AN APPRAISAL OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES’ PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL LIFE OF CAMEROON

By

Ngong Peter Tonain
B.Sc. (Hons) Sociology
and Anthropology

A Thesis submitted to the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social and Management Sciences of the University of Buea in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Masters of Science (M.Sc.) Degree in Anthropology

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FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

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DEDICATION

To my elder brother and sponsor; Mr. Ankiembo Ignatius
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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at investigating the extent to which people with disabilities participate in the politico-cultural processes of Cameroon. These politico-cultural processes were disseminated into four main issues: Being voting, policies/legislations, employment, and clubs/associations. Four research questions and hypotheses guided this study. The research design adopted was exploratory and survey designs; the population and sample for the study constituted 40 persons, consisting of persons with disabilities in three major categories--those with visual, hearing/speech and physical impairments as in the proportion 15 is to 13 is to 12 respectively. They were drawn from the existing disabled people’s organizations, rehabilitation centres, schools, and churches. Both the working and non-working classes were considered in the study. The instruments for Data collection were an interview guide, an information sheet for the explanation of objectives, and a free and informed consent form for the consolidation of respondents’ willingness to participate in the study. Data was analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics that is simple frequencies, percentages, and average percentages; and presented in tabular forms using descriptive explanations. The findings showed that: PWDs suffered lots of neglect as they were not accorded with the most enabling environment to fully participate in the socio-politico-economic structures and life of their state. However, some PWDs to a very less extent partly shared the blame as they lay slack in their concealed corners thus failing to take their destinies in to their own hands. Based on the findings, the main recommendation of the study was the need for all political stakeholders of the state to fully implement those internationally signed conventions coupled with the seemingly pleasant national disability laws or reinforce more for the incorporation of PWDs.
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ABBREVIATIONS

AFUB: African Union for the Blind.
ANAC: Association Nationale pour les Aveugles du Cameroun.
ANC: African National Congress.
ARCH: Associated Rehabilitation Centre for the Handicap.
BSD: Buea School for the Deaf.
CDU: Cameroon Democratic Union.
CJARC: Clube Des Jeunes Aveugles Rehabilites Du Cameroun.
CPDM: Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement.
CRM: Cameroon Renaissance Movement.
CRPD: Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
CNSF: Cameroon National Salvation Front.
CUAPWD: Co-ordinating Unit of Associations for Persons with Disabilities.
DPOs: Disabled People’s Organizations.
DRPI: Disability Rights International.
EC: Elections Commission.
ELECAM: Elections Cameroon.
HI: Hearing Impaired.
HSUVI: Hope Social Union for the Visually Impaired.
i.e: that is to say; Latin: id est.y
IGOs: International Governmental Organizations.
MHB: Medical Health-care Bill.
MDR: Movement for the Defense of the Republic.
MINAS: Ministaire Des Affairs Sociales (Ministry of Social Affairs).
MP: Mouvement Progressiste.
NADP: National Alliance for Democracy and Progress.
NGOs: Non-governmental Organizations.
NSW: North South Wales.
NUDP: National Union for Democracy and Progress.
OI: Orthopedically Impaired.
P: Physically Impaired.
RIB: Rehabilitation Institute for the Blind.
SAJOCAH: Saint Joseph’s Children and Adult Home.
SDF: Social Democratic Front.
SI: Speech Impaired.
SNEG: Special Needs Entrepreneur Group.
SRF: Swedish Association of the Visually Impaired.
UB: University of Buea.
UMS: l’Union Mouvement des Socialistes.
UN: United Nations.
UPC: Union for the Population of Cameroon.
UPIAS: The Union for the Physically Impaired Against Segregation.
US: United State.
VI: Visually Impaired.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study
As the population of the globe continues to increase, the world is also gradually sliding into a disabled one. That is, the number of persons suffering one disabling condition is increasing every day as a result of different causes. This is confirmed by the World Health Organization (WHO) Report on Disabled Persons, for 2011, which states that about one billion people worldwide experience a disabling condition (Disabled world, 2011). This is an indication that we live in an era where contributions of individuals to nation building shall no longer be judged by mere looking at their physical wellbeing, but from what they are able to do politically, economically and socio-culturally amidst any physical impediment. The dictums “Disability is not inability” (Omorotionmwan, 2012), and “Nothing for us without us” (Asong, 2007) will continually circulate and create significant and inadvertent proportions in the lives of people living with disabilities in and around the globe. These are quite rife in the lives of the members of this social group who ostensibly seek for political autonomy that can enable them to participate and contribute their own significant quota to nation-building. This according to the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS, 1975) is a common characteristic of organizations like the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), the National Union of the Deaf (NUD) and the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS).

These groups argue that Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) must work out their own collective solutions to problems of their membership and they must do this through democratic organizations of persons with disabilities (PWDs). Frisch, (2012) in his book ; “Why People with Disabilities Loose in the Political Process” laments that, PWDs make up 19% of the population of most countries, but unfortunately, this percentage is not reflected in the welfare services they receive, and does not influence or often not reflected in their representation in the political arena. The proportion of voters with disability is certainly greater than the number of gay and lesbian voters, Aboriginal voters, unemployed voters, rural voters, young voters and aged voters. Yet it seems that the politicians do not listen or care.

There is no disability champion in either of the major parties in either the North South Wales (NSW) or Commonwealth Parliament. The Party Platforms make only grudging mention of disability. While most Members of Parliament don't have a clue about the dimension of social isolation and second-class citizenship faced by persons with disabilities (PWDs), some however "admire" people with visible disability and dismiss people with invisible disability. They "help" "deserving" individuals as much as they can at the individual level (Frisch, 2012). It is estimated that 19% of politicians have immediate family members whom they view and treat in much the same way as the rest of the community view PWDs - sometimes with dignity, sometimes with fear, sometimes patronizingly, sometimes with frustration, sometimes with love. But that is not good enough. Disabled World, (2012) connotes that, Disability will affect the lives of everyone at some point in their life, it is time society changed to acknowledge this and intensify efforts towards the inclusion of PWDs in the mainstream politico-economic and social construction of the polities, especially the Cameroon polity.

The study of disability is experiencing significant changes which have affected all the social sciences, but relatively little attention has been devoted to this subject by political scientists. Many of these changes can be traced to a definitional shift from a medical orientation, which focuses on functional impairments, and an economic approach, which stresses vocational limitations, to a socio-political perspective which regards disability as the product of the interaction between the individual and the environment. The latter view has led
to a new emphasis on anti-discrimination measures and to a "minority-group" model of
disability, which recognizes that the environment is molded by public policy and that policy is
a reflection of prevalent social attitudes and values. Although the concept that disabled citizens
comprise a minority group has long been recognized in psychology, economics, and sociology,
the development of this model has previously been impeded by the lack of a strong emphasis
on the political dimensions of the issue. Increasing acceptance of the socio-political definition
disability, however, may provide a means of restructuring and re-conceptualizing the study
of this subject.

Among the wide range of political issues that have become the objects of significant
scholarly interest, relatively little attention has been devoted to the study of disability policy.
Increasingly, the subject of physical disability has emerged as a major focus of research in
psychology, sociology, and economics, as well as in several recent anthologies which combine
the perspectives of various disciplines. Yet, disability policy has virtually been ignored by
political scientists (Hahn, 1988). It is to this effect that, the anthropologists in concert with
their humanistic perspective and being corroborated by advocacy tenets tend to add a voice
and more weight, in a bid to foster and objectify the politico-cultural interests of PWDs in the
Cameroon polity.

Much of the apparent indifference to this issue undoubtedly has reflected conceptual
confusion. Political scientists not only have failed to devote significant attention to disability,
but perhaps even more importantly, they have also avoided the crucial responsibility of
examining the normative implications of research in other disciplines that yield different
policy prescriptions. Perhaps the most commonly accepted definition of disability, for
example, is Nagy’s (2005) concept of "a form of inability or limitation in performing roles and
tasks expected of an individual within a social environment." Yet, various academic traditions
have placed distinctive emphasis on terms such as the individual or the environment, the
"inability or limitation," the nature of "roles and tasks," and the notion of "expectations". Moreover, each word embodies specific values, and each term also connotes different
programmatic solutions to the problem. As a result, the clarification of normative issues seems
to be an essential prerequisite to the development of a politics of disability (Hahn, 1985).

The end product of any electoral process is certainly aimed at producing someone
chosen by vote(s). Ginsberg (2009) opines that, an election is a procedure that allows members
of an organization or community to choose representatives who will hold positions of authority
within it. The most important elections select the leaders of local, state, and national
governments. The decision to choose who governs at each level serves as an opportunity for
the public to make choices on the policies, programs, and future directions of government
action. The threat of defeat at the polls exerts pressure on those in power to conduct
themselves in a responsible manner and take account of popular interests and wishes when
they make their decisions.

Worthy to note is the fact that, the state of Cameroon is within an electoral epoch--that is,
with the presidential elections which just went pass some two years back (October 9 2011)
and the senatorial elections which took place a few months ago (April 14 2013), the entire
country anticipates to witness and accomplish the long awaited but twin legislative and
municipal polls of 2013 (September 30th) preceding its postponement in July 2012. And as a
matter of fact, the whole nation just went through the launching and reopening of new electoral
registers that commenced in October 2012 and pre-empted to run through February 28th 2013
and to a later extension via March 30th 2013, and subsequently to the convening of the 30th
September polls.
Considering that PWDs constitute about 15 percent of the population of societies as reported by United Nations Population Statistics, (2012) (with Cameroon inclusive) It is but obvious that they (PWDs) be offered the opportunity to participate and play a preponderant role in the electoral gimmicks of the state. However, the reverse is true in most African nations, as persons with disabilities have often complained of different impediments to their participation in the political process. Some of these impediments stem from the inaccessibility of the multiple polling stations for PWDs, non-availability of polling materials such as ballot papers and other print materials that are inclusive in nature, disenfranchisement, exclusion and intimidation of politically ambitious PWDs and quite a lot more (Asong, 2007). In Ghanaian for instance, many individuals with disabilities experience many barriers in accessing their basic human right to political participation, especially in exercising their right to vote. The most common barriers to election access for persons with disabilities are physical, environmental, attitudinal, legal and cultural. Polling stations are located in facilities that are not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs, crutches and white canes; voter information and registration materials are not accessible to persons who are hearing and visually impaired; and many election officials refuse to allow persons with physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities to register or vote due to negative attitudes and cultural stigma.

In Cameroon, Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April relating to the planning and organization of elections in Cameroon was promulgated in to law two years ago as the electoral code, despite a precedence of an outcry of controversies pointed out in its final adoption by a majority of the opposition political parties represented in the National Assembly and civil society organizations. The paramount expectation of the electoral code will be to give a sociological overview of all the social groups within the politico-cultural circle of the nation (with PWDs inclusive). The exceptional issue relating to the interests of PWDs in this cryptogram surfaces just in section 105 of the electoral code. The extent to which this minority social group is going to have a say in the political processes as prescribed by this idyllic electoral code will largely be dependent on the treatments they have gotten in previous and would-be elections.

The state under the patronage of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS) long before now had put in place a battery of laws, set aside to protect the socio-politico-economic rights and interests of persons with disabilities. this include Law no 83 /013, of 21 July 1983 relating to the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, which has been in full function since the early 90’s following the signing of its text of application (Decree no 90/1516 of 26 November 1990 setting the modalities of application of law no 83/013); and Law No. 2010/002 of 13 April 2010 Relating to the Protection and Welfare Of Persons With Disabilities, replacing the former and at present in anticipation of the signing of its highly awaited text of application by the head of state. One of the focuses of this investigation is directed towards the application and respectability of these laws and their ramifications on the beneficiaries, (the PWDs). These laws by their very nature are supposed to accord this minority social group with many a preferential treatment so far as public interest is concerned. This is tantamount to the disadvantages linked to their impairments or to the impediments that hamper life in their disability struggle and attempts to assert themselves in to the politico-cultural life of the nation.

According to the Cameroon Constitution (1996), the Nation shall protect and promote the family which is the natural foundation of human society. It shall protect women, the young, the elderly and the disabled. In 2011, in her “controversial” recruitment policy the Cameroon government contractualized some unemployed 25,000 Cameroonians. It was an opportunity for government to prove that she was committed to protecting the rights of the disabled as
enshrined in the 1996 constitution and on section 38 of the April 2010 National Disability laws relating to the protection of PWDs. Considering that most persons with disabilities are often liable to diverse forms of discrimination and with recruitment being very pertinent, they were advised to apply in their numbers. This, they massively did (in their hundreds), given that many of them are fast attaining educational integration with their able-bodied peers; and thus are endowed with much unexploited skills for the job market. Even though the resultant effect was a mixed blessing, most PWDs were however full with grudges and groaning seemingly due to the employment of just an insignificant number. Disgruntled by the smallness in the number of recruits, most of the applicants with disabilities converged in the nation’s capital staging a two-day sit-down strike at the premises of the Star Building. The strike action yielded an instantaneous dividend as many more PWDs were at this time ordered to be absorbed in the additional and second list than was in the previous list. However, this still left another group of PWDs, which is the visually impaired in a stalemate and disillusionment. This was vividly consolidated by the fact that, in a totality of about a hundred disabled recruits, just a little above six visually impaired persons were reconsidered in this additive but sensitive exercise.

Also, Law No 90/52 of 19th December 1990 known as the “Liberty Laws” was promulgated in 1990 guaranteeing certain basic human rights and civil liberties (Halle, Nico N.D). These 1990 liberty laws are believed to have liberalized and authorized the creation of associations. These laws are attached to freedoms of many sorts. In this respect, there has been an outshoot of multiple associations of and for persons with disabilities. These associations, all play a mixed role to the advocacy and interests of the PWDs in the politico-cultural realms in the state of Cameroon. Associations of PWDs constitute those which they themselves freely and copiously claim membership in collective solidarity. Associations for PWDs do not necessarily embroil PWDs but those who arbitrate on their behalf. Moreover, inclusive associations do exist, wherein the PWDs optionally subscribe to their involvements for mutual conviviality with their able-bodied peers. It is thanks to the activities of these organizations that some individuals with disabilities have been able to distinguish themselves in some national and international political arena around the globe.

On the international scene, persons with disabilities have been contributing significantly in raising up the political subsists of many a nations. Disability World, (2012), has listed a good number of them who had and are still creating a difference in their polities. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt- an orthopedically impaired and who despite on a wheelchair took the United States out of the great depression amidst countless reforms. Sir David Blunket- a visually impaired functioning as the British home secretary in the 2000s was hailed to have exerted a lot of positive influence on the political manifesto of the Labor Party. The Lesotho justice’s ministry of recent was manned by Moses Masemene--a visually impaired minister whose proficiency then, is currently projecting the image of this little known Southern African nation to the limelight , and corroborated by the indefatigability of Susan Nchitimbe – a physically impaired who served diligently as minister in charge of disability issues in Malawi, (Duncan 2003).

Likewise, the United Nations Organization (UNO) in collaboration with its committed political structures amongst the signatory and dedicated membership nations, have since the inception of the concept of political participation and democracy in the face of multi-party politics reintroduced across the continent of Africa in the early 90s, reaffirmed and drafted policy documents/legislations to guide its implementation in the respective member countries. Cameroon, a bona fide member of the UN and AU had to endorse the respective conventions and charters in addition to its supplementary sovereign legislations. Among these instruments,
the most recent ones with special emphases on the full or partial inclusion of PWDs in the socio-political continuity of their various countries like the case of Cameroon include:

• The 21 October 1986 African (BANJUL) Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
• The Cameroon Constitution of 1996
• The United Nations 2007 Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPDs)
• The 2010 National Disability Laws on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

**Problem Statement**

The novel electoral body of the state – Elections Cameroon (ELECAM) since its creation in 2008 has been striving in taking some undocumented giant advances and good-natured decisions aimed at ameliorating the voting predicaments of the PWDs and other vulnerable groups in the state. Despite these measures, Persons with disabilities in the Cameroon state seems to be regularly segregated or relegated to the background and are rarely involved so far as the politico-cultural reforms of the nation-state are concerned. It is even an outcry amongst PWDs that they are hardly given the avenues and channels by the powers that be to freely express their own issues of human rights akin to dignity, autonomy, choice, self-determination, non-discrimination, and inclusion, among others; (Mayer, 2007). This is further aggravated by the fact that they lack a greater and valid representation in the major politico-cultural structures of the state such as in the electoral bodies, political parties, National Assembly and in the municipal councils where the people’s representatives sit to deputize on their behalf. Of course, is it not said that, “He who wears the shoes, knows where it pinches?” (Asong, 2007).

Paradoxically, the state is endowed with a lot of formulated and enriched laws, set aside for the protection and the fostering of the rights of PWDs and has also ratified major international legislations/conventions aimed at protecting the right of PWDs like the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (particularly Article 29), and other marginalized groups of persons in the society. The non-implementation of these laws could be attributed to bad faith and the absence of the political will by some political office holders. All these continue to act as impediments to the political, economic and social progress of the entire families of PWDs rather than the disability itself.

Considering the increasing outburst of educated persons with disabilities, striving to become future elites, Mindful of the necessity to revisit the drawing board and review certain disability legislations and conventions to prevent the many unforeseen contingencies that might inevitably arise in the course of time, considering the fact that there has been an outcry from PWDs that they have continually suffered from disenfranchisement either directly or indirectly resulting specifically from physical barriers blockading them from progressing smoothly and functionally in this politico-cultural sphere, it has become necessary in the presently changing political, economic and social dispensation (globalization) to begin an anthropological appraisal of the participation of PWDs in the Cameroon politico-cultural process and map out a convenient way forward through useful recommendations.

**Research Objectives**

Generally, the study was aimed at appraising the political participation and public life of PWDs in the politico-cultural construction of the Cameroon polity. Specifically, the study aimed at achieving the following objectives:

1. To examine the extent to which the government of Cameroon creates an enabling environment to ensure the participation of the disabled in the political processes like registration, voting, nomination, and candidature presentation in the state of Cameroon during elections.
2. To identify the capacity and eligibility of PWDs in the political construction of the Cameroon polity; examining the extent to which the state is effective in implementing the appropriate legal instruments relating to the inclusion of PWDs.
3. To ascertain the degree to which PWDs are included in the working life of the state of Cameroon vis-à-vis their inputs or outputs alongside their diverse collaborators in the process of safeguarding the politico-economic impetus of the nation.
4. To assess the role of disabled people’s organizations (DPO’s) as veritable civil societies and advocacy channels for those they stand to represent, unify and/or co-operate with for the common goal of all and sundry in the arena of disability.

**Research Questions**

**General Research Question**

To what extent are PWDs irrespective of some of their deterring handicapping conditions accorded a level playing ground to freely participate in the politico-cultural processes of the nation?

This study set out to answer the subsequent specific Research Questions:

1. To what extent do political actors of the state such as the government, the electoral body, and the political parties often take into account and facilitate the specific interests of PWDs in the polling or balloting process and other plan of actions?
2. To what extent are PWDs without being prejudiced consulted in the formulation of policies and legislations that will affect their lives in particular and the state as a whole?
3. To what extent have special avenues or institutions been put in place to ensure a proper implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs before, during and after work experiences?
4. To what extent are DPOs available in the country since the 90’s to act as veritable civil societies and advocacy channels in circumventing all the directions of discrimination against PWDs?

**Research Hypotheses**

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

**Ho1:** There is no significant positive relationship between political actors of the state (government, election body, and the political parties) and PWDs in relation to facilitating the polling or balloting processes and other plans of action to favour the interests of the PWDs.

**Ho2:** There is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state in reference to existing state policies, legislations and other related international conventions formulated to favour PWDs in particular and the state as a whole.

**Ho3:** There is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state with reference to the provision of special avenues or institutions to ensure the proper implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs.

**Ho4:** There is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state institutions in relation to the availability of DPOs that act as civil society groups and advocacy channels in circumventing all directions of discrimination against PWDs.

**The Scope of the Study**

Geographically, the study encompassed PWDs all over the national territory, but with specific focus and emphasis laid on the South West, North West, Centre and Littoral regions. The choice of these locations was substantiated by the influence in the cultural background of the selected regions, the multiplicity and availability of PWDs in the areas originating from the other villages and the rest regions; consequentially from a rural exodus drift.
As concerns the content scope, the study is delineated to investigating the extent of participation by PWDs in the political life of Cameroon. In the course, the research builds a fence around the political processes of the nation which are supposed to engulf persons with disabilities, but which might have suffered neglect due to one reason or the other. These political processes encompass aspects like registration, voting, and involvement in the formulation of collective state decisions, and respectability of policies, laws and conventions, the attainment of political positions either via self-empowerment or by deserved appointments, amongst many. Although economic and social issues do not essentially constitute the real point of focus, worthy to note is the fact that some politico-cultural curiosities closely related to these issues above, such as work and employment, associations and clubbing relationships are vigilantly evaluated.

Moreover, these persons with disabilities are parted in to diverse categories. But the investigations are limited just to these three major impairment categories: those with physical disorders that is the orthopedically disabled, and those with sensory disorders being the visually impaired, and the speech/hearing challenged. These enlisted three categories endure various communication procedures as perpetuated in one way or the other. The educated and uneducated VI are perceived through the usage of braille and audio messages respectively; meanwhile the HI/SI are better construed with the practicability of sign language.

Furthermore, in conformity with the country’s single electoral code (Articles 45 & 46a, 15-16) which states that, “Every person of Cameroonian nationality of either sex, who has reached the age of 20 (twenty) years, is registered on an electoral register and is free from all cases of disqualification provided for by law, shall be entitled to be an elector. Every Cameroonian citizen enjoying the right to vote who has their home of origin or place of abode within a council area or has actually been resident therein for at least the last 6 (six) months may be entered in the electoral register in such council area.” Therefore, the respondents contacted in the field did fall within the age range of twenty-one and beyond.

Lastly, the timing of this study was of paramount interest; with an era dating from the year 1990 to 2013. Considering the reintroduction of multipartyism in the early 90’s, the country has metamorphosed along many political lanes and related developments that needed the inclusive participation of PWDs as was the case in the global trend.

**Significance of the Study**

The theoretical significance of this study is based on; the theory of prejudice and discrimination, Liddy, (2012) who sees discrimination in two perspectives- that's adverse impact (positive) and disparate treatment (negative). In preview adverse impact includes policies and practices that are not discriminatory in their intent. However, it may have a disproportionately higher adverse impact on certain groups; whereas with disparate Treatment, the employer treats some people differently based on their race, colour, national origin, sex, etc. Supervisors and managers may be accused of disparate treatment more often than adverse impact discrimination. In relation to PWDs and participation in a political life of a state, it implies that this minor vulnerable but vital group of persons should be likely subjected to adverse impact discrimination rather than disparate treatment. This is to enable them meet up with exigencies and needs they might have missed out as a result of their impairments. For a visionless single-mindedness on disparate treatment will point towards an exclusion of a segment of the society in the political process. Accordingly, a sociological composition should triumph in every political setting that is bound to take man in to consideration.

Practically, the importance of the results of this study is that it will be of use to the inquisitive staff and students of U.B, the government of Cameroon (Policy makers), Elections
Cameroon (ELECAM), the United Nations (UN), and political researchers in Cameroon and elsewhere, not leaving out the PWDs themselves.

It is of benefit to the academic, non-academic, administrative staff and the students alike in that, it will provide them with novel information on how to better interact with the students living with disabilities and willing to participate in campus politics. And moreover, via their research endeavours, they will aid in blowing the trumpets of PWDs all over the country as this will subsequently enhance a most enabling environment to them, thus paving the way for their politico-cultural inclusion. By so doing, UB will be admitting an advocacy role in ameliorating on the political plights of PWDs wholly. This is mindful of the fact that a varsity everywhere habitually serves as a centre of knowledge and excellence for all and sundry to emulate.

To policy formulators and implementers in Cameroon (government, ELECAM, active political parties, civil societies), the study will provide them with information on how the PWDs can be implicated in to the socio-politico-economic avenues of the state. The existing merits and setbacks of their political participation and non-participation in that order, so that hierarchy can in future be able to come out with clear-cut policies and vibrant methods in addition to means of implementations to the advantage of this minority group. In other words, the results will be able to give room for improvements in policy formulation, adaptation and implementation. It will also provide the government with information on the necessary areas that it can assist the titular political structures in the implementation of their policies.

To other socio-politico-economic institutions in the country that may want to embark on the practice or already practicing the integration and inclusion of PWDs in the politico-cultural life, the findings will be able to give them a sociological perspective of the situation in the entire country, hence they can better understand what it takes and is needed to facilitate the participation of PWDs in a multiple politico-cultural system.

This study will be of immense vitality to MINAS; thereby serving as an assessment tool to all the disability-friendly state laws and international conventions to which this ministry is acting as guarantor. For this reason, posing the ministry in a position of proper implementation and further advocacy to all those it sets to shield.

Importantly to ELECAM, IE the foremost democratic structure that moderates the elections of this country, the findings of this study shall provide or deliver them with adequate information that can be juxtaposed with their do(s) and don’t(s) vis-à-vis the expectations of PWDs, who remain one of their primordial voting clients in Cameroon’s political hemi-circle.

The findings will be useful to the UN, national and international commissions of human rights especially its representatives in Cameroon and the diaspora in that it will make them to be able to monitor very closely the implementation of the sensitive political policy considering that Cameroon is a signatory to most of their conventions; henceforth they can know the best support or advice to offer the intricate institutions at any time there is need.

To academic researchers in Cameroon and elsewhere expressly in the university milieu, this study will provide the bases for further research, act as a guide and source of literature to students or educational researchers that may wish to carry out further investigations in the field of disability and politics in their corresponding countries.

To PWDs in Cameroon, the study is important to them because it will further expose their needs and worries which may prompt immediate action on trying to redress them so that they can better enjoy their voting rights, legal privileges, working lives, socialization, and a better stay in the country to which they also form an integral part. Furthermore, this purported evaluative study will be expected to serve as an advocacy piece to the voice of the voiceless that are endowed with a lot of unexploited skills but are lying unfastened in their concealed
corners. Regrettably enough, most PWDs have been victims of circumstances to the unrestrained behaviours of some ignoramus.

Moreover to the PWDs, the research piece will lend a hand in educating them on their rights and duties as authentic citizens of this great nation Cameroon. Rather than fold their arms and just wait that things should be done for them, they are likewise charged with the obligation to take giant strides and great personal initiatives in advancing collective nation-building, thus rationally and tactfully engaging in the various political structures and processes even amidst so-called sickening discrimination. Definitely, is it not said that, rights are seized and not given.
Limitations to the Study

During the execution of this study the researcher encountered some challenges that acted as limitations and thus may have in one way or the other affected the collection and analyses of data.

Not all the PWDs targeted for the research were readily available. Mindful that the researcher and his team ought to have multiple sessions with the respondents, their availability was frequently epileptic since most of them were not constantly turning up for the discussions attributing this to their varying busy schedules. Therefore, at the end not all the essential informants were contacted for the data indeed distorting some of the realities required in the field.

The topography of the municipality was another bone of contention. Considering that the researcher had to go round all the nooks and crannies of the area under study, the stony and dusty nature of the roads during the dry season and rocky, muddy and slippery terrains of these same villages in the rainy season acted as a grievous set-back to the data collection process. This greatly reduced the frequency of the visits paid to the study population.

Another limitation to the study emerged from the expectations of some of the respondents to the researcher and his team. Presuming the team was coming from a university milieu; the populations in most of the circumstances expressed their desperations on issues not even related to the study such as financial, health, nutritional, and marital problems just to mention these for the visitors to immediately seek a comfortable solution. Thus, when their aspirations and expectations were not fully met, they were somehow hesitant in becoming resourceful to the research, hence limiting the smooth continuity of the research.

The researcher is aware of the fact that not all the issues relating to PWDs and their participation in the political life of Cameroon were addressed in the study. Also, the researcher is aware that the items that constituted the instruments used in the collection of data did not in its entirety address the various variables under investigations. Consequently, the researcher sees these as shortcomings or limitations to the study which subsequent studies will need to handled.

Moreover, administrative bottlenecks in the release of pertinent information to the researcher in relation to the study by some delegation authorities and institution heads despite the presentation of letters of introduction from the relevant authorities (department of Sociology / Anthropology and the South West regional delegation of Social Affairs) by the researcher also acted as a limitation of the study. The consequences are that the researcher in certain circumstances was either compelled to embark on speculative and sketchy data or the information finally release to the researcher by some of these reluctant administrators were just based on estimations and assumptions and not the actual and apt recorded information needed. This could have in one way or the other influence the results of the study.

Again, the consistent interactions between the researcher and his field assistants in languages other than that of the respondents while on the field were sometimes misconstrued by some suspicious respondents who occasionally saw the team to be plotting against them. In several instances, suspicion was rife amongst a handful of respondents that the team might be spies for either the government or some NGOs. Consequently, this suspicion hampered the free flow in the acquisition and availability of information.

In totality more than ten categories of PWDs existed in this study area, but just the VIs, OIs and HI/SI were taken in to consideration for the study; thus leaving out a considerable number of PWDs whose interests might be marred before, during and after a political process.

Another challenge that may have acted as a limitation to the study was the high rate of illiteracy in relation to the issues under investigation among some of the respondents. In the
process of collecting the necessary data from PWDs in the field, some of them were grossly ignorant on the issues which they were being asked to comment or respond to. At the end of the day, they could neither say Yes or No, thus prompting the researcher and his team to classify them under the undecided class, which at the end of the day might have influenced the outcome of the results.

Also, there was gross interference by some family members of some respondents in the process of data collection which restricted free flow of information between the researcher and the respondents. There by affecting the final results of the study. Some family members thought that the exercise was aimed at collecting sensitive information from the respondents concerning their disabilities and families. As a result, they sat beside the respondents listening to all what they had to say on the various questions asked by the researcher. All attempts by the researcher to convince the family members that the exercise had nothing to do with issues relating to the private lives were futile.

With all these limitations in mind, one can therefore say that this study despite all its strengths cannot then be concluded as a PERFECT one because it is through the shortcomings and gaps identified that subsequent researchers on related issues will be able to affix their investigations.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction
The review of related literatures for the study was organized under two major segments as follows, consisting of empirical literature and theoretical framework.

Empirical Literature
Literatures here were reviewed in the subsequent sub-headings:

- Concept of political participation
- Making the Physical Environment Accessible for Political Participation
- Varied Experiences of PWDs during Political Participation and Public Life
- Voting Methods Relating to PWDs
- Barriers Faced by Electors with Disabilities

The Concept of Political Participation
In recent times, there has been much international debate particularly in the less developed world on Political Participation by PWDs, as an effective tool of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving equal political opportunities for all (Asong 2007). Political Participation therefore, has largely been based on the supposition that a combination of services need to be put in place for the system to function effectively. Today, it is no longer an assumption, but a law in international politics legislation that countries involve in the practice of democratic politics must make available the enabling environment that will accommodate and addressed the political needs of persons with disabilities (Edwards, 2012) and (article 29 of the United Nations CRPDs). This enabling environment constitute among other things, which are the bases of this study, the adaptation of the physical environment free from architectural barriers for easy mobility (environmental accessibility) to every category of PWDs in general and the orthopedically impaired in particular, (Guernsey et al 2007); the availability of balloting materials in obtainable modes accessible to PWDs such as the putting of ballot papers in to tactile form for voters with visual impairments, the deployment of sign language interpreters to minister to potential voters with hearing/speech impairments or even the insertion of electoral information underneath the news bars of TV broadcasts for their uncomplicated readability, bearing in mind that most of them who are usually educated time and again adhere to the monitors of their TV sets. The subsequent paragraphs therefore give a concise description of the above listed characteristics of an enabling environment, which are the major variables to be considered in this investigation.

Making the Physical Environment Accessible for Political Participation
Making the physical environment accessible for PWDs is a very important exercise in the implementation of participation in politics by PWDs in their respective political organizations at all levels and even in the society as a whole. This is because, the success of PWDs in their political pursuit will not only depend on the political empowerment but equally on the type of physical environment they are exposed to in achieving this vital goal. It is no longer news that PWDs especially those with muscular problems, broken bones, amputees and the visually impaired not leaving out the hearing/speech impaired need a conducive physical environment free from architectural/human barriers and constitute of landmarks to ease mobility and access to every department of the institution. According to ARTICLE 5 of the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, passed at the 48th session of the UN general Assembly as one of the policy document on inclusion, the implementation of measures to remove the obstacles to participation in the physical
environment for PWDs should be the major priority of member states. These measures should include among others the enactment of legislations to ensure accessibility to various areas in society such as housing, schools and public buildings, transport services, streets and outdoor environment. Architects, construction engineers and others who are professionally involved in the design and construction of the physical environment should have access to information on disability and measures to achieve accessibility.

Given that political structures are part of this society and considering the fact that it will be unfair to practice societal politics in a disability unfriendly physical environment, Brown, (2004) adapting from the Standard Rules have thus presented some measures which must be taken into consideration to ensure that the physical environment is made accessible in a political institution for PWDs. These measures include the following:

1. Ensure the construction of ramps with concrete or wood wherever there are lots of steps or make available persons to assist PWDs in mobility around these polling and working areas on voting days and operational hours.
2. The angles of ramps should respond to construction norms, preferably not steeper than 1.8m or at the very least and should not be dangerously steep.
3. Paint a white line at the edge of each step to improve visibility for those with low vision.
4. Ensure that door ways are wide enough, with flat under for wheel chairs to pass through freely
5. Ensure the accessibility of the ballot boxes by making them quite lower on the ground for the visually impaired, and those on wheelchairs for undemanding vote casts.
6. Create enough space in voting halls and other public places to ensure wheelchair accessibility.
7. Ensure that PWDs are provided with a common accommodation on voting grounds
8. Putting in place landmarks in major junctions, corners and directions on the way to and in the voting grounds to facilitate mobility especially to mild visually impaired voters
9. Allowing or giving the preferential treatment to PWDs in the voting process to cast their ballots first.

Making all these available in a political institution thus make the physical environment conducive and accommodating for PWDs there by providing easy movement, combating voters’ lethargy, reducing fatigue and ensuring a comfortable participatory environment for both PWDs and normal voters.

Varied Experiences of PWDs during Political Participation and Public Life

According to (Barriga, 2011), people with disabilities are decrying the fact that they are treated as second class citizens. In most countries, evident in Uganda, Hungary and Peru they are sometimes denied the rights to political participation as a consequence and tilted to pretense towards their disabling conditions. Some are prevented from taking part in voting with the pretext that they are going to “spoil” votes such as the case of a blind woman in Uganda who was already registered but later stopped from exercising her civic duty. In Hungary PWDs with mental disorders are prevented from voting and with wheelchair users in Peru having limited access to go and vote.

Even in those countries where the disabled are allowed to vote, the playing ground is not usually inclusive since they are left at the mercies and hands of their relatives and friends to assist them in voting. Most often they conflict in the choices of whom to vote and with the aides of the blind at times trickily taking wrongful choices for them.
Brown, (2009) in his piece of work on the Scottish society depicts how disability rights and social issues connected to the disabled have to be taken very seriously by socialists and politicians. Scotland constitutes a disabled population of about 800,000 persons most of whom have a less than 10,000 pounds income each per year. Many disabled people are likely to be out of work than the abled persons and thus most need adaptations in their work-places.

In this society through a social model by the disabled persons themselves, it is detected that disability is no longer a problem to the disabled people; it is rather the society’s attitude towards the disabled persons that pose a threat to them. Their environs, other vital materials and public commodities are inaccessible to them. Thus with social exclusion abound, they lack a most enabling environment to function effectively in contributing their own quota to the build-up of the society. They are striving to combat this via collective efforts. Realizing their demise, they resort to the formulation of organizations of person of their calibre in to which they are show-casing their own capabilities, shunning from independence, demanding and seizing their basic rights as prescribed by the state and international laws. Arguably enough, while the PWDs still suffer from a lot of prejudices and discrimination, eventually the social model on the other hand has aided in improving on their lots and socio-political welfare.

Carlucci, (2012) posits that the Ghanaian society constitutes a population of about 2.5 million persons with disabilities most of whom are scattered all over as beggars serving as an impediment to Ghana’s socioeconomic development. This beggarly attitude of theirs mostly stems from the fact that they undergo enormous challenges such as having access to education, employment and health care amidst many other challenges. Unfortunately, the Ghanaian disability movements are failing the gains of the purported beneficiaries as they are not fully implemented coupled with the fact that the state is failing woefully to work within the confines of the UN’s millennium development goals in protecting the rights of the disabled. Mindful of the fact that the country’s constitution guarantees the protection of the rights of the disabled, the Persons with Disabilities Act (PDA), the Medical Health-care Bill (MHB), including many more bills have not been ratified and signed; thus given very little or no attention by the powers that be.

Duncan, (2003) talks of an international conference which held in Durban South Africa bringing together successive African policy makers and politicians in African countries like Malawi, South Africa, Lesotho, Zambia and other amicable world nations to those above like Norway and the United States to deliberate on pertinent challenges hampering the smooth flow of the politics of disability in the continent and elsewhere. The workshop was structured in two sessions, the first devoted to the experiences and impact of elected or appointed disabled politicians, and the second an examination of how various disability policy structures were working at the highest levels.

In the first session, three African representatives talk on how they have been able to impact on the lives of the disabled in their various countries by creating awareness to both the ignorant disabled population and to the government. Basically, they expressed their problems in the execution of their duties such as the non-interpretation of vital documents in to Braille, absence of sign language interpreters in the parliament and mobility challenges to meet up with cabinet obligations. The second session admits that some African nations have been doing quite much in involving the disabled in too many political structures but much still needs to be done. Anyway, disabled people’s organizations have been training and orienting both the disabled and able-bodied persons on disability issues. They talk of the need to make the environment most enabling to the disabled for effective participation in politics and social life.

Erica is a PWD living with cerebral palsy and is nominated to work in the integrated council charged with taking care of the disabled in one of the states in America. Exemplifying
her story amidst other PWDs, she acknowledges that the US is doing quite much to ensure the welfare of PWDs but unfortunately the commissions designated to sit and deliberate on disability issues seldom meet and also there is a predominance of attitudinal misconceptions towards the disabled. Erica ascertains that PWDs are even marginalized in those gatherings since they are rarely given equal voices during deliberations. The author admits that the states recommends social media and governments to ensure civic participation for PWDs but unfortunately its sites are not accessible particularly to those with visual impairments thus contravening section 508 program of the federal agency advocating inclusion for all.

To involve the PWDs and other disengaged populations in to civic participation, Edwards gives salient ideas. More invitations to participate should be offered to those that are excluded; new rules and procedures can be introduced that gives all participants an opportunity to talk. Less technical language should be used; Seating arrangements can be changed so that those in authority sit among those with less power; Politically neutral spaces can be created in rural and urban areas where the citizens live, instead of at City Hall; Consultative options can be offered before meetings to give citizens time to deliberate on policy options so that they are better prepared, (Edwards, 2012).

Vic Finkelstein who hails from Leeds University Centre for Disability Studies is a psychologist. He has lived the apartheid days of South Africa wherein he served as a jailed victim of the then circumstances. He supposes that disability should be digressed from the view as a medical problem and be looked at more in terms of a socio-political interpretation and explanation and with the disabled accorded deserved social rights. Society should be seen as the one disabling persons with disabilities and not the disability of the victims. Much focus should be done on PWDs and their capabilities rather than the preconceived thoughts the society perceives against the disabled as a whole. Thus, as a matter of fact, society needs to undergo a change. Simply being vocal in his fight for equality of rights by PWDs, Finklestein is jailed for five years by the apartheid led government in South Africa and under severe punishment. Despite his disability, he is later forced to leave the country where he gains a refugee status in Britain joining the rest of his disabled peers in socio-political advocacy. Together with the newly formed Union for the Physically Impaired Against Segregation they fight against oppression of the disabled rather than the compensation for the oppression of the disabled as advocated by the state, (Finkelstein, 2001).

Frisch, (2011) opines that PWDs are numerically superior to many social groups in his society such as the gay and lesbian voters, Aboriginal voters, unemployed voters, rural voters, young voters and aged voters. But they most likely undergo political discrimination because of their statuses and lack of a vibrant intermediary or advocate to intervene for them. They constitute about 19 percent of the population significant for decision-making. Contrary, the politicians care very less about their voting rights talk less of regional bodies around Australia void of representatives for disabled interests. Even the politicians here discriminate amongst the disabled persons as they view and regard some than others. The PWDs too contribute to their own disenfranchisement since they stifle themselves convincingly to one position thus accepting their conditions that they cannot belong or integrate rather than seeing society as a barrier and fighting to conquer. The various disabled people’s organization are individualistic so do not work in unison to forge collective interest.

McClain, (2002) analyzes the South African constitution which is emergent and very representative of all the majority groups with the disabled noted to have fought relentless for their own inclusion. The country possesses an overarching policy of the Integrated National Disability Strategy in which all the PWDs of the state were consulted to take in to considerations their views on inclusion and integration, all of which are followed to the latter.
This policy projects the disabled not as subjects of pity but as capable individuals who can contribute immensely to nation-building. They are protected and guaranteed employment opportunities as every other undeserved citizen; and with a compulsory percentage of employment reserved for them in addition. The educational system is designed in a way to accommodate every special learner although it still suffers some setbacks as a lingering consequence of the dead apartheid and insufficient trained personnel. The health-care is also quite laudable. The structures and governance is representative of the disabled to the extent that the presidency of the republic has a department for the status of PWDs spread throughout the tentacles of the state, and which conveys messages pertaining to disability issues in addition to a comfortable representation accorded them in times of the formulation of state policies. Even political parties such as the ANC have made it as a matter of obligation to involve the PWDs in their political agendas. The civil society organizations and particularly the South African Human Rights Commissions are doing quite much to foster, protect and preserve the inalienable rights of the PWDs.

Pillay, (2012) reveals that the Human Rights Council (HRC) meets to deliberate on and assess the rights of PWDs bringing together International Governmental Organizations (IGOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs). In an exemplary manner, the HRC is rendered to all the categories of PWDs in attendance so that they can perceive the deliberations with absolute ease. The HRC officials commend the efforts of many a nation who have ratified and signed the Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities(CRPDs) and particularly implicating the PWDs in political life. However, it is noted that most nations still remain adamant to the respect of article 29 of the CRPDs. Members note that if all the legal provisions of these conventions are fully implemented, states will manifest a high degree of responsibility. This followed by testimonies of PWDs who as a result of stereotyping conditions have been prevented from voting in their respective nations. Here, some of the comments of the human rights committee are denounced; such as No. 25 which demands that the exclusion of a PWD from political life should only be based on the condition that the person is mentally incapacitated. With this, those with Down syndrome accuse HRC for flouting article 29 of the CRPDs.

In prelude to the Ghanaian elections Sarkyi-Addo, (2004) reports on the low rate participation of Ghanaian PWDs in politics. In his report to the BBC, he compares the case with Britain where disabled persons occupy high portfolio positions in politics such as becoming ministers unopposed. However, he admits that in Ghana some disabled are accorded political positions such as becoming parliamentarians. In contrast, they lack accessibility to the implementation of their tasks. Despite all these, he salutes the efforts of the electoral commission who have introduced tactile ballots that will enable the blinds to vote unaided in subsequent Ghanaian elections.

The concept of Political Participation and Public Life by PWDs as prescribed in article 29 of the CRPDs might seemingly sound strange in the ears of countless persons, nevertheless in the recent times curiosity from these PWDs themselves alongside their veritable empathizers coupled with inadvertent consciousness from lots of national, regional and international acts have all been portraying a great deal of attention towards this under-privilege social group (disabled persons).

Etongue Mayer (2007), (a worker with the National Commission of Human Rights [NCHR]) then embarked on a topic designated: STUDY ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN CAMEROON, sponsored by AFUB, ANAC, DRPI and SRF. The aim of this study was to ascertain the degree to which the basic human rights’ principles of PWDs were respected in the Cameroon society by all the respective stakeholders. The study
was guided by three research questions. The data in this study was from different persons with disabilities. The field work was based on interviews conducted amongst persons with disabilities in their daily environments. In fact, 100 interviews were conducted in three different areas and 96 were used for the following analysis. The interviews were recorded and stored in tapes. Immediately after the data collection, the team proceeded to transcribe the information and engage in further analysis. It must be mentioned here that the areas the team used for the study—the Centre, Northwest and Western regions are a remarkable reflection of the diversities that exist amongst the ethnic homogeneous and heterogeneous groups of Cameroon, with different levels of education and lifestyle. Due to the difficulties to obtain a befitting sample reflecting the population of persons with disabilities, the utilitarian approach was bound to be used which consisted of assembling the interviewees while taking into account the diversity that existed within the population and the different forms of persons with disabilities in Cameroon with respect to the geographical environment, age and gender. The teams mandated to conduct the interviews spent approximately 20 days in each chosen area and were able to interview the following number of interviewees: - For Yaoundé, 48 persons with disabilities; - For Bafoussam, 35 persons with disabilities; - For Bamenda, 17 persons with disabilities. The disparities noticed amongst the interviewees in the three sites: Yaoundé, Bafoussam and Bamenda, was due to the fact that the preparatory work for the study took place in Yaoundé. Furthermore, the majority of the persons used for the study resided in Yaoundé, composed mostly of students, including the Leading researcher of the project. Due to the examination constraints, these students were obliged to limit themselves to the town of Yaoundé and its surrounding localities. For this same reason, some were able to work in Bafoussam, which was nearer to Yaoundé, than Bamenda. It is equally important to note that, Bamenda is essentially an Anglo-Saxon area and there were very few researchers who had a good mastery of the English language; thus, only a limited number of persons were qualified to be sent to this region, thus limiting the number of interviews. As previously mentioned, in the opinion, even if this research was conducted separately in the different sites, there will still be no fundamental changes to the results that were obtained. Generally, the findings carried out showed that, the life of persons with disabilities in Cameroon was marked by acts of discrimination, prejudice and inequality. The results indicated that persons with disabilities faced difficulties ranging from discriminatory attitudes, abuse and violence. There is also the question of accessibility for people with disabilities in accessing certain services and facilities leading to cases of segregation and exclusion within the context of; the family, job side, at school and in the society in general where disability is often seen as a burden of shame. These results indicated that for the majority of persons with disabilities (approximately 18%), situations of abuse and violence occurred in the community and society at large. The blind and persons with visual problems for instance, reported in this exercise how they were put to trial several times by individuals who had doubts about their optical problems. Results also show that many interviewed had faced negative perceptions, including clichés which led to the isolation of and discrimination against persons with disabilities in their own communities and society at large. The prevailing negative social attitudes and perceptions of disability in the society reportedly affected the self-esteem of persons with disabilities. They faced poor treatment especially when they used public facilities such as transportation systems. Again results show that poverty or economic deprivation constituted a bulk of the problems faced by the respondents. The findings also indicated that access to education was a problem faced by a cross-section of the interviewed persons in this study. On the basis of disability, many people faced difficulties in getting admission into secondary schools and colleges of their choices. A large proportion of people with disabilities had not been able to go
to school because their parents thought it would be a waste of resources. In other cases, the family did not send their disabled children to school because of poverty. What’s more, it was the responsibility of the academic institution that refused to admit people with disabilities. The legislation on the issue of free school fees for persons with disabilities in place is not being implemented. In other instances; families could not afford the fees because they lived in abject poverty. The opportunity for a good education was also often denied by the directors of the institutions when they realized that the students who applied for admission were people with disability.

The relationship between Etongue Mayer’s study and this present study is that both are investigations whose findings will positively impact on the lives of PWDs especially those within the political age. For instance, results of the above study was able to expose the vices and negative attitudes that PWDs endured and went through in their various societies as a consequence of their handicapping conditions. In the same way, the finding in this ongoing study which is aimed at appraising the political participation of PWDs in the same country, it will be able to reveal to the state authorities and the public where they are succeeding and failing in the process of political accommodation which will intend help them to make amends all in the favour of PWDs in Cameroon. However, the gap in Etongue Mayer's investigation is that it failed to look at the efforts which PWDs vis-a-vis constituted state hierarchy could take to improve on the lots of the former by combating some of the ills they underwent, for according to Asong (2007) the one who puts on a shoe knows better where it pinches. By the end of the investigations, the precedent study will detect and expose more strategies which the PWDs and the state could either use to consolidate their existing blessings or eliminate and ameliorate the regrettable curses befalling the disabled.

Another previous empirical study related to this investigation is that of Asong, (2007). The study titled: Mainstreaming Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Elections and Political Processes, specially focuses on people with disabilities with limited/no access to education. The researcher set out for a study that will unveil the challenges faced by PWDs in the Ghanaian political system/processes and the way forward. The researcher adopted four research questions to guide the study. After adopting a historical case study of the descriptive research design, the researcher went forward to make use of the purposive and snow-ball sampling techniques where 51 PWDs were chosen to respond to the interview questionnaire. Using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) the following results were obtained: The reality was that persons with disabilities experienced many barriers in accessing their basic human right to political participation, especially in exercising their right to vote.

The most common barriers to election access for persons with disabilities were physical, environmental, attitudinal, legal and cultural. For example, many polling stations were located in facilities that are not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs, crutches and white canes; voter information and registration materials were not accessible to persons who are hearing and visually impaired; and many election officials refused to allow persons with physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities to register or vote due to negative attitudes and cultural stigma. In conclusion, Asong recommended that it’s important to continue the advocacy to ensure that the Elections Commission and political parties should address practical issues so that persons with disabilities were not discriminated against in the electoral process. The government and CSOs had to acquaint election authorities with emerging international standards on the electoral rights of disabled citizens and assist election authorities to identify specific strategies to enfranchise voters with different types of disabilities. Government and political parties should allocate resources for mainstreaming inclusion of persons with disabilities in elections and political processes. Without this nothing will change.
They, persons with disabilities themselves have to develop interest and ability to join political parties and be able to express their views within political parties. They also need to be able to look at taking offices in political parties, so as to influence the political systems to address the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

A related aspect of the reviewed study with the present one is that they all have the same setting and are all concerned with the political plights of PWDs in the various societies (Ghana and Cameroon) with a slight disparity that Asong's work is focused specifically on issues of voting whereas the present study delves in to more public life issues like legislations, employment and association—all linked to good governance. Another relationship between the two studies lie in the fact that both investigations deal with the two major categories of physical and sensory disabilities and are having identical challenges requiring earnest advocacy to seek for a lasting redress that can enhance the smooth political inclusion of PWDs in to their respective state governments. A shortcoming emerges from the fact that, meanwhile the Ghanaian study covers a large surface area that of the current study just takes in to consideration a sub district in the country with generalizations to be extended to others.

**Voting Methods Relating to PWDs**

Voting methods, and their relationship to persons with disabilities, can be discussed in terms of general methods made available by electoral management bodies for all electors and then specific methods for electors with disabilities and other so-called special needs.

The classic, paradigmatic form of voting is of registered electors going to polling stations in available buildings on Election Day to observe the voting instructions, and to cast a paper-based standardized ballot, read and marked by hand as a personal act, done in secret. For all its democratic virtues, this model of voting participation and electoral administration ignores the diversity of abilities and disabilities among citizens, as well as lacks adequate recognition and accommodation of embodied differences and material inequalities in the life circumstances of people. Indeed, contained in this traditional democratic paradigm of voting is the image of the normal voter, the self-reliant elector and able-bodied citizen; an image that implicitly and unintentionally has been unduly restrictive for a substantial number of citizens (American Foundation for the Blind 2011; Australian Electoral Commission 2011b; and Weaver 2001).

Over the years, therefore, in response to claims by groups for political citizenship and equal treatment, additional methods have been introduced and available to all eligible voters, most commonly the methods of advance voting and absentee voting, the latter also called special ballots (vote by mail) in Canada and postal voting in some other jurisdictions. In the UK, absent or postal voting was introduced in the late 1940s to meet the needs of people with a physical incapacity, but then extended, in 2001, to all voters, regardless of the kind of impairments or even if the elector did not have a disability. This legislative change resulted in an increased take-up of the postal ballot among the UK electorate in elections in 2005, although access problems with postal voting apparently persist. It is important to note, for the purposes of this report, that in the UK, postal voting remains the only real alternative to traditional voting available to electors with disabilities (Scope 2010a, 18–19, and 32–34).

In the UK, disabled voters are offered, at least from a Canadian perspective, a relatively modest array of options for voting. Disabled electors are entitled to request assistance to mark their ballot paper by an immediate family member, a qualified elector or by a presiding officer. To prevent electoral fraud, “the name and electoral register number of the disabled person and the companion are entered onto a list” by presiding officers at the polling station (Scope 2010a, 15). Following changes to the Representation of the People Act 2000, regulations specify that for people with mental health conditions and intellectual or cognitive
impairments – people historically labelled as mad, insane or feeble minded – there were, in many jurisdictions, intentional restrictions in law and practice on the right to vote. Tactile voting devices are to be available in elections to assist visually impaired voters or those with limited dexterity to mark their ballot in secret without the help of another person (BBC News 2001; Direct.gov 2011). Moreover, large-print poster versions of the ballot paper are to be posted at polling stations as a reference for voters when they mark the regular-sized ballot.

Where polling stations are inaccessible – which remains a significant issue in British elections (Scope (2010a) – the presiding officer may take the ballot to the elector or the elector may request a postal vote (Electoral Commission 2008). In addition, recent UK legislation allows for the phased introduction of individual electoral registration, in place of the traditional method of the head of household registering the occupants of their private home. Disability groups applaud the move but also express a caution:

Individual registration is a welcome step in improving access to elections for disabled people, helping to prevent deliberate non-registration or vote stealing by those responsible for registering them. However, it is essential that the new system of registration in the UK is designed from the outset with the access needs of disabled people in mind, including the ability to use different identifiers where required, and to receive registration information in the alternative format of their choice (Scope 2010a, 10).

In their comparative study of electoral systems, Karlawish and Bonnie (2007, 895) found, with respect to Australia, that:

The Australian system has been reluctant to adopt balloting technologies different from its long-standing use of the pencil and paper ballot, such as ballots in Braille or computer-assisted voting. In mobile polling, this reliance on the paper and pencil ballot requires frequent one-on-one assistance for the elderly voter. The result is that elderly Australians have access to the ballot but limits upon their ability to vote privately.

Information from the Australian Electoral Commission (2010a, b) indicates that for the 2010 federal election, electors who are blind or have low vision had the option to cast a secret vote by telephone to a special and secure call centre. Other alternative voting options available for electors with disabilities in Australian federal elections include an “assisted vote,” early (advance) voting, voting by post (mail) and voting at a mobile polling station, which may visit such locations as hospitals and nursing homes. In the state of Western Australia, the electoral commission there has been introducing a range of services for voters with disabilities since the mid-1990s, following the enactment of disability rights legislation. In addition to mobile polls the Political Parties and Elections Act 2009, United Kingdom Parliament. At the 2010 federal elections, telephone voting was available in 125 locations across Australia to allow voters who are blind or have low vision to cast a secret vote. Australia Electoral Commission divisional offices and other selected locations. Voters using this service had their name marked off the electoral roll and then cast their vote in private over the phone (People with Disability 2011).

and general polling place access, the Western Australia Electoral Commission (2011) has established drive-through polling places, redesigned desktop voting screens, TTY (telephone typewriter service), hard-of-hearing counter cards, video magnifiers and CCTV (closed circuit TV) screens, among other devices. Other devices include magnifying sheets at polling places, triangular pencils and the right to obtain assistance from any person a disabled elector chooses. Following the 2005 election, the Western Australia Electoral Commission conducted a survey to assess people’s level of satisfaction with the electoral services offered by the Commission.

In New Zealand, all electors can nominate other persons to assist them to read and mark their voting paper; vote in advance of election day and/or in a place other than the voting
booth; and also nominate another person to register for them and vote on their behalf if they do not have the capacity to understand the nature of the decision to register as an elector.

In the US, it seems that a moderate range of alternative voting methods are available across all 50 states, whether for state-wide or national elections. A survey conducted by the US General Accounting Office following the 2000 elections found that just one or two alternative voting methods or accommodations for disabled voters were provided in all states, in particular for people with disabilities whose assigned polling places were inaccessible. All states allow for absentee voting without requiring a notary or medical certification. It is worth noting that some, but not all, states provide in law or policy for the reassignment to a polling place that is accessible. And, some, but not all, states provide curb-side voting, early voting or absentee voting by mail, and allow ballots to be taken to a voter’s residence (US General Accounting Office 2001, 6–7). Inside voting booths and polling places, other accommodations for electors with disabilities include voter assistance, magnifying devices, voting instructions or sample ballots in large print, and Braille ballots.

New electronic technologies for voters with physical and visual impairments were introduced in several US states, starting with the 2000 election year. In addition to optical scanning machines and Direct Record Electronic (DRE) voting machines, newer methods include a Slate, a laptop computer device; speech synthesizers; and a touch-screen voting machine in which computer screens are responsive to touch. Other special voting methods or aids include a human reader, audio readouts, “sip and puff” systems, and a partial Braille ballot in some American jurisdictions and elections.

Across the four other nations surveyed, electronic and Internet voting are still not widespread methods in electoral systems, perhaps explained by the inertia of traditional practices, and also by caution about privacy issues and the overall security and thus integrity of the electoral rolls (Karlawish and Bonnie 2007, 899; Schur et al. 2002). Australia has done a trial of electronic voting in a federal election (Australian Electoral Commission 2010a). In the UK, electronic voting or e-voting – “methods of casting a ballot which use an information technology format to allow voters to record their votes digitally” – were piloted in local and national elections between 2002 and 2007, to assess, among other issues, their accessibility to disabled voters. The major e-voting methods piloted were e-voting at kiosks, Internet voting, telephone voting, text messaging and digital TV voting systems. The Electoral Commission in Britain expressed concerns over the accessibility of the methods and security risks to the integrity of the election process (Scope 2010a, 19–22). All the countries studied for this report provide a range of formats on information on voting for the blind, deaf-blind and vision-impaired communities (Scope 2010a, 14–15).

With respect to the Canadian electoral system, Karlawish and Bonnie (2007, 905) observe that: Canada’s initiatives over the past two decades appear to have substantially enhanced access to the polls for elderly voters with disabilities. These features include mobile polling, and substantial innovation in ballot design and formatting to maximize a voter’s opportunity to vote without the assistance of someone else. Canada’s system has several features that reduce the risk of fraud. Mobile polling run by election officials limits the chance that nursing home staff will co-opt or otherwise manipulate residents’ ballots. Limiting a non-family member to assisting only one disabled voter and requiring an oath to document this also reduces the likelihood that a person aiming to affect the outcome of an election will be able to influence the votes of a large number of residents.

These remarks on the Canadian electoral system draw attention to mobile polling stations, which involves taking the polls to a voter’s place of residence, usually an institutional residence such as a long-term care facility, hospital, nursing home or home for the aged.
Mobile polls are also used for proving voting access to electors living in remote and isolated communities in Australia, Canada and the US. Proxy voting – delegating one’s voting right to another specific person – is another method in use in a few countries, which may be of assistance to some electors with disabilities as well as other voters. Still another method used, in the Canadian context at least, is the transfer certificate, which allows a person who is a wheelchair user to vote at a polling station with level access, if his or her own polling station is inaccessible (e.g. due to narrow doorways and corridors, steep stairwells, no elevators). In addition to ordinary polls on election day, other general methods made available by federal/provincial/territorial electoral management bodies for electors include advance polls, mail-in or special ballots, voting at home, voting at the office of a returning officer, mobile polls (i.e. travelling polling stations), transfer certificate and, in the case of Nunavut and Yukon, proxy voting, (Elections Canada 2006).

To be sure, there has been “substantial innovation in ballot design and formatting” aimed at enhancing access and voting turnout by electors with physical and mental impairments. These innovations include audio tactile devices, audio cassettes as well as Braille to enable people who are blind or visually impaired to vote; different languages in addition to English and French; DVD and CD diskettes; large-print format; and voting templates for electors with a visual impairment. Previously, many people with vision loss had to vote with the help of a sighted assistant. In 2006, with the help of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) and other groups, Elections Canada produced a new plastic template that will allow people with vision loss to vote in private. The tool includes raised numbers, Braille and a large-print list of candidates’ names.

In addition, there are developments in recent years in the provision of assistive voting services and technologies – both human supports and technical supports – to electors with disabilities. Human support services include the option of personal assistance, provided by a family member or even a non-family member or by an elections official at the polling station, with registration and marking the ballot. Another human support service is the availability of language or sign language interpreter services on request. In a similar way, in a recent Quebec by-election, the province’s electoral management body, the Directeur général des élections du Québec, piloted a ballot paper with a photograph of the candidates, a practice that will be extended to general provincial elections. In the Northwest Territories, providing the photograph of candidates on a ballot is also one of the forms of assistance provided to electors.

Assistive voting technologies that use equipment recently tried in some provincial elections in Canada include the sip and puff technology that enables a person with a spinal cord injury or other mobility impairment that denies them the use of their hands to vote (Adam 2011). At the federal level, Elections Canada, having obtained parliamentary approval, tested an assistive voting device (an automated talking machine) during the federal by-election in Winnipeg North in November 2010. The device’s purpose is to assist electors with a visual impairment and those with low literacy skills (Owen 2010). Electors who required assistance and whose Election Day polling station did not offer an assistive voting device could apply for a transfer certificate to permit them to vote at a polling site that did have a device. According to Elections Canada, “The agency has concluded that it will not proceed further with this device, but will continue to study additional methods that could facilitate voting for electors with disabilities.

**Barriers Faced by Electors with Disabilities**

Five types of barriers confront people with disabilities who could or want to vote in elections. By characteristics, these barriers, in no implied order of importance for electors, are architectural and physical; attitudinal and cultural; informational and communication; legal
and policy; and those rooted in the socio-economic status of many people living with disabilities. All these barriers can be regarded as societal aspects of exclusions, which have the effect of marking people with disabilities off from other electors, marginalizing them as a social group and rendering many as “absent citizens” (Prince 2009).

Architectural and physical barriers in the built environment remain a topic of concern among academics, disability organizations and electoral commissions (Ward, Baker and Moon 2009). In the May 2010 general election in the UK, visits to over a thousand different polling stations in almost 400 parliamentary constituencies throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland found “that 67 percent of polling stations had one or more significant access barriers to disabled voters. This represents just a 1 percentage point improvement from the last General Election (68 percent) and 2 percentage points from the General Election of 2001 (69 percent)” (Scope 2010a, 8). A theme in the literature is that access barriers vary by type of impairment. As a British politician observes, “While physical access for those of us in wheelchairs has been improving over recent years (I accept it is not yet perfect everywhere), it is still difficult for people with a visual impairment, learning disability or motor limitations” (Scope 2010a, 5).

Attitudinal and cultural barriers refer most frequently to the beliefs, assumptions and actions or inactions of election officials when dealing with people with disabilities. Redley, Hughes and Holland 2010; Schriner and Batavia (2001). They relate to what Ward, Blake and Moon (2009, 84) call “the actions or socio-psychological environment provided by polling and election officials and election workers.” These academics add, “For this reason, attention has begun to turn to the sorts of problems people with disabilities encounter in their interactions with poll workers and other local election officials” (Ward, Blake and Moon 2009, 80). Restrictive attitudes about the voting capacity and rights of people with disabilities – as held by family members, caregivers or professional staff in supported living settings – has already been noted. The Speaker of the House of Commons in Britain identifies some of the effects of these prejudicial attitudes as follows: “Many [disabled people] are left with a feeling of being disenfranchised because of the various barriers they face in exercising their right to vote. This, together with the under-representation of disabled people in all areas of public and political life, sends a clear message that progress must be accelerated” (Scope 2010a, 4). Informational and communication barriers include such problems as citizens not knowing where to register to vote or the location of polling places, the instructions that accompany a ballot being “confusing and complicated” and mail-in ballots for postal voting being difficult to mark and fold into the envelopes provided. As a British report observes, these problems derive from the fact that “Our electoral system was not designed with disabled people in mind and in this inherently inaccessible system few alternative ways of casting the ballot are offered” (Scope 2010a, 8).

Another topical report in Britain on people with learning disabilities identified three key barriers to the democratic process: the low awareness of the rights of people with learning disabilities to vote; the complexity of the electoral system; and the lack of easy-to-understand information about candidates and party platforms on policies (United Response 2010). Other reports and articles reach similar conclusions in the UK (Bell, McKay and Phillips 2001; Redley 2008) and the US (Harrington 1999; Ward, Baker and Moon 2009). The result produced by such barriers is a form of civic illiteracy (Milner 2002).

Legal and policy-based and procedural barriers are another type of stumbling block electors with disabilities face in democratic nations (Bell, McKay and Phillips 2001; Redley 2008). Current research by disability organizations in Britain finds that:
This study by Ward and associates (2009) is primarily an overview of literature on issues that affect how people with disabilities vote. Specifically, the article surveys issues of legislation and policy, disability activism, implementation of laws, court decisions, electronic voting methods, and data on voters with disabilities in the US.

Whilst legislation [the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and Electoral Administration Act 2006] and guidance have created the impetus for significant improvement, more recent experience shows that the implementation and enforcement of this on the ground falls short. This resulted in many disabled people, in 2010, being unable to cast their vote without assistance and in secret. For some it meant that they were unable to vote at all or could not verify that their vote had been cast and counted (Scope 2010a, 8).

Related to issues of implementation and enforcement is the matter of constrained public budgets for electoral services, stretching staff and reducing the ability to respond in a timely manner to voters’ needs (Scope 2010a). Literature in the US examines the legislative measures enacted to promote the equal enfranchisement of adults with disabilities, including national voting rights laws in the 1980s and 1990s, voting accessibility for the elderly and the handicapped in the 1980s, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and amended in 2008. The impact of this series of legislation as policy, as summarized by three American scholars, emphasizes difficulties in implementation.

By 2000, the end of a century in which Congress and the Supreme Court had taken decisive measures to curtail voting discrimination because of race, sex and class, the federal government had taken only beginning steps toward eliminating barriers to voting by people with disabilities. Despite legislation designed to curtail both overt and implicit discrimination against people with disabilities, a number of legislative and policy issues regarding voting have persisted into the early 21st century. In part, some issues remain because disability legislation has not consistently, and affirmatively, addressed voting practices. Other issues remain because of the inability or unwillingness of local governments to carry out federal mandates (Ward, Baker and Moon 2009, 80–81; Schriner, Oehs and Shields 2000).

Barriers rooted in the socio-economic status of many people living with disabilities refer to economic forms of inequality and disadvantage. These material barriers are demonstrated by the substantially disproportionate rates of unemployment, lower levels of educational attainment, low income and risks of poverty of people with disabilities compared with people without disabilities in all these countries. Persistent and extensive unemployment, widespread dependence on welfare and frequently experienced stigma and social exclusion are serious obstacles to encourage electoral participation. Research in the US indicates that “the voter turnout of employed working-age people with disabilities is almost identical to that of otherwise similar people without disabilities” (Schur et al. 2002, 180).

Another theme related to barriers, but far less examined in the literature, concerns the barriers faced by family members, caregivers or professional staff in supported living settings – the difficulties or hindrances they face in supporting individuals with significant disabilities in exercising their democratic citizenship. Joan O’Sullivan (2001) offers some insights in her study of nursing home residents and administrators:

Administrators must follow extensive regulatory guidelines for running the nursing home, and often do not have the time to ensure that residents have the opportunity to vote. Providing good quality care, keeping front line workers fully staffed, and managing the many tasks involved in running a quality nursing home may put voting low on the list of priorities (2001, 345). What made a difference in the nursing homes and assisted living centres surveyed by O’Sullivan was the initiative of local election officials, and teams of local volunteers, in
providing information packets to the administrators with advice on helping residents to vote in an election.

Two additional issues discussed in the literature on disability and electoral participation deserves brief mention. One issue concerns the question of voting and the mental capacity of people with cognitive impairments and, the wider trend, of “voting by aging citizens who face some level of cognitive impairment or other brain impairment” (Sabatino and Spurgeon 2007).

There are numerous articles about voting and people with Alzheimer’s disease, people with intellectual or learning disabilities and people with other cognitive impairments, such as multiple sclerosis, strokes, traumatic brain injury, Parkinson’s disease and Huntington’s disease. Most of these writings come from the US. Some of this work is philosophical in nature; other work focuses on political rights (much is clinical in orientation) and tests assessment tools of electoral capacity by measuring, for example, appreciation and reasoning about voting choices.

Karlawish and Bonnie (2007) offer a comparative discussion on Australia, Germany and Canada which is touched on later.

Of the countries reviewed for this report, Australia, New Zealand, the US, and the UK have some form of mental capacity exclusions, although the legal restrictions in the UK were notably eased with the passage of legislation in 2005 (Redley et al. 2010). Canada stands out at the O’Sullivan (2001) surveyed long-term care facilities in two jurisdictions in the American state of Maryland. In each jurisdiction, 42 residents were interviewed; each interview lasted about 10 minutes. Those chosen for interviews could make their own health decisions and were not under guardianship. Also, interviews were held with staff at the nursing homes who administer elections. One of the jurisdictions used the Board of Elections procedure and the other did not. Nursing homes selected included those in poorer neighbourhoods as well as in upscale areas. The article provides information on the socio-economic status of the respondents as well as the interview questions used. While descriptive statistics are reported, there is no elaborate quantitative analysis of the data. The article does include a review of federal laws and policies, and case law, in regards to the right to vote by Americans with disabilities, at the National level as not having explicit legislative restrictions on voting with respect to mental capacity.

Most remarkable is Canada’s absence of any exclusion on mental incapacity. Incapacity does not appear to be a controversial issue in Canada, perhaps because those lacking capacity simply tend not to vote, and perhaps because of the greater attention paid to providing information, education, and accessibility services to persons who have cognitive or physical disabilities, persons with limited reading and writing skill, and persons living in transitional situations (Sabatino and Spurgeon 2007, 848). Sabatino and Spurgeon, American specialists in law and aging, add that “the Canadian experience may suggest that minimizing, and even eliminating, the exclusion from voting based on incapacity may indeed be a viable option for consideration”.

A second issue concerns the role of disability organizations in political socialization, recruitment and engagement; in this context, in asking persons with disabilities to join a group or political party, to register to vote, to learn about public issues, to volunteer in a campaign, to run as a candidate and to vote in elections (Schriner and Shields 1998; Ward et al. 2009). In her study of people with spinal cord injuries, Schur (1998, 4) showed “that outreach policies of disability organizations can play a large role in creating conditions that encourage political participation.”
A related article by Schriner and Shields (1998) observes that most disability activism in US has tended to target specific public policy issues and current elected representatives, rather than cultural attitudes about people with disabilities or increasing voter participation. This observation may not be so true today in the way disability activism operates in Canada and perhaps other nations.

Schur and associates (2002) likewise note that disability service agencies and advocacy groups can serve as “recruitment networks” for people with disabilities to become politically aware and active in elections and other forms of democratic citizenship. Ward and others (2009) support the belief “that disability service providers can act as effective advocates for people with disabilities. Such providers are capable of educating election and poll officials and the public and identifying barriers to polling places and supporting efforts to overcome them.”

While this may be true, it should not be ignored that before 1992 the Canada Elections Act was preventing those with a mental disability to vote. The Act was amended further due to court cases based on the Charter and following recommendations from the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing.

This chapter of the investigation has successively appraised the conceptual framework, bearing in mind all the variables under study, other relevant conceptual issues like the making of the physical environment accessible for political participation, varied experiences of PWDs during the processes of political participation and public life, voting methods relating to PWDs, barriers faced by electors with disabilities. The researcher has therefore in one way or the other tried to link these themes to the entire study or a variable under study.

However, among the past empirical investigations on political participation reviewed under literature, none of them has actually evaluated the degree to which political participation by PWDS is facilitated in Cameroon as a whole. It is therefore on this note, coupled with the research problem at stake that this researcher got the inspiration to this investigation on the extent of political involvement of PWDs in a political system, and with special interest in the areas of registration and voting, workability of the existing national and international laws/legislations, meaningful/gainful employment and involvement in clubs and associations—all by these PWDs.
Theoretical Framework

This chapter laid the foundation on which other theories and models had to complement the effectiveness or ineffectiveness by a disabled person so far as participation towards the politico-cultural processes of a nation was concern.

1. The Theory of Discrimination (Taste-based Model and Information-based Model); Gary Becker, 2004
2. The Theory of Discrimination (Adverse Impact and Disparate Treatment); Robert Liddy, 2012
3. Functionalism (biocultural and structural); Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe Brown
4. The Theory of Social Exclusion; Rajendra Pradhan, 2006

Principally, the models that guided this study were the theory of discrimination by Gary S. Becker (2004), the discrimination theory of Robert Liddy (2012), the theory of social exclusion by Rajendra Pradhan (2006) and the functionalist theory of Bronislaw Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown 1920-30) in addition to many other supportive models as portrayed by varied theorists.

1. The Theory of Discrimination (Taste-based Model and Information-based Model)

The theory of discrimination is postulated by Becker (2004) who views this theory in two dialectical perspectives. That is, on the taste-based model and the information-based model.

With these two leading dialectical perspectives of discrimination, the first theoretical perspective is based on tastes. In the taste-based story, some economic actors prefer not to interact with a particular class of people and are willing to pay a financial price to avoid such interactions. The second leading explanation is based on incomplete information. The simplest information-based model involves one group having mistaken beliefs about another group’s skill level and acting accordingly. That simple model, while perhaps a reasonable description of behaviour, is not a very satisfying economic model because it implies that individuals are making systematic errors; thus a series of more sophisticated information-based statistical discrimination.

Applying the afore-mentioned theory to the study under investigation, the researcher is going to appraise the attitudes of other political stakeholders—the government, electoral officials, political parties, the citizenries and many more personalities towards the PWDs in the political participation of Cameroon vis-à-vis the reciprocal compliments of the latter towards the former. Definitely, many a PWD have suffered from indiscriminate negligence emanating from divergent circles of the social order irrespective of condescending national, regional and international laws propagating their personality interests. Disability World (2012) connotes that many people on the upper rungs of the social ladder are likely to treat PWDs differently contrary to the expectations inscribed in most national, regional and international laws which for a good number of time lack protection as defaulters will often go scot-free. And even in circumstances of any penalties, they transgressions are infrequently equitable, as a result optionally fancied by defaulters. Severally, PWDs are secluded from lots of public actions and activities as an effect of the misconstrued outcome of their infirmities not necessarily inability (Asong, 2004). Some employers and potential bosses from equally the private and public sectors out of hesitation and uncertain emotions may fall short in according PWDs those prospects to serve as their administrators and other closest aides irrespective of the incontestable and latent talents of the said PWDs. Occasionally, a number of PWDs
themselves being deficient in the manifestation of their self-esteem attract unrestricted and unconditional discrimination in to undeniable political participation.

2. The Theory of Discrimination (Adverse Impact and Disparate Treatment)

As perpetuated by Liddy (2012) another leading theorist on discrimination, She opines that there are two theories of discrimination. That is, adverse impact (positive) and desperate treatment (negative) forms.

Adverse impact includes policies and practices that are not discriminatory in their intent. However, it may have a disproportionately higher adverse impact on certain groups. Examples are:

- Minimum height and weight requirements, when not required for the job, may adversely affect women, or minorities.
- English fluency, when not required for the job.
- Lifting requirements, when not required for the job, may have an adverse effect on women and other groups.
- The second theory of discrimination is Disparate Treatment. The employer treats some people differently based on their race, colour, national origin, sex, etc. Supervisors and managers may be accused of disparate treatment more often than adverse impact discrimination. Examples of disparate treatment are:
  - Providing training opportunities to males only
  - Disciplining minority employees for tardiness while not disciplining, or giving lighter penalties to non-minority employees
  - Not selecting job applicants 40 years of age or older.

Disparate treatment occurs when our stereotyped assumptions (preconceived opinions) about certain groups of people or because you like or dislike certain individuals is acted upon. It is important that you treat all employees equally. Patterns of unequal treatment could lead to a finding of discrimination even though there was no discriminatory intent.

In assessing political participation based on this theory, objectively the researcher sets out to scrutinize the disparate situation evident amongst an assortment of races, colours, national origins, sexes, and other social groups particularly of who are PWDs. This will further elucidate whether the PWDs are subjected to political exclusion or a contrary phenomenon is obtained in the field. Despite all, PWDs are seemingly liable to adverse impact or positive discrimination tantamount to their handicapping conditions or state of affairs. Hence, they ought to have preferential treatments in every political manifestation considering the unforeseen contingencies that may arise from political excesses at the time of collective participation in general politics.

3. Functionalism (biocultural and structural)

Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1920-30) trigger that the functionalist theory is the fundamental metaphor of the living organism, its several parts and organs, grouped and organized into a system, the function of the various parts and organs being to sustain the organism, to keep its essential processes going and enable it to reproduce. Similarly, members of a society can be thought of as cells, its institutions its organs, whose function is to sustain the life of the collective entity, despite the frequent death of cells and the production of new ones. Functionalist analyses examine the social significance of phenomena, that is, the purpose they serve a particular society in maintaining the whole.
Functionalism, as a school of thought in anthropology, emerged early in the twentieth century. Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, two prominent anthropologists in Great Britain at the time, had the greatest influence in this development.

Two versions of functionalism developed between 1910 and 1930: biocultural (or psychological) functionalism, the approach advocated by Malinowski, and structural-functionalism, the approach advanced by Radcliffe-Brown.

Malinowski suggested that individuals have physiological needs and that social institutions develop to meet these needs. There are also culturally derived needs and four basic "instrumental needs" (economics, social control, education, and political organization), that require institutional devices. Each institution has personnel, a charter, a set of norms or rules, activities, material apparatus (technology), and a function. Malinowski believed that uniform psychological responses are correlates of physiological needs. He argued that satisfaction of these needs transformed the cultural instrumental activity into an acquired drive through psychological reinforcement.

Radcliffe-Brown focused his attention on social structure. He suggested that a society is a system of relationships maintaining itself through cybernetic feedback, while institutions are orderly sets of relationships whose function is to maintain the society as a system. Radcliffe-Brown, following Auguste Comte, believed that the social constituted a separate level of reality distinct from those of biological forms and inorganic matter. Furthermore, he believed that explanations of social phenomena had to be constructed within the social level. He believed that individuals were replaceable, transient occupants of social roles. Unlike Malinowski's emphasis on individuals, Radcliffe-Brown considered individuals irrelevant.

Relating this theory of functionalism to PWDs in political participation and public life, it will be exceedingly palpable to scrutinize the complementarities of PWDs to every society in which they belong to as integral members. Just as a body is comprised of several parts whose network work for the common good of all, the disabled and non-disabled alike have to co-exist on an identical approach; hence, to cautiously consume the usefulness of one another. Vividly, individuals irrespective of whosoever ought to function in sealed partnership so as to facilitate the availability of physiological needs. Categorically, explanations will be the maxim to guide apt interpretation.

4. The Theory of Social Exclusion

According to Pradhan, social exclusion can refer to a state or situation, but it often refers to processes, to the mechanisms by which people are excluded. The focus is on the institutions that enable and constrain human interaction. Social exclusion is manifested in recurrent patterns of social relationships in which individuals and groups are denied access to the goods, services, activities, and resources which are generally associated with citizenship. This definition thus includes social relationships and citizenship as part of the definition of social exclusion. Some definitions emphasize exclusion from full participation in community or society as an essential element of social exclusion, while others emphasize other elements such as citizenship and social rights. One definition, for example, defines social exclusion as the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live. He further states that social exclusion consists of exclusion from social, political and economic institutions resulting from a complex and dynamic set of processes and relationships that prevent individuals or groups from accessing resources, participating in society and asserting their rights. He then lists several key aspects of social exclusion including the fact that it is multidimensional, that exclusion is a process and that the behaviour of particular agents and institutions leads to the exclusion of certain groups;
that it is a feature of groups rather than individuals. Here, groups are distinguished by their
culture, religion, colour, gender, nationality, migration status, caste, and so on; that it is
relational in that its definition depends on what is normal in that particular society.

In a bid to link PWDs’ participation in politics and public life to the theory, they are a
social group which habitually undergoes social exclusion from salient public amenities caused
by either unconscious or deliberate acts from the society. Consequentially, these constraints
are the human interpersonal relationships between the PWDs and the other members of the
society.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND STUDY AREA

Introduction
This chapter is divided into two major parts namely: Research methodology and study area. Whereas the methodology examines the procedure for data collection and analyses, the study area presents a brief history and political set up of the area under study (Cameroon).

Research Methodology
This section describes the general procedure adopted in the collection of data through which the problem of the study was to be addressed. This procedure is described under the following headings: Design of the study, sampling technique, instruments for data collection, validation of instruments, trial testing of the instrument, Reliability of the instrument, methods of data collection and method of data analysis.

Research Design
Considering that this study was an ethnographic research design the field work approach was deployed. Field work in itself is exploratory since the researcher while in the field was a leaving witness to the actual scenes these PWDs had to incur in the socio-politico-economic life of their nation. It therefore implies that conversation, observation were very pertinent and why not an extent of participatory approach.

As postulated by classical works of Anthropology, a researcher is supposed to be in the field for about six months to two years, (Bronislaw Malinowski, 1926); he was actually on the field in the Trobrian Islands for more than twenty-six months.

In reality, this researcher was actually on the field for about seven months thus indeed, carried out a succinct survey of persons with disabilities in connection to their cultural identities, habitual residences, and supplementary peculiarities—all of whom added more impetus and momentum to the research problem under study. This exploratory approach is closely interconnected to the survey research design. This design was used because the study possesses the features of a survey. According to Ali (2006), a survey research design is considered when the study is concerned with an in-depth collection and analyses of data from a group of persons or population relating to a particular issue(s) in the society. Nworgu (2006) indicates that a descriptive survey study is an intensive use of questionnaires, interview guides, and observations to collect and analyze data from a representative population which could be a group of individuals, institutions, and or community. This study was therefore a descriptive survey characterized by an in-depth study of the extent of the political involvement and incorporation of the qualified PWDs in Cameroon using interview guides and observations.

Other aspects of the study which made a survey design suitable for it are that, the study demanded an intensive and extensive collection of data from an exclusive set of people (PWDs), employing the conversation, observation and interview techniques of data collection. The findings would also provide relevant background information that would give rise to more extensive studies in related areas. All these are what made the investigation a survey and consequently the need for its adoption.

Sample and Sampling Technique
Considering the fact that it is the problem under investigation that determines the choice of the population, sample and samplings technique (Nworgu, 2006), the quota and purposive sampling of the non probability sampling techniques were adopted for the study. According to Awotunde and Ugoduluwa (2004), quota sampling entails selecting only those elements of the population having particular characteristics of interests to the researcher in
relation to the study. While purposive sampling entails deliberately selecting specific elements of the population at the judgment of the researcher which satisfy some predetermined criteria with respect to the purpose of the study (Kothari, 2004). The above sampling techniques were therefore chosen because they were very pertinent and crucial to the realization of the objectives of this investigation. The study is based on the extent of the participation of PWDs in the political life of Cameroon. It was therefore vital that the researcher chose a sample made of elements of the population that were directly feeling the impacts of politics in the country and were grounded in its participation, and also aware of what definitely prevailed on the ground so far as the various variables under study were concern. The sample of the research being used in this study was consisted of disabled persons in various categories. Consequently, they were being strained into three main strata tantamount to each category of disability. The expectation was to derive an apt representation of the indispensable categories. Through these, the researcher was confident of the data collected and was able to make conclusions about the results with all certainty and without fear or favour.

**Instrument for Data Collection**

The data for the study was collected using a researcher-developed interview guide, and information sheet, and a free and informed consent form. The items of the interview guide were developed using statements adopted and adapted from the local laws, international instruments and legislations on political participation and public life; and the entire interview guide was partitioned into multiple dissimilar sections. The questionnaire constituted four sets of statements of divergent political areas, representing research questions one to four. The answers to the items were classified on a scale of: “A”, “B”, “C”, and “D”. The first three choices (A-C) were left opened for the respondents to make their best options whereas the last choice (D) absolutely provided the respondents with an unrestricted opening for them to write out their preferred answers that were not found amongst the first three provided varieties. As concerns the interview, the interview guide was developed based on the various issues addressed by the questionnaire to identify the problems that may impede the participation of PWDs in politics.

An information sheet was developed by the principal investigator (researcher) in order to give an implicit explanation to the respondents on all the issues going to be elevated throughout the investigations—thus the expectations of both parties to each other and basically to make available clarifications as to the doubts of the research participants. Moreover, the free and informed consent form was meant to each respondent to sign on, in acknowledgement of his or her consent to freely partake in the exercise. It was to carry very personal or confidential information about the respondent that would not be included in the final instrument, amidst other evidences that were going to serve as references to individual questionnaires in times of flashback and emendations. Lastly, the principal investigator was to also sign on each free and informed consent form so as to attest a veritable contact between him and every respondent, an actually of the former’s presence on the field. The reason for the use of these types of instruments was for effective analysis and answering of research questions and hypotheses given that the research questions had to do with the extent to which a particular variable was true, available or not.
Validation of Instrument

The type of validity adopted for the study was the face validity. After constructing the instrument, it was presented to three experts for scrutiny. They included: an anthropologist from the department of Sociology and Anthropology, who was the supervisor of this study, a Special Education lecturer from the Faculty of education, University of Buea and a master’s degree graduate in Comparative and International Education from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. They were requested to review the questionnaire in relation to the objectives of the study, research questions and hypotheses, clarity of the items and compatibility to statistical tools for analyses. They were consulted individually with copies of the instruments, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses. These academic experts were constantly contacted on a face-to-face basis and also via the electronic media (the internet and telephone). After their inputs and criticisms on the effectiveness of the questionnaire in achieving the required objectives, the necessary corrections were effected and taken for trial testing. This type of validity was used because: the researcher needed to know if the data collected using the instrument would be sufficient enough to answer all the research questions and to test the hypotheses. Equally, the researcher wanted to know whether the content and structure of the instrument reflected the class and level of academics of the respondents in terms of the appropriateness of the language, expressions and the general instructions required in the field.

Trial Testing of the Instrument

Bearing in mind that the reliability of the instruments ought to be consolidated, the questionnaire which is the major and measuring instrument had to pass through a trial testing. Thus, the instruments were trial tested on ten persons living with disabilities from the Bamenda II Sub-division (Mankon). They included three PWDs with visual impairments, three people with physical disabilities and four persons with speech/hearing disorders. Before the trial test was being accomplished, the researcher had to explain to them what the study was all about and that they should consider themselves as victims and victors in the Cameroon politico-cultural life in which they are supposed to be participants. Worthy to note is the fact that, these ten PWDs at the end did not feature amongst the final respondents.

Method of Data Collection

The data for this study was massively accrued by means of the deployment of diverse research strategies. These principally were through conversation with the respondents and relevant personalities, observation, participation and the usage of listening skills. The presence of the researcher while on the field was quite visible. That notwithstanding, he obligatorily had to employ the services of some four field assistants who had to lend a helping hand in the issuing out and filling of the questionnaires; making an allowance for the fact that most of the respondents were not literate, again the scripts were in writings/languages not compatible to their original mediums of communication and with a bulk of the items wanting recurrent illuminations. Additionally, some of them served as interpreters and transcribers to facilitate the misconstrued languages and unperceived writings that arose in the course of the study, such as the exceptionality of sign-language from the HI/SI interviewees. Prior to this ethnographic field work, the principal investigator of this study alongside aide from his supervisor, rendered the four research assistants (volunteers) with numerous and adequate training sessions thus enabling and equipping them with the suitable tenets of a good social science research. In the field exclusively, they administered the questionnaires to the respondents thereby ticking the rightful options and/or filling in the necessary responses wherever necessitated. Exceptionally for the hearing/speech impaired who needed tertiary field
assistants. As a matter of obligation, selected “normal” members of staff underwent an on-the-spot keep fit training for the academic exercise.

**Method of Data Analysis**

The data for this study was analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics which include simple frequencies, percentages, and average percentages. The data was also analyzed using tabular and descriptive explanations.

**Study Area**

The area of this study was Cameroon and particularly its politics vis-à-vis the participation of PWDs. This section thus presents a brief history of Cameroon, political structure and background, and the population under study.

**Brief History of Cameroon**

The earliest inhabitants of Cameroon were probably the Bakas (Pygmies). They still inhabit the forests of the south and east regions. Bantu speakers originating in the Cameroonian highlands were among the first groups to move out before other invaders. During the late 1770s and early 1800s, the Fulani, a pastoral Islamic people of the western Sahel, conquered most of what is now northern Cameroon, subjugating or displacing its largely non-Muslim inhabitants. In all, there are more than 250 ethnic groups in Cameroon today disseminated over the ten regions (Ngoh, 1996).

According to Ngoh (1996), the first Europeans (Portuguese) set foot on the coast of Cameroon in the 1500s after which the country underwent mixed blessings of a booming coastal trade and slaves acquisition. Subsequently, Christian missions established a presence in the late 19th century and continue to play a role in Cameroonian life. Beginning in 1884, all of present-day Cameroon and parts of several of its neighbours became the German colony of Kamerun, with a capital first at Buea and later at Yaoundé. After World War I, this colony was partitioned between Britain and France under a June 28, 1919 League of Nations mandate. France gained the larger geographical share, transferred outlying regions to neighbouring French colonies, and ruled the rest from Yaoundé. Britain's territory—a strip bordering Nigeria from the sea to Lake Chad, with an equal population was ruled from Lagos.

French Cameroon achieved independence in 1960 as the Republic of Cameroon. The following year the largely Muslim northern two-thirds of British Cameroon voted to join Nigeria; the largely Christian southern third voted to join with the Republic of Cameroon to form the Federal Republic of Cameroon (Fanso, 1999). The formerly French and British regions each maintained substantial autonomy until May 20th, 1972 when a referendum amalgamated the two. Pioneer president was Ahidjo (1961) who resigned as President in 1982 and was constitutionally succeeded by his Prime Minister, Paul Biya, a career official from the Bulu-Beti ethnic group whom today is the current serving president. Biya’s Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) party holds a sizeable majority in the legislature.

**Political Structure and Background of Cameroon**

According to Mbile (2000), the government adopted legislation in 1990 to authorize the formation of multiple political parties and ease restrictions on forming animalistic associations and private newspapers. Nowadays it holds that the Cameroon political scenery constitutes some more than 200 legalized political parties. Cameroon’s first multiparty legislative and presidential elections were held in 1992 followed by municipal elections in 1996. Of the multiple parties, the CPDM has maintained dominance as the ruling party.
whereas the SDF has constantly trailed as the leading national opposition political party. Other active opposition parties represented in the legislature, fully and partly in the municipalities or in both include the CDU, NUDP, MDR, UPC, UMS, CRM, ANDP, CCP, UFP, MP, PADDEC and CNSF.

Cameroon has a number of independent newspapers. Censorship was abolished in 1996. Although a 1990 law authorizes private radio and television stations, the government has not granted any licenses as of March 1998. The Cameroonian Government's human rights record has been improving over the years but remains flawed.

The Cameroon polity is run by a semi-presidential system that is, the president serving as the head of state and the prime minister as head of government. Government is segmented into three arms—the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.

The executive is piloted by the president bordered by his appointed ministers. According to the Cameroon Constitution (2008), the president is empowered to name and dismiss cabinet members (regardless of parliamentary representation), judges, generals, provincial governors, prefects, sub-prefects, and heads of Cameroon's parastatal (about 100 state-controlled) firms, obligate or disburse expenditures, approve or veto regulations, declare states of emergency, and appropriate and spend profits of parastatal firms. The president is not required to consult the National Assembly. In 2008, a constitutional amendment was passed that eliminated term limits for president.

The judiciary is subordinate to the executive branch's Ministry of Justice. The Supreme Court may review the constitutionality of a law only at the president's request. All local government officials are employees of the central government's Ministry of Territorial Administration, from which local governments also get most of their budgets. While the president, the minister of justice and the president's judicial advisers (the Supreme Court) top the judicial hierarchy, traditional rulers, courts, and councils also exercise functions of government. Local governments are usually headed by mayors preceding local elections. Local governments in Cameroon are currently undergoing the process of decentralization. Traditional courts still play a major role in domestic, property, and probate law. Tribal laws and customs are honoured in the formal court system when not in conflict with national law. Traditional rulers who are considered as auxiliaries of the administration receive stipends from the national government.

The legislature consists of a National Assembly - lower house of parliament and a Senate - upper house of parliament. The 180-member National Assembly meets in ordinary session three times a year (March/April, June/July, and November/December), and has seldom, until recently, made major changes in legislation proposed by the executive. Laws are adopted by majority vote of members present or, if the president demands a second reading, of a total membership (Republic of Cameroon, 2008). Following government pledges to reform the strongly centralized 1972 constitution, the National Assembly adopted a number of amendments in December 1995 which were promulgated in January 1996. The amendments call for the establishment of a 100-member senate as part of a bicameral legislature, the creation of regional councils, and the fixing of the presidential term to 7 years, renewable once. One-third of senators are to be appointed by the President, and the remaining two-thirds are to be chosen by indirect elections. However, power to convene the Electoral College and call elections for the Senate remained with the President. According to the Post Newspaper (2013), President Paul Biya signed decree 2013/056 on 27 February 2013, which set 14 April as the election date. Thus, elections to the Senate were held for the first time on 14 April 2013. The Senate has 100 seats, of which 70 are elected and 30 appointed by the President, with each region having 10 Senators. The elected seats are elected by the 10,636 members of the 360
municipal councils. The President of the Senate is the constitutionally designated successor to the President of the Republic in case of a vacancy in the latter office.

**Population of the Study**

According to the national population census (November 2005) which was published in December 2009, the total population of Cameroon counts some 19,400,000 persons. Moreover and mindful of the fact that PWDs constitute approximately 15 percent of the world’s population (UN Population, 2012) approximately some 3,000,000 persons with varied disability conditions are disseminated all round the country.

The target population for the study which also constituted the sample size was drawn or made up of a totality of forty respondents disseminated in the entire study area; making an allowance for three foremost categories of disabilities, that is to say, the orthopedically, the visually, and speech/hearing impaired. The distribution was obtained according to the proportions of the divergent populations detected on the field as follows: Fifteen visually impaired respondents comprised the target population for the available VI’s, thirteen interviewees with hearing/speech impairments and twelve orthopedically impaired in that respect completed the list of the required interviewees. The mass of the population was being drawn from the existing Disabled People’s Organizations (DPO’s), rehabilitation centres, integrated institutions in the vein of schools, churches and work-places. Meaning therefore that members of staff, clients as well as unemployed citizens established the requisite respondent population for the research.

The available DPOs consisted of either individual or collective groups of PWDs in the visited areas; notably CUAPWD, HSUVI, SNEG, ANAC a nation association for the blind, NAPHAC for the physically disabled; FECASDEV, FECASSOU and FECASDEP for VI, PI and HI/SI sports respectively.

Notably, there surfaced some prominent rehabilitation institutions for the various categories of disabilities: that is Associated Rehabilitation Centre for the Handicap (ARCH) Dibanda Mile 14—a rehabilitation centre for the physically disabled; SAJOCAH in Bafut, CJARC Yaoundé, Rehabilitation Institute for the Blind (RIB) Bulu, and the Buea School for the Deaf (BSD) just to mention these few. Besides, regular stopovers were made to a number of churches, markets, private homes and work-places in multiple localities of the country in order to fish-out potential respondents.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Introduction
It should be noted that the purpose of this study is to investigate the extent to which PWDs contribute to the political life of Cameroon. This chapter is therefore concerned with presenting and analyzing the data gotten from the field and making interpretations on the analyses in relation to the research questions and hypotheses. During the administration of the instrument, a total of 40 were conducted with PWD, representing the initial sample population for the study, thus a return rate of 100 percent.

Demographic Information
Table 1: Distribution by Sex and Disability Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, 55% of the respondents were male and 45% were female. Categorically, for the hearing impaired respondents, there were more female (61.5%) than male (38.5%). While there were more male respondents (73.3%) than the female (26.7%), the physically impaired had equal distribution for both sexes.
Table: 2: Distribution by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>20 - 30</th>
<th>31 - 45</th>
<th>45 - 60</th>
<th>60 +</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deaf and hard of Hearing</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For distribution by age, two-fifths (42.5%) of the respondents were aged between 20 – 30 years, one-fifths (22.5%) had ages between 31 – 45 years and same proportion for ages between 45 – 60 years. One-tenths (12.5%) of the respondents were above 60 years.

Presentation and Analyses

Research Question One: To what extent do political actors of the state such as the government, the electoral body, and the political parties often take into account and facilitate the specific interests of PWDs in the polling or balloting process and other plan of actions?

Below are items analyses relating to research Question one; which is concerned with the extent to which political actors of the state such as the government, the electoral body, and the political parties have taken into account and facilitate the specific interests of PWDs in the polling or balloting process.

Table 3: Have you ever registered for any elections in this country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, 60% of the respondents indicated to have ever registered for elections in Cameroon, while 40% have never registered. In more specific terms, more visually Impaired (93.3%), the physically impaired (75%) and only 7.7% of the respondents who are hearing impaired have registered for elections in Cameroon.

Table 4: Are you registered for the upcoming elections?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As concerns the level of preparedness for upcoming elections, 50% of the respondents were ready, as they had registered on the electoral list, while 50% had not registered. 80% of the respondent who are visually impaired were already on the electoral list, 58% for the physically impaired and 7.7% for hearing impaired as presented on table 2 above.

Table 5: Are the electoral materials such as the ballot papers and voting boxes available in accessible modes compatible to you as a PWD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Electoral materials being disability friendly differed significantly and among the three categories of disabilities. In all, 3/10 of the respondents accepted that ballot papers and voting boxes were available in accessible modes, 6/10 indicated that electoral materials were never disability friendly and 1/10 of the respondents were undecided. The hearing impaired respondents said electoral materials were never accessible, slightly ½ of the visually impaired respondents confirmed that these materials were accessible and 1/3 of physically impaired respondent said the materials were accessible.

Table 6: Are you often assisted by someone during the voting process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assistance given to persons with disabilities is an individual decision. In all, 47.5% accepted that assistance is given them during the voting process, 45% refused being assisted and 7.5% were undecided. Categorically, 100% of respondents who were visually impaired were being assisted, no hearing impaired loved to be assisted and 33.3% of physically impaired respondents were being assisted during the voting process.

Table 7: Are the polling stations in your area indiscriminately accessible to you and other PWDs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
From the table above, 37.5% of all the respondents attested that polling stations are disability friendly, 35% saw polling stations to be unfriendly and 27.5% of the total respondents were undecided. Findings showed that, of the visually impaired respondents 60% indicated that polling stations in their areas were indiscriminately accessible. For the hearing impaired respondents, 23.1% refuted the fact that polling stations in their area were indiscriminately accessible and the remaining 76.9% were undecided about the accessibility of the polling stations.

Table 8: Do the elections’ officials give you any preferential treatment during the voting process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>97.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the overall responses above, it is seen that 97.5% of PWDs acknowledged the necessity for them to participate in the voting process, as against 2.5%
Table 10: Do PWDs in your jurisdiction without any prejudices engaged in partisan politics and are voted in to the party posts and local governments?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the analyses above, it is evident that PWDs are not given the opportunities to engage in partisan politics and are not also given the opportunities through election to run for local government positions.

Table 11: Summary of Items analyses relating to Research Question one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>73.34%</td>
<td>25.83%</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>48.75%</td>
<td>40.62%</td>
<td>10.63</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 above is a summary analyses of items 1 to 8 relating to research question one, which was concern with the extent to which political actors of the state often take into account and facilitate the specific interests of PWDs in the polling or balloting process during political elections. Looking at the overall responses, 48.75% of PWDs accepted that their interests are taken into consideration, 40.62% disagreed while 10.63% could not decide (were ignorant) whether their interests are considered or not. Judging from the Yes and No responses, one can comfortably conclude that; the facilitation and consideration of the interests of PWDs in the polling and balloting process by the state during political elections is Relative. This is to say that the difference between the percentages Yes and No is not large enough to conclude that there is absolute or no absolute facilitation and consideration of PWDs interests during political elections.

Research Question Two: To what extent are PWDs without being prejudiced consulted in the formulation of policies and legislations that positively affect their lives in particular and the state as a whole?

Below are item analyses of Research Question two; relating to unprejudiced consultation of PWDs in the formulation of disability friendly State Policies and Legislations

Table 12: Are PWDs deliberately excluded when formulating the general political policies of this country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The analysis shows that there is gross deliberate exclusion of PWDs on the formulation of
general political policies. As shown on the table, 82.5% of all the PWDs acknowledged this
claim as a reality as against 15%, while 2.5% of the respondents were simply ignorant as to
their exclusion or not.

Table 13: Do PWDs also constitute the major law-making bodies [parliament] of the
state?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analyses on table 12 indicate that there is absolute under-representation of of PWDs in the
major lawmaking bodies (Parliament and Senate) in the Cameroon polity. Whereas 10% of the respondents agreed that PWDs are represented, majority 65% disagreed while 25% were
simply ignorant.

Table 14: Are you aware of the distinct national laws on the protection of the rights of
PWDs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority of all the classes of PWDs in the above analyses acknowledge that they are aware of
the existence of distinct national laws on the protection of the rights of PWDs in the Country.
This can be seen from the 92.5% positive response as against 7.5% negative response.

Table 15: Are you aware whether Cameroon has signed the UN Convention on the Rights
of Persons with Disabilities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table indicates the responses of PWDs on whether they are aware of the signing of the UNCRPD by the Cameroon government. From the analyses, 27.5% of the respondents agreed that they are aware of the signing, 35% disagreed while 37.5% of the respondents are totally ignorant as to what the UNCRPD is all about. This is a clear indication that PWDs are largely not part of the consultations in the formulation of policies and legislations that address issues relating to their interests.

Table 16: Summary of item analyses relating to research Question two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15 above is summary of item analyses relating to research question two which is concerned with the extent to which PWDs without being prejudiced are consulted in the formulation of policies and legislations that positively affect their lives in particular and the state as a whole. The summary analyses indicate that PWDs are aware of existing legislations that protect their rights and interests. However, they (PWDs) are to a great extent not consulted or are excluded in the formulation of these policies and legislations that positively affect their lives and the citizenry as a whole. As shown by the results, the 53.1% Yes response confirms the view that PWDs are excluded or not consulted in the formulation of legislations and policies, 30.6% responded No, disapproving the view that they are excluded while 16.3% of the respondents are completely ignorant or just don’t know what prevails in relation to this, and so their inability to say Yes or No.

**Research Question Three**: To what extent have special avenues or institutions been put in place to ensure a proper implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs before, during and after working experiences?

Below are item analyses of research question three; relating to the putting in place of special avenues to ensure a proper implementation of the politico economic rights of PWDs before, during and after working experiences.

Table 17: Does the recruitment policy of the state favour the deserved and qualified PWDs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The percentage responses on table 16 above revealed that the recruitment policy of the state of Cameroon does not favour the deserved and qualified persons with disabilities (PWD) as questioned by the item. As seen from the table, 92.5 percent of the respondents answered No as to whether the recruitment policy was favourable to PWDs as against an insignificant 7.5 percent of the respondents who answered yes to the question.

Table 18: Do you know any employed PWDs in Cameroon?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the analyses above, it can be observed that majority of all the PWDs are aware of at least one PWD who has been employed by the Cameroon government and other parastatals. This is seen from the 85 percent Yes response to the question as against 15 percent No.
Table 19: Are they performing well in their work-places?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from knowing PWDs who are employed by the Cameroon government and other parastatals, 82.5 percent of the respondents agreed that the PWDs employed are performing very well in their work-places as against 12.5 percent who disagreed and 5 percent undecided.

Table 20: Do most potential employers exercise discrimination in recruiting and treating PWDs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The PWDs from the analyses on the table above overwhelmingly agree that there is discrimination of the PWDs by potential employers in their recruitment policies. 80 percent of the respondents agreed to the fact that they were being discriminated as against 15 percent, while 5 percent could not decide.
Table 21: Do the employed PWDs share a cordial relationship with their employers, colleagues and clients?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above analyses, 65 percent of the respondents acknowledge that the employed PWDs have a cordial relationship with their employers. 25 percent responded that there is no cordial relationship between the PWDs and their employers, while 10 percent could not say if there is a cordial relationship or not.

Table 22: Summary of item analyses relating to Research Question three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>63.1%</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The items on the questionnaire relating to Research Question three as analyzed above were all trying to find out whether special avenues or institutions have been put in place to ensure a proper implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs before, during and after working experiences, and to what extent. In responding to the negatively cued items, an overall 64 percent of the respondents agreed that there are no special avenues or institutions put in place for proper implementation of the of the politico-economic rights of PWDs, while 34 percent disagreed, which invariably mean that there are special avenues and institutions for the implementation of these rights. 4 percent from the analyses were on able to agree or disagree to the questionnaire items. Looking at the 64 percent Yes response, one can comfortable say that; the Cameroon government to a very great extent has not been able to put in place avenues and institutions for the implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs in the polity.

Research Question Four: To what extent are DPOs available in the country since the 90s to act as veritable civil societies and advocacy channels in circumventing all the directions of discrimination against PWDs?

Below are Item analyses relating to Research question four; which is concerned with the extent of availability of DPOs in the country to act as veritable civil societies and advocacy channels in circumventing all the directions of discrimination against PWDs.
Table 23: Do you know any associations of, and for PWDs in and around your jurisdiction?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An overall 82.5 percent of the respondents (classes of PWDs) on table 22 above agreed that they knew of associations and organizations of and for PWDs in and around their jurisdictions. 12.5 percent of them said they never knew any, while 5 percent of them could not tell.
Table 24: Do you belong to any association, organization, and/or club of PWDs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, 82.5 percent of the PWDs agreed belonging to some of these associations and organizations of and for PWDs. 12.5 percent said that they did not belong while 5 percent could not decide whether they belonged or not.

Table 25: Are you a member of any inclusive association, organization, and/or club?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In responding to whether they belonged to any inclusive association or club (as seen on table 22), 87.5 percent of the entire PWDs agreed that they belonged, 10 percent disagreed while 2.5 percent could not determine if they belonged or not.

Table 26: Summary for items relating to research question four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>UD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Impaired</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 25 is a summary of all the item analyses relating to the availability of advocacy Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs) that fight against the politico-economic discrimination of PWDs in the country. From the analyses, it is seen that DPOs are to a very great extent available for the fight against discrimination of PWDs in the Cameroon society. As seen from the results, an overall 84.2 % of the respondents (PWDs) responded positively to questions in relation to the availability of DPOs and their involvement in these organizations. 11.7 percent of the PWDs could not agree to this, while 4.2 % could simply not decide in relation the research question.
Summary of Findings Based on the Research Questions and Hypotheses

Having analyzed the data collected to answer the research questions that guided the study, the following conclusions can be reached in cognizance with the various research hypotheses.

1. From the analyses for research question one, it was established that; the facilitation and consideration of the interests of PWDs in the polling and balloting process by the state during political elections is Relative. This is because, only an overall below average 48.75% of PWDs accepted that their interests were taken into consideration, 40.62% disagreed while 10.63% could not decide (were ignorant) whether their interests are considered or not. This therefore confirms the hypothesis for research question one that: There is no significant positive relationship between political actors of the state (government, election body, and the political parties) and PWDs in relation to facilitating the polling or balloting process and other plans of action to favour the interests of the PWDs.

2. For research question two, the findings showed that; PWDs are aware of existing legislations that protect their rights and interests, but are to a great extent not consulted or are excluded in the formulation of these policies and legislations that positively affect their lives and the lives of citizens as a whole. This could be substantiated from the 53.1% Yes response which confirmed the view that PWDs are excluded or not consulted in the formulation of legislations and policies as against 30.6%, while 16.3% of the respondents could not decide. The findings on research question two also go a long way to confirm the second research hypothesis that: There is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state in reference to existing state policies, legislations and other related international conventions formulated to favour PWDs in particular and the state as a whole.

3. Looking at research question three, the researcher found out that; the Cameroon government to a very great extent has not been able to put in place avenues and institutions for the implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs in the polity. This is explained by the overall 64 percent of the respondents who agreed that there are no special avenues or institutions put in place by government for proper implementation of the of the politico-economic rights of PWDs, as against 34 percent who disagreed, while 4 percent were on able to agree or disagree on the issue. The findings therefore confirm research hypothesis three that: There is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state with reference to the provision of special avenues or institutions to ensure the proper implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs.

4. As concerns research question four, the study found out that; DPOs are to a very great extent available for the fight against the politico-economic discrimination of PWDs in the Cameroon society. This could be seen from the overall 84.2 % PWDs who responded positively to questions in relation to the availability of DPOs and their (PWDs) involvement in these organizations as against 11.7 percent who could not agree to the availability of DPOs, while 4.2 % could simply not decide. From the findings on research question four, the null hypothesis is thus rejected. This therefore means that there is significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state in relation to the availability of DPOs that act as civil society groups and advocacy channels in circumventing all directions of discrimination against PWDs.

Discussion of Findings
Having presented and analyzed the data gotten from the field in the preceding paragraphs, it is thus necessary to advance possible interpretations and explanations to the findings of the study, and relating them to previous works of researchers in the domain of PWDs and participation in politics as seen under the review of related literature. The discussion is classified under the following subheadings;

- The involvement of PWDs in the political processes of the state
- The availability of policies and conventions supporting disability and politics
- A conducive socio-economic environment for work and employment to PWDS
- Availability of Disabled Peoples Organizations.

**The involvement of PWDs in the political processes of the state**

The findings of this study revealed that the facilitation and consideration of the interests of PWDs in the polling and balloting process by the various state stakeholders before and during political elections was relative, mindful of the fact that just a below average majority could attest to their involvements in one way or the other. Therefore confirming that there was no significant positive relationship between political actors of the state (government, election body, and the political parties) and PWDs in relation to facilitating the polling or balloting process and other plans of action to favour the interests of the PWDs. This just goes a long way to acknowledge the fact that political actors still need to do a lot more in accommodating and facilitating the socio-political interests of PWDs so far as participation in electoral matters are concerned.

As seen in the study, despite a good number of PWDs who were taking some efforts in participating, they were rarely commended but met with a lot of barriers which were sometimes instead demoralizing. According to a VI respondent his political arsenal was ready as he had registered and has been participating in past elections but under deplorable situations; thus hoping for betterment one day. He preferred anonymous or independent voting during vote casts, attesting that he was once tricked by an aider in voting ignorantly for a wrongful candidate, just for the malignant aider to be commonly using the situation in times of disagreements to make fun of him. Even the recent single electoral code promulgated in April 2011, has very little consideration to the involvement of PWDs; this uniquely as only section 105 of the code in very unclear terms patronize their interests. In addition to threats, the inaccessibility of voting materials and the environment defy article 5 of the UN’s equalization of opportunities for PWDs slightly likening the Cameroon situation to Barriga’s (2011) in Uganda, Peru and Hungary where PWDs were directly denied voting rights with the pretext that they will spoil votes.
The availability of policies and conventions supporting disability and politics

From the findings, majority of the PWDs in Cameroon are aware of existing national and international legislations that are set aside to protect their interests, but to a great extent are not consulted and often excluded from formulation of these laws and legislations that are meant to affect their lives and the entire citizenry. This further consolidates the view that there is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state in reference to existing state policies, legislations and other related international conventions formulated to favour PWDs in particular and the state as a whole.

If not all most of the PWDs bore witness to the fact that the state of Cameroon is endowed with a lot of juicy national laws (the 1983 and 2010 laws among others on the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities) but they are rarely ever implemented to their fullest. On-like in the southern African nations of Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho and South Africa as exposed by Ducan (2003) and McClain (2002) where PWDs also constitute the parliament which is the highest decision-making bodies of these countries; and Disability World (2012) that talks of the appointments and elections of PWDs as ministers and presidents in some prominent countries of the world, very little or nothing has been done in Cameroon. All the same, in the just past April 14th senatorial elections and appointments in Cameroon, an OI was nominated alternate senator from the South Region of Cameroon.

Conducive socioeconomic environment for work and employment to PWDS

The results addressing the socio-economic rehabilitation of PWDs in to job opportunities in Cameroon indicated that the government to a very great extent has not been able to put in place avenues and institutions for the implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs in the polity. This just consolidated the assertion that there is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state with reference to the provision of special and favourable avenues or institutions to ensure the proper implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs. From all indications it is clear that a few individuals were employed by the government and some parastatals, who were performing in their work places and sharing cordial relationships with employers. But the state was doing very little to their full and intensive integration.

This is in contrast to what prevails for example in South Africa, where McClain (2003) pointed out that there was a full department for the welfare of the disabled in the presidency which ensured that a percentage of jobs were reserved for them. Also article 27 of the CRPD on work and employment and sections 38 and 45 of the 2010 disability laws in Cameroon ascribe to the indiscriminate employment of PWDs, but they are hardly ever respected considering that the accompanying sanctions are regularly ignored.

Availability of Disabled Peoples Organizations

It was noticed that the DPOs are to a very great extent truly available in the fight against the socio-political and economic discrimination of PWDs; thus negating the notion that there was no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state in relation to the availability of DPOs that act as civil society groups and advocacy channels in circumventing all directions of discrimination against PWDs. Multiple associations for and of PWDs have been playing a vital role in uniting and advocating for each other. This gives a pad on the back of the government for the introduction of the 1990 liberty laws on the freedom of clubs and associations, (Halle, 2006) whose dissemination is currently aiding in illuminating the image of the disabled despite many other shortcomings along the pathway. It is a situation similar to
that in the US and Australia where associations for and of PWDs are interceding and intervening powerfully on behalf of its clients (Brown, 2012) and (Pillay, 2009).

However, to achieve a realistic and fair political terrain, the political actors have to use DPOs in ameliorating on the plights of the disabled, preceded by checks and balances on those recalcitrant groups that might use the PWDs’ backs as human ladders in attaining political freedom or selfish interests. The willingness and activeness of the PWDs freely subscribing to the memberships of these DPOs is indicative of the fact that they are poised to take their own destinies in to their own hands. Thereby putting on a shoe by oneself and knowing exactly where it pinches (Asong, 2007).
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

It is vividly clear that the study was out to assess persons with disabilities' participation in the politics and public life of Cameroon just as prescribed in article 29 of the United Nation's CRPDs, in conjunction with other national and regional policies. This chapter presents a general summary of the study, implications of the findings on disability and politics, conclusion-explaining the extent to which the objectives have been achieved and major lessons drawn from the findings, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies.

Summary of Study
The study set out to anthropologically appraise the participation of PWDs in the politico-cultural construction of the Cameroon polity. Specifically, it tried to ascertain:

I. the extent to which the disabled are accorded with a level playing ground to participate in the politico-cultural processes, such as in registration, voting, nomination, and candidature presentation in the state of Cameroon during elections.

II. Whether PWDs themselves are really qualified and are ready to play a part in the politico-cultural processes and reconstruction of the nation as does every other compatriot. This to be mostly done by finding out the degree to which persons with disabilities are involved in the formulation of policies that will affect themselves in particular and the state as a whole; amidst evaluating the existing state policies including those international conventions already ratified by the state of Cameroon and perceive whether they are compatible or meet with the aspirations of persons living with disabilities all over the national territory.

III. The degree to which PWDs are included in to the working life of the state of Cameroon vis-à-vis their inputs or outputs alongside their diverse collaborators in the process of safeguarding the politico-economic impetus of the nation, and

IV. The role of disabled people’s organizations (DPO’s) as veritable civil societies and advocacy channels for those they stand to represent, unify and/or co-operate with for the common goal of all and sundry in the arena of disability.

After reviewing literature, and theoretical framework, an ethnographic, coupled with a descriptive survey research design was adopted in which the field work approach was deployed. After analyzing the data collected from three main groups of PWDs (VI, HI, and OI) with the use of an interview guide coupled with observation and conversations, the following results were gotten:

The facilitation and consideration of the interests of PWDs in the polling and balloting process by the state during political elections is Relative. This is because, only an overall below average 48.75% of PWDs accepted that their interests were taken into consideration, 40.62% disagreed while 10.63% could not decide (were ignorant) whether their interests are considered or not. This therefore confirms the hypothesis for research question one that: There is no significant positive relationship between political actors of the state (government, election body, and the political parties) and PWDs in relation to facilitating the polling or balloting process and other plans of action to favour the interests of the PWDs.

It was also seen that PWDs are aware of existing legislations that protect their rights and interests, but are to a great extent not consulted or are excluded in the formulation of these policies and legislations that positively affect their lives and the lives of citizens as a whole. This could be substantiated from the 53.1% Yes response which confirmed the view that PWDs are excluded or not consulted in the formulation of legislations and policies as against
30.6%, while 16.3% of the respondents could not decide. The findings on research question two also go a long way to confirm the second research hypothesis that: There is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state in reference to existing state policies, legislations and other related international conventions formulated to favour PWDs in particular and the state as a whole.

As concerns avenues and institutions for the implementation of politico-economic rights of PWDs, the study established that the Cameroon government to a very great extent has not been able to put in place avenues and institutions for the implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs in the polity. This is explained by the overall 64 percent of the respondents who agreed that there are no special avenues or institutions put in place by government for proper implementation of the of the politico-economic rights of PWDs, as against 34 percent who disagreed, while 4 percent were on able to agree or disagree on the issue. The findings therefore confirm research hypothesis three that: There is no significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state with reference to the provision of special avenues or institutions to ensure the proper implementation of the politico-economic rights of PWDs.

The study also found out that; DPOs are to a very great extent available for the fight against the politico-economic discrimination of PWDs in the Cameroon society. This could be seen from the overall 84.2 % PWDs who responded positively to questions in relation to the availability of DPOs and their (PWDs) involvement in these organizations as against 11.7 percent who could not agree to the availability of DPOs, while 4.2 % could simply not decide. From the findings on research question four, the null hypothesis is thus rejected. This therefore means that there is significant positive relationship between PWDs and the state in relation to the availability of DPOs that act as civil society groups and advocacy channels in circumventing all directions of discrimination against PWDs.

Based on the finding, discussions were made with reference to reviewed literature, and recommendations made for the betterment of the politico-economic and socio-cultural plight of the PWDs. The study also suggested related areas of possible research in case there are further interests in relation to the subject under study.

**Implications of the Findings**

The findings of the study can be said to have implications for inclusive socio-political-economic participation in public life. The findings will be of use to political actors like government agencies, ELECAM, policy makers, political parties, disability institutions, NGOs, IGOs and DPOs.

The involvement and/or inclusion of PWDs in the political processes of the state has to be taken into serious consideration by the government agencies and all other political stakeholders. This is because, the study revealed that the facilitation and consideration of PWDs' interests during elections was relative judging that only a below average of the respondents affirmed their interests were enhanced by the appropriate stakeholders as prescribed by some national and international legislations. This is a hindrance to the involvement and participatory conformability of the disabled given that the availability of a level playing-ground for all and sundry is equally a determination of full participation in politics for all.

To proceed, the state of Cameroon is endowed with many laws on the protection of the rights of PWDs coupled with numerous international conventions and charters it has ratified and signed for the welfare of the disabled. Their awareness by the purported beneficiaries already adds more impetus to the readiness and eagerness of the PWDs to regularly improve
on their plights. An urge by the government will go a long way to sensitize policy-makers and implementers to engulf the interests of all; this proceeded by reasonable appointments to every qualified national irrespective of class, status, religion and age.

Another implication on political participation and public life is that the government has to a very great extent not been able to put in place avenues and institutions for the implementation of the politico-economic interests of PWDs despite the fact that many of them are very qualified and are ready for the job market. It is also noticed that the few who are employed are effective and efficient; hence to serve as a yardstick to potential employers who should learn to get apt taste in the pudding; a cordiality in the relationship between PWDs and their colleagues. As to the existing rules to this effect which have been seldom practiced, hierarchy should reinforce them, augment more and motivate implementations to always follow righteousness towards disability and participation in public life gains.

Finally, one salient implication is the inevitability of DPOs to defend the socio-politico-economic discrimination befalling PWDs in the course of political participation and public life. This emanates from an outcome of the liberalization of clubs and associations in the country. For the moment, these organizations in which most PWDs are part need to be promoted, encouraged and empowered to be more proactive.

**Conclusion**

This study which is said to be an awareness creating, political advocacy and appraisal between PWDs and other political stakeholders in Cameroon has successfully evaluated the level of political participation by the former.

This study in relative terms has been able to establish the facilitation and considerations to be accorded PWDs before and during every voting process as postulated by the UNCRPDs vis-a-vis their divergent struggling efforts in Cameroon. It has also ascertain the availability of policies, laws, conventions and their non-implementation; in addition to the knowledgeability of PWDs to all these legal issues pertaining to them, not leaving out their exclusion in vital political assignments of the state. Again, the study has shown that the state has not been able to put adequate avenues and institutions to ensure the politico-economic interests of PWDs; whereas the presence of multiple DPOs facilitated by government laws are fighting hard in abating the political discrimination hampering the progress of PWDs.

From the findings of the investigations one has come to the knowledge that some political actors at least do something for the involvement of PWDs although much still needs to be done. Selectively amongst the disabled categories the VI and PI attested to some electoral preferences before and during voting, most probably because of the visible nature of their disabilities. This commendable action is not documented but left optionally at the mercy of any presiding official. Though not fully implemented, it is definitely clear that either via free will or influence, government has adopted, ratified and signed many a legislation for the promotion of disability-related issues. The findings too corroborated that some PWDs are living and working for the state and its partners; meanwhile the legalization of clubs and association eventually leading to the up-shoot of DPOs has done good to the PWDs than harm.

To crown it all, it is said that perfection eludes every human. Consequently, the political stakeholders are not expected to be perfect in the involvement and accommodation of PWDs in to state politics and public life, but there are substantive measures which if taken by these political stakeholders, will earn them the credibility of having performed excellently in the rehabilitation process. It is on these bases that all the political actors in collaboration with PWDs have to adopt more proactive measures in addressing challenges tilting towards the socio-politico-cultural involvement of the latter. After all, political systems are continually becoming part of the global village and so African political institutions cannot afford to sit on
the fence especially when it concerns the participation of PWDs into the mainstream political setting.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations if taken into consideration by the authorities concern (the government, ELECAM, various political parties, civil societies, NGOs and IGOs) will go a long way in addressing some of the challenges hampering the effective participation of PWDs in the politics and public life of Cameroon.

- Elections body(s), political parties and other stakeholders should ensure that there is convivial and a favourable environment so as to ensure the effective participation of PWDs in the political processes of the state such as in accessible registration, voting, nomination and candidature presentation. Meaning all the categories of PWDs without any prejudice and discrimination as a matter of obligation should be rehabilitated in to these processes via adequate sensitization, awareness creating and flexible adaptations. For instance, preferential treatment accorded PWDs before and during the electoral processes and the availability of electoral materials in compatible modes such as braille and sign language for the VI and HI/SI respectively. Particularly, TV news bars should exceptionally and routinely carry information for the easy readability of the hearing/speech impaired.

- Need for more workshops and frequent conferences to be organised by ELECAM, political parties and stakeholders on disability issues pertaining to political participation where their staff and members will be educated on how to include these special voters and aspirants. At this time, qualified and learned PWDs having a lot of expertise may possibly be invited to give life experiences or lectures on how their folks could be better handled by every participant in elections. Thus, making all and sundry to be on familiar terms with the fact that giving PWDs priority is a right and not a favour as has always been the viewpoints amongst most political stakeholders.

- There is the necessity by the government of Cameroon to motivate and oblige the electoral body, political parties, law makers, employers and DPOs to perpetually take PWDs in to consideration. This to be commenced through the enforcement of the already existing laws put in place to monitor their plights. More laws or policies need to be revised or enacted in order to accommodate their socioeconomic and political interests; without which, severe sanctions should be mated out on all those who deliberately flout any obligation to bring melancholy on PWDs. By so doing, it will combat the syndrome of endorsing very good laws without their protection; leaving room for defaulters to often go scorn free.

- More so, the government of Cameroon needs to irrevocably encourage and foster the traits of preferential treatment embedded in the state laws on the protection of the rights of PWDs. Just like with the recent case where political parties are compelled to incorporate women in to primordial party posts, the disabled core as well could be set a similar stand, mindful of the fact that their disabling conditions already place them in to positions of prejudice and discrimination despite the fact that they can function better to the ignorance of many. A similar move can be effectuated with job opportunities. Besides all, DPOs should be applauded and encouraged to continue with the fame they have been creating on behalf of PWDs.

- Furthermore, the government of Cameroon needs to encourage and facilitate exchange visits between her sociopolitical structures and those of external countries in order to import novel practices obtained elsewhere. In this domain, officials who leave Cameroon to observe how elections are unfolding abroad, monitor foreign local governments,
parliaments and senates function, experience the employment opportunities given PWDs in these respective nations will definitely learn from some of their inclusive practices. Upon returning home they will either implement likewise or seek laudable propositions to the state on how to better ameliorate on the state of affairs of the PWDs.

- It is also important that the UN, alongside other international organizations to which Cameroon are signatories should engage in the constant monitoring of the exercise of including PWDs in politics and public life. This is to either help provide habitual support where necessary or to check the excesses that might arise in the course of political malingering.

When all these are done, coupled with prudent management machinery, it will greatly helped in addressing the present inadequacies and limitations in the political process. Every operating system has problems confronting it. The difference is seen on how each institution handles it challenges to ensure continuity and effectiveness. Consequently, the effective inclusion of PWDs in to the politics and public life of Cameroon depends on the stakeholders’ willingness to effectively manage the process to its end, and their commitment to the effective and continuous functioning of the socioeconomic and political system.

**Suggestions for Further Studies**

Base on the implications of the findings in the study, the following suggestions can be researchably explored in future by other researchers or this researcher himself.

1. An assessment of the effectiveness of Disabled People's Organizations in their fight against the politico-economic and social discrimination of PWDs in the Cameroon polity.
2. A comparative analysis of the diverse views of the different classes of persons with disabilities towards the political participation in the polity of Cameroon.
3. An assessment of the attitudes of persons with disabilities towards the taxation policy of the state of Cameroon.
4. An appraisal of the effectiveness of Cameroon's rehabilitation centres in the sociopolitical lives of persons with disabilities.
6. The levels of preparedness and contributions of persons with disabilities in the political evolution of Cameroon at the dawn of multiparty politics.
7. Ex-raying the awareness and deportment of electoral and party officers of Cameroon on the empowerment of people with disabilities in the political participation and public life of Cameroon.
8. Political exploitation and exclusion of persons with disabilities in Cameroon: Wherein lies the consciences of politicians? The way forward!
9. This same study could also be carried out in another municipality in Cameroon and Africa to find out the differences or whether the same situation prevails there.
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Republic of Cameroon Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April relating to the Electoral Code; Yaounde.


APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: SOME FUNDAMENTAL INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATIONS ON PWDS' PARTIAL OR FULL PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND PUBLIC LIFE

• The 21 October 1986 African (BANJUL) Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
• The Cameroon Constitution of 1996
• The United Nations 2007 Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPDs)
• The 2010 National Disability Laws on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

1 The 21 October 1986 African (BANJUL) Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

The African Charter on human rights, a powerful and humanitarian arm of the AU currently has as its seat Banjul which is the political capital of the-Gambia. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted 27 June 1981, OAU Doc. CAB/LEG/67/3 rev. 5, 21 I.L.M. 58 (1982), entered into force on 21st October 1986. This Banjul Charter from time immemorial under the auspices of the OAU onto the AU has as obligation to protect and safeguard the interests of member states and individuals. These are embedded under certain rights and duties obligatory and mutually exclusive for states and individuals to strictly trail. The articles implicated with this study engulf articles 13, 19, and 28 as observed subsequently:

Article 13
1. Every citizen shall have the right to participate freely in the government of his country, either directly or through freely chosen representatives in accordance with the provisions of the law.
2. Every citizen shall have the right of equal access to the public service of his country.

Article 19
All peoples shall be equal; they shall enjoy the same respect and shall have the same rights. Nothing shall justify the domination of a people by another.

Article 28
Every individual shall have the duty to respect and consider his fellow beings without discrimination, and to maintain relations aimed at promoting, safeguarding and reinforcing mutual respect and tolerance.

2 The UN Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006

Guernsey et al., (2007) posit that the CRPD consists of 50 articles addressing the full array of civil and political, economic, social, and cultural rights. The Convention does not seek to create new rights for disabled persons, but rather elaborates and clarifies existing obligations for countries within the disability context. It establishes a committee of experts to monitor its implementation at the international level, and it also provides for the operation of independent national level monitoring mechanisms. The CRPD is also joined by an Optional Protocol that recognizes “the competence of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals subject to its jurisdiction who claim to be victims of a violation by that State Party of the provisions of the Convention. The CRPD is therefore comprehensive not only in terms of its substantive content, but also in the manner in which monitoring and implementation at all levels is addressed.

According to the UN (2006), the convention on the rights of persons with Disabilities (CEPDs) was adopted at the UN Headquarters in New York on 13th December 2003 and was open to the public for signature on the 30th March 2006. Being the first comprehensive human right treaty of the 21st century, the convention is aimed at promoting, protecting and ensuring
the full inclusion and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. The convention is an international legally binding document that entered into force on the 3rd May 2008, (UN, 2009). Issues on political participation and public life amidst other salient social issues in the convention especially those concern with this study are discussed in Articles 5, 21, 27 and 29 as seen below:

**Article 5: Equality and non-discrimination**

1. States Parties recognize that all persons are equal before and under the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law.
2. States Parties shall prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantee to persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds.
3. In order to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, States Parties shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided.

**Article 21: Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice, as defined in article 2 of the present Convention, including by:

(a) Providing information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost;
(b) Accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions;
(c) Urging private entities that provide services to the general public, including through the Internet, to provide information and services in accessible and usable formats for persons with disabilities;
(d) Encouraging the mass media, including providers of information through the Internet, to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities;
(e) Recognizing and promoting the use of sign languages.

**Article 27: Work and employment**

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia:

(a) Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;
(b) Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment, and the redress of grievances;
(c) Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;
(d) Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programs, placement services and vocational and continuing training;
(e) Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;
(f) Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one’s own business;
(g) Employ persons with disabilities in the public sector;
(h) Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programs, incentives and other measures;
(i) Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;
(j) Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market;
(k) Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programs for persons with disabilities.
2. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.

Article 29: Participation in political and public life
States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others, and shall undertake to:
(a) Ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and be elected, inter alia, by:
(i) Ensuring that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;
(ii) Protecting the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate;
(iii) Guaranteeing the free expression of the will of persons with disabilities as electors and to this end, where necessary, at their request, allowing assistance in voting by a person of their own choice;
(b) Promote actively an environment in which persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in the conduct of public affairs, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, and encourage their participation in public affairs, including:
(i) Participation in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country, and in the activities and administration of political parties;
(ii) Forming and joining organizations of persons with disabilities to represent persons with disabilities at international, national, regional and local levels.
3 Law No. 2010/002 of 13 April 2010 on the Protection and Welfare of PWDs
Law No. 2010/002 of 13 April 2010 Relating to the Protection and Welfare of Persons with Disabilities is the latest and collective laws set aside by the state of Cameroon and spearheaded by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS) to safeguard the interests of PWDs in multi-faceted domains--be it political, social, or economic. The National Assembly
deliberated and adopted this law, wherein the President of the Republic hereby enacted the law set out.

Below are sections 5, 27, 33, 38, 45, and 46 of the 2010 novel law that are concerned and/or related to this study on political participation and public life of PWDs.

SECTION 5
(1) The prevention of disabilities, and the psychological, social and economic rehabilitation and integration of persons with disabilities shall be an obligation of national solidarity.
(2) The State, families, physical or corporate persons shall pool their efforts to put into effect the obligation referred to in paragraph (1) above.
(3) The parties referred to in Section 5 (2) above shall provide persons with disabilities access to institution and public structures and ensure their integration and upkeep in a normal working and living environment.

SECTION 27
(1) Integration, shall concern any social or economic measure that guarantees the full participation of persons with disabilities, in social life.
(2) The State shall encourage the presence of persons with disabilities in various bodies of social and political life.
(3) The socio-economic integration of persons with Disabilities shall comprise:
- Access to education and vocational training;
- Access to information and participation in cultural activities;
- Access to infrastructure, housing and transport;
- Participation in sports and leisure activities;
- Access to employment.

SECTION 33
(1) Government and private buildings and institutions open to the public shall be designed such as to facilitate access and use by persons with disabilities.
(2) When carrying out renovation or major transformation works on buildings, existing government or private buildings and facilities open to the public shall be refurbished such as to facilitate access and use by persons with disabilities.
(3) The authorization to build or use a house shall be subject to complying with the provisions of sub sections (1) and (2) above.
(4) The construction of passages shall take into consideration facilities reserved for persons with disabilities.

SECTION 38
(1) Persons with disabilities with a vocational training or general education shall be entitled to preferential treatment, in particular through an age waiver during recruitment into government or private jobs when competing with non-handicapped persons, where the position is compatible with their condition.
(2) With equal qualifications, priority in recruitment shall be given to persons with disabilities. However, they may only be subjected to tests that are compatible with their conditions.
(3) Under no circumstance, whatever, shall a disability be a reason for rejecting their application or discriminating against them.

SECTION 45
Officials of schools, vocational and university institutions employers or corporate managers guilty of discriminating in the admission, recruitment or pay of persons with disabilities shall be punished with imprisonment for from 3 (three) to 6 (six) months and fine from 100.000 (one hundred thousand) to 1.000.000 (one million) CFA Francs.

SECTION 46
Whoever refuses to provide a service due to a person with disability in accordance with this law and its enabling instruments shall be punished with the penalties set forth in section 242 of the Penal Code.
APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

STEP 1 – Introductions, Background Information, Consent & Collection of Personal Data:
(a) Introduction of monitors:
(b) Review of Thesis Information Sheet and Free & Informed Consent Form:

[Proceed with questioning ONLY if consent is given.]
(c) Collection of personal/demographic information:

- Interview Code ___________________
- Sex ___________________
- Age Range [check one]
  20-30, 31-45, 46-60, 61 and older
- Type of Disability [mark as apply]
  - physical (mobility, amputee, ETC.)
  - sensory – if so, blind, deaf
  - other ___________________
    (specify)

STEP 2 – Asking Prompting Questions on Voting:
1 (I) Have you ever registered for any elections in this country?
   - yes,
   - no
   (II) If yes, why?
   A. to fulfil my civic duty
   B. to impress a certain political party leader
   C. because the voting conditions were favourable
   D. others (specify) ___________________

   (III) If no, why not?
   A. I had not yet attained the voting age
   B. the voting conditions were unfavourable
   C. the polling stations and materials were inaccessible
   D. others (specify) ___________________

   (IV) While cuing up for registration, did you receive any preferential treatment as a PWD?
   - Yes,
   - No

2 (I) Are you registered for the upcoming elections?
   - Yes,
   - No
   (II) If yes, why?
   A. I am ready to perform my civic duty
   B. the polling agents came to my neighbourhood
   C. I am adequately sensitized
   D. others (specify) ___________________

   (III) If no, why?
   A. The registration centre is far off
3 (I) Are the electoral materials such as the ballot papers and voting boxes available in accessible modes compatible to you as a PWD?
   - yes,
   - no

(II) If yes, how?
   A. the ballot papers have tactile marks which enable the VI to easily identify their candidates
   B. the ballot boxes are low enough to enable wheelchair users cast their vote easily
   C. the ballot boxes are placed in locations accessible to PWDs
   D. others (specify) ____________________

(III) If no, why not?
   A. There is a lack of will on the part of the electoral officials
   B. there is ignorance on the part of the electoral officials
   C. there is the lack of means to make those provisions for the PWDs
   D. others (specify) ____________________

4 (I) If the materials are not accessible, who usually assists you and the other PWDs in the voting process without prejudicing you?
   A. my friend[s],
   B. electoral officer,
   C. a relative
   D. others [specify] ____________________

(II) Do you like being assisted by someone during the voting process?
   - Yes,
   - No

5 (I) If to be assisted during voting, who would you prefer?
   A. a friend,
   B. an electoral officer,
   C. a relative
   D. none of the above
(II) If none of the above, which means is most preferable according to you?
   A. Ballot boxes should be placed in locations accessible to all PWDs and others
   B. Ballot papers should bear special marks/writings as to guide the PWDs and others
   C. Most electoral officials should be trained with the basic arts of sign language
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

6 (I) Are the polling stations in your area indiscriminately accessible to you and other PWDs?
   - Yes,
   - No

(II) If no, which categories of PWDs are most affected?
   A. The orthopedically impaired
   B. The visually impaired
   C. The speech and/or hearing impaired
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

7 (I) Do the elections’ officials give you any preferential treatment during the voting process?
   - Yes,
   - No

(II) If yes, why do you think that he or she treats you in that particular manner?
   A. they comply with the rules of the electoral body
   B. they just sympathize with me as a PWD
   C. they are afraid of a threat from me as a PWD
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

(III) If no, why do you think he/she treats you in that particular manner?
   A. they have no mastery of the electoral rules
   B. they are merely wicked to the PWD
   C. they have a score to settle with the PWD
   D. others (specify) ___________________

8 (I) Do you think it is necessary for you and other PWDs to vote?
   - Yes,
   - No

(II) If yes, why?
   A. To perform my civic duty as a citizen
   B. To choose my own desired leader
   C. To sanction a bad leader
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

(III) If no, why not?
   A. The voting materials are not in compatible modes to PWDs
   B. PWDs are only contacted when their votes are needed
   C. Polling stations are inaccessible to PWDs
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

9 (I) Do PWDs in your jurisdiction without any prejudices engage in partisan politics and are voted in to the party posts and local governments?
- Yes,
- No

(II) If yes, who encourages their partisan engagements?
   A. The leaders and militants of the various political parties
   B. The constitutions of the various political parties
   C. The PWDs themselves
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

(III) If no, who hampers their partisan engagements?
   A. The leaders and militants of the various political parties
   B. The constitutions of the various political parties
   C. The PWDs themselves
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

STEP 3 – Asking prompting Questions on State Policies:

10 (I) Are PWDs deliberately excluded when formulating the general political decisions of this country?
   - Yes,
   - No

(II) If yes, give reason for your answer
   A. There are no PWDs as representatives in the national decision-making bodies
   B. Most state policies do not favour PWDs
   C. People who know very little or nothing about PWDs talk on their behalf
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

(III) If no, give reason for your answer
   A. There are PWDs as representatives in the national decision-making bodies
   B. Most state policies favour the PWDs
   C. All those who talk on behalf of PWDs know very much about them
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

11 (I) Do PWDs also constitute the major decision-making bodies [parliament] of the state?
   - Yes,
   - No

(II) If yes, give reason for your answer
   A. There is an allocation of special seats for PWDs in the National Assembly
   B. There are a good number of PWDs in the National Assembly
   C. Political parties are compelled to have at least a PWD as an MP
   D. All of the above.

(III) If no, give reason for your answer
   A. There are no special seats for PWDs in the National Assembly
   B. There is no PWD in the National Assembly
   C. Political parties are not compelled to have at least a PWD as an MP
   D. All of the above

(IV) If no, what can be done to implicate the PWDs in to the decision-making bodies?
   A. There should be an allocation of special seats for PWDs in the National Assembly
   B. Political parties should be compelled to have at least a PWD as an MP
C. PWDs should be empowered in healthy competition with others
D. Others (specify) ___________________

12 (I) Do you like the distinct national laws on the protection of the rights of PWDs?
- Yes,
- No

(II) Are these laws implemented to the interest and favour of the majority of the PWDs?
- Yes,
- No

(III) Give a brief appraisal of these laws according to you.
   A. The laws are quite good but rarely ever implemented to their fullest
   B. The laws are not protected so defaulters often go unpunished
   C. The laws are implemented to the satisfaction of every beneficiary
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

13 (I) Are you aware whether Cameroon has signed the UNCRPDs?
- Yes,
- No

(II) If yes, are the provisions on political aspects of these UNCRPDs properly respected in Cameroon?
- Yes
- No

(III) If no, how can their implementation be well effectuated?
   A. The UN should send teams to police the government
   B. Everything should be left to the consciences of government officials
   C. PWDs should go to the streets whenever they feel cheated
   D. Others (specify) ___________________

STEP 4 – Asking Questions on Employment Issues:
14 (I) Does the recruitment policy of the state favour the deserved and qualified PWDs?
- Yes,
- No
(II) If yes, give a reason for your answer
A. All educated PWDs are given jobs by the government
B. Corporations that do not employ PWDs often pay the required rates
C. In recruitment PWDs are given the preference without any prejudice
D. Others (specify) __________________

(III) If no, give a reason for your answer
A. PWDs are often prejudiced during massive recruitments
B. Most of the educated PWDs are unemployed
C. The employed PWDs are given very little or no preferences in workplaces
D. Others (specify) __________________
E. 15 (I) Do you know any employed PWDs in Cameroon?
   - Yes,
   - No

   (II) Are they performant in their work-places?
   - Yes,
   - No

16 (I) Do most potential employers exercise discrimination in recruiting and treating PWDs?
   - Yes,
   - No

(II) If yes, what reason accounts for that?
A. They are ignorant about the potentials of PWDs
B. They know they can evade the law and go free
C. They are just irrational in their ways of doing things
D. Others (specify) __________________

(III) If no, what reason accounts for that?
A. They are aware of the potentials of most PWDs
B. They are ready to respect the laws and conventions protecting PWDs
C. They believe in ability in disability
D. Others (specify) __________________

17 (I) Do the employed PWDs share a cordial relationship with their employers, colleagues and clients?
   - Yes,
   - No

(II) Amongst the PWDs, their employers, colleagues and clients, who disregards the other most?
A. Employers, colleagues and clients disregard the PWDs most
B. PWDs disregard their employers, colleagues and clients most
C. All of them are usually at loggerheads with each other
D. Others (specify) __________________

STEP 5 – Asking Questions on Clubs and Associations:
18 (I) Do you know any associations of, and for PWDs in and around your jurisdiction?
   - Yes,
   - No

(II) If yes, how objective and effective are they to the purported beneficiaries?
A. The serve as advocacy agents to PWDs
B. They rally PWDs to work in harmony
C. They train PWDs in gainful crafts and arts
D. Others (specify) ________________

19 (I) Do you belong to any association, organization, and/or club of PWDs?
   - Yes,
   - No
(II) In case you do belong, how do you interact amongst yourselves and treat each other?
   A. We struggle and conflict amongst ourselves
   B. We share and exchange ideas for the common good of all
   C. We serve as each other’s keeper
   D. Others (specify) ________________

20 (I) Are you a member of any inclusive association, organization, and/or club?
   - Yes,
   - No
(II) If yes, how do you intermingle and treat each other?
   A. We see each other as normal and integral members of society
   B. We often disagree and one party claims superiority over the other
   C. We collaborate for the common good of all
   D. Others (specify)

STEP 6 – Interview Conclusion:

[Do you have anything else you would like to add?]

________________________

[Do you have any questions for me?]

________________________

Thank you very immensely to have accepted taking part in this academic exercise.

(End of interview)
APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE ON CONFRONTATIONS AND CHALLENGES PWDS UNDERGO IN THEIR PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE POLITICS AND PUBLIC LIFE OF CAMEROON

1. To what extent do PWDs like you have the level playing-ground to participate in the political processes of Cameroon such as in registering, voting and candidature presentation?

2. Are PWDs represented in the decision-making structures of the state, besides laws and conventions that favour their welfare?

3. To what extent are PWDs involved in the working life, adjacent to their varied contributions to the state?

4. Do clubs and associations safeguard the interests and implicate PWDs in to public life against all political discrimination?
APPENDIX IV: FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I have read and understood the preceding pages of this Information Sheet and Free and Informed Consent form. The research procedures mentioned above have been explained to me and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have been informed that I can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and that, if I choose to do so, any data collected as a result of my participation will be destroyed. The potential discomforts that I might experience because I have participated in the study have been explained to me. I also understand the potential benefits of being a part of this study.

I know that I may ask now, or at any time in the future, any questions I have about the study. I have been assured that the recordings, scripts, and tapes related to this study will be kept confidential to the limits of the research laws. I have also been assured that no information will be released or printed or made public that would disclose my personal identity unless I give permission for that to happen.

I hereby consent to participate
Printed Name of Participant: …........................................................................

Interview Code:...........
Date:....................
Signature of Participant………………………………………………………

I hereby consent to having my interview recorded
Signature of Participant........................................ Date:.......................
Dear Respondent,

Letter of Introduction

I am Ngong Peter Tonain, a Master of Science Student with a visual impairment in Developmental Anthropology at the University of Buea. I am here for a research on the topic: An Appraisal of People with Disabilities’ Participation in the Political Life of Cameroon. My humble wish is that you assist me respond to these questions with all sincerity, objectivity and fairness, as to what you think is the situation at your area in relation to the topic under investigation. I assure you that your responses will be used strictly for this study.

Thank you very much for your kind understanding.

This subsequent information is provided so that you can make a decision about whether or not you want to participate in this study. I am giving you a lot of information because I want you to be able to make the decision that is best for you.

Sponsor:
The study is exclusively my personal initiative and thus is yet void of an official sponsor. That notwithstanding, it is corroborated by the supervisory expertise of DR. Akoko Robert.

Why am I doing this study?
I am collecting information about the lives and the Cameroonian politico-cultural experiences of people living with disabilities by talking directly to persons with disabilities. I want to see if their political rights are being respected or discriminated upon. The information I am collecting will be studied and reports will be written.

The names of participants will not be mentioned in the reports unless they have given me clear permission to do so.

The reports will be available to the University of Buea, Elections Cameroon (ELECAM), organizations of people with disabilities, other groups working to improve the lives of people with disabilities, the media and governments.

The reports will be used to:

• Let people know about violations of the political rights of people with disabilities
• provide facts to back up arguments for changes in laws, policies, and programs to improve the political lives of people with disabilities
• keep track of the steps that the government and other elections bodies have taken or has failed to take in order to fulfil the promises it has made to people with disabilities when it signed agreements at the United Nations saying that it would protect, promote and fulfil the rights of people with disabilities (Article 29 of UNCRPD).

If you agree to participate, you will be asked a series of questions about your life and your experiences. I will particularly want to know if your political rights have been violated and how they have been violated. In other words, I will want to know if there are unfair things that have happened to you which have stopped you from participating in society in the way that people without disabilities participate in society and vice versa.

If you agree to participate, you will either be interviewed by me or one/more friends of people with disabilities who are students of the University of Buea and have a deep passion for people with disabilities. These students are called “monitors or research assistants”.

During the interview, the monitor(s) will take notes. If you give them permission to do so, they will also tape or digitally record the interview so that I can be sure to get all of the information
you provide accurately. Depending on the methods of communication that are used, the complete interview should take approximately 1 to 2 hours to complete.

After the interview, the monitor(s) will give all of their notes and the tape/digital recordings to me, who is in charge of the academic exercise. The monitor(s) will not keep any copies and will not talk to anyone except to me, the principal investigator about what you said. The interview will be confidential.

I will safeguard the notes and recordings of your interview and study them. Your name will not be on any of the information given. Moreover, I will not know whose information I am studying.

After looking at your information and the information from the interviews with my supervisor(s), I will write a reportor thesis that will be given to the University of Buea, ELECAM, organizations of people with disabilities, other groups working to improve the political lives of people with disabilities, the media and governments. Your name will not be mentioned in the reports without your clear permission.

Are there possible negative things that might happen if you participate in the study?

There are no negative things that will happen to you by participating in this study. However, you may feel uncomfortable when you start thinking about some of the questions that you are asked. For example, you may remember some things that have happened to you that are not pleasant to think about. If that happens, you can take a break from the interview or, if you want, you can stop the interview completely.

If you want to continue to talk about these things, that’s fine, too. If you feel upset about these things, you can ask the monitor(s) for me if I am not available at the moment and discuss with me about your feelings after the interview is over.

Are there good things that might happen if you participate in this study?

You may or may not receive any direct benefit from participation. You might find that it makes you feel better to talk about some of your experiences. Also, we hope that The University of Buea, ELECAM, organizations of people with disabilities, the media and governments learn from the studies and reports that are made and take steps to improve the politico-cultural lives of people with disabilities in our country Cameroon.

Moreover, as prescribed by our African ethical solidarity, I will not hesitate to share anything (kolanut) with you if I have.

Can you decide if you want to participate in the study?

You are free to choose to participate or not to participate in the study and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your participation is completely voluntary. Your decision not to participate in the study will not influence your ongoing relationship with either myself the main researcher, the monitors, my supervisor or the University of Buea associated with the research.

Will your information be kept confidential?

The information you provide will be kept confidential within the limits of the research laws. Unless you specifically provide your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. The notes and recordings of your interview will be safely stored in a place that is locked and will be destroyed at the end of the thesis presentation. You should know that there are certain types of information that I would be required by the laws of our country to tell the authorities about if you mention them in the interview.

Do you have questions concerning the study?

If you have questions about the research in general or about your own role in the study, please feel free to contact:

Ngong Peter Tonain, Research Investigator
by regular mail: University of Buea, P.O. Box 63 Buea
By phone: 77362657 or 33609916
by email: tonpeterain@yahoo.com

OR

DR. Akoko, Main Research Supervisor
By regular mail: The H.O.D Sociology & Anthropology
Faculty of SMS, University of Buea, P.O. Box 63.
SUMMARY OF THESIS

This study aimed at investigating the extent to which People With Disabilities (PWDs) participate in the democratization process of Cameroon, for instance, in registration/voting, policy formulation/implementation and employment of the PWDs. Four research questions and hypotheses guided the study.

Empirical literature was reviewed under the concept of political participation, making the physical environment accessible for political participation, varied experiences of PWDs, voting methods relating to PWDs and the barriers faced by PWDs. Theories that guided this study were the theories of discrimination, the theory of social exclusion and the functionalist theory.

Research design adopted was exploratory and survey designs; the sample for the study constituted 40 disabled persons in three major categories--those with visual, hearing/speech and physical impairments. They were drawn from the existing disabled people’s organizations, rehabilitation centers, schools, and churches. Both the working and non-working classes were considered in the study. The instruments for Data collection were an interview guide, an information sheet, and a free and informed consent form. Data was analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics and presented in tabular forms using descriptive explanations.

After analyzing the data the subsequent results and conclusions were reached at. Research question one established that the facilitation and consideration of the interests of PWDs in the electoral processes by the state is relative. This is because just 19 PWDs accepted that their interests were considered. 16 disagreed while five remained undecided. It thus confirmed the null hypothesis one of a no significant positive relationship. Research question two ascertained that PWDs were aware of existing laws protecting their welfare but were to a great extent not consulted during their formulation. This is substantiated by the 21 ‘yes’ responses confirming exclusion as against 12 affirmative while 7 could not decide. The finding also confirmed the null hypothesis two of a no significant positive relationship. Research question three found out that the Cameroon government to a very great extent has not been able to put in place avenues for the politico economic participation of PWDs. This is explained largely by 26 respondents who
agreed to no special avenues; contrasting thirteen agreeing whereas one was ignorant. This finding then confirmed the null hypothesis three of no significant positive relationship. Concerning research question four, it detected that DPOs are to a greater extent, available to fight against the political and socioeconomic discrimination of PWDs. This is supported by the overwhelming 34 PWDs who agreed to the availability of DPOs unlike four disagreeing with two undecided. From the findings the null hypothesis four was thus rejected.

Based on the findings, the main recommendation of the study was the need for all political stakeholders to fully implement those internationally signed conventions pertaining to the improvement of conditions of the PWDs and the lofty Cameroon national disability laws which is hardly implemented or enforced.