

SOCIAL MEDIA POLL RESULT RELEASE

About 120 Million Nigerians Have Access To The Internet – New Poll Reveals

Abuja, Nigeria. November 12th, 2019 – A new public opinion poll conducted by NOIPolls in the week commencing on October 14th, 2019, has revealed that 61 percent of Nigerians have access to the internet. When applied to Nigeria’s estimated population of 198 million by the Nigeria Population Commission,¹ this translates to about 120 million Nigerians having access to the internet. Interestingly, when looking at the demographics, 70 percent of young Nigerians aged between 18 – 35 years have access to the internet compared to the 56 percent for those aged between 36 and 60 years and 28 percent for those aged 61 years and above. Of the proportion of respondents that claimed to have access to the internet, an overwhelming majority (94 percent) indicated that they mostly access the internet through their mobile phones. This proportion was equally high across the six geo-political zones, and across age demographics; indicating a wide use of smart phones in the country. This wide access to the internet on mobile phones across Nigeria shows that there is a huge market and high demand for smart phones in Nigeria, giving credence to the claim that Nigeria is Africa’s biggest smartphone market.

Most respondents (95 percent) who access the internet revealed that they use the internet to engage social networking sites and applications. This finding also held true across geo-political zones and across various age demographics. On the level of awareness, results show that Facebook (95 percent) and WhatsApp (94 percent) are the most widely known social networking sites in the country; followed by Instagram (50 percent), and Twitter (42 percent), among others. Polls on the proportion of respondents using each social networking platform produced the following results - Facebook (86 percent), WhatsApp (84 percent), Instagram (19 percent), Twitter (11 percent), and Snapchat (2 percent). However, with regards to preference, WhatsApp (51 percent) is the most preferred social networking site/application, followed by Facebook (45 percent), Twitter (2 percent), and Instagram (2 percent).

Some of the leading reasons Nigerians provided for their preference of WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter respectively include; “It’s Simple and Fast” (26 percent), “Easy to Connect to People With” (20 percent), “It seems more real than other platform” (47 percent) and “The Platform Allows Government to Obtain Feedback from The Public” (31 percent). Regarding the average number of hours spent in a day on social media sites/applications, Twitter captured the largest daily cumulative value, as 19 percent of Twitter users disclosed that they spend 10 hours and more engaging on it. This was followed by WhatsApp with 8 percent of users revealing they spend upwards of 10 hours daily on the average.

Furthermore, the poll results show that respondents considered Facebook (98 percent), Instagram (88 percent), WhatsApp (77 percent), and Snapchat (74 percent) most effective for advertising, while Twitter (98 percent) was considered most effective for gaining attention on topical issues and trending subjects.

With regards to security, the poll results show that 12 percent of Nigerians reported that their social media accounts have been hacked previously; and of this proportion, 91 percent mentioned Facebook as the affected platform, while 7 percent confirmed that their WhatsApp account has been hacked.

The CEO of Twitter, Jack Dorsey recently visited Nigeria and for good reason as 20 percent of internet users reported that they have a Twitter account. This figure amounts to about 21.3 million Nigerians. Majority of these are young

¹ <https://www.legit.ng/1248015-nigeria-a-population-198-million-people---npc.html>

people as the poll showed that young people aged between 18 and 35 years are twice as likely to have a twitter account (26 percent) than older people aged 36 years and above (13 percent). Among those that have a Twitter account, 45 percent disclosed that they are actively involved on Twitter - by sending out Tweets or pictures, or by participating in conversations or other activities using their accounts. The poll also revealed that Twitter users in Nigeria mostly use the platform to get trending news (33 percent), interact with friends (21 percent) and for advertising businesses, amongst other things. Interestingly, a higher proportion (29 percent) of Twitter users acknowledged that giving voice to many voiceless Nigerians is the greatest impact Twitter has made in Nigeria. Finally, with regards to features missing on Twitter, 39 percent recommended that the owners of Twitter increase the number of words allowed per Tweet, as many respondents during the survey expressed that they would prefer to write a whole lot in one tweet.

Background

Social media networks or platforms are websites and computer programs that allow people to interconnect and share information on the internet using computers, mobile phones and other internet enabled devices. Examples of social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Snapchat. The fundamental aim of social media sites is to enhance communication through socializing. The advantages of these social media platforms are enormous, given that they are not bound by space and time. Social media platforms allow users globally to meet friends; exchange text, images, audio files and videos; and most importantly stay connected.

Nigeria has continued to enjoy technological advancement, especially in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These ICT advancements have provided Nigerians with fast internet access, with which they engage in social media activities on various internet enabled devices. According to the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC), Nigeria currently has about 122 million internet users². The number of social network users in Nigeria in 2018 stood at approximately 29.3 million users; the figure is projected to grow to 36.8 million in 2023³. Recently, a bill to regulate the use of social media in Nigeria has passed second reading in the Nigerian senate. If passed into law, Nigerians found guilty of making false remarks on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other similar media, would have face two years in jail or a fine of 2 million naira.⁴ Against this backdrop, NOIPolls conducted a survey to understand how Nigerians use social media, examining their preferences for each platform, and their future expectations from these platforms.

Survey Findings

The first question sought to measure the level of internet penetration in Nigeria, and the poll revealed that 61 percent of Nigerians have access to the internet. This translates to about 120 million Nigerians having access to the internet factoring Nigeria's current population estimate of 198 million according to the Nigeria Population Commission.⁵ This figure corresponds to the data from Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), which puts the numbers of Nigerians with access to internet at 122 million.⁶ Interestingly, proportion of Nigerians with access to internet was highest among young Nigerians between 18 – 35 years (70 percent).

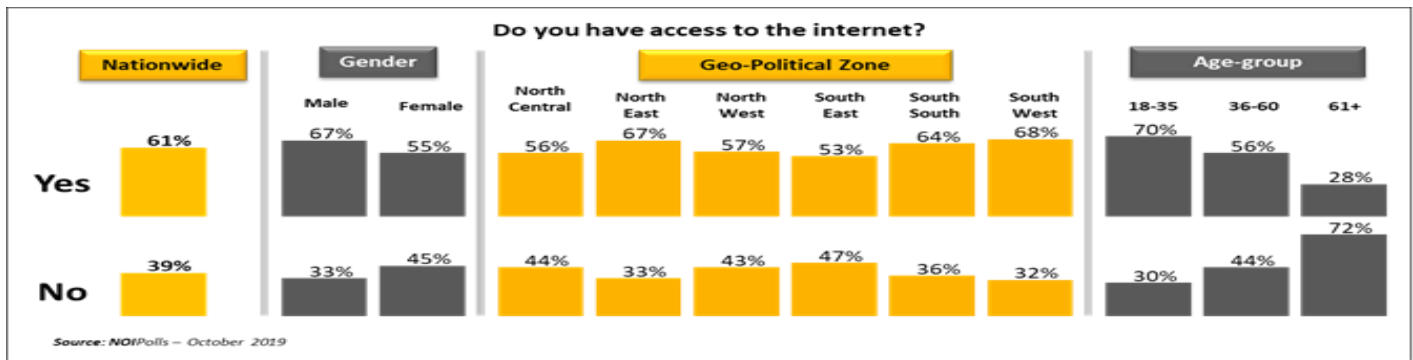
² <https://www.ncc.gov.ng/stakeholder/media-public/news-headlines/614-ncc-hinges-nigeria-s-122-million-internet-users-protection-on-effective-governance>

³ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/972907/number-of-social-network-users-in-nigeria/>

⁴ <https://www.premiumposttimesng.com/news/headlines/361199-nigerian-senate-reintroduces-bill-to-regulate-social-media-use.html>

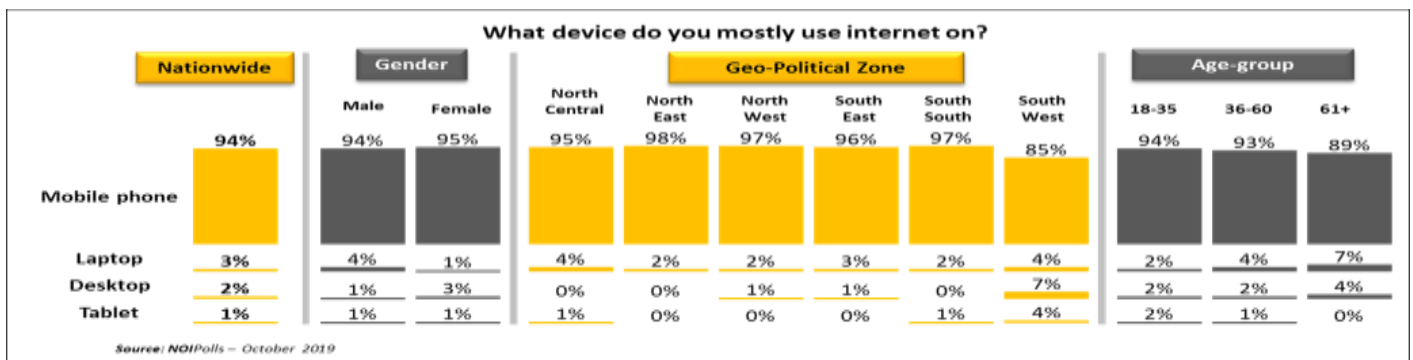
⁵ <https://www.legit.ng/1248015-nigeria-a-population-198-million-people---npc.html>

⁶ <https://www.ncc.gov.ng/stakeholder/media-public/news-headlines/614-ncc-hinges-nigeria-s-122-million-internet-users-protection-on-effective-governance>



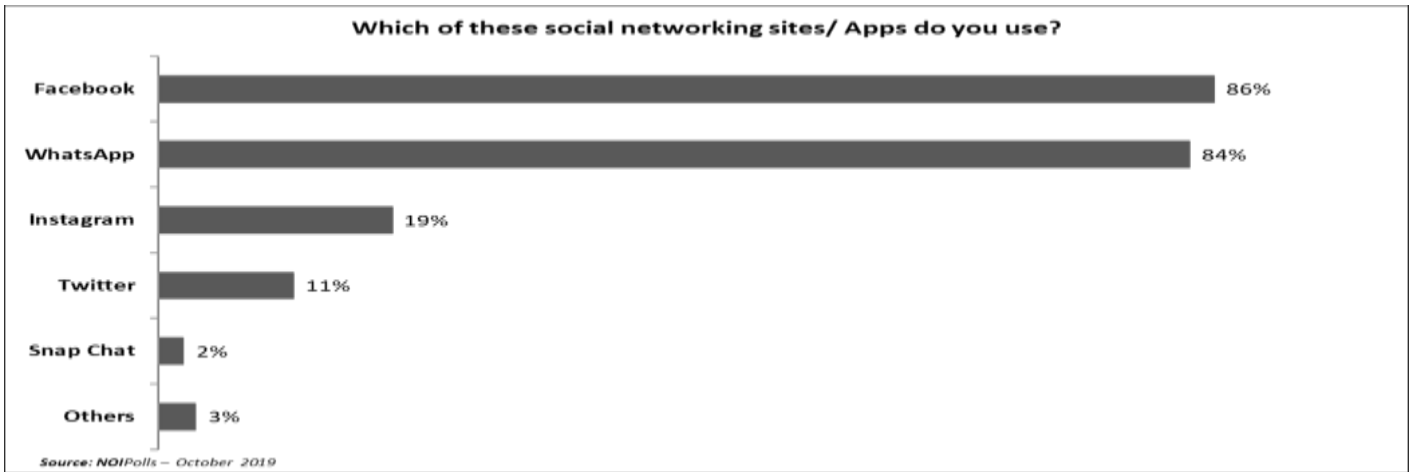
Of the proportion who claimed to have access to the internet, an overwhelming majority (94 percent) indicated that they mostly access the internet on their mobile phones. This proportion was equally high across the six geo-political zones and across age demographic; highlighting a wide use of smart phones in the country.

The wide access of the internet on mobile phones across Nigeria shows there is a huge market and high demand for smart phones in the country, and it gives credence to the claim that Nigeria is Africa's biggest smartphone market.

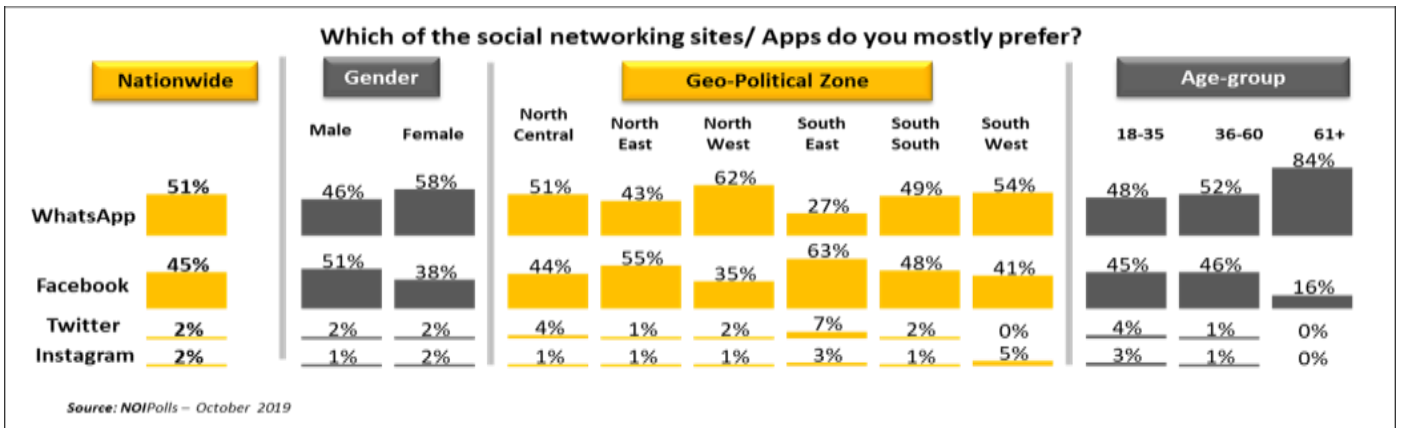


Of the proportion who indicated that they use mobile phones to access the internet, 95 percent reported that they mostly use the internet for social media interactions and with regards to awareness, Facebook (95 percent) and WhatsApp (94 percent) were the most popular amongst other platforms. However, with regards to use, most respondents indicated they use Facebook (86 percent) and WhatsApp (84 percent) the most, followed by Instagram (19 percent) and Twitter (11 percent).

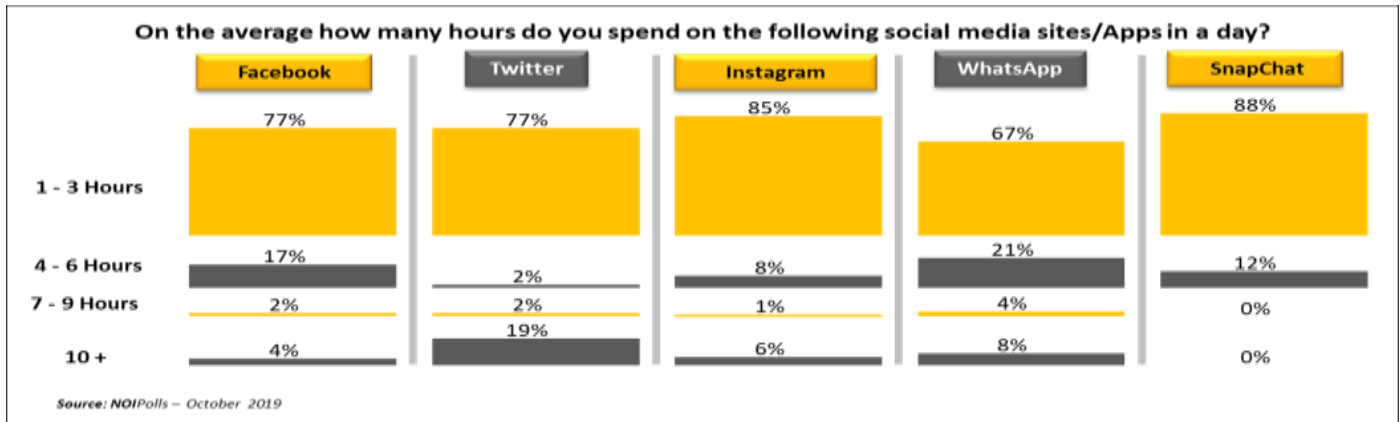
Some reasons may explain the entrenchment of Facebook in Nigeria, such as its prolonged presence compared to other platforms (Facebook is the oldest of the listed social networking platforms), ease of use, and the capacity to engage that platform with minimal data usage. WhatsApp's wide use may be due to the ease of connection on the platform as you only need the phone number of a contact to connect on WhatsApp. These and other reasons may explain the extensive use of these two platforms.



Interestingly, WhatsApp (51 percent) is the most preferred social networking site/application, followed by Facebook (45 percent), Twitter (2 percent), and Instagram (2 percent). Comparing the age demographics, WhatsApp was overwhelmingly the most preferred social networking site for respondents 61 years and above (84 percent). With regards to gender, results show some interesting trends – amongst females, WhatsApp was preferred the most (58 percent) while amongst males, Facebook was the most preferred social networking site (51 percent). Across geo-political zones, respondents in the South East preferred Facebook (63 percent) to WhatsApp (27 percent) while respondents in the North West preferred WhatsApp (62 percent) to Facebook (35 percent).

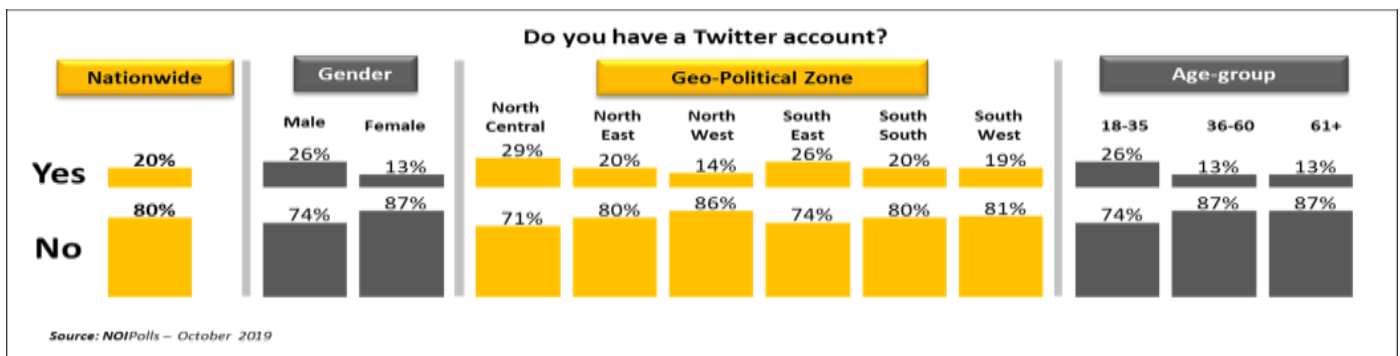


With regards to the average number of hours spent in a day on social media sites/applications, Twitter captured the largest daily cumulative value, as 19 percent of its users disclosed that they spend 10 hours and more engaging on it. This was followed by WhatsApp, with 8 percent of its users revealing that they spend upwards of 10 hours daily on average on the platform.



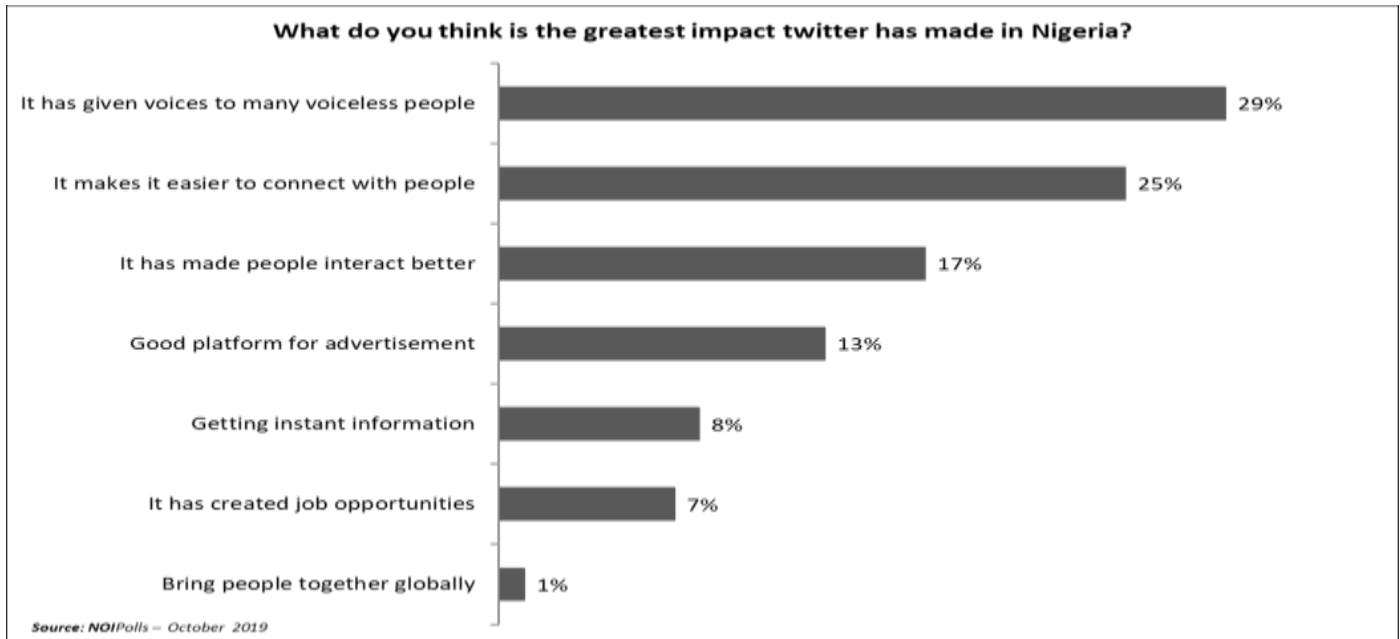
The recent visit of Jack Dorsey, the CEO of Twitter to Nigeria is for good reason as a deeper analysis on Twitter revealed that 20 percent of respondents who have access to the internet confirmed having a Twitter account, representing about 24 million Nigerians. This figure corresponds with other data which reports that 19.64 percent of Nigerians have a Twitter account.⁷

At 26 percent, male respondents doubled the proportion of female respondent who have a Twitter account (13 percent). Younger respondents aged 18 – 35 years also doubled the proportion of respondents aged 36 years and above with a Twitter account. The North West had the least proportion of respondents with Twitter accounts (14 percent) while the North Central had the highest (29 percent).



The poll further sought to know the greatest impact of Twitter in Nigeria, and results revealed that 29 percent of Nigerians are of the opinion that Twitter has given voice to many voiceless people. During the survey, some respondents mentioned that Nigerians can now express their concerns on issues that they feel are going wrong in the country in real-time. Additionally, 25 percent of respondents stated that Twitter makes it easier to connect with different people, while 17 percent stated that the platform makes people interact better, and these attributes are seen as the most important aspect of social media.

⁷ <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/nigeria>



In conclusion, the poll revealed that about 120 million Nigerians (61 percent) have access to the internet and of this proportion, 94 percent access the internet through their mobile phones - indicating a wide use of smart phones in the country. Most Nigerians who access the internet use it for social networking sites/applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. However, WhatsApp (51 percent) and Facebook (45 percent) are the most preferred social networking sites/applications in the country, mainly because Nigerians believe they are simple and fast (26 percent), easy to connect to people with (20 percent) respectively.

Additionally, the poll indicated that respondents considered Facebook (98 percent), Instagram (88 percent), WhatsApp (77 percent), and Snapchat (74 percent) most effective for advertising, while Twitter (98 percent) was considered most effective for gaining attention on topical issues and trending subjects. More findings revealed that 20 percent of respondents reported that they have a Twitter account, and this figure represents about 21.3 million Nigerians. Of this proportion, 45 percent disclosed that they are actively involved on Twitter - by way of either sending out Tweets or pictures or engaging in conversations or other activities using their accounts.

Given the proportion of Nigerians on social media, government and other decision makers can connect with communities across the country on Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter, given the number of Nigerians who use these platforms. For instance, social media can be effectively utilized in improving work processes in sectors such as education and health. When used effectively, social media could be immensely advantageous in developing Nigeria’s economy and its various sectors. Finally, as the Nigerian population continues to grow and technology adoption levels continue to rise, social media will continue to serve as a vital tool that will shape the opinions of youths and more importantly, allow for direct interactions and conversations in a virtual town hall setting.

Survey Methods

The opinion poll was conducted in the week commencing October 14th, 2019. It involved telephone interviews of a proportionate nationwide sample of 1,000 randomly selected phone-owning female Nigerians aged 18 years and above, representing the six geo-political regions and 36 states and the FCT of the country. Interviews were conducted in 5 languages – Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, Pidgin English, and English. Although we can say with 95% confidence that the results obtained were statistically precise – within a margin of error of plus or minus 4.65%; we

recognize that the exclusive use of telephone polling has its limitation of excluding non-phone-owning Nigerians. Nonetheless, with the country's tele density put over 100 percent by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), we consider our telephone polling approach appropriate. Also, given the rigorous scientific process of randomization and stratification applied, we can confidently stand by the validity of our methodology and approach. NOIPolls Limited, No1 for country specific polling services in West Africa. We conduct periodic opinion polls and studies on various socio-economic and political issues in Nigeria. More information is available at www.noi-polls.com.

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