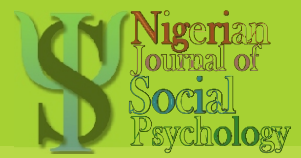


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## Conscious Inclusion of Women in Informal Policing: Pathway to Eliminating Gender Disparity in Southeast, Nigeria.

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### Abstract

*The notion that women are fragile, weak and incapable of handling certain situation outside of domestic chores seems to have dominated the mindset of not only the men folk but women as well. The philosophy behind the introduction of informal policing is that security should be the business of everyone irrespective of gender. However, women seem not be actively involved in the informal police in Nigeria. The earlier held notion of women being weaker vessel seems to underscore the reason for total exclusion of women in the security outfit in spite of their population strength. The study therefore investigated the exclusion of women in the information policing and its implication on women in Southeast, Nigeria. The study adopted mixed research method. The population of the study was 3296735 women, out of which, 400 women were selected as the sample size. Multistage sampling procedure was adopted for the study. Questionnaire and in-depth interview were the instruments for data collection. It was found that women believe that they are of no value to the informal policing. One of the findings of the study was that women see their involvement in informal policing system as inappropriate because of their strong attachment to domestic chores. Again, It was also found that the men capitalize on weakness of women and demand for gratifications; including sex before justice could be obtained. It was recommended that there should no gender disparity in the membership of the vigilante group in South-East, Nigeria. More so, people to discard their mindset about security being an exclusive reserve of the men.*

**Keywords:** gender equality, policing, security, vigilante & women

### Introduction

The philosophy which informed the introduction of informal policing system suggests that it should be an all inclusive group without regard to gender. It is pertinent to note that throughout literature on Nigeria vigilantism, the duty appears an exclusive reserve of the male adult population. Akinyele (2005) observed that vigilante in Nigeria comprise of adult male resident of a street who patrol the street for a few hours of the night whenever there is danger alert from armed robbers or when they perceive their street might be the next target.

Vigilante group are regarded as the police of the community, working in liaison with the Nigeria Police Force. Implicit to their role is that the group ensures that in time of internal squabble, they act as go-between in order to maintain peace and order in the community. However, there are situation where issues that have direct concern with women, for example issues involving rape, sexual assault and domestic violence will come up, as it were, members of the vigilante group are expected to investigate the case especially when it threatens the peace and unity of the community. Under such circumstances, the female members of the society who are directly or indirectly involved in the case will be exposed to sexual violence and other abuses particularly on those who may not have the financial strength to formally litigate the

matter. It may not be out of context to state that several related cases have been swept under the carpet in many communities.

Woolsey (2019) stressed that preliminary results showed that subjects particularly the women who report incidents of sexual harassment may be subjected to variety of retaliatory behaviours specifically aimed at deterring them from reporting unacceptable behaviours including sexual molestation. The retaliatory conduct is exhibited in form of shunning isolating and ostracizing the victim failing to provide backup on critical situations reneging from to communicate or co-operate with the victim. This type of behaviour is prevalent in the process of delaying or preventing victim from reporting and that end reinforces the code of silence.

Scholars, particularly in social sciences have argued that because women are not exposed to strong economic activities which may have lured them into financial crimes, it may not be important to regard them as force in crime and criminality in the society. However, Ozo-Eson (2008) observed that in Nigeria, women are moving into economic crimes like armed robbery drug trafficking and other property offences as a means of making fast money. Igbo (2008) chronicled the trend of female criminality in three epochs; pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. The author maintained that within the pre-colonial period incidences of crime were quite low. Crimes like stealing infanticide, witchcraft were committed by women but to a very low level. This was attributed to the communal level of the Nigeria economy and the high level of social bond that existed therein. The next stage was the colonial period. The period reduced virtually everything into cash nexus. It was a period characterized by wage employment and the acquisition of private property. Some women were apparently liberated in order to look for wage employment. This ultimately exposed the women to opportunities to committing crimes particularly financial crime so as to meet up with the societal demands both at the family level or otherwise. The third is the post-colonial period. This was the period multinationals employed bribery and corruption as tools to divert the nation's wealth into their private pockets. Acquisition of political power becomes a road map for wealth acquisition. Thus, the state became the principal source of finance and contracts. Some individuals, including women who were sidelined, short-charged or marginalized in the process of sharing the national wealth took to crime as a way to make up and survive.

Again, there is the politics of "weaker sex". This is a seeming general held notion that women are weak and incapable of being involved in issues relating serious crime and security. As noted by Azikiwe (2008) that the prevailing worldview is that the world we live in is a man's world. Men formulate culture and tradition which guide people's lives in any society. Gimott (1965) re-affirmed this disposition when he noted that in occupation, there appears gender disparity; masculine or feminine. The boy—child gets the socialization message that a man's destiny is to live traces in time and destiny. To this end, men assume an assertive disposition, diligent and capable of holding situation of women; meek, accommodating respectful and home groomed. However, such disposition has been found to be inconsistent with real life situation Women have been found in occupations that have to do with the application of physical strength. Women are found in sporting activities like wrestling, football, and gymnastics among others. Indeed, the pains women pass through in the process of reproduction; from conception to delivery in addition to their socially assumed role of housewives and mothers need no further explanation that women are quite strong.

The exclusion of women as members of informal policing seems not to be uncounted with the patriarchal system which tends to suppress the women and superimpose negative socially created men superiority ideas on them. It seems to suggest that such exclusion has

no other agenda order than making women always believe that the men are superior as they could move out in the night and come back the next morning unhurt. Adinde (2012) quoting Marenin (2008) observed that composition of security personnel remains largely male particularly the police force in Nigeria and perhaps other climes. The situation seems critical when one considers the composition of members of informal policing where women are completely lacking in the process. Geneva Center for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) (2017) noted that the women working within the security section of institutions face challenges and obstacles in their workplace. This ranges for lack of leadership support, unfriendly environment, and harassment to disapproval from families and communities. These negative attitudes seem not to have reason order than the unending pertinent question of why should a man take orders from a woman.

Gaya (2009) noted that in many countries of the world, women participation in labour force increased during the course of conflict. However, at the end of the conflict when the tigers of the war come back women will be the first to be fired from their jobs. Mutunya (2009) piteously remarked that during violent conflict, women are mandated to take up roles they were not originally exposed to. When the men in the war front have been decimated, the psychological instinct for survival lures the women to take up arms to fight for their fatherland; a job which was originally credited to the men. The ugly trend seems to paint no gloomy picture about the suppressive attitude of the men against the women.

The erroneous believe that security is all about the use of physical strength alone seems to underscore the use of one's intellectual ability to achieve desired result. Today, crime appears to have assumed another dimension. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to commit crime seems to have occupied the criminal wave since the past decades. Apparently, such does not require physical strength to get rid of the criminals but the ability to make use of one's intelligence which indeed has no gender bias. Although some studies have shown that women in policing are likely less to use excessive and deadly force. They are also less likely than their male coworker to be involved in fights or acts of aggression on the job. Female officers rely more on inter personal skills than physical force. Gbla (2008) noted that women can contribute to combating crime through the community policing framework by raising public awareness through advocacy. This may include talking to community groups, youths, religious groups and politicians about physical, sexual violence and other forms of discrimination against women. Women are known to deescalate more than the men situations which ordinarily if allowed would degenerate into violet crisis (Woolsey, 2019). This very critical psychological intrigue that women use has nothing to do with macho or male strength as often claimed by them in security matters.

Scholars in their various submissions on gender disparity affirmed that such disparities exist in education of women, in workplaces, and even in remuneration paid to workers doing the same type of job. However, few or none of these studies has been able to address the need for the inclusion of women as members of informal policing. This the gap for which the present study is aimed at addressing.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study draws its academic strength from John Hagan's (1990) power-control theory and James Messerschmidt's (1993) structured action theory "doing gender". Power-control theory views gender difference antisocial behavior as a function of power differentials in the family. The thrust of the theory is drawn from the positions spouses occupy in the workforce. When fathers are the sole breadwinner and mothers are housewives and or have menial jobs, a

patriarchal family structure results especially if the father is in a position of authority at work. On the other hand, Messerschmidt's structured action theory or "doing gender" postulates that gender is something male and female demonstrate and accomplish rather than something they are by virtue of biological sex. Doing gender is a dynamic process by which males expose their masculinity to audiences of both sexes so that it may be socially validated. Drawing our position from these theoretical thrusts, the exclusion of women as members of vigilante in Nigeria seems to underscore the height of social exclusion of women perpetrated by men in order to show that they are absolutely in charge. This seeming unabated situation of women does not suggest in any way that women are incapable of handling any role in the society. As stated in *Womanifesto* (2006) that women have exhibited high sense of leadership across various cultural backgrounds and social classes before the introduction of bureaucratized system of administration which herald male dominance not only in Nigeria but other countries of the world.

In the world of patriarchal ideology, it will rather appear absurd that a woman takes absolute charge of the affairs in either the family or in the larger society. It is rather anachronistic that with the population strength of women coupled with their enviable records in virtually all human endeavour, women are yet to be fully represented not only in the formal policing but in the informal policing system where their presence is completely not felt. Messerschmidt (2002) theorized that to project a positive masculine image to the world, a man must learn the relevant cultural definition of masculinity which is projected to one being successful in one's career, having and providing for the family, being a good protector and projecting an aura of dominance in both physical and mental strength. Indeed, the exclusion of women in the informal policing spells no irony of expressing gender differentials, a situation where men assume the responsibility of protecting the females who (as it is our position in this paper) have been erroneously defined to be fragile, vulnerable and weak.

Apart from the fact that the exclusion of women from the informal policing service in Nigeria is a social twist designed by men to continue to dominate the whole life of women, such social exclusion poses threat to the life of women generally. For instance in Northern Nigeria, some women are not allowed to participate in social gathering let alone in informal policing because of religious belief and cultural attachment. To this end, they are oblivious of the security challenges in the country. The little they may know will come from their husbands who in most cases will regard it as a waste of time to educate the women on the ongoing security situation in the country. Zungia (2005) affirmed that if women were to be actively involved in all activities through adequate empowerment, it will be a fruitful effort and not domination over others but an increased power of their own self esteem and internal force.

It may not be incorrect to state here that part of the reasons why women and children are the worst hit during each attack by the dreaded Boko Haram sect is because of poor knowledge of security. It may also not be out of context to state here that one of the greatest challenges Chibok girls had before, during and even after they had been kidnapped could be attributed to complete lack of knowledge on security. If some of the women were involved in the informal policing system, they would have directly or indirectly socialized some of the girls which would have leveraged their situation.

Again, just recently, a relation to Mr. President was alleged to have been kidnapped in Daura. (Ugwuoke, 2010) Given the erroneous claim that the women belong to the home front, this and other similar criminal activities would have been curtailed if women have been involved actively in the informal security process. The United Nations cited in Mutume (2005)

posited that the biggest security threat we face now and in the decades ahead go far beyond states waging aggressive war, They extend to poverty, infectious diseases and environment degradation, war and violence within the state, the spread and possible use of nuclear radiological chemical and biological weapons; terrorism and transnational organized crimes. The threats are from non-state actors as well as states and to human security.

George Peter Murdock in his work on “Biology and Practicality” cited in Haralambos and Holborn (2000) argued that the biological differences between men and women are the basis for sexual division of labour. Murdock did not suggest that men are directed by generally based predispositions or characteristics to adopt their particular role. Instead, he simply suggested that biological differences such as greater physical strength of men and the fact that women bear children lead to gender role out of sheer practicality. Murdock concluded that given the biological differences between men and women, a sexual division of labour is the most efficient way of organizing society.

However, Oakley in Haralambos and Holborn (2000) in debunking the position affirmed that a number of societies that have been examined have no role differentials in terms of sex. The author gave examples with the Mbuti Pygmies; a hunting and gathering society who live in Congo Rain Forest have no specific rules for the division of labour by sex. Both men and women hunt and share responsibilities not only for the care of the children but in other matters Oakley further noted that among the Australian Aborigines of Tanzania. Women were responsible for sea hunting, fishing and catching opossums (tree dwelling animals). In the present day societies, Oakley notes that women form an important part of many armed forces particularly those of China, Cuba and Israel. According to him, in India, women work in building sites and in some Asia and Latin American countries, women have worked in mines.

Uzuegbunam (2008) affirmed that the continued marginalization of women in society is no longer acceptable to the international community and as such strive to put an end to it, The author affirmed that bold steps have been taken to avert such inequality. Such include Agenda 21 in 1992 United Nations Summit with emphasis on the adoption of convention elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, the 1993 Human Right World Conference and Recognition of Inclusive Rights of Women and Girl-children as part and parcel of universal human right, the 1995 Beijing World Conference which declared a call to end all barriers to gender equality. However it is very worrisome that after all the conferences and conventions, women are still not out from the shackles of operation and marginalization from men particularly on issues relating to security matters. As Dighe (2009) rightly adduced that an empowered woman is someone with a sense of self worth and self-confidence, someone who critically analyses their social and political environment and thus exercise control over the decisions affecting their life

### **Research Questions**

1. How does poor inclusion of women in informal policing affect their contribution in security system in Southeast Nigeria?
2. How does poor inclusion of women in informal policing influence violence against women in Southeast, Nigeria?
3. How does gender disparity influence attitude of women to informal policing system in Southeast Nigeria?

### **Method**

The study adopted mixed method of research. This is the type of research design whereby qualitative and quantitative data are collected and analysed for a particular study or series of studies. Mixed methods research represents research that involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2008). The study area was South-East geopolitical zone, Nigeria. The zone is comprised of five states namely Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states. The general population of the study was 23, 926,683. However, the target population was 3,296,735 women from where a sample size of 400 women was selected using Taro Yamen formula for sample determination. Multiple stage sampling procedure was adopted for the study. The fishbowl method of simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting two out of five states in the geopolitical zone. The local government areas in each of the selected states were stratified into urban and rural and in each of the strata, one local government area was selected. In each of the local government areas selected, the fishbowl method was again adopted in selecting the communities. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire and In-depth Interview (IDI) guide. The questionnaire data were processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20.0. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and graphic illustrations were used for data analysis. The qualitative data were processed using QDA Miner software application..

### Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1: How does poor inclusion of women in informal policing affect their contribution in security process in South-East, Nigeria?

Respondents were asked whether it is appropriate to involve women as members of informal policing. Responses are presented in table one

**Table 1: Opinion on Women Involvement in Informal Policing Process**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
. Yes	152	38
No	203	50.8
Do not know	45	11.2
Total	400	100

**Source : Field Survey2022**

Table 1 shows that a majority 203(50.8%) of the respondents are of the opinion that it is not appropriate for the women to be involved in informal policing system. However, 152(38%) of the respondents said yes; that it is appropriate for the women to be involve in informal policing system. The finding agrees with the data from in-depth interview. One of the respondents said:

*Women from day one are culturally prohibited from associating with men.  
For woman to associate with men there must be an established relationship  
known by everyone. How would it look like if a woman should stay all night not*

*minding the family; some of them may be new born. I mean, this is ridiculous. (Female, 46 years, Farmer, Enugu.*

Another respondent was typically obsessed by the idea as she said:

*Chukwu aju (God forbid). This is not in our tradition that a woman should leave her God given role of being a home keeper for any other business. Involving the women in informal security is just like asking them to be paying the bride price of men instead of the other way round. Security is an exclusive reserve of the men , they are our lords. Female, 54 years, Trader, Enugu.*

Respondents were further asked the reason for poor inclusion of women as members of informal policing. Responses were presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Reason for Poor Inclusion of Women in Informal Policing.**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
. Women are meant to be at home to take care of domestic chores	179	44.8
Women are too fragile and could be harmed in the process	101	52.2
Women are too gullible and can easily divulge security secret	84	21
Women hate doing anything with the men because of their might.	36	09
Total	400	100

**Source : Field Survey2022**

Table 2 shows that a majority 179 (44.8%) of the respondents opined that women are meant to be at home to take care of domestic chores, 36 (09%) of the respondents opined that women hate doing anything with men.

The finding corroborates with the data from the in-depth interview guide. One of the respondents stated thus:

*Right from creation, women are meant to take care of the home front. If women should be part of the informal policing, it implies that they should go out even at night for the duty. I wonder who will take care of the children, breastfeed the new born and take care of the sick ones. There are certain roles expected of the men and the women, E kere olu eke (There is division of roles based on sex) (Female, 51 years, Politician, Enugu state).*

Another respondent who seems to digress slightly from the from the general held opinion had it this way:

*I see no reason why women should not be involved directly or indirectly in the informal policing system. It is only in our own clime that women are asked to stay indoors. In other cultures across climes, hardly would you separate the roles based on sex. Some of us may give excuse that they take care of the children, cook and other domestic activities. Yes, but they can still play very vital role of giving needed security information.*



(Female, 28 years. Student, Ebonyi State).

Respondents were further asked in which way they think women could contribute to informal policing system. Responses were presented in table 3.

**Table 3: Ways Women can contribute to Informal Policing.**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Women can give desired security information to members of informal policing.	24	06
Women can donate material things to members of the informal policing	56	14
Women can actively participate in the actual day-to-day operations of the informal police.	122	30.5
Women have nothing to offer and therefore should be excluded from the activities of informal police.	198	49.5
Total	400	100

**Source : Field Survey2022.**

Table 3 shows that a majority 198 (49.5) of the respondents are of the opinion that women have nothing to offer and therefore should be excluded, 24 (06%) of the respondents opined that women could give desired security information to members of the informal police. The finding is in tandem with data from the in-depth interview. One of the respondents noted with dismay the sex discrimination inherent in many cultures pointing out that women appear to be in perpetual bondage. She maintained thus:

*Women depend on their husbands in virtually everything. Unfortunately, this is what the normative values provide. The little amount women make from petty economic activities are either accounted for the men or used for domestic chores. Men are our lords. In our culture, a woman who displays affluence greater than the husband is regarded as being disrespectful and therefore treated with scorn. (Female, 46 years, civil servant, Enugu).*

**Research question 2:** How does poor inclusion of women in informal policing process influence violence against women in South-East, Nigeria?

Respondents were asked whether it is appropriate for women to believe and obey decisions of men at all times. Responses are presented in table 4.

**Table 4: Women should believe and obey the decisions of members of informal police**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
. Yes	174	43.5
No	226	56.5
Total	400	100

**Source : Field Survey2022**

Table 4 shows that a majority 226 (56.5%) of the respondents are of the opinion that women should not believe and obey the decision of members of the informal police. However, 174 (43.5%) of the respondents opined that members of the informal policing should not be believed and obeyed at all times.

Respondents were asked how members of the informal policing handle issues involving opposite sex. Responses are presented in table 5

**Table 5: Handling of issues involving opposite sex.**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Women are often requested to pay in kind before justice is given..	222	55.5
Members of informal policing believe and apply equity in their judgment	71	17.7
Members of the informal policing believe that women are evil and will always be against them	41	10.2
Members of informal policing believe that women are like children and therefore be treated as such	66	16.5
Total	400	100

**Source : Field Survey2022.**

Table 5 shows that a majority (55.5%) of the respondents opined that members of the informal policing would always ask women to pay in kind before justice is given, 41 (10.2%) of the respondents opined that women are evil and will always be against them. The finding is in tandem with data from in-depth interview. One of the respondents said:

*The world we are in is the world of men; whether my Fellow women like it or not, whether the world gives the women all the rights and privileges. Not only with the members of informal policing even in other roles involving both sexes. The men would take the advantage of being men to suppress and request the women for gratification before they obtain fair judgment particularly where the woman is a widow or single parent.  
(Female, 31years, civil servant, Ebony State).*

Another respondent; female legal practitioner had it this way:

*Yes, before now it is possible that justice may have been perverted by men in virtually all issues involving the opposite sex. It was possible that women then would accept and obey the decisions of men. Today, the table has turned. If any man tries to pervert justice whether among the informal policing group or any other organization or even at individual level, I will personally take up the matter with him in the court of law. Women have come a long way. Days are gone when women are stack illiterates, naïve and anti- social. Let me tell you, in advance countries, women dictate for the men and if you dare to trample on their individual rights the government will deal with you.  
(Female, 52 years, Legal practitioner, Enugu State).*

Respondents were further asked whether it is appropriate for members of informal to handle all issues involving women. Responses are presented in table 6.

**Table 6: Informal Policing should handle all issues involving women**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
. Yes	119	29.7
No	238	59.5
Do not know	43	10.7
Total	400	100

Source : Field Survey2022

Table 6 shows that a majority 283 (59.5%) are of the view that members of the informal policing should not handle all issues relating to women, 119 (29.7) opined that members of the informal policing should handle all issues involving the women. Respondents were further asked what informed their decision. Responses are presented in table 7.

**Table 7: Handling of issues involving opposite sex.**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Informal policing comprises of men only and therefore certain issues must not be discussed with them to avoid abuse and hostility.	243	60.7
Members of informal policing have regard and respect for the women	32	08
Members of the informal policing represent the people and therefore should be allowed to deal with all issues on security	98	24.5
Members of informal policing believe that women cannot handle their issues well and therefore should be involved.	27	6.7
Total	400	100

Source : Field Survey2022

Table 7 shows that a majority 243 (60.7%) opined that informal policing comprises of men only and therefore certain issues should not be discussed with them to avoid abuse and hostility, 27 (6.7%) of the respondents are of the opinion that members of the informal policing believe that women cannot handle their issues well and therefore they should be involved.

The finding corroborates with the data from the in-depth interview. Majority of the respondents maintained that members of the informal police capitalize on their male dominance to lord over the women. One of the respondents piteously narrated her ordeal with members of the informal policing thus:

*I'm a single parent with one male child before I lost my husband years ago. There was this parcel of land bequeathed to my son by my husband before his demise. A very wealthy man in that community also owns a piece of land close to mine. Immediately my husband died the man, decided to lay claim on the land. It became a case. I remember on several occasions some members of the*

*informal policing made several sexual advances to me so that they can help me reclaim the land. Thank God for the intervention of the traditional ruler of my community. Otherwise, it is absolute wickedness and total suppression.*

**Research question 3:** How does gender disparity influence attitude of women in participating in informal policing process.

Respondents were asked how they would describe the attitude of women in security matters. Responses are presented in table 8.

**Table 5: Attitude of women on security matters**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Women believe it is the responsibility of both sexes to provide security in the community.	44	11
Women believe that it is the responsibility of the men alone to provide security in the community	202	50.5
Women believe that they can only provide mere support to the men who do the job in the community	44	11
Women believe that they cannot make any contribution to the informal policing process	246	61.5
Women believe that security is the business of men and women	44	11
Women believe that they are fragile and therefore cannot handle security business	110	27.5
Total	400	100

**Source : Field Survey2022**

Table 8 shows that a majority 246 (61.55%) of the respondents opined that women believe that they cannot make any contribution to informal policing, 44 (11%) affirmed that women believe that it is responsibility of both sexes, the same number of respondents also said that women believe that they cannot make any contribution to the informal policing system. The finding agrees with data from the in-depth interview. Indeed, most of the respondents affirmed that women do not show concern when it comes to matters relating to security not minding their vulnerability higher population strength .One of the respondents from Hausa extraction but lives in Enugu (one of the ethnic groups in Nigeria) said:

*Our culture does not allow women to socialize with men . Everything regarding our welfare is the responsibility of our husbands. We are not allowed to see the men let alone participating in the security of the land. Our religion and the culture forbids that. If I was to be in my community, you dare not as a male enter this compound. You have to request a female to do the interview for you (Female, 55 years, Housewife Enugu).*

Another respondent captured it this way:

*Women do not understand their added responsibility apart from giving birth to babies and nurturing them. They have poor attitude to security matters. We cannot count the number of times some women forget even their babies in a vehicle. To my mind, men should not be involved in certain issues of women. Rather, matured and elderly women in the community should be involved, particularly issues relating to sex and marriage. Women have been made objects of ridicule even before the young male members of the informal policing. is too bad.  
(Female, 26 years Tailor Enugu state).*

### **Findings and Discussions**

One of the findings of the study was that women see their involvement in informal policing system as inappropriate. Women are meant to be at home to take care of domestic chore and to that extent should not be involved in informal policing. Women believe that they have nothing to offer and therefore should be excluded. It thus implies that there is still the wrong notion among the women folk that men own the world and they have little or nothing to contribute; even in the security of their life and property. The implication is that whatever decision taken by men of the informal policing should be binding on the women

It was also found that the men capitalize on weakness of women and demand for gratifications; including sex before justice could be obtained. Again, women believe and obey the decision of members of the informal police because the composition is made up of men only

It was also found that members of the informal policing should not handle all issues relating to women. There are certain issues which are exclusive for different sexes and to that extent; justice may not be done in a situation where the opposite sex is involved. However in many occasions, men delve into issues that are for women simply because they are not represented in the informal policing

### **Conclusion**

Poor inclusion of women in the informal policing system in Nigeria is a ploy by men to continue to lord it over their women counterpart. Both men and women share the same social attributes. The differences in biology of men and women do not suggest any form of handicap that would necessitate difference in role.

We have equally argued that today, women engage in series of financial and other crimes which suggests that they are no longer the assumed harmless creature who should be treated with levity. This paper succinctly maintained that it is erroneous for the men to claim that their physical strength alone is what is required to get rid of crime and criminality. Today, crime has assumed the application of information and communication technology. This to a large extent does not imply the use of physical strength but rather the employment of one's intellectual prowess which has no basis for disparity in terms of gender. The exclusion of women in the informal policing has actually negated this legal disposition on justice.

### **Recommendations**

1. It is important that there should be no gender disparity in the membership of the vigilante group in Nigeria. Women therefore should be given equal opportunity like the men counterpart to participate actively.
2. There is need for people to discard their mindset about security being an exclusive reserve of the men. Even when the men could claim to have overriding power on the physical

strength, this is not only what is required in today world where cyber crime deems to have occupied the criminal space. The women can still make erroneous impact in security through their intellectual prowls.

3. The crime wave in Nigeria has assumed a dimension where all hands should be on deck. Women should be made to understand the security challenges in the country both at the community level and the country at large. This can only be effective when women are fully integrated in the informal policing system.
4. The time is now when women should stop procrastinating and assume their responsibilities as partakers in the development of the society.

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