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**Perception Of Nigerians
On LGB Rights
Poll Report**

May 2015



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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nigeria passed a Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act late 2013 which was signed by the Former President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, on Jan 7th, 2014.¹ The Act which makes culprits of same-sex marriages liable to 14 years imprisonment was widely supported by members of the general public in Nigeria. Opponents of the law have complained that the law allows members of law enforcement agencies to trample on the human rights of alleged culprits before found guilty.² In line with this NOIPolls in partnership with The Initiative for Equal Rights and Bisi Alimi Foundation conducted a poll to assess Nigerians' awareness and perception of the homosexual / Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual (LGB) community in the country.

Findings from the survey reveal that:

Awareness of persons who are homosexual is low among adult Nigerian, only **17%**. This proportion is even lower among members of the public who are above 46 years of age. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of Nigerians (**90%**) do not think people are born homosexual, suggesting that it is a quality that is acquired through life's experiences. This finding supports the results from an earlier survey conducted by NOIPolls in June 2013 where a majority of respondents (**60%**) regarded homosexuality as a 'sinful' act, one that is not good and which is not supported by religion.

In addition, most Nigerians (**87%**) are not willing to accept a family member that is homosexual (even though **11%** indicated they are willing to accept such a family member. Over half (**52%**) of respondents who believe people are born homosexual know a homosexual from their family, a friend, or someone in their locality.

Finally, a majority of adult Nigerians (**87%**) expressed support for the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law. This has been so since the previous NOIPolls survey conducted on the subject in June 2013. Also a majority of adult Nigerians (**81%**) do not believe homosexuals should have the same rights as other Nigerians.

2.0 SURVEY BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act 2013 makes same-sex unions in Nigeria a criminal offence punishable by a maximum sentence of 14 years imprisonment. The Act also cites punishment for any person who registers, operates or participates in gay clubs, societies and organizations directly or indirectly is liable to a term of 10 years imprisonment. The bill was passed in the House of Assembly on May 30th, 2013 also punishes those who make a public show of same-sex amorous relationship with a liability of 10 years imprisonment. The law as passed builds on precedence by not recognizing gay marriages, but takes it a step further by criminalizing gay marriages.

The Act has been challenged in the Federal High Court on its constitutionality, but it was struck out by Justice Kafarati in October 2014, on the grounds that the plaintiff lacked the requisite locus standi to sue

¹ Nigeria passes law banning homosexuality

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/nigeria/10570304/Nigeria-passes-law-banning-homosexuality.html>

² Abimboye, M. 2015. "Nigeria recorded 105 cases of right abuses against gays in 2014 – Group" *Premium Times*

<http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/183295-nigeria-recorded-105-cases-of-rights-abuses-against-gays-in-2014-group.html>

on behalf of other Nigerians. In addition, the court argued that the plaintiff did not provide sufficient materials to show he had suffered or was about to suffer from the implementation of the Act.³ There have also been claims by groups such as Queer Alliance, which stated that between January and December 2014, the Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual (LGB) community recorded 105 cases of human right violations on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.⁴

Against this background, NOIPolls in partnership with The Initiative for Equal Rights conducted a poll to measure Nigerians' perception towards the LGB community in Nigeria, and their considered rights. The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERs) is a Nigeria-based registered non-profit organization that works to protect and promote the human rights of sexual minorities nationally and regionally. It was founded in 2006 as a response to the discrimination and marginalization of sexual minorities observed in HIV prevention and human rights work.

3.0 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted on a randomly selected sample of 1,000 telephone-owning Nigerians across the six geo-political zones, who were 18 years and above. A sample population of this size provides a 95% confidence level in the results obtained with an error margin of plus or minus 3%. This means that if the survey is conducted 100 times using the exact same procedures, the results obtained would be the same 95 out of 100 times. The interviews were conducted in English, Pidgin, Hausa, Igbo, or Yoruba, depending on the respondent's preference. The use of the several Nigerian languages reduces the likelihood of a non-response bias.

4.0 DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

The respondents' demography was analyzed by gender, geo-political zone, age group, and occupation as illustrated in the figure below.

Gender:

An almost even proportion by gender was observed in the sample population, with males comprising **51%** and females **49%** of the entire sample surveyed.

Age-Group:

A larger proportion of respondents surveyed (**42%**) fall within the 26-35 year age category, followed by those within the 36-45 year age category (**28%**). 18-25 year olds comprised **16%**, 46-60 year olds made up **11%**, and those 61 years and over made up only **3%** of the sample population.

Geo-political zone:

A larger proportion of respondents surveyed reside in the North-West (**24%**) region, followed by **20%** who reside in the South-West. **15%** of respondents reside in the South-South and North-Central zones respectively, among others.

³ Soniyi, T. 2014. "Court throws out suit challenging legality of same sex Prohibition Act" *ThisDay*
<http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/court-throws-out-suit-challenging-legality-of-same-sex-prohibition-act/192003/>

⁴ Abimboye, M. 2015. "Nigeria recorded 105 cases of right abuses against gays in 2014 – Group" *Premium Times*
<http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/183295-nigeria-recorded-105-cases-of-rights-abuses-against-gays-in-2014-group.html>

Occupation:

A large proportion of respondents are self-employed traders (**30%**), followed by **21%** who are government workers/civil servants, **13%** who are students, and **9%** who are professional workers among others.

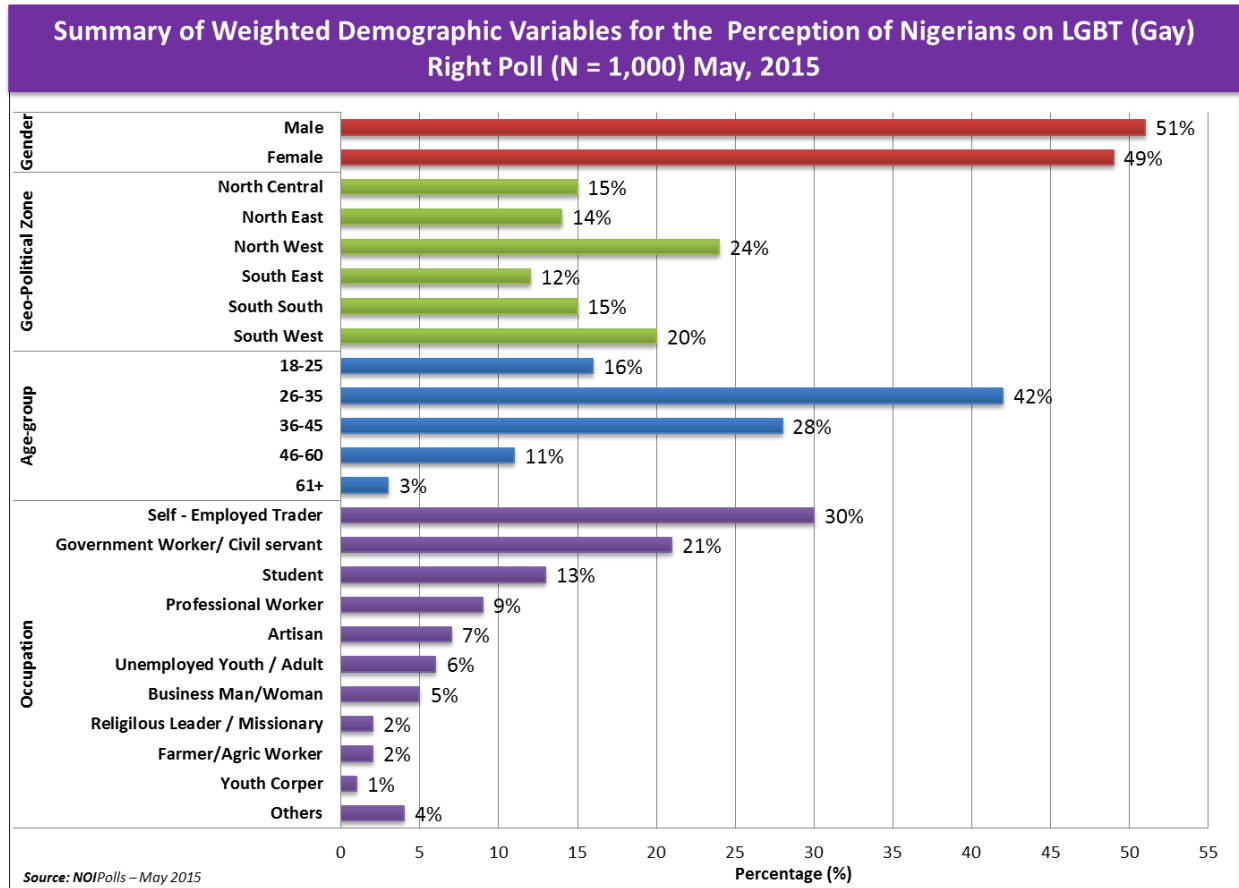


Figure 1: Demographic distribution

5.0 SURVEY RESULTS

This section highlights the poll results as provided by respondents to the survey.

5.1 Homosexuality: Innate or acquired

The first question of the survey asked respondents of their opinion, i.e. if they believe people are born homosexual. In other words, the question sought to measure respondents’ opinion generally on whether they thought a person’s homosexual orientation was inherent or acquired through life. Results show that 9 in 10 (**90%**) adult Nigerians nationwide do NOT believe people are born homosexual, with **5%** disclosing their belief in people being born homosexual, and another **5%** revealing they weren’t sure. The result was largely similar across gender and geo-political zones, with the South-East zone having the highest proportion of respondents (**10%**) who revealed they were unsure whether people were born homosexual, indicating some degree of doubt and the potential for malleability in their reasoning.

Interestingly, the younger generation (18-25 year olds) and those aged 61 years and over have the largest proportions of respondents who indicated they were unsure people were born homosexual.

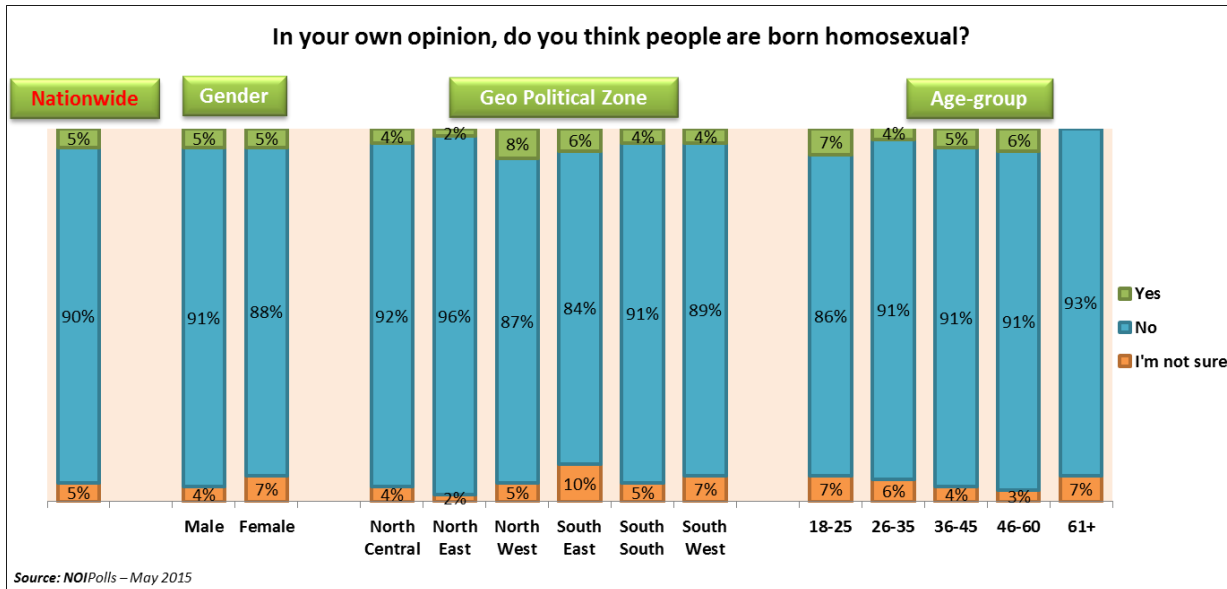


Figure 2: Perception of innate versus acquired homosexuals

5.2 Willingness to accept a homosexual family member

Nationwide results reveal that a majority of Nigerians (87%) are unwilling to accept a homosexual family member, whereas 11% are willing to personally accept a family member who is homosexual. In addition, 2% disclosed they were unsure of their willingness to accept a homosexual family member.

Further analysis revealed that a larger proportion of adult females (13%) are more willing to accept a homosexual family member than adult males. The North-Central and South-South zones boasts the highest proportion of residents (15% respectively) who are willing to accept a family member if they are homosexual.

On an analysis by age, we find that the proportion unwilling to accept a homosexual family member increases generally as age increases (except for the 46-60 year category where there's a slight decline).

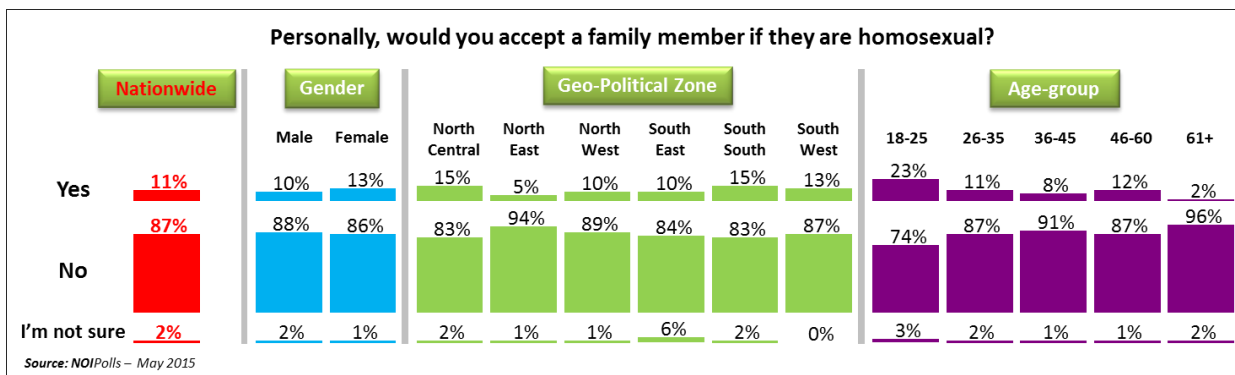


Figure 3: Willingness to accept a homosexual family member

5.3 Perceptions towards the LGB by condition of their birth

Further analysis was carried out on the population who indicated “Yes” or “No” to the question about people being born homosexual. Here, they were asked; if they oppose the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law, if they have a friend who is homosexual, etc. Of the **90%** who indicated in the earlier question that they do NOT believe people are born homosexual, **10%** disclosed they would accept a family member who is a homosexual, **6%** oppose the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law, only **1%** have a family member who is homosexual, **5%** have a friend who is homosexual, **13%** have a person in their locality who is homosexual, and **16%** knows someone who is homosexual generally.

On the other hand **29%** of the **5%** who perceive people are born homosexual would accept a family member if he/she is homosexual, **17%** oppose the law, **9%** have a homosexual family member, and **15%** have a friend who is homosexual and **52%** knows someone who is homosexual among others.

The results here indicate that on a whole, a majority (**52%**) of respondents who believe people are born homosexual know a homosexual (either family, friend, or someone in the locality).

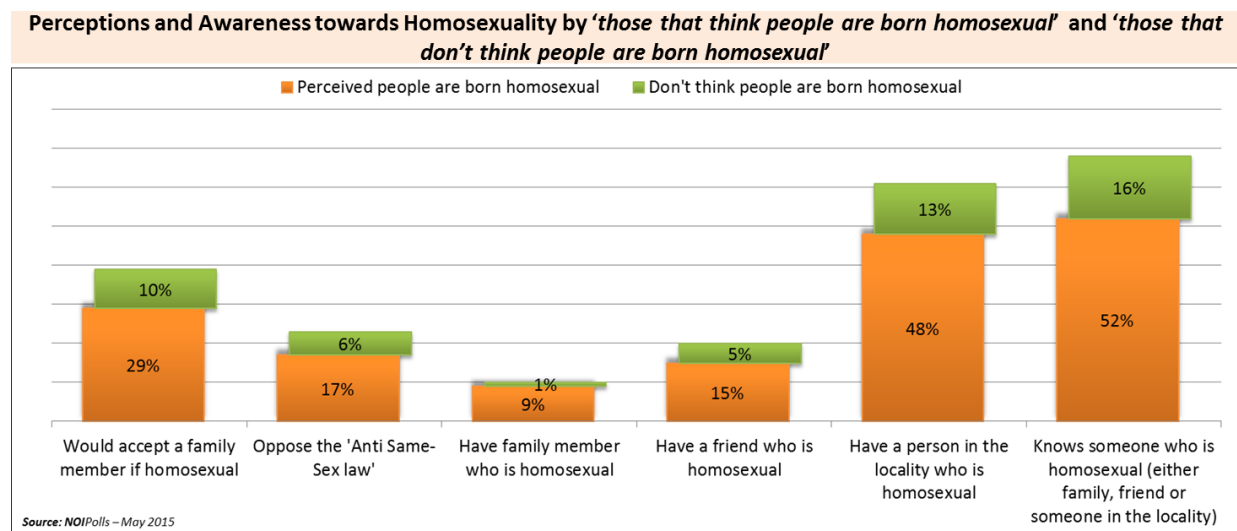


Figure 4: Perceptions of those who think people are born homosexual vs. those who disagree

5.4 Perception towards the LGB as part of your family

The perception towards homosexuals of those who answered either a “Yes” or “No” when asked of their willingness to accept a family member who was homosexual was further analyzed by: their opposition to the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law, they have a friend who is homosexual, know someone who is homosexual, etc.

Results show that over **20%** of those who would accept a family member who is homosexual; oppose the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law, Have a person in their locality that is homosexual, and Know someone who is homosexual respectively.

15% of those who would NOT accept a homosexual family member know someone who is homosexual. 13% of them have a homosexual person in their locality, and 6% oppose the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law.

Interestingly, in spite of the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law being observed in the country, about 30% of those would accept a family member who is homosexual know someone who is homosexual. This reveals that there are small pockets within the population who oppose the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law in the country.

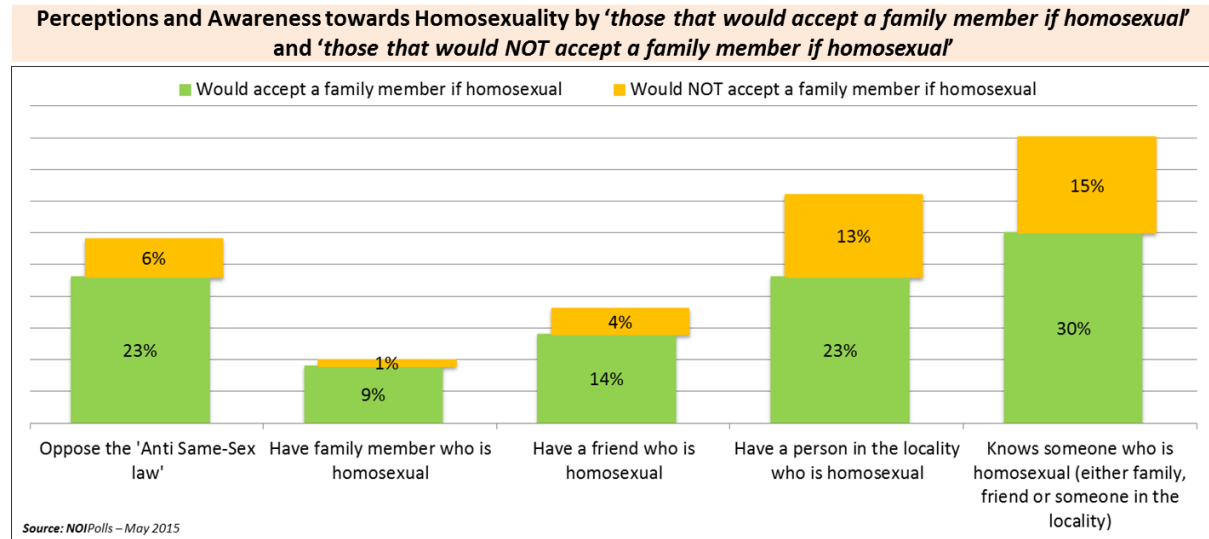
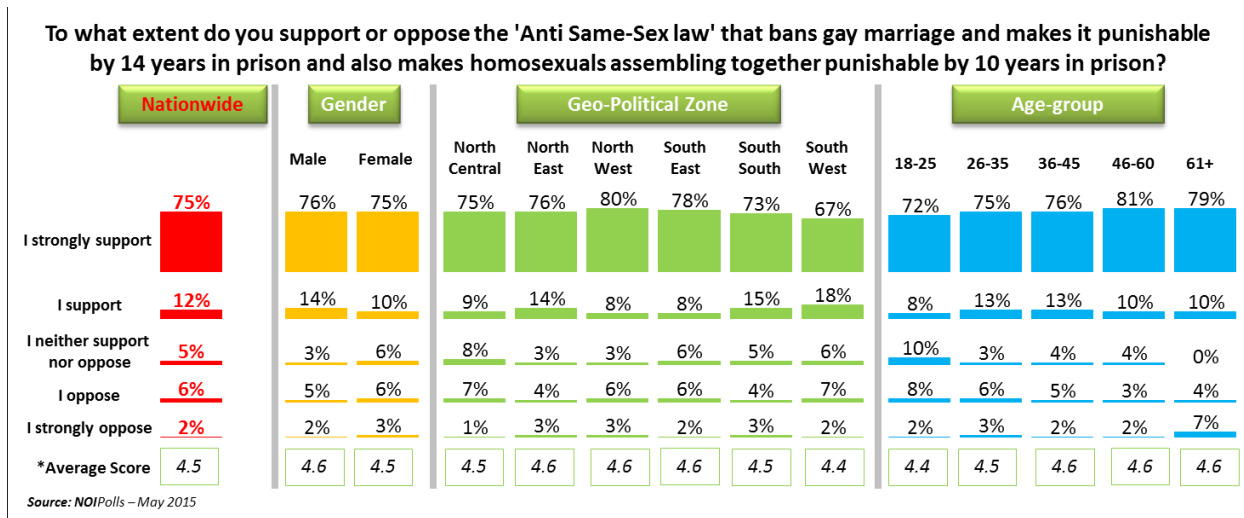


Figure 5: Perceptions of those willing to accept homosexual family member vs. those against

5.5 Support for the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law

The Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law bans gay marriage and makes it punishable by 14 years in prison, and also makes homosexuals who assemble together punishable by up to 10 years in prison. When adult Nigerians were asked to rate their support for the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = I strongly oppose, and 5 = I strongly support, the majority (75%) indicated strong support for the law, bringing the average score nationwide to 4.5. This finding held true across gender, age-groups, and geo-political zones (except for the South-West zone which had the lowest support proportionally 67%).



*The higher the average score, the higher the level of support for the 'Anti Same-Sex Law' (1 = I strongly oppose, ..., 5 = I strongly support)

Figure 6: Support for the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law

The findings from this poll were trended from a similar survey conducted in June 2013, and even then the results show support for the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Legislation was very high.

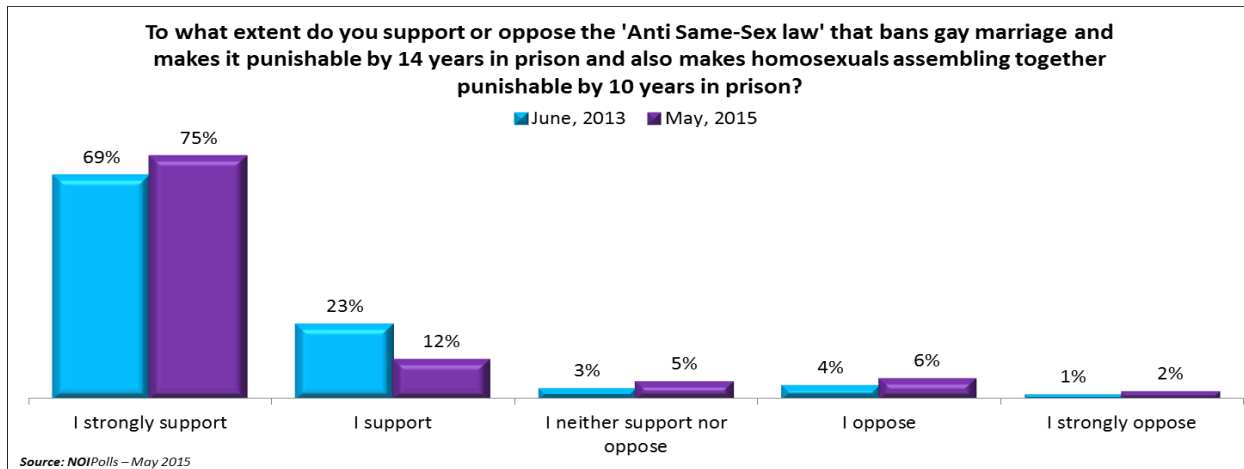


Figure 7: Support for Same Sex Marriage Prohibition legislation (trended)

5.6 Awareness of homosexuals in Nigeria

Respondents were subsequently asked about their awareness of homosexuals in Nigeria. More than 4 in 5 persons (over 80%) acknowledged that they do not know of a homosexual person in their family, as friends, in their locality, or even through the media.

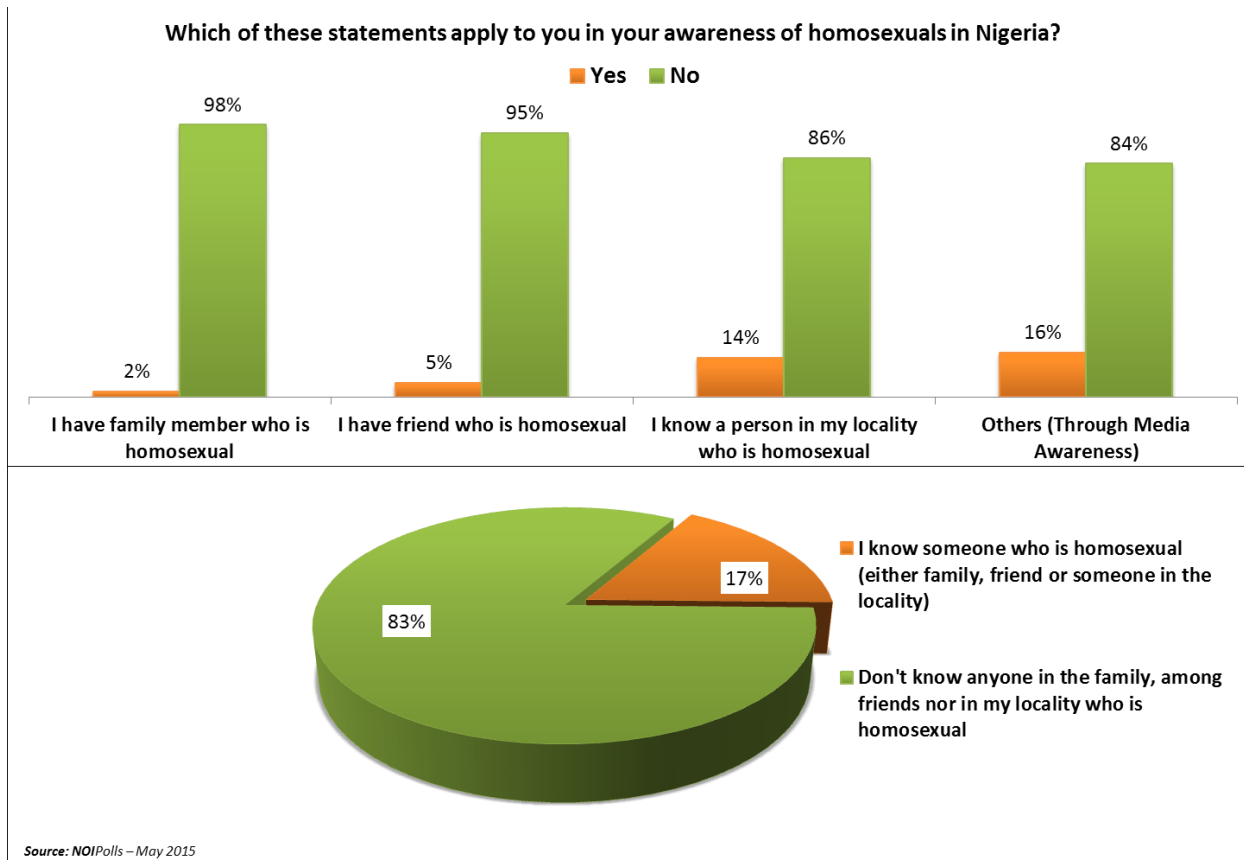


Figure 8: Awareness of homosexuals in Nigeria

When analyzed by gender, we find a larger proportion of males (**22%**) acknowledged that they know someone who is homosexual than females (**12%**). Also, the 18-25 age category had the largest proportion of respondents (**30%**) who indicated that they know a homosexual. This age category also boasted the largest proportion of respondents who are willing to accept a family member who is homosexual as mentioned earlier.

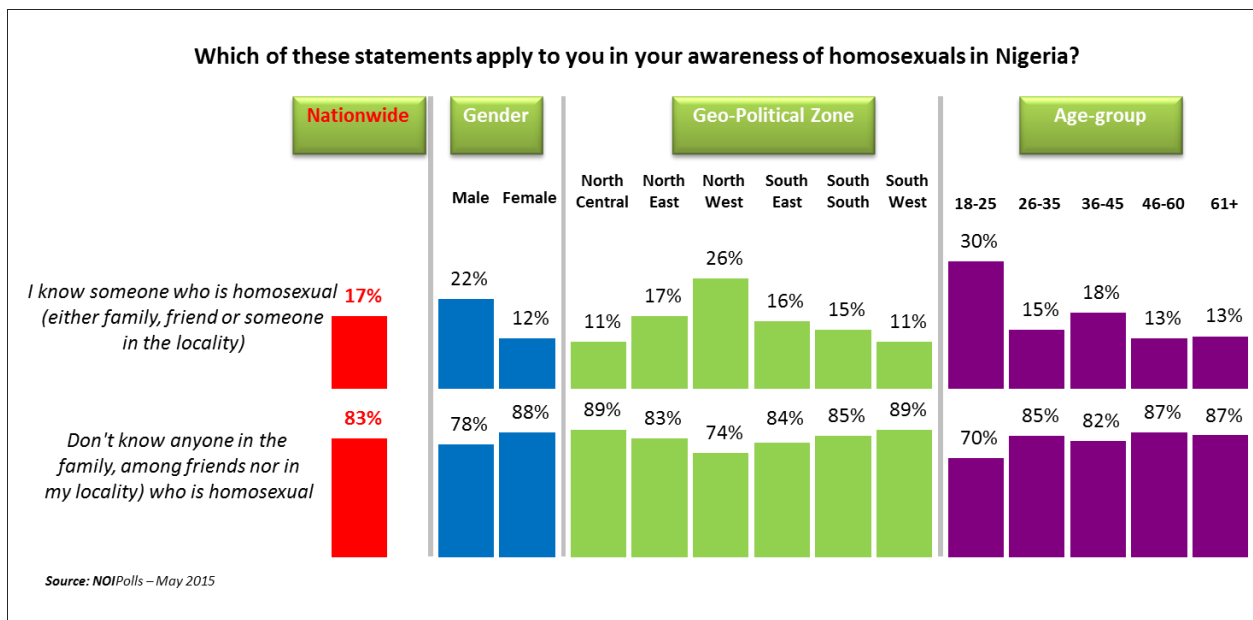


Figure 9: Awareness of homosexuals in Nigeria (demographics)



5.7 Perception regarding LGB rights in Nigeria

Nigerians were asked their perception about certain rights as it concerned the LGB community (i.e. whether they agreed, disagreed, or were neutral). The survey shows that a majority of Nigerians (**81%**) do NOT believe homosexuals should have the same rights as other Nigerians, however **15%** believe homosexuals should have equal rights as other Nigerians. Another question on whether homosexuals should have rights to access public revealed that a majority (**66%**) of Nigerians disagree that homosexuals be given rights to access public services such as healthcare, whereas **30%** agree that homosexuals be granted these rights.

An overwhelming majority (**95%**) of adult Nigerians believe homosexuals should NOT be allowed to get married. Furthermore, a majority (**90%**) also believe homosexuals should NOT be able to meet together as homosexuals, or set-up organizations. Interestingly, the results also show **62%** of adult Nigerians expressed intolerance towards homosexuals, whereas only **28%** expressed tolerance towards them, with **10%** being neutral.

A majority of Nigerians (**90%**) agree with the notion that Nigeria would be a better country without homosexuals, only **6%** disagree, and **4%** were indifferent. Furthermore, **87%** of adult Nigerians support the notion of having homosexuals imprisoned for 14 years for having a relationship with the same sex. Only **10%** of the adult population disagrees, and **3%** are indifferent.

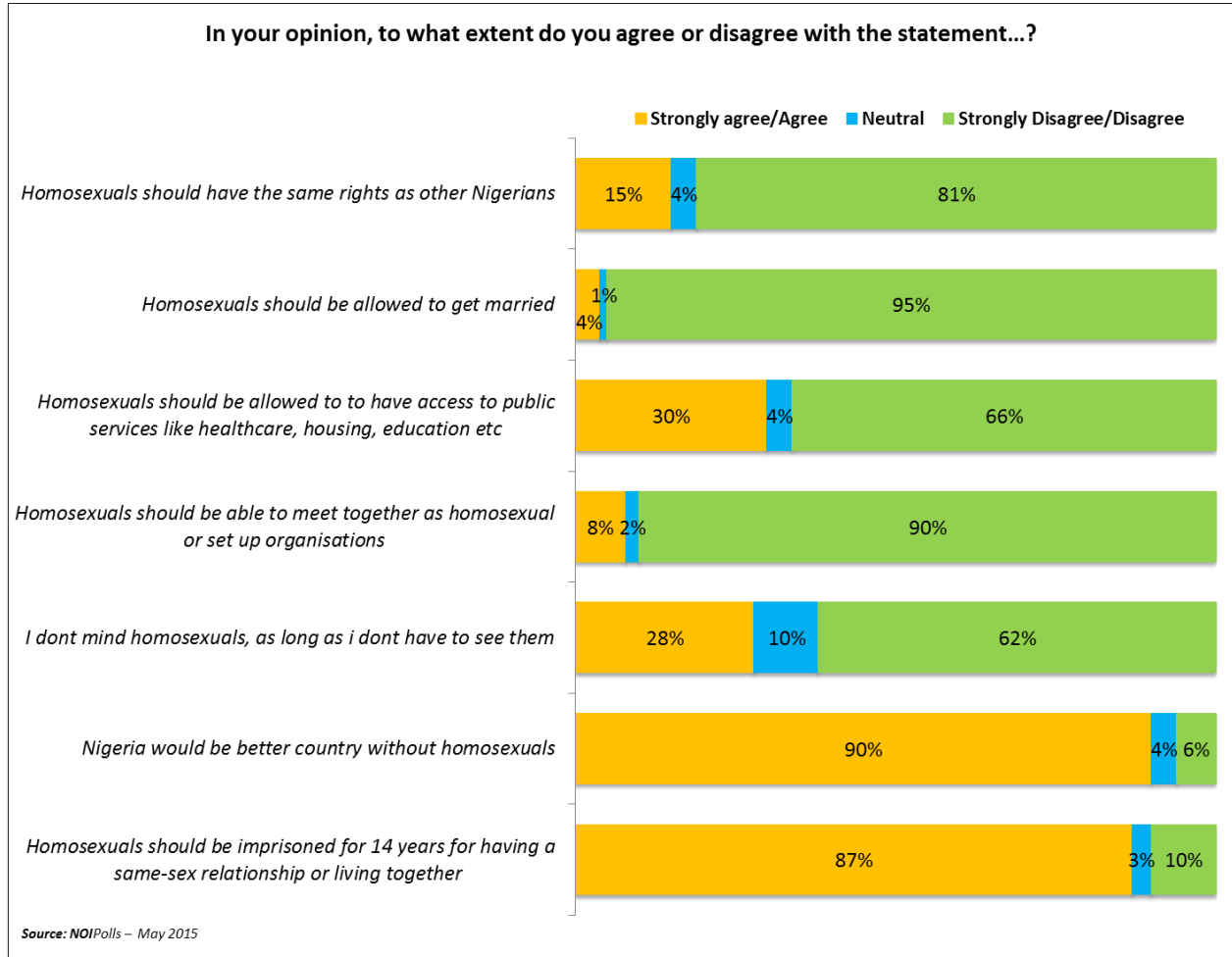


Figure 10: Perception regarding LGB rights in Nigeria

6.0 CONCLUSION

The survey confirms that currently, there is overwhelming public support for the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law. Results show a majority of adult Nigerians (**87%**) support the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Law, and this has remained so even before it’s passing in early 2014 (based on a survey NOIPolls conducted in June 2013). Most Nigerians (**87%**) are not willing to accept a family member who is homosexual, and an even larger proportion (**90%**) do not think people are born homosexual, suggesting that it is an orientation that is acquired through life. Finally, a majority (**81%**) of Nigerians do not believe homosexuals should have the same rights as other Nigerians.

However, awareness of persons who are homosexuals is low nationwide, only **17%**, and over half (**52%**) of respondents who believe people are born homosexual know a homosexual i.e. a member of family or, a friend, or someone in their locality.

7.0 APPENDIX

A majority of Nigerians (90%) do not believe people are born homosexual.

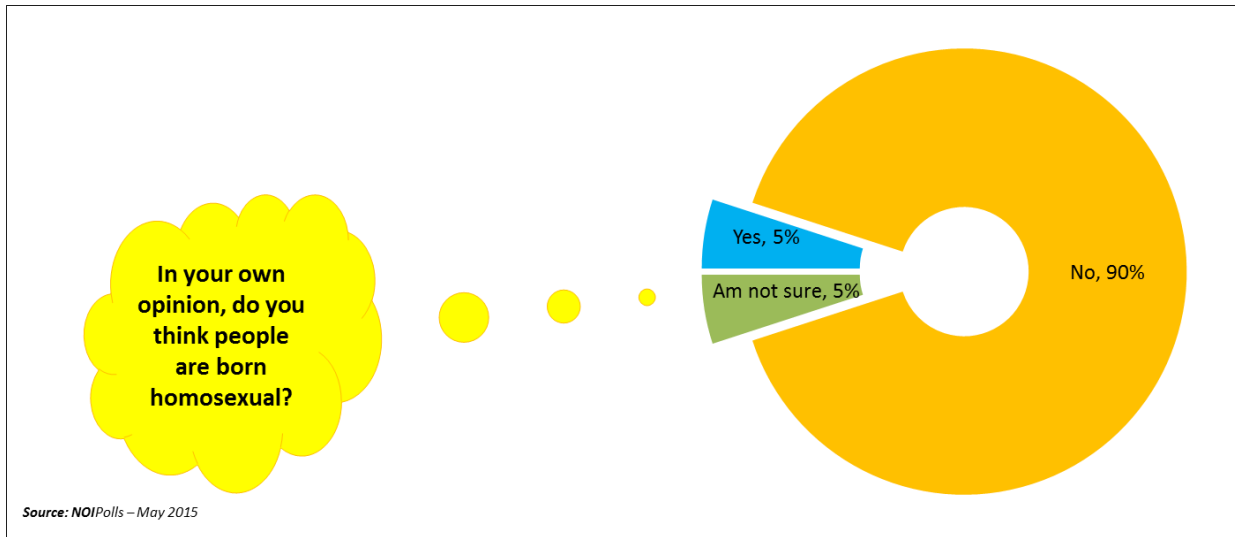


Figure 11: Perception of whether people are born homosexual

Awareness of homosexuals in Nigeria is low

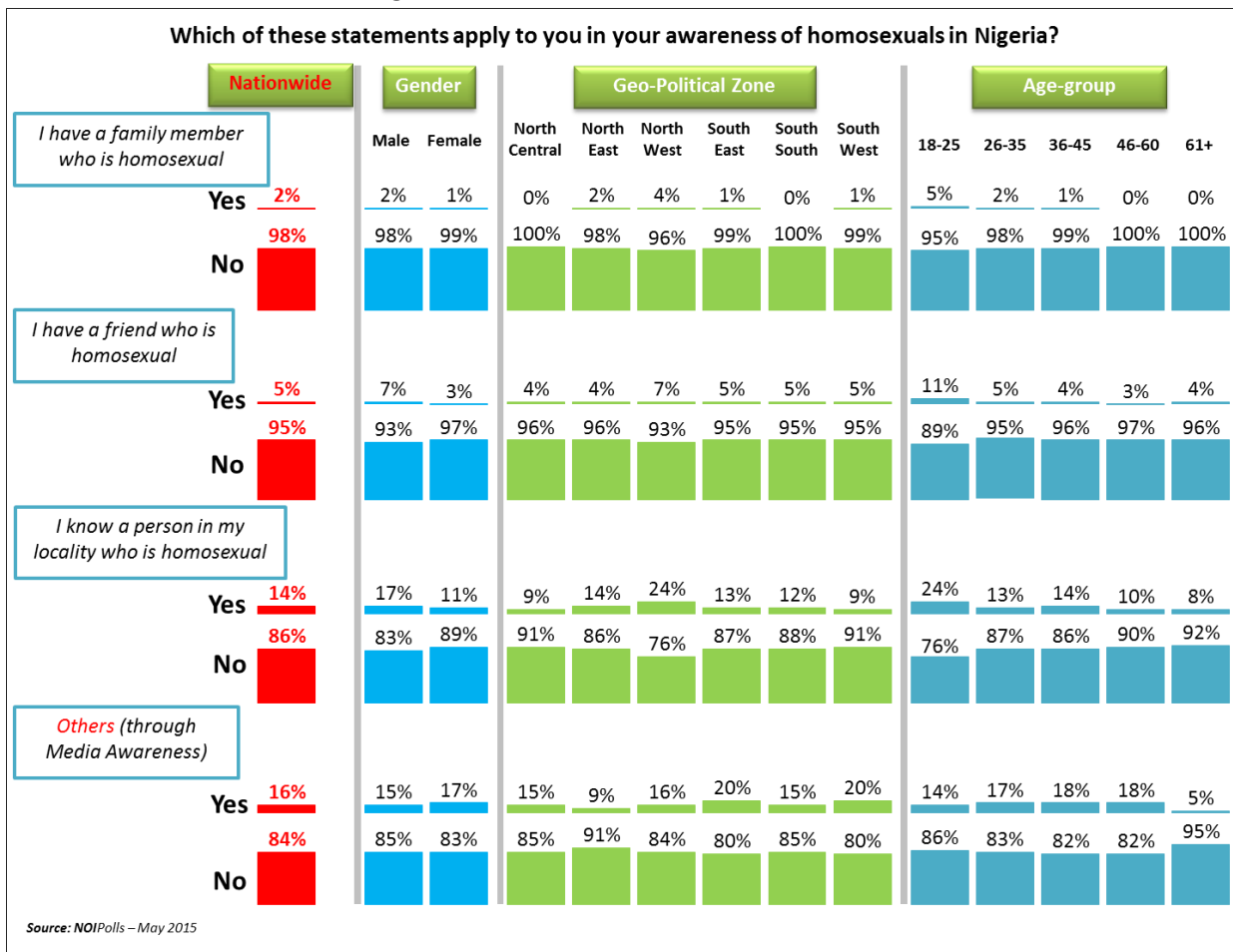


Figure 12: Mode of awareness of a homosexual in Nigeria

A majority of adult Nigerians (**87%**) are not willing to accept a family member who is homosexual.

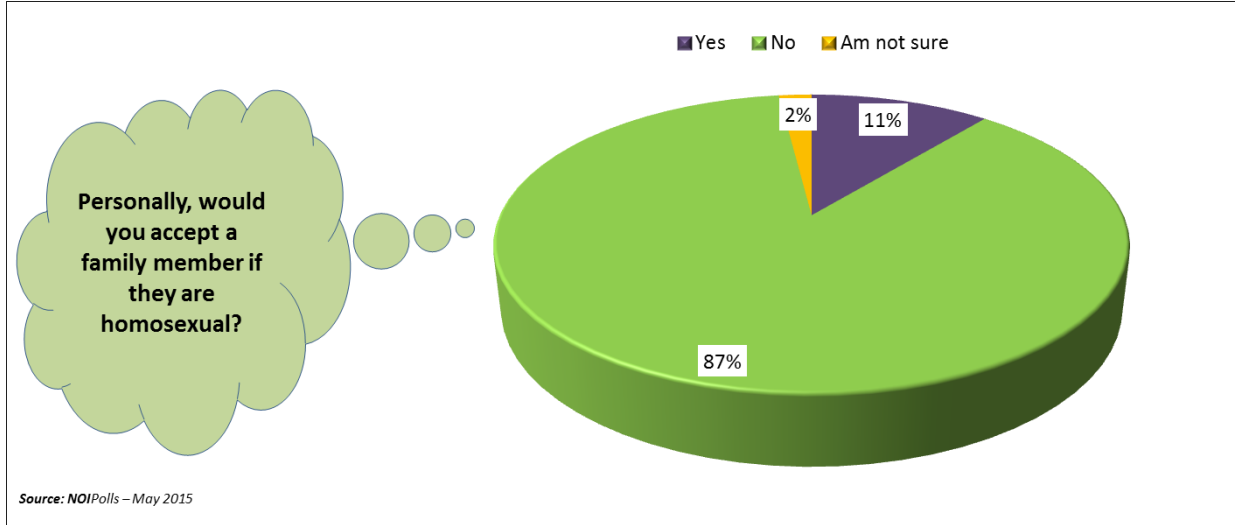


Figure 13: Willingness to accept a family member who is a homosexual

Most Nigerians (**81%**) do not believe homosexuals should have the same rights as other Nigerians.

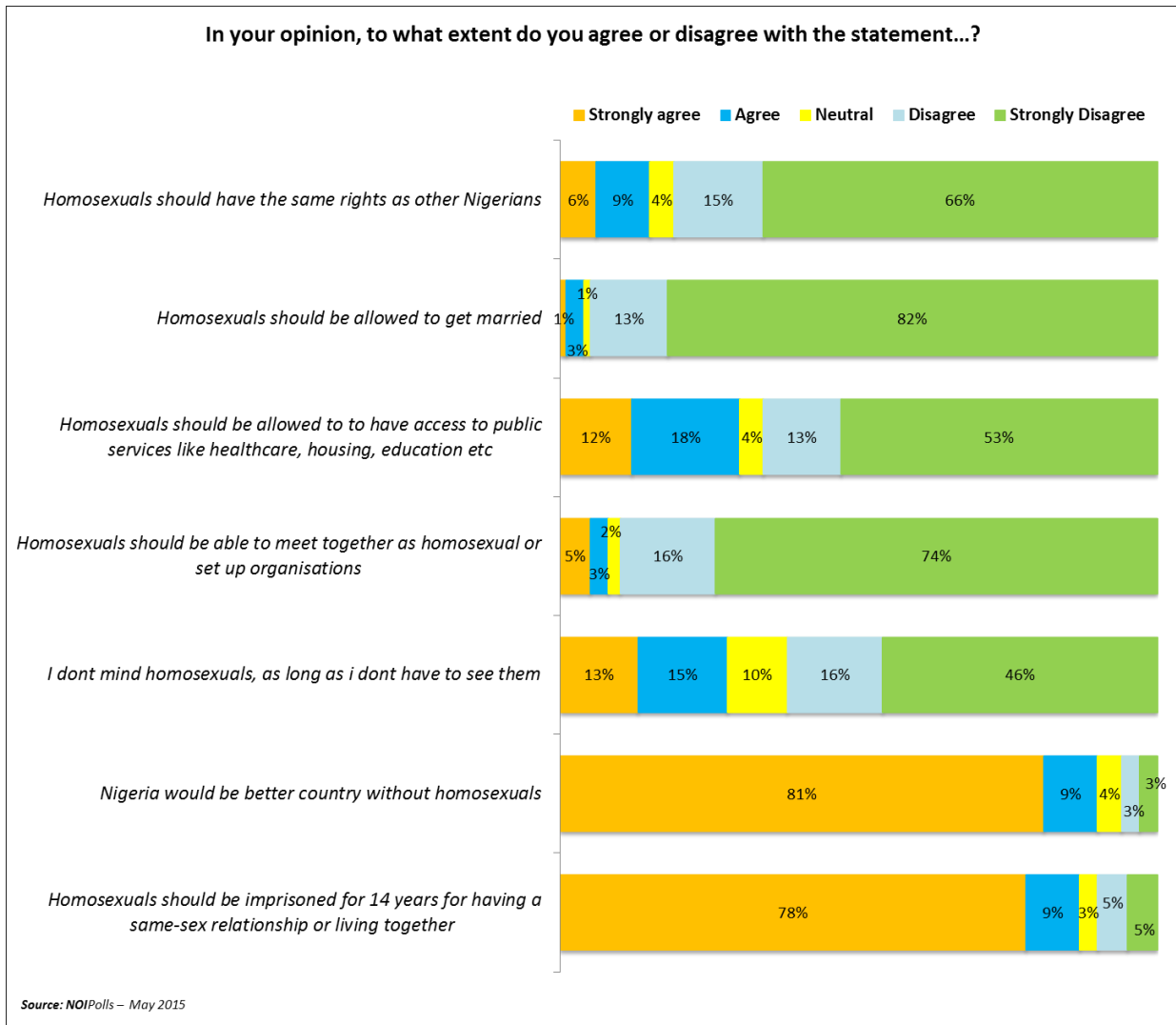


Figure 14: Nigerians' perception about LGB Rights

Most Nigerians do not believe homosexuals should have the same rights as other Nigerians.

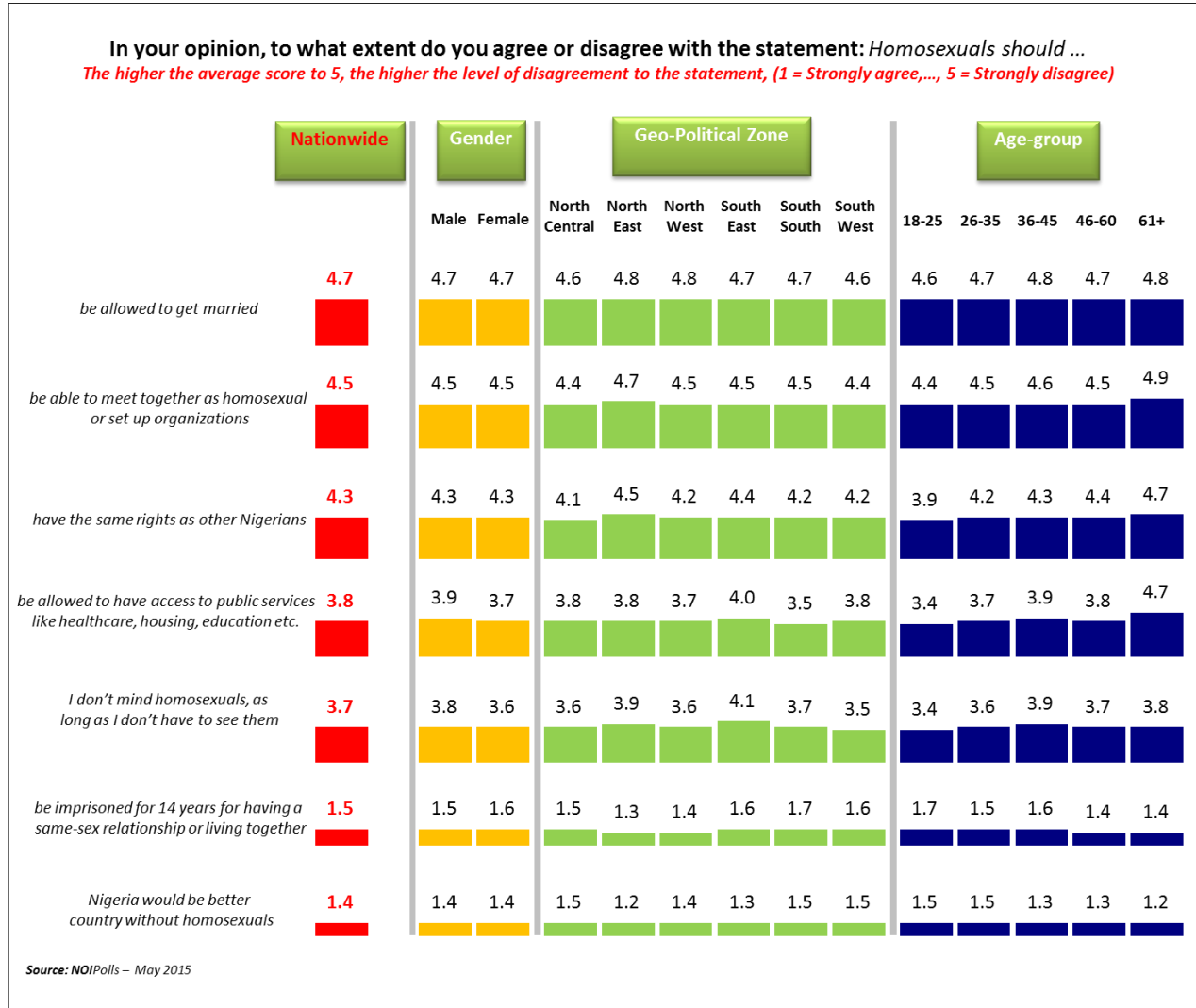


Figure 15: Nigerians' perception about LGB rights in points

Most Nigerians strongly support the Anti Same-Sex Law in Nigeria

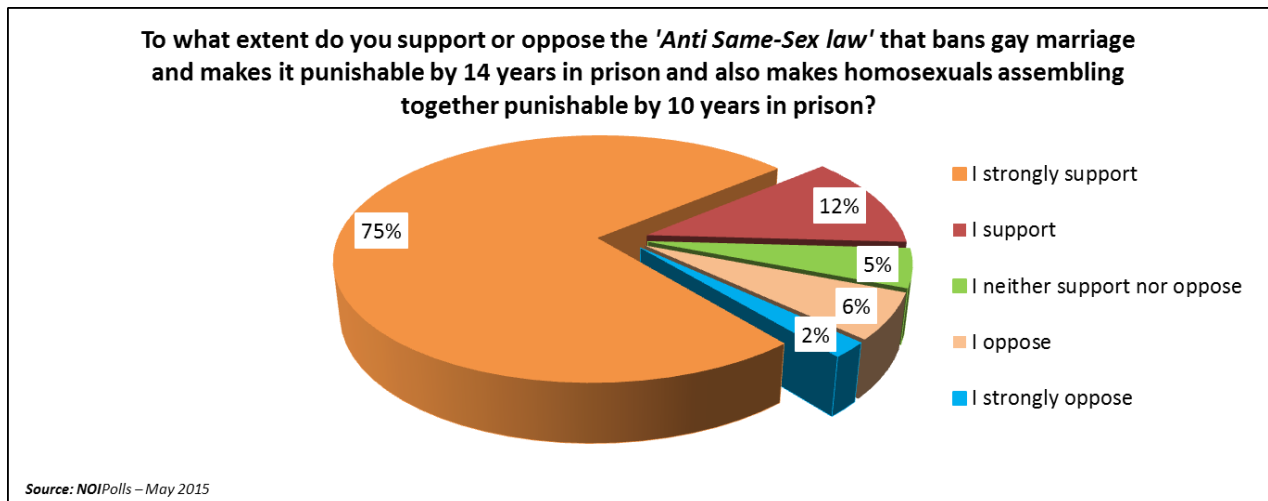


Figure 16: Support for Anti Same-Sex Law