

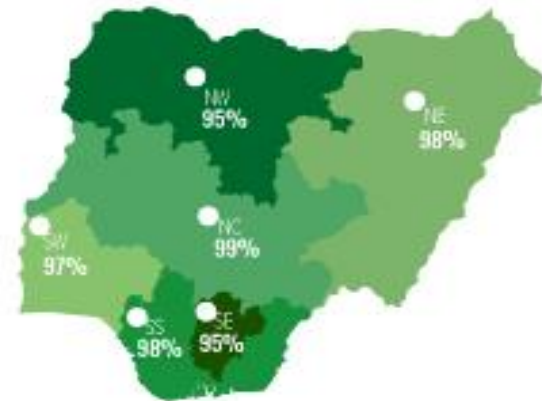
ELIMINATION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

With a Focus on Domestic Violence Against Women

PERCEPTION ON PREVALENCE RATE

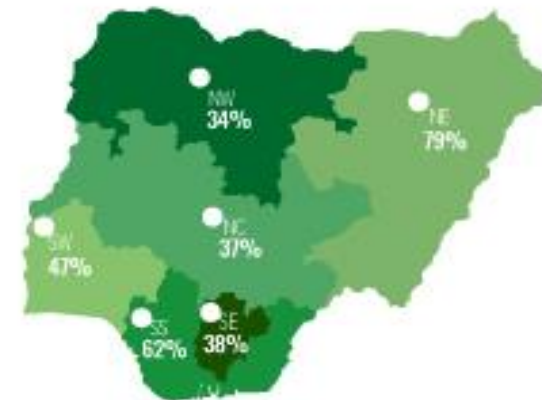
97%

Domestic Violence Against Women



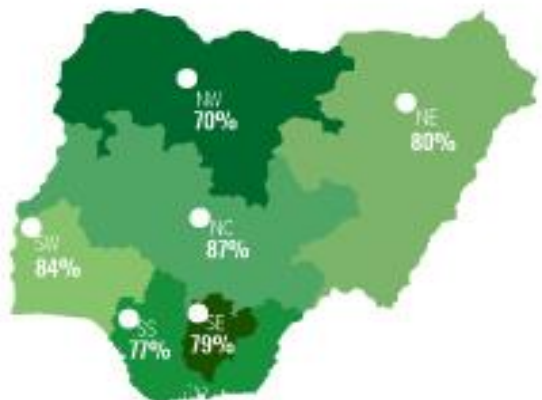
47%

Domestic Violence Against Men



79%

Domestic Violence Against Children



ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN COMMEMORATION

Critical and Measurable Steps Required for the Elimination of Violence against Women in Nigeria

Abuja, Nigeria. November 27th, 2018 – According to the United Nations, violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations in our world today and it remains largely unreported due to the impunity, silence, stigma and shame surrounding it. The theme of this year’s celebration has been declared to be “Orange the World” with a hashtag #HearMeToo.¹ The color symbolizes a brighter future and a world free from violence against women and girls. This year’s celebration focuses on giving women and Girls listening ears because they matter too. The United Nations (UN) International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is observed annually on the 25th of November.

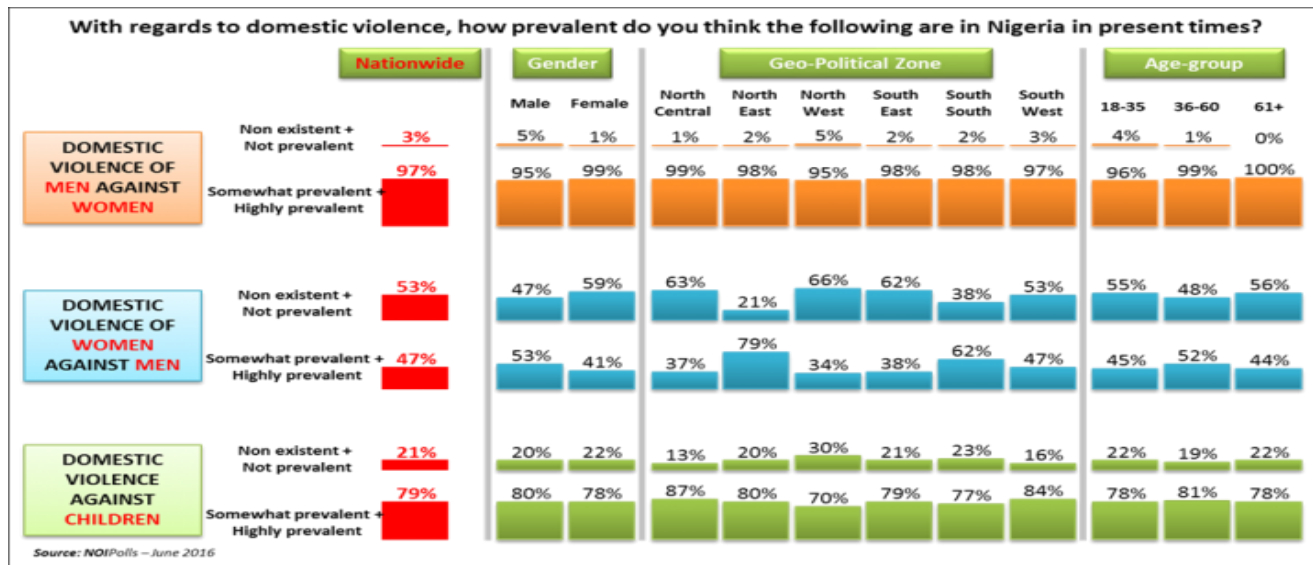
Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.² This menace has become an obstacle in achieving equality, development, peace as well as the fulfillment of women and girls’ human rights. All in all, the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is to leave no one behind cannot be fulfilled without putting an end to violence against women and girls. According to the UN, a staggering one in three women have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime—a pandemic of global proportions.

In commemoration of the Day, NOIPolls reflects on some findings from its past poll on domestic violence in Nigeria, which highlighted the rising prevalence of domestic violence against women. The poll which was conducted in June 2016, in partnership with Project Alert, revealed that domestic violence against women (97 percent) was very prevalent in the Nigerian society, despite the prohibition by Section 34 (1) of the 1999 Constitution, which guarantees the rights of all against torture and/or degrading treatment. Children were also found to be at the receiving end of domestic violence in Nigerian homes as 79 percent of the respondents reported that domestic violence against children was also prevalent. Further findings showed that 54 percent of Nigerians had either suffered or know someone who had suffered a form of domestic violence. When asked if the victim was a man, a woman or a child, regardless of gender, geo-political and age-group, 75 percent confirmed that the victim was a woman.

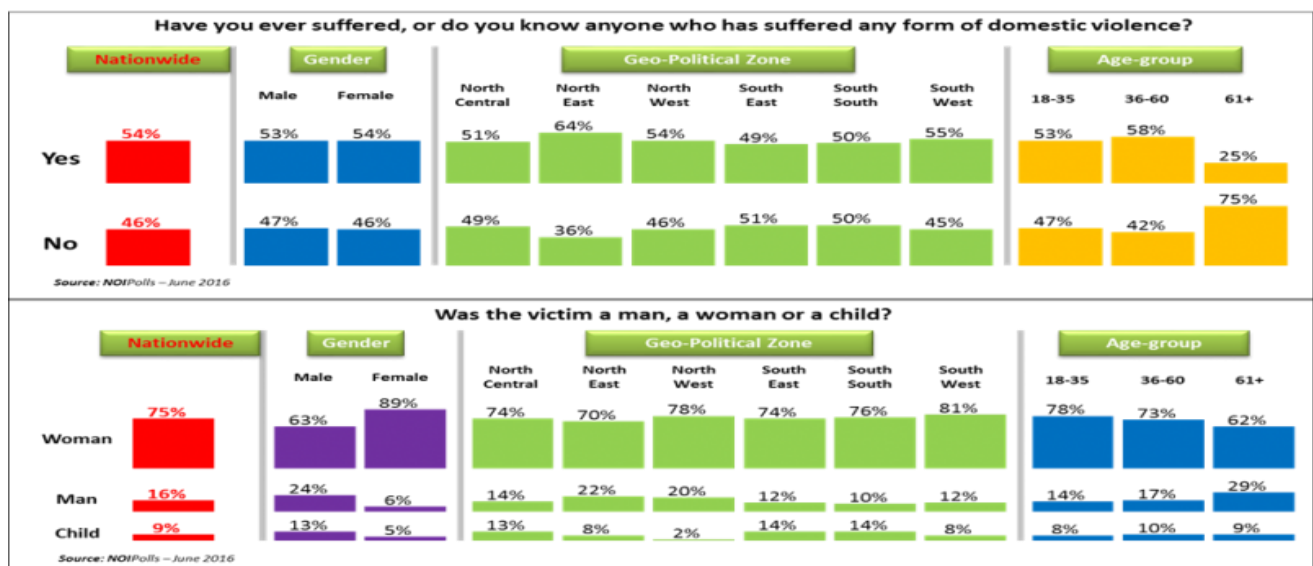
The figure below shows that domestic violence against women was highly prevalent in Nigeria as stated by 97 percent of the respondents interviewed. This was closely followed by 75 percent of Nigerians who mentioned that domestic violence against children was also quite prevalent.

¹ <http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/>

² <http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/>



Subsequently, 54 percent reported they had personally suffered or know someone who suffered some sort of domestic violence. Of this proportion, 75 percent revealed that the victims were majorly women and majority of the respondents who gave this assertion were females. The Nigerian Senate during one of its plenary session on Tuesday May 23rd 2017, expressed concern over the continuous rise in sexual assault and domestic violence reported against women and children. For instance, the Lagos State Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Response Team (DVSRT) has reported 138 cases of domestic violence against women from May 2017 to March 2018.³ Similarly, the Sokoto State Hisbah Commission recorded 30,160 cases of domestic violence from January 2017 to April 2018.⁴



In conclusion, the poll revealed that violence against women was highly prevalent in every strata of the Nigerian society irrespective of gender, geo-political zone, age, class, tribe or education. Violence against women is a

³ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-west/265575-lagos-records-138-domestic-violence-cases-against-men-in-10-months-official.html>

⁴ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/nwest/269985-commission-records-30160-cases-of-domestic-violence-in-16-months.html>

violation of their human rights and cannot be justified by any political, religious, or cultural claim as it has led to the deformity and in extreme cases death of many women in Nigeria. Hence, there should be sustainability in the struggle against acts of violence against women regularly.

The Nigerian Government through the Ministry of Women Affairs must pay more attention to issues of gender-based violence. This would help in policy formulation to prevent further gender based domestic violence and protect women and children from the attendant complications arising from said violence. There should be public enlightenment through the mass media on the negative effects of domestic violence against women. Also, the government should establish and fund counselling centers at the community and Local Government levels, employing professional counsellors to help victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. Finally, laws and policies protecting the rights of women should be properly enforced to greatly reduce domestic violence as it has become a pandemic issue.

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Press Contact

The Editor

Email: editor@noi-polls.com