



SOCIAL PERCEPTION SURVEY ON

**LESBIAN, GAY, BI-SEXUAL
AND TRANSGENDER PERSONS
RIGHTS IN NIGERIA**

REPORT JUNE, 2019

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Executive Summary

The Initiative for Equal Rights commissioned Vivid Rain to conduct a social perception survey to understand how Nigerians view lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights issues. This poll, which is the fourth in the biennial series, was conducted in all the 36 states in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERs) is a Nigeria-based registered not-for-profit organization working to protect and promote the human rights of sexual minorities nationally and regionally. It was founded in 2005.

Although Nigerians have consistently shown a negative attitude towards LGBT rights issues, there has been a gradual increase in acceptance as shown by the results from this survey. About 60% of Nigerians will not accept a family member who is LGBT. While this number is high, in 2017, 83% of Nigerians were not willing to accept such a family member. This represents a significant change in acceptance levels. Similarly, there were positive changes in the attitude to the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act as more Nigerians appear to no longer support the law. In 2015, 87% of respondents surveyed supported the law but in 2019 about 75% support it. This shows a 12% drop in 4 years.

In addition, there is a 13% drop in the proportion of Nigerians who believe that people should be jailed for 14 years for having same sex relationships, as 74% of respondents surveyed in 2019 are in support of jail terms as opposed to 91% of respondents in 2017.

Conversely, there appears to be a downward trend in the awareness of LGBT persons as fewer numbers reported being aware of relatives, community members, or famous people who are LGBT.

Background

In 2013, NOI polls conducted a national perception survey on the lives and human rights of LGBT persons in Nigeria. The survey was initiated in the wake of the deliberations on the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act of 2014. This bill was passed by the Nigerian National Assembly in May 2013 and received presidential assent on the 7th of January 2014. The Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act has made it illegal for gay people to even hold meetings and also criminalizes homosexual clubs, associations and organizations, with penalties of up to 14 years in jail. Nigeria is one of 38 African countries to have passed such anti-gay legislation (about 3 out of 4 African countries presently) in one form or the other.

Nigeria has been criticized severely by civil rights organizations, as well as the United Nations, for failing to uphold, and violating, the rights of LGBT people but this has not changed the cultural disposition of its people to the topic. The polls are conducted biennially, measuring the perception of Nigerians towards persons who are different on account of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Methodology

Using Nigeria's adult population of the 2006 National Population and Housing Census as sample frame, a clustered stratified multistage probability sample design was used to ensure every adult citizen was given an equal and known chance of being chosen for inclusion in the sample. The sample size was 2,400, which contains a representative cross section of all citizens of voting age (18 years and older) in Nigeria. In order to increase precision, the sample was stratified with key social characteristics of the population. Face-to-face surveys were conducted in 150 primary sampling units (PSU) with 16 surveys conducted per Enumerating Area (EA).

Data collection was conducted with the aid of Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) on the survey CTO platform.



Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Who participated in the survey?

- Geopolitical Zones**

The North West zone of the country has the highest share of respondents. It accounts for about 25% of the total respondents, followed by the South with about 21% of the respondents. North Central has 16%, followed by South South which has about 15%. The North East and South East both accounted for about 13% and 11% respectively. The sample distribution follows the national population distribution across the geopolitical zones.

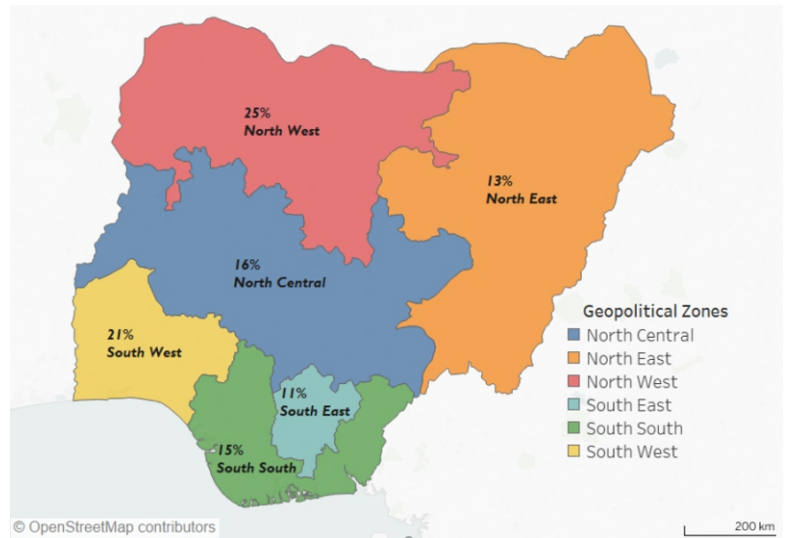


Figure 1 : Proportion of Study Participants by Geopolitical Zones

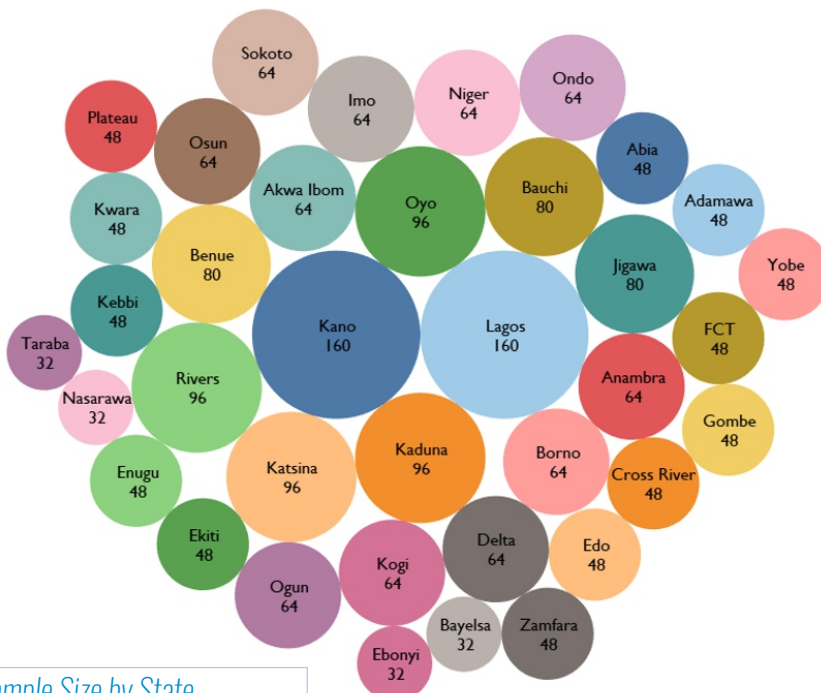


Figure 2: Sample Size by State

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

• Occupation

A good number of the respondents (35%) are self-employed; artisans account for 16 % of the respondents. Students, business owners and the unemployed account for 13%, 8% and 7% respectively.

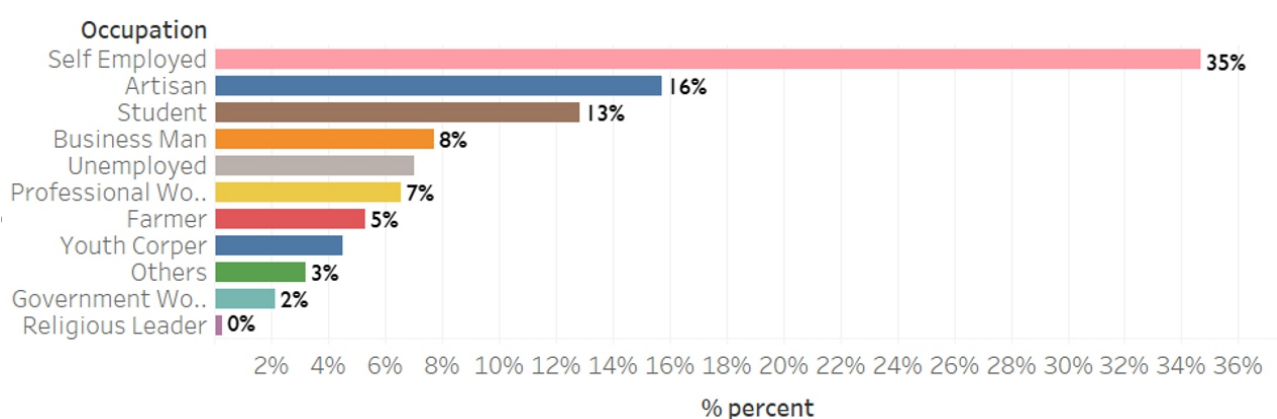


Figure 3 : Occupational Characteristics of Study Participants

• Age Group by Gender

A little over 53% of the respondents are male compared to 46.5% of the respondents that are female. The age group distribution follows a normal distribution pattern. Age group 18 – 30 years accounts for the majority (51%) of the respondents while the age group of those above 60 accounts for just 1% of the total respondents. Over 85% of the respondents are between 18 – 40 years.

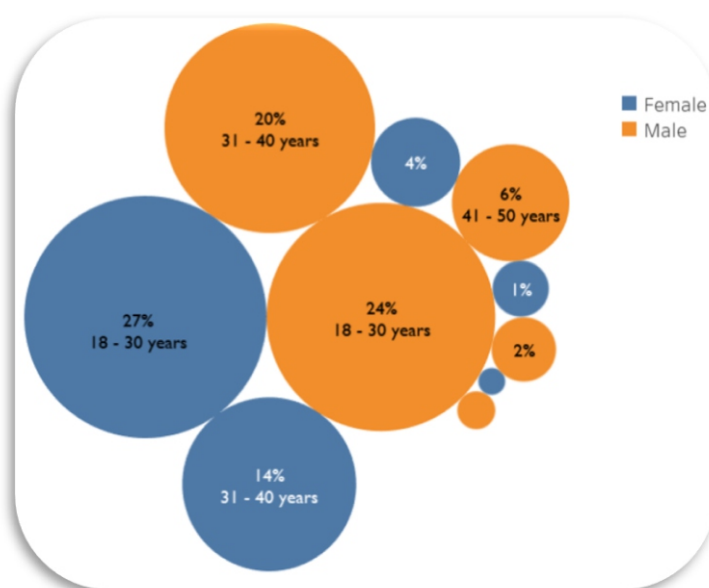


Figure 4: Description of Age Groups by Gender

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

• Highest level of education according to geopolitical zones

About 16% of the total number of respondents do not have any form of formal education, over 60% completed either primary or secondary school education, and about 22% of respondents have a university degree or its equivalent (18% have a first degree while about 4% have a postgraduate degree). The chart below shows the breakdown according to geopolitical zones.

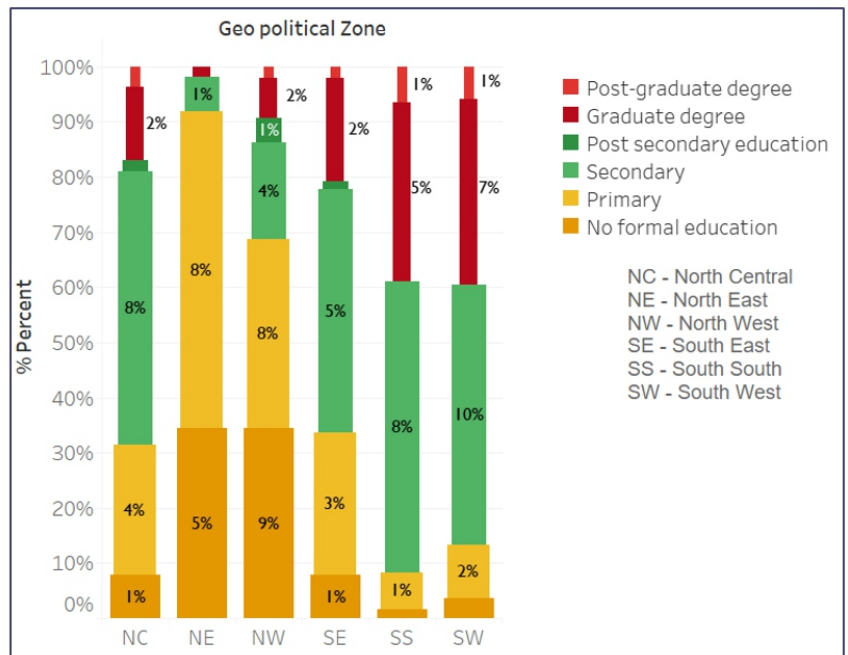


Figure 5 : Description of Educational Attainment by Geopolitical Zone

• Marital status and gender

A little over 53% of the respondents are male compared to 46.5% of the respondents that are female. Majority (53%) of the respondents are single, while 44% are married. About 3% are either separated/divorced or widowed (not currently married).

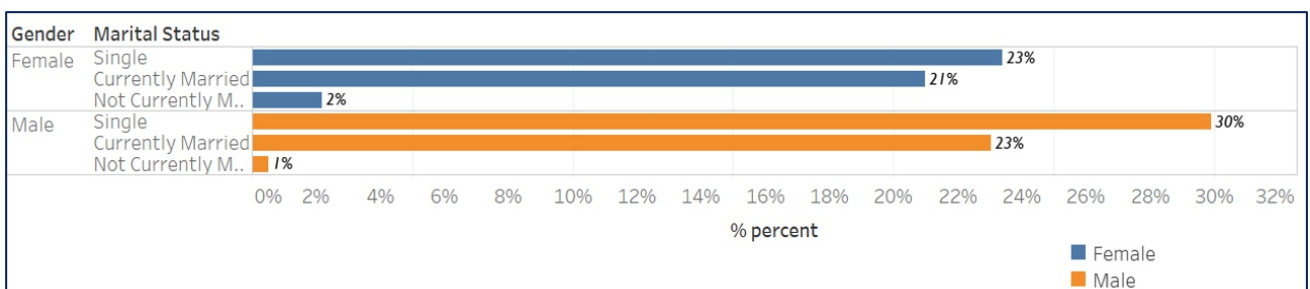


Figure 6: Description of Marital Status by Gender

RESULTS

Homosexuality as a Condition of Birth

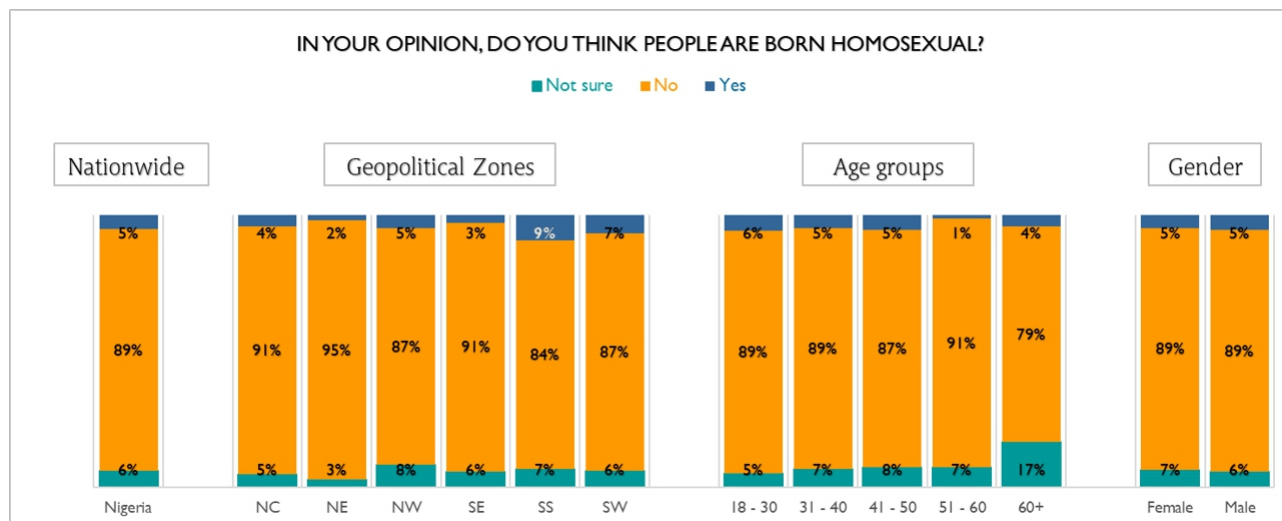


Figure 7: Belief in Homosexuality as Innate

About 89% of respondents do not believe that homosexuality is innate, 5% believe this to be true, while 6% of respondents are unsure. This mind-set generally cuts across every age group aside from the above 60 age group where 17% of respondents are unsure if people are born homosexual and 4% agree that it is innate. At 9%, South South zone has the highest number of people who believe that people are born homosexual, while the North East has the lowest number at 2%.

Trend Analysis on Homosexuality as a Condition of Birth in Nigeria (2015-2019)

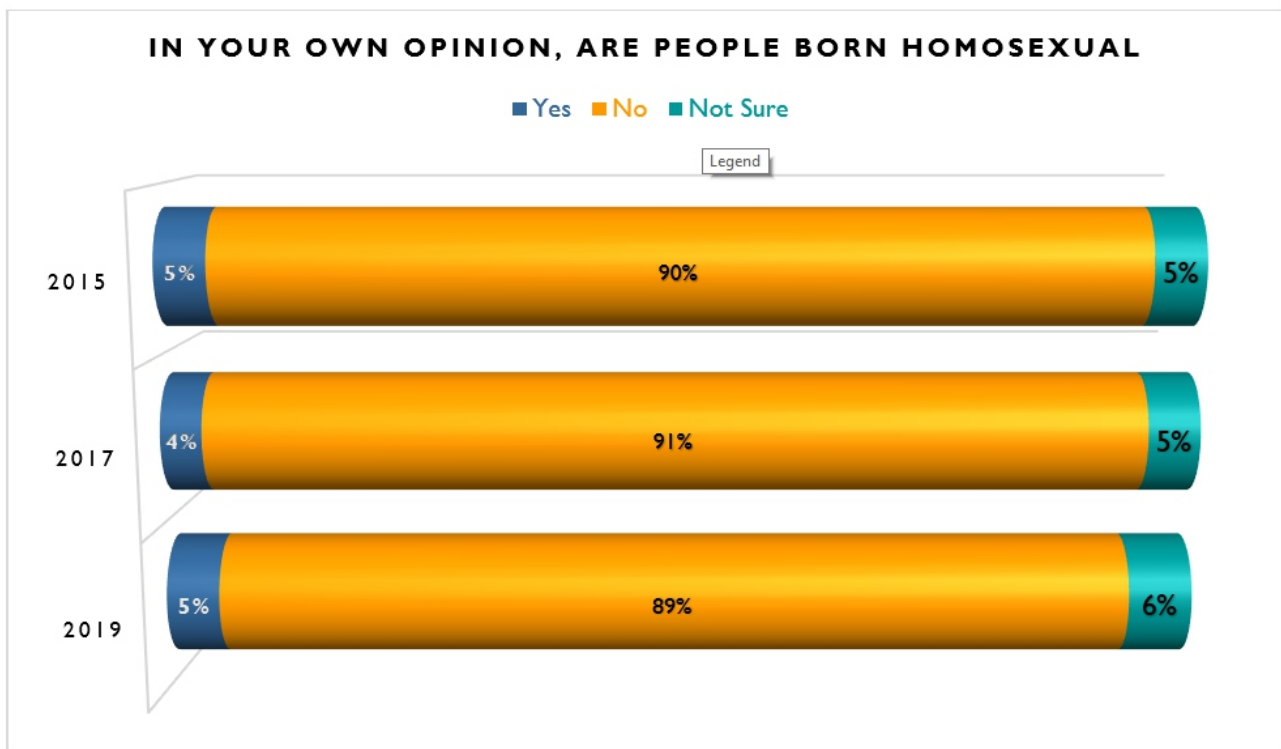


Figure 8: Trends for Belief in Homosexuality as Being Innate

Comparatively, there has been a 2% decrease in the number of Nigerians who do not believe that people are born homosexual as 89% of respondents in 2019 and 91% in 2017 were of this opinion. This difference cannot particularly be considered significant.

Acceptance of Homosexuality within the Family

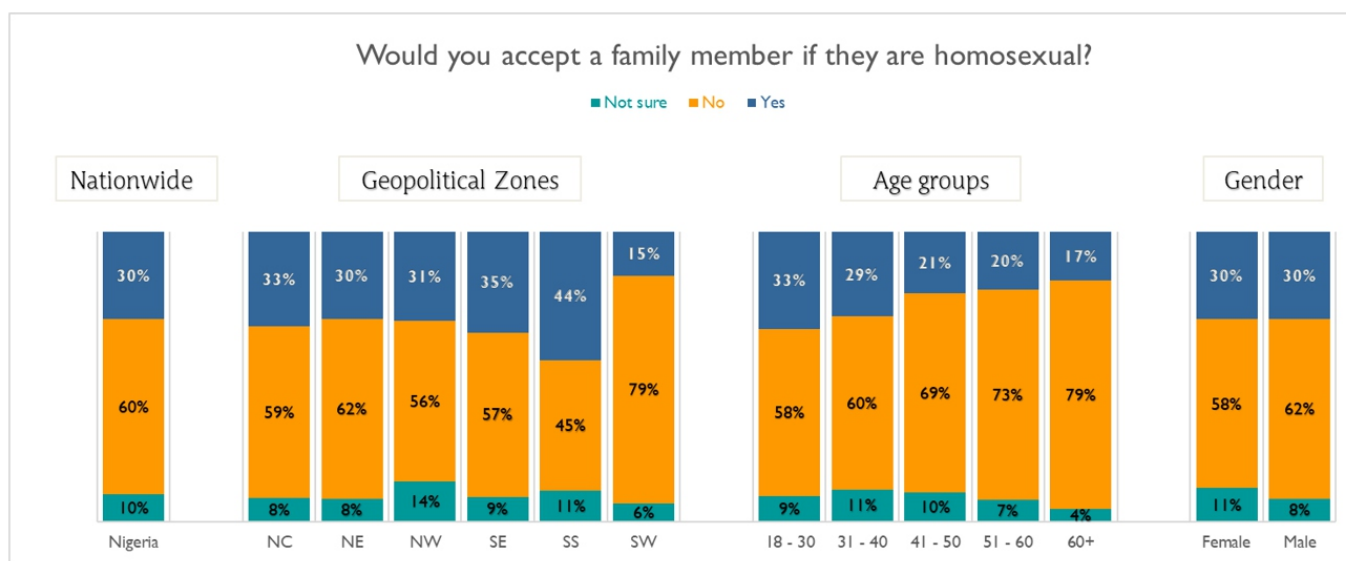


Figure 9: Acceptance of Homosexuals Within the Family

About 30% said they would accept a family member if the person is homosexual, 60% of the respondents said they would not accept a homosexual family member, and 10% were not sure whether or not they would accept the family member. The South South has the highest proportion of respondents (44%) who say they will accept a homosexual family member. The South West region has the highest number of respondents (79%) who say they will not accept a homosexual family member. More male respondents (62%) say they will not accept a family member if the family member is homosexual compared to 59% of female respondents who say they will not accept a homosexual family member. Also, younger people seem to be more accepting of a homosexual family member when compared to their older counterparts.

Trend Analysis on the Acceptance of Homosexuals within the Family (2015 – 2019).

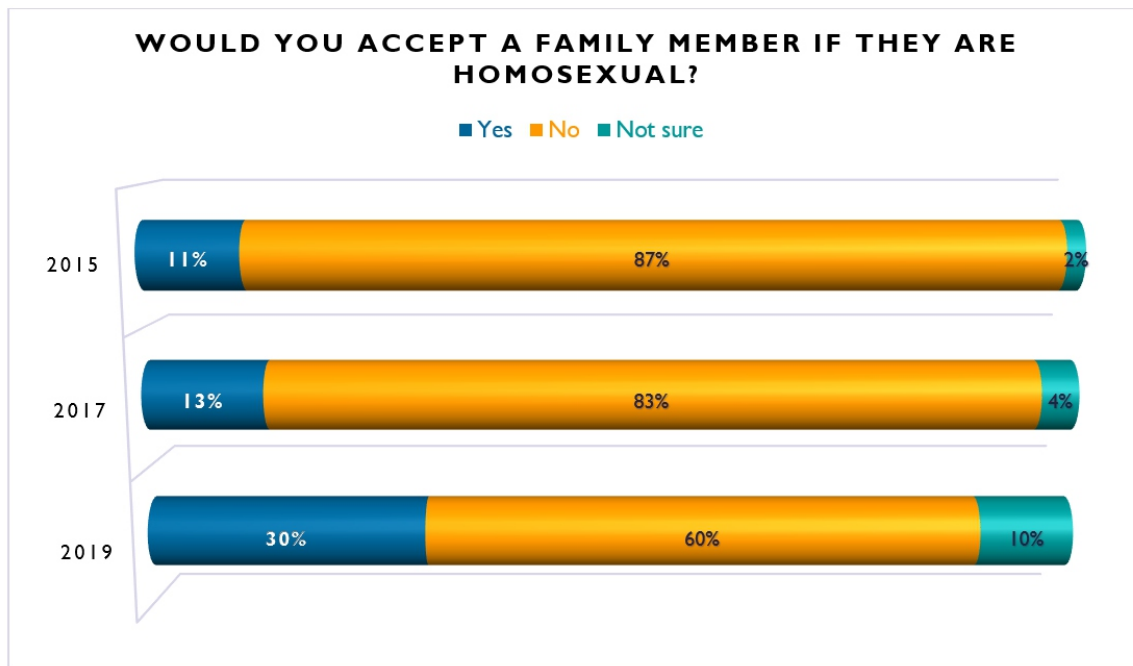


Figure 10: Trends for Acceptance of Homosexuals within the Family

There is a significant improvement in the acceptance of homosexuals within the family. Presently, 30% of respondents said they would accept a homosexual family member compared to 13% of respondents in 2017 and 11% of respondents in 2011. Also, there seems to be more people who are not sure if they would accept a homosexual family member or not. With the trend from 2013 – 2019 that sees a significant increase in the number of those who will accept a homosexual family member, it is safe to say that this group of people who are undecided would most likely accept a homosexual family member in the near future.

Attitude towards the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act

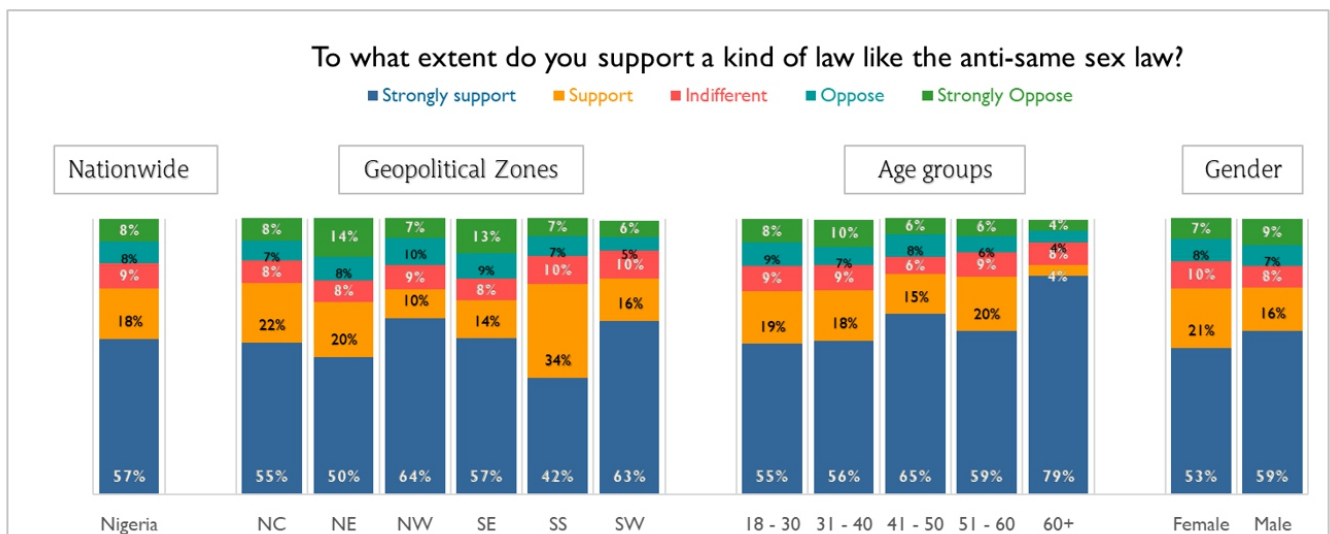


Figure 11: Attitude Towards SSMPA

About 75% of the respondents support the anti-same sex law, 16% oppose the anti-same sex law, while nine percent of the respondents are neither in support nor against the SSMPA. Almost 80% of respondents in the South West region either strongly support (63%) or support (16%) laws like the anti-same sex law. The North East (22%) and South East (22%) have the most people who either strongly oppose or just oppose the law. There also seems to be a pattern regarding how age affects people's support of a law like the anti-same sex law.

Trend Analysis on Attitude towards the Anti-Same Sex Law (2015 – 2019)

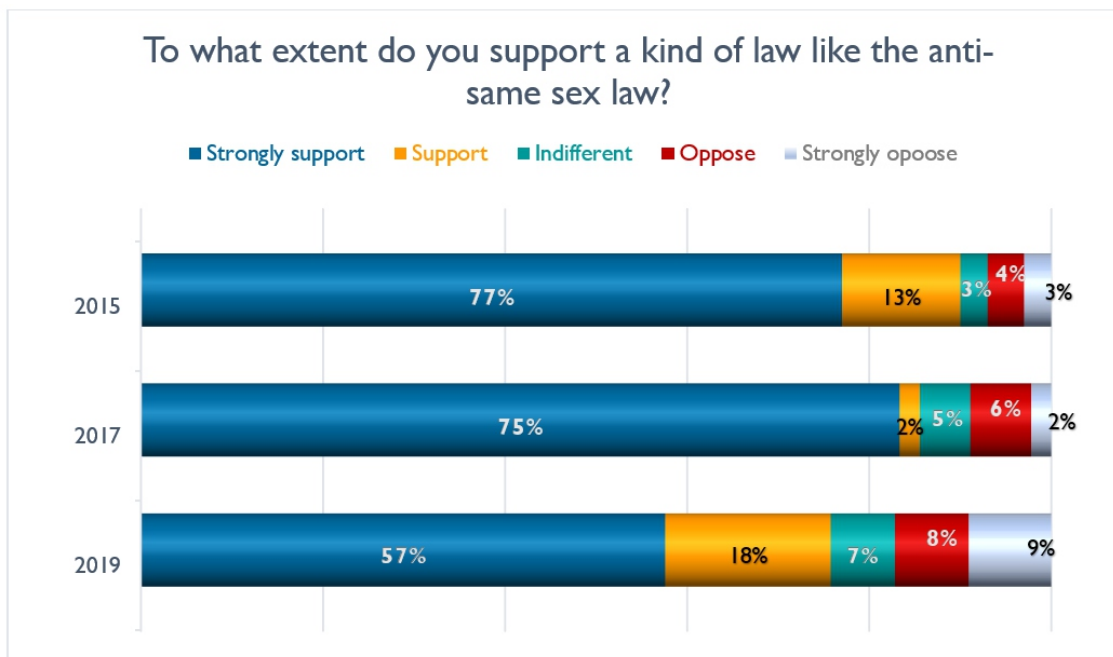


Figure 12: Trend Analysis on Attitude towards SSMPA

There seems to be a gradual decrease in Nigerians' support of laws like the anti-same sex law. In 2015 about 87% of respondents either supported or strongly supported such a law. This figure increased to 90% in 2017 and presently it stands at about 75% which shows a 12% reduction in 4 years in the number of those who are in support of the anti-same sex law. It is important to note that in 2015, 8% of respondents were against the law, this number reduced to 7% in 2017 indicating a slight negative shift, and in 2019, 17% of respondents either opposed or strongly opposed laws like the anti-same sex law. The proportion of those who are indifferent has fluctuated over the years, at 3%, 5% and 7% representing the year 2015, 2017 and 2019 respectively.

Awareness of Homosexuality in Nigeria



Figure 13: Awareness of LGBTs in Nigeria

The chart above shows the awareness of respondents about homosexuality in Nigeria. Just 2% of respondents said they have a family member who is homosexual, 7% said they have a friend who is homosexual, 19% know someone in their locality who is homosexual and 24% know a famous person who is homosexual.

Trend Analysis on the Awareness of Homosexuals in Nigeria (2015 – 2019)

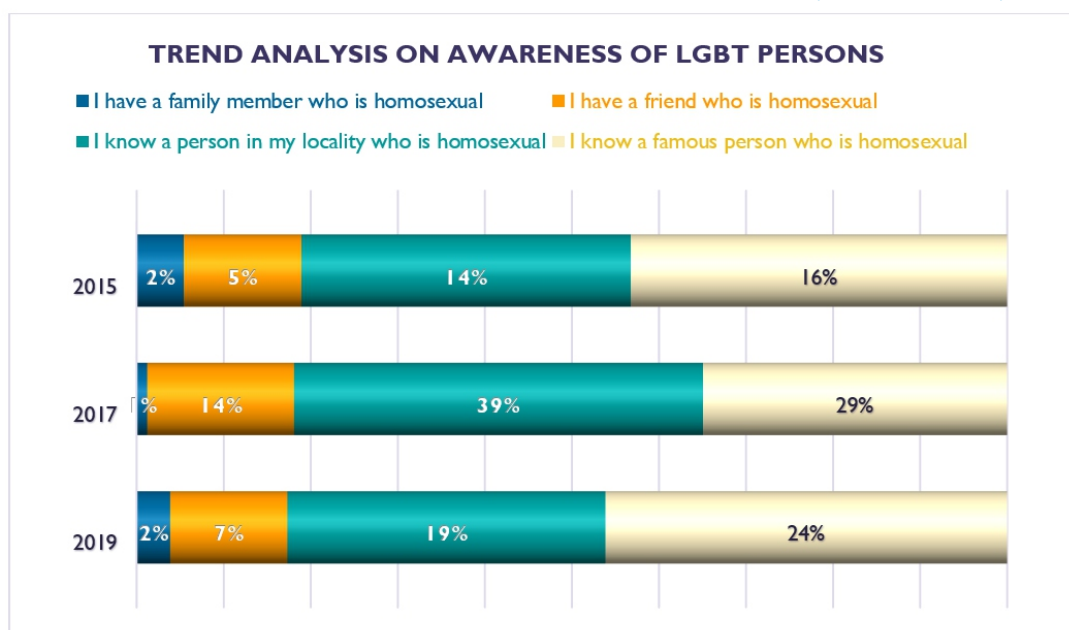


Figure 14: Trend on Awareness of LGBT Persons in Nigeria

The chart above shows a four-year trend on the awareness of homosexuality in Nigeria.

From 2015 to 2019, there appears to be no significant change in the proportion of respondents who say they have a family member who is homosexual.

In 2015, 5% of respondents reported to have a friend who is homosexual. This number almost tripled in 2017 at 14%. However, that number reduced by 50% in 2019 as only 7% of respondents now say they have a friend who is homosexual.

In 2015, 14% of respondents said they know a person in their locality who is homosexual. This number almost tripled in 2017 when 39% of respondents reported to know someone in their locality who is homosexual. However, in 2019, only 19% of respondents said they know someone in their locality who is homosexual.

About 16% of respondents in 2015 said they know a celebrity who is homosexual, this number almost doubled in 2017 where 29% of respondents said they know a famous person who is homosexual, and in 2019 the figure dropped to 24%. Overall, there seems to be a general reduction in Nigerians' awareness of homosexuality.

Perception of Homosexuality in Nigeria

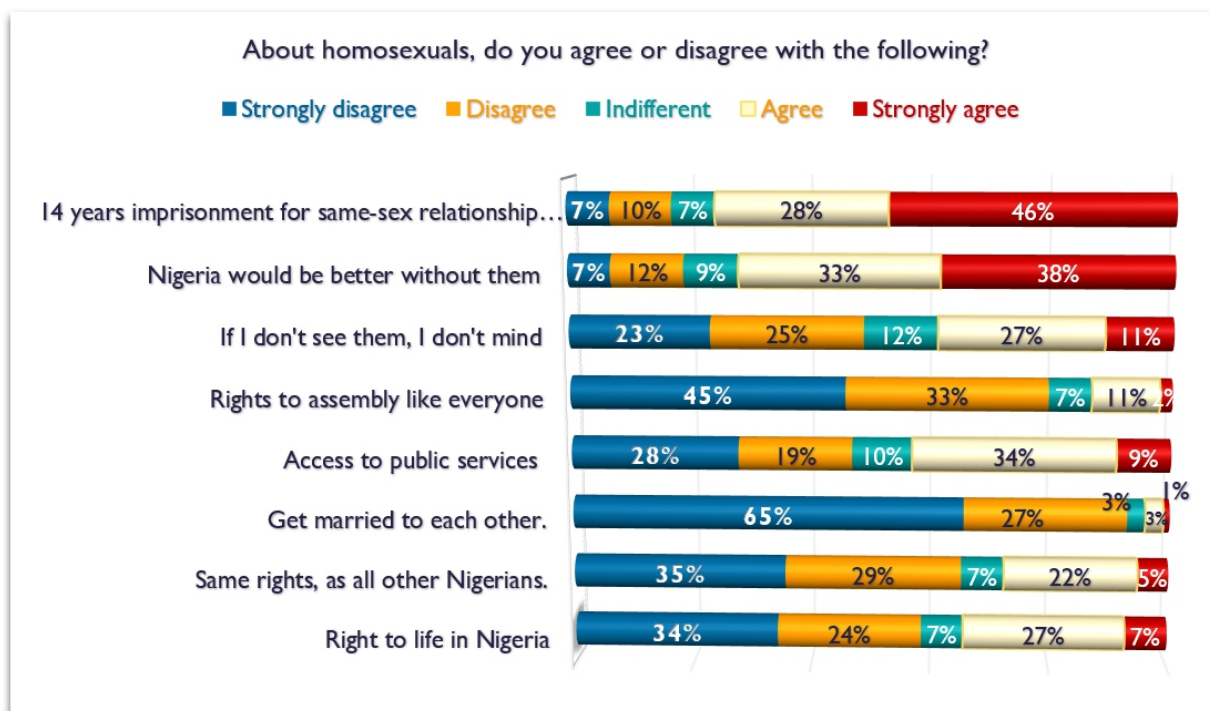


Figure 15: Trends in Nigerians' Perception of Homosexuality

Over 70% of respondents said homosexuals should be imprisoned for 14 years for having a same-sex relationship. In a similar vein, over 70% of respondents feel that the country would be a better place without homosexuals, while about 20% do not agree that Nigeria would be a better place without homosexuals.

About 40% of respondents say they do not mind homosexuals as long as they do not have to see them. Over 90% of respondents disagree that homosexuals should be able to marry each other.

Trend Analysis On The Perception Of Homosexuals In Nigeria (2015 – 2019)

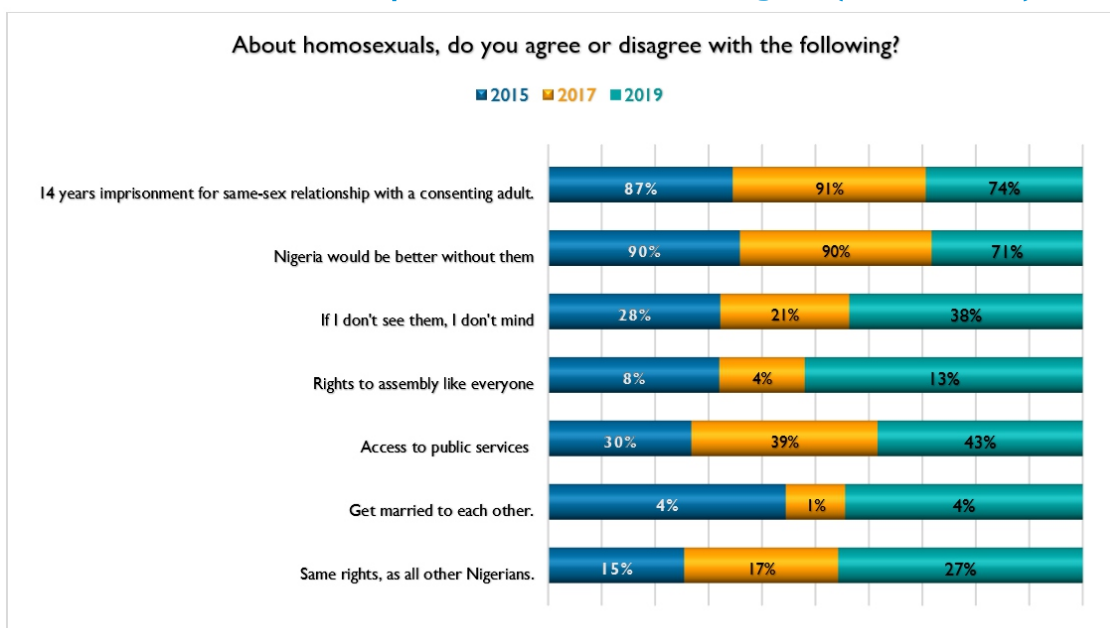


Figure 16: Trends in Nigerians' Perception of Homosexuality

The perception of Nigerians towards homosexuals in 2019 appears to be generally negative when considered outside the context of previous surveys, but a trend analysis shows a marked improvement towards the idea of homosexuals having the same rights as all other Nigerians.

In 2015 about 15% of Nigerians felt that homosexuals should have the same rights as all other Nigerians; this number increased slightly to 17% in 2017 and presently stands at 27%.

There also appears to be a general improvement in the perception of Nigerians towards homosexuals from 2015–2019.

There was a 13% reduction in the number of people who say homosexuals should be imprisoned for 14 years for having a same-sex relationship. This figure stood at 87% in 2015, increased to 91% in 2017 and reduced significantly to 74% in 2019.

A significant 19% reduction was noticed in the number of people who feel Nigeria would be a better country without homosexuals. In 2015 and 2017 about 90% of respondents believed Nigeria would be a better place without homosexuals; this figure now stands at 71%.

In 2015, 28% of respondents said they did not mind homosexuals as long as they did not have to see them; this number reduced to 21% in 2017, and presently stands at 38%.

Conclusions

From the foregoing, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- There is a gradual change in attitudes and perceptions towards sexual minority rights in Nigeria; Nigerians are gradually becoming more open to accepting family members who are sexual minorities.
- There is a stronger opposition to the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act, led by respondents in the North East.
- While the majority of Nigerians still view LGBT rights negatively, the needle seems to be moving towards a higher level of acceptance and tolerance.
- The awareness of LGBT persons either in families or in communities appears to be on a downward trend. This could be a cause for concern as it might imply that LGBTs have gone underground especially in the last two years.



Appendix

Questionnaire

Interviewer's ID	Location
Interviewer's Name	
Respondent's Telephone No./Email	
Date Of Interview	Back – Checked By

Screeener

1. Which of the following age ranges do you fall under?

Under 18	1
18-30	2
31-40	3
41-50	4
51-60	5
60+	6

Main Questionnaire

2. In your opinion, do you think people are born homosexual?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I am not sure
- d. Refused

3. Personally, would you accept a family member if they are homosexual?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I am not sure
- d. Refused

4. Do you know of the anti-same sex law that bans gay marriage and makes it punishable with 14 years in prison and also makes homosexuals assembling together punishable by 10 years in prison?

- a. Yes, I know the law
- b. No, I don't know the law
- c. I am not sure

5. To what extent do you support a kind of law like the anti-same sex law?

- a. I strongly oppose
 - b. I oppose
 - c. I neither support nor oppose
 - d. I support
 - e. I strongly support
 - f. Don't know
 - g. Refused
-

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

		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	I know a famous person who is a homosexual	1	2	3
5	Others (please specify).....	1	2	3

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

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	DK/RF
A	Homosexuals should have a right to life in Nigeria	1	2	3	4	5	6
B	Homosexuals should have the same, as all other rights as other Nigerians.	1	2	3	4	5	6
C	Homosexuals should be able to get married to each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6
D	Homosexuals should have access to public services like healthcare, housing, education etc	1	2	3	4	5	6
E	Homosexuals should be able to have meetings as a group or right to assembly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
F	I don't mind homosexuals, as long as I don't have to see them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
G	Nigeria would be a better country without homosexuals	1	2	3	4	5	6
H	Homosexuals should be imprisoned for 14 years for having a same-sex relationship with a consenting adult.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Demographic Information

9. Gender

Male	1
Female	2
Other	3

10. Which of these best describes your highest level of education attained?

No formal education	1
Primary School completed	2
Secondary school completed	3
First degree completed	4
Post-graduate degree completed	5

11. Marital Status

Single	1
Married	2
Separated/ Divorced	3
Widow/ Widower	4
Other	5

Project Team

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Osuolale Bolatito Tundun
Fisayo Onifade
Mary Oluwaseun Adeolu
Samson Olagoke Oladoye
Olagunoye Adekemi Sandra
Olanipekun Olalekan Seyi
Okeremeta Opeyemi

A vibrant rainbow flag with horizontal stripes of red, orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, and purple, draped and slightly wrinkled. The top portion of the image is partially obscured by a black horizontal band.

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