

## **Tenacity of Gerontocracy in Nigeria: An Example of the Esan People in Edo State**

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**ABSTRACT** Gerontocracy as a rule of the elders remains tenacious in many parts of Nigeria. In Esanland, a core group in Edo State, the manifestation of the rule of the elders is particularly strong at the village level. Usually, all respected elders as the custodians of the norms and values of the people while at the same time they were seen as the immediate next to the ancestors. Despite the vicissitudes of modernity on the status of the elders, gerontocracy lingers on as the norms in which elders exercised control as a cohesive force for their villages and communities. This is evident in the elders right to first choice, their family roles especially as the stabilizers of family ties and their being considered as next to the ancestors.