

Gender Role Ideologies and Prevalence of Violence Against Women in Imo State, Nigeria

Clifford Odimegwu and Christian N. Okemgbo

KEY WORDS Violence. Gender. Battery. Forced Sex. Genital.

ABSTRACT Gender inequalities is at the root of all forms of gender-based violence. This inequality is reinforced by ideologies that emphasize unequal sex role.. The extent this is translated into specific actions has not been fully investigated. In this study we examine the relationship between gender-role ideology and prevalence and incidence of violent acts against women as proxied by wife battery, sexual coercion or rape and female genital mutilation. Data was collected from a sample of 308 women aged 15-50 in selected parts of Imo State, Nigeria. The sampling design was a multi-stage cluster sampling technique. Both qualitative and quantitative tools were used in the collection of data. Analysis was done using SPSS. The findings show that attitudes about violence against women are mostly influenced by male-dominance ideology. It is also shown that women, irrespective of their place of residence, subscribe to gender role of male authority, though there are some noticeable changes. The paper calls for community education to change societal attitudes to violence against women while also noting the reproductive health and rights implications of these ideologies.

Authors' Addresses: **Clifford Odimegwu**, Takemi Program in International Health, Harvard School of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts 02115-6021, USA,
E-mail : codimegw@yahoo.com, codimegw@hsph.harvard.edu
Christian N. Okemgbo, Applied Population Health Network, Box 1901 OAU P.O.,
Ile-Ife, Nigeria