

COMMEMORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Human Rights Mostly Violated By The Nigerian Police Force



77%
of Respondents

say they are aware of their human rights as a Nigerian Citizen

50%
of Respondents

say that their human rights or that of someone they know has been violated

60%
Male

40%
Female

Some human right(s) infringed upon:

22%

Right to dignity of a human

21%

Right to freedom of movement

12%

Right to fair hearing

11%

Right to compensation for property compulsorily acquired

Who violated these rights?

30%

Police

17%

Government Official

12%

other security officials

10%

Employer

8%

Family

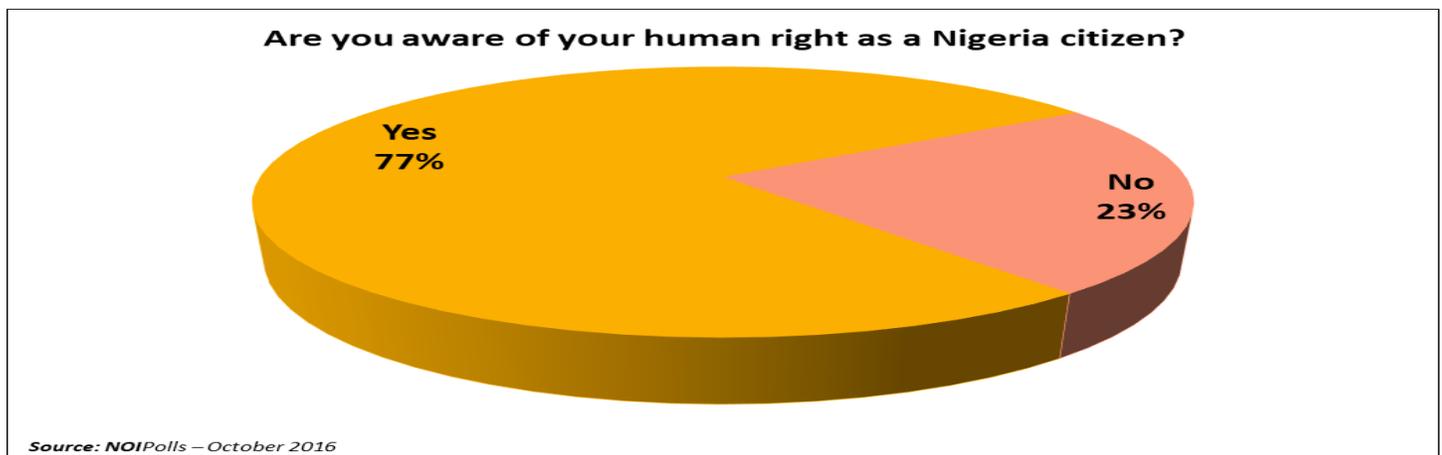
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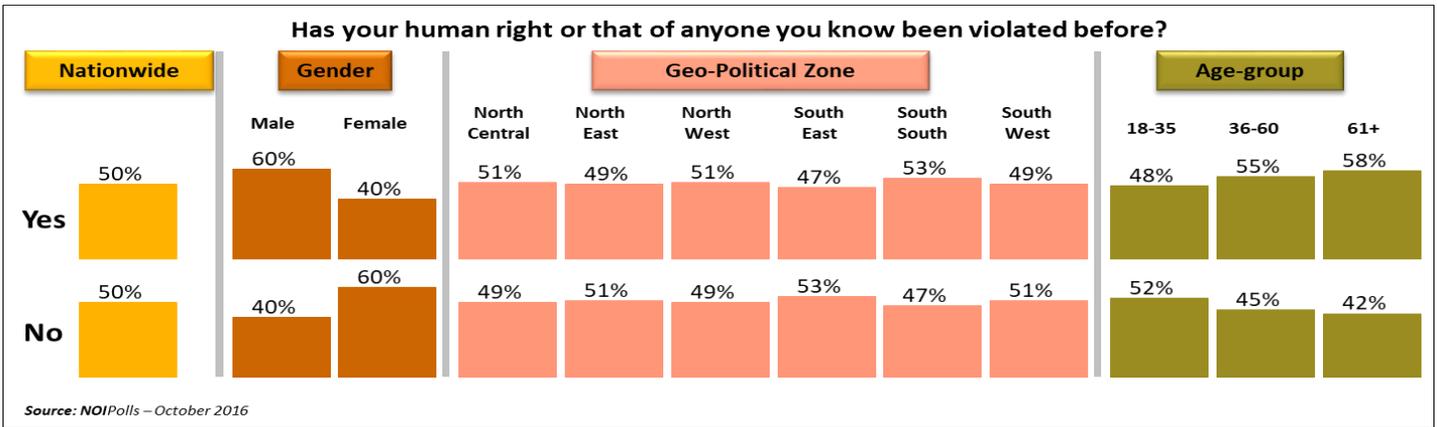
Abuja, Nigeria. December 11, 2018 – The United Nations (UN) World Human Rights Day is celebrated annually on December 10th. It is a UN campaign that calls for people to know and push for their human rights no matter who or where they are in the world. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a milestone document that proclaimed the undeniable rights which everyone is inherently entitled to as a human being regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, birth or any other status. Despite the efforts to protect it, hostility toward human rights and those who defend it continues to rise. As a result, this year’s Human Rights Day advocates for everyone to stand up for their rights (**#StandUp4HumanRights**) and those of others – civil, economic, political and cultural rights.

In commemoration of the World Human Rights Day, NOIPolls reflects on some critical findings from its past poll on Human Rights in Nigeria which assessed the awareness of Nigerians about their fundamental human rights and if any has been violated. The poll which was conducted in October 2016 revealed that while almost 8 in 10 Nigerians were conscious of their human rights as citizens of Nigeria, half (50 percent) of the respondents reported that their rights or that of someone they know had been violated in the past. When respondents were asked to mention their human rights which had been infringed upon, the top three mentions were; right to dignity of human person, right to freedom of movement and right to fair hearing. Interestingly, a larger proportion of the respondents reported that these rights were mostly violated by the police.

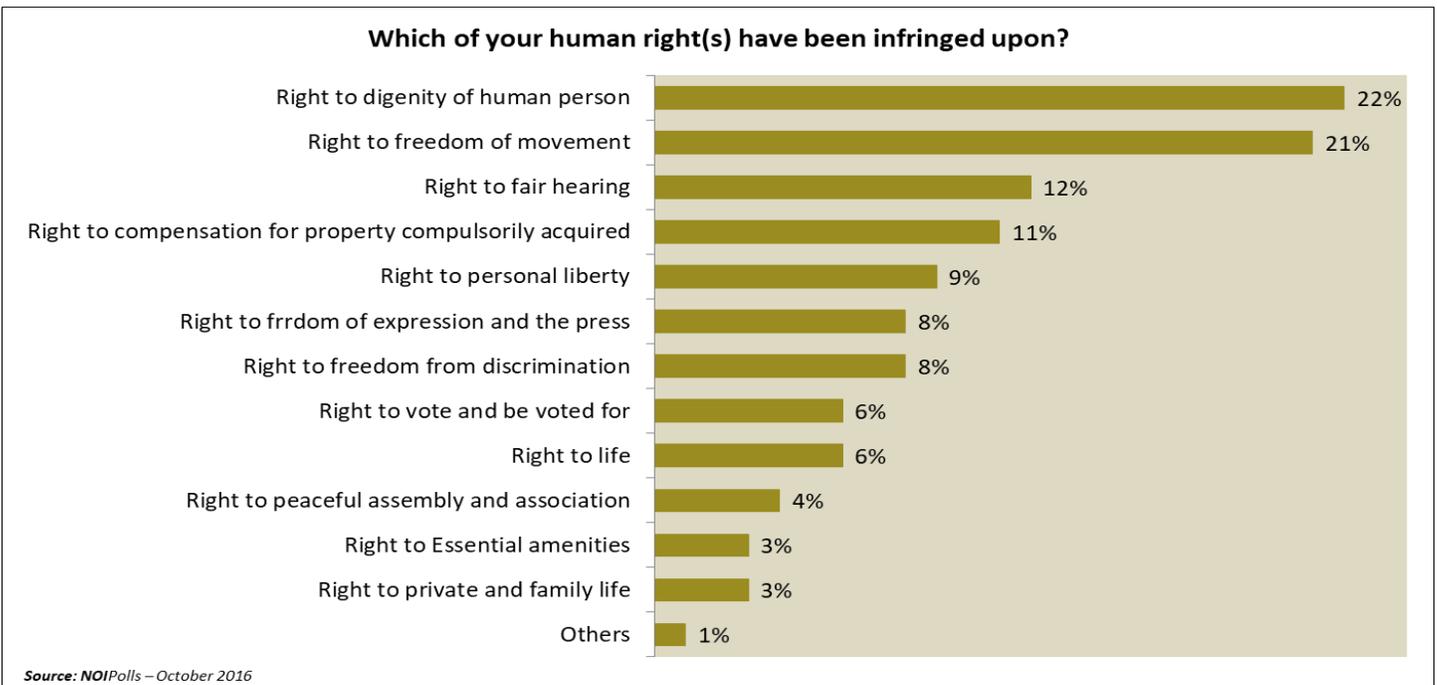
In evaluating the level of human rights awareness in Nigeria, the figure below showed that most Nigerians (77 percent) are mindful of their rights as humans and as citizens of the country. This indicates that irrespective of ethnicity, religion, sex, language, political affiliation, social origin or status in the society, the average Nigerian is conscious of his or her rights as a human and citizen of Nigeria.



Subsequently, the poll results also revealed an even split of 50 percent on each side when respondents were asked to find out if their rights or that of anyone they know had ever been infringed upon. Analysis by gender showed that more male (60 percent) than female (40 percent) indicated that their rights or that of someone they know had been infringed upon, also the South-South region accounted for the highest proportion of respondents in this category.

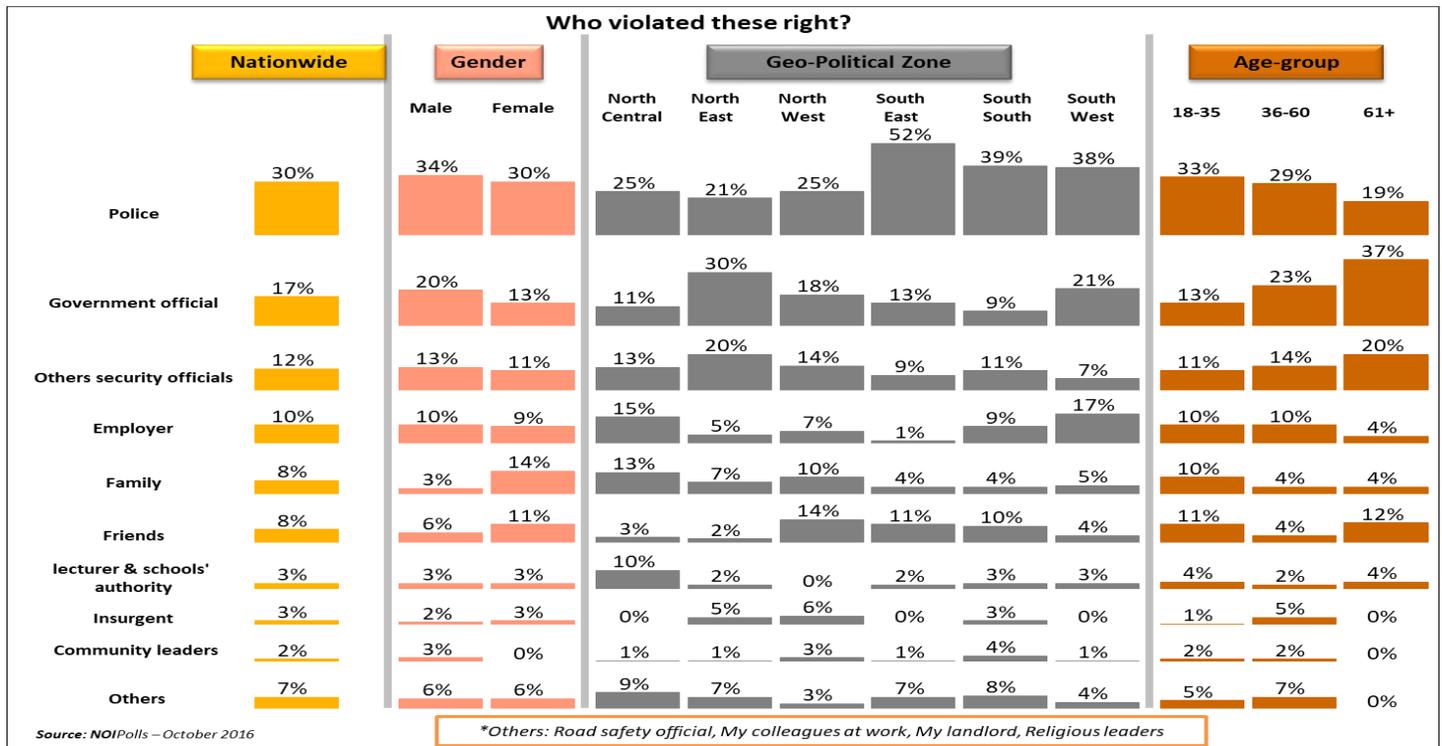


An assessment of the various rights of citizens that had been violated in the past revealed that the largest proportion (22 percent) of those surveyed claimed that their ‘right to dignity of human person’ had been trampled upon, while 21 percent stated that their ‘right to freedom of movement’ had been violated in one way or another. Other rights mentioned by respondents includes, ‘right to fair hearing’ (12 percent), ‘right to compensation for property compulsorily acquired’ (11 percent) and ‘rights to personal liberty’ (9 person) among others.



Respondents who claimed that their rights had been previously violated were further probed and a larger proportion (30 percent) categorically specified that the police is mainly responsible for violating these rights. The Nigerian Police is the most visible agency and interacts the most with citizens amongst other paramilitary and military men and women. However, the Nigerian Police Force has been found culpable in the killing of some innocent and unarmed Nigerians. This necessitated the Nigerian Police force to teach its men and women courses on human rights and as part of efforts to

ensure that the rights of every Nigerian are not violated, the Nigerian police took the decision set up human rights desk across the country.¹



In conclusion, the poll results showed that almost 8 in 10 (77 percent) Nigerian stated that they were aware of their rights as citizens however, half of the respondents lamented that their human rights or that of someone they know had been violated in the past. Also, some respondents claimed that their right to dignity of human person (22 percent) and right to freedom of movement (21 percent) had been mainly violated before by the Nigerian Police Force.

Finally, sensitization campaigns should be held more often to educate and enlighten the citizenry on the existence of their rights through seminars, academic work and books that portray such rights. Also, law enforcement officers, prosecutors and others agencies charged with the duty of protecting citizens should be constantly educated and enlightened on what constitutes the Human Rights. Lastly, violators should be diligently prosecuted to serve as a deterrent to others and this could be achieved rapidly by putting modalities in place for the proper enforcement of the laws that ensure that Human Rights are protected and promoted e.g. National Human Rights Act, 2010.

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¹ https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/93802-police_officers_to_be_trained_on_human_rights-2.html

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