

# DOES NIGERIA LOVE NIGERIANS?



A CITIZENS'  
PERCEPTION SURVEY  
ON HOW NIGERIANS  
VIEW GOVERNMENT'S  
OBLIGATIONS TO  
HER CITIZENS

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## DOES NIGERIA LOVE NIGERIANS? Report [September 2020]

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## ABOUT API

Africa Polling Institute (API) is an independent, non-profit and non-partisan opinion research think-tank, which conducts opinion polls, surveys, social research and evaluation studies at the intersection of democracy, governance, economic conditions and public life; in order to support better public policy, practice and advocacy in Africa.

API was established on the belief that citizens' participation in democratic governance can deepen the continent's democratic experience, strengthen public institutions and promote social inclusion and cohesion. API is independent of governments, political parties, commercial interests, trade unions and other interest groups.

Our vision is to become a leading opinion research think-tank in Africa, championing “good governance” by promoting access to credible data and evidence to support decision makers, policy makers and advocates.

Our mission is to promote the conduct and dissemination of credible Africa-led and Africa-owned opinion polls, surveys, social research and evaluation studies; to inform better decisions, public policy, practice and advocacy.

## PREFACE

As a leading opinion research think-tank in Africa, the Africa Polling Institute (API) presents its latest survey titled: “Does Nigeria Love Nigerians?” It is a nationwide Citizens Perception Survey (CPS) that has made efforts at situating within the realm of intellectuality, a myriads of opinions about Nigeria by Nigerians. Simply put, it brings to rest the plethora of doubts about the quality of love Nigeria has for Nigerians through the logical articulation of opinions of Nigerians across demographics. Issues around unemployment, insecurity, debilitating inflations, increment of electricity tariffs and partial removal of fuel subsidy are indicative of a 'failing state'. Recent civil unrests, violent attacks across the federation and the intractable spate of Boko Haram attacks are reflective of a state incapable of guaranteeing safety – a core term in the social contract between Nigerians and Nigeria.

This survey finds expediency in the fact that the citizens' interests ought to form the key consideration when government undertakes responsibilities that affects the security of lives and properties. As aptly observed by World Bank (2018), Citizen-focused public service delivery measures the extent to which the needs and aspirations of the citizens are captured in government policy decisions. However, with the daunting economic challenges and the seemingly intractable trends of insecurity, Nigerians are beginning to ask questions about the place of governance in the delivery of the contractual terms between the citizens and the state as eloquently expressed in the Social Contract Theory.

Thus, this latest Citizens Perception Survey (CPS) by API emphasises obvious existential gaps in the social contract between the Nigerian state and her citizens. From the survey, it is clear that while Nigerians are proud of being citizens of the Country (as evidenced by 91%), there are key issues with trust in the Nigerian state, particularly as 75% of citizens surveyed said, they have benefitted absolutely nothing from the Country in the last 5 years. Additionally, a large chunk of Nigerians surveyed opined that they do not believe their lives matter to the Nigerian government; neither do their opinions count in public policy formulation, execution and general decision-making. The report also shows that there is the general agreement that the Country does not have in place any solid welfare package for the elderly, who in some cases would have served the nation as civil or public servants. They often struggle to access their retirement benefits for their personal up-keep and needs. Those with terminal diseases and people living with disabilities, the report shows, also have paltry attention paid to them by the Nigerian state.

By and large, there is an increasing disaffection among Nigerians with the current state of affairs in the Country. Meanwhile, while this apparent disconnect exists, it is also a truism that in some instances, Nigerians have not kept up with their own part of the social contract as there are increasing cases of non-payment of taxes and crass disobedience to laws, rules and regulations. Hence, within the framework of the social contract between Nigeria and Nigerians, this perception survey is designed to be carried out in two phases. The first phase, which forms the fulcrum of this present survey report, centers on the government's obligations to the citizens. The second phase, to be released in subsequent series, would evaluate citizens' responsibilities to the Country.

I hereby recommend this report to key stakeholders in the Nigerian project and the general public. It will in the meantime update the body of knowledge in the area of social cohesion, nation-building and patriotism. This ultimately resonates with API's vision, mission, and strategic objectives of producing and disseminating credible data on public opinion to support decision makers, policy makers and advocacy at the intersection of democracy and governance, amongst others.

I hope you will enjoy reading this report and benefit from its findings.



**Dr. Bell Ihua (PhD Kent)**

Executive Director,  
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Signed

**Amarachi Charles**

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>API</b>	Africa Polling Institute
<b>CPJ</b>	Committee to Protect Journalists
<b>CPS</b>	Citizens Perception Survey
<b>ERGP</b>	Economic Recovery and Growth Plan
<b>FMHDS</b>	Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development
<b>ICC</b>	International Criminal Court
<b>ICRP</b>	International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect
<b>MSMEs</b>	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>NANS</b>	National Association of Nigerian Students
<b>NBS</b>	National Bureau of Statistics
<b>NEEDS</b>	National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
<b>NOA</b>	National Orientation Agency
<b>NPC</b>	National Population Commission
<b>NYC</b>	National Youth Council
<b>PLWD</b>	People Living with Disabilities
<b>SIP</b>	Social Investment Programme
<b>SMEDAN</b>	Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

As a leading opinion research think-tank in Africa, the Africa Polling Institute (API) undertook a nationwide Citizens Perception Survey (CPS) to accentuate the relationship between the Nigerian State and her citizens. In specific terms, the survey elicited the views of Nigerians on the very burning concern of how Nigeria treats her citizens. The report leveraged on the theoretical standpoint of the social contract to examine the government's obligations to her citizens.

This survey is founded on the belief that occasional feedback from Nigerians helps to promote social cohesion, and inspires the resolve by leaders to deliver on their promises of good governance by deliberately expediting and utilising policy instruments to reposition the already blighted economy. This attempt resonates with the API's vision, mission, and strategic objectives of producing and disseminating credible data on public opinion to support decision-makers, policymakers and advocacy at the intersection of democracy.

### Methodology

The nationwide survey was conducted by API in the month of August 2020 to gauge public opinion on how Nigerians view the obligations of the state to her citizens. All interviews were conducted via telephone, using a Stratified Random Sampling technique. A total of 1633 completed interviews were captured in this survey out of the 5784 calls made, representing a response rate of approximately 28%; and the sample consisted of 51% Male versus 49% Female respondents, all aged 18 years and above.

The interviews were conducted in five languages: English, Pidgin, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, and geographic quotas were assigned to ensure the selection of a nationally representative sample proportionately covering all Senatorial Districts and states, including the FCT. The survey asked citizens 10 key questions, ranging from whether or not they are proud of being Nigerians; do they believe Nigeria loves them, their level of trust in the Nigerian State, what they have benefitted from being Nigerians, if they believe their life matters to the Nigerian government, if their voices count in government decision-making, if the government would come to the aid of citizens who encounter problems abroad, care for the elderly, provide equal opportunity for people living with disabilities and areas that government should focus its attention at reinforcing in order to add value to the lives of Nigerians. The analysis involved tabulation of responses into frequency tables and generating frequency charts from the summaries. The open-ended responses were first coded, analysed and summarised into optimal categories before generating frequency tables and charts.

### Key Findings

Putting citizens at the heart of economic and development policies is one way of assessing a country's love for her citizens. The main purpose of the state is the utmost realisation of good life for all its citizens. As observed by the World Bank (2018), citizen-focused public service delivery measures the extent to which the needs and aspirations of the citizens are captured in government policy decisions. However, given the current economic realities in Nigeria, it is uncertain to conclude whether or not Nigerians believe that the government (at Federal, State and Local Government levels) loves and cares about the welfare of the citizenry. Unravelling this knot can help us answer questions regarding the viability of the social contract that exists between the government and the citizenry. It is pertinent to examine the extent of the country's love for her citizens vis-a-vis citizens patriotism to the nation within the framework of the social contract theory. The main thrust of the social contract theory is that the essence of government is to protect and enhance citizens' wellbeing in exchange for their support and loyalty to the state. Within the framework of the social contract between Nigeria and Nigerians, this perception survey was designed to be carried out in two phases. The first phase, which forms the fulcrum of this present survey report, centres on the government's obligations to the citizens. The second phase, which is to be released in a subsequent series, would evaluate citizens' responsibilities to the country.



### **Proud of Being Nigerian**

Firstly, citizens were asked if they were proud of being Nigerians. Overwhelmingly, the survey reported that 91% of Nigerians affirmed that they were proud of being citizens of Nigeria; and this finding cuts across the key socio-demographics such as gender, age-group, literacy level and geopolitical zones.

### **Level of Trust in the Nigerian State**

This was followed by the question to ascertain the level of trust that Nigerians have in the state. The findings revealed that despite the majority of Nigerians who said that they were proud of being Nigerians, only about a third of the citizens (33%) expressed some or a lot of trust in the Nigerian state, the majority (67%) expressed very little to no trust whatsoever in the country. In addition, disaggregated data showed that there were more female (68%) than male (65%) respondents with little to no trust in the state. Also, there were more citizens based in southern Nigeria (70%) with little to no trust in the state, in comparison with citizens based in northern Nigeria (63%).

### **What Have Citizens Benefitted from the Country in the Last 5 Years?**

Citizens were asked what they have benefitted from being Nigerians in the last five years. The findings revealed that a significant majority of Nigerians (75%) were of the opinion that they had benefitted absolutely nothing in the last 5 years. However, a few citizens identified improved security (7%); government empowerment programme (5%); and access to free education (3%) amongst others.

### **Does the Nigerian Life Matter to the Government?**

In terms of citizens' viewpoint on the importance of their life to the Nigerian state, the survey showed that 60% of Nigerians either do not believe their lives matter to the Nigerian government, or the respondents are simply unsure. This finding clearly highlights an existential gap in the government's ability to protect the lives and properties of her citizens. On the contrary, 4 in 10 Nigerians (40%) said they believe that their lives matter to the government. This finding has been corroborated in the literature review by several scholars who argued that Nigerian lives do not matter to the Nigerian government, given the government's poor response to various issues pertaining to citizens' wellbeing and protection.

### **Does the Voice of the Nigerian Count in Government Decision-Making Process?**

Citizens were also asked if they believe their voices or opinions count to the government in terms of decision-making. Overwhelmingly, about 8 in 10 Nigerians (80%) either disagreed (54%) or were simply unsure (26%) that their voices and opinions count in government decision process. On the other hand, only about 2 in 10 respondents (20%) said they believe that their opinions count in the decision-making process.

### **Would the Nigerian Government Come to the Aid of Citizens Abroad?**

Citizens were also asked whether or not they believe the Nigerian government would come to their aid in case they encounter problems while out of the country. From the response, about 4 in 10 respondents (42%) stated that they do not believe the Nigerian government would come to their aid if they encountered a serious problem abroad. This was followed by 32% who were simply unsure if the government would come to their aid. On the contrary, only about 28% of respondents thought that the Nigerian government would come to their aid if they encountered a problem abroad.

### **Does the Country Care Enough for Elderly Citizens?**

According to the World Population Data (2020), the elderly (aged 60 years and above) make up 3% or 6.1 million of Nigeria's total population. With this in mind, citizens were also asked if they believe the country cares enough for elderly citizens in the society. From the result, almost 8 in 10 Nigerians (79%) objected that the country cares enough for the elderly. On the contrary, only a few of the respondents (21%) were of the opinion that the country cares enough for the elderly.



## Does Nigeria Love Her Citizens?

Lastly, the survey attempted to aggregate the thoughts of Nigerians by asking them a more pointed question: Do you believe Nigeria loves you as a citizen?. Interestingly, the findings revealed mixed feelings as equal proportion of the citizens queued on both side of the response. In particular, while 50% of the respondents believes that the country loves them as citizens, an equal per centage (50%) of respondents also believes that the country does not love them as citizens. However, a critical look at the responses across socio-demographics revealed that while there was equal proportion of citizens who agreed or disagreed that Nigeria loves them, same cannot be said across gender, age-group and literacy levels. From the result, there were slightly more male (52%) respondents who believed that Nigeria loves them as citizens, compared to female respondents (51%) who believed otherwise. Also, respondents aged 60 and above expressed a stronger opinion that Nigeria does not love them as citizens. In addition, the data showed that there were more respondents in northern Nigeria (57%) who believe that the country loves them; compared to 57% of those in southern Nigeria who believe that the country does not love them as citizens.

## What Areas Should Public Policy Be Focused on Addressing?

In concluding the survey, citizens were then asked to suggest areas that the government should focus its attention on in order to make life better and more conducive for the average Nigerian. The result revealed that the top five priority areas identified by citizens are: Employment Policies (30%), Security Policies (21%), Policies on Good Governance (18%), Empowerment Policies (15%) and Education Policies (12%), amongst others.

In summary, this latest Citizens Perception Survey (CPS) by API highlights existential gaps in Nigeria's social contract between the government and the citizenry. The findings show that while Nigerians are proud of being citizens of the country (as evidenced by 91%), trust in the Nigerian state is deficient, particularly as 75% of citizens surveyed said, they have benefitted absolutely nothing from the country in the last 5 years. More so, a significant proportion of the general public do not believe their lives matter to the Nigerian government, neither do their opinions count in public policy design, implementation and decision-making. There is also the general consensus that the country does not provide adequate care for its senior citizens, those with terminal diseases and people living with disabilities.

## Recommendations

Government needs to do a lot to regain the trust of its citizens and re-build the seemingly broken social contract; which have resulted in civil unrest in parts of the country and an increase in social vices such as domestic violence, sexual abuse and a spike in overall crime rate. Nigerians have spoken in clear terms – government should focus its attention on policies targeted at creating massive employment opportunities across the country to engage the bulk of Nigeria's unemployed population, especially the youths, who make up about 70% of the country's population. This effort will unarguably help eschew the tendency of youth indulging in violent extremism and becoming handy tools in the hands of politicians who sponsor political thuggery and election violence. Also, policies focused on improving the state of insecurity in the country and promoting good governance and anti-corruption should be given urgent attention.

In conclusion, we recommend that occasional interface between the youths and the government at various levels be sketched through a website logic template, where their plights and disaffection with the Nigerian state may be captured and aggregated. This will help reduce the myriads of social challenges that they are faced with as a result of their socioeconomic shortcomings. An annual national conference on “Youth Participation in Governance” should be instituted and led by the National Orientation Agency (NOA) in collaboration with the National Youth Council (NYC) and the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) to help dampen the frightening disappointments of Nigerian youths in the country and their leaders.



# 01

## Background



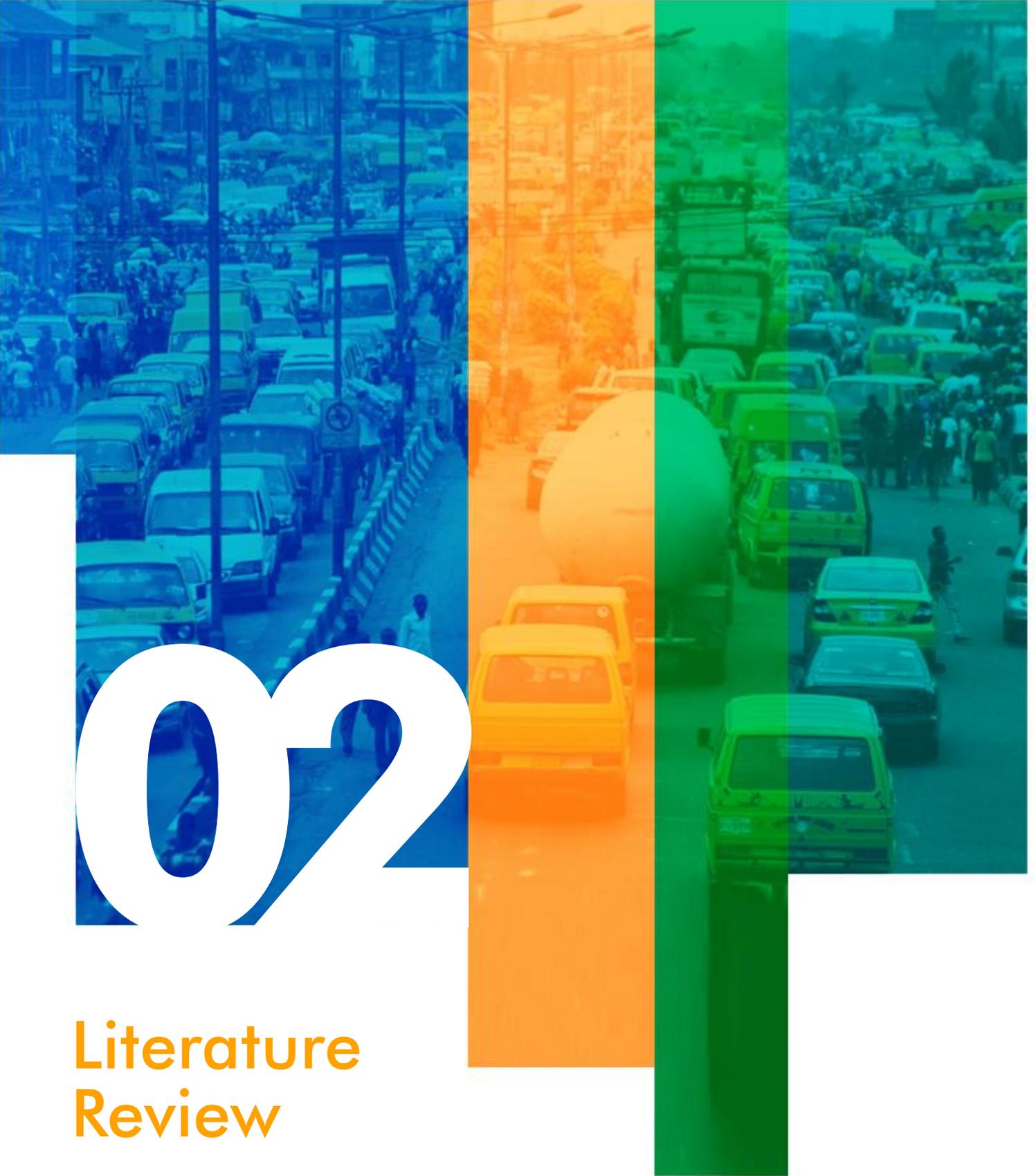
## 1.0 Background

Putting citizens at the heart of economic and development policies is one way of assessing a country's love for her citizens. The main purpose of the state is the utmost realisation of good life for all its citizens. As observed by World Bank (2018), Citizen-focused public service delivery measures the extent to which the needs and aspirations of the citizens are captured in government policy decisions. However, given the current economic realities in Nigeria, it is uncertain to conclude whether or not Nigerians believe that the government (at Federal, State and Local Government levels) loves and cares about the welfare of the citizenry. Unravelling this knot can help us answer questions regarding the viability of the social contract that exists between the government and the citizenry.

It is pertinent to examine the extent of the country's love for her citizens, vis-a-vis the citizens' patriotism to the nation within the framework of the social contract theory. As posited by the social contract theory, the state owes its existence to the citizenry and must protect the citizens in exchange for their support, while in return, citizens have an obligation to support constituted authority in expectation of welfare, security and progress. In this perspective, the state and the citizens are in a sort of social contract bonded by mutual reciprocity. As evident in Adewole (2014), in any contractual relationship, the unwritten code binding parties together is that when one party has failed to live up to the conditions of the contract, the other party has the right to vitiate the contract. The relevance of the social contract theory to Nigeria's governance process has been adequately explained in Chapter 2, Section 14 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended).

### Key Objectives

The main thrust of the social contract theory is that the essence of government is to protect and enhance citizens' wellbeing in exchange for their support and loyalty to the state. Within the framework of the social contract between Nigeria and Nigerians, this study was designed to be carried out in two main survey reports. The first phase of the report, which forms the fulcrum of this present report, centres on government responsibility to the citizens. The second phase of the report to be released in subsequent series would evaluate citizens' responsibilities and obligations to the country. In particular, the main objective of the present study which constitutes the first part of the report is to examine citizens perception on the responsibility of government and critically evaluate the extent of love that the country has for the citizens, in accordance with the dictates of the social contract.



# Literature Review



## 2.1 The Current State of the Nation

After over 20 years of Nigeria's successful return to democracy, the country still ranks among the poorest, the miserable countries, the most corrupt countries, low human development countries and the failed countries in the world. In specifics, while Nigeria is the largest oil producer in Africa and ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in oil reserves globally<sup>2</sup> and boasting huge natural resources deposits of coal, iron ore, lead, limestone, tin and zinc, it ranks very poorly in socioeconomic indicators. It is ranks such as the 6<sup>th</sup> of the most miserable countries<sup>3</sup>; 15<sup>th</sup> most failed nation in the world<sup>4</sup>; 146 out of 180 most corrupt nations<sup>5</sup>; 158 out of 189 low human development countries<sup>6</sup> and has overtaken India as the poverty capital of the world with roughly 94 million Nigerians currently living below the poverty line<sup>7</sup>. Amidst these poor ratings, Nigeria is also faced with a weak economy, characterised by daunting security challenges as well as the negative effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. All of these pose severe threats to the socioeconomic development of the nation. In a recent Vanguard news report, all of the above points were reechoed thus:

Today, everything seems to have failed in Nigeria. To address the nation otherwise is an exercise in foolhardiness. The President and his club of men which I call the cabal sit in absolute detachment from the realities in this country<sup>8</sup>.

According to the 2018 Mo Ibrahim African Index of Governance, Nigeria has consistently ranked among the bottom ten countries in Africa. In overall governance, Nigeria scored 47.9, ranking 33 out of 54 countries in Africa<sup>9</sup>. The poor rating of Nigeria in the 2018 Index Report could be a reflection of the country's continued weakness in governance, which inhibits policy effectiveness and economic development.

Widespread poverty, devastating youth unemployment and underemployment, rising inflation rate, deteriorating exchange rate, inadequate physical and social infrastructure, increasing domestic and external debts have further placed a tremendous strain on the economy. Currently, Nigeria is not only the top African country, with the highest population living in extreme poverty, but has overtaken India as the poverty capital of the world. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)<sup>10</sup>, Nigeria's unemployment rate has increased by 4%, rising from 23.1% in Q3, 2018 to 27.1% in Q2, 2020. In particular, the unemployment rate among youth (15-34 years) was 34.9% in Q2, 2020, up from 29.7% in Q3 2018, while the rate of underemployment for the same age group rose to 28.2% from 25.7% in Q3 2018. The increasing wave of unemployment in the country does not only constitute a recipe for youth restiveness, with implication for increasing crime rate but also represents a colossal waste of the country's manpower resources. The report further indicates that Nigeria's inflation has been on a steady rise for 11-months, rising from 11% in Q3, 2019 to 12.8% in Q2, 2020. The economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent oil price crash from \$60 per barrel in Q4, 2019 to around \$25 per barrel in Q2, 2020 have continued to push up the inflationary pressure as well as weakening the exchange rate with devastating effect on the economy.

However, since the crash in oil price, government revenue has declined, thereby constraining its ability to meet her financial and developmental obligations due to her over-reliance on crude oil proceeds. Again, the official naira exchange rate has been weakened by 24%, depreciating from 305/\$1 in Q4 2018 to 381/\$1 in Q2 2020, while exchanging as high as N486/\$1 in the parallel market. As evident in the economy, the consequence of naira depreciation is the sharp rise in the price level of goods and services leading to a significant decline in real wages, declining aggregate demand and increased poverty.

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.worldometers.info/oil/nigeria-oil>

<sup>3</sup><https://punchng.com/nigeria-ranked-sixth-most-miserable-country-in-the-world>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.proshareng.com/news/Nigeria%20Economy/Failed-States-Index--Nigeria-Ranked-15-out-of-177-Nations/7135>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.transparency.org/en/news/cpi-2019-Sub-Saharan-Africa>

<sup>6</sup>[http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/NGA.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/NGA.pdf)

<sup>7</sup><https://punchng.com/94m-nigerians-currently-live-below-poverty-line-world-poverty-clock/>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/03/nigeria-toying-with-disintegration-without-restructuring/>

<sup>9</sup><https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/news/2019/rule-law-transparency-accountability-key-improving-public-governance-africa>

<sup>10</sup><https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/>



Besides the deteriorating economic condition, the nation is also plagued with worsening insecurity including; the Boko Haram insurgency ravaging the nation's peace and distorting economic activities especially in the North-East, the farmer-herders conflict the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) and the Militancy in the Niger-Delta. Others include: kidnapping, ritual killing and ethnoreligious fights and killing across the country as well as the current crises and killings in southern Kaduna State. Unfortunately, these multifaceted waves of insecurity in the country have degenerated to a dangerous dimension in recent years, thereby constituting a serious threat to lives and properties, impeding business activities, discourage local and foreign investors and threatening the corporate existence of the country.

The Cable network also lent its voice to the narrative on the state of the nation and posits thus:

**The talk of impunity raises the spectre of Boko Haram insurgency and the Fulani herdsmen menace incidence afresh for all those who care about this nation. It beats the imagination why a simple policy initiative concerning the nomadism and cattle ranching elude the Nigerian leadership. Why play politics with the countless lives that the herdsmen issue had taken away since it began? Why is it difficult to make the herdsmen menace a national emergency that requires urgent solution, rather than making it a matter of mere political rhetoric? Thousands of Nigerian lives have been lost to the Boko Haram insurgency, and yet we still have not got it right. The horrific and deadly strikes of these insurgents on a regular basis belie the official rhetoric of military victory. The Dapchi Girls abduction was a shameful reference to Nigeria's lack of a military early warning system. That this followed after the global outcry that attended the Chibok girls incidence makes it even very worse for the Nigerian leadership. How is it possible to logistically abduct the number of hapless Chibok and Dapchi girls without the Nigerian state being aware?<sup>11</sup>**

Reporting the opinion of Nigerians in a book presentation recently in Lagos, the Vanguard Newspaper had vehemently submitted the position of Nigerians about the state of the nation thus:

**What is happening to our country today is disturbing. This is not the Nigeria of our dream. None of us, including Chief Anyaoku, would have thought that Nigeria would turn to what it is today. The younger generation may not understand what I am saying. I am in tears, as this country must be saved. We must do everything within our power to save this country<sup>12</sup>.**

However, several scholars have attributed the increasing insecurity challenge in the country to the failure of leadership to deliver good governance, and secure the welfare of persons on the doctrines of citizens' inclusion, freedom, fairness and justice (Oluwarotimi, 2012<sup>13</sup>; Ewetan and Urhie, 2014<sup>14</sup>; Nwagboso, 2018<sup>15</sup>; Yahaya et al. 2018<sup>16</sup>;). This worsening economic situation in the country is aptly captured by Agbor (2012)<sup>17</sup>, that Nigeria is a failed state characterised by political, social and economic failure, as it is unable and unwilling to provide for her citizens.

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<sup>11</sup><https://www.thecable.ng/state-nigerian-nation>

<sup>12</sup><https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/02/state-of-the-nation-nigeria-on-the-brink-eminant-nigerians/>

<sup>13</sup>Oluwarotimi, A. (2012). US to use more Balanced Security Strategy to Fight Insecurity in Nigeria, Leadership Newspaper, Lagos.

<sup>14</sup>Ewetan, O. O. and Urhie, E. (2014). Insecurity and Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria. Journal of Sustainable Development Studies. Vol 5 (1), pp 40-63.

<sup>15</sup>Nwagboso, N. I. (2018). Nigeria and the Challenges of Internal Security in the 21st Century European Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, Vol 4(2), pp 15-33

<sup>16</sup>Yahaya, J., Liman. A. and Adadu, Y. (2018). An Assessment of Challenges Faced by Security Agencies in Fighting Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Kano State, Nigeria. International Journals of Social Science Studies Vol 6 (7)

<sup>17</sup>Agbor, U. (2012). Leadership behaviour and the crises of state failure in Nigeria: towards a transformational leadership attitude for addressing Nigeria's failing state. Public Policy and Administration Research. Vol.2, No.4, 2012.



## 2.2 The Social Contract between Nigeria and her Citizens

There is no gainsaying that every democratic society the world over has a social contract with its people which guides the governing process. The origin of the social contract theory is traced to the works of three great philosophers (Thomas Hobbes 1651; John Locke 1690 and Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1762), who were concerned with the doctrine of the rule of law, stability and order in a society as against oppression, chaos and bad leadership. The common ground of the social contract theory is that, the state, or more specifically, civil society is the product of a contract, an agreement, or a compact. However, even though there is lack of agreement among social contract theorists on the origin of the state, a general consensus is that there exists a social contract derived from the state of nature.

Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau were in agreement when they argued that social contract was primarily to provide collective security, protection of lives and property, and the provision of welfare services to the citizens. This principle of social contract theory constitutes the foundation and standard by which modern society is governed. Based on the doctrine of the social contract, the responsibilities of government include maintenance of law and order, ensuring security of life and property, promotion of welfare and general wellbeing of all citizens. The primary purpose of social contract is to ensure that members of society have reason to accept and abide with the basic social rules, institutions, laws and principles of that society.

The Nigerian state, however, is not different in this regard. Clearly, a true reflection of the tenets of social contract theory in Nigeria's democracy is very visible in section 14 of the 1999 Constitution. As provided in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As amended); Chapter 2, Section 14(1) clearly states that "the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a State based on the principles of democracy and social justice". It is further stated in Section 14(2a) that "sovereignty belongs to the people of Nigeria from whom government through this constitution derives all its powers and authority" and in Section 14 (2b), it is boldly written that the "security and welfare of the people of Nigeria shall be the primary purpose of government".

Bearing on the above provision, it is expected that at all times, the government will be based on the consent of the governed and would guarantee a decent existence for its citizens. But unfortunately, while many democratic countries the world over continue to uphold these invaluable principles of social contract, successive governments in Nigeria have long violated the social contract and the provision of the constitution as stated in Chapter 2, Section 14.

Contrary to the extant provisions of the social contract and the constitution of Nigeria, the political leadership has been largely driven by self-interest and blatantly undermining the security of lives and properties, promotion of the rule of law, and improving citizens' welfare. Regrettably, after over 59 years of independence, the country is yet to enjoy the ever-cherished dividends of governance given the level of physical and social infrastructural decay, unemployment, kidnapping, corruption, poverty, political violence, ethnic tension, economic instability, and insecurity in the country. In this wise, Nweke and Nkwede (2019)<sup>18</sup> argued that the Nigerian state has consistently and flagrantly abused the provisions of the constitution which makes the desirability of a society built on democracy and social justice a mirage. They emphasised that the country has failed to maintain the provision of the constitution which stipulates that "sovereignty belongs to the people of Nigeria and that the primary responsibility of government is to ensure "security and welfare of the people". A similar view was expressed by Emecheta (2016)<sup>19</sup> that sovereignty does not belong to the Nigerian people but belongs wholly to government officials who use it to advance the course of their political and economic interests, while the helpless citizens are subjected to complete alienation from expressing their sovereignty. The Nigerian state has consistently failed to live up to its primary responsibilities as the country continue to face serious social, economic and security challenges, some of which pose threats to state and regional stability.

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<sup>18</sup>Nweke, K. and Nkwede, J.O (2019).The Nigerian State and Hobbes' Social Contract Theory: An Albatross around the Collective Will of the People. *European Journal of Scientific Research*. Vol. 152 (3) pp. 304-321

<sup>19</sup>Emecheta, K.O (2016) Power to the People: An Inverse Role in Nigeria's Politics and Governance. *International Journal of Area Studies*, Vol 11(2), pp 83-102.



According to Aning (2016)<sup>20</sup>, some of the security challenges threatening the unity of the country is partly as a result of several years of marginalisation, social inequality, political exclusion, corruption, economic deprivation, unequal allocation and distribution of state resources, endemic poverty among others. In this wise, Yagboyaju and Akinola, (2019)<sup>21</sup>, opined that no nation can enjoy lasting peace if her citizens live in abject poverty particularly if that nation has the resources to provide development and guarantee a good standard of living. Unfortunately, that is the reality and tale of Nigeria characterised by poor governance, insecurity and poverty in the midst of plenty. While reacting to the increasing insecurity situation in the nation, Civil Rights Lawyer Mr. Femi Falana (2015)<sup>22</sup> pointed out that “in the last five years, the Federal Government has spent about N5 trillion for the defense of the territorial integrity and internal security of the nation. Accordingly, the various state governments equally spent hundreds of billions of Naira on law and order. In spite of huge funds spent on security, it is common knowledge that the country is currently grappling with the menace of kidnapping, hostage-taking, terrorism and armed robbery being carried out by disenchanting youths”. He concluded that life and property cannot be secured in any country without the provision of adequate welfare for the generality of the people. The more disappointing is that 5 years after Falana's observation, the insecurity and poverty situation has further degenerated. This is worrisome given that without security, other socioeconomic goals are unattainable.

### 2.3 Government Responsibility to the Citizenry

The pride of government in any country is the provision of adequate security and welfare improvement for her citizens, in such a way that the citizens would feel attached to governance and have a sense of belonging. Notably, for citizens welfare to be improved there must be requisite socioeconomic and political development policies. This view was corroborated by Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2011)<sup>23</sup>, that for Nigeria to successfully implement meaningful development and strengthen government's commitments to the citizens, effective strategies must be developed. However, the inability of successive governments in Nigeria to evolve impactful economic strategies have greatly constrained her desire to improve citizens welfare as unemployment, poverty and hunger are still pervasive in the country. Against this backdrop, Ogbeidi (2012)<sup>24</sup> argued that for Nigeria to experience sustainable socioeconomic development, responsible and credible leaders must emerge to implant the act of good and selfless governance in the country.

With the emergence of a democratic government in 1999, Nigeria has had several economic and developmental policies aimed at stimulating sustainable development and enhancing the livelihoods of citizens. Between 2003 and 2007, there was the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). This was immediately followed by the Vision 20:2020 and the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) in 2017. Most recently in 2020, is the plan of the current administration to lift 100 million people out of poverty within 10 years. However, a critical look at these policies, considering the current state of the nation, reveals that these policies have not achieved their objectives. As reported by the World Poverty Clock in 2018, Nigeria not only tops African countries with the highest population living in extreme poverty, but has also overtaken India as the poverty capital of the world (Figure 1). This was corroborated by the data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in 2019, that 40 per cent of Nigerians are poor by national standards. This translates to 4 out of 10 Nigerians that are considered poor.

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<sup>20</sup>Aning, K. (2016). Keynote address at the international conference on Africa since independence: Promise, pugnacity, and failure in the post-colonial contexts, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

<sup>21</sup>Yagboyaju, D. Y. and Akinola, A. O (2019). Nigerian State and the Crisis of Governance: A Critical Exposition. Sage Open Journal, pp 1-10

<sup>22</sup>Falana, F. (2015, 17). Insecurity in Nigeria: a menace to national development. *Premium*

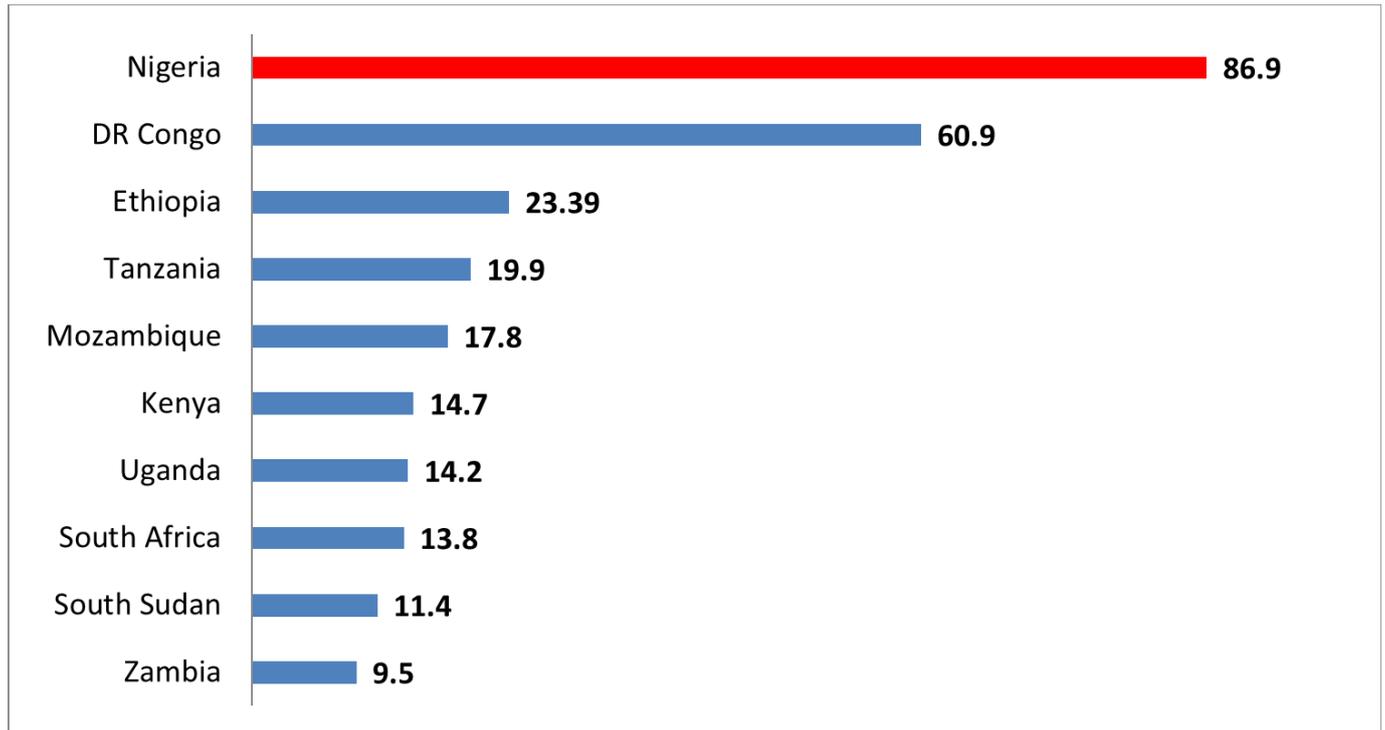
*Times*. <https://opinion.premiumtimesng.com/2015/07/17/insecurityin-nigeria-a-menace-to-natural-development-by-femi-falana>

<sup>23</sup>Lawal, T. and Oluwatoyin, A. (2011). National development in Nigeria: Issues, challenges and prospects. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research* Vol. 3(9), pp. 237-241.

<sup>24</sup>Ogbeidi, M. (2012). Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria Since 1960: A Socio-economic Analysis. *Journal of Nigeria Studies* Vol. 1, No 2



**Figure 1: Top 10 African Countries with People Living in Extreme Poverty in 2018 (Million)**



Source: World Poverty Clock (2019)

Uche (2019)<sup>25</sup> opined that it is utterly disappointing that all the various planning initiatives the country had adopted have not delivered the much-expected results rather the country is still battling with endemic poverty and mounting developmental challenges. Similarly, Orji (2019)<sup>26</sup> argued that Nigeria cannot be said to be committed to the citizens' wellbeing in the face of the recently proposed harsh social media bills and death penalty for hate speech. Obviously, the hate speech and social media bills have generated a lot of fumes and outcries from millions of Nigerians including notable personalities, claiming that the bill is a ploy to cripple their voices and bottle up government critics.

In this wise, Soyinka (2019)<sup>27</sup> argued that the Social Media Bill is an antic to silence the voice of criticism. He wondered why killing should be seen as an alternative to the scourge of hate speech. He advised that true *governance has a responsibility to protect her citizens rather than killing them. Besides, the uproars from the Social Media Bill, the country's rising out-of-school children and endemic poverty amidst crushing health challenges such as; malaria, tuberculosis, maternal mortality, have further dampened the perceived government commitments to the citizens. As pointed out by Abdullahi (2019), Nigeria is currently home to about 10 million out-of-school children, of whom half are girls. More so, 66% of this population is domiciled in North-West and North-East region, both regions have been terrorised by the Boko Haram insurgents, resulting in the displacement of over 2.8 million children*<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>25</sup>Uche, E. (2019). Development Plans and Policies in Nigeria: Observed Impediments and Practical Best Alternatives. International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation (IJRSI), Volume VI, Issue VII.

<sup>26</sup>Orji, S. (2019):<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/nigeria-hate-speech-death-penalty-muhammadu-buhari-media-a9238781.html>

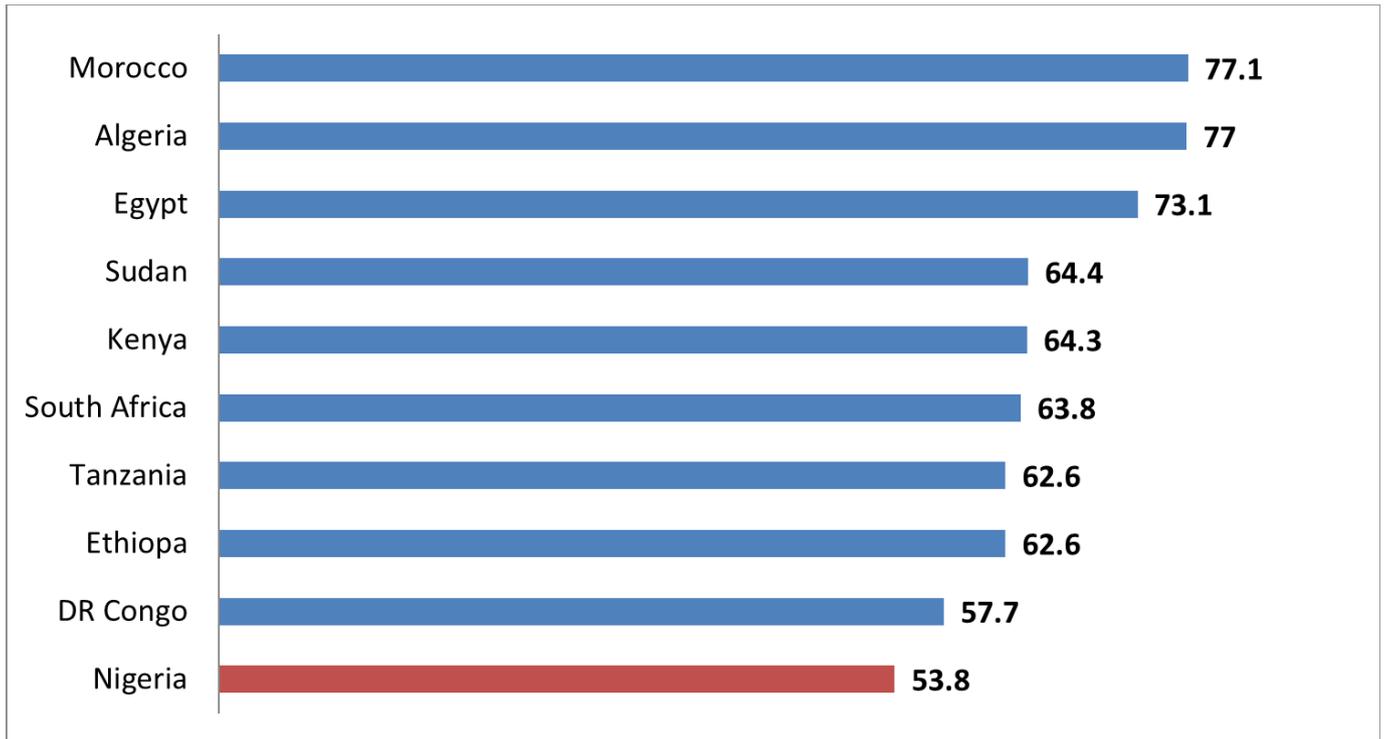
<sup>27</sup><https://www.thecable.ng/is-it-now-cool-to-kill-soyinka-writes-nassembly-over-hate-speech-bill>

<sup>28</sup>Abdullahi. M. (2019).<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/03/90-million-nigerians-live-in-extreme-poverty-here-are-3-ways-to-bring-them-out/>



In the midst of extreme poverty, killings and insecurity in the nation, the country's life expectancy has also been on the decline. According to the World Bank<sup>29</sup>, life expectancy at birth is defined as how long, on average, a newborn can expect to live, if current death rates do not change. However, the longevity of an individual life depends on the economic environment and the level of his/her wellbeing. Instability and high poverty rate affect individual livelihoods which invariably determines the length of life. As shown in Figure 2, Nigeria again ranks lowest among the top 10 most populated countries in Africa, with life expectancy of 53.8 years. This ranking does not only fall short of the world's averages of 71.4 years but also falls below most African's countries that are not in the same level of resource endowment and national wealth.

**Figure 2:** Life Expectancy in Top 10 Most Populated African Countries in 2017 (Years)



Source: CIA, 2020<sup>30</sup>

Some other scholars believe that Nigeria does not love her citizens based on the country's response to various issues that pertain to the citizens' wellbeing. Ogunnowo and Joshua (2019)<sup>31</sup> posited that a total of 121 Nigerians have been killed by Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa since 2016, yet Nigeria's response to these attacks have been conservative and more at condemning rather than taking decisive action. This view was supported by Akinrefon, et al. (2018), that the Federal Government has only condemned the attacks and no drastic action has been taken against the persistent killing of Nigerians in South Africa.

<sup>29</sup><https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN>

<sup>30</sup><https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2102rank.html>

<sup>31</sup>Ogunnowo, O. & Joshua, S. (2019). Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa and Nigeria's Foreign Policy: Rethinking Nigeria's Afro-Centric Foreign Policy Posture. Covenant University Journal of Politics & International Affairs. Vol. 7 No. 1, Pg;1-16.



As Ebegbulem (2019)<sup>32</sup> pointed out, Nigerian diplomats have never boosted the country's image or taken care of Nigerians living abroad. Similarly, in April 2020, about 4000 Nigerians were stranded abroad due to Covid-19 pandemic; with majority stranded in the U.S., UK, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and China but the Federal Government claimed that the country does not have enough resources to evacuate all of them back to Nigeria. However, out of the stranded 4000 Nigerians abroad willing to return because of the health crisis, only about 700 have been brought back (Asadu 2020)<sup>33</sup>.

The incessant killings resulting from the farmers-herders clashes and the indiscriminate arrest of journalists perceived to criticise the government, have further cast doubts on the genuineness of the country's love for her citizens. As stated by Ndubuisi (2018)<sup>34</sup>, there is hardly a week that passes without farmers-herders clashes or killings in any part of the country with displacement and destruction of properties worth millions of naira. In 2018 alone, more than 2000 Nigerian citizens died from the farmers-herders clashes<sup>35</sup> that exclude those who were killed and displaced by the Boko Haram insurgents.

The fatality suffered by the Nigerian Army in the course of Boko Haram insurgency is well documented in SB Morgen's intelligence report. According to the report, no fewer than 5,656 soldiers have died in the war since 2011, with 2014 recording the highest number of military casualties of about 2789 soldiers. In 2015, about 189 soldiers lost their lives, the number of death increased to 287 in 2016; 472 in 2017; 661 in 2018, and 873 casualties in 2019<sup>36</sup>. The insurgency has also left more than 7.1 million people relying on humanitarian assistance, 2.4 million displaced; it has claimed at least 37,500 lives (Global Conflict Tracker, 2019)<sup>37</sup>.

Unfortunately, while the insurgents have unabatedly terrorised the North-West and North- East of the country, the Federal Government has continued to pay lip service to Nigerians, claiming that the sect has been driven out from their strongholds and no longer capable of operating effectively. Amao and Maiangwa (2017)<sup>38</sup> have argued that Nigeria's apparent failure to nip the insurgency in the bud is deeply rooted in the context of its home-grown challenges; particularly its seeming indecisive political leadership and the politicisation of the country's national security. In a report by the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRP), the security breaches in Nigeria totally violate the international laws on crime, and the attention of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has been drawn to this. In fact, they posited that:

**Targeted violence, increased lawlessness, escalating sectarian tensions, the state's inability to protect, and its military's own contribution to human rights violations, has raised significant alarm as to whether the international community is bearing witness to mass atrocity crimes – or could in the near future. In May 2014, one month after Boko Haram's abduction and continued detention of 276 schoolgirls, the International Criminal Court Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, said that crimes committed by Boko Haram fell within the jurisdiction of the Court, which has authority over cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide<sup>39</sup>.**

<sup>32</sup>Ebegbulem, J. C. (2019). Nigeria's National Interest and Foreign Policy: A Critical Evaluation. *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies* Volume 6 (10), 49-60.

<sup>33</sup>Asadu C (2020): <https://www.thecable.ng/covid-19-we-are-being-strained-says-fg-on-evacuation-of-stranded-nigerians>

<sup>34</sup>Ndubuisi C. I (2018). A critical analysis of conflicts between herdsman and farmers in Nigeria: Causes and socioreligious and political effects on national development. *HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies*-0259-9422.

<sup>35</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/12/amnesty-farmer-herder-clashes-kill-3600-nigeria-181217101114812.html>

<sup>36</sup>Stalemate: Boko Haram's New Strategy requires it to commit fewer attacks. [https://www.sbin tel.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/201910\\_Boko-Haram.pdf](https://www.sbin tel.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/201910_Boko-Haram.pdf)

<sup>37</sup>Global Conflict Tracker. 2019. Boko Haram Nigeria. Global Conflict Tracker. May 15. <https://www.cfr.org/interactiv e/global-conflict-tracker/enfl ict/boko-haram-nigeria>.

<sup>38</sup>Amao, O.B., and B. Maiangwa. (2017). Has the *Giant* gone to sleep? Re-assessing Nigeria's response to the Liberian Civil War (1990–1997) and the Boko Haram insurgency (2009–2015). *African Studies* 76 (1): 22–43

<sup>39</sup><http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/crises/crisis-in-nigeria>



Also, worth noting is the unabated attacks on journalists and media activists. As reported by Amnesty International (2019)<sup>40</sup>, Nigeria's civic space has continued to shrink owing to the consistent attacks on journalists and media practitioners. These attacks take the forms of verbal and physical assaults, as well as indiscriminate arrest and detention by the Nigerian government. It has been further observed that these violations are usually carried out by government security forces such as the Nigerian Army, the Nigeria Police and the Department of State Service (DSS). These arrests usually occur when media practitioners and journalists try to enquire information from the government, share information or make critical comments that could instigate public opinions.

Also, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) in its 2018 Global Impunity Index, stated that there were unsettled murder cases of about 13 journalists in Nigeria within the reporting period<sup>41</sup>. Consequently, Nigeria was ranked 120 out of 180 countries in Press Freedom ranking, and rated as 'difficult' for press freedom and net freedom<sup>42</sup>. The insensitivity of government to the plights of the teeming vulnerable population of Nigerians during the Covid-19 lockdown also highlights the lack of commitment to the citizens' welfare. While the Federal Government claimed it had distributed palliatives to mitigate the suffering of poor Nigerians over the coronavirus pandemic, the citizens have expressed utter disgust and disappointment at the so-called palliatives which they described as ridiculous. Many of the citizens perceived the government's palliatives as a scam, claiming that they are yet to see anyone who benefited from the palliatives<sup>43</sup>.

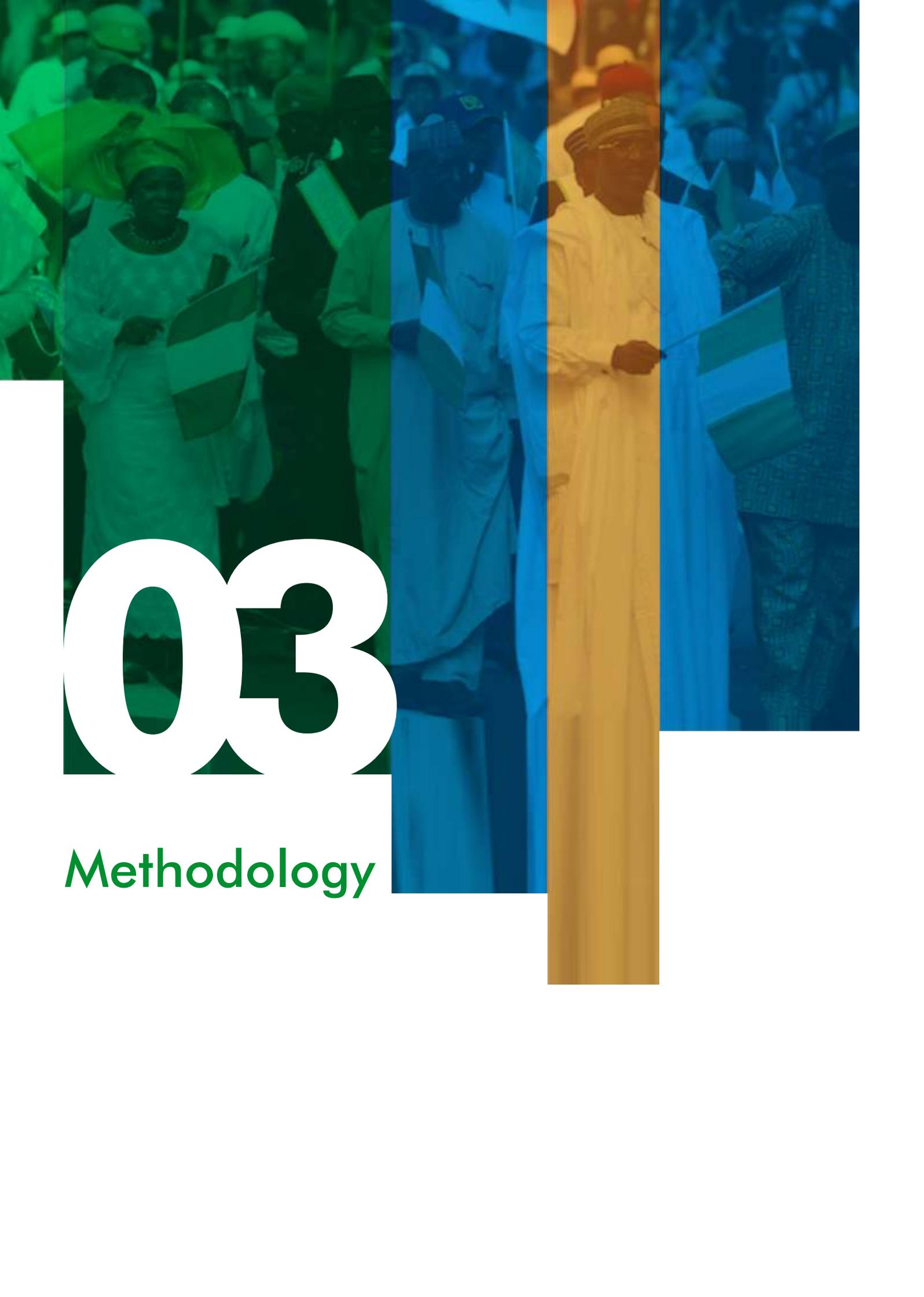
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<sup>40</sup>Amnesty International (2019): Endangered Voices: Attack on Freedom of Expression in Nigeria. AFR 44/9504/amnesty.org

<sup>41</sup>Elisabeth Witchel, Getting Away with Murder. CPJ's 2018 Global Impunity Index spotlights countries where journalists are slain and their killers go free: <https://cpj.org/reports/2018/10/impunity-index-getting-away-with-murder-killed-justice.php>

<sup>42</sup>Reporters without Borders, Data of Press Freedom Ranking 2019: [https://rsf.org/en/ranking\\_table](https://rsf.org/en/ranking_table)

<sup>43</sup><https://tribuneonlineng.com/i-stand-by-my-statement-on-covid-19-palliatives-fraud-ndume-replies-presidency/>  
<https://dailypost.ng/2020/04/06/covid-19-buhari-apc-govt-claim-of-cash-gift-to-nigerians-big-scam-pdp/>



# 03

## Methodology



### 3.0 Methodology

A nationwide Citizens Perception Survey (CPS) was conducted between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2020. API elicited views of Nigerians across the country on the extent of love the country has for her citizens, gauging from socioeconomic parameters and the general wellbeing of the citizens. A quantitative approach was adopted for the study involving telephone interviews administered to target respondents aged 18 years and above. A Stratified Random Sampling technique<sup>44</sup> was adopted to representatively select citizens in all 36 states of the nation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

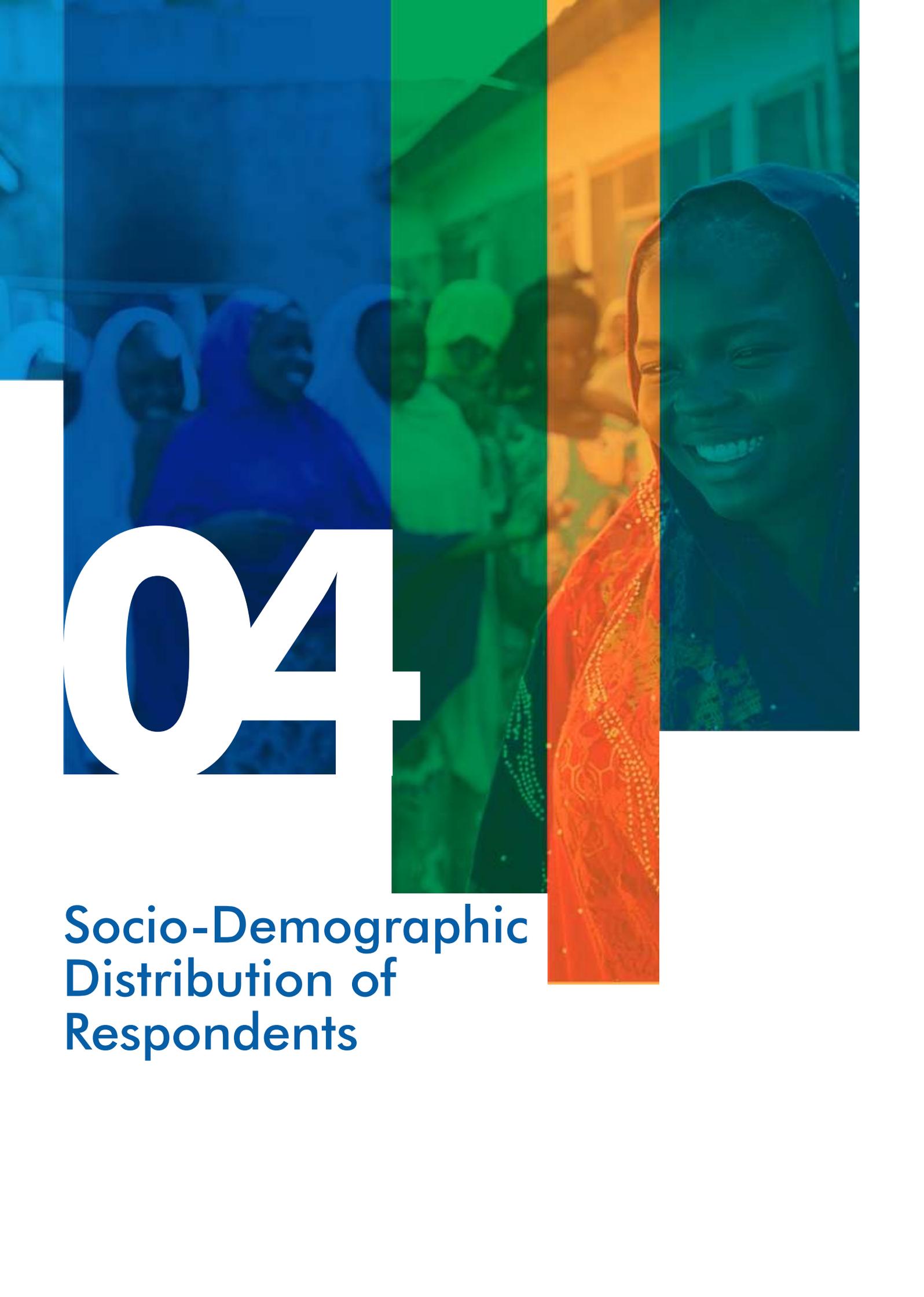
A total of 1633 interviews were administered and achieved out of 5784 calls made, representing a response rate of approximately 28%. The questionnaire contained two parts: the first part included questions regarding government responsibility to the citizens. The second part contained questions that enabled respondents to give their thought on the extent of love the country has for the citizens. Telephone interviews were administered in five languages (English, Pidgin English, Igbo, Hausa & Yoruba) to ensure inclusiveness, wider access and adequate representation.

All interviews were administered in the language of the respondent's choice. The average time per completed interview was 18 minutes. Geographic quotas were assigned to ensure that every Senatorial District and state was proportionately represented in the sample. Post-stratification gender, geopolitical zones and state weights were constructed and applied to the data to make it more representative of the population, allow for more accurate population totals of estimates and reduce non-response bias. The weights assigned were in proportion to the 2006 Nigerian population figures.

The margin of error for this survey is  $\pm 3$  per cent at the mid-range, with a confidence interval of 95 per cent. The analysis for this survey involved tabulation of responses into frequency tables and generating frequency charts from the summaries. The open-ended responses were first coded, analysed and summarised into optimal categories before generating frequency tables and charts.

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<sup>44</sup>A method of sampling that involves dividing the population into smaller groups known as strata, and then drawing representative samples from the strata. In this case, the 36 states and Abuja constitute the strata from which representative samples are drawn.



# 04

## Socio-Demographic Distribution of Respondents

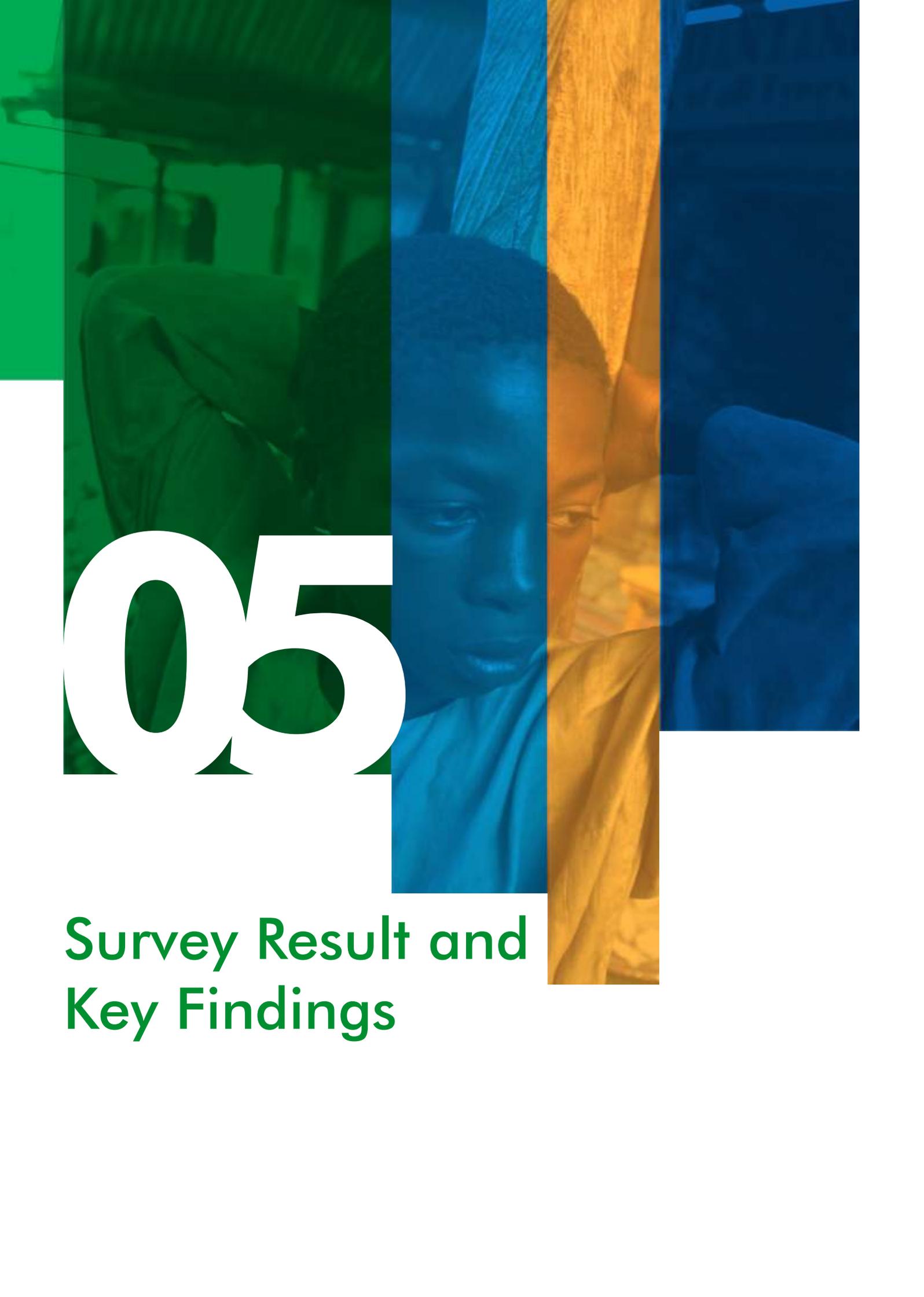


#### 4.0 Socio-Demographic Distribution of Respondents

A total of 1633 respondents across Nigeria participated in the poll, of which 51% were male, and 49% were female. More of the respondents (49%) were aged 36 to 60 years. This was closely followed by aged 18 to 35 years (47%) while 4% of the respondents were aged 60 and above. With regards to the literacy level, respondents who had tertiary education and above were equal with respondents who had no education/ completed secondary education with 50% each.

**Table 1 :** Weighted Socio-Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Variable Name	Variable Label	%=100	N=1,633
Gender	<i>Male</i>	51%	830
	<i>Female</i>	49%	803
Age-Group	<i>18 to 35 Years</i>	47%	765
	<i>36 to 60 Years</i>	49%	795
	<i>60+ Years</i>	4%	73
Literacy	<i>No Education/Completed Secondary</i>	50%	817
	<i>Tertiary Education &amp; Above</i>	50%	816
Geo-Political Zone	<i>North Central</i>	15%	237
	<i>North East</i>	14%	221
	<i>North West</i>	25%	418
	<i>South East</i>	12%	191
	<i>South South</i>	15%	245
	<i>South West</i>	19%	322



05

## Survey Result and Key Findings



## 5.0 Survey Result and Key Findings

The survey assessed whether Nigeria loves Nigerians with regards to how Nigeria treats her citizens and also to capture the views of Nigerians on what they feel about the country, given the present socioeconomic realities.

### 5.1 Assessing How Proud Citizens Are to be Nigerian

Despite the harsh economic realities and security challenges in the country, an overwhelming 91% of the respondents attested that they feel proud to be Nigerians. On the contrary, only a few respondents (9%) were not proud to be Nigerians. It is pertinent to posit that a positive expression of this magnitude conveyed by majority of citizens across the country could plausibly be attributed to the fact that, Nigerians are very resilient, and the religious disposition of many citizens make them hopeful in the face of hardship and perceived poor governance. However, the views expressed by majority of the respondents do not align with the position of Iwalaie (2013)<sup>45</sup> who argued that Nigerians cannot be proud or patriotic to a nation that has no plan for her citizens. He added that, despite the enormous oil wealth, the country still grapples with challenges of high unemployment rates, increasing insecurity, excruciating poverty and a somewhat bleak future.

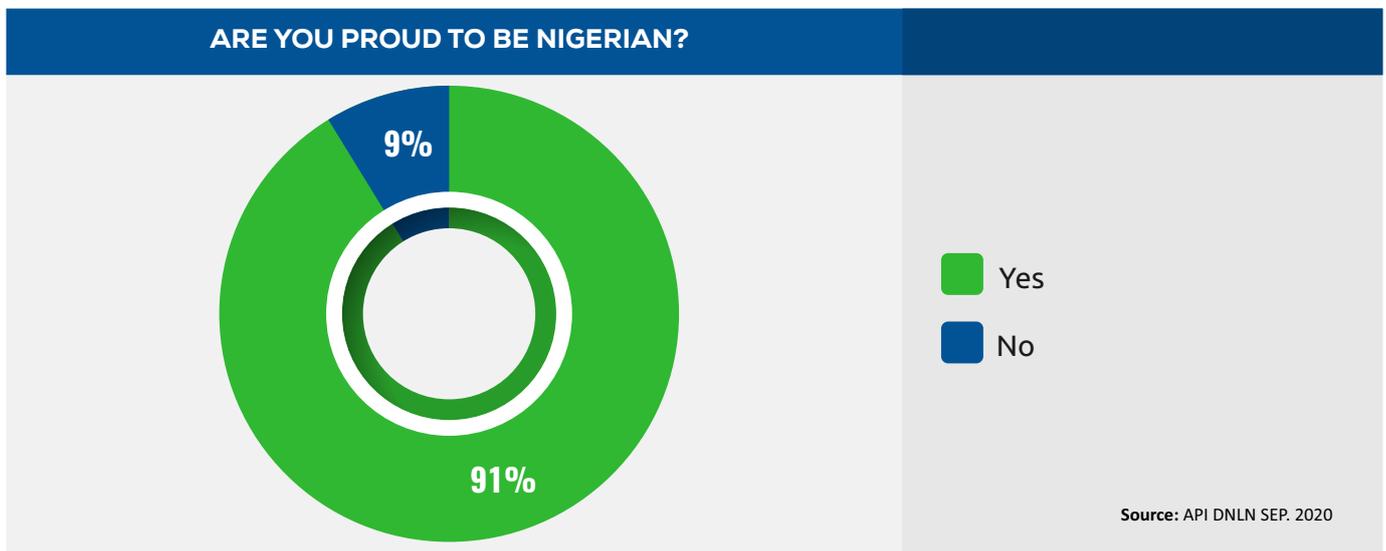


Figure 3: Assessing how proud citizens are to be Nigerian I

Similarly, this finding that Nigerians are proud of being Nigerians cuts across the different key socio-demographic classifications. Across gender, 91% of both male and female respondents are proud of being Nigerians. However, when we consider the age demography, there were more respondents between the ages of 18 and 35 years (92%) and 36 to 60 years (91%) who affirmed that they are proud of being Nigerians; compare with a slightly lower 84% of senior citizens above the age of 60 years. Also, the survey revealed that less educated citizens (93%) seemed more proud to be Nigerian, than the more educated citizens with tertiary education and above (88%); while more citizens based in the northern region of the country (94%), affirmed to be proud of being Nigerians, compared to those in the southern half of the country (87%).

<sup>45</sup>Iwalaie, S. (2013). <http://saharareporters.com/2013/06/21/reasons-why-most-nigerians-today-are-not-proud-be-nigerians-sunday-iwalaie>

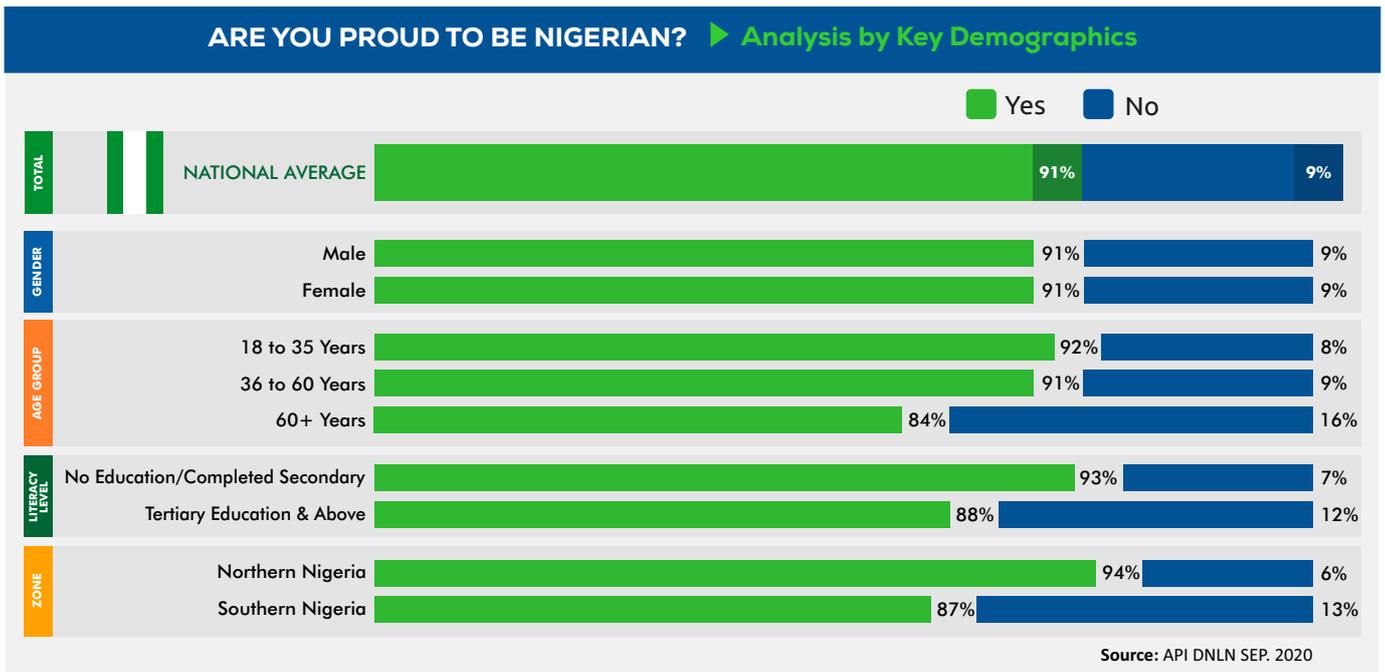


Figure 4: Assessing how proud citizens are to be Nigerian II

## 5.2 Gauging the Level of Citizens' Trust for the State

A governments that enjoy more citizen trust will function better and successfully than those with minimal citizens' trust. However, to further validate the findings above on how proud citizens are to be Nigerian, respondents were asked about their level of trust for the country. Surprisingly, despite the fact that a majority of the citizens felt proud to be Nigerian, only 22% of respondents said they have trust for the state. On the other hand, an overwhelming proportion of the respondents (78%) nationwide expressed some degree of mistrust for the country. In particular, 35% of the respondents said, they have just a little trust for the country, 32% do not have trust for the country at all, while respondents who have somewhat trust for the country were only 11%. The apparent lack of trust for the country expressed by citizens is scary; if citizens fail to trust the country, it will be difficult for them to support the country and obey government laws.

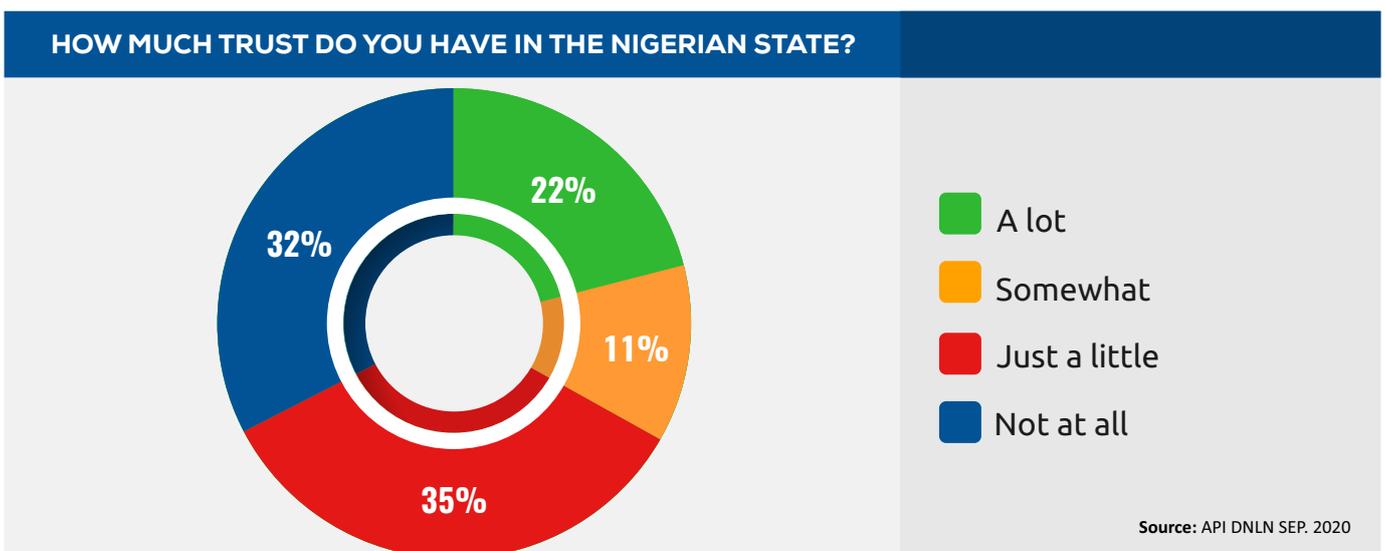


Figure 5: Ascertaining the level of Citizens trust for the country - I



Presented in another way in Figure 5, the survey data showed that while only about a third of Nigerians (33%) expressed some or a lot of trust in the Nigerian state, the majority (67%) expressed very little to no trust in the country whatsoever. In this regard, Ali and Yasin, (2015<sup>46</sup>) asserted that when citizens fail to trust the government, they will resist the rules, avoid taxpaying or even involve in riots. This view no doubt reflects the current state of the nation, where citizens' mistrust towards the government due to several years of government failure, high level of corruption and unfulfilled promises have led to a sporadic increase in violent crimes and pockets of civil unrests/protests across the country.

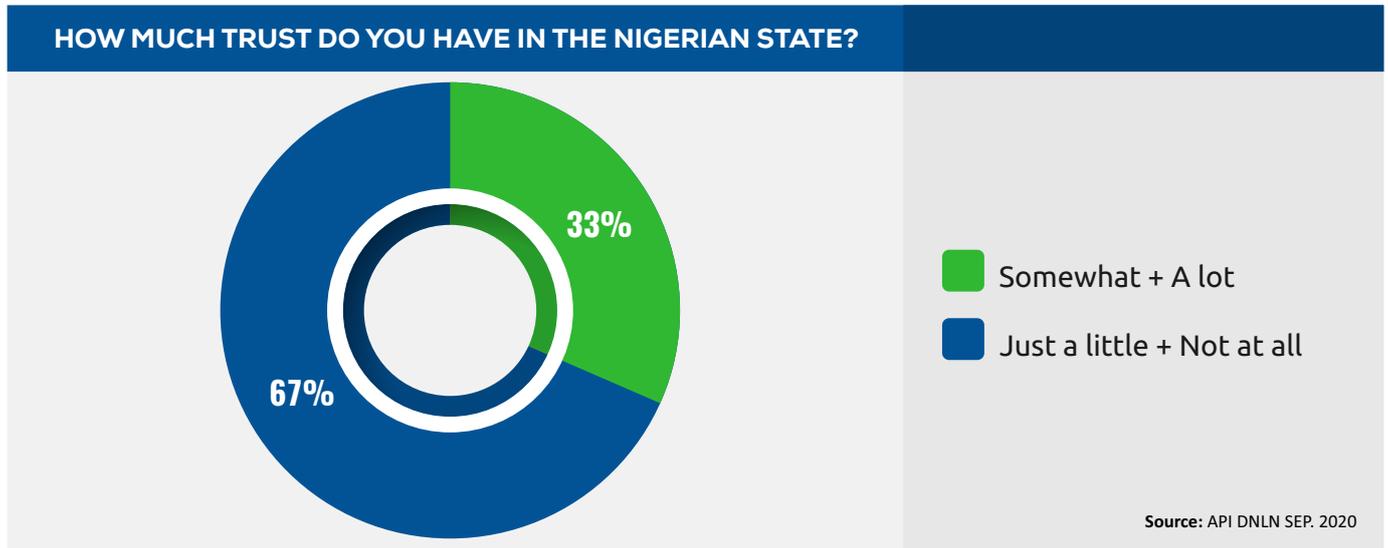


Figure 6: Ascertaining the level of Citizens trust for the country - II

In addition, disaggregated data showed that there were more female (68%) than male (65%) respondents with little to no trust for the state. Also, there were more citizens based in southern Nigeria (70%) with little to not trust in the state, in comparison with citizens based in northern Nigeria (63%).

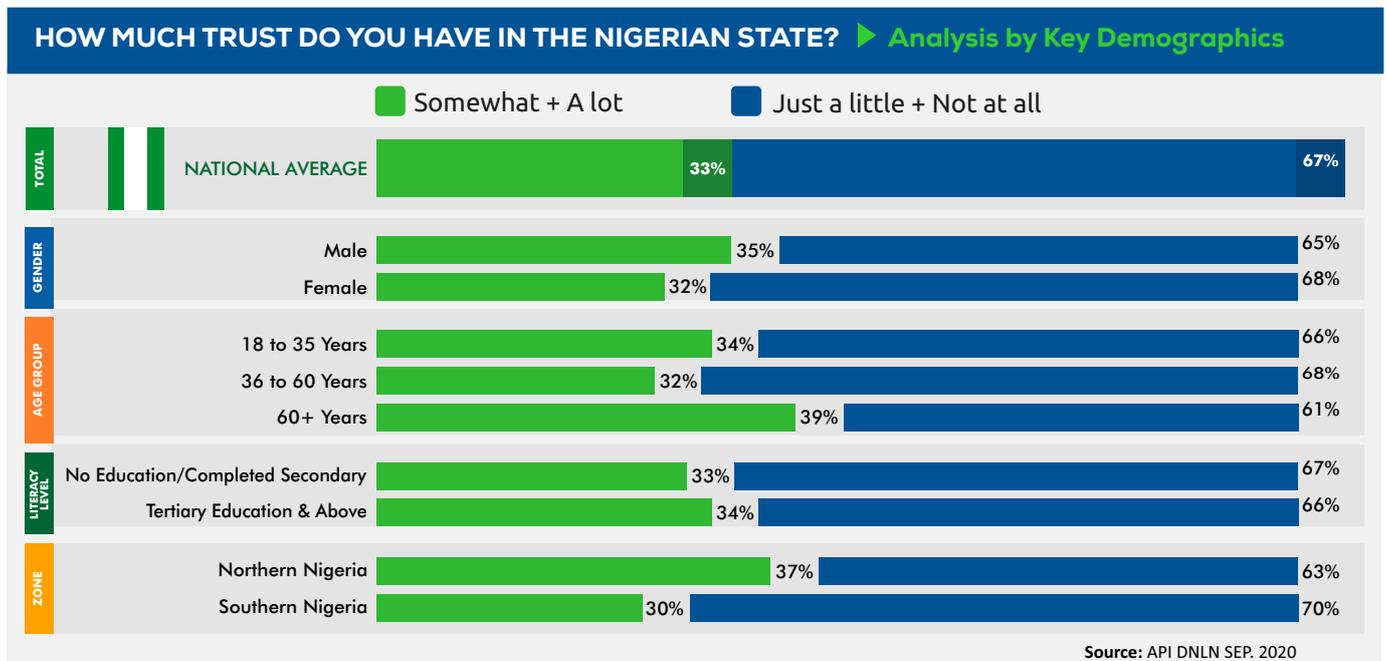


Figure 7: Ascertaining the level of Citizens trust for the country - III

<sup>46</sup>Ali, S. and Yasin, T (2015), "Citizens' Trust in Public Institutions: International Congress of the International Institute of Administrative. A Field Study", IIASIIISA



Further disaggregation by geopolitical zones from the survey uncovered that respondents who do not trust the country at all, were more from South-East (41%) and South-South (40%), while respondents who expressed a lot of trust for the country were highest in North-West (26%) and North-East (25%).

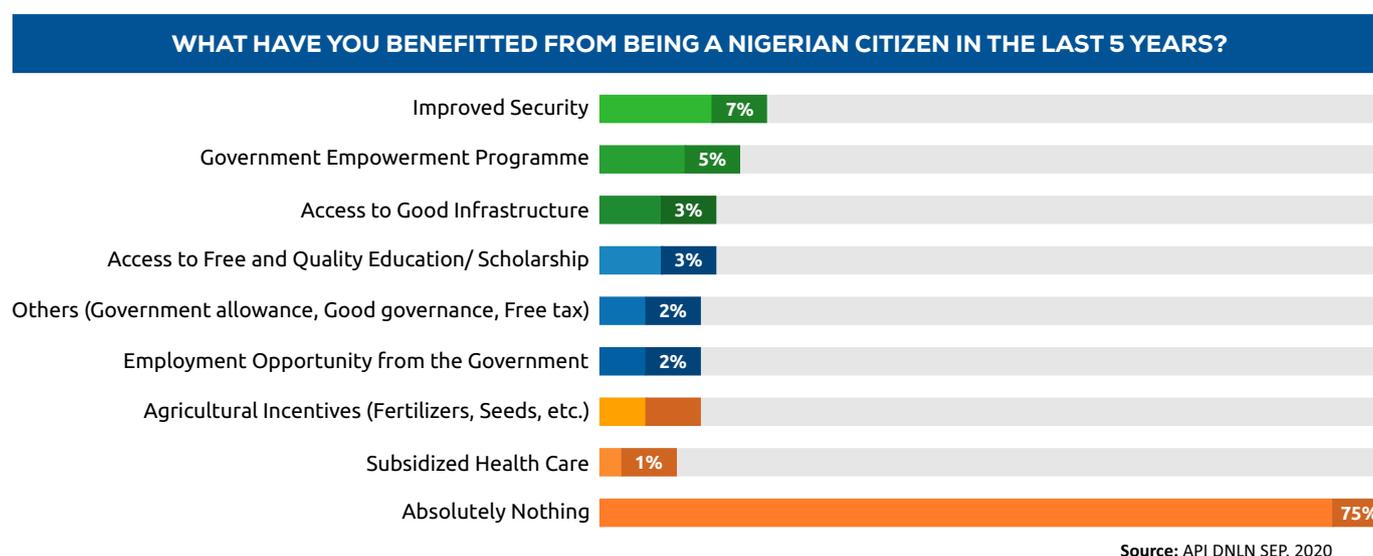
**Table 2:** How much Trust do you have in the Nigerian State? (By Geo-Political Zones)

	Total	Geo-Political Zone					
		North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
<b>A lot</b>	<b>22%</b>	21%	25%	26%	13%	20%	23%
<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>11%</b>	14%	7%	13%	12%	8%	12%
<b>Just a little</b>	<b>35%</b>	34%	32%	32%	34%	32%	42%
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>32%</b>	31%	36%	29%	41%	40%	23%

Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

### 5.3 Gauging Citizens' Perception of the Benefits of being Nigerians

The concept of good governance is premised on how well citizens of a country benefit from government policies and programmes. Considering this pertinent issue, respondents were also asked to give their opinion on what they have benefited from the country in the last 5 years. The result clearly showed that majority of the respondents (75%) have benefited nothing from the government. Very few respondents were found to have benefited from the government; improved security (7%), benefited from government empowerment programme (5%), quality education (3%) amongst others.



Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

**Figure 8:** Gauging what Citizens have benefited from the Country in the last 5 Years?

The massive proportion of respondents who opined that they have benefited nothing from the government underscores the failures of leadership and worsening state of the economy characterised by endemic poverty, rising unemployment and acute hunger. This possibly explains why Nigeria has continued to rank low in Human Development Indicator from 2010 to 2018. Specifically, in 2018 Nigeria ranked 158 out of 189 countries with low human development<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>47</sup>[http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/NGA.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/NGA.pdf)



Glaringly, it could be seen from the result that irrespective of socio-demographics, the widely held opinion was that respondents have benefited nothing from the government in the last 5 years. Although, this opinion was stronger in the South-South (86%) and North-Central (85) but there was a unanimous consensus in the other geopolitical zones; South-East (83), South-West (76%), North-East (75%) and North- West (65%). Similarly, 75% and above of all respondents across gender, age-group and literacy level equally expressed ill-feelings of benefiting nothing from the government. Again, this finding corroborates that of Mesagan and Adeniji-Ilori, (2018)<sup>48</sup> who reported that, several episodes of economic growth witnessed in the country and the oil wealth have not benefited the citizens.

**Table 3:** What have you benefited from being a Nigerian citizen in the last 5 Years? (By Socio-Demographics)

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Literacy Level		Geo-Political Zone					
		Male	Female	18 to 35	36 to 60	60+	No Education / Completed Secondary	Tertiary Education & Above	North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
<i>Absolutely Nothing</i>	75%	75%	80%	79%	75%	76%	77%	78%	85%	75%	65%	83%	86%	76%
<i>Improved Security</i>	7%	7%	7%	5%	8%	14%	6%	8%	6%	9%	7%	2%	5%	11%
<i>Government Empowerment Programme</i>	5%	4%	5%	7%	3%	1%	4%	5%	2%	4%	8%	10%	2%	2%
<i>Access to Free and Quality Education/ Scholarship</i>	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	1%	2%	6%	2%	2%	3%
<i>Access to Good Infrastructure</i>	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	0%	4%	2%	1%	2%	5%	1%	3%	2%
<i>Agricultural Incentives (Fertilizers, Seeds, etc.)</i>	2%	3%	%	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	3%	4%	0%	%	1%
<i>Employment Opportunity from the Government</i>	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%
<i>Others (Government allowance, Good governance, Free tax)</i>	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%
<i>Subsidized Health Care</i>	1%	%	1%	%	1%	0%	1%	%	%	2%	1%	0%	0%	%

Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

<sup>48</sup>Mesagan, P. E., & Adeniji-Ilori, O. M. (2018). Household Environmental Factors and Childhood Morbidity in South-Western Nigeria. Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences, 11(3), 411-425.



### 5.4 Gauging Citizens' Perception of the Value of their Lives to the Government

As highlighted in the social contract theory, the state owes its existence to the citizenry and must guarantee the protection of the citizens' life and property. In this perspective, citizens were asked if their lives matter to the Nigerian government. Findings from the survey revealed that majority of the respondents (45%) held the view that they do not believe that their lives matter to the Nigerian government. This was followed by 40% who said, they believe that their lives matter to the government; and 15% who were simply unsure if their lives matter to the government or not. Without doubt, this finding highlights citizens' perceptions on the existential gaps that exist in government's ability to protect the lives and properties of citizens. This finding has been corroborated by several scholars such as; Ogunnowo and Joshua (2019), Akinrefon, et al. (2018), Ebegbulem (2019) and Asadu, (2020), who argued that Nigerian lives do not matter to the Nigerian government, given the government's poor response to various issues pertaining to citizens' wellbeing and protection.

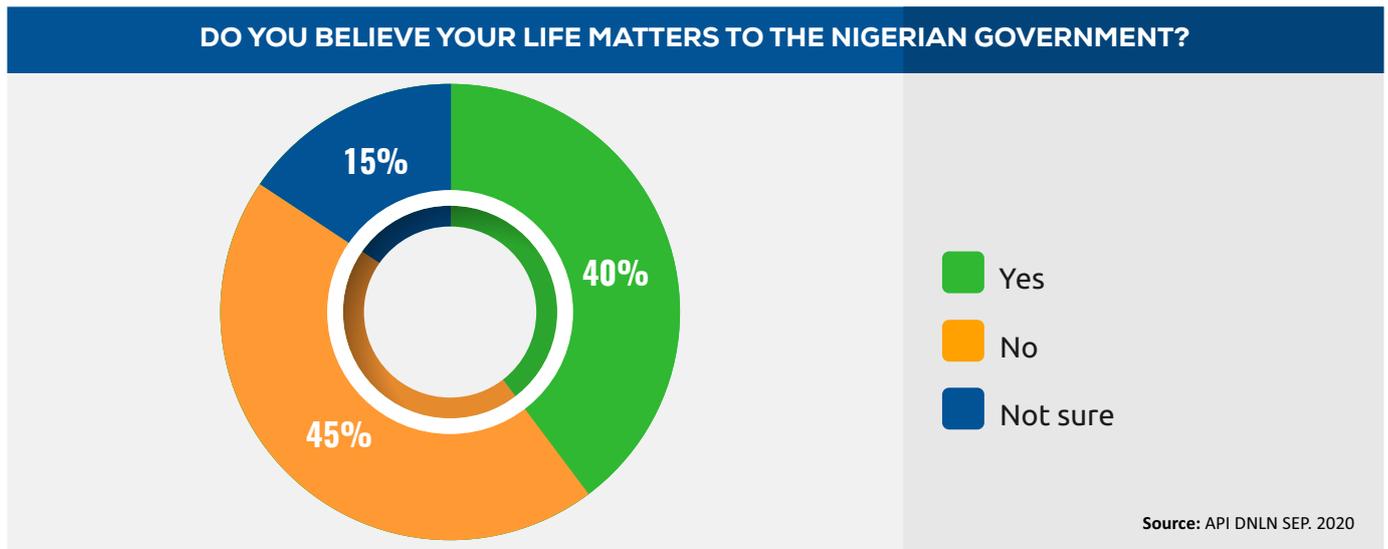


Figure 9: Citizens perception on the value of their lives to Nigerian Government I

Interestingly, this sentiment is shared by Nigerians across different socio-demographic classifications, particularly from senior Citizens aged above 60 years, of which 62% do not believe their lives matter to the government. [See figure 10 below]. This point was echoed in Ebegbulem (2019) posited that Nigeria's government does not value the lives of her citizens, as most citizens at home and in the diaspora, have learnt not to expect anything from the government, but to depend on their own survival instincts.

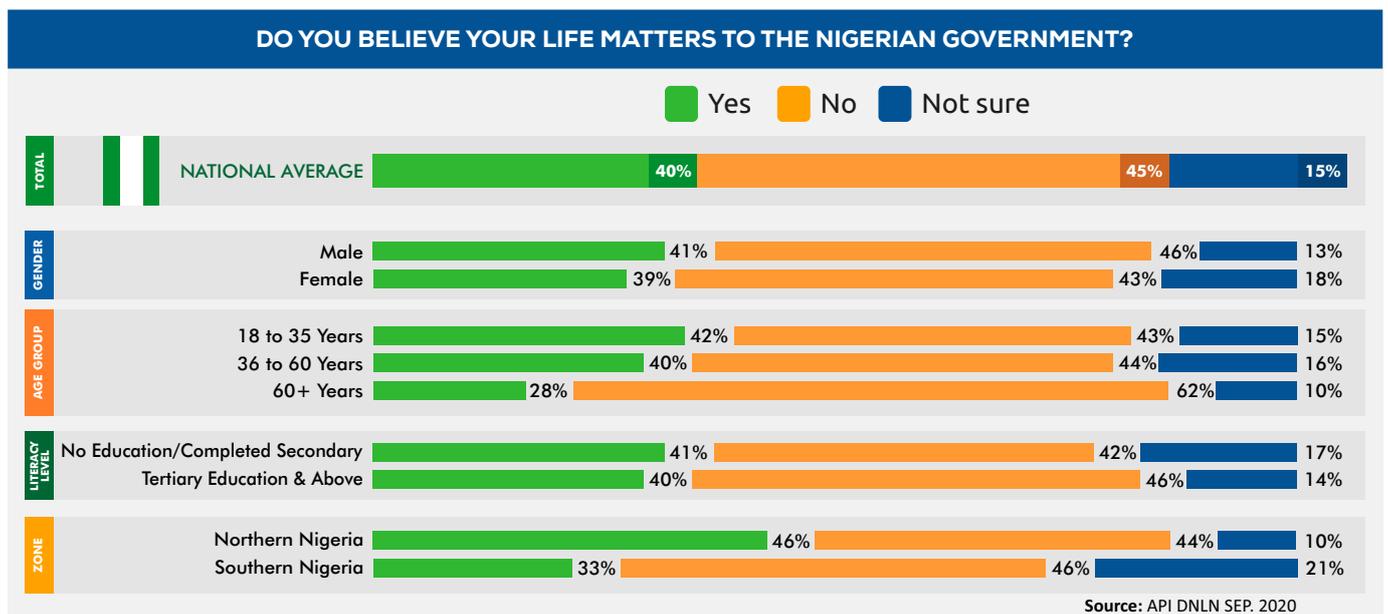


Figure 10: Citizens perception on the value of their lives to Nigerian Government II



Further disaggregation of the data revealed that amongst 45% of citizens who do not believe that their lives matter to the government, significant proportion were found in the South-East (54%) and North-Central (51%) geopolitical zones. On the flipside, majority of the 40% who believe that their lives matter to the Nigerian government are based in the North-West (51%) and North-East (48%) geopolitical zones. Again, this result no doubt mirrors the ethnic sentiments and tribal politics that have characterised the Nigerian state.

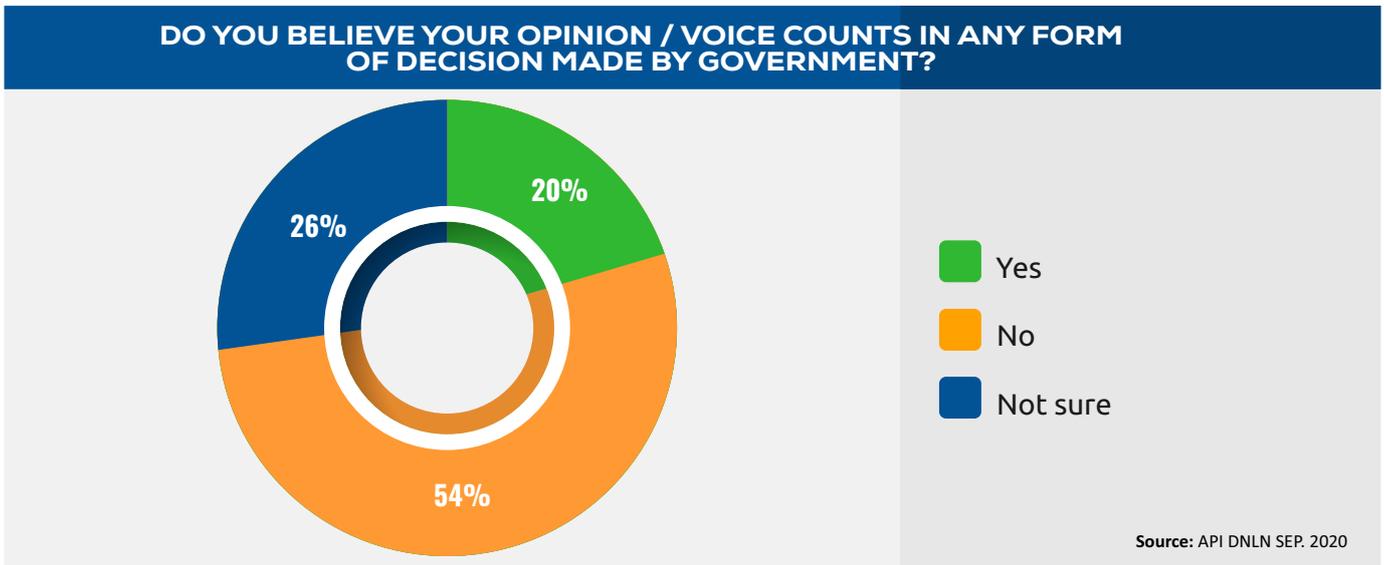
**Table 4:** Do you think your life matters to Nigerian government? (By Geo-Political Zones)

	Total	Geo-Political Zone					
		North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
<b>Yes</b>	<b>40%</b>	38%	48%	51%	25%	37%	36%
<b>No</b>	<b>45%</b>	51%	44%	39%	54%	39%	44%
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>15%</b>	11%	8%	10%	21%	24%	20%

Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

### 5.5 Gauging Citizens' Perception Regarding the Value of Their Opinion to Government Policies

Citizens' participation in government decision making is crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of government policy, transparency and accountability. The participation of citizens in the governance process should not be limited to only elections, but also as shapers of government policies and programmes. In view of this, citizens were asked if they believed their opinions are considered by government when making decisions. An overwhelming proportion of Nigerians surveyed (80%) either disagreed (54%) or were simply unsure (26%) that their voices and opinions count in government decision processes. On the other hand, only about 2 in 10 respondents (20%) held the belief that their opinions count in government decision making processes. The viewpoint that citizens' opinions do not count in government decisions was supported by Eniayejuni and Evcan (2015) who stated that, in the last fifteen years, there is a growing crisis of detachment of government from the people; suggesting that citizens' participation is needed at all levels of governance to vehemently address the needs of the masses.



Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

**Figure 11:** Gauging Citizens perception regarding whether their voice counts |

<sup>49</sup>Eniayejuni, A. and Evcan, N. (2015). Citizen's Participation: Between Continuity and Change in Nigeria. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences Vol 6 (6), pp 1-7



A look at key socio-demographic indicators revealed that there was slightly more male (55%) than female (53%) respondents who do not believe their voices count in government decision making processes. Similarly, there were more senior citizens aged 60 years and above (56%) who felt their voices do not matter to the government, compared to youths aged between 18 and 35 years (54%) and adults aged between 36 and 60 years (53%). Again, there were slightly more citizens based in southern Nigeria (55%) who believe their opinions do not matter in government's decision-making processes, compared to those in southern Nigeria (53%).

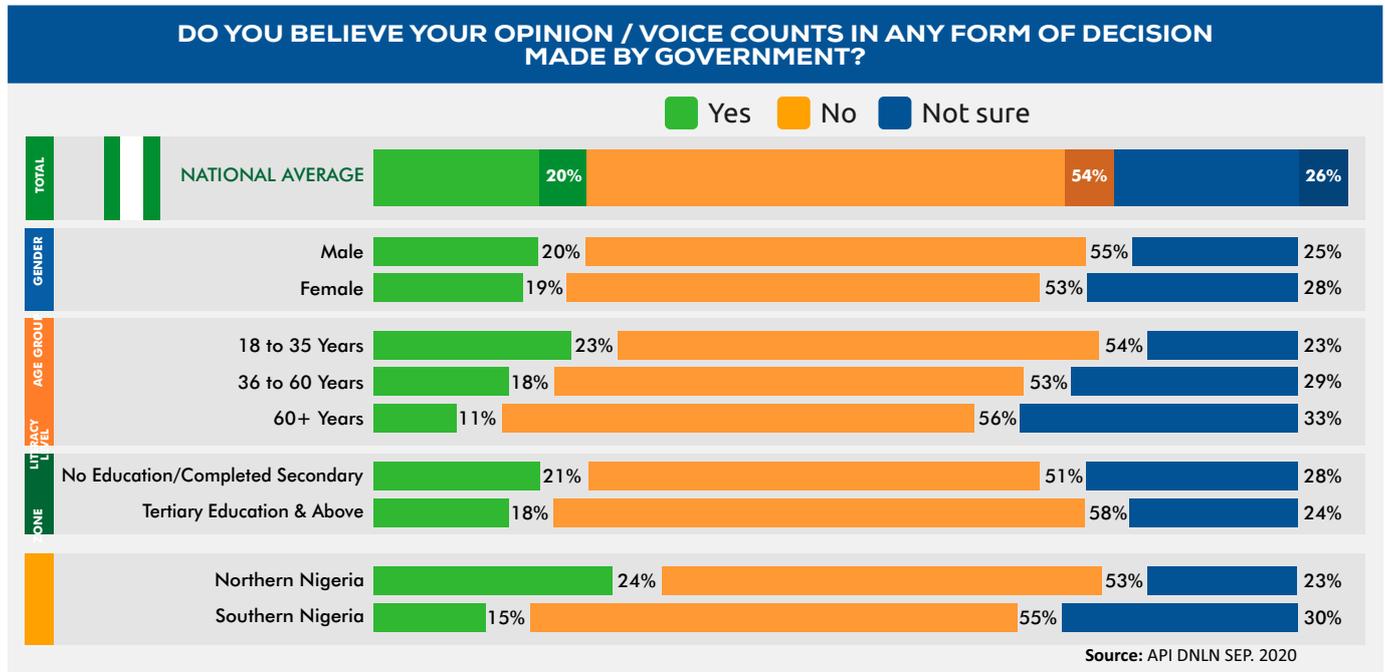


Figure 12: Gauging Citizens perception regarding whether their voice counts II

Furthermore, the data showed that the significant proportion of citizens from the South-South (58%), South-East (56%), North-West (54%) and North-Central (54%) held the view that their opinions do not count in government decision process [See Table 6 below]. Evidently, the overarching viewpoint expressed by citizens was that government does not consider their opinions and perspectives in considering public policies and programmes. Interestingly, this finding highlights a critical vacuum that exists between the government and the governed in Nigeria. As submitted by Popoola (2016), governments ought to listen and pay attention to what their citizens desire to minimise social unrest and avoid violent agitations.

Table 5: Do you think your opinion / voice counts in any form of decision made by government? (By Geo-Political Zones)

	Total	Geo-Political Zone					
		North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
<b>Yes</b>	20%	23%	23%	25%	15%	11%	17%
<b>No</b>	54%	54%	49%	54%	56%	58%	53%
<b>Not sure</b>	26%	23%	28%	21%	29%	31%	30%

Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

<sup>50</sup>Popoola, O. (2016). Actors in Decision Making and Policy Process. Global Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences. Vol 5(1), 47-51.



### 5.6 Gauging Citizens Perception Regarding Government Support When They are Abroad

Respondents to the survey were also asked whether or not they believed the Nigerian government would come to their aid in case they encounter problems while out of the country. From the response, about 4 in 10 respondents (42%) stated that they do not believe the Nigerian government would come to their aid if they encountered a serious problem abroad. This was followed by 32% who said they were simply unsure if the government would come to their aid. On the contrary, only about 28% of respondents thought that the Nigerian government would definitely come to their aid if they encountered a problem abroad.

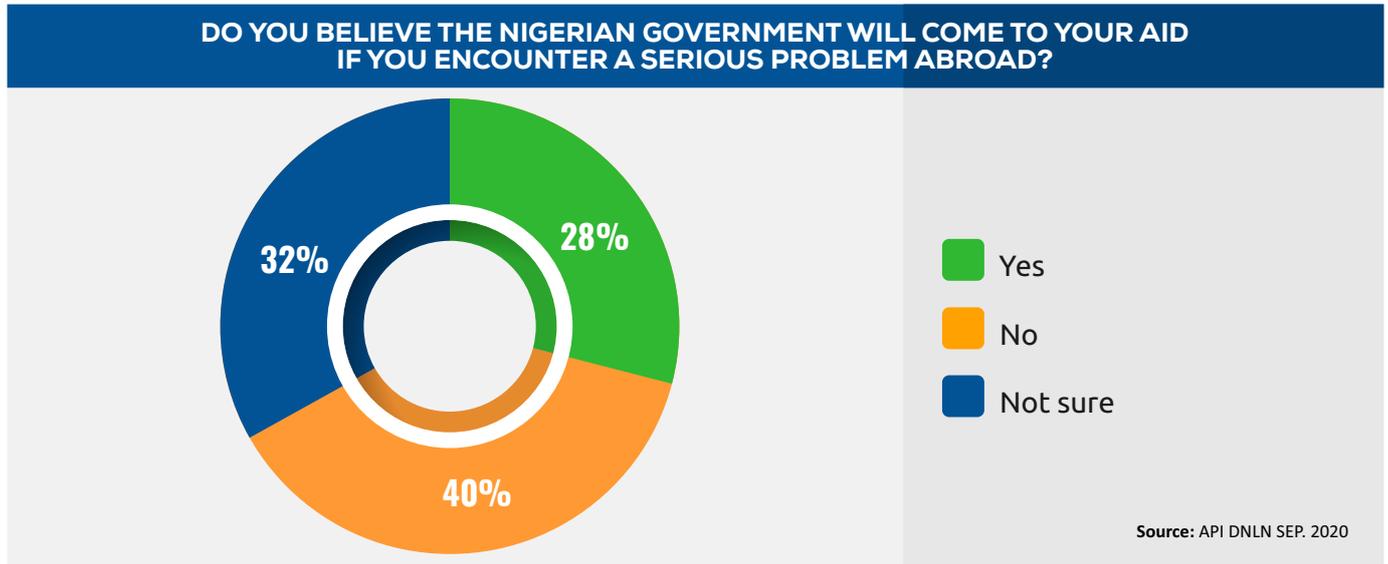


Figure 13: Gauging Citizens Perception regarding Government support when they are abroad I

Again, this finding cuts across various socio-demographic classification as seen in Figure 14; and it corroborates the assertion by Ebegbulem (2019) that if the Nigerian government values the lives of her citizens, it should care about the welfare of all Nigerians both home and abroad. To put this in context, some recent issues that buttressed this finding include: the recent attack on Nigerians in China and Ghana, xenophobic attack on Nigerians in South Africa, and the case of over 4000 Nigerians stranded abroad due to Covid-19 amongst others.

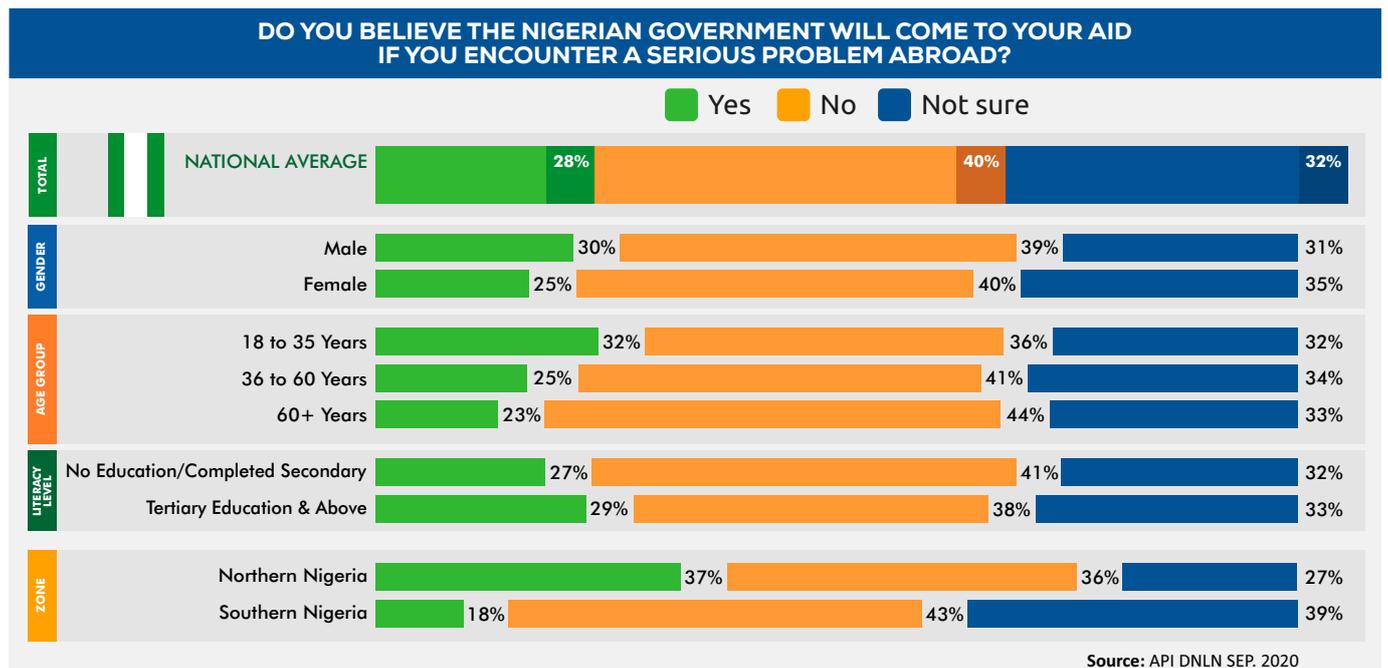


Figure 14: Gauging Citizens Perception regarding Government support when they are abroad II



### 5.7 Gauging Citizens Perception Regarding Care for Those with Terminal Diseases

People living with terminal illness usually experience financial hardship and would require government financial support. In most countries, these people are entitled to one or more government benefits. Therefore, to elicit citizens' views in this regard, respondents were asked to give their opinions on whether or not the government cares enough for citizens with terminal disease who are unable to pay their hospital bills. The result showed that almost 8 in 10 Nigerians (78%) were of the opinion that the government does not care enough and would also be unwilling to support citizens with terminal diseases; reflecting the findings of Chukwunyere (2019) that the implementation of effective palliative care services for people with terminal diseases in Nigeria has remained a challenge due to lack of government policy/priority. However, on the contrary, 22% of respondents said they believe that the government cares enough to support citizens with terminal diseases.

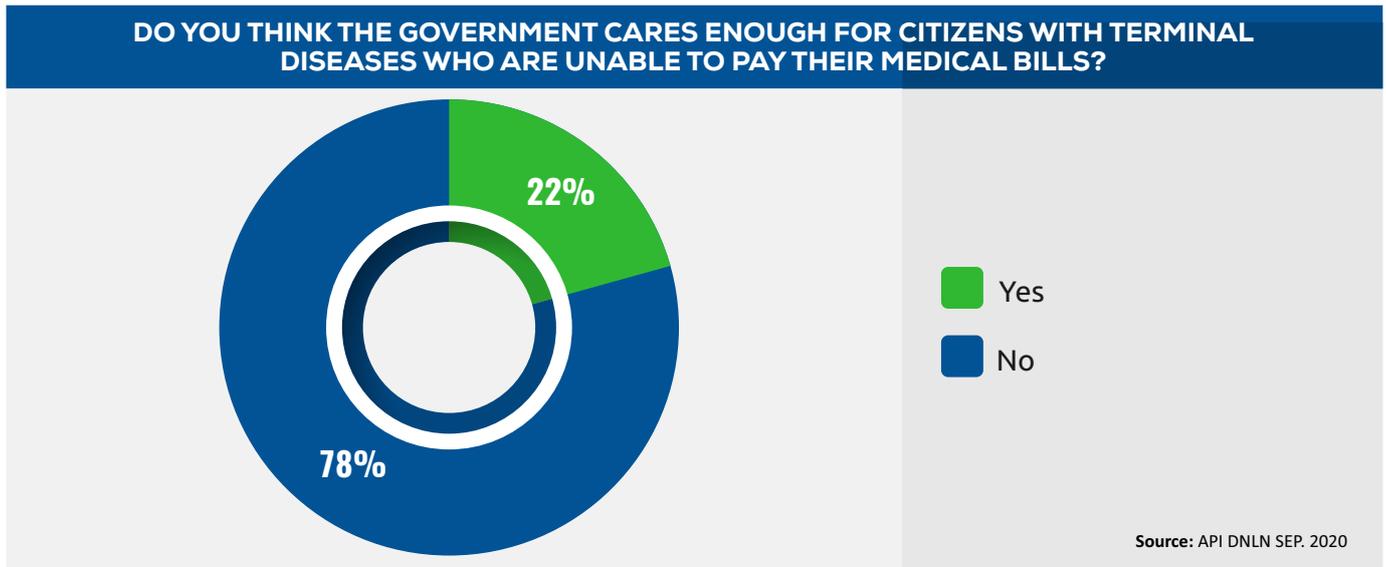


Figure 15: Citizens perception regarding care for those with terminal diseases I

The overwhelming finding that the Nigerian government does not care enough for citizens with terminal illnesses cuts across all the key socio-demographic categories. The finding resonated mostly with elderly citizens above the ages of 60 years, and Nigerians in the southern half of the country (83%), as can be seen in Figure 16 below.

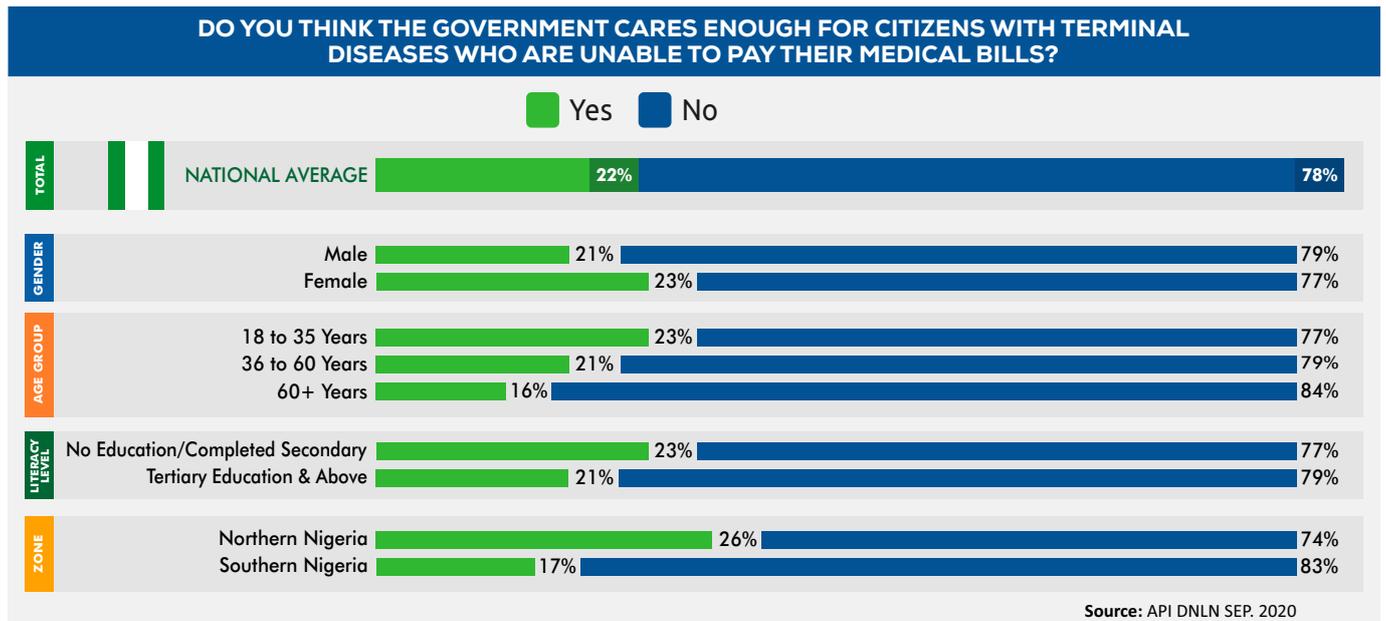


Figure 16: Citizens perception regarding care for those with terminal diseases II

<sup>51</sup>Chukwunyere, N (2019). Palliative Care: The Nigerian Perspective DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.85235>



In addition, the data revealed that the South-East (85%), South-West (83%), South-South(82%) and North-Central (80%) geopolitical zones had the highest proportion of citizens who expressed total disbelief that government would be willing to support citizens with terminal disease.

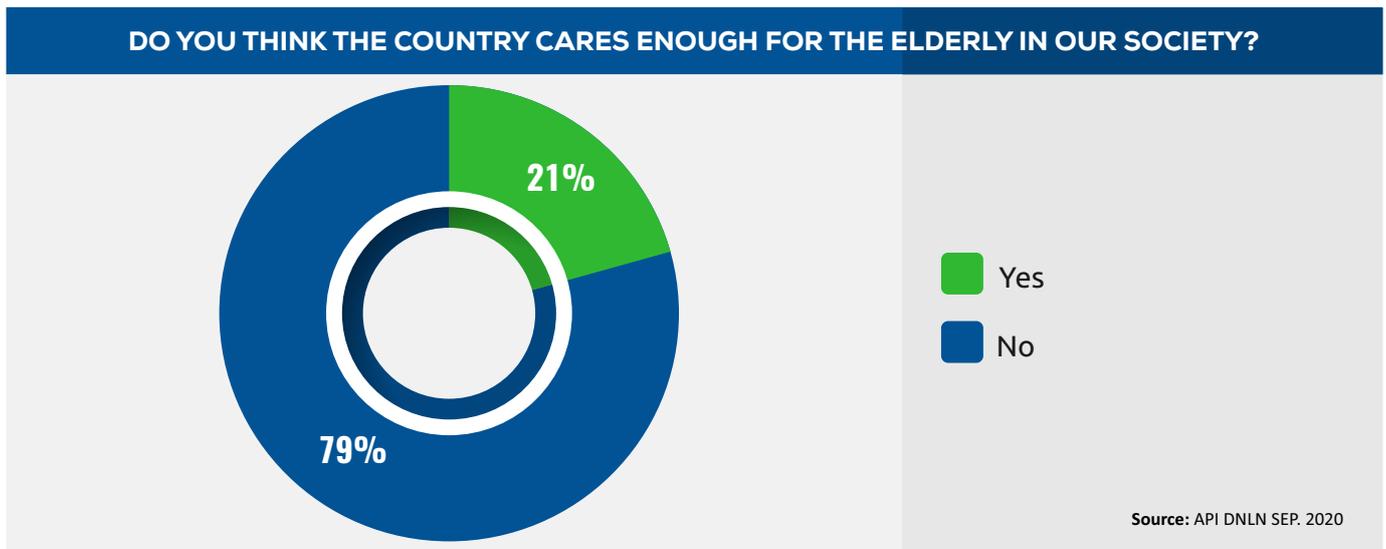
**Table 6:** Do you think the Government cares enough for Citizens with terminal diseases who are unable to pay their medical bills? (By Geo-Political Zones)

	Total	Geo-Political Zone					
		North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
<b>Yes</b>	<b>22%</b>	20%	29%	28%	15%	18%	17%
<b>No</b>	<b>78%</b>	80%	71%	72%	85%	82%	83%

Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

### 5.8 Gauging Citizens' Perception Regarding Care for the Elderly

The provision and care for elderly are vital for their longevity and life expectancy. As people get older, their incomes drop, and they worry about the future, social, economic and physical wellbeing. Failure to provide these senior citizens with these basic necessities could shorten their life expectancy. According to the Population Reference Bureau (2012)<sup>52</sup>, the elderly (aged 60 years and above) make up 3.1% or 5.9 million of Nigeria's total population. With this in mind, respondents were asked to give their opinions on government provision and care for the elderly in Nigeria. From the survey results, almost 8 in 10 Nigerians (79%) blatantly objected that the country cares enough for the elderly. On the contrary, only a few of the respondents (21%) were of the opinion that the country cares enough for the elderly.



Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

**Figure 17:** Gauging Citizens perception on government provision and care for the elderly I

Again, this finding that Nigeria does not care adequately for the elderly in the society cuts across different socio-demographic classifications. Interestingly, the data showed slightly more female (80%) than male (79%) respondents, and more educated (82%) than less educated (77%) respondents who affirmed that the country does not look after the elderly in the society [See Figure 18]. As expected, there were more elderly citizens (85%) who agreed with the finding that they are not properly looked after in the country, compared to youths aged between 18 and 35 years (81%) and the adult working-class demography, aged 36 to 60 years (77%). This finding was supported by Tanyi et. al (2018)<sup>53</sup> who argued that Nigeria has no functional national policy on the care and welfare of older persons.

<sup>52</sup>Population Reference Bureau. (2012). World population data sheet. Washington, DC.

<sup>53</sup>Tanyi, P., André, P and Mbah, P. (2018) Care of the elderly in Nigeria: Implications for policy, Cogent Social Sciences, vol 4 (1), pp 1-14.

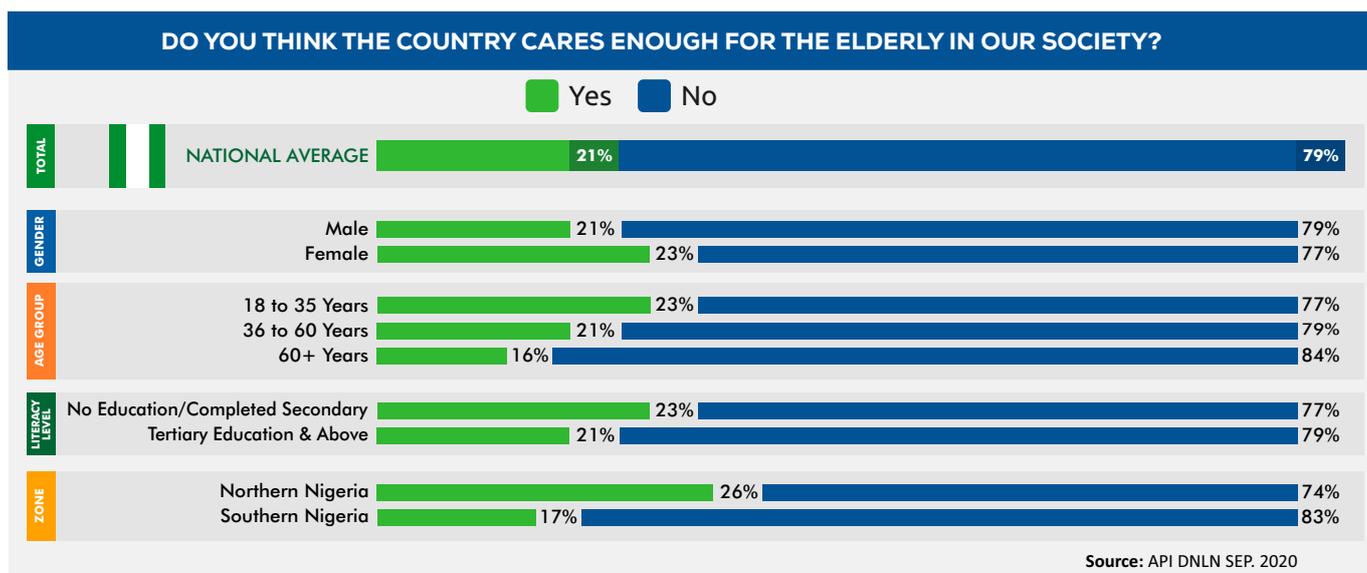


Figure 18: Gauging Citizens perception on government provision and care for the elderly II

Further analysis by geopolitical zones revealed that, overwhelmingly citizens in the South-East (88%), South-South (87%), South-West (82%) and North-Central (80%) zones of the country expressed dismay that the country does not care enough for the elderly.

Table 7: As a Nigerian, do you think the country cares enough for the elderly in our society? (By Geo-Political Zones)

	Total	Geo-Political Zone					
		North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
<b>Yes</b>	<b>21%</b>	20%	35%	23%	12%	13%	18%
<b>No</b>	<b>79%</b>	80%	65%	77%	88%	87%	82%

Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

### 5.9 Gauging Citizens' Perception of Attitude towards People Living with Disabilities (PLWD)

According to the National Population Commission (NPC, 2018) Nigeria has about 19 million citizens living with one form of disabilities; constituting roughly 9% of the population. Consequently, respondents to the survey were specifically asked if they thought that Nigeria as a country provides equal opportunities for People Living with Disabilities (PLWD). Overall, 57% of respondents stated that they do not believe the country provides equal opportunities for people living with disabilities. This was followed by 25% who were unsure and 18% who held the view that the Nigerian government provides equal opportunities for people living with disabilities. This finding is consistent with Iwuagwu (2019) who found that many health facilities in Nigeria do not have provisions for people living with disabilities; stating that there are no ramps for wheelchairs, narrow doorways, poor signages, inadequate bathroom facilities and inaccessible parking space for PLWD.

<sup>54</sup><https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/288954-19-million-nigerians-living-with-disability-official.html>

<sup>55</sup>Iwuagwu, S. (2019). The Need for Access: Is Nigeria failing persons living with disabilities. <https://nigeriahealthwatch.com/the-need-for-access-is-nigeria-failing-persons-living-with-disabilities/>

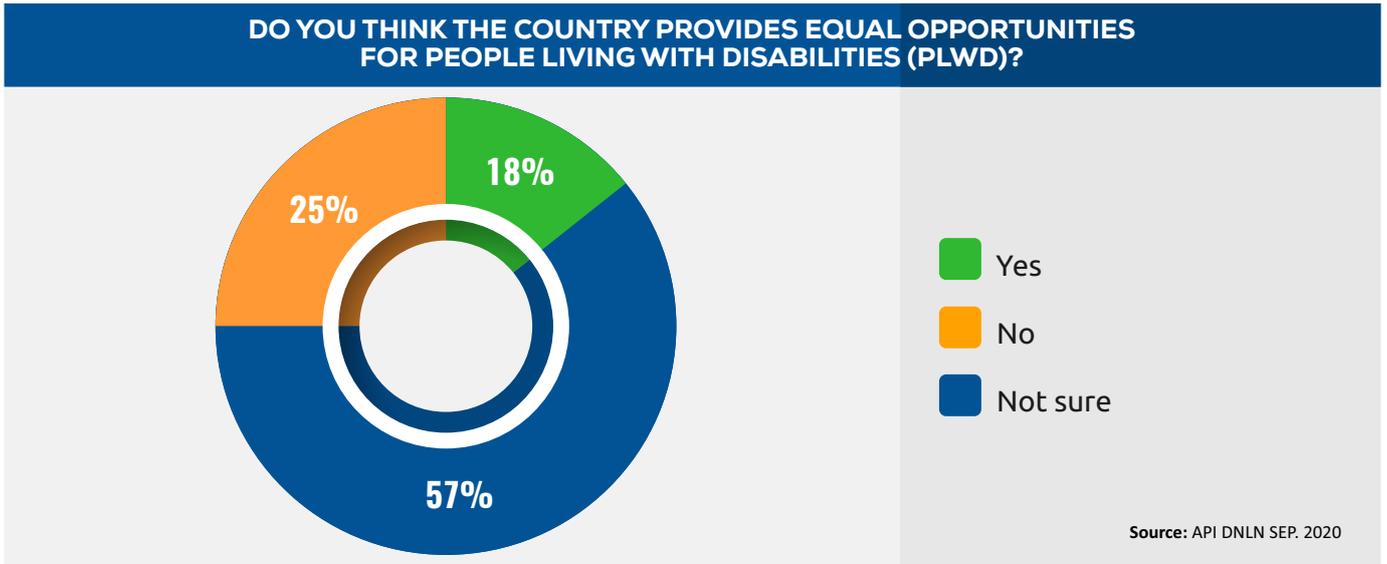


Figure 19: Citizens Perception on Government Attitude towards People Living with Disabilities (PLWD) I

Further disaggregation of the data showed that more male (60%) than female (51%) respondents held the opinion that the government does not provide equal opportunities for people living with disabilities. In addition, young Nigerians (aged 18-35years) and the elderly (aged 60 and above) held the same opinion with 58% each.

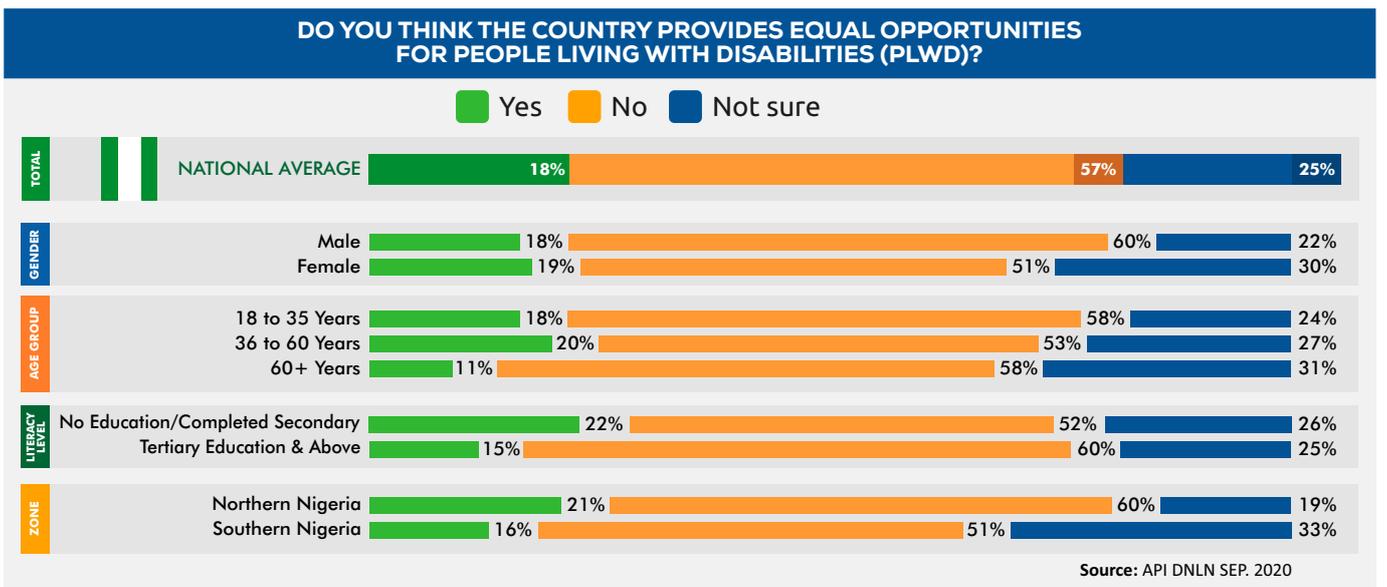


Figure 20: Citizens Perception on Government Attitude towards People Living with Disabilities (PLWD) II

Similarly, further disaggregation of the data showed that there were more respondents in the South- East (70%), North-Central (61%) and North-East (60%) geopolitical zones of the country who affirmed that the country does not provide equal opportunities for people living with disabilities; compared to those in the South-South (51%) and South-West (40%) geopolitical zones [See Table 8 below].



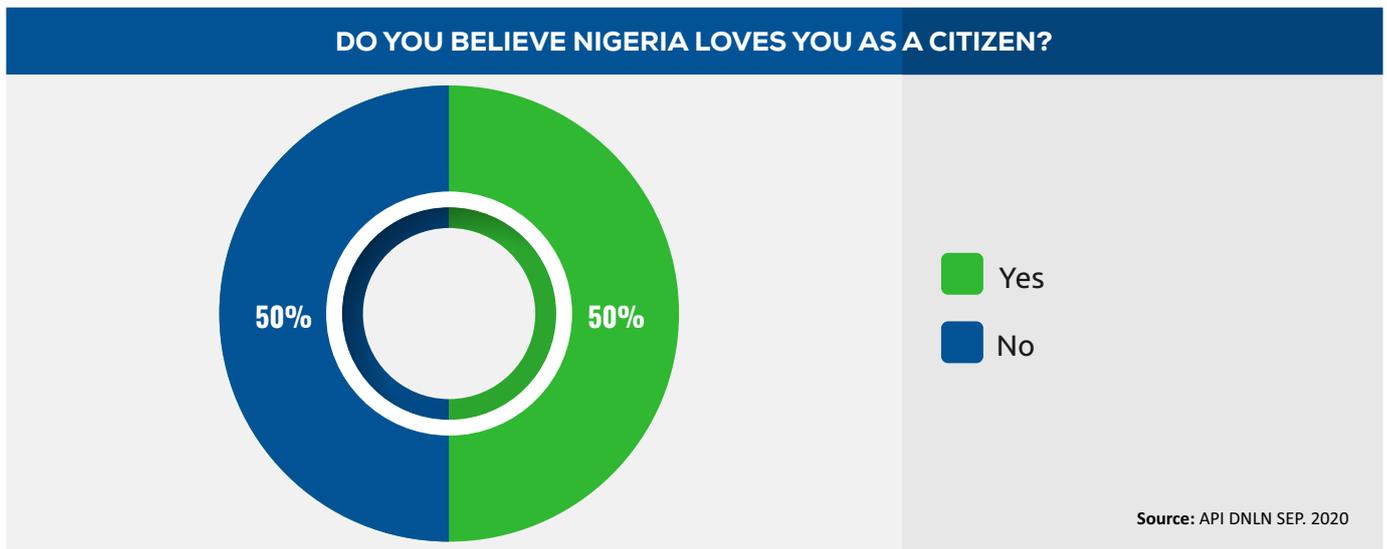
**Table 8:** Do you think the country provides equal opportunities for PLWD? (By Geo-Political Zones)

	Total	Geo-Political Zone					
		North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
<b>Yes</b>	<b>18%</b>	14%	32%	19%	11%	12%	21%
<b>No</b>	<b>57%</b>	61%	60%	58%	70%	51%	40%
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>25%</b>	25%	8%	23%	19%	37%	39%

Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

### 5.10 Citizens' Perception of the Love Nigeria has for her citizens

Lastly, the survey attempted to aggregate the thoughts of Nigerians by asking them a more pointed question: Do you believe Nigeria loves you as a citizen? Interestingly, the findings revealed mixed feelings as equal proportion of the citizens queued on both sides of the response. In particular, while 50% of the respondents believe that the country loves them as citizens, an equal percentage (50%) of respondents also believe that the country does not love them as citizens.



Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

**Figure 21:** Citizens perception on the love Nigeria has for them I

The responses show that, across socio-demographics, while there was equal proportion of respondents who agreed or disagreed that Nigeria loves them as citizens, same cannot be said across gender, age-group and literacy levels. As Figure 22 shows below, there were slightly more male (52%) respondents who believe that Nigeria loves them as citizens, compared to female respondents (51%) who believe otherwise. Also, respondents aged 60 and above expressed a stronger opinion that Nigeria does not love them as citizens. In addition, the data showed that there were more respondents in Northern Nigeria (57%) who believe that the country loves them; compared to 57% of those in southern Nigeria who believe that the country does not love them as citizens.

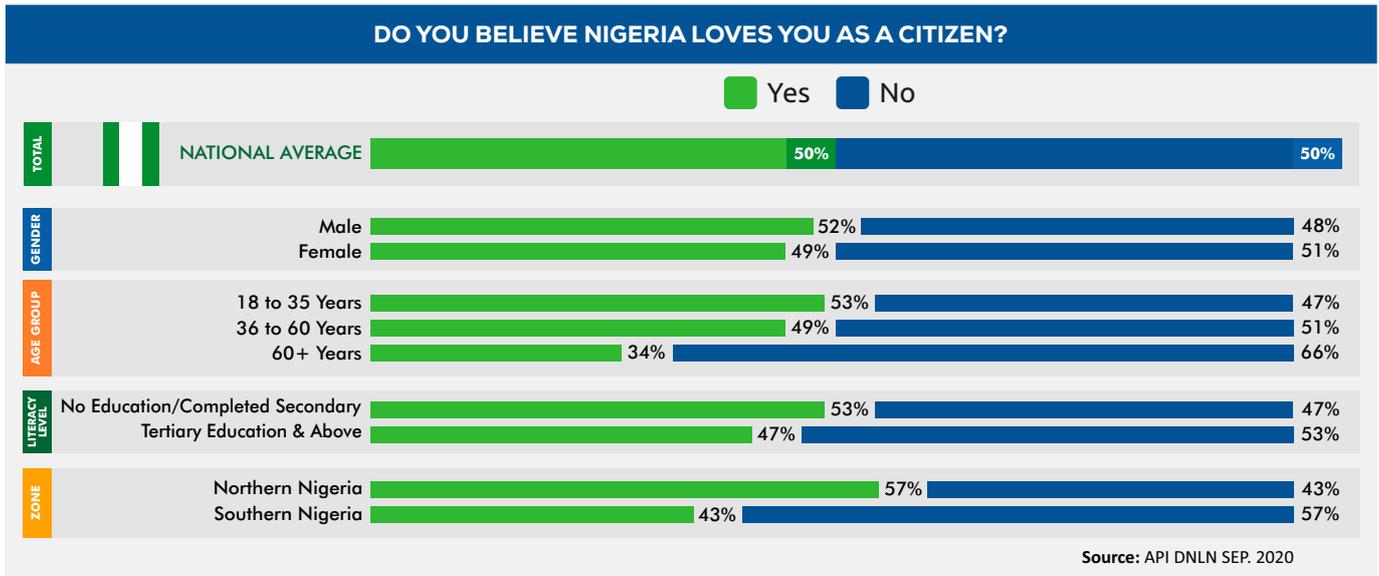


Figure 22: Citizens perception on the love Nigeria has for them II

Further disaggregation of the data revealed that the South-East (65%) and North-Central (62%) geopolitical zones had the highest response for citizens who opined that Nigeria does not love them as citizens, respondents in the North-West (65%) and North-East (61%) geopolitical zones constituted the bulk of citizens who believe that the country loves them. This result is somewhat surprising, given the insecurity challenges and poverty facing parts of northern Nigeria, particularly with the challenges of insurgency facing the North-East, and banditry in the North-West geopolitical zones of the country.

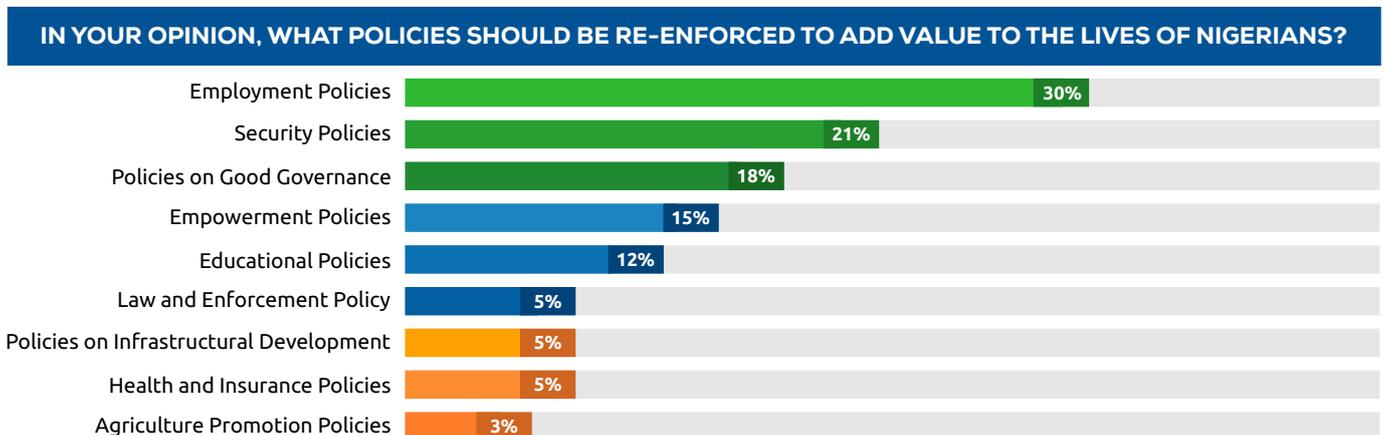
Table 8: In your opinion, do you think Nigeria loves YOU as a Citizen? (By Geo-Political Zones)

	Total	Geo-Political Zone					
		North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
<b>Yes</b>	<b>50%</b>	38%	61%	65%	35%	48%	43%
<b>No</b>	<b>50%</b>	62%	39%	35%	65%	52%	57%

Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

### 5.11 Suggestions on Areas of Public Policy Focus for the Government

In concluding this survey, Nigerians were asked to suggest areas of policy focus for the government. In other words, they were asked to identify the kinds of policies they believe government should reinforce to make life better and more conducive for the average Nigerian. The result revealed that the top five priority areas identified by citizens are: Employment Policies (30%), Security Policies (21%), Policies on Good Governance (18%), Empowerment Policies (15%) and Education Policies (12%). Others areas mentioned by citizens include Laws and Enforcement Policy, Policies on Infrastructural Development, Health and Insurance Policies and Agriculture Promotion Policies.



Source: API DNLN SEP. 2020

Figure 23: Suggestions on areas of public policy focus for the Government

The background features a collage of images. On the left, a man in a dark cap and uniform is shown in profile. On the right, a man in a white cap and glasses is shown. The background is divided into vertical color bands: green, blue, orange, and teal. A large white number '06' is overlaid on the left side.

# 06

**Summary of Findings,  
Recommendation  
and Conclusion**



## 6.1 Summary of Key Findings

This survey was designed to examine the extent of the country's love for her citizens vis-a-vis citizens' patriotism to the nation within the framework of the social contract theory. The survey asked citizens 10 key questions, ranging from whether or not they are proud of being Nigerians, do they believe Nigeria loves them, their level of trust in the Nigerian state, what they have benefitted from being Nigerians, if they believe their lives matter to the Nigerian government, if their voices counts in government's decision-making, if the government would come to the aid of citizens who encounter problems abroad, care for the elderly, provide equal opportunity for people living with disabilities, and areas that government should focus its attention on reinforcing in order to add value to the lives of Nigerians.

Overall, findings from the survey highlights existential gaps in Nigeria's social contract between the government and the citizenry. While Nigerians are proud of being citizens of the country (as evidenced by 91%), trust in the Nigerian state is very low, as 75% of citizens surveyed said they have benefitted nothing from the country in the last 5 years. More so, a significant proportion of the general public do not believe their lives matter to the Nigerian government, neither do their opinions count in public policy design, implementation and decision-making. Also, the general consensus is that the country does not provide adequate care for its senior citizens, those with terminal diseases and people living with disabilities.

## 6.2 Recommendations

This survey has uncovered several issues regarding the level of love the country has for her citizens. The survey's findings identified several areas that the government needs to improve on to soften the citizens' apparent negative perception of the government and the state of affairs in the country. Upon this realisation, the study makes the following recommendations:

**01** Scale-Up of Infrastructure: The government should strengthen the overall performance of the country through deliberate scaling up of basic social and physical infrastructure, enhancing human capital development. A corollary to these is to ensure sound macroeconomic policies by stimulating GDP growth, maintaining single-digit interest and inflation rate to boost domestic productive capacity, catalysing MSMEs development and ensuring exchange rate stability. A synergy between the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the National Economic Council can help revitalise this blighted area through deliberate creation of a framework that articulates the infrastructural deficit across the nation. Yearly budgetary allocations may address a specific infrastructural need, and a mid-term assessment of projects under this aegis may be negotiated as well. The Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) should, as a matter of urgency, be financed adequately to enable it steer the stimulation, monitoring and coordination of the development of the MSMEs sub-sector. The Nigerian state through the agency can centrally control access to financial instruments for growing SMEs, while ensuring that access to financial aid is not in any way compromised. This will ultimately help in promoting and facilitating development programmes, instruments and support services to accelerate the development and modernisation of MSME operations which is in line with the agency's mandate.

**02** Poverty Reduction and Job Creation: The rising level of poverty and unemployment has implications for the increasing insecurity challenges confronting the nation. In this wise, in order to address the insecurity challenges, government must address the widespread poverty and unemployment crisis facing the country. As highlighted in the social contract theory, ensuring the protection and wellbeing of the citizens remains the utmost responsibility of the government. Against this backdrop, there is need for government to formulate effective policy and provide the enabling environment to foster; job and wealth creation opportunities, youth empowerment and poverty reduction. In addition, the national social protection programme of the FMHDS should be more inclusive and expanded to cater for the teeming vulnerable Nigerians. A centralised data bank of youth who have attained completion of secondary school can be created and updated by the NBS with their demographic profiles. This should be done with the intent of mainstreaming the source of their



socioeconomic wellbeing into the database. This effort will unarguably help to eschew the tendency of youth indulging in violent extremism and becoming handy tools in the hands of politicians who sponsor political thuggery and election violence. Occasional interface between the youth and the authorities at various levels of implementation can be sketched through a website logic template, where their plights and disaffection with the Nigerian state may be aggregated. This will help assuage the myriads of social crises that they are faced with as a result of their socioeconomic shortcomings. An annual national conference on youth may be led by the National Orientation Agency (NOA) in collaboration with the National Youth Council (NYC) and the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) to help dampen the frightening disappointments of Nigerian youth in the country and their leaders.

03

**Win Back Citizens' Trust:** The government needs to urgently win back trust by evolving effective leadership to re-build citizens' confidence, ensuring transparency and accountability, adequately tackle corruption, enhance citizens' participation in the governing processes as well as fulfilling campaign promises. Additionally, a change-oriented awareness campaign can be initiated, spearheaded and supervised by the Ministry of Information, National Orientation Agency, organised private sector and the media. This will undoubtedly change the poor perception that Nigerians and the international community have about the country. This is particularly because image-making is key in driving good governance. Moreover, despite the plethora of challenges bedeviling the country, there are still areas where the government has improved but can be further enhanced. Policies on the Social Investment Programme (SIP) as exemplified in the Conditional Cash Transfer and the School Feeding Programme led by the Office of the Vice President and the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, respectively, is quite commendable as it has aided needy Nigerians in cushioning the harsh socioeconomic conditions they face on a daily basis. Further efforts should, however, be dedicated to achieving wider outreach as a large chunk of Nigerians sampled opined that they have never been captured as beneficiaries of any of these interventions even when their socioeconomic conditions are obvious.

04

**Security:** The Federal Government needs to develop a comprehensive and practicable strategy for forestalling the security challenges, a different approach from the current national security strategy which appears to be ineffective. Key stakeholders involved in these violent killings can be invited for long-term dialogue and have their needs first aggregated and subsequently mainstreamed into implementable legislations and policy framework. A monitoring and evaluation template can be designed to closely monitor implementations of agreements reached. The federal and state governments can create inter-sectoral committees to superintend over this area so as to ensure a lasting panacea to the violence that has characterised the Nigerian state in recent times. Traditional / community leaders, heads of faith-based organisations, the media and civil society can also be involved in championing this mandate. They can be enlisted to join the conversation during national security discourse occasionally organised by the national security council headed by the President. In such fora, they may be allowed to present security briefs regarding the most recent happenings in their respective constituencies and jurisdictions. Punitive sanctions should be enforced on leaders who err or appear to fan the embers of disunity and insecurity in their domains. This will significantly help in deterring future security breach across the country.

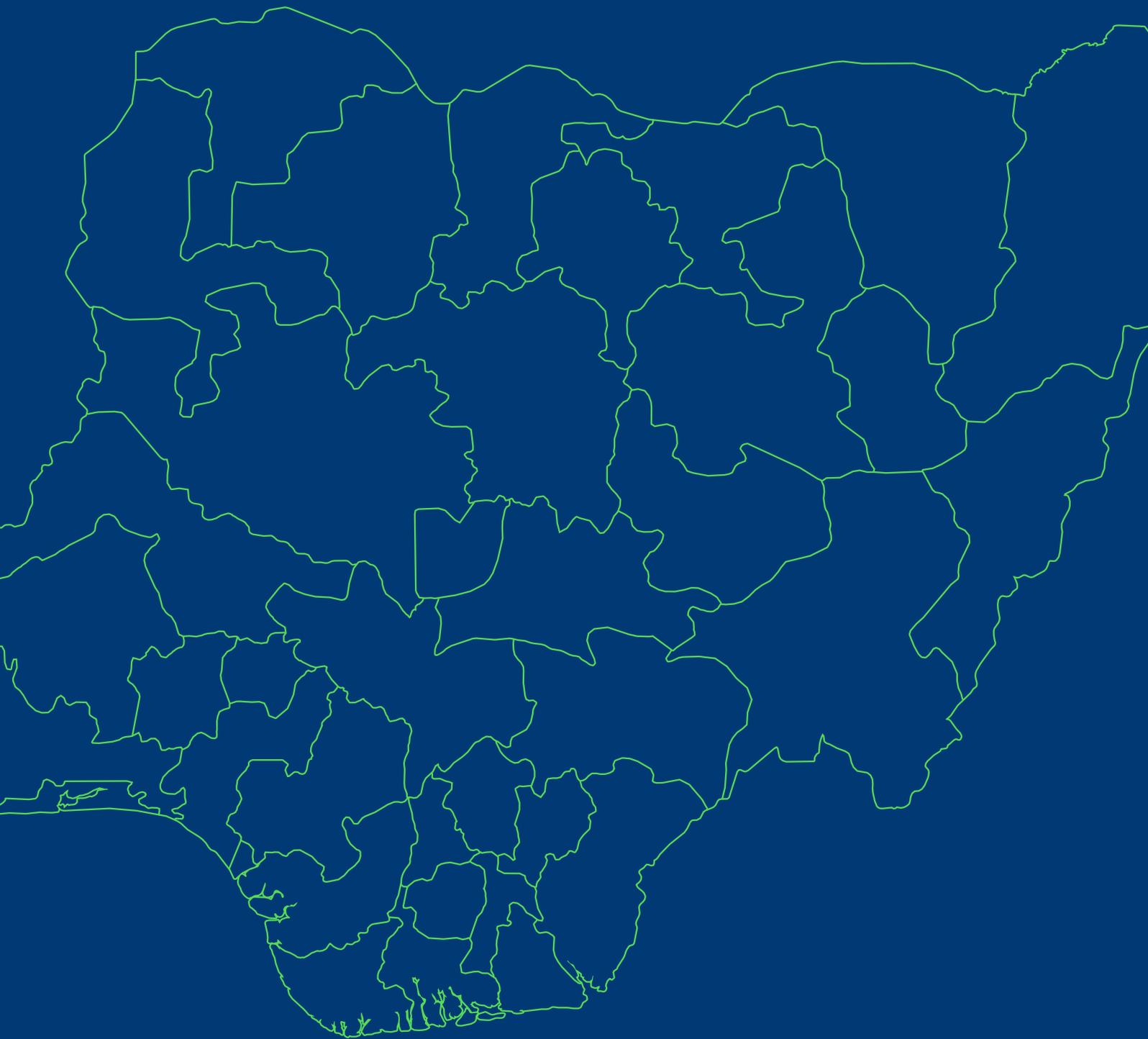
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<sup>56</sup>Fed Min of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development



### 6.3 Conclusion

Ensuring the wellbeing of the citizens with adequate protection of lives and properties, remain the most important responsibility of government. Overall, the survey found a disconnect between the citizens and the government. The lack of effective economic policies, the lack of political will to better citizens' welfare and the failure of successive governments to adequately address the poor state of affairs in the country have further aggravated citizens' distrust about the government. Hence, the government needs to brace-up to fulfil its obligations as highlighted in the social contract entered with Nigerians, and must device an effective strategy to ensure that Nigerians adequately benefit from the dividends of democracy. The state owes her existence to the citizenry, therefore the needs and aspirations of the citizens must form the fulcrum of government policy decisions.



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