

Gender Inequality in Nigeria Police Force

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Abstract: This study aims to examine how the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) administrative structure, recruitment policy, and promotion criteria engendered gender inequality. The research used the Zone 4 which presently cover three states; Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State Commands with the Zonal Headquarters at Makurdi, Benue State as a case study. Primary data was obtained through administered questionnaires. A quantitative empirical approach was chosen for the study because it provided a numerical measurement and reliable statistical predictability of the results to the total target population. The study discovered that the gender discriminatory policies and promotion criteria of the NPF has deterred the career progression of the female police officers. The female police officers are often victims of sexual harassment, bully from superior male officers and lack of equal employment opportunities. Hence the recommendation that the recruitment policy should be revisited for reforms to encourage more to close the existing gap, women should be assigned roles and duties aside bookkeeping, clerical secretary and police matron. The Inspector-General of Police in collaboration with the government should ensure strict implementation of laws safeguarding the female police officers from sexual harassment and bullying from the superiors.

Keywords: Gender inequality, police, promotion criteria, recruitment policy.

I. INTRODUCTION

The police force and other law enforcement agencies that were traditionally dominated by the adult male is gradually evolving with the enlistment of female police officers. There are more women employed by law enforcement agencies today than ever before. Their roles and work experiences have changed significantly from police matrons it used to be in the late 1800s-early 1900s (Chang, 1999). Generally, the women's roles in the labour force have evolved from the traditional secretary, bookkeeper, sales clerk, cashier, waitress, nurses, teachers, domestic workers, and typist. Women have begun to move into a broader range and traditionally male-dominated occupations such as policing, medicine, engineering and other parts of law enforcement.

For 25 years after the establishment of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) in 1930, consequent to the amalgamation of the north and south protectorates' police forces, no women police existed in Nigeria. There was no visible presence of women in the Nigeria Police Force before the 1940s. In 1944, some women politicians requested for the employment of women between 40 and 45 years as police constables (Tamuno, 1970). It was argued that such women constables would be in a better position to prevent prostitution and handle female

criminals. The then Commissioner of the Police Mr. H. King, a Briton, opposed the demand, and in a memorandum to the Chief Secretary of the colony argued that women were physically unfit to deal with disorderly persons and combative criminals (Iyamabo, 1993). He also argued that female police officers will be unacceptable in Northern Nigeria because of the patriarchal cultural setting and religious status of women in the Region.

Notably, women were not deemed fit for the rigours of police work until the increase in criminal activities involving women suggested a profound need for women police in crime prevention and control. As a result, the campaign for the enlistment of women in the police started. (Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015). The motion for the engagement of women in policing was moved in March 1953 by A.O Ogedengbe, member House of representative (Owo Constituency) and it was supported by Chief Anthony Enahoro representative (Isha Constituency) and A. Admadu the Sarduna of Sokoto (Iyamabo 1993). About a year later the Federal Government made public its intention to begin "women's Police Branch" of the Nigeria Police Force. In 1955 women were recruited into the Force for the first time. The first batch of 20 Policewomen passed out from training early 1956) By the end of 1962, it was reported that there were 170 policewomen in the Federation most of which were from Eastern and Western Nigeria (Tamuno, 1970)

Women in the NPF have recorded a significant numerical increase during the past decades. In spite of this increase, women remain a marginalized fraction of the total police strength in the country.

Statement of the Research Problem

Throughout recorded history, women have been dehumanized, disposed of, diminished, degraded, marginalized, disenfranchised, secluded, subjugated and silenced in all sphere of life despite their visible efforts parallel to men. Although women are gradually been acculturated into the police force but still experiencing varying degrees of discrimination, bully and sexual harassment. Women working in the police force and other law enforcement agencies in Nigeria continue to face myriad barriers to full occupation integration. As a whole, female officers have made very slow progress toward full integration into the Nigeria Police Force due to barriers such as the attitudes of male officers who viewed women as having less physical strength than male officers and the perception of the patriarchal oriented societies which question the status and the physical ability of the women to subdue and apprehend combative suspects. The

gender imbalance administrative structure and discriminatory policies of the NPF has deterred the career progression of the female police officers. The occupational environment and social organization of policing is replete with norms and values such as aggressiveness, toughness, doggedness, ruggedness, emotional control, and physical strength that promotes the traditional forms of masculinity at the detriment of femininity.

Despite laws and policies forbidding discrimination, women in the workforce continue to be discriminated against and under-represented. Gender inequality is still a defining aspect of law enforcement. Women in Nigeria Police Force (NPF) are often inexplicitly resented by their male counterparts and many face harassments. Additionally, many women encounter a 'brass' ceiling and are unable to rise to leadership and supervisory positions despite their qualifications, achievements and years of service. It is against the aforementioned that the research work seeks to explore the element of gender inequities and discrimination in NPF with emphasis on the administrative structure, policies and promotion criteria.

The aim of the study

The aim of the study is to examine gender inequality in the Nigeria Police; the effects of the administrative structure, the recruitment policy and the criteria for promotion.

The Scope of the study

The study focused on the gender equality in the Nigeria Police Force targeting Zone 4 which presently cover three states; Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State Commands with the Zonal Headquarters at Makurdi, Benue State. The entire Zone has a population of about 9,261,231 based on the 2006 National Population census figure and combined staff strength of 16,363 police officers.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Nigeria Police Force

Nigeria evolved through the colonial subjugation of hundreds of nationalities and societies in the territory between 1861 and 1914. By 1900, the British Colonial Government has amalgamated these societies into two political blocks: Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. The two blocks were amalgamated in 1914 to form a single political entity. The subjugation of each of the constituent nationalities witnessed the establishment of a police force or constabulary for their respective territories. This practice of local and multiplicity of local police forces continued throughout colonial rule.

However, from 1900, there were also regional police forces. In 1930, a national police force called the Nigeria Police Force was established. Nigeria became an independent country on 1st October 1960. The independence Constitution (1960) and Republican Constitution (1963) provided for local

police forces and Nigeria Police Force. The military seized power on 15th January 1966, and dissolved the local police forces, as a result of the negative roles attributed to the forces during the First Republic (1960-1966). A detailed history of the evolution of police forces and their roles have been covered in the literature

Nigeria currently has a centralized or national police force – Nigeria Police Force, established in 1930. This was a sequel to the dissolution of local police forces in 1966. The 1979 and 1999 Constitutions explicitly prohibited the establishment of any force other than the Nigeria Police Force (NPF, UNWOMEN, and UNFPA, 2010)

Gender Issues in Nigeria Police Force

Gender refers to the roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviour, and values that society ascribes to men and women. Gender also refers to the learned differences between men and women. In contrast to gender, sex refers to the biological differences between females and males. These biological characteristics (such as hormones, reproductive organs, and genetic differences) are used in classifying into males and females. They are generally universal and are not usually amenable to change. (NPF, UNWOMEN, UNFPA, 2010)

The integration of gender issues in law enforcement is now recognized as a key to operational effectiveness and institutional credibility in Nigeria. Women often bring specific skills and strengths to police work, such as the ability to diffuse potentially violent situations and employ good communication skills to minimize the use of force. In certain contexts, female officers are necessary to perform the cordon and search of women, widen the net of intelligence gathering and assist victims of sexual exploitation.

Notably, in the Nigeria Police Force (as in many other countries) is not only dominated by men but modeled as a masculine institution with masculinized values, behaviour and expectations.

Alemika and Agugua (2001) noted that only 4% of the total police population; and 8% of all officers respectively, were women as in July 2010, the figure for senior female police officers merely moved to 5%; and 12.9% for junior female police officers. The gender imbalance in the Nigeria Police Force has attendant implications for women, while the Nigeria Police Force continues to have alarming records of gender abuses and discrimination. In general, women are expected to maintain their femininity but are often penalized for doing so. When female officers were noncompliant, they were chastised, labeled as weak and had difficulty soliciting support.

Studies suggest that female officers leave the profession for different reasons when compared with male officers. Those reasons are usually related to some form of discrimination, lack of advancement, or family responsibilities (Dodge &

Valcore, 2011). Researchers posit these obstacles exist because chauvinism is deeply rooted in every aspect of policing and male officers view women's presence emasculating the profession (Young, 2006). The current literature further reported instances where women felt compelled to take on masculine characteristics or be viewed as inferior.

Sexual harassment is also evidence in the Nigeria Police Force. Legally, sex discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfavorably because of his or her gender, especially in reference to hiring, firing, and promotions (EEOC, 2010). Sexual harassment is also considered a major impediment for women in law enforcement. Researchers maintain that although 60 to 70 percent of female officers experience sexual harassment, less than 7% report any incidents (EEOC, 2010). Sexual harassment by its definition, it considers unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other physical and visual conduct of a sexual nature are sexual harassment. Several studies have documented complaints from female officers who were continuously propositioned for sexual favours (Hassel & Brand, 2009)

The International Association of Women Police (IAWP) agrees that sexual harassment is the primary problem in male-dominated workplaces (Woolsey, 2010). Indeed, female officers report incidents of sexual harassment more often than male officers in the Nigeria Police Force (NCWP, 2003). The Nigerian Police Force (like many other countries in the world) is not only dominated by men but modeled as a masculine institution. This has attendant implications as the Nigeria Police Force continues to have alarming records of gender abuses which include; Institutional framework and practices which tend to be more men-centric and protective of male interests and concerns (male-centric institutional frameworks, responses to women-specific interests both by law, and in practice are entrenched in gender stereotypes and gender prejudices (gender unfriendly conditions of service, especially for the female police officers; gender-biased treatment of domestic violence and other forms of violence against women etc. Use of operational frameworks and guidelines that inhibit women's access to justice.

Policewomen and policemen should engage in the same work, as different things with different principles would result in real justice. Women have physiological menstrual periods, pregnancies and lactations that men will never encounter in their lives and thus different things should be treated in different ways. Hence, policewomen should be given differential treatment as a way of showing support for them in the police force. It is not necessary for policewomen to do frontline work in police stations as policemen do. There are many job duties, such as women and children affairs, security, traffic, foreign affairs, administration, forensics, information and household registration that provide policewomen with regular rotations that can increase their personal job experiences and prevent them from

Organizational Structure of the Nigeria Police Force

The Nigeria Police Force is organized into 37 Commands and the Force Headquarters. Each of the thirty-six States and the Federal; Capital Territory is served by a Command of the Force. The Force: Headquarters is the office of the Inspector General of Police. The task of the force is carried out through six departments:

- a. Administration and Finance
- b. Operations
- c. Works and Logistics
- d. General Investigation and Intelligence
- e. Training
- f. Research and Planning

Each of the Departments is under the leadership of an Assistant Inspector General of Police. The 37 State Police Commands are further organized into twelve Zonal Commands. The zonal commands are under the command of Assistant Inspectors- General, while Commissioners of Police are in charge of State Commands. The entire Force is under the command of the Inspector-General of Police. He is assisted by a Deputy Inspector General and six Assistant Inspectors-General of Police in charge of A, B, C, D, E, F departments at the Force Headquarters.

Recruitment Policy of Nigeria Police Force

The same educational qualifications are required of male and female candidates seeking enlistment into the Nigeria Police Force. There are three points of enlistment into the force. These are: (1) Constable; (2) Cadet Inspector and (3) Cadet Assistant Superintendent. The first two are a junior and upper junior entry levels respectively while the third is the lowest superior (senior), officer rank or cadre. Candidates seeking enlistment into the force as constable are expected to possess a school certificate with five credits, while those aspiring to be enlisted as cadet inspectors are expected to possess a post-secondary diploma (such as National Certificate of Education, Ordinary National Diploma and equivalents) Enlistment as cadet assistant superintendent requires a bachelor's degree or equivalent.

At these levels, there is no gender-related discriminatory provisions. However, in the light of lower literacy levels and lower enrolment at higher levels of education by women coupled with prejudices inhibit the high rate of female recruitment.

Besides formal education, there are other requirements for recruitment. The requirement for height is usually slightly lowered for female Candidates. However, the discriminatory provisions regarding age and marital status can be observed. As regards age, the implication is that there is an implicit assumption that the maturity of 17 years old male is equivalent to a 19 year- old female.

There are also extensive physical requirements for recruitment into the Nigeria Police Force. Section 73 of the Police

Regulation provides that: A candidate for enlistment suffering from any one of the abnormalities or deformities listed below shall not be accepted for enlistment.

These conditions apply to both male and female candidates, and may on the surface, seem to contain no discriminatory requirements. But in reality, the image of physically suitable candidates conveyed is that of a masculine individual. Women police officers shall as a general rule be employed on duties which are concerned with women and children, and shall be particularly employed in the following duties - investigation of sexual offenses against women and children; recording of statements from female witnesses, female accused persons and from children, attendance when women or children are being, interviewed by male police officers, the searching, escorting and guarding of women, prisoners in police stations, and the escorting of women prisoners to or from police stations, school crossing duties, crowd control, where women and children are present in any numbers. Women police officers recruited to the General Duties Branch of the Force may, in order to relieve male police officers from these duties, be employed in any of the following office duties, namely- Clerical duties, Telephone duties, Office orderly duties.

The duties assigned to women police officers by law indicate a patriarchal attitude, which is, not to subject male to the authority of women. Thus, women police officers are to deal with women and children. The provisions on duties and deployment clearly discriminate against women. Further, women are treated differently from men in terms of the content of practical training in police training schools. Specifically, women police officers are not trained in the handling of firearms. Section 123 of the Police Regulations states that "A woman police officer shall not be called upon to drill underarms or to take part in any baton or riot exercise. In essence, women are excluded from 'core police duties' and consequently denied the 'honor, status and career advancement associated with deployment to those duties.

III. METHODOLOGY

To identify and examine gender inequality in the Nigeria Police Force, male and female police officers were selected in three Police State Commands in Zone 4. A non-probability convenience sample was selected as the most appropriate method to utilize because the participants were easily and readily available to the researcher. The sample size consisted of 50 male and female sworn police officers that met the selection criteria. The purpose of survey research methods was to obtain information directly from a group of people regarding their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and experiences, and using this information to represent or estimate the views and beliefs of some larger population.

The survey instrument was designed using ordinal and nominal designed statements/questions. There was a total of 11 statements/questions aimed at measuring the pattern of response among participants. The author designed the ten

ordinal statements to measure the level of gender inequality in the Nigeria Police Force.

A quantitative empirical approach was chosen for the study because it provided a numerical measurement and reliable statistical predictability of the results to the total target population. The purpose of quantitative research is to randomly sample a population of interest. A non-probability was more appropriate because it is inexpensive, convenient, and the only available population; however, its disadvantages are that it may involve bias and unrepresentativeness and unable to estimate sampling error.

IV. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Age of the Police Officers

Findings revealed that most of the female officers were youthful whereby those between the ages of 26 to 40 were the majority at 50% followed by 18-25 with 31% to above 51 years at 3.20% and 41-50 with 15.40%.

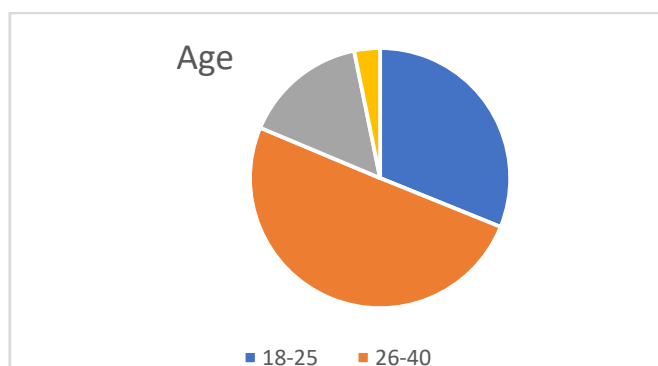


Figure 4. 1: Age of the respondents

Duration of Service of the Female Police Officer

Figure 4.2 revealed that most of the female officers had served between nine to fifteen years representing 53%, of the respondents, followed by those who had served less than nine-year but above five years had 27% representation and only 10% of the respondents had served more than 20 years.

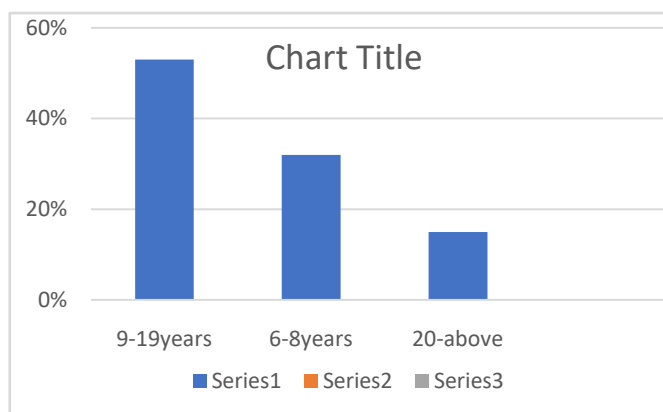


Figure 4.2: Years of service

4.1.3 Level of Education

According to figure 4.3, 54.7% of the respondents had attained a minimum of secondary education and they represented the majority of the female officers followed by those who had tertiary education at 35.9% and graduates represented 19.3%.

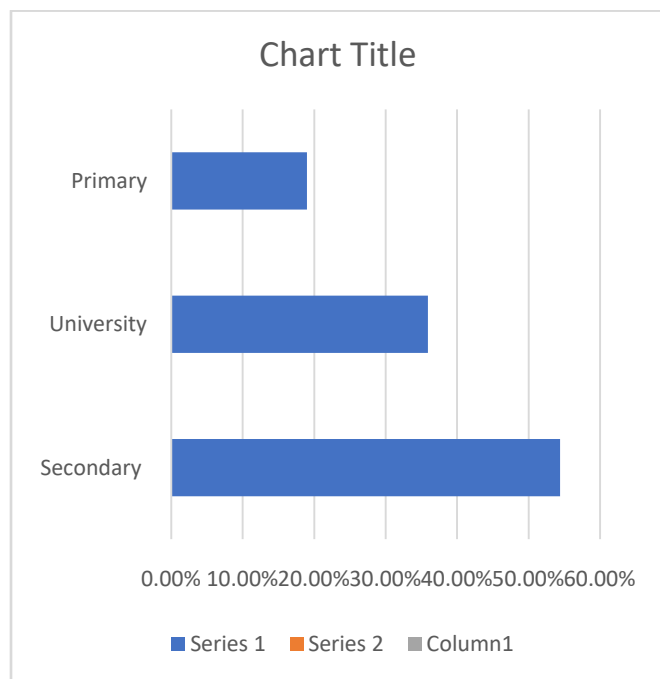


Figure 4.3: Education Levels of Respondent

According to figure 58.6% of the female respondents are graduate while 42.4% of the men police officers are graduate.

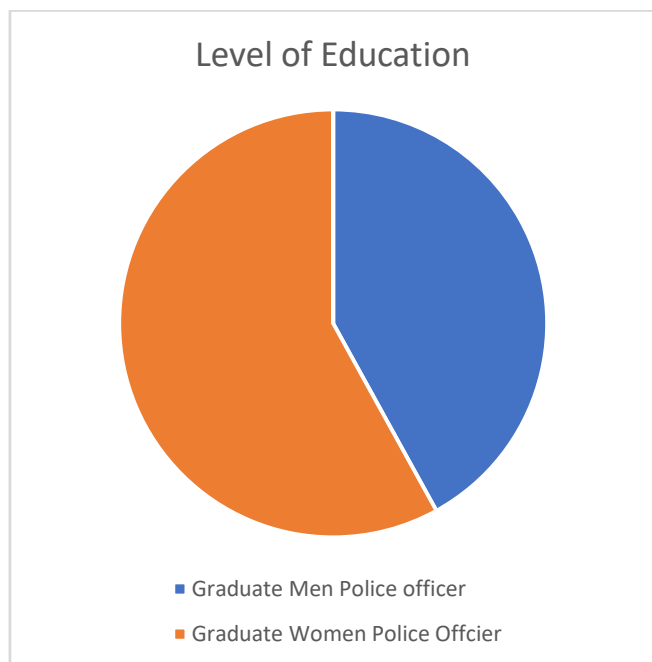


Table 4.2 A Comparison of Men Respondents and Female Respondents Utilizing a One-Sample T-test

	MALE POLICE OFFICERS Respondents (GROUP 1)	FEMALE POLICE OFFICERS Respondents (GROUP 2)	P-VALUE
I believe that NPF should be a male dominated field.	1.49	3.96	.013 *
I believe that individual performance in NPF has nothing to do with gender	2.19	3.94	.006 **
I believe that men Are better Equipped to handle violent situations than women.	1.44	3.98	.006 **
I believe that Women are Marginalized in remuneration	2.91	4.87	.766
I feel that the recruitment policy is gender dissimilatory	2.26	4.65	.045 *
I feel that the male dominated department are often promoted.	1.47	4.55	.496
I believe that Women should not join the NPF	2.23	4.31	.982
I believe that promotion in the NPF is gender bias	1.72	5.72	.870
I believe that Women are Mentally Incapable of Working in law enforcement.	2.72	3.72	0.54
I feel the accommodation and welfare package is gender bias	1.70	5.04	.049 *
The gratuities and pensions is discriminatory against women	2.91	4.87	.766

To display the disparities between the two age groups, the author chose to note the most frequent and least frequent response from the two age groups that were statistically significant while controlling for age.

Statement one: I believe NPF should be a male-dominated field. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of male police officer respondents strongly agreed while nine percent (9%) strongly disagreed. On the other hand, fifty-one percent (51%) of the female police officer two respondents also strongly disagreed and only seven percent (5%) agreed strongly. The p-value for statement one was .013, which was significant at the .05 level.

Statement two: I believe that individual performance in NPF has nothing to do with gender. fifty-nine percent

(49%) of male police officer respondents strongly disagreed while percent (9%) strongly disagreed. On the other hand, seven eight percent (78%) of the female police officer respondents also strongly agreed and only five percent (15%) disagreed strongly. .006, which was significant at the .01 level.

Statement three: I believe that women are marginalized in the remuneration. Thirty percent (30%) of group one respondents agreed strongly and only seven nine (79%) strongly disagreed. Whereas, thirty percent (70%) of group two respondents strongly agreed, however, twenty-two percent (22%) agreed strongly. The value for statement three was .006, which was significant at the .01 level.

Statement four: I feel that the recruitment policy is gender discriminatory. Twenty-five (25%) percent of group one respondents were neutral, however, five-five percent (25%) strongly disagreed and twenty-five (25%) agreed strongly. In contrast, fourteen percent (14%) of group two respondents strongly disagreed and 75%) agreed strongly.

The p-value for statement four was .043, which was significant at the .05 level.

Statement six: I feel that the male-dominated departments are often promoted. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of group one respondents strongly agreed and seventy (70%) disagreed. Whereas, fourteen (14%) of group two respondents strongly disagreed while (70%) agreed. The p-value for statement six was .049, which was significant at the .05 level.

Statement seven: I believe that women should not have joined the NPF. sixty-five percent (65%) of group one respondents agreed strongly and only twenty-nine percent (29%) strongly disagreed. Alternatively, thirteen percent (13%) of group two respondents agreed strongly and eighty-seven percent (87%) strongly disagreed. The p-value for statement seven was .012, which was significant at the .982 level.

Statement eight: I feel that promotion in the NPF is gender bias. Thirty-two percent (32%) of group one respondents strongly agreed, however, sixty-two percent (62%) strongly disagreed. Yet, seventy-two percent (72%) of group two respondents strongly agreed and only sixteen percent (16%) disagreed strongly. The p-value for statement ten was .870, which was significant at the .05 level.

Statement nine: I feel that women are mentally incapable of working in law enforcement. Thirteen percent (13%) of group one respondents strongly agreed, however, sixty-two percent (62%) strongly disagreed. Yet, (20%) of group two respondents were neutral while only 9% strongly agreed. The p-value for statement ten was .054, which was significant at the .05 level.

Statement ten: I feel that accommodation and welfare package is NPF is gender bias. Forty-five (45%) were a neutral while -two-three percent (23%) of group one

respondents strongly disagreed. Yet, seventy-two percent (72%) of group two respondents strongly agreed and only sixteen percent (16%) disagreed strongly. The p-value for statement ten was .49, which was significant at the .05 level.

Statement ten: I feel that the gratuities and pensions package is gender bias. twenty-five (25%) was neutral while -sixty-eight percent (68%) of group one respondents strongly disagreed. Yet, seventy-two percent (92%) of group two respondents strongly agreed and only six percent (6%) disagreed strongly. The p-value for statement ten was .997, which was significant at the .090 level

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Reading past literature about the lack of women and this overwhelming epidemic of inequality in law enforcement has given women the opportunity to discover why there is indeed a lack of women choosing a career in law enforcement. Initially, one was led to believe that the males' attitudes toward women working in law enforcement are the biggest barrier one must overcome, but however, the researchers have shown that the administrative structure, recruitment and promotional policy largely discriminate against women

Women have encountered numerous barriers that she must overcome when entering the world of law enforcement and the discriminatory policy is perhaps the biggest barrier that is obviously noticeably and recognized in the early stages of a woman's career. However, from the study that was conducted, times are truly changing, and men are becoming much more acceptable of working side by side with a female however the policy and administrative ought to be revisited.

There are no specific gender limits in the police personnel promotion system, but in actuality, the system is subject to artificial control. Therefore, police organizations should clearly plan a vision for job promotions and help both policemen and policewomen to achieve such goals. The authorities should clarify what job positions one should experience and what training one should receive before he or she is promoted. Moreover, NPF appointments and promotions caused by gender differences should be eliminated in order to have a more transparent and open personnel system.

Male police officers do not favour the implementation of gender mainstreaming or equality. The research revealed that policewomen said they did not feel there is equal gender treatment in the police force. Instead, the policy favour the men as against the women. Policewomen are usually posted to departments where they are often promoted and rewarded.

The unequal treatment of female officers when it comes to deployment of duties was one of the challenges that most officers raised. The survey found out those senior officers favored male officers in the deployment of duties. In cases where they considered female officers, there was always an

aspect of sexual harassment involved. This was combined with looking down upon female officers as not able to perform some police duties which traditionally have been viewed as male duties such as night foot patrols, V.I.P protection among others.

It was found out that many female officers are left out of the mainstream the decision-making process in their various stations. This was a clear indication of male officers undermining the counterparts of their capabilities to make viable contributions to matters affecting the day to day activities in their stations and lack of trust too. Female officers who hold leadership positions in the Service, that is corporals and above, felt that junior male and female officers did not give gravity to the orders that they issued as opposed to the same orders coming from their male leadership. This can be partially attributed to failure by the police community, in general, to accept that women too can take up leadership positions and lead others the police as an organization not excluded.

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