field of education so as to narrow the gender gaps that exist between boys and girls, women and men and also raise awareness on the gains in gender education. Across the globe, women and girls are less educated and receive worse healthcare services than their male counterparts (quibria 1995, world bank 2000). As a result, inequality is bound to exist and the women and girls are said to be « missing women » worldwide(sen1992).

Drawing inspiration from Plato's question, "is there any thing better in a state than that both women and men be rendered the very best? There is not. It will be idle to say that what is right for a man is wrong for a woman" Education should have nothing to do with sex, boys and girls should be taught that what is right or wrong for a man or boy is equally right and wrong for a woman or girl, making it very important to educate boys and girls indiscriminately in our societies. Both sexes should be bounded by the same code of morals; both are amenable to the same divine law. Both have a right to do the best they can, or to speak more justly, both should feel

the duty, and have the opportunity, to do their best. Each must justify its existence by becoming a complete development of manhood and womanhood, leaders of our societies should be aware that these children have their rights to humanity and can refuse whatever limits or dwarfs that development.

III. LITERATURE ON CUSTOMS AND TRADITION AND GENDER EDUCATION

John Dewey (1938) looked at traditional education, as back-to-basics, conventional **education** or **customary education**, refers to long-established customs that society traditionally used in schools. For him, some forms of education reforms promote the adoption of progressive education practices, in a more holistic approach which focuses on individual students' needs and self-control. In the eyes of reformers, traditional teacher-centered methods focused on rote learning and memorization must be abandoned in favor of student-centered and task-based approaches to learning for both boys and girls. However, many parents and conservative citizens are concerned with the maintenance of objective educational standards based on testing, which favors a more traditional approach. Depending on the context, the opposite of *traditional education* may be progressive education, or modern education (the education approaches based on developmental psychology), or alternative education. The main objective of traditional education is to transmit to a next generation those skills, facts, and standards of moral and social conduct that adults consider to be necessary for the next generation's material and social success. As beneficiaries of this scheme, which educational progressivist Dewey (1938) described as being "imposed from above and from outside", then students are expected to docilely and obediently receive and believe these fixed answers. Teachers comprises some of the instruments by which this knowledge is transmitted and these standards of behavior are enforced.

Historically, the primary educational technique of traditional education was simply oral recitation. In a typical approach, students sat quietly at their places and listened to one student after another recite his or her lesson, until each had been called upon. The teacher's primary activity was assigning and listening to these recitations; students studied and memorized the assignments at home. A test or oral examination might be given at the end of a unit, and the process, which was called "assignment-study-recitation-test", was repeated. In addition to its overemphasis on verbal answers, reliance on rote memorization (memorization with no effort at understanding the meaning), and disconnected, unrelated assignments, it was also an extremely inefficient use of students' and teachers' time. This traditional approach also insisted that all students be taught the same materials at the same point; students that did not learn quickly enough failed, rather than being allowed to succeed at their natural speeds. This approach, which had been imported from Europe, dominated American education until the end of the 19th century, when the education reform movement imported

progressive education or modern education techniques from Europe.

He further state that, traditional education is associated with much stronger elements of coercion than seems acceptable now in most cultures. It has sometimes included: the use of corporal punishment to maintain classroom discipline or punish errors; inculcating the dominant religion and language; separating students according to gender, race, and social class, as well as teaching different subjects to girls and boys. In terms of curriculum there was and still is a high level of attention paid to time-honored academic knowledge.

In the present it varies enormously from one community or culture to another, but still tends to be characterized by a much higher level of coercion than alternative education. Traditional schooling in Britain and its possessions and former colonies tends to follow the English Public School style of strictly enforced uniforms and a militaristic style of discipline. This can be contrasted with South African, US and Australian schools, which can have a much higher tolerance for spontaneous student-to-teacher communication.

Culture and Practices

Culture practitioners and activists (especially the culture intelligentsia) would have to play the role of 'culture vanguard' for the mega picture to be complete. Their role will be mainly that of destroying a number of myths that have distorted intellectual discourse on African Culture. What is perhaps the most harmful of these myths is that which places African Culture in the realms of anthropology (the study of 'primary' societies), instead of that of sociology that studies 'modern, societies. Closely related to this is the myth that equates African cultural values and ways of life with the past, in contrast to that culture being sold to the African, which has to do with the future and with 'progress'. The same myth equates the African mind with emotions and the western mind with logic, thus implying that logical reasoning and scientific behavior are alien to African culture.

It is also incumbent on the African cult, the African and the African way of life. These include such annoying statements that some explorer 'discovered' some place in Africa, that some missionary undertook a civilizing mission to some places in Africa. They also include references to Blacks as 'Negro', to our languages as 'dialects', to our peoples as 'tribes', to our countries as 'territories', to our culture artifacts as 'fetish', to our vegetables as 'wild herbs'. The problem here is that the use of these terms has become so ingrained in the minds of Africans themselves that even persons who ought to understand the pejorative intent of these terms, still use them to describe Africa and Africans. There are also other well-entrenched misconceptions and over-simplifications of the cultural life of the Africans. The one that has gained very strong grounds is the grouping of Africans into Anglophone, francophone, and Lusophony as a cultural reality. Such

arbitrary classifications tend to underplay the stronger cultural ties that cut across the artificial boundaries created by colonialism.

The same over-simplification is seen in the grouping of African societies as Christian or Islamic. That tends to ignore the trait of 'africanness', which is a lot stronger than the traits conveyed by the two great religions. Culture, we are told, is 'dynamic'. Every culture develops by borrowing, by adapting. The African culture activist would have to lead the battle to qualify such statements. They should address such questions as 'if Africa should be the only borrower', and 'if borrowing and adapting means abandoning what you have'. We should even try to see if Africa has not been over borrowing foreign culture the way it has done with foreign money, whether or not Africa is leading itself into a culture debt trap. The culture practitioner also has to help to combat the negative image of Africa that is the stock-in-trade of the international media. For example, television programs titled 'inside Asia' will likely talk about investments and markets, while the ones titled 'inside Africa' will talk of war, hunger and disease. This creates the impression that nothing good ever comes out of Africa and that there is nothing to learn from that continent.

In the impressionable minds of the young African, the media helps to develop an aversion for Africa (where all things are portrayed as sad and ugly) while reinforcing a strong thirst for the external world, where all things are supposedly bright and beautiful. Above all, culture practitioners will have to re-create the African hero, in terms of people, places, inventions and creations. Their work has to portray the achievements of Africa and the contributions of Africans to world civilization. They have to be in constant touch with the noble efforts of Africans (including those in the Diaspora) in improving the conditions of humanity, in sports and games, in advancing knowledge and ideas, in promoting global understanding, in heroically enduring hardships, deprivations, and discrimination. These would be materials that can be harnessed in developing appropriate curricula for culture-rich education programs in Africa.

The domain of culture-related educational materials will equally include:

- Production of school and popular editions of the UNESCO History of Africa project.
- Production of atlases that portray Africa correctly.
- Making creative works by Africans more readily available.
- Popularization of the biographies of Africans who have contributed to changing Africa and the entire world.

Culture in Education and Education in Culture

Obanya (1998) to him, the Curriculum Promoting African culture in education and educating the Africans through culture required a functional curriculum with the following tripartite objectives:

- Access to a wider world of people, knowledge, techniques, ideas and practices: the 'official' languages and their literatures, mathematics, science and technology, informatics, tools and methods of social analysis, western and oriental philosophies and religions.
- Personal Development for Contribution to Social Transformation: A variety of core skills for lifelong learning, vocational awareness or vocational activities, entrepreneurship, creativity, communication and inter-personal conduct, self-awareness, etc.
- Developing the deepest sense of pride in being African, through a deep understanding of "the pride of Africa": the mother tongue or the community language, the African world view, Africa's contribution to world civilization over the ages, and literature of Africa, the creativity of Africans in various forms, Great Africans past and present, contemporary Africa from an African perspective, Africa's plans for its future in the emerging global community. Culture and Education are inseparable, as they are simply two sides of the same coin. The two concepts can in fact be said to be indistinguishable, as the primary definition of Education is Acculturation.

Every human society - whatever its level of technical evolution - devotes considerable attention to transmitting its cultural heritage to the young. This trans-generational transmission of culture has helped to cement human solidarity and to ensure the continued survival of societies over the ages.

Before the emergence of schools as specialized agencies, Education took place in society, where the young and the not so young became educated by simply living their culture. Education (in its true sense) was in fact first threatened by schooling, and most societies have been questioning the educational effectiveness of schools ever since they were invented. In the case of Africa, it was not only sovereignty that was lost with colonialism. Its Education was also lost, and has not yet been found or reinvented, in spite of well-documented post-colonial reforms. We have had cause to make the same point elsewhere in the following words.

"The transformation of Africa should not lose sight of the deep roots of Education: its being seriously anchored on the people's culture, so that we do not make the people extinct by destroying their culture. What Africa then lost with colonization was what it

shared with every other society in the world an Education that keeps you psychologically in your socio-cultural frame. With colonization, Education became equated with mere schooling. In traditional societies Education for all was taken for granted; in a colonial setting, Schooling for All became a problem" This work is concerned with the Education that Africa lost and how this can be found and resuscitated for genuine development of the mind and soul of the continent.

The discussion situates the problematic of the interface of Education and Culture in Africa at three levels: the mega level (the wider societal environment), the macro level of educational policy development, curricula, and other inputs into education programs, the micro level, at which direct action is taken to educate in schools and classrooms, as well as in the out-of-school learning situations.

III. METHODOLOGY

The article adopted the primary and the secondary methods of gathering information using both qualitative and quantitative research sources. The method also allow for the collection of particular literature for a complete understanding of the main objective of the study and to answer research questions. The research involves a review of circulating journals, articles on gender education in Cameroon and elsewhere, gender policy documents and statistical documents of Cameroon as well as reports and research on women's education in Cameroon. Some Articles, journals and reports and policy documents were retrieved form online data bases, and the analysis of the data were based on interpretation of data got from the field from overall gender disparities that exist in education in Cameroon Universities. As the objective of this study was to assess the contribution of traditional societies in promoting gender education in higher education in Cameroon, especially in communities where gender inequality is maintained and promoted. It seeks also to show how at times gender education can be used as a tool to liberate women and girls from obnoxious practices and encourage empowerment of women. Some women and girls in Cameroon were selected based on their unique position as least educated and poorest social group. The critical criteria were that traditional norms, attitudes and cultural practices contribute to inequalities and feminization of women into poverty. Also most of these societies are governed by patriarchal system that follow strict traditional gender roles which influences women's level of education these traditional societies are rule by phalocrats with sexist policies thereby discriminating and dominating the women and girls in all spheres of life.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

Glancing at the nature of the data set –up in this study, the qualitative and the quantitative technic were used to collect information for the study while the co- relational research design was appropriate, besides establishing relationship between two or more variables, it was described following the conditions that already exist thereby, making it difficult for the researcher to manipulate any of the variables. Moreover, it is used to explain important human variables and predict likely outcomes of that variables, in the case where two variables are highly related a correlation coefficient of 0.05 was obtained and the reverse was true with 0.00 for highly negative variables.

When we obtained a figure closer to 1, it means that the relationship is very strong and we retain the alternative

hypothesis (H_a) and that imply the variable contribute to the research problem, whereas, if it closer to 0, it means there is no relationship between the variables then the null hypothesis (H_o) will be rejected meaning the variable does not contribute to the research problem. Therefore, to Nworgu, (1991:38) a research design stipulates how data relating to a given problem was collected and analyzed, it deals with the general approach the researcher adopted to carry out an investigation similarly, Faenkel and Wallen (2000: 10) noted that it determines relationship between two or more variables, explore their implications for cause effect.

Therefore, the prime aim of research is not merely to collect data but to use such data to come up with results based on a given problem, (gender disparity in education and underdevelopment). Look for solutions and draw genuine conclusions about people or objects on which the data was collected for and make decisions, on the problem in question which is under investigation so as to help ameliorate the situation. Fraenkel and Wallen, (2000:389) confirmed that apart from the advantages of this design mentioned above it also seeks associations on how closely variables are related. However, the fact that the researcher is unable to control the variables poses a lot of problems since it may lead to many intervening variables, these variables at time influence the final results positively or negatively. Nwargu, (1991:59) mentioned that one disadvantage of co relational research design is that it does not establish causation between variables. That is if the two variables are highly related this does not necessarily mean that "X" is the cause of "Y", for the correlation could occur owing to the influence of other variables.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The first important point in selecting a sample in correlation studies is to identify an appropriate population that is meaningful and that which data could easily be obtained on a given variable. This explains why the researcher decided to choose the selected universities in this work. According to the researcher the sample size, out of five hundred (500) questionnaires distributed, four hundred and twenty (420) students male and female were actually studied. This larger number was chosen because the larger the sample, the more meaningful results it provides. While the sampling technique is a plan specifying how a given sample could be collected from a population. The random sampling technique without replacement which is a sub set of the probability sampling technique was used. without replacement simply means a piece of paper removed out of a basket by the researcher is thrown away and not put again into the basket. It should be noted that using this sampling technique names of 10 universities were put into a basket to select four by the researcher and the above universities chosen after shuffling the paper balls the researcher personally made the draw in which four were selected out of ten.

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in this work is the Convenience sampling, this is a nonprobability sampling technique where subject were selected because of their convenient, accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Here the subject or participant were selected just because they were easiest to recruit for the study and the researcher did not consider selecting subjects that are representative of the entire population. Aware of the fact that all forms of research, would be ideal to test the entire population, but this case the population was too large that it was impossible to include every individual.

Research Instruments

A research and data collection instruments according to Yoland T and Sobrepene P (2011) are measurement tools for example questionnaire or scales designed to obtain information from a group of people and the results obtained are used to make inferences about the characteristics of the people involved in the study. The same device can be used to study animals and non living things like objects. Among the many types of such parameters include, test experiment documents, interviews, and a questionnaire that were chosen. Observing and interviewing both students male and female in chosen universities and at home was of great important to the researcher, due to the socio-political instability which the country is plunged into, the collection of this information becomes difficult and the researcher needs to explain severally for the respondent to be convinced that there is no hidden agenda behind the study following the calendar of respondent.

Data Treatment

Representing qualitative data for this work percentages, cross tabulation, and histograms were used. While for quantitative data to test the validity of hypotheses, the correlation coefficient and test for significance (t-test were used for hypothesis and percentages alone for hypothesis. According to Fraenkel and Wallen, (2002) : the t- test is used to see:

“whether a correlation coefficient calculated on sample data is significant that is whether it represents a nonzero correlation in the population from which the sample was obtained. It is almost like the t- test for means but for the fact that here, the statistics deals with is a correlation coefficient r rather than a different between means. Further, the test produces a value for t known as obtained t, which the researcher verifies on a statistical probability table to see if is statistically significant. Hence, the larger the probability obtained value for t the greater the probability that the significance has been arrived at”.

V. ANALYSIS AND RESULT

Table 1: On custom and tradition

No	Items	Modalities	Frequency	Percentage
1	Women's access to higher education is impeded or hindered by early and forceful marriages	SA	105	25.0
		A	66	15.7
		N	2	.5
		DA	121	28.8
		SDA	126	30.0
2	Early and marital responsibilities plays a negative role and women finds it difficult attaining higher levels of education.	SA	57	13.6
		A	79	18.8
		N	16	3.8
		DA	167	39.8
		SDA	101	24.0
3	The nature of bride price can influence female children negatively from continuing education.	SA	106	25.2
		A	21	5.0
		N	15	3.6
		DA	89	23.6
		SDA	179	42.6
4	Widows are permitted by societal culture to further their education in your community	SA	75	17.9
		A	44	10.5
		N	15	3.6
		DA	141	33.6
		SDA	145	34.5
5	In your opinion , societal norms are set up to reinforce women oppression and reduce the rights to education	SA	75	17.9
		A	44	10.5
		N	15	3.6
		DA	141	33.6
		SDA	145	34.5
6	The organization of labour affects the education of girls and women negatively compared to boys and men.	SA	175	41.7
		A	113	26.9
		DA	49	11.7
		SDA	83	19.8
7	Gender inequality in education is associated to gender stereotyping	SA	59	14.0
		A	49	11.7
		N	14	3.3
		DA	153	36.4
		SDA	145	34.5

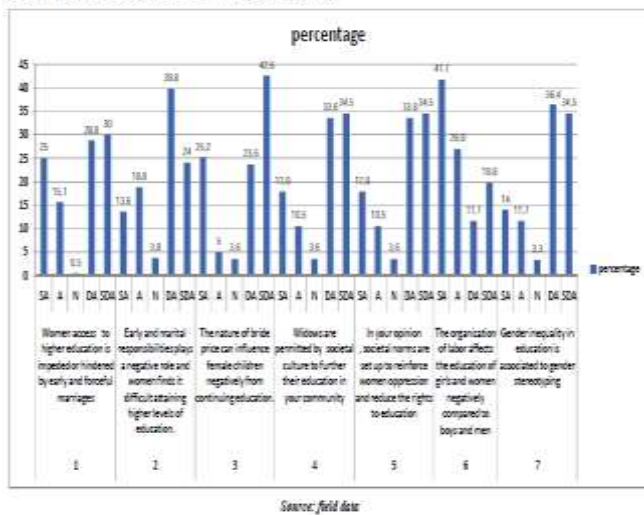
Source: field data

The table 1, above, it contains information on societal customs and tradition, the first item on the table seeks to know how women's access to higher education is impeded or hinder by early and forceful marriages, where 25.0% strongly agreed and 15.7% agreed with the statement and ,5% on the contrary 28.8 disagreed and 30.0 strongly disagreed with the statement, this reveals that more people are of the opinion that women's access to higher education is not hindered or impeded by early and forceful marriages. Closely related to the above statement is the idea that early and marital responsibilities plays a negative role and women finds it difficult to attend higher levels of education in Cameroon. 13.6% strongly agreed and 18.8 % agreed that early and marital responsibilities plays a negative role for women to access higher levels of education. 3.8% of the respondents were uncertain, while 39.8 and 24.0 disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that early and marital responsibilities does not play a negative role and women does not find it difficult attending higher levels of education in Cameroon. The third item present the fact that the nature of bride price can influence female children negatively from continuing education and 25.2% strongly agreed and 5.0% agreed with the statement and 3.6 is uncertain, and 23.6% and 42.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively this statistics reveals that the nature of bride price cannot play a negative role for female children to continue education at higher institutions in Cameroon. Item number four says, “widows are permitted by societal culture to further their education in our communities”, statistically, 17.9% strongly agreed and 10.5% agreed with the statement and 3.6% remain uncertain meanwhile 33.6% disagreed and 34.6% strongly disagreed meaning that widows are not permitted by societal customs and traditions in our communities to continue with education at higher institutions. When considering that societal norms are set up to reinforce

women’s oppression and reduce their rights to higher education, 17.9% and 10.5% strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the statement and 3.6 were uncertain while 33.6% disagreed and 34.5% strongly disagreed revealing that women’ and girls under education is as a result of societal norms that oppress and limit women and girls from having access to higher education in Cameroon.

The organization of labor affect the education of women and girls negatively compared to men and boys, finding reveals that 41.7% strongly agreed and 26.9% agreed with the statement, 0% uncertain while 11.7% and 19.8% disagreed and strongly disagreed. We see therefore that more respondents agreed that the organization of labor affect female education negatively than their male counterparts. The last item under societal customs and tradition stress that gender inequality in education is associated to gender stereotyping 14.0% and 11.7% strongly agreed and greed that gender stereotyping led to gender inequality in education, on the other hand, 36.4 % disagreed and 34.5% strongly disagreed this shows that gender inequality in education is not influence only by gender stereotyping there are other factors like poverty, female genital mutilation, early and forceful marriages and 3.3% of the respondents were uncertain.

Figure 1: Histogram on societal customs and tradition response in percentages



The figure 1 above, on societal customs and tradition shows in item one 25% strongly agreed and 15.7% agreed that girls and women access to higher education is impeded by early and forceful marriage while 28.8% and 30% of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that early and forceful marriage does not hinder females access to higher education. Item two, early marital responsibilities plays a negative role and women finds it difficult to attend higher levels of education here, 39.8% disagreed and 24% strongly disagreed respectively. Item four, widows are permitted by societal culture to further their education in your community, 33.6% disagreed 34.5% strongly disagreed on the point in item five societal norms are set up to reinforce women oppression and reduce their rights to education

33.6% disagreed and 34.5% strongly disagreed with the idea and item six, the organization of labor affect the education of girls and women negatively compared to men and boys 41.7% of respondents strongly agreed and 26.9% agreed respectively on the view and lastly, item seven, gender inequality in education is associated to gender stereotyping, 36.4% of respondents disagreed and 34.5% strongly disagreed and this variable is ranked fourth on the recapitulative table.

inferential statistics and test of hypothesis

Ha: Customs and traditions influences the promotion of gender education in Cameroon Universities.

Ho: Customs and traditions does not influence the promotion of gender education in Cameroon Universities.

Table 2: Statistics on societal customs and tradition

			Customs and traditions Gender Education	Customs and traditions Gender Education
Spearman's rho	Customs and Traditions	Correlation coefficient	1.000	0.657
		Sig(2-tailed)N	0.00 420	0.00 417
Gender Education		Correlation coefficient	0.657	1.000
		Sig(2-tailed)N	0.00 417	0.00 420

VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Ha: customs and tradition influences the promotion of gender education at tertiary level in Cameroon.

HO: Customs and tradition does not influence the promotion of gender education at tertiary level in Cameroon.

From the correlation table, we discovered that there is a relationship between customs and tradition which influence the promotion of gender education at tertiary level. This relationship is significant based on the fact that the level of significance is 0.00 therefore lesser than 0.05 which is the alpha index and the standard error margin. Conversely looking at the spearman rank correlation index, is 0.657 indicating that the link is positive and strong. The results reveals that customs and traditions significantly influences the promotion of gender education at higher levels in Cameroon. Our findings show that culture and tradition discriminate against women in the field of education, due to our cultural norms and practices, women are relegated to the background or are at home taking care of children and aged persons who are in need of some assistance. Culture and tradition sometimes reduces women’s right to education and foster gender stereotypes. This can be supported by Menye (2007) which reveals that in a small village located some 50km from Ngaoundere in the Adamawa region of Cameroon called MbaMboum, customs and tradition have for long kept girls out of schools. Domestic chores are regarded as duties of women and girls with important duties like carrying water, fetching firewood, takes advantage over education thus maintaining inequality in education between boys and girls, women and men.

Despite efforts made by parents to promote gender education both in homes and in schools, a cross section of the population are still steadfast to traditional and customs. These beliefs holds that girls should marry early and that women and girls have a lower social status than men and boys. Consequently, most of these young girls are told to get ready for their future roles as mothers and spouses. In this community, girl's education is not seen as important and the majority of these girls stay at home to take care of household chores and young siblings. Exploring the complexity of the impacts of traditional gender role beliefs on these outcomes this researcher investigated the impact of traditional gender role beliefs on gender education in Universities un Cameroon, the researcher investigate the impacts of traditional gender role beliefs within as well as access gender education at higher levels.

The respondent further more believed that there are many role that tradition can play to promote gender education at higher levels of study. The interviewee said " I think there are so many roles that tradition can play especially we begin to look at a home where parents think that the girl child's place is at home and for house chores and the boy child for playing football, if the society can make them to understand that they have the same capacity and energy to provide support for the functioning of the home, when the society make the children from childhood to understand that they are equal from birth and can perform same tasks with equal intervention, and not that others have privileges to go to school while others do not have makes it good for equal opportunities and equal chance. At one point in time the society can play a role of sensitizing parents on how they can treat their children both boys and girls equally for an egalitarian society.

VII. CONCLUSION

The overall findings of this study shows, that the indicator of customs and traditional practices seem to be problems for gender parity in education in Cameroon. These finding is oneamong other categories that becomes patriarchal role, customs and tradition, social organization, family structure, female perception.

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