Chapter 8.25

Women’s Access to ICT in an Urban Area of Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the rapid and revolutionized development of communication and media around the world in the last few decades, which culminated in the term information communication technology (ICT), most of the developing countries are yet to clearly understand its significance or maximize the use of various forms of ICTs, because of other pressing issues such as access roads, potable drinking water supply, electricity and health facilities. This has greatly caused a wide gap between and within countries in the areas of social, economic, political, health and educational developments.

ICTs encompass all the technologies that facilitate the processing, transfer and exchange of information and communication services. Various forms of ICTs exist, such as radio, television, newspaper, telephone, magazine, billboard, Internet, electronic and print media, and so forth.

In the past few decades, there has been a significant increase in knowledge of the importance and developmental trends of ICTs worldwide. ICTs are very important in analyzing one’s existing/potential audience using the most cost-effective way to communicate; evaluating the quality of messages; and making provision for information feedback. ICTs bring about various opportunities, ranging from employment and education to economic, health, social and environmental development.

As a result of the digital divide between and within countries, there are uneven disparities between the economic, social, educational and political status of the international community. This brings about classification of countries into “developed and developing” or “have and have nots.”

Gender disparity has served as a strong barrier to women’s use of ICTs, considering the fact that women in most developing countries are