

ANALYSIS OF GENDER RELATIONS IN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN CAMEROON: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF DECISION-MAKING PERSPECTIVES WITHIN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

The problem of male domination is acute in society in northern Cameroon. The strategy put in place by Muslim women through small commercial activities, associations and groups seems to be an effective tool in the fight against this power of patriarchy skillfully implanted in the mores of society. The objective of this work is to analyze the cultural practices, habits and customs of society in northern Cameroon in the explanation of sexual inequalities and developmental delay in the local environment. However, if these inequalities exist, should we not look elsewhere for the factors of their production within society? The result of this study shows that by initiating a commercial activity, women who are victims of humiliation, denigration, insults, and threats. Domestic violence is an abuse of power and trust. It hinders relationships based on equality and respect. An in-depth analysis based on observation shows that the Adamawa Muslim participates in the life of the group through numerous economic, cultural and political activities. This study allows us to show how the marginalization of women by the patriarchal system is legitimized by social organization and Islamic-Muslim traditions. However, the arrival of Western feminist movements as an exogenous factor, reorganized the phallographic society by contributing to the emancipation of women through socio-economic activities.

Keywords: Woman, North Cameroon, Inequalities, Patriarchy, Domination.

INTRODUCTION

In most human groups, social relations between the sexes are much more fluid, much more subject to social games, tricks and compromises than developments, political and feminist discourses would have us believe today. In traditional African Muslim communities confronted with economic problems, unequal exchanges, the irruption of the market in all areas of social life, gender relations or even "social constructs" around sex have been profoundly challenged in question. The distribution of tasks between men and women, socially codified, has considerably changed under the effect of the expansion of capitalism and the economic policies imposed by the institutions of Bretton woods, and yet the reflections on this subject are marked by more complexities and ideologies.

Development policies, feminist studies, organizations and other development actors do not stop shooting at the customs and customs and traditional cultures of African peasant societies for being resistant to the development of women to reproduce the gender inequalities and therefore jeopardize development. Current mobilizations seek to reduce men and women without however seeking to understand how these inequalities are constructed, reproduced, reinforced and become more complex in the history of societies. There is therefore a gap between the discourse held with regard to women and the places actually occupied by the latter in the production and reproduction of society. Observation of daily life since colonial times has shown that gender relations are essentially dynamic and vary from one socio-cultural context to another, from one historical situation to another. These dynamics in gender relations in the Muslim environment must today question sociologists, as Jacqueline Laufer asserts:

"For almost half a century, the evolution of the place and status of women in society has raised very direct questions for sociology and all of the human sciences. The social transformations are there, tangible and attested, but their translation into a research question is less obvious, more chaotic, marked by delays and accelerations¹.

We wish to provide, through this subject, elements which make it possible to analyze, understand and explain how the relations of domination and gender inequality have been reinforced in economic and social history to become what they are today insofar as these communities have undergone different mutations, the dynamics of the gender relationship predisposes us to consider the socio-economic phenomenon as structuring gender inequalities in this society which depends only mainly.

PROBLEM

The question of the advancement of women remains a current concern and a topical issue. Thus, the United Nations in collaboration with Member States have taken measures to improve the status of women. This has resulted in events both internationally and nationally. The United Nations declared 1975 as International Women's Year at the Mexico Conference. This allowed the creation of an institutional framework for research, training and operational activities in the field of women and development: The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (DISTRAP) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). The period 1976-1985 was adopted as the United Nations Decade for Women.

In 1980 took place the 2nd world conference aiming at evaluating the evolution of the situation of the woman throughout the world. The Nairobi conference in 1985 made it possible to evaluate the decade of women. Finally, there was the 4th World Women's Conference in Beijing, China in 1995. These various Conferences enabled the nations that took part in them to direct their actions in favor of the advancement of women. Cameroon, which participated in some of these conferences, is committed to taking measures to integrate Cameroonian women in general and Muslim women in particular in the development process. This desire has resulted in the creation of national mechanisms for integrating it, such as the Ministry of Women and the Family, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, the National Committee for the Integration of Women in Development, National Women's Week and many other state and private institutions with a view to promoting the improvement of women's living conditions. Despite all these measures and the mechanisms put in place, reluctance exists and persists. It is not enough to put in place a legal arsenal and institutional mechanisms to see the daily life of Muslim women in Adamawa improve.

The fundamental problem is at the level of mentalities which must evolve and change. It is the weight of the habits and customs that have marked the people of the great North of Cameroon in general and in particular that of Adamawa for a long time that are the cause. For Claude Lévi-Strauss, *"The scientist is not the one who gives the right answers, but the one who asks the right questions"*ⁱⁱⁱ.

Thus, our problem is part of the reflection to find practical, ambitious but realistic and achievable answers.

To be able to identify the equal roles of women and men and its implementation in the service of development, this issue raises several questions:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main question:

Faced with male domination supported and maintained by the patriarchy, how do Muslim women proceed to conquer their freedom on the socio-economic level?

Specific issues:

- How is the economic engagement of women a means of gaining freedom and leadership vis-à-vis men in northern Cameroon?
- What are the obstacles that Muslim women develop in the Adamawa region and that prevent their development?
- How do Muslim women circumvent male domination to invest in socio-economic and political activities in the Adamawa region?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Main hypothesis

The Muslim woman of Adamawa by their capacity to react in front of the difficulties, her bravery, her effort, her inventiveness, her creativity uses strategies to weaken the patriarchal authority.

Specific assumptions:

- The involvement of women in economic activities has enabled them to undertake the conquest of leadership vis-à-vis men in Ngaoundéré;
- Muslim women in the Adamawa region are confronted with socio-cultural difficulties and socio-economic and political precariousness which lead them to invent and implement strategies to survive and improve their living conditions.

- To face up to patriarchy in order to ensure its full development, Muslim women in the Adamawa region develop multiple strategies which consist of organizing themselves around associations, bringing their demands to the administrative authorities and relying on NGOs and other international bodies.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

All research work and likewise all human action has an objective. This research that we have undertaken is no exception to this rule. The precision of the objective therefore depends on this methodological and scientific rigor which M. Grawitz recommends when she states: “*Whatever the reasons which prompted the investigation, the first truly scientific step consists in specifying the objective*”. For our work, our objectives are:

Primary objective:

This work shows the strategies deployed by women to gain leadership vis-à-vis men in Ngaoundéré.

Specific objectives:

- To determine the place occupied by Muslim women in the Adamaoua region.
- Analyze the obstacles encountered by Muslim women in the Adamaoua region and which prevent their development.
- Study the strategies developed by Muslim women in the Adamaoua region to face patriarchy in order to ensure their full development.

INTEREST OF THE STUDY

The interest of this subject can be perceived in the approach of the phenomenon through the dynamism of Muslim women in socio-economic and political activities to face the patriarchal logic. Thus, on a theoretical level, this study complements the sociological literature concerning the individual motivations that lead Muslim women to face patriarchal logics.

On a scientific level:

First of all, we want to deepen our knowledge of the specificity of the issue of Muslim women in the Cameroonian context and arouse the enthusiasm of other researchers on the issue. This study also makes it possible to deepen the reflection on the questions of differentiation based on the question of gender in Cameroon, in particular on the Muslim woman who is today taken under the yoke of the weight of culture. In addition, this study appears as an indicator for evaluating our knowledge and our ability to conduct and carry out research on sensitive and complex subjects based on an adequate scientific method. Thus, on the theoretical level, this study will complete the sociological literature regarding the circumvention of the rules governing the functioning of social structures for the achievement of individual objectives by relying on methodological individualism.

On the socio-economic level:

We then want to draw everyone's attention to the need to liberalize our societies, especially Muslim women, for a greater contribution by all to the development process underway in Cameroon. All resources are to be mobilized and as a reminder, women are more than half of the Cameroonian population. This is a real asset and a resource to be developed for the socio-economic and political take-off of the country.

On the socio-cultural level:

With regard to the socio-cultural plan, Cameroonian women in general and Muslim women in particular should no longer fold their arms in the face of certain socio-cultural blockades but rather fight for their future with a view to improving their living conditions through a change of mentality and attitude, as was the case in certain countries where women are not only involved in the development process but also associated in the circle of decision-making. They must be united in order to defend their interests and secure their place in society.

On the institutional level:

The authorities and institutions of civil society must look specifically at the case of Muslim women so that texts and regulations adapted to the evolution of our societies and to the requirements of development are drawn up in order to promote, protect and liberalize the Muslim woman in her community. Our work also aims to highlight the limits of the legislation

and help to understand what is missing in it. Most research proposes to take into account gender relations. Based on this observation, this thesis attempts to identify the link between social relations in the Muslim patriarchal system and to identify the process of development, to understand the conditions for implementing equality in social relations of sex in the service of the development. The orientation of our work revolves around the conditions for the implementation of equality in social gender relations that condition development in developing countries such as the case of Cameroon. Our overall interest is in identifying the role of Muslim women in the face of the power of patriarchy in order to better understand the interactions between gender from below and development from above.

METHODOLOGY

In the sociological dictionary of Gilles Ferréol et al, research methodology in the social sciences is defined as: *A body of knowledge and research with a sufficient degree of unity and generality. And capable of leading the men who devote themselves to it to concordant conclusions which result neither from arbitrary conventions, nor from individual tastes or interests which are common to them, but from objective relations which one discovers gradually and which one confirmed by verification methodsⁱⁱⁱ.*

According to this author, the research methodology must seek the objective or the goal set by the researcher to achieve the result while respecting the methods of scientific verification.

THEORETICAL FRAME

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of domination:

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of domination leads us to understand an ideology that is indifferent to gender studies, namely feminism. This ideology is considered by many as a set of actions to keep women aware of their state of domination. Beyond this vision, Pierre Bourdieu gives us a precision that: *“For women, there are two places of struggle, we can assign objectives. Instead of saying where is the struggle? In the domestic hearth. So we'll struggle to do the dishes. It's not bad, but there are other places of greater struggle. When we say: we are going to destroy the area where there are no longer any women and the area from which they benefit more : Social Security, mutual insurance, hospitals, nurseries, schools, assistance*

services ”^{iv}. We can conclude that the theory of male domination is very appropriate for our analysis simply because it exposes the strategies of imperialism of phallocracy which draws its origins from the habitus.

In other words, this patriarchal logic has become a socialized phenomenon by Muslim women. In a structured space like Ngaoundéré, the social field is now marked by symbolic struggles in which Muslim women seek to break this mark of domination through their firm implications for the cultural capital that is the school, which is becoming increasingly more in economic capital through their inclusion in modern economic calculations. This is the reason why this research work establishes a link between male domination guided by patriarchy and socialization and, above all, in the logic of emancipation of Muslim women in a context where the weight of endogenous values sometimes excludes the space of power.

Convenient setting

The practical framework describes here how our field investigations took place. According to Granai: " *The sociological investigation is a complex strategic operation which always invests and explores the very diverse domains of reality and which could not be enslaved to any exclusive technique of investigation* ". ^[5] This shows the very particular character of research in sociology by its method of analysis of sociological investigation of social facts.

TYPE OF STUDY

We opted for a qualitative study. It allows us to analyze field data, to explain them and to know the social realities in North Cameroon, especially in the Muslim world where women are most often victims of male domination. However, the study combines quantitative data including statistics on the evolution of rates of marginalization of Muslim women in the Adamaoua region.

The target population is all the individuals to whom our study applies, in order to make our object of study credible. Our target population was made up of Muslim households, including **Fulani, Hausa, Mbororo, Mboum, Dii, Gbaya women**, social affairs services, the regional and departmental service for women and the family.

Therefore, our theme having as main objective to show how the Muslim women of Adamaoua face the questions of socio-economic development despite the patriarchal logic which limits

their power of extension within the society. We will choose data collection tools which are, among other things, different techniques that have allowed us to collect empirical information. To this end, we used the following techniques: documentary research, semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and direct observation.

Data collection techniques

According to Raymond Quivy and Luc Van Campenhoudt, data collection "constitutes the implementation of the observation instrument [and] consists in collecting or gathering the prescribed information from the people or observation units selected in the sample."^v. Thus, in order to break with spontaneous sociology as recommended by the theoretical approaches presented above, we will use the qualitative method to collect relevant information and deconstruct gender equality in the face of patriarchal logic within of the Muslim community in the city of Ngaoundéré.

The data collection techniques that we are going to use in the context of our study correspond to a desire to systematically collect information concerning the patriarchal logic in the face of the dynamics of Muslim women in Ngaoundéré as well as the way in which the populations apprehend this phenomenon of gender equality today.

Our study has a much more qualitative orientation, which will use quantitative elements to support the arguments developed. For this, four (03) data collection techniques are used, namely: documentary research, observation and interview.

Direct observation

Observation is defined as a critical look at the objects of study in order to know it. It implies that there is no observation that is not inscribed in a program or in an idea that gives it meaning. As Claude Bernard writes: "*Empirical observations are observations made without any preconceived idea and for the sole purpose of noting the fact. But once the empirical observations have been established, they must be given a meaning. It is to these latter observations that we must give the name of scientific observations. They are necessarily made with a view to a preconceived idea that needs to be verified*"^{vi}. Indeed, direct observation makes it possible to establish a direct relationship between the researcher and the population to be studied. It is the starting point for data collection. This type of observation is adopted in our

study insofar as it allowed us to experience the reality on the ground and to understand the social experience of Muslim women in Ngaoundéré in the face of patriarchal logic.

An observation corresponds to a careful and careful look at particular aspects of a phenomenon studied in a given time and space. The aim is to methodically look at the social fact studied thanks to an observation guide which will have been constructed on the basis of the work objective. Authors such as Stéphane Beau and Florence Weber see it as a tool for discovering and verifying social facts. It involves three simultaneous phases: perception, memorization and notation^{vii}.

Given that Muslim women have a reluctant behavior towards any foreign person in general and men in particular, this direct observation will aim to get to know the women, in order to gain their trust and collect the data we need.

Semi-directive interview

The interview is defined according to the lexicon of sociology as : “ *a method of collecting information in which the interviewer questions the subject face to face* ”^{viii}. It is reserved for a limited number of individuals affected by the problem because it requires enormous material, financial and time resources. It should be remembered that there are three types of interview: directive, non-directive and semi-directive interview. In our case study, we opted for the so-called semi-directive one. We have opted for this interview, because it is the most used in the social sciences. For De Blanchet " a semi-directive interview is an interview mainly between two people, the interviewer and the interviewee (it can be extended to a group) conducted and recorded by the interviewer to favor the reproduction of a discourse of the 'interviewed on a theme defined in the context of research^{ix}.

It will lead us to develop interview guides in order to collect a certain amount of information on our subject. These interview guides will be administered mainly to married women and responsible heads of families in Muslim households, some women traders and their husbands in the town of Ngaoundéré. The interview with the women will be based on an interview guide that we will prepare for this purpose. We will work with key Muslim women and men informants according to the degree of their knowledge of the female question in the face of patriarchal logic. The various informants interviewed will be Muslim women, relatives, facilitators and we will contact members of Islamic women's associations such as: WAMY

(World Assembly of Muslim Youths), ADF (African Development Foundation), CAMWA (Cameroon Muslim Women Association), for information on the gender issue.

Life stories

This method was to collect information about Muslim women, their life story. It was a question of bringing women to tell us how they manage to carry out their activity in the Muslim community despite the weight of tradition and the region that is often hostile to female emancipation.

Focus Group Discussion

According to Dawson S. Manderson L. and Tallo^x. A focus group is a discussion group that brings together people from the field or with similar experiences to discuss a specific topic that is of interest to the researcher. Thus the focus group discussion should not be confused with the semi-structured interview in which the moderator (animator “facilitator”) asks specific questions to be answered by the group. On the contrary, the participants of the group freely discuss a given subject. The researcher, on the other hand, tries to encourage the participants to go deeper into the subject during the discussion in order to obtain more information on the way of thinking.

The focus group discussion is a preferred method for conducting a qualitative survey. The focus group is a group interview technique. It is part of qualitative survey techniques as opposed to quantitative surveys. Group dynamics make it possible to explore and stimulate different points of view through discussion. The discussion in turn makes it possible to specify, clarify and reconcile points of view. Thus, our focus group will be addressed to married Muslim women and young Muslim girls

THE DIALECTIC OF THE GENDER RELATIONSHIP IN MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN NGAOUNDERE

A general remark is in order: in many societies, there is a division of tasks and occupations between men and women. This distribution can be symbolically or religiously justified depending on whether one is in such or such a society. Some production processes are reserved for one or the other sex only. However, the distribution of tasks can also be done within the

same production process. One of the fundamental questions to raise in the context of the analysis of gender relations is the role and status of women in the political, cultural and religious administration of the Muslim community. This question is to know who has the power to make decisions for the smooth running of society and to seek to know if the opinion of women counts in the daily management of the community.

Current configurations of gender relations in Muslim communities

In the Muslim community of Ngaoundéré, the power of men and their role as economic providers in households gives the impression of being called into question. We are witnessing here a new reconfiguration of social roles in the family space where women today have many socio-economic maneuvers. This situation shows how to establish relationships between money and power within the family. It should also be added that these changes have had repercussions on the sexual divisions of roles and work. In other words, certain male roles and tasks become feminized over time.

After highlighting all the economic strategies of women in Muslim communities, we believe it is important to highlight the work of women in the economy. Women enter and remain in the labor market. While there is an absolute relative fall in the male labor force as well, this new emergence of women in the sphere of the economy gives them a certain financial autonomy. Taking advantage of this autonomy, they manage to shake off “*the yoke of male servitude*”^{xi} which they have supported since the colonial period. We are witnessing today a new “configuration” of gender in a world dominated by patriarchy without necessarily coming to the end of male domination, does not the autonomy of Muslim women allow them to widen their margin of freedom in society, the marital home and in a reinterpretation of the role of women?

From complementarity to gender discrimination of tasks in production

The gender distribution of power within the Muslim family is an important topic for all gender studies. The question is on everyone's lips today to know, how to revitalize socio-economic power with the new status of men and women in the family circle? What is the social and emotional cost of this new economic power, which goes beyond the traditional roles of wife and mother? What is the impact of these changes on children (images of parental authority), on the new redistribution of roles and power in the family? The possibilities of access to have money thanks to the marketing of agricultural products which had made men the provider of

the family and the possessor of the key to economic development had also acquired a sort of taboo character which reinforces male power within the family. However, this new economic context marked by the economic success of women in creating within Muslim families a sort of rebalancing of social powers. Muslim women upset a certain social order by forcing men to hand over decision-making power to them more and more within the family and even in communities as a whole. Work also offers an opportunity for Muslim women to participate in public life.

Indeed, the woman's contribution to household income potentially strengthens her position within the family and in the relationship between the couple. It is significant that we turn more and more towards women to obtain food or to have a little money to pay for the schooling of the children and to have the money to pay for medical care. At the family level, she acquires social weight in her relationship with her husband. One does not need a meticulous analysis to get to the evidence of the importance of the woman in the assumption of responsibility of the current managed.

The expenses related to the education of the children, to the health of the family, to the clothing of the members of the family are almost entirely supported today by these women. Indeed, concerning specifically the schooling of children, let us rather follow the words of a primary school teacher:

“If necessary: say them in all sincerity, our primary schools currently functioning thanks to the efforts of women. Why do you have to hide? At the start of the school year, you will realize that it is the women who do everything to buy school supplies for the children and they are the ones who always come to us for the registration of the children. It looks like the men have resigned from their duties after all, we understand them since here in the city of Ngaoundéré there are no permanent activities that allow them to have money, but it's too exaggerated insofar as some have difficulty is it risk to sell a goat or a sheep to send the child to school. We prefer to expect everything from the woman. The most shocking thing is when you convene a meeting of parents of students, 65 % of the participants are sometimes women, while there are men who could also attend the meetings. I'm so sorry, really it's a sad deplorable reality that men have to lean into it in the face of this most detrimental situation”^{xii}.

Indeed, some of our research in the field demonstrates enough. During an interview with a father of a family in the Haoussa district in the city of Ngaoundéré, we curiously asked the level of education of his four children who were right next to us, the latter replied that: “Perhaps you should ask their mother, the level of study of the children, what I know in this story? She is the one who often leaves to pay or collect their reports and respond in the event of a problem at school^{xiii}. The consequences of such attitudes will lead, on a social level, to a shift in parent/child relationships, more precisely to the upheaval of parental authority. Therefore, children will have more and more respect for their mothers than their fathers. Moreover, the daily need of man is much more fulfilled by women. It is not uncommon to find men asking their wives for money on a daily basis to go to the market for entertainment or to have a cup of tea or something in the market. Some heavier bank debts that weigh on men are usually repaid by their wives^{xiv}.

The capitalist economy and male domination

Violence against human beings is a social evil. It constitutes a violation of human rights. It is physically and psychologically harmful to the victims^{xv}. Women are the main victims of violence and men are the main perpetrators. According to the 2020 UN report, more than one in two women have experienced some form of violence from the age of 15, compared to 1 in 10 men^{xvi}. Statistics from the same source indicate that 90.0 % of violence against women is perpetrated by men (mainly husbands/partners, boyfriends and even fathers or brothers).

This table below also explains this phenomenon experienced by women in the Ngaoundéré region.

Table: Number of natural persons surveyed according to the forms of known and suffered physical violence.

Violence Physical	Caning	Forced abortion	Genital mutilation	Breast ironing	Sequestration	Brutality	Forced labor
Yes	265 (95 %)	157 (56 %)	85 (30 %)	130 (50 %)	10(4%)	143(51%)	4(1%)
No	15 (5 %)	123 (44 %)	195(70%)	141(50%)	270(96%)	137(49%)	276(99%)

Source: APRODHFIM S/C BP study report: 820 Ngaoundéré-Cameroon tel (237) 677 223 337/696 744 133 of May 15, 2021 in Ngaoundéré.

According to statistical data from the report of the project to strengthen women's CSOs to monitor the legal instruments ratified by Cameroon in favor of women in the Adamawa region in October 2020, throughout the region, women experience violence physical in their environment. Caning is the most common mode with the percentage of 95 % for Yes. Analogous to caning, brutality (51 %) is also common in the different localities of the region. Forced abortions are recorded at 56 %, which are generally acts carried out by unmarried young people for fear of reprisals and responsibilities or the consequences of unwanted pregnancies. Phenomena that we never thought could exist in the Adamawa region such as breast ironing and female genital mutilation are also present and are respectively recorded at 50 % and 30 %.

Table 8: Summary of the rate of emotional abuse

Psychological abuse	Anger	Insult	Threatens	Denigration	Discredit and silence	Reviews
176	212	236	96	172	34	
104	68	44	184	108	246	

Source: field survey in Ngaoundéré 2020.

Psychological violence

Throughout the Adamawa region, women experience psychological violence from various others. The statistics are scary in places. Looking at the table above, we realize that violence such as threats (84 %), insults (76 %), anger (63 %) and discredit/silence (61 %) are the most frequent.

Difficulties related to the development of the economic activities of vendors

The populations consider women dealers as exploiters and are becoming more and more reticent towards them. The price of plantain bunches in the countryside has risen considerably because these products are sometimes rare on the market. Despite all these difficulties, people are unaware that Bayam-Salam women encounter a lot when loading plantain bunches on the freight train in Ngaoundéré. The other attitude displayed by the populations is the contempt they display. They consider these saleswomen as people who have

failed in their lives. This, because there are many women who have never set foot in school. There is a high proportion of illiterates in the circles of banana-plantain food sellers. The public authorities do not pay much attention to the latter, while they constitute the feeder udder with their food. Their status gives them no respect from some officials who call them crooks because of the unsuitability of the price of their product.

They experience other difficulties due to the court that other clients impose on them in the exercise of their function. Women vendors are exposed to prostitution. It's probably as Yasmine explains: *“There are clients, especially married men who like to disturb us, who make offers to sleep with us. But, when we go to the countryside, some suppliers offer us diets of plantains to sleep with us”*^{xvii}.

The presence of the Hausa ethnic group is strongly marked in the city of Ngaoundéré and assisted by Bamileke women from the region of southern Cameroon. In this kind of activity, we meet most of the vendors at the small market and especially behind the Ndoumbé Oumar stadium in Ngaoundéré. However, among donut traders, they also encounter many difficulties in the exercise of their trade. Indeed, in the exercise of their activity, some girls are victims of numerous temptations and rapes from certain unidentified individuals and sometimes even from some of their own clients. In less well-off families, *“every young girl must carry out an income-generating activity to prepare for her marriage”*^{xviii}. This explains the strong presence of young Muslim girls in the commercial activity of donuts. This activity is still in the artisanal form; in addition, it is recognized as a family business where the girls assist their parents in the sale to have a high productivity despite it still remaining on a small scale for lack of financial means. The itinerant donut sellers have to deprive themselves of sleep to turn their legs to make the donuts. They travel for miles with the trays or bowls placed on their heads to sell donuts. Some girls set up there in the streets, at the crossroads and on the sidewalk in the open air to display the goods to users.

During the month of Ramadan, there is a strong presence of young girls lined up along the road to sell donuts to get the money to prepare for the Ramadan feast. They are lined up along the road displaying their various sales items, among others: wheat flour donuts, bean donuts, corn... Thus, other items are stored on the trays placed on the small tables. Indeed, in this market, there are only donuts, boiled during the Ramadan fasting period, there is also the natural one commonly called *“foléré”*^{xix} honey juice, *“jindja juice”*.

However, the “*foléré*” juice accompanies these delicious-tasting donuts for the occasion. Thus, the importance of these Muslim women no longer needs to be demonstrated in the city of Ngaoundéré. Because it is these women vendors who feed the population almost every day in the early morning and at dusk, their role is also considerable for these Muslim faithful who must buy a few donuts from them before breaking the Ramadan fast. These donuts are also very important for those consumers who buy to go home with and be able to eat together with their family member. It should also be noted that the environment in which these women unfold is not easy, this environment is not equally healthy. These foodstuffs, which are not sometimes covered, can cause illnesses and therefore could harm the health of consumers. Moreover, the state of these donuts can justify the slump which leads to losses.

Difficulties related to lack of funding

Money is very essential to launch a commercial activity; its lack can slow down the activity at all levels. These Muslim women who sell donuts do not have any capital unlike their bayam-salam predecessors where sometimes the official banking establishments, micro-finances or micro-credits grant them credits. These donut sellers do not benefit from certain services from the town hall, among others: buildings, electricity, supply and drinking water. They do not have very comfortable infrastructures to carry out their commercial activities. They are allotted in precarious sheds either in private family homes, sometimes in places where there is not even light and drinking water. While they have to wake up in the middle of the night to knead the flour.

Thus, improving access to physical infrastructure can lead to productivity and reduced operating costs. They don't have decent equipment to run a business because good condition and quality equipment increases performance and productivity. The meeting with a donut seller in the Baladji district revealed this statement.

I get up very early in the morning at 4 o'clock, I have no electricity and I only use the flashlight. My shed is located 200 meters from the house, when it's a bit dark, it's my 13-year-old child who accompanies me to the market. I don't have the wheelbarrow and we are all transporting in the dark with a lamp that does not light well and there are no streetlights on my route and transporting all these things on my head^{xx}. Thus, the formation of such equipment is important for the integration of this activity in the rest of the economy.

However, the women who sell donuts use their family dwelling as their places of service. Most of them live in precarious housing. Whereas to increase their productivity, these players in the economy need electricity both to light their premises and to operate their tools. The supply of water, sanitary facilities and storage of their product is necessary.

THE NEW ISSUES OF GENDER RELATIONS IN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY ONT NGAOUNDÉRE

Studying the issues of gender relations in the Muslim community in Ngaoundéré means highlighting the new reconfiguration of the status of Muslim women within her community today and also examining the issues of decision-making within the family before seeing the extent of the feminization of male roles in today's society, although dominated by the patriarchal system.

The ambiguity of the perception of women's work

The social status of Muslim women varies very little from one ethnic group to another. She has the status of wife, mother, and mistress of the family. A woman's procreation or fertility is highly valued in all ethnic groups of the Muslim community. Final fertility averages 6.2 children per Muslim woman. This high intensity of fertility contributes to the strengthening of the domestic role of Muslim women^{xxi}. Carrying out activities outside the home is made difficult by the permanent presence of young children who need to be cared for.

It is true that the center of decision for the procreation or to make the child depends strongly on the decision of the head of the family whose husband, the Moslem woman is here to draw aside any part in this role. In addition, it must be recognized that the phenomena of controlling this fertility remain unknown to most Muslim women and young girls, despite the efforts undertaken in the field of family planning. The use of contraceptives is still very low due to the lack of information, education and communication in this area and especially cultural and religious constraints.

This ignorance of procreation, often seen from the angle of destiny, contributes to increasing among Muslim women and girls, the problems linked to early and unwanted pregnancies, and to the very high number of children. It is not uncommon to meet young Muslim girls aged 16-18 or young women forced to stop their studies or see their future compromised because they are expecting a child^{xxii}. Women in general and Muslim women have not always been taken

into account in the elaboration of development projects or programs. In the past, the female component of the Muslim community was omitted and it was made to believe that exclusively female-oriented programs automatically generated benefits for them.

In the agricultural sector in particular, women's leadership has long been passed over in silence. Whereas, Muslim women played a growing role in food production following the reconfiguration of men towards the cultivation of cash crops.

The challenges of decision-making within the family: age as a factor in decision-making

Age is the major element in decision-making and the imposition of one's will in a matter relating to common interests, the oldest are always the most respected, therefore their decisions are much more taken into account.

Indeed, age can be considered here as an indicator of power, it contributes to the first to impose authority and to reproduce differences, to identify the different roles between men and women, elders and younger^{xxiii}. This table below explains this difference in decision-making.

Table 11: Distribution of people surveyed according to age

Ages	Workforce	Percentage
18 to 20 years old	13	4.6
21 to 30 years old	104	37.1
31 to 40 years old	122	43.6
4,050 _	36	12.9
5,160 _	4	1.4
61 and over	1	0.4
Total	280	100.0

Source: field survey in October 2020.

Age therefore contributes to a real influence of women in traditional African society in general and in particular in Muslim society in Cameroon, older Muslim women can have the mosque, for example, on the other hand, young Muslim women cannot have access to the mosque. This place is strictly prohibited for these age groups of young women. This shows how much society and religion grant an important capital to the people of the third age (old man). Age also contributes to the change in the social status of Muslim women. The oldest Muslim woman

finds a place of choice in terms of respect and socio-political and economic decision-making power. As Henri Ngoa rightly points out in his writings: *“in black Africa, women always participate in the political life of the group. past a certain age and generally after the menopause, she participates in the council of the clan ”*^{xxiv}. Indeed, the opinion of the elderly woman among the Fulani, Hausa, Mboums, Dii and Gbaya are more taken into account during meetings of elders in clans or ethnic communities. They can speak in public in front of men during significant events such as the weddings of her daughter or her relatives where her decision can be taken into account, she can be listened to and participates in decision-making. She is here, socially considered as a " man " although being physically removed from the constraints of motherhood which places the woman a " defiled person " and " impure " by the evil powers during the period of menses, the woman is excluded from certain ceremonies of a sacred or religious nature among Muslims. But the elderly woman can have a socio-magico-religious power and can attend these ceremonies.

Table 12: distribution of people surveyed by gender

Genders	Workforce	Percentage
Male	98	35 %
Feminine	182	65 %
Total	280	100 %

Source: field survey in October 2020.

Thus in many societies in the far north of Cameroon, for women to acquire mystical power, they must lose their ability to procreate, that is to say, they must be “masculinized”. She can only reach this stage at the menopause, the hope of the woman is marked by the menopause which makes women pass in the category “women made men” for imprint the term of Chantal Collard^{xxv}.

The feminization of male roles

Today in the city of Ngaoundéré we are witnessing new distribution of tasks initiated since the introduction of small businesses in the informal sectors today allows the development of economic activities of Muslim women, men are no longer in a position to play the autonomous

roles on the economic and cultural level present in the great North of Cameroon. Men now turn to their husbands for help, as we just mentioned above, or Muslim women pay for their children's medicine and schooling. Muslim women, on the other hand, no longer expect men to help them with certain tasks that used to fall within the domain of male competence.

THE CRISIS OF MALE IDENTITY

In a world where there is no identity, men no longer know how to appreciate women as sisters, mothers or especially spouses. They no longer know how to respect it. They respect even less the ideals of societal value. Which, by the way, are non-negotiable. Nature does not like hollow debate. Men want to redefine the concepts of cultural identity, the value of which is unknown to almost all humans.

Marketing of products and difficulties encountered by women sellers

Through commercial activities, the bayam-salam also participate in the fight against unemployment and poverty like all other activities, each finds its interest in this commercial activity, because it mobilizes several people, namely: pushers, loaders, wagons or tomboro and truck loaders, there are also plantain finger cutters to put them in boxes, other vendors. You can also find other small activities that gravitate around the tower (street food sellers, shoe sellers). It should be noted that these Muslim women manage to integrate many other young people into their activities either by granting them capital, or by employing them directly as assistants in the business. This is how Mrs. Roukayatou was able to integrate five young people into her activities of selling bananas/plantain who, later on, these young people became independent sellers for their own account.

Photo 7: Banana/plantain at the Living Market at the Merchandise Station in Ngaoundéré



The transport of commercial products brings significant income to the economy in the goods station, even if these remain insignificant compared to the other commercial activity as so well underlined by the revenue and tax managers of CAMRAIL M. Abdoulaye^{xxvi}. However, this activity occupies a place of choice not only at the level of CAMRAIL, but also at the level of the town hall. These include the discharge tax, the receipt and the right of place. Indeed, access to a small portion of land is paid for, the price of which is set at 3000 FCFA per square meter. This money allows the town hall to fulfill its sovereign missions (sanitation of the city, urban electrification, road redevelopment, bridge construction, drilling and payment of fuel vouchers) underlines the main official of the town hall of Ngaoundéré^{2xxvii}.

Muslim women traders therefore constitute the essential link in the supply chain of the city of Ngaoundéré and its surroundings in terms of products (plantain and banana). Indeed, almost the entire population of Ngaoundéré obtains its supplies there against the fact that they hold a monopoly on products such as bananas/plantains and plantains from the south. Although working in the informal sector, the economic activity of the region in general and the city of Ngaoundéré in particular. Therefore, we find in front of the effect of the activities of donut vendors which leaves its traces in almost all of the city of Ngaoundéré. Muslim women traders encounter difficulties in their activities like any other human activity characterized by the up and down, bayam-salam Muslim women and women who do catering in the exercise of their profession, face several difficulties which are social orders first within her own family where the husband does not leave her the slightest space of freedom to carry out her commercial activity and also, they also face financial, administrative, family, social and safe. The study carried out here makes it possible to identify the difficulties which present similarities and dissimilarities. On this subject, we note the marginalization of the female agent who is excluded from all modern activity. Indeed, as Boserup explains:

There are few Muslim women among the traders who actually sell at the local market and many women among those who work on their own account or as family helpers in the local industry, we find in most developing countries development path a large proportion of women working in local industry, while a small proportion of men employed in industry remained in an unproductive branch of the industrial sector^{xxviii}.

The bayam-salam as we pointed out above are great traders. They serve as channels between the actors of the rural world, including the producers of consumer goods, and the urban markets which abound in capital and purchasing power.

The fight against poverty

It should be noted that through the activities that the Muslim bayam-salam carry out, they are protected from poverty which is characterized by the lack of means, the means of subsistence and money, the shortage, lack of subsistence minimum. The income they maintain on a daily basis keeps them away from poverty, begging and starvation. Morally and psychologically, they cannot be affected. In this wake, we can observe that these Muslim businesswomen in the city of Ngaoundéré use all their energies, skills and abilities to be producers and holders of capital. It is found on all fronts in the commercial activity sectors so as not to be included in the table of men's involvement. They face fatigue, insomnia and have the stamina for their conditions to improve, in addition to having a mental balance implied by physical health. She presents the image of a good woman fulfilled at the level of her family and even by those around her. As such, these women deserve special attention because they are not considered the most demented.

The impact of the donut trade on social development

The social impact of the activity of selling donuts is perceptible on an individual and collective level. At the level of individual life, this activity refers to the rearing of women. While at the level of collective life, it is the family that benefits from the fruit of the work.

At the level of individual life

The promotion of sex and gender and the empowerment of Muslim women economically has built the image of women in general at the level of their community. This shaping of the image has strengthened its social position. Indeed, thanks to the profit from the donut trade, Muslim women who carry out this activity manage to solve their daily problems. There are many women and girls in this sector who, failing to frequent a lot, quickly integrate into society through this activity. This development where economic independence is observable in an ethnic group with a strong representativeness, in particular the Hausa. We could substitute as part of their culture, especially among girls where the modern school is not highly valued.

For this female category, the fulfillment of the woman or her happiness is dependent on the commercial activity which allows her to prepare for her future marriage. They start this activity in their adolescence underlines this young girl " *I left school since the 6th class without having finished the secondary cycle, I was already endowed and engaged* "^{xxix}. The trade in donuts that

young Muslim girls practice allows them to buy things and equipment for their wedding : waxi loincloths, suitcases, bedding, buffets, candles among Muslims constitute a grandiose festive event, it is an element of social welfare, but when you are married young, you stop carrying out a commercial activity. At this time one becomes a housekeeper bonded in the supervision of the husband and children.

At the family level

Most of the Muslim women who do the catering are real economic agents; some women are providers insofar as they take care of children's schooling, nutrition in the household where women do not have decent jobs or are poorly listed. In most households where Muslim women do the catering, the mother is a nurturer and is welcomed as such. She is compared to the cow with the inexhaustible magpie because she puts this quality at the service of other people. An accomplished foster mother receives another epithet: the grandmother of an appanage, matched with hardened values. The stability of the Muslim woman in the family contributes to the construction of a fair and responsible society edited by culture and religion. Muslim women perpetuate the education of their offspring.

Departing from this moral training, they fight against prostitution which is a social scourge within the Muslim community, in certain ethnic sub-groups, the crisis has broken sexual segregation where the man has remained perched for a long time so that there is permanent contact between husband and wife. Apart from the Hausa Muslim women who dominate the catering market in Ngaoundéré, migrant women are involved and lead for the most part in the Sheds made of temporary material or at their homes. Through this activity, there is complementarity between the formal and the informal because, it buys in the shops and the turnover increases and this increases the taxation which enters the coffers of the State and which allows it to fill his missions.

Figure 8: Restaurant with its back to the small market in Ngaoundere



Photos : Moudga Mathieu le Prince, Novembre 2020.

In addition, catering is one of the responses to unemployment where this type of activity recruits many young people who have dropped out of school. This allows them to survive. This The image above presents the reality of the woman who struggles daily in the restaurant business. They are sometimes confronted with the problems of lack of modern equipment which could increase the production of the restaurant and generate more of this economic agent. Some Muslim women who do catering have been able to include other Muslim girls and women in this activity so that they have become autonomous. By becoming autonomous, there is a decrease in the rate of prostitution in the community. Moreover, the informal activities in which Muslim women are concentrated, such as bayam-salam, the trade in plantains and the trade in doughnuts, are activities that make it possible to withstand external shocks. Through these activities, the gender issue is manifested and the emancipation of women becomes effective through this form of economy. The Muslim woman is integrated into the social environment and contributes in her rightful right as a real actor in the development of the city of Ngaoundéré on the social level and this is visible on the improvement of the individual condition at the level of family life.

Moreover, this Muslim woman by the name of Hadja Fatimatou explains her itinerary in this activity from which she drew her source, until the day she fell into the arm of a man and later, she found herself in her household so that today she is the mother of four children. At the level of the family, she said, according to the popular conception of her community, the woman contributes to the well-being of the family, as for all the communities in the world, the woman must play the role of mistress of the house, she must have as a major objective, that of ensuring the collective well-being of his family^{xxx}. Because of this heavy responsibility which rests on the woman within the hearth, and because of the immensity of work which requires a great expenditure of energy and a great tenacity which falls to the latter on a daily basis. Yesterday like today in urban and rural areas, women are the first to get up and the last to go to bed. It is still her who contributes enormously to food, she supports the man in the schooling of the children and brings the children to the hospital when they are sick. Thus, the woman must mobilize efforts, her skills and abilities to break the curse of poverty, to wash away the dark picture of the men who have always plastered her as " *the consumer* " to also become " *a producer* ".

The new status of women in the Muslim community today

The distribution of power between the sexes within the Muslim family is a central issue for all gender-based studies. How is power redefining itself with the new economic role of men and women in the upkeep of Muslim families? What is the social and emotional cost of this new economic power, which goes beyond the traditional and obligatory roles of wife and mothers for remnant women? What is the impact of these changes on children (images of parental authority), on the new redistribution of roles and power in the family? The possibilities of access to have money thanks to the marketing of agricultural products which had made men the provider of the family and the possessor of the keys to economic development had also acquired a sort of taboo character which strengthens male power within the family. However, this new economic context marked by the economic success of women in creating within Muslim families a sort of rebalancing of social powers. Muslim women are shaking up certain social orders by forcing men into their hands by ceding more and more power within the family, starting from the same with communities as a whole. The work also offers an opportunity for Muslim women to participate in public life, in their family, community and ethnic circles.

Indeed, the woman's contribution to household income potentially strengthens her position in the couple and in the family. It is significant that we turn more and more to women to obtain food, a little money to pay for the schooling of children, medical care and so on. Finally, at the level of the family, she acquires weight in her relations with her husband, her children and, to a certain extent, with extended relatives. One does not need a meticulous analysis to get to the evidence of the importance of the woman in the assumption of responsibility of the current managed.

Expenses related to the education of children, the health of the family, the clothing of family members are almost entirely borne by women. However, with regard specifically to the schooling of children, let us rather follow what a primary school teacher told us:

“If it is necessary: to say it in all sincerity, our primary schools currently function thanks to the efforts of women. At the start of the school year, you will realize that it is the women who do everything to buy school supplies for the children and they are the ones who always come to us for the registration of the children. It looks like the men have resigned from their duties after all, we understand them since here in the city of Ngaoundéré there are no permanent activities that allow them to have money, but it's too exaggerated insofar as

some people find it difficult to sell a goat or a sheep to send the child to school, we prefer to expect everything from the woman. Worse still, when you convene a parent-teacher meeting, you find that only 65 % of the participants are women. I'm really sorry, really it's a sad deplorable reality that men can think about it in the face of this detrimental situation ^{xxxix}.

Indeed, certain speeches can testify in the solidarity of their children. During an interview, we curiously asked the level of education of his four children who were right next to us, he replied: "Perhaps we should ask their mother the level of education of their children, I know what ; this she who often leaves to withdraw their ballots and respond in the event of a problem" ^{xxxix}.

The consequences of such attitudes will lead, on a social level, to a shift in parent/child relationships, more precisely to the upheaval of parental authority. Therefore, children will have more and more respect for their mothers than their fathers. In addition, the daily need of man and much more provided by women. It is not uncommon to meet men asking their wives for money daily to go to the market for entertainment or to go and consume something in the market. Some heavier bank debts that weigh on men are usually repaid by their wives ^{xxxix}.

However, in the Muslim community of Ngaoundéré, the power of men and their roles as economic providers in households give the impression of being questioned. We are witnessing here a new reconfiguration of social roles in the family space where women today have many socio-economic maneuvers. This situation shows how to establish relationships between money and power within the family. It should also be added that these mutations have repercussions on the sexual divisions of roles and work. In other words, certain male roles and tasks become feminized over time.

In the field of education

In the field of education, Muslim women stand out for their skills, as Sobé points out in his research where he explains that education is an action of transmitting knowledge and know-how to a learner. During the colonial period, literacy activities were carried out by men. Women were almost excluded from this work because of the cultural constraints that limit the work of women in field work. Indeed, in the city of Ngaoundéré we will not say it enough, women are victims of traditional and cultural practices which do not allow them to fit into the learning process. She is the major force in agricultural production for her community whose life depends entirely on agriculture. Indeed, the Mboum woman, for example, had neither the

encouragement nor the adequate time to get involved in the Western school. Faced with this situation, efforts have been made to encourage women to participate more in all activities.

Table 13: Profile by establishment of the number of students from the Adamawa region of the University of Ngaoundéré

No.	Genders Establishments	Girls	Boys	Total
	ESCIM	15	32	47
	ENSAI	20	56	78
	ITU	25	116	141
	ESMV	19	38	57
	FALSH	235	403	638
	FSEG	203	510	713
	FS	112	494	606
	Total	629	1,649	2,280

Source: Planning and Development Infrastructure Department of the University of Ngaoundéré

The table above shows us the involvement of young Muslim girls in the fields of schooling in general and in particular shows their ability to do certain courses that were once called " men 's courses ", such as scientific series. Indeed, in the years 1996, it was difficult to find a Muslim girl to access these scientific courses but today, they are found everywhere in the various higher schools and faculties. This is a good sign despite the fact that many young girls remain in the shadows because of socio-political contexts undermined by values that limit the education of young girls in favor of that of boys.

The painting also shows a positive change in local mentalities that had long opposed the girl's education. Indeed, this access for all to education has created equal social opportunities for the different social strata allowing minorities and discriminated social sub-groups (Muslim women) to participate freely in the development of their locality and their country without constraint.

We can note that higher education is increasingly attended by girls from Ngaoundéré because of both the openness of the latter to globalization and social mobility which allow them to easily mingle with other ethnic groups. Social change thus becomes here like a scientific trajectory that follows the dynamics of gender relations from the factors that have contributed to the high schooling of young Muslim girls in Ngaoundéré.

Nowadays we see a strong involvement of Muslim girls from Ngaoundéré in the education sector. The woman not only becomes a trainer (teacher, teacher, etc.). The impact of literacy in its empowerment is much visible; not only does she participate in development, but she effectively manages her daily life. We can never say enough, the example of Madame Nafissa is illustrative in this respect. She is the founding president of the school complex that bears her name.

Hadja Nafissa will mark the city of Ngaoundéré and its surroundings in terms of education She will also found a school complex (bilingual college Nafissa Ali al islamisa). She also created a training center for women within her foundation. The center allows these women not only to benefit from many lessons, it also allows them to facilitate their socio-professional integration^{xxxiv}. In addition to Mrs. Nafissa, several other women stand out through their commitment to education. This is the case of Doctor Amina Djouldé, a native of the Adamaoua region who is in charge of courses in the History Department of the University of Ngaoundéré^{xxxv}.

Muslim woman in sport

The creation of a National Directorate of Sport for All by Decree No. 2005/098 of April 6, 2005, on the organization of the Ministry of Sports and Physical Education determining the allocation of their responsibilities. This Department is responsible for designing strategies to promote sport for all, the organization and practice of adapted sport and maintenance, the development of traditional sports and games, in conjunction with the departments and services concerned^{xxxvi}. As a result, there is no programming of activities, no transparency of the financial package. The organization and operation of sport are more in the domain of confidentiality by mobilizing an informal network of friendships by those who hold a share of power.

The Benefits of Physical Education and Sports for Women and Girls

The notion of a special physical education for women was conceived in the 18th century by Jean Jacques Rousseau, who stressed such a necessity, without admitting, however, that she participated in sporting events. The idea that the girl and the woman can practice physical education and sport has aroused, on the whole, the same reaction as the emancipation of women: the fact that the woman leaves her home and exercises a social and a profession has been interpreted to this day, even in developed countries, as a revolt breaking natural laws and doomed, in itself, to modify the very nature of woman.

That said, according to the prescriptions of Islamic laws, the Muslim woman must be almost entirely covered and must leave only the face and hands visible. Mrs. Haouwa, Koranic teacher in the Mbideng four shops district in Ngaoundéré thinks about the physical exercise and sports that Muslim girls and women at school have: *" women's dress, the veil, required by the Muslim religion contradicts sporty attire. Between the veil and the sports T-shirt, there is a great abyss. Conventional athletic attire is considered indecent and offensive because it reveals and exposes the female body"*^{xxxvii}. In justifying her answer, she said that at their first meeting she was in sportswear and just a year after the wedding was celebrated. After three years of marriage with two kids, he divorced her supposedly that he is now a fundamentalist, the woman's body is an object of desire, of appropriation, hence putting on sportswear it is to attract the gaze of others so the main role of the woman is to stay at home.

The other divorcee affirms that her husband told her to take an availability since in the long run she will no longer be able to profess, that is to say when she is pregnant. For him the conception that prevailed was that the woman is not built to practice sport, but to procreate and, as any physical exercise is accompanied by clashes, shocks and jolts, it is dangerous for the uterine organ, so for the woman. He guaranteed her the salary so that she would no longer practice this profession. He maintains that Liman, his next door neighbor, told him that a woman's role is to stay at home to take care of her children and her husband and when she goes out she must be veiled from top to bottom.

In general, Muslim clerics in Cameroon, particularly the Bororo, do not appreciate the practice of physical education by women. However, since 2,700 BC, Kung-fu, for example in China, was already using a method of physical education for religious purposes to heal the body from illnesses, the body having to be a servant of the soul^{xxxviii}. What is interesting for us in the

present study is that one should not see the Muslim religion in terms of an obstacle. The largest Islamic Nations in the world, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Iran Iraq, practice physical education and sports in schools even if it is practiced separately by the two sexes; they also have sports teams which represent them in major world sporting events. Physical education and sports teachers in public and private establishments are therefore aware of the influence of religion through the organizational framework and dress code, which can be corrected with a little pragmatism.

Finally, as Iman Fabiou says : "*Islam recognizes the honorable purpose of sport, but that does not prevent it from combating excesses, in particular clothing behavior, too close mixing and doping*"^{xxxix}.

Responses from resource persons of women's associations

According to the Regional Inspector of Physical Education and Sports of the Region of Ngaoundéré (IREPS), the person in charge of personnel and the educational adviser (CPEPS), former teacher of physical education and sports, athletes and players of the team's basketball and handball championships; it affirms that the practice of physical education and sports generally remains a necessity for all human beings and in particular for women. This demonstrates that sport is a means that allows us to convey our cultural values. Physical education also recommends good teaching methods for the transmission of knowledge and know-how, allowing them to acquire the maximum knowledge. Physical and sports education from a young age until puberty develops the human body, which is armed with good blood circulation. It allows socialization with others, there is no difference between the sexes and in no way leads a girl to delinquency unless she is motivated by a bad intention or she already was. It allows the development of body and mind^{xl}. Sport provides the woman with a certain dynamism in order to be able to fully take care of her home because it is a saving action.

Doing sports does not always mean running, jumping, you can do sports to maintain your physical shape and even being in your room by practicing abdominals. According to the Director for the Promotion of Women and the Assistant for the Integration of Young People, the only handicap is the mix because Islam prohibits mixing between men and women and/or with sticky and transparent outfits, highlighting their form especially married women. There are certain exercises that a woman should not demonstrate or practice on the court, for example the spreads. It is to harm her femininity in front of an audience and this constitutes a frustration,

a humiliation for our social environment^{xli} who in turn misjudges this function exercised by women.

Responses from resource persons of Islamic associations

Taking into account the answers received and the independent variables, also according to the social categories of the people questioned, the majority affirms that their Muslim religion is favorable to the practice of physical education and sport among girls. Women's Islamic associations approve of the tolerance shown for the practice of physical education and sports by women and girls on condition that they respect Islamic principles. The origin of sport in Islam is constituted by the verse which says: " *Prepare yourself to fight them, everything in your power to do so.* " and the hadith that says : " *The strong believer is more preferable and more loved by God than the weak believer* " ^{xlii}.

According to the representative of the ACIC and of cultural, religious and sports affairs of the Ngaoundéré Agency: sport is good for both sexes. Whatever is good for the body and the mind, Islam allows us to practice it^{xliii}. Muslim girls with decent outfits and supervised by women in a fenced area where the man is not allowed to access it. He said: " *The Prophet Mohammad. SAW, Peace be upon Him raced his wife in his own house and not in a public place and she was victorious* " ^{xliv}. This demonstrates once again the will of Islam for what strengthens the body and also facilitates the defense of its dignity and honor in case of danger. He takes it a step further by saying that recent studies have shown the reliability of their success in separating them from boys. For the Deputy Secretary General of the ACIC^{xlv} , Islam is not against physical education and sports practiced by women, but it is the way of performing it that differs from the cultural practice. We saw it at the Olympic Games, they run among themselves, why not in education? In addition, sport should not be compulsory, rather look for palliatives corresponding to the sport allowing to move the body (gardening, grazing). Ms. Raihana Bouba, former athlete from the University of Ngaoundéré, member of the women's associations of Ngaoundéré, says that sport socializes us by teaching us how to live better in society and develops the physique. These are prejudices that come from some parents of the girls and from society in general. Therefore, it is necessary to undertake an intense sensitization on the benefit of this discipline^{xlvi}. The woman should not exhibit her body in plain sight except the eyes and hands (wrists) to prevent temptations on the body of the believing woman.

For the President representing AEMUN, Islam prohibits women from practicing sport. It is not normal because this practice exceeds the acceptable. Sport develops girls' bodies and makes them muscular. On the other hand, the corpulence, the beauty and the esthetics of the woman differ from those of the man. Running, jumping, gymnastics, all these movements create harmful ideas especially in the presence of boys. It is contrary to Islam in view of the exhibitionist outfit while Islam protects the female body. According to our interlocutor, the woman must be exempted from sport, only the practice of prayer is indicated so that she keeps her shape and her health because her role is in her home^{xlvii}.

For the representative of the AEMUN, he affirms that the practice of physical education and sports is more favorable by the innocent little girls, namely the chicks, the youngest, the youngest. Islam encourages games because of this:

“The goal of sport is in no way lucrative, it aims above all to make the truth triumph, to support and defend it. Sport does not seek fame because fame leads to corruption on earth; he must tend towards piety which would help him to fight better in the way of God“^{xlviii}.

But once they reach the age of puberty, it is forbidden to mix them with boys, let alone run them together.

Finally, the AEMUN President of the women's section shares the same ideas as the other associations. The conditions of this practice are deplorable (exhibition, fantasy, etc.). Islam : *" recommends not to show their finery except to certain people, fathers, mothers, husbands^{xlix}*. Sport is not bad in itself, Islam recommends it in terms of health. If Islam accepts having intellectual daughters, it absolutely does not accept the freedom granted to girls to expose their bodies. However, the majority of women in Adamawa are believers and practitioners because they recognize that Islam allows the practice of physical education and sports among Muslim girls under the conditions prescribed by the Holy Koran.

The concepts of household and families have been well defined by the social and economic sciences. But it is important in each context to define new family models to identify social and cultural changes, the crisis of moral values, economic difficulties and their consequences such as unemployment, migration, redistribution of roles and power within families. The concept of “household refers here to the most restricted consumption unit, in the father, the mother, the children and the other persons in charge. As we had to point out at the start, in a Muslim

environment, households are generally consumption units within a family. The family is thus composed of several households and led by the male eldest. No reason authorizes a woman to be the head of the household, whatever her age or her status in society. In many African societies this principle is the same. We further consider that to speak of southern women heads of households is to deny the meaning of the concept in some of these southern societies. There is a difference between being the head of the family and being the breadwinner. These two situations are close but do not cover the same reality. The husband may be present, but unable to contribute economically to the upkeep of the family: Unemployment, physical disability, advanced age etc., so women support the family without being the heads. On the other hand, field observation testifies to the many women who run households and are heads of them. These are indeed widows; women whose husbands are in search of knowledge in urban center. Today, because of poverty and in a certain way because the accumulation of individual assets has become the norm, widows and orphans are less and less cared for by their paternal family.

This work deals with and highlights the socio-economic and cultural obstacles that hinder women in general and more specifically, the Muslim women of Ngaoundéré who are still today dominated by the constraining power of the patriarchy. In the field of the education of young girls and the dynamics of gender relations in Vina, Aissatou Souaibou raises the issue of the education of women and social changes through female employees.

Isabelle Droy¹ starting from the hypothesis that the ignorance of women in certain rural development programs may be one of the reasons for their failure. The author shows that rural development can only be achieved if it is accompanied by a reduction in domestic responsibilities and the need to take into account the specific interests and constraints of women. If not, the women react either by refusing to take part in projects which only increase their workload without any other benefit, or by clearly expressed revolt, or by actions of misappropriation of the project for their benefit. Materially seated, with the financial means that allow them to be influential within Indian society, women have a dependent status. In this society, knitting and masonry have become real figures of female success. Their material power makes them not objects in their relationship with men but a sizeable economic agent.

However, the impacts of the actions of revolt or diversion on the life of the local population remain on the sidelines of the author's reflection. Thus for the author, development projects in rural areas must first take into account women and their situation for sustainable

development. But her analysis does not bring out clearly the marginalization of Muslim women today in the face of patriarchal authority.

Talking about the place of women in society, Denebete^{li} in her research work on FINADEV financing and the empowerment of women traders in the 6th District of Ndjamena, demonstrates that Chadian women manage to manage themselves thanks to the support of associations. Fatima Mernissi^{lii} in her research work shows that the Muslim woman occupies a place of choice in society and that she plays a very important role in the sphere. Esther Boserup in her book *Women Facing Development* ^[4] describes the dynamism of Third World women and vigorously represses the casual attitude of decision-makers who marginalize women in the elaboration of projects. For her, although excluded from the modern sector of agricultural production, women in the Third World have continued to play an essential role in the economy of their country through food crops and subsistence activities whose value has been underestimated.

Still according to the author, women represent a productive force that should not be neglected if we want to guarantee a future project. Revolting and vehemently criticizing the many injustices that overwhelm women in which men are actors, defining themselves from their social positions. Mosconi^{liii} traces and describes bitterly the erroneous conception that we have of women in a society that she qualifies as pluralistic and monopolistic. She talks about the conditions of women's access to the appropriation, transmission and production of legitimate knowledge. Thus, according to her, the woman will have to take a good initiative and a very important part in the production of legitimate knowledge.

Indeed, the latter thinks that the school is the center par excellence in which respect and the right of gender equality to access to knowledge and the production of new divisions of knowledge between the sexes take precedence. She always explains that with the vertical segregation of jobs at the level of national education, the Afrocentrism of knowledge transmitted, and a class dynamic where the dominance of patriarchy is asserted. The school therefore plays an essential role here in the differential and unequal socialization of the sexes. The author in his analyzes of the "relation to knowledge", also underlines a form of marginalization of access to economic resources and employment between men and women. The grid for reading the difference between men and women is knowledge perceived as the key to building a gender relationship.

In addition, studies on knowledge have been the subject of publications in various fields of the social sciences; this made it possible to show the importance of knowledge in the development process. Michael Crozier^{liv} shows that change is not only the consequence of an " economic, biological, cultural logic external to man, it is a sociological problem, because man does not change individually but also in his relationships with others and its social organization. Change is first of all the transformation of a system of action, the putting into practice of new human relationships. To attach that men are to their habits, "they are completely ready to change very quickly if they are able to find their interest in the games offered to them ". There will be an assessment of the risks, because any change leads to a modification in the sources of power and the control of areas of uncertainty.

The work of Basga Dialla^{lv} is part of the same perspective, when he makes a retrospective analysis of the various works on local knowledge, he shows that taking these works into account in development projects has led to a change in the development paradigm. . However, in the context of the agricultural economy in Africa where the local space is essentially a space for agricultural activities, women are at the center of the quest for this knowledge. Doing the study on local knowledge in Africa necessarily means doing a study of women, because they are at the heart of local production. This work by Mosconi has a specific interest since it sheds light on the role of knowledge in the construction of gender relations.

CONCLUSION

The differences observed between the ethnic groups in the Muslim community of Ngaoundéré with regard to decision-making within the household seem to be linked to the ethnic organization which partly determines the decision-making power of the woman.

Indeed, Muslim women from the Dii/Gbaya and Mboum ethnic groups, who are socially organized groups that are not very centralized and hierarchical, are much more likely to take part in decision-making within their household than Muslim Fulani/Peulh women. Hausa/Bororo. On the other hand, among the Fulani ethnic group, it is the husband who generally covers all the food needs and the necessary needs of the households. However, we note in this analysis that Mboum and Dii Muslim women meet part of their food needs by carrying out a small commercial activity, unlike Hausa/Peul Muslim women who generally expect everything from the man. Thus, these are also the reasons that could explain their

decision-making power within the household. However, the qualitative interviews carried out in the Hausa/Bororo and Peulh groups also revealed a difference between the generations in terms of the perception of gender relations. Indeed, the discourse of young Muslim girls in general, for example, shows their aspiration to change the relationship between man and woman. While the older ones are still present and reluctant to change the way of life and current mutations.

However, if the older generations also remain more attached to traditional Islamic norms and values, particularly on the role of Muslim men and women, young people in general believe that married couples should dialogue and understand each other for decision-making within the family the family, they must cooperate mutually for a good decision-making taking into account the decision of the man and the woman within the hearths and the complementarity of the spouses.

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^{xii} Interview with Madame Fadimatou, director of the Sabongari public school (Ngaoundéré) on November 27, 2020.

^{xiii} Interview with Mr. Bouba in the Haoussa district (Ngaoundéré) on November 22, 2020

^{xiv} Interview with Aboubakar Sidiki, at the small market in Ngaoundéré on November 23, 2020.

^{xv} Statistical data on the standard of living of households conducted in 2010 by the National Institute of Statistics.

^{xvi} 2020 UN Gender Based Violence (GBV) Report.

^{xvii} Interview with Yasmine, food vendor at the station market in Ngaoundéré, November 21, 2020 in Ngaoundéré.

- xviii Interview with Madame Fatimatou in Ngaoundéré on November 19, 2020.
- xix “Foléré” is a natural juice called in the local language Fulfulde.
- xx Interview with Madame Zenabou in the Baladji district, November 22, 2020 in Ngaoundéré.
- xxi Interview with Farikou Bello, Ngaoundéré-Haoussa district, November 17, 2020
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