



THE INITIATIVE  
FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

**NOIPolls**

POLLING ANALYTICS DATABANK STRATEGY

**SOCIAL PERCEPTION SURVEY ON  
LESBIAN, GAY AND  
BI-SEXUAL RIGHTS  
IN NIGERIA**

**REPORT**

JANUARY 2017



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**SOCIAL PERCEPTION SURVEY ON  
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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NOIPolls commissioned by The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERs) conducted a nationwide trended poll on: a) the perceptions of Nigerians around the rights and lived experience of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual and b) attitudes toward the 2014 Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA). TIERs is a Nigeria-based registered non-profit organization whose work is to protect and promote the human rights of sexual minorities within Nigeria and the West Africa sub-region. It was founded in 2005 as a response to the discrimination and marginalization of sexual minorities observed in HIV prevention and human rights work.

The poll revealed that the vast majority of Nigerians (91%) do not believe that people are born homosexual, indicating that there is little belief in scientific and genetic justification or explanations for stable same-sex attraction. This figure represents a 1% increase when compared to the 2015 findings. Correspondingly, 83% of those surveyed specified that they would not be willing to accept a family member who is homosexual, whereas 13% expressed a willingness to accept an LGB family member. Comparing current results with the 2015 findings revealed a 4% decline in the number of people who say they would not accept a gay family member.

The survey also shows that 9 in 10 adult Nigerians (90%) are in support of the SSMPA, a 3% increase from the 2015 result (87%). Also, analysis reveals that 83% of respondents disclosed that they do not have a family member, a friend or know anyone in their community who is homosexual. 17% however claimed that they either have a family member, a friend or know someone who is LGB. In relation to the question about association with homosexuals, 90% of the respondents are of the view that Nigeria would be a better country without homosexuals and 70% of the respondents say that they would not want to have anything to do with homosexuals. 21% indicated that they don't mind homosexuals as long as they do not have to see them. In addition, 56% of Nigerians say homosexuals should be denied access to public services like healthcare, housing, education, etc. whereas 39% think that they should have access to public services.

## 2.0 SURVEY BACKGROUND

On 13 January 2014, the former president of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan signed into law the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA), which was passed by the National Assembly in May 2013. The SSMPA has made it a criminal offence for same-sex people to hold meetings, set up associations and organizations, and this attracts a 10-year jail sentence while marriage between same-sex couples attracts a 14-year jail term. Nigeria is one of 38 African countries that have passed draconian legislation in recent times. The passing of these laws has attracted criticisms and legal challenge from within the countries as well as internationally. Despite criticism from various sources, many Nigerians are opposed to the idea of homosexuality claiming cultural incongruity.

## 3.0 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey method involved a random nationwide sampling of 2,000 respondents who were interviewed over the telephone. Participants were selected from the six geopolitical zones through a proportionate, stratified random sample design. A sample of this size gives 95% confidence that the results obtained are statistically precise - within a range of plus or minus 3% of what they would have been if the entire population had been surveyed. The survey questionnaires were administered using five major languages (Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, English and Pidgin English). Respondents were asked eight specific questions and findings are presented below.



## 4.0 SURVEY RESULTS

The survey is the third in series of the LGB poll conducted by NOIPolls. The first was conducted in 2013 and the second was conducted in 2015 and this section presents findings from the 2017 polls and where necessary, it draws comparison with early polls.

### 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

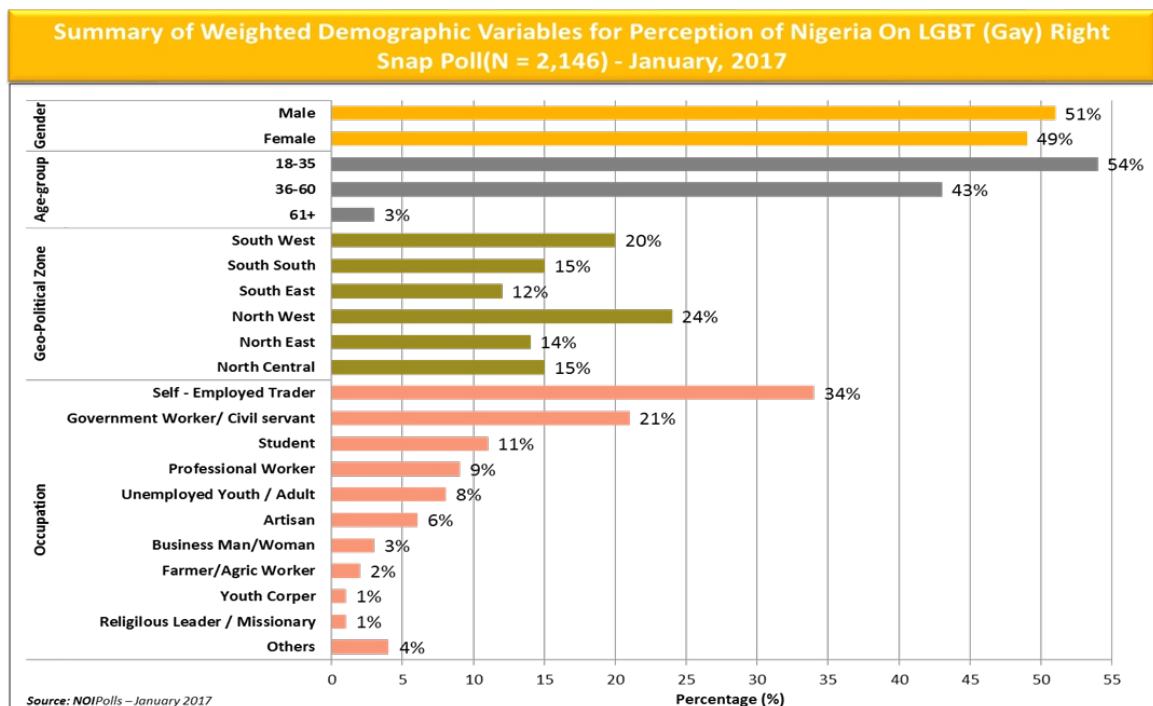
The demographic distribution of the respondents is divided into the following groups: Gender, age-group, geo-political zones and occupation as illustrated in figure 1 below.

**GENDER:** The proportion of male and female respondents was almost equal with 51% and 49% respectively.

**AGE-GROUP:** The largest age-group represented in the survey was 18-35 years with 54%, followed by respondents aged 36-60 with 43%. The lowest age-group represented in the survey was the 60+ age-groups (3%).

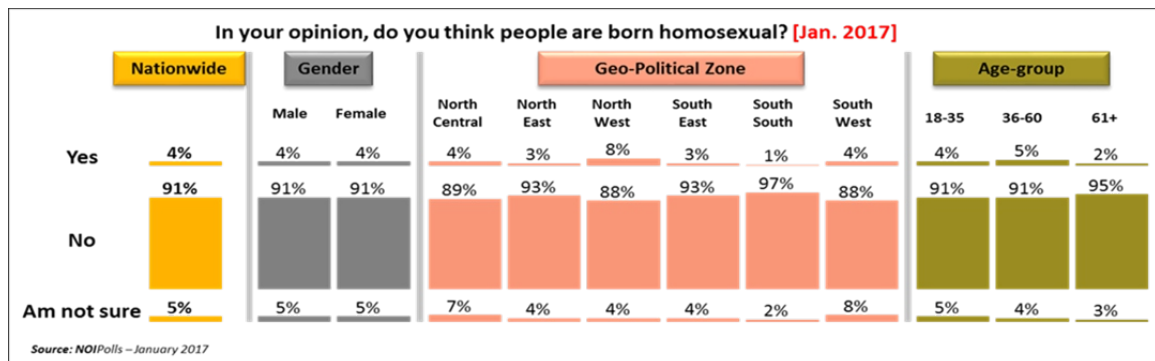
**GEO-POLITICAL ZONES:** All geo-political zones were adequately represented in the survey, with the highest representation from the North-West zone (24%) and the lowest was the South-East zone (12%).

**OCCUPATION:** The highest represented occupation in the survey was self-employed trader (34 percent); followed by Government/Civil Servant (21 percent) and students (11 percent).



## 4.2 HOMOSEXUALITY AS A CONDITION OF BIRTH

The question whether homosexuality is inborn or socially constructed has engendered great debate, with perspectives varying between those who believe homosexuality is genetically predetermined and therefore difficult to alter. Others view homosexuality as acquired through socialization and therefore, a life choice that can be easily changed at will. (<https://allpsych.com/journal/homosexuality/>) When the respondents were asked if people are born homosexual, most (91%) across the demographic divide said no. Only 4% of respondents believe that people are born homosexuals and 5% of respondents were unsure. In subsequent polls, it will be useful to see what the result will be if the same question was posed about whether heterosexuality is inborn or acquired.



## 4.3 TREND ANALYSIS OF HOMOSEXUALITY BY CONDITION OF BIRTH

When current findings are compared with the result obtained in 2015, the findings are almost identical with a 1% increase in the number of Nigerians who are certain that people are not born homosexuals.

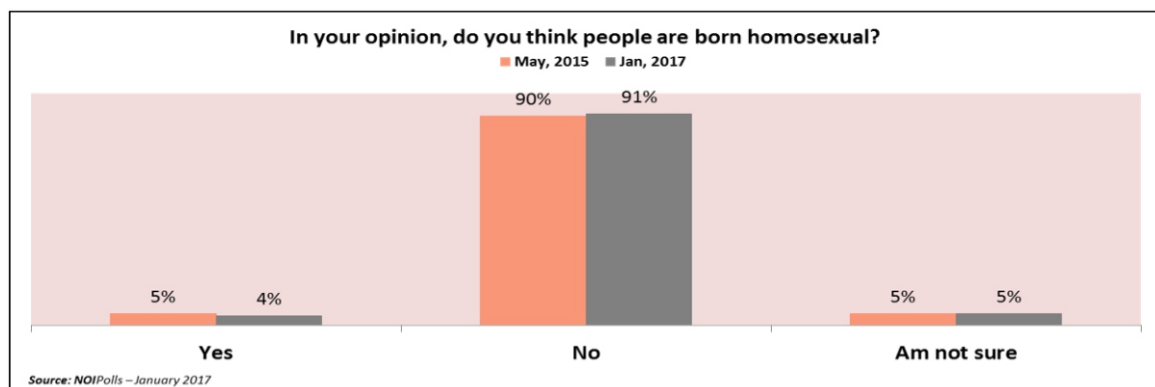


Figure 3: Trend analysis of homosexuality by condition of birth

## 4.4 ACCEPTABILITY OF HOMOSEXUALS WITHIN THE FAMILY

In order to ascertain the level of acceptability of LGB people across family members, the majority of Nigerians (83%) stated that they would not accept a family member who is homosexual. This can be attributed to a general disapproval of same-sex attraction or relationship which most respondents mentioned during the course of the interview as alien, not part of their African cultural or religious beliefs. Analyses across gender showed that more males (83%) than female (81%) will not accept homosexuals, while residents from the North Central and South-South geo-political zones had the highest unacceptability rate with 86% each.



Recent findings revealed that 13% of Nigerians affirmed that they would accept a family member who is homosexual and respondents from the North-west zone (19%) accounted for the largest proportion of Nigerians who expressed acceptance.

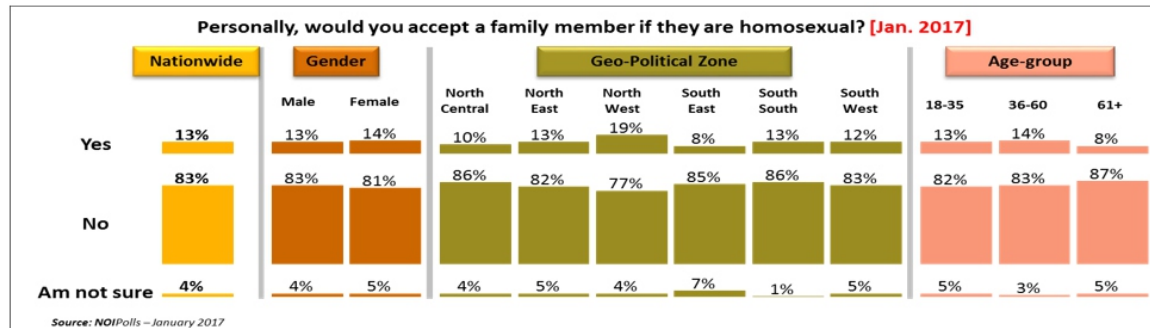


Figure 4: Homosexual acceptability

## 4.2 TREND ANALYSIS OF HOMOSEXUALS WITHIN THE FAMILY

Comparing these findings with the result obtained in May 2015, there is a 4% decrease in the proportion of respondents who would not accept a homosexual family member. Inversely, a 2% increase was observed in the number of respondents who would personally accept a family member if they are homosexuals.

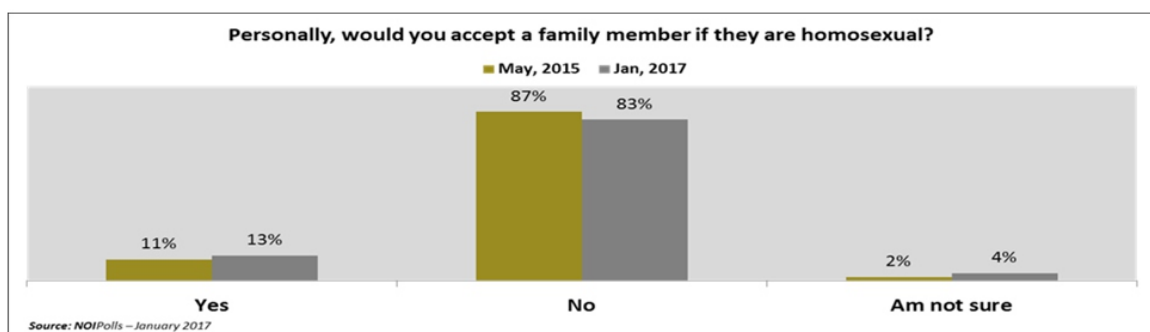


Figure 5: Trend analysis on homosexual acceptability in Nigeria

## 4.2 ATTITUDES TOWARDS SSMPA

The SSMPA makes marriage between same-sex couples punishable by 14 years in prison. It also makes the assembling of same-sex groups punishable by a 10-year prison sentence. Three years after the law was signed by the former President Goodluck Jonathan in January 2014, the poll showed that majority of Nigerians (90%) continued to support the Act. It is also worth noting that during the course of this survey, most respondents believed that homosexuality is not only unAfrican, but also that it is yet another example of Africans adapting to Western cultural practices.

Contrarily, while 7% of the respondents surveyed claimed that they oppose the law, the highest opposition to the law is among the over 61+(17%).

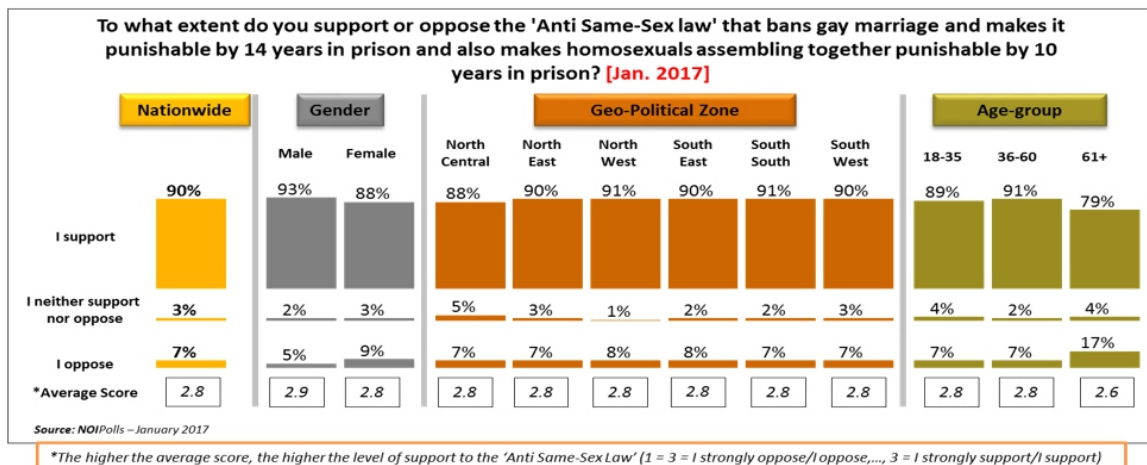


Figure 6: Support for the Anti Same-Sex Law in Nigeria

## 4.2 TREND ANALYSIS ON ATTITUDES TO SSMPA

Trend analysis showed a steady increase in the proportion of respondents who strongly support the anti-same sex law over a 4-year interval when current findings are compared with the result obtained in 2013 and 2015.

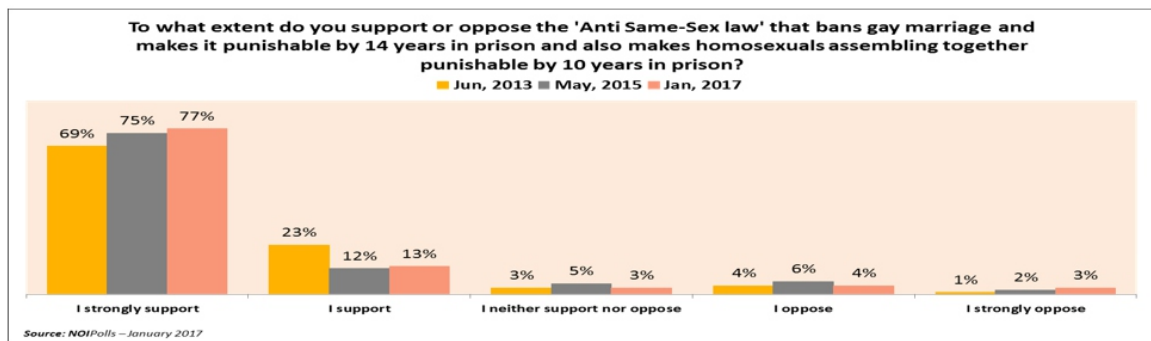


Figure 7: Trend analysis on the support of the Anti-Same-Sex Law in Nigeria

## 4.2 AWARENESS OF HOMOSEXUALS IN NIGERIA

The poll sought to measure the social and familial awareness about LGB people. Only 1% of respondents specified that they were aware of a family member who was homosexual, while a majority (99%) stated otherwise. 14% of respondents affirmed that they have friends who are homosexual and 86% of respondents stated that they do not have friends who are homosexual. A further 61% of respondents stated that they do not know anyone in their locality who is homosexual and about 4 in 10 (39%) respondents nationwide stated that they know someone who is homosexual within their locality or vicinity. Although 17% of the respondents say they know someone who is homosexual, the younger demographics 18-35 (17%) and 36-60 (18%) are more likely to personally know someone who is homosexual – either friend, family member or in their locality than the older demographic (61+) at 8%.

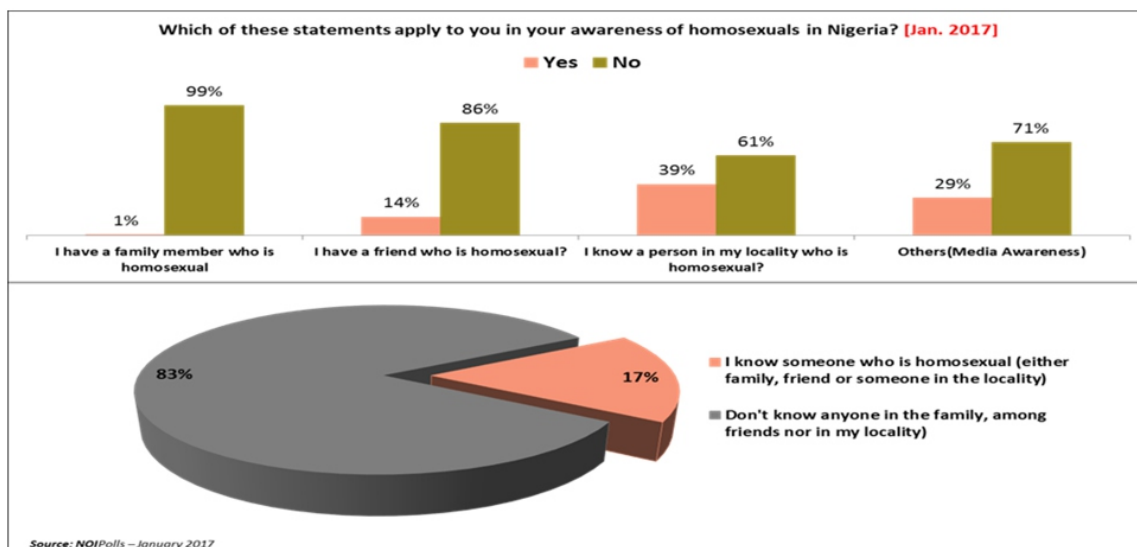
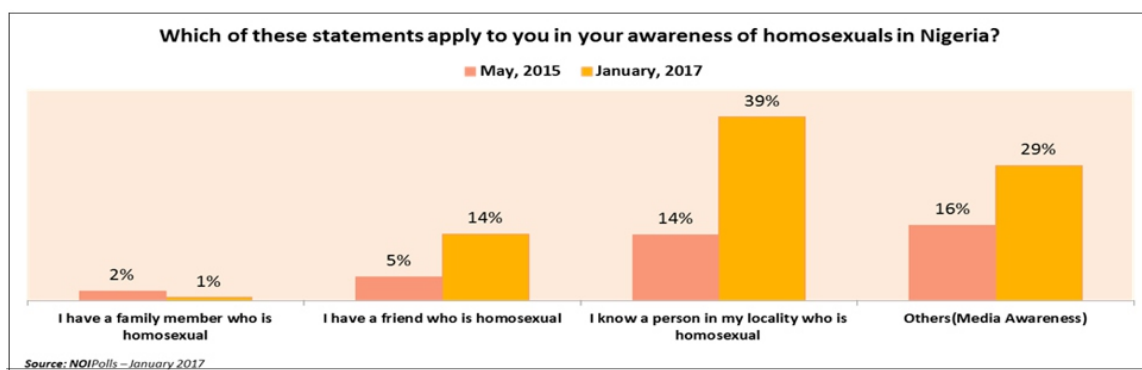


Figure 8: Awareness of homosexuals in Nigeria

## 4.2 TREND ANALYSIS ON THE AWARENESS OF HOMOSEXUALS IN NIGERIA

There has been a 1% decrease in 2017 of the number of people who stated that they have a family member who is homosexual compared to the 2% of 2015. Further analysis shows that 5% of respondents nationwide in 2015 indicated that they have a friend who is homosexual while the 2017 poll revealed that 14% of the respondents confirmed that they have a friend who is homosexual. This represents a 9% increase for respondents in this category.

Compared to 2015 where 14% of respondents claimed to know a person in their locality who is homosexual, 39% of the respondents make the same claim in 2017, hence revealing a 25% increase in the proportion of respondents who know someone in their locality that is homosexual. Similarly, the 2015 result showed that 16% of respondents nationwide stated that their knowledge about LGB people was through the media. This figure increased to 29% in 2017, representing a 13% increase. At 29% the media remains the most likely context through which the surveyed population acquire knowledge and awareness about LGB people in Nigeria.



## 4.2 PERCEPTIONS OF NIGERIANS TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY

When asked if homosexuals should be imprisoned for 14 years for having consensual same-sex relationship most Nigerians (91%) stated in the affirmative that they supported the law; while 7% opposed it and 2% stayed neutral. Similarly, a high (90%) number of respondents are of the view that Nigeria would be a better country without homosexuals while 7% disagreed with this assertion. Furthermore, the poll revealed that 70% of the respondents say that they do mind homosexuals and would rather not see them, whereas 21% do not mind homosexuals as long as they remain out of their field of vision.

The majority of respondents (94%) disagreed that constitutional rights of freedom of association and assembly should be a right upheld for homosexuals. (98%) are of the opinion that homosexuals should neither have the right to marriage or any other rights as other Nigerians (80%). (56%) say homosexuals should be denied access to public services like healthcare, housing, education, and 39% think that they should have access to public services.

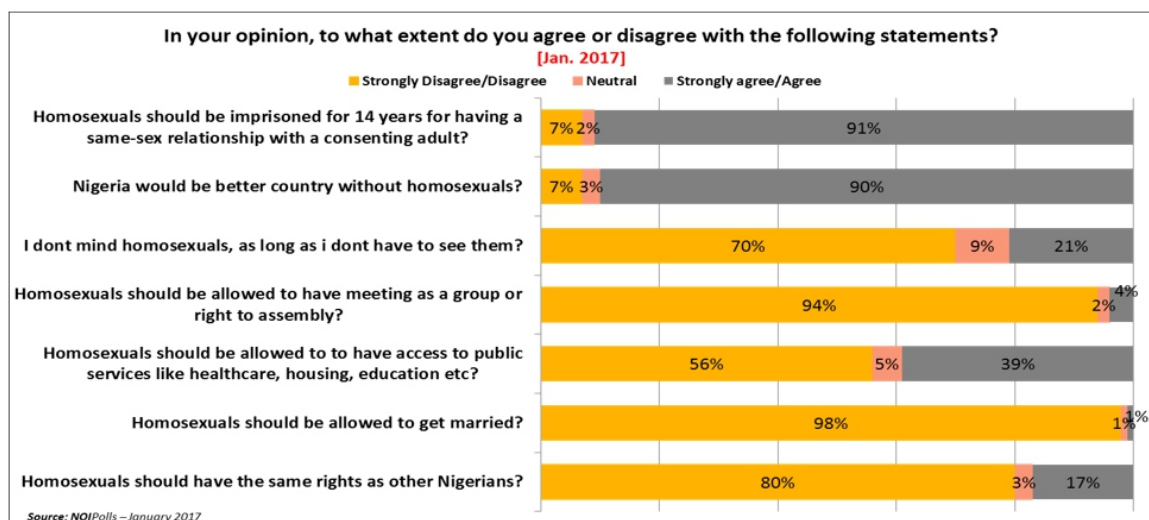


Figure 10: Perceptions of Nigerians towards homosexuality

## 4.2 TREND ANALYSIS ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF NIGERIANS TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY

Comparing current findings with the results obtained in 2015 showed a 9% increase in the number of Nigerians who think that homosexuals should be allowed to have access to public services whereas, a 7% decrease was observed in the number of respondents who do not mind homosexuals as long as they don't have to see them.

While there's been an increase (4%) in the number of respondents who think that same-sex relationship should carry a 14-year prison sentence, there has been a noticeable rise (9%) in the number of respondents who think that homosexuals should be allowed to have access to public services such as healthcare and housing etc. Noteworthy is the increased acceptance (7%) for homosexuals in 2017 compared to 2015.

## IN YOUR OPINION, TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?

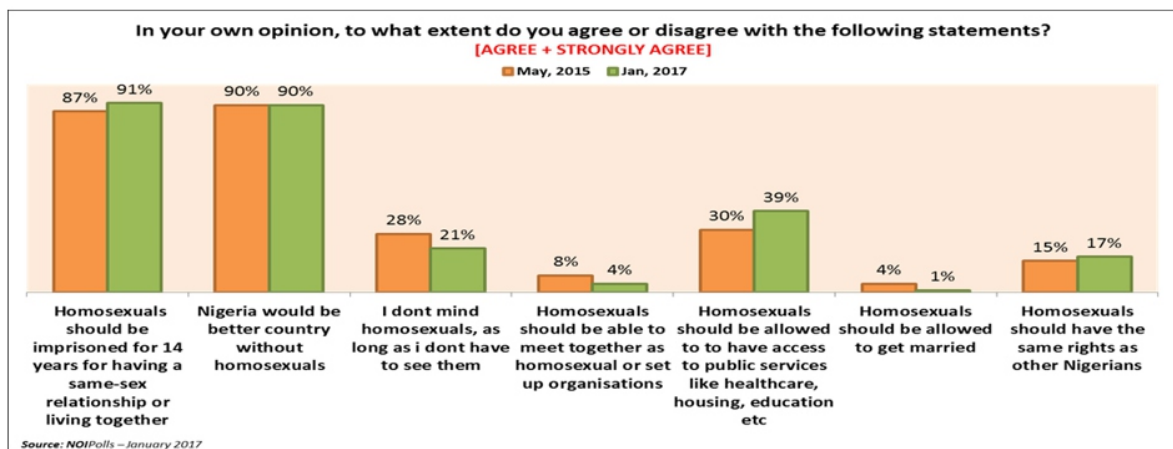


Figure 11: Trend analysis of opinion of Nigerians on homosexuality



## 5.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while a larger proportion of Nigerians (91%) do not think people are born homosexual, and a majority continue to support the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act, a growing number of Nigerians (39%) accept that Nigerians who are homosexual should have equal access to public services such as healthcare, housing and education. The predominant narrative about Nigerian attitudes to homosexuality may need revising, giving the shifting perspectives and attitudes demonstrated by the trends in this survey.

## 6.0 APPENDIX

### - QUESTIONNAIRES AND EXTRA CHARTS

#### Perception of Nigerians on LGB Rights Poll - Questionnaire

Good Morning / Evening, my name is..... I work for NOIPolls, an Abuja-based opinion polling and research organization. We are currently conducting a survey to find out the views of Nigerians regarding LGB rights. (We retrieved your number from a pool of randomly generated numbers). Your participation in this poll is completely voluntary. However, your opinion is vital to this poll. Is this a good time to talk? **Note to interviewer: Do not read out 'Don't know' and 'Refused' options.**

1. In your opinion, do you think people are born homosexual?
  1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Am not sure
  4. Refused
2. Personally, would you accept a family member if they are homosexual?
  1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Am not sure
  4. Refused
3. To what extent do you support or oppose the 'Anti Same-Sex law' that bans gay marriage and makes it punishable by 14 years in prison and also makes homosexuals assembling together punishable by 10 years in prison?
  1. I strongly oppose
  2. I oppose
  3. I neither support nor oppose
  4. I support
  5. I strongly support
  6. Don't know
  7. Refused

4. Which of these statements apply to you in your awareness of homosexuals in Nigeria?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Yes	No	DK/RF
1.	I have a family member who is homosexual	1	2	3
2.	I have a friend who is homosexual	1	2	3
3.	I know a person in my locality who is homosexual	1	2	3
4.	Others (please specify).....			

5. In your opinion, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	DK/R F
a	Homosexuals should have the same rights as other Nigerians.	1	2	3	4	5	6
b	Homosexuals should be allowed to get married.	1	2	3	4	5	6
c	Homosexuals should be allowed to have access to public services like healthcare, housing, education etc	1	2	3	4	5	6
d	Homosexuals should be allowed to have meeting as a group or right to assembly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
e	I don't mind homosexuals, as long as I don't have to see them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
f	Nigeria would be a better country without homosexuals	1	2	3	4	5	6
g	Homosexuals should be imprisoned for 14 years for having a same-sex relationship with a consenting adult.	1	2	3	4	5	6

### Demographic Questions

6. Gender:

1. Male
2. Female

7. What age category do you fall in to?

1. 0-17 **(End interview if this is the case)**
2. 18-35
3. 36-60
4. 60+
5. Don't know/Refused

8. Occupation?

1) Government Worker / Civil Servant	Employed by a public ministry, agency, board, or commission; either at Federal, State or LGA level.
2) Professional worker	Lawyer, Doctor, Teacher, Engineer, Nurse, Accountant, Computer Programmer, Architect, Banker, Pilot etc.
3) Self-Employed Trader	Self-employed trader or one-man business owner.
4) Business Man/Woman	Owner-Manager of a registered business corporation employing one or more persons.
5) Farmer/Agric. Worker	Farmer, Fisherman, Meat Seller, Agro Dealer, Agric extension worker, tractor operator etc
6) Artisan	Carpenter, barber, Plumber, Electrician, Mechanic, Hairdresser, Tailor, Welder etc
7) Religious Leader / Missionary	Full-Time Pastor, Evangelist, Reverend, Imam, Mallam etc
8) Youth Corper	Currently Serving
9) Student	Currently in Secondary or Tertiary Institutions – Universities, Polytechnics, College of Education and Vocational Schools
10) Unemployed Youth / Adult	Currently has no means of earning an income
11) Others	

9. What state do you live in? **(Interviewer: code state and geo-political zone)**

Note: Code for states (below) 1-37.

38 – Refused

S/N	STATE	S/N	STATE	S/N	STATE	S/N	STATE	S/N	STATE
1	Abia	10	Delta	19	Kano	28	Ondo	37	Abuja/FCT
2	Adamawa	11	Ebonyi	20	Katsina	29	Osun	38	Refused
3	Akwa Ibom	12	Edo	21	Kebbi	30	Oyo		
4	Anambra	13	Ekiti	22	Kogi	31	Plateau		
5	Bauchi	14	Enugu	23	Kwara	32	Rivers		
6	Bayelsa	15	Gombe	24	Lagos	33	Sokoto		
7	Benue	16	Imo	25	Nasarawa	34	Taraba		
8	Borno	17	Jigawa	26	Niger	35	Yobe		
9	Cross River	18	Kaduna	27	Ogun	36	Zamfara		

10. What LGA do you live in? **(Interviewer: code LGA)**

**Thank the respondent for participation and end interview.**



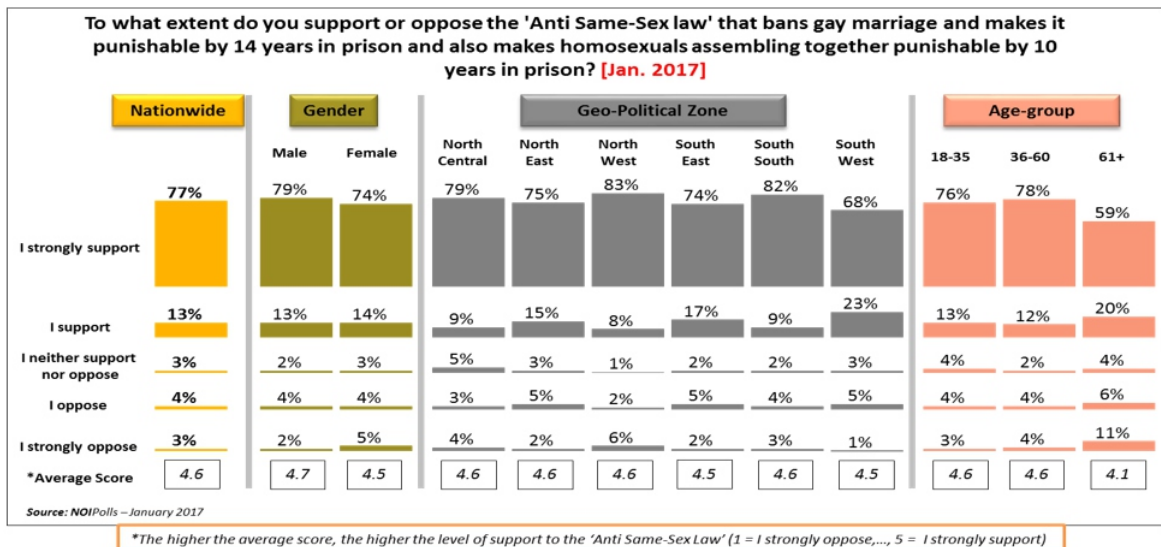


Figure 12: Support for the Anti-Same Sex Law in Nigeria

On the average, the poll revealed that 17 percent of the Nigerians acknowledged that they know someone (either family, friend or someone in their locality) who is a homosexual while, 83 percent disclosed that they do not know anyone in their family, among friends nor in their locality who is homosexual.

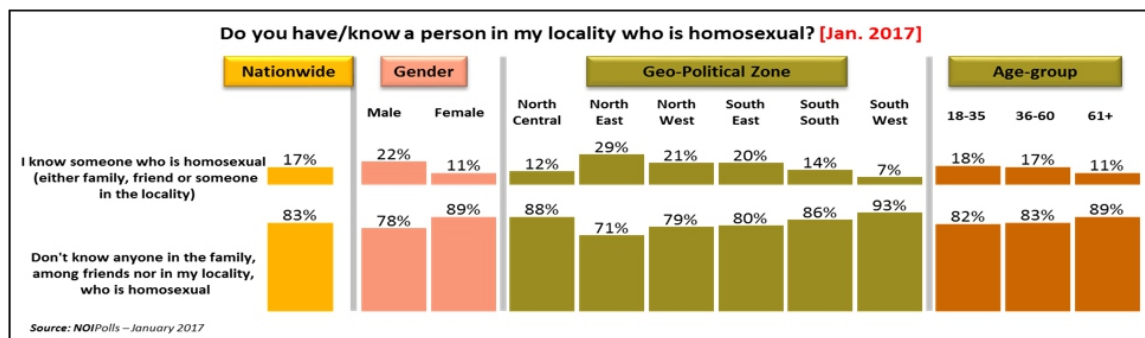


Figure 13: Awareness of homosexuals in Nigeria

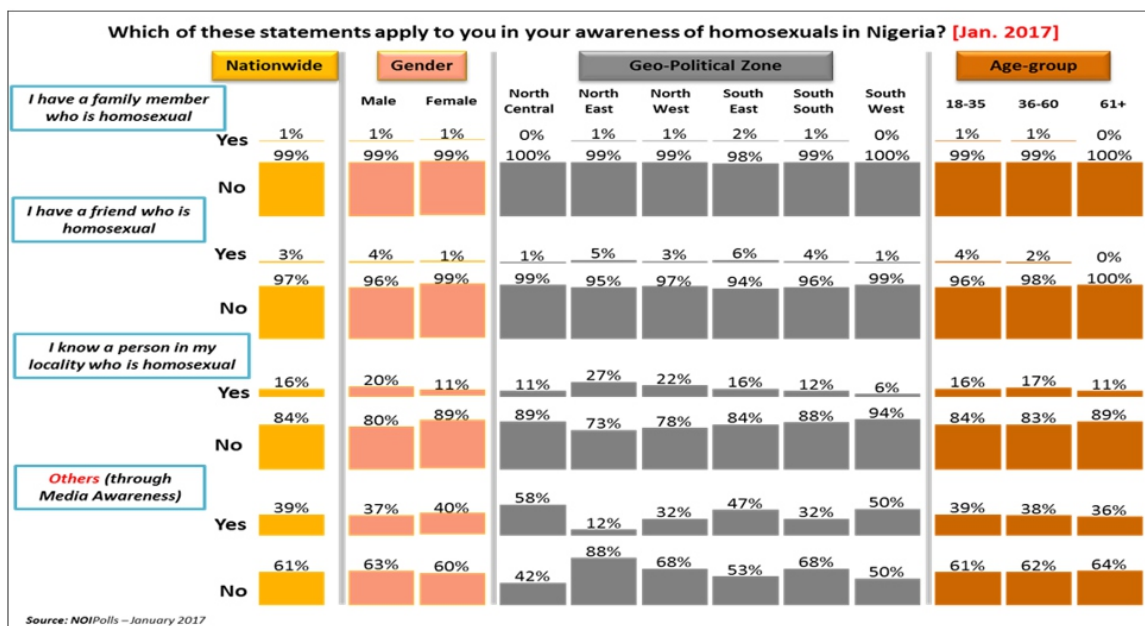


Figure 14: Mode of awareness in relation to someone who is homosexual

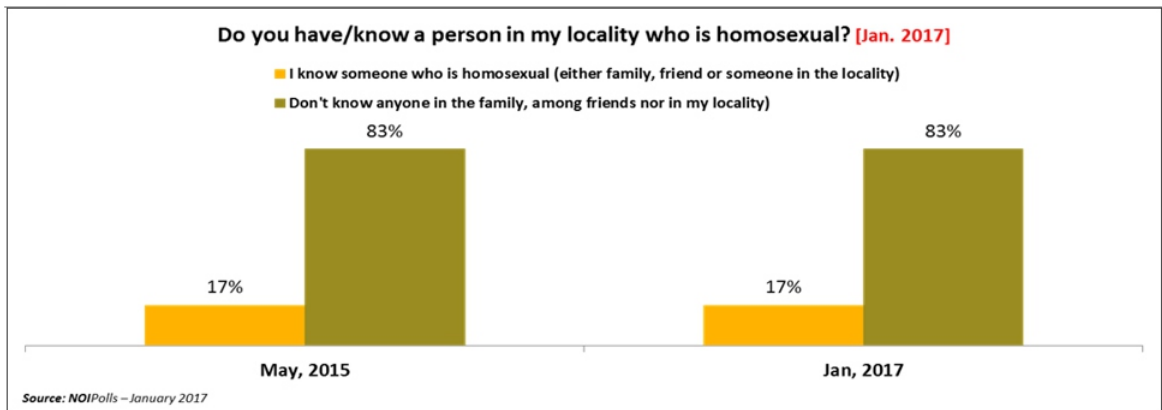


Figure 15: Trended mode of awareness in relation to someone who is homosexual

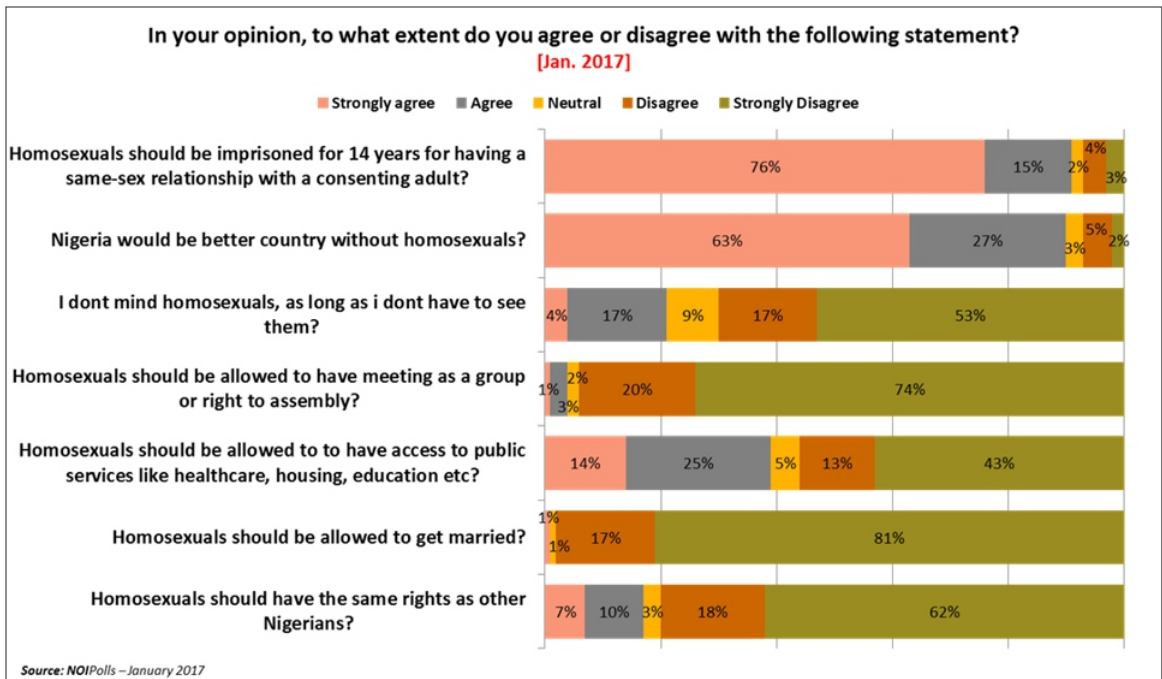


Figure 16: Perceptions of Nigerians towards homosexuality

