

**LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS: STAKEHOLDERS'  
PERSPECTIVES**

**BY**

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## CERTIFICATION

I, Adeboboye Taofeeq Adekunle, hereby certify that this thesis titled; “Legislative Oversight by the House Of Representatives Committee on Telecommunications: Stakeholders’ Perspectives” has been carried out under the supervision of Dr. Augustine C. Osigwe. All information from literature have been duly acknowledged in the text and list of references provided. This thesis has not been previously presented for the award of degree at NILDS/UNIBEN Post Graduate School or at any institution.

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## APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis titled “Legislative Oversight by the House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunications: Stakeholders’ Perspectives” by Adeboboye Taofeeq Adekunle meets the partial requirements for the award of Masters in Legislative Studies of the University of Benin/National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies, Post Graduate School, Abuja. We therefore approve the work for its contribution to knowledge.

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## ABSTRACT

Numerous laws and regulations have been enacted by the Nigeria legislators for the operations of the telecommunication industries, in spite of these laws and regulations recent periods have beheld several reckless misconducts of telecommunication companies. For instance, there are growing allegations of low quality services, deceptive marketing, questionable products, doubtful promotional practices, sloppy services, hidden charges, and poor telephony services. Based on the foregoing, this dissertation assessed; the awareness of the legislative oversight function on telecommunication firms among the members of the public, the operational effects of the telecommunication firms on Nigerians; and the effectiveness of the 9th House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication.

The study adopted mixed methods research design in order to have depth assessment of the 9th House of Representatives Committee oversight functions on Telecommunication firms. The basic principle of this methodology is that it advances a more complete and synergistic utilization of data than do separate quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The embracement of this research design was influenced by the nature of data collection and analysis i.e. quantitative and qualitative. The Slovin's (1960) formula was utilized to determine the public-respondents sample size. Also, the study purposively sampled 23-members of the 9th House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication. Data collected through structured interview questions and questionnaire administration were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Furthermore, the study employed narrative and descriptive analysis methods these include frequencies, percentages and charts.

The empirical findings from the descriptive analysis of the public-respondents revealed on the first objective that most members of the public are not aware of the existence of the Committee on Telecommunication in the House of Representatives. On the second objective,

the study established the prevalence of some telecommunication firms' misconducts which include deceptive marketing, hidden charges, poor network coverage, poor customer service, doubt about personal information handling, and lack of value for money paid for services/products as the operational effects of the telecommunication firms on Nigerians. On the third objective, the study revealed that Committee on Telecommunications is not effective in discharging their statutory functions as far as addressing the prevalent issues of Telecommunication firms' misconducts are concerned.

The study therefore recommended creating more public awareness (i.e. sensitizing the public) regarding the Committee statutory oversight functions, regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services, and the Committee should earnestly come up with a standardized oversight manual for the Committee. The Committee needs to construct workable platforms to harness public complaints/opinions on the operational activities of the Telecommunication companies. The study therefore concluded that it can safely be said that the Committee is not effective in discharging their statutory functions as far as issues of Telecommunication firms' misconducts are concerned. And established lack of funds, lack of platform to harness complaints/opinion, lack of standardized oversight manual, lack of cooperation by the executive arm, unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, and lack of cooperation from the telecom providers as factors hindering the Committee effectiveness.





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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The term telecommunication refers to the science of conveying information in verbal, written, coded or pictorial form, through the devices of telephone, telegraph, cable, radio, television and other such means. Thus, telecommunications is literally ‘the sharing of information over a distance’. It basically has to do with the conveyance of messages, by electrical means, well beyond the limits of hearing distances (Adediran *et al*, 2017). Inarguably, since the inception of telecommunication in Nigeria, it has contributed enormously to Nigeria’s economy and the lives of Nigerians. The innovation of mobile phone usage from basic phone telephony to new enhanced services and the introduction of new technology within diverse sectors of the country have seen the sector grow immensely (Proshare, 2020). The sector has experienced rapid growth and helps in so many ways such as easier banking services (bank mobile apps) and access to e-learning platforms to Nigerians (Proshare, 2020). However, over the years telecommunications in Nigeria has been characterized by serious shortfalls between planned and realized targets, principally because of insecurity, poor management, lack of accountability and transparency, and low level of executive capacity (Englama and Bamidele 2002; Raimi *et al.*, 2014; Adediran *et al*, 2017; Proshare, 2020).

Moreover, it has been defined to epitomize government owned operated systems of Information and Communications Technologies that transforms its relationship with her citizens, the private sector and other government agencies, so as to promote citizens empowerment, improve service delivery, strengthen accountability, increase transparency and efficiency (Onuche, 2021). Sequel

to this and while the agitations for increased social involvements and transparent social reporting are gaining momentum in Nigeria, the government deregulated the telecommunication industry after a long history of nationalization (Raimi *et al.*, 2014). The Nigerian telecommunication sector since its deregulation has revealed in financial gains and fortunes judging by the growth in the number of telephone companies, customers and performance indicators (Raimi *et al.*, 2014; Proshare, 2020). Further than economic gains, the legislators (that is policymakers) felt the necessity for all telecommunication firms to act responsibly within the realm of the extant laws promulgated to protect property rights, citizens' wellbeing, enduring investment and the environment in line with international best. This realization called for a thorough legal and regulatory framework, which was expeditiously put in place by the government for the overall interest of all the stakeholders in Nigeria. Government reinvigorated old laws to enact new ones that strengthen the regulatory environment.

According to scholars such as Raimi *et al.* (2014), Proshare (2020) and Onuche (2021), several of the promulgated regulations prescribed minimum socio-economic obligations and demands social/environmental reporting, from corporations thereby averting corporate excesses, abuse of the operating environment and other corporate misbehaviors widely reported in developed economies. In spite of these regulations, the literature in recent period is full of several reckless executive misconducts of corporations (Mwakatumbulaa *et al* 2019; Onuche 2021; Anele and Ubochioma 2021). There are accusations of low quality services, deceptive marketing, questionable products, doubtful promotional practices, sloppy services, hidden charges, poor telephony services and so on. Therefore, it is against these backdrops that this study intends to assess the Nigerian legislative oversight functions (specifically the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives

Committee) on telecommunication and how to mitigate the reckless misconducts of telecommunication corporations.

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

Consequent to the agitations for increased social involvements and transparent social report gaining momentum in Nigeria, the government deregulated the telecommunication industry after a long history of nationalization (Raimi *et al.*, 2014). Numerous regulations have been enacted by the Nigeria legislators for the operations of the telecommunication industries and, for the protection of property rights, citizens' wellbeing, and enduring investment and for the protection of the environment in line with international best practice. The Nigerian telecommunication sector since its deregulation has revealed in financial gains and fortunes judging by the growth in the number of telephone companies, customers and performance indicators (Raimi *et al.*, 2014; Proshare, 2020). However, in spite of the deregulations and the complemented financial gains recent periods have beheld several reckless misconducts of telecommunication corporations. For instance, there are growing allegations of low quality services, deceptive marketing, questionable products, doubtful promotional practices, sloppy services, hidden charges, poor telephony services, mishandling personal information, lack of value for money paid for services/products and so on (Onuche 2021; Anele and Ubochioma 2021). Thus, the problem on how to mitigate the misconducts of telecommunication firms becomes a concern. Based on the foregoing, this study is anticipated to assess the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives Committee oversight functions on the Telecommunication sector and possible ways the legislators could mitigate the reckless misconducts in the sector.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Originating from the abovementioned problems, the study will provide answers to the following questions:

- i. Are the members of the public aware of the legislative oversight function on telecommunication firms?
- ii. What are the effects of operational activities of the telecommunication firms on Nigerians?
- iii. How effective is the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives Committee on telecommunication towards making the telecommunication firms in the country to be responsible and its operating environment in line with international best practice?
- iv. What are the factors hindering the effectiveness of the Committee?

### **1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to ascertain the extent to which the oversight functions of the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives have improved the operations of the Telecommunication sector in Nigeria in line with international best practice. In achieving this, the following specific objectives are pursued:

- i. To assess the awareness of the legislative oversight function on telecommunication firms among the public members;
- ii. To assess the operational effects of the telecommunication firms on Nigerians;
- iii. To examine the effectiveness of the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication; and
- iv. To identify the major factors influencing the effectiveness of the House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication.



### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on examining the oversight functions of Committee on telecommunication with a view to determining how the telecom industry in Nigeria has improved as a result of its oversight activities. The 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives Committee on telecom is considered because it represents the recent period of Nigerian legislative administration. Explicitly, the study is limited to an assessment of the activities of the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication. The longitudinal scope of the study is limited to two (2) groups namely; the members of the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication, and the Telecoms subscribers.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study would be of immense benefit not only to researchers but also to all the stakeholders in the telecom industry as it has the potential to provide technical assistances towards the enhancement of telecommunication firms' service delivery in Nigeria. In addition, this study will also give legislators and indeed all stakeholders insight on how to mitigate the reckless misconducts of telecommunication firms in the country. This study will as well contribute to in this area of study by examining the specific case of Nigeria's telecommunication industry.

### **1.7 Organization of Chapters**

This study is structured into five chapters. Chapter one includes the background to the study, statement of the research problem, aim and objectives, research questions, scope of and significance of the study. Chapter two is composed of the review of relevant literature with extensive discussion of the empirical literatures and the theoretical framework. Chapter three focuses on the methodology, clearly explaining research design, sources of data, population,

sample size, data collection technique and data analysis methods. Chapter four discusses and analyzes all the data collected through the use of questionnaire. Finally, chapter five concludes the entire research, it summarizes the findings of the research and provides appropriate recommendations in line with the findings of the work.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter reviews literature that are germane to the study. The chapter starts with the study's adopted theoretical framework, followed by conceptual clarifications. The last part of the chapter discusses empirical studies.

#### 2.1 Conceptual Clarifications

##### 2.1.1 Legislature

According to Jooji (2019), a legislature is a deliberative assembly with the authority to make laws for a political entity or city. Legislatures form significant parts of most governments. In the model of separation of powers, legislatures are often contrasted with the executive and judicial branches of government. According to the doctrine of separation of powers, 'the legislature in a presidential system is considered an independent and coequal branch of government along with both the judiciary and the executive.' Following the above account, the legislature may be rightly viewed as that organ of government which formulates laws. It is a very special and important organ of the state in a democratic dispensation

##### 2.1.2 Legislative Functions

The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria is legally supreme and binding. It is the *grundnorm (fontis et origo)* from which all organs of government derive their powers and authorities (Arowolo, 2010). Section 4 (1) of the Constitution sets out the powers and functions of the legislature. Some of the basic features of the legislature provided by the Constitution are: (i) Bicameral legislature. That is, the legislative powers vested in the National Assembly are to be exercised by two bodies made up

of Senate and House of Representatives; Legislative Committees. They undertake most of the detailed work of legislation. They embark on investigative or fact finding tours, public hearings among others; exercise of general legislative power through the passage of bills by both the Senate and House of Representatives, assented to by the president except where he withholds his assent and the bill is again passed by two third majority of each House when it becomes law and the president's assent is not required; exercise of legislative power over money bills. Thus, the major functions of the Legislatives are highlighted as follows:

### **Law Making**

The law making powers and procedures of the National Assembly (i.e. the Legislative) as contained in sections 4, 58 and 59 of the 1999 Constitution and section 100 for state Houses of Assembly can be used steadily to control the administration and its units, especially as executive policies and programmes must have legislative backing before they are implemented. The consideration of executive/administrative bills affords legislative committees the chance to inquire into the work of the agencies. The constitutional and legislative procedures employed by the National Assembly and the State Houses of Assembly which involves several readings, public hearings, legislative committees and sub-committees, deliberations and publicity, principles of limitations and checks, enhance transparency and accountability in the exercise of governmental powers that accords with constitutionalism and promotes nation building.

### **Representation**

One of the prominent roles of Legislature is representation. Membership of the Chamber is based on equal representation. Each member represents one Federal Constituency of Nigeria, though the number of Constituencies per State varies since population strength is the criteria used to determine

the number of each State's Federal Constituencies. Representation in this case involves service to constituents (citizens; the voters) by representing their interests in the legislature and providing a direct link to government. Thus, the representation function is critical to the long-term sustainability of democracy (PLAC, 2016). In this light, the fulcrum of legislative activity is expected to be the articulation and aggregation of diverse interests of the represented constituencies into the policy process. Besides the parliament's legislative function, it is through oversight that the house can assert its role as the defender of the people's interest (Jooji, 2016).

### **Oversight**

The guide to legislative oversight in the National Assembly PLAC defines the term as, "the review or monitoring and supervision of government and public organizations, including the implementation of policy and legislation" Legislative oversight involves keeping an eye on the activities of government agencies especially the executive branch and public organizations on behalf of the Nigerian people (Jooji, 2019). Numerous scholars have proposed a number of definitions for oversight. Jooji (2019) noted that oversight is not just supervision of what the executive branch of government has done, but also supervision of the executive's legislative proposals. By contrast, Ejikeme (2014), Ikeji *et al* (2013), Ehigiamusoe and Umar (2013) submitted that, oversight refers to the set of activities that a parliament performs to evaluate the implementation of policies. Hence, the legislative oversight function is one of the keystones of democracy. Oversight is a means for holding the executive and public sectors such as telecommunication accountable for their actions and for ensuring that it implements policies in accordance with the laws passed by the parliament. The robust monitoring of the public sectors (i.e. telecommunication) by the parliament is an indicator of good governance. In Nigeria, the

oversight functions which attempts to make the executive behave and conform to the political order exists. The 1999 Constitution diffuses and entrenches these oversight functions in the legislative role of law making, watch- dog of public finance, investigative functions and even constituency responsibilities and so on (Arowolo, 2010).

### **2.1.3 Overview of the House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication**

Pursuant to section 62(1) of the Amended 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that empowers the House of Representatives to appoint Committees of its members for effective discharge of its legislative functions, the House Committee on Telecommunications was established as one of the Standing Committees of the House. The Committee, at inauguration, was made up of twenty nine (29) members from the parties represented in the House but presently the Committee is made up of 43 members.

### **2.1.4 Jurisdictions/Functions of the Committee**

The Jurisdiction or Functions of the Committee included:

- i. Oversight over the Ministry responsible for Communications Technology;
- ii. Oversight of Telecommunications, including Global Systems for Mobile Communications (GSM), NITEL Plc., and M-Tel Services;
- iii. Nigerian Communications Commission;
- iv. Oversight of Telephones and Telexes;
- v. Oversight of Post Offices and Postal Services;
- vi. Oversight of Cablegrams;
- vii. Oversight of Frequency Allocation;

- viii. Oversight of Universal Services Provision Fund (USPF);
- ix. Oversight of Telecommunications Matters generally; and
- x. Annual Budget Estimates.

Thus, this study is limited to the oversight of Telecommunications, including Global Systems for Mobile Communications (GSM), NITEL Plc., and M-Tel Services.

### **2.1.5 The Evolution of the Nigerian Telecommunication Sector**

According to Chidozie *et al*, (2015), the first telecommunication facility in Nigeria was a cable connection between the colonial office in London and Lagos established by the colonial administration in 1886. Telephone services were later made available to government offices in 1893, and later extended to the hinter land such as Ilorin and Jebba. The first commercial trunk telephone service between Calabar and Itu was established in 1923; a steady development of telecommunication in the country thus began. A three-channel line carrier system between Lagos and Ibadan was commissioned and later extended to Benin, Enugu, Kano, Kaduna and Osogbo; this took place from 1946-1952. The equipment used were changed- small to medium capacity systems that employ the use of Very High Frequency (VHF) and Ultra High Frequency (UHF) radios were introduced, and also the use of Strowger exchanges as against manual pegboards (Chidozie *et al*, 2015). These telecom infrastructures were put in place by the colonial masters and they were intended to help in administrative functions and not mainly for socio-economic development of the country.

At independence in 1960, there were only 18,724 phone lines available to a population of about 40 million (Ijewere and Gbandi 2012; Chidozie *et al*, 2015) and this was grossly insufficient. In the face of this reality, four national development plans were executed towards the improvement

of the current state of the network and infrastructure, and they were supervised by the Ministry of Communications. Some of the intended objectives were installation of additional telephone lines, expansion of trunk dialing facilities to link the major urban centers, and the establishment of an institution in the sector Nigerian External Telecommunications (NET) Limited (Chidozie *et al*, 2015). These goals were not totally achieved, but some level of developments were recorded such as, the connection of major cities through microwave radio transmission system, the establishment of NET, increase in the number of lines in the telephone network from 52,000 to 241,000 lines, building of satellites that boosted external coverage, a microwave link connecting Nigeria and Benin Republic, and installation of an International Telephone Switching Center (ITSC). There were certain factors that limited the development of the telecom sector at this period such as inadequate funds, poor coordination of projects, interruptions such as the civil war of 1967-1970, and insufficient skilled labor force to manage the additional equipment (Chidozie *et al*, 2015).

Subsequently, up until 1985, the institutions in the telecommunication sector were the Department of Posts and Telecommunications (P&T) which was responsible for the internal network; and the Nigerian External Telecommunication (NET) Limited, which was a Limited Liability Company responsible for the external network (Chidozie *et al*, 2015). In 1985, the Posts and Telecommunications Department was separated into the Postal and Telecommunications sections, and the telecommunications sector was merged with NET to form Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL), which also became a Limited Liability Company. NITEL was established to supply to the Nigerian state efficient telecommunication services, and this required sufficient resources - financial and technical, as well effective planning and co-ordination, as it was to merge



the responsibilities of planning and coordinating internal and external telecommunications, and ensure these services were affordable and accessible (Ijewere and Gbandi, 2012).

Further, NITEL was able to provide 60% of the N12 billion that was invested in the provision of certain infrastructures such as digital exchanges and transmission links, from internally generated revenues. This was a big credit to the institution. The institution also engaged in Research and Development (RD) to develop system components that suit the environment, develop solutions to technical problems and introduce new services. In 1993, NITEL introduced the voice mail, the paging system, trunked radio and phone card. The Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) ensured the availability of services such as electronic mail, video telephone, telefax and many more. NITEL was also able to provide telecommunication services to local governments in the country (Odukoya, 2007). However, NITEL was faced with problems of corruption, mismanagement, inefficiency in service delivery in terms of quality; the telephone system was congested, erratic, non-customer friendly and expensive. The immediate result of these was the public outcry for state intervention to remedy the epileptic telephony services of NITEL.

Consequently, the Decree of 1992 led to the establishment of the regulatory body in the sector- Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) as part of state reaction to the challenges of NITEL. The NCC commenced operation in 1993 with the inauguration of the first commission, however full deregulation began in 2000. The NCC was charged with the responsibility of monitoring the evolution of competition in the sector, preventing hostility against new entrants by those already existing in the market, and protection of the public against the manipulation of the market by the firms via practices such as inflated prices, reduced quality and quantity of services provided (Sodiq *et al*, 2011).

### ***2.1.6 Emergence of Global System of Mobile Communications (GSM) Service Providers***

The NCC is also in charge of licensing telecommunications operators, engendering of private sector participation and investment, tariff regulation, interconnection disputes, supervision of technical and operational standards and practices for network, and other matters affecting the industry; and it is meant to perform these functions without bias and with all sense of autonomy, on the basis of transparency, equity and fairness. The NCC granted licenses to three GSM service providers in 1999- ECONET, MTN and MTEL, a Second National Operator in 2002, which is GLOBACOM, and another operator in 2008, ETISALAT. In 2006, the Universal Access Service licenses were issued to provide fixed telephony, VSAT and internet services (Alabi, 1996).

According to Chidozie *et al* (2015), the rationale behind the deregulation of the telecommunication sector include: the inability of the government to support the sector with subsidy; the need to reduce the burden on the government, the demand for efficient and current facilities, low rate of infrastructure growth, low access especially in the rural areas, and poor service delivery. The commercialization of the operations of the state enterprise in the late 1980's marked the beginning of the deregulation process. However, with the announcement of the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) Decree of 1992, telecom was divided into 2, with a part left in the hands of NITEL exclusively, while the other sector was opened to private sector participation. NITEL thus kept her monopoly over areas such as Exchange and Trunks and International Services. Section 10(a) of the Decree made provision for only Nigerians to participate in the sector, but this was amended in 1998 spelling out the criteria for being licensed.

In 1999, the then President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo made it a priority to privatize the sector totally, involving the Global System of Mobile Communications (GSM) service providers. Some

private companies received licenses, but no operation took place until 2001 when three operators got digital mobile licenses auctioned by the NCC; the operators include ECONET, MTN and MTEL. After this, there was a great explosion in the sector; by 2007 the number of telephone lines in the country grew to 38 million as against 450,000 that was in place as at 1999, and 85 million by April 2010, due largely to the mobile network, which made the country the world's fastest growing teledensity (Okonjo-Iweala, 2012).

Furthermore, the Telecommunication Act of 2003 encouraged more entry into the sector, engendering competition, and strengthening the role of the NCC. This paved way for the entry of the Second National Carrier which was GLOBACOM, and this has increased the intensity of competition in the sector, as each company introduces competitive and innovative packages, in order to gain the greater share of the market. As at 2004, the following had been achieved in the sector: a teledensity of 3.9% as against 0.4% at 2001; average of 45% of the population in an area of about 156,200km<sup>2</sup>, 3.8 mobile lines connected in less than 3 years; 4 licensed service providers, including two National Operators; increased access to mobile phones by the people; reduction in acquisition costs of new lines; reduction in cost of internet access; employment generation on the path of the companies and the "umbrella people" (Ndukwe, 2005).

In the present day, the industry has gone past telephony as there are quite a number of mobile service providers such as MTN, Airtel, GLOBACOM, ETISALAT which provide a range of services that include internet, Small Messaging Services (SMS), multimedia services, internet access and mobile banking. With such development, new challenges are also arising such as ensuring conformity to best quality of service delivery; upgrading of infrastructures to meet international standard; security and maintenance of facilities, especially in the remote areas;

ensuring the framework of broadband that can be accommodated by the ecosystem; and security of data in this digital world (Chidozie *et al*, 2015).

## **2.2 Review of Empirical Studies**

A number of studies have been conducted on Nigeria Telecommunication and oversight function of the legislature. Chidozie *et al* (2015) investigated the deregulation of the Nigerian Telecommunication Sector within the precinct of Imperialism and development. This was premised on the fact that Nigeria's Telecommunication sector has not only been moribund over the years but has more importantly been dominated by foreign and local bourgeoisies after its deregulation in 1999. Chidozie *et al* (2015) borrowed from Structural Imperialism which argues that the elites in the Centre and Periphery states connive, indeed conspire to undermine development in the latter. Chidozie *et al* (2015) relied heavily on the use of secondary data, by virtue of the nature of the work, thus probing the dynamics of these Centre/Periphery trajectories. The study findings revealed that certain levels of development have been recorded in the Telecommunication sector particularly in terms of contribution to the Nigerian economy through the ubiquitous provision of telecommunication lines, especially the mobile phones.

Adediran *et al* (2015) established that telecommunication is a way of life as it affects how and where we do 'everything'. Adediran *et al* (2015) further stressed the challenges that are strongly faced by rural communities in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, which include extreme poverty, lack of social services and infrastructures, low level of education and health status, as well as unequal access to income opportunities. Despite the fact that telecommunication services in Nigeria could be traced back to 1851, the aforementioned factors, coupled with the difficult physical terrain in some cases, have made them lack behind the urban areas with regard to provision of

telecommunication access. Adediran *et al* (2015) discussed the issues behind the failure of various past Nigerian governments in providing universal telecommunications access as directed by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). Advantages of extending telecommunications technology to the rural areas, particularly to the rural women, are enumerated. Adediran *et al* (2015) also proffered solutions to meeting the telecommunications needs of the rural communities in Nigeria within a very short, but reasonable, time.

Raimi *et al* (2014) assessed the adequacy of regulations on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Social Reporting (SR) in the Nigerian telecommunication industry. The study employed qualitative research method strictly relying on documentary/archival sources. Their findings indicated that Nigeria has adequate regulations (direct and indirect) on CSR and SR, and that there are adequate regulatory agencies created to ensure compliance. Furthermore, Raimi *et al* (2014) revealed that the regulations were efficient based on evidence of social reporting of CSR programmes and projects in the annual reports and websites of the telecommunication companies. They therefore concluded that these findings were tentative and required empirical investigation for their validity.

Furthermore, Osotimehin *et al* (2016) examined the customers' perception of service quality in the Nigerian telecommunication sector. They generated data through questionnaire administered on a random sample of 250 undergraduate students spread across two public owned state Universities in Ogun State, South-West, Nigeria. Osotimehin *et al* (2016) subjected the collected data to descriptive statistics. The results of the study revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between service quality and both, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, and also service quality is considered as a major factor in choosing telecommunication service provider in

Nigeria. Further, Osotimehin *et al* (2016) found that the quality of service customers received from their service providers in terms of prompt service delivery, reliability, improved service, availability of effective and efficient customer care to assist customers help in assessing their rate of satisfaction.

Mwakatumbulaa *et al* (2019), analyzed the current status of institutions that protect consumers in the telecommunications sector in five African countries (including Nigeria) from the perspective of three pillars of sound institutional design. The findings indicated that while all cases analyzed herein have some form of institution that upholds consumer protection, in most cases, such protection is limited to mobile communications. Furthermore, Mwakatumbulaa *et al* (2019) revealed that in most cases, there are only general sanction provisions that are either too weak to bind service providers or that leave overly discretionary powers to regulatory agencies, which can lead to corrupt practices, hence weakening consumer protection.

Anele and Ubochioma (2021) posited that liberalization of telecommunications sectors in many countries has brought with it the need to regulate and develop regulatory models for competition. They noted that South Korea and Nigeria followed the liberalization trend of the telecommunications markets in late 1980s and 1990s. Both countries have also established competition laws and adopt various regulatory models. Anele and Ubochioma (2021), through a comparative analysis, examined how both countries regulate competition in their telecommunications markets. They argued that the two countries regulatory models have merits and demerits which may affect efficient regulation of competition in the industry. They therefore, concluded that the Nigerian model reflects its slow level of telecommunication development and

the more sophisticated the industry becomes, it becomes imperative for its regulatory regime to become sector-specific.

Jooji (2019) examined the legislative oversight functions of the legislature in Nigeria with a view to ascertaining the extent to which the hope of the nation's populace is rekindled in this form of governance. The utilized data obtained gleaned from secondary sources including books, journals, periodicals, magazines, newspapers, and the internet. Jooji (2019) adopted the Principal Agent Theory as the theoretical frame work and used the technique of content analysis in its methodology. Results from the analyses revealed that the oversight functions performed by the Nigerian legislative arm has ensured a more even and near equitable distribution of democratic dividends. Jooji (2019) recommended the sustenance of such legislative oversight functions.

Nevertheless, the aforementioned ( Raimi *et al.* 2014; Mwakatumbulaa *et al* 2019; Onuche 2021; Anele and Ubochioma 2021), studies revealed the existence of several promulgated regulations prescribing minimum socio-economic obligations and demands social/environmental reporting, from corporations thereby averting corporate excesses, abuse of the operating environment and other corporate misbehaviors widely reported in developed economies. In spite of these regulations, the literature in recent period is full of several reckless executive misconducts of corporations (Mwakatumbulaa *et al* 2019; Onuche 2021; Anele and Ubochioma 2021). To the best of our knowledged, despite the growing accusations of poor customers' protection, low quality services, deceptive marketing, questionable products, doubtful promotional practices, sloppy services, hidden charges, poor telephony services among others in recent periods, there is no comprehensive study yet that assesses the legislative oversight functions on Telecommunication

using the PAT model in order to mitigate the reckless misconducts in telecom industry. Hence, this study is proposed to fill the existing gap in the literature.

### **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

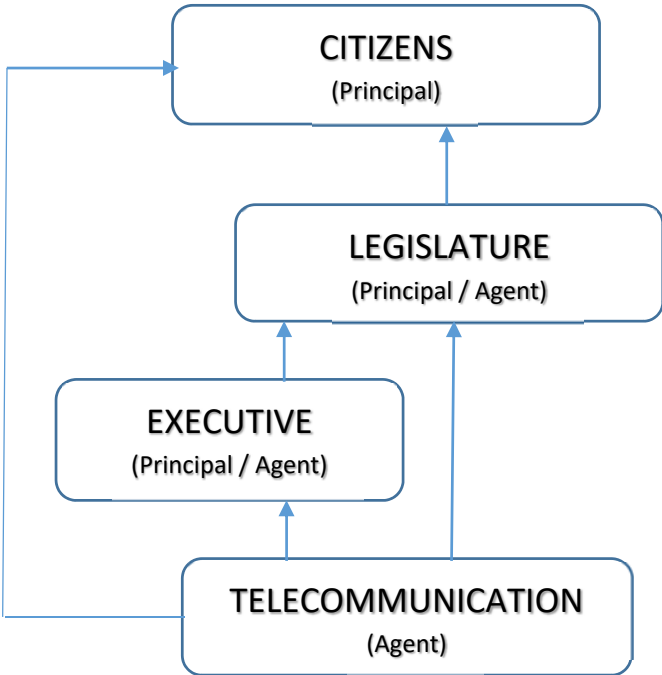
The study adopted the Principal-Agent Theory (PAT) as posited by Pelizzo and Stapenhurst, (2004). The principal-agent theory lay emphasis on the institutional mechanisms whereby principals can monitor and enforce compliance on institutions (Jooji, 2019). This theory is particularly appropriate for explaining the accountability relationship between citizens (as principals) and the legislature (acting as principal on behalf of citizens) and both the legislature and the institutions on the other hand. According to Roach (2016), the PAT may be defined as a model in which the leader who proposes the contract is called the Principal and the follower (the institution who just has to accept or reject the contract) is called the Agent. While this modeling choice makes things much simpler, the reader should keep in mind that actual bargaining procedures are likely to be much more complex (Whitford, 2013). Thus, this model is intended to apply to any situation where there is a principal who defines a convention or contract with an agent. The agents will then determine behaviors that are consistent with the desires of the principal (Moe, 1984).

Furthermore, within the PAT model there are components that may give rise to issues that require monitoring and in some instances, create concerns for principals and agents. These extents may affect all parties involved in positive and negative ways. Ultimately, they may even impact how actors manage their roles, behaviors, expectations, interests, outcomes, information, resources and control mechanisms (Roach, 2016). The model assumes that actors are perceived as rational utility maximizers (Moe 1984; Roach 2016), implying that actors seek out their self-interests. In the



context of telecommunication organizations, government and public officials may serve as principals and are likely to act in their interests by putting forward their priorities in the light of their organizational goals and objectives (Roach, 2016). By so doing, government (that is the legislators) as principals may want to ensure that convention agreements reflect these priorities and expect their agents (telecommunication firms) to accomplish them within their agreements.

Figure 2.1. PAT Model



Source: Pelizzo and Staphenurst, (2004)

In this context, Figure 2.1 applies the PAT to legislative oversight. The ultimate principals are citizens while the ultimate agents are telecommunication institutions. The executive and the legislature are both principals and agents. The executive as agent, is accountable directly to citizens by the virtue of electoral process, and to the legislature which acts on behalf of citizens and exercises an oversight function over the executive and telecommunication institutions. The

legislature are agents of the people because they are elected by the people as representative of their varied interest while at the same time they are principal to the telecommunication firms by virtue of their sacred oversight function as members of the legislative body. Therefore, by implication the ultimate accountability instrument is the legislature, who acts on behalf of citizens and are constituted with the responsibility to oversee the activities of the executive and bureaucracy such as Telecommunication firms. Explicitly, this study focuses on the legislative oversight function on the telecommunication institutions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter entails the various research tools and methodologies the study adopted. The chapter begins with a detailed research design of the study. It also presents the area of study, population of study followed by discussion on sample size and sampling procedure. Discussion on data collection instrument is also presented. The chapter ends with the discussion on method of data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Following the aim and objectives of the study, this study adopted mixed methods research design in order to have depth assessment of the 9th House of Representatives Committee oversight functions on Telecommunication. According to Creswell and Fetter (2004), the mixed methods research design is an evolving methodology of research that advances the mixing of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation. The basic principle of this methodology is that it advances a more complete and synergistic utilization of data than do separate quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The embracement of this research design is influenced by the nature of data collection and analysis i.e. quantitative and qualitative. According to according to Creswell and Fetter (2004), one reason for this choice is to allow correspondents enough room to elaborate and give better information. As such, this technique provides the potential to gain a rich source of data, allows for necessary flexibility to probe deeper during the interview, administration of questionnaires and as such to go deep into the case at hand.

### **3.2 Area of Study**

The survey focused area is Abuja, Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria. Abuja is the eighth most populous city of Nigeria. Located in the North Central of the country, it is a planned city built mainly in the 1980s to replace Lagos (the country's most populous city), as the capital on 12 December 1991. Abuja's geography is defined by Aso Rock, a 400-metre (1,300 ft) monolith left by water erosion. And Zuma Rock, a 792-metre (2,598 ft) monolith, lies just north of the city on the expressway to Kaduna (NPC,2019). The city is the home of the country National Assembly; a bicameral legislature established under section 4 of the Nigerian Constitution. It consists of the Senate and House of Representatives.

### **3.3 Population of Study**

The targeted population of this study include the telecoms subscribers in Abuja and the members of 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives National Assembly. Specifically, the study is targeted at the Committee on Telecommunication of the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives and the entire residents of AMAC. The AMAC residents is a varied population encompassing peoples of varying callings and social statuses like politicians, government workers, private employees, artisans, traders, Christians, Muslims, religious leaders, leaders of traditional institutions, and students, among others. The population of AMAC residents is about 776,298 people (NPC, 2019). Thus, population of this study comprised of different respondents from different backgrounds such as: religion, tribe, educational qualifications and different years of experience.

### **3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

There is no generally agreed sample size for mixed methods research design since the research design comprises qualitative approach. However, in order to gain a rich source of data, allows for

necessary flexibility to probe deeper during the interview, administration of questionnaires and as such to go deep into the case at hand, this study adopted purposively sampling procedure. The study purposively 23-members of the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication. On the telecoms subscribers, the Slovin's (1960) formula was used to calculate the sample size (n) given the population size (N) and a margin of error (e). The formula is stated as thus;

$$n = \frac{N}{1+Ne^2} \quad 3.1$$

where  $n$  is the sample size,  $N= 776,298$  is the population of AMAC residents (NPC, 2019),  $e = 0.05$  is the Margin of Error. The adoption of this method was utilized for two reasons; firstly, is to make sure that the sample is large enough to represent the population such that the sampling statistic will be the same with the population parameter and, secondly to make sure that each resident is truly represented in the population. The sample sizes for AMAC population is calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{776298}{1 + 776298(0.05^2)} = 400$$

Hence, for the purpose this research a total number of 423 sample size was utilized.

### **3.5 Instrument of Data Collection**

Structured interview questions and questionnaire were used as instrument for data collection. This structured interview questions and the questionnaire comprised of close-ended and open-ended questions. Due to committee-respondents busy work schedule and convenience, most of the interview sessions were conducted via phone calls. However, for telecoms subscribers the

Questionnaires (400 copies) were purposively administered to residents within the AMAC via online. The questions were framed in such a way that they supplied answers to the research questions. A set of questions were designed to relate to particular research question.

### **3.6 Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected were entered, coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The study employs narrative and descriptive analysis methods these include frequencies, percentages and charts.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the analysis results obtained from the study. The analysis includes the descriptive analysis of the respondents' characteristics and views on oversight functions of the House of Representatives towards making the telecommunication firms in the country a responsible ones. Also chi-square analysis was used assess the significant relationship between the legislator-respondents years in the House of Representatives and their views on Telecommunication oversight in Nigeria. All sub-sections have individual interpretations in the context of the study and analyses carried out with respect to all forms of respondents' responses in percentages and all data were analyzed using IBM-SPSS version 23 analysis package.

#### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.1 presents the common demographic information of the two categories of respondents (i.e. Legislators and Public) in this study. The results reveal that majority of both categories of respondents (87%=Legislators, 71%=Public) were male. The age bracket of the respondents depicts that most of legislator-respondents (61%) were between 51-70 years of age while majority of the public-respondents (82%) were active youth between the ages of 21-40 years. Also, the educational level of the respondents presented in Table 4.1, depict that the virtually all the respondents (both the legislators and public) possessed HND/BSc and High Degrees.

In addition, Fig 4.1 presents the legislator-respondents years of experience as legislators. The figure reveals that significant number of legislator-respondents (44%) had above 8-years working experience as legislators. Similarly, Fig 4.2 shows that all the public-respondents are telecommunication subscribers. Therefore, the demographic results of both respondents signpost

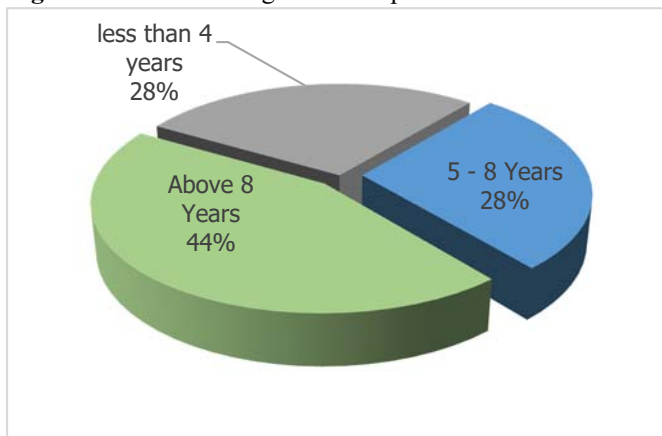
that they have the versatile requisite knowledge to provide the required answers to the questionnaire.

**Table 4.1.** Common Demographic Information of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Legislators		Public	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	3	13%	116	29%
	Male	20	87%	284	71%
Age Bracket	21-30 Years	-	-	186	46%
	31 - 40 Years	1	6%	143	36%
	41 - 50 Years	8	33%	72	18%
	51 - 60 Years	12	50%	-	-
	61 - 70 Years	3	11%	-	-
Educational Level	Higher Degree	17	72%	114	29%
	HND/BSc	6	28%	257	63%
	OND/NCE	-	-	14	4%
	SSCE	-	-	14	4%

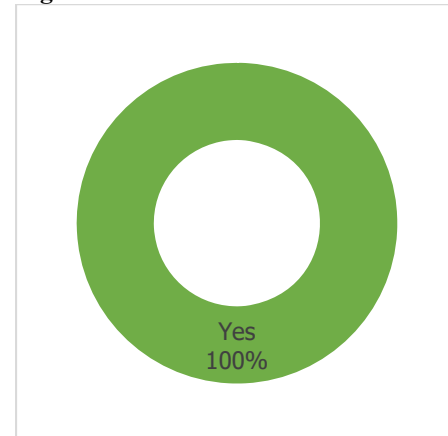
*Source: Field Survey 2022*

**Figure 4.1.** Years of Legislator-Respondents in National Assembly



*Source: Field Work 2022*

**Figure 4.2.** Public Telecom Subscriber



*Source: Field Work 2022*

#### 4.2 Assessing the Operational Activities of Telecoms and the Oversight Function by the Legislative from Public Perspectives

Furthermore, Table 4.3 presents the assessment of the operational activities of the Telecoms and its effects on the public. Table 4.3 reveals some encouraging operational activities of the Telecoms these include: more than half of the public-respondents (57%) admitted that the instructions about



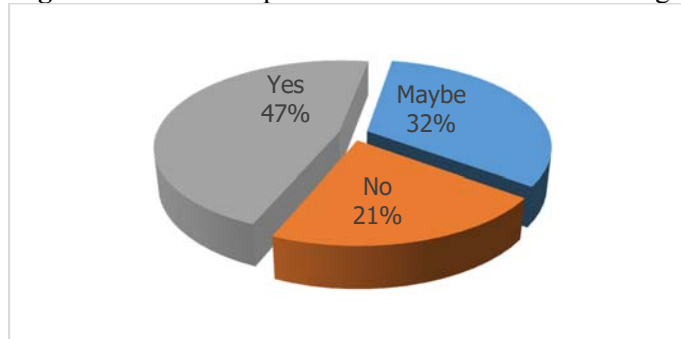
the products/services provided by network operators are clear and self-explanatory; most of the public-respondents (65%) acknowledged that the network operator provide good network coverage; and half of the public-respondents (50%) noted that network operators demonstrates determination to solve unresolved situations.

**Table 4.2.** Operational Assessment of the Telecoms’ Activities

Operational Activities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
The instructions about the products/services provided by your network operator are clear and self-explanatory	14%	43%	18%	4%	21%
Your network operator products and services provisions are satisfactory	4%	14%	32%	4%	46%
Many of the Telecoms firm marketing are deceptive	7%	61%	14%	4%	14%
Your network operator provides a quick and efficient services	11%	21%	18%	4%	46%
As a subscriber, when you have unresolved situation, your network operator demonstrates determination to solve it	4%	46%	25%	7%	18%
You feel unsafe regarding your personal information you provided to your network because of fear that your information can be disclosed and use incorrectly	18%	43%	25%	4%	11%
Your network operator has good network coverage	11%	54%	18%	4%	14%
The value for money of services provided by your network operator is appropriate	7%	7%	25%	7%	25%

*Source: Researcher’s Compilations from SPSS 23 Outputs*

**Figure 4.3.** Network providers are fond of hidden charges



*Source: Field Work 2022*

Conversely, some unpromising operational activities were also revealed in Table 4.3, these include: half of the public-respondents (50%) disagreed that network operators provide quick and efficient services (i.e. satisfactory); most of the public-respondents (68%) also acknowledged that many of the Telecoms firm marketing are deceptive; similarly, most of the public-respondents (61%) admitted to feel unsafe as regard providing personal information to network provider

because of fear of disclosed information; and lastly, significant number of public-respondents (32%) noted that the values for money of services provided by network operators are not appropriate. In addition, Fig 4.3 show that network providers are fond of hidden charges. Thus, while Telecom firms are promising in terms of network coverage, good customer service and clear and self-explanatory instructions about their products/service, however these results reveal that Telecom firms products and network services are deceptive, unsatisfactory and fond of hidden charges. Public-members feel unsafe as regard providing personal information to network provider because of fear of disclosed information.

**Table 4.3.** Public Assessment of the House of Representative Telecommunication Oversight Function

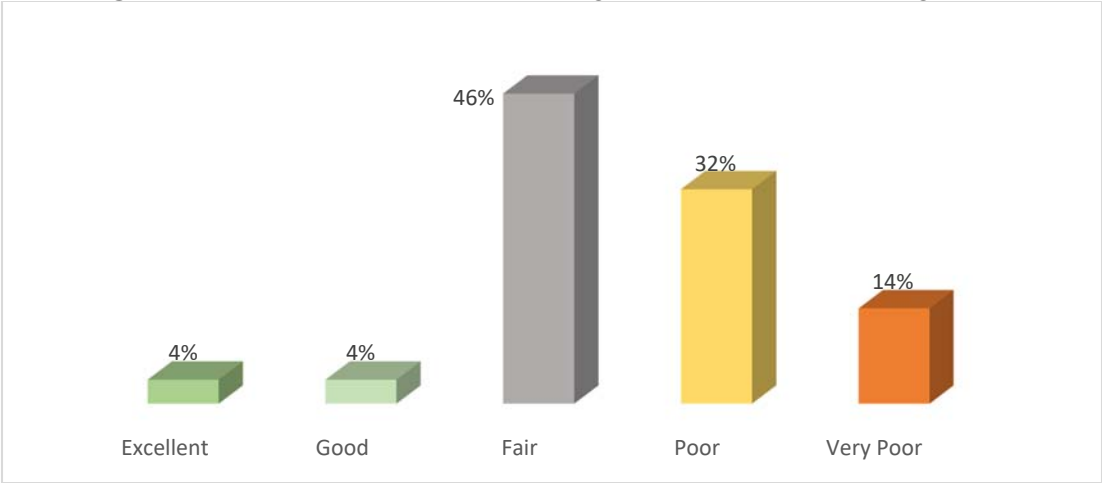
	Maybe	No	Yes
Are you aware of any resolution reached at the House of Representative sitting that meet your wish in the telecommunication industry?	0%	89%	11%
Are you aware of the existence of Committee on Telecommunication in House of Representatives?	0%	68%	32%
Are you aware of any member of the committee from your geo-political zone?	0%	86%	14%
Do you have access to any member of the abovementioned Committee?	0%	96%	4%
Do you think the Legislature (the Committee on Telecommunication) have special mechanisms for overseeing the Telecom companies?	0%	64%	36%
If the Committee create a platform for complaint and public opinion, would you be willing to provide information that will enable it to function better?	0%	7%	93%
If you are notified of town hall meeting organized within your reach by the committee, would you be willing to attend?	0%	25%	75%
Do you feel deprived of the opportunity to lay your complaints/opinion on issues in the telecommunication as a result of holding the committee public hearing in Abuja?	0%	29%	71%
Do you consider yourself a stakeholder in the improvement of the operations of the telecom industry?	0%	14%	86%

*Source: Researcher's Compilations from SPSS 23 Outputs*

Moreover, Table 4.3 presents the assessment results of public views on the Telecommunication Oversight Function by House of Representatives. To begin with, most of the public-respondents: are not aware of the existence of Committee on Telecommunication in House of Representatives (68%); are not aware of any member of the committee from your geo-political zone (86%), and do not have access to any member of the abovementioned Committee (96%). Additionally, from the Table 4.3 most of the public-respondents (64%) acknowledged that legislature (the Committee on Telecommunication) have no special mechanisms for overseeing the Telecom companies.

Also, most of the public-respondents acknowledged to the following: are not aware of any resolution reached at the House of Representative sitting that meet their wish in the telecommunication industry (89%); and feel deprived of the opportunity to lay their complaints/opinion on issues in the telecommunication as a result of holding the committee public hearing in Abuja (71%). Consequently, majority of the public-respondents admitted to the following: considered themselves a stakeholder in the improvement of the operations of the telecom industry (86%); if the Committee create a platform for complaint and public opinion, they would be willing to provide information that will enable it to function better (93%); and if they are notified of town hall meeting organized within their reach by the Committee, they would be willing to attend (75%).

**Figure 4.3.** Public Perceived Overall Rating of Effectiveness of the Legislature



*Source: Field work 2022*

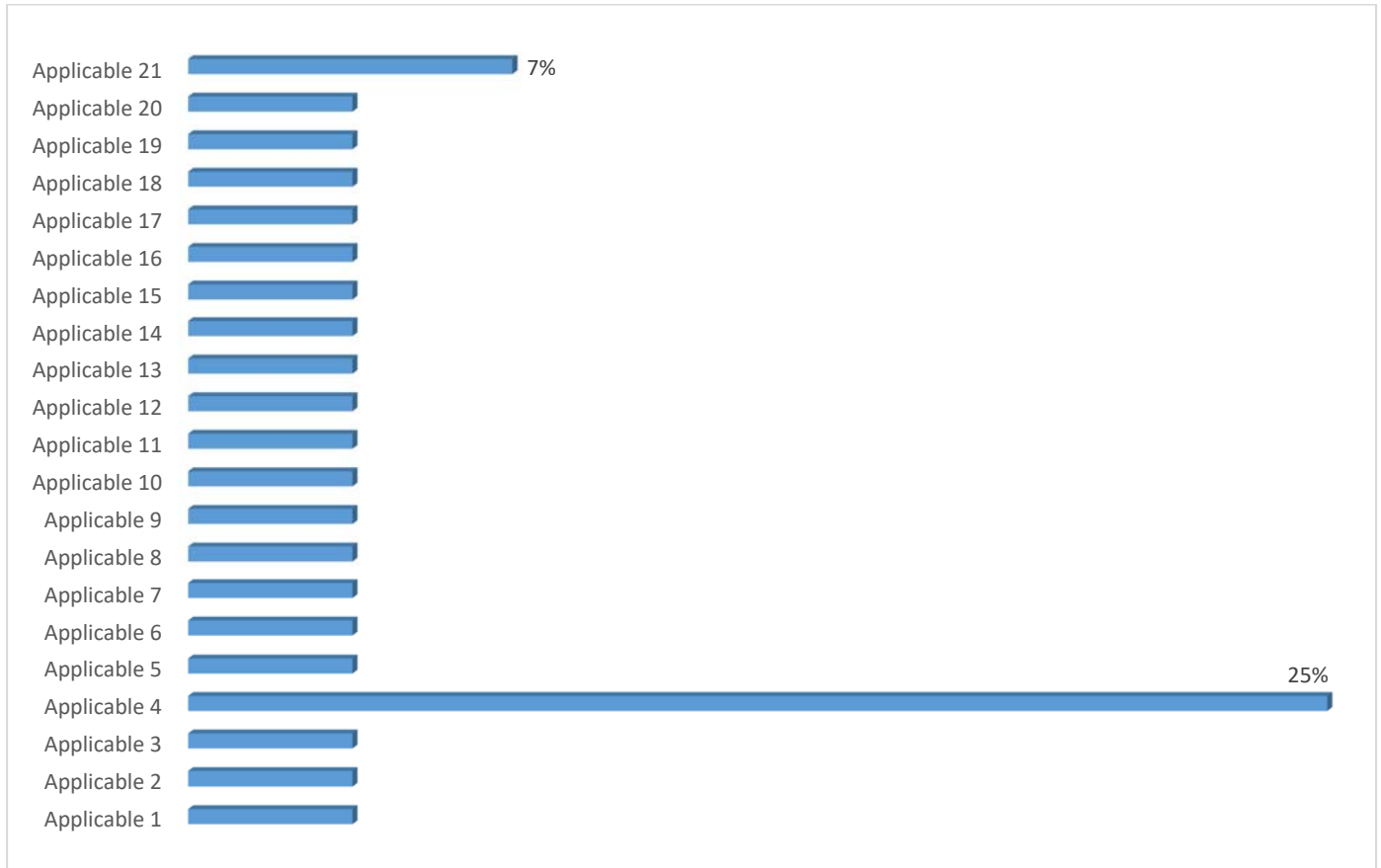
Subsequently, Fig 4.3 presents the public perceived overall rating of effectiveness of the legislature. The figure reveals that nearly have half of the public-respondents poorly (46%) and fairly (46%) rated the effectiveness of the legislature in terms of Telecommunication oversight. Thus, the above results indicate that the legislatives are not effective as far as the Telecommunication Oversight function is concerned.

**Table 4.4.** Major Concerns that Public want the House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication to Address

<b>Complaints as Applicable</b>	<b>Combination of Complaints</b>
<b>1</b>	i. Hidden charges
<b>2</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, IV. Poor customer service
<b>3</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, IV. Poor customer service, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion
<b>4</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, IV. Poor customer service, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>5</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, IV. Poor customer service, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>6</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, IV. Poor customer service, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>7</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion
<b>8</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products
<b>9</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion
<b>10</b>	i. Hidden charges, II. Poor network coverage, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>11</b>	i. Hidden charges, III. Deceptive marketing, IV. Poor customer service, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>12</b>	i. Hidden charges, III. Deceptive marketing, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products
<b>13</b>	i. Hidden charges, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>14</b>	II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, IV. Poor customer service, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products
<b>15</b>	II. Poor network coverage, III. Deceptive marketing, V. Doubt about personal information handling
<b>16</b>	II. Poor network coverage, IV. Poor customer service, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>17</b>	II. Poor network coverage, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion
<b>18</b>	II. Poor network coverage, VI. Lack of value for money paid for services/products, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>19</b>	II. Poor network coverage, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion
<b>20</b>	III. Deceptive marketing, V. Doubt about personal information handling, VII. Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion, VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services
<b>21</b>	VIII. Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services

*Source: Field Survey 2022*

**Figure 4.4.** Charts of the Major Concerns that Public Want the House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication to Address



*Source: Field work 2022*

Nevertheless, Table 4.4 and Fig 4.4 depict the public major concerns that they would like the House of Representative Committee on telecommunication to address. According to Fig 4.4, public concerns are ascribed to applicable 4 since it returns as the highest. Thus, the public would love the House of Representative Committee on telecommunication to address issues relating to; Hidden charges, Poor network coverage, Deceptive marketing, Poor customer service, Doubt about personal information handling, Lack of value for money paid for services/products, Creation of platform for harnessing complaints/public opinion, and Regionalization of public hearing regarding telecom services.

### **4.3 Assessing the Functioning Activities of the House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication**

Table 4.5 and Fig 4.5 present the assessment of the functioning activities of the House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication. According to Table 4.5 majority of the legislator-respondents acknowledged to the following: public have access to the Committee to discuss issues relating to the misconducts of Telecom companies (100%); members of the public had met with them to discuss issues relating to the misconducts of Telecom companies (78%); the Committee is active in terms of making sure the Telecommunication companies are accountable to the Legislature (78%); the Committee have mechanism in place to ensure the implementation of resolutions that emanates from each report (83%); the Committee have platforms for harnessing complaints/opinion of Nigerians concerning the telecommunication industry (78%); and apart from public hearing there are other platform through which the committee can convey and resolve the complaints of telecom subscriber (83%). Fig 4.5 reveals that combination of different methods are adopted by Committee in the oversight of telecommunication companies. However, according to Fig 4.6 more than half of the respondents (55%) noted that the telecommunication companies have been fairly accountable since the emergence of the 9th House of Representatives.

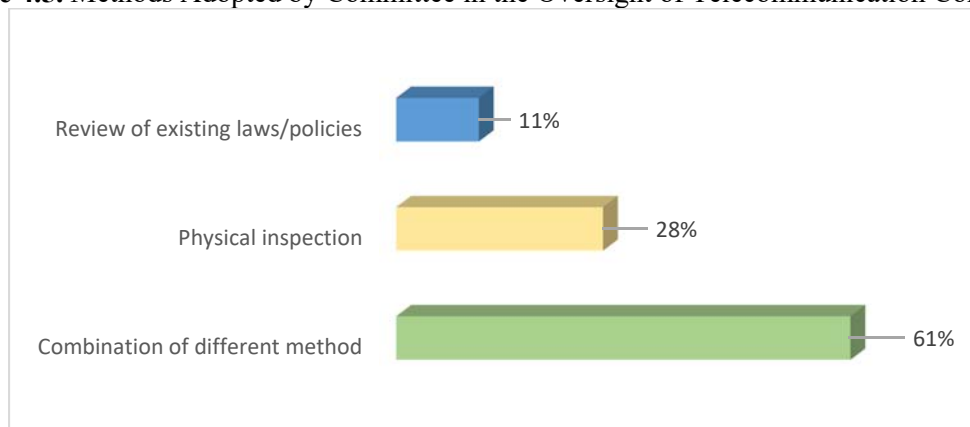
The overview of the above-mentioned results indicate great activeness of the House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication however, the fact that most of the legislator-respondents (61%) are not aware of any landmark resolution of the house that emanated from the committee report, raise serious worries and concerns about the significances of the activities of the Committee.

**Table 4.5.** Functioning Activities of the House of Representative Committee on Telecommunication

	No	Yes
Are you aware of any landmark resolution of the house that emanated from your committee report?	61%	39%
Does the public have access to the Committee to discuss issues relating to the misconducts of Telecom companies?	-	100%
Has any members of the public ever met you to discuss issues relating to the misconducts of Telecom companies?	22%	78%
Is the Committee active in terms of making sure the Telecommunication companies are accountable to the Legislature?	22%	78%
Does your Committee have any platform for harnessing complaints/opinion of Nigerians concerning the telecommunication industry?	22%	78%
Does the Committee have any mechanism in place to ensure the implementation of resolutions that emanates from each report?	17%	83%
Apart from public hearing are there other platform through which the committee can convey and resolve the complaints of telecom subscriber?	17%	83%

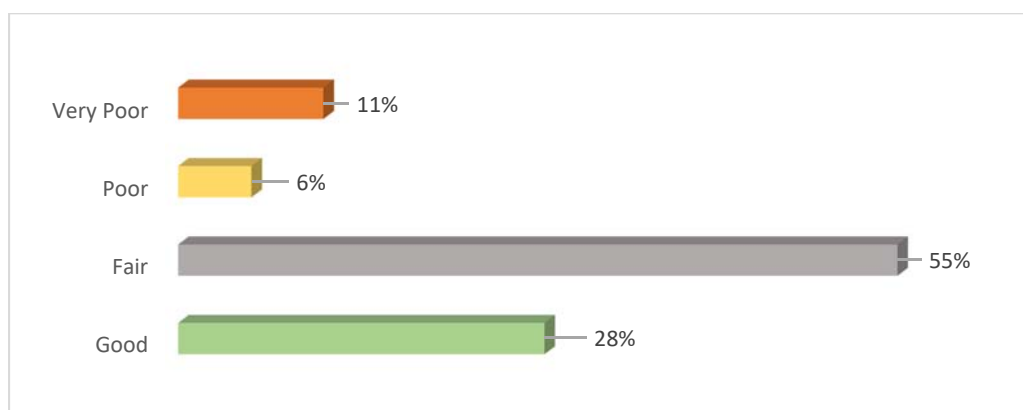
*Source: Field Survey 2022*

**Figure 4.5.** Methods Adopted by Committee in the Oversight of Telecommunication Companies



*Source: Field work 2022*

**Figure 4.6.** How Accountable are the Telecommunication firms since the Emergence of the 9th House of Representatives?



*Source: Field work 2022*

In addition, Table 4.6 presents the factors hindering the Committee from functioning effectively. According to Table 4.6, among other combinations of factors hindering the effectiveness of the Committee, the number 7 of the combinations returns with the highest percent. Thus, Funding, Lack of platform to harness complaints/opinion, Lack of standardized oversight manual, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, and Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers are significant factors hindering the Committee from functioning effectively.

**Table 4.6.** Factors Hindering the Committee from Functioning Effectively

1. Funding, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm	6%
2. Funding, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, Lack of Commitment by Committee members, Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers	6%
3. Funding, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers	6%
4. Funding, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion	6%
5. Funding, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers	6%
6. Funding, Lack of platform to harness complaints/opinion, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm	6%
7. Funding, Lack of platform to harness complaints/opinion, Lack of standardized oversight manual, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers	21%
8. Funding, Lack of standardized oversight manual, Lack of Commitment by Committee members, Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion	6%
9. Funding, Lack of standardized oversight manual, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers	6%
10. Funding, Lack of standardized oversight manual, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion	6%
11. Funding, Lack of standardized oversight manual, Lack of cooperation by the executive arm, Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers	17%
12. Funding, Lack of standardized oversight manual, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers	6%
13. Funding, Lack of standardized oversight manual, Unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, Lack of cooperation from the telecom providers, Too many mandate pursued by the committee	6%

*Source: Researcher's Compilations from SPSS 23 Outputs*

#### **4.4 Discussion of Findings**

The study has so far established the uncharitable operational activities of the telecommunication firms in the country. More specifically this study found that Telecom firms products and network services are deceptive, unsatisfactory and fond of hidden charges as well as that public-members



feel unsafe as regard providing personal information to network provider because of fear of disclosed information. These findings is similar to Mwakatumbulaa *et al* (2019), Onuche (2021), as well as Anele and Ubochioma (2021), who documented accusations of low quality services, deceptive marketing, questionable products, doubtful promotional practices, sloppy services, hidden charges, and poor telephony services against the telecommunication firms. Thus, the study empirical evidence established the prevalence of the identified telecommunication firms' misconducts particularly deceptive marketing, hidden charges, poor network coverage, poor customer service, doubt about personal information handling, and lack of value for money paid for services/products (unsatisfactory product or services).

Furthermore, the study distinctively when compared to the existing literature established that most of the public members are not aware of the existence of Committee on Telecommunication in House of Representatives. In addition, the empirical findings from the public-respondents and legislator-respondents point of views established the insignificant functioning activities of the Committee. Thus, the study found that the Committee is not effective in discharging their statutory functions as far as issues of Telecommunication firms misconducts are concerned. Consequently, the study established the followings; inadequate funds, lack of platform to harness complaints/opinion, lack of standardized oversight manual, lack of cooperation by the executive arm, unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, and lack of cooperation from the telecom providers as significant factors hindering the Committee from functioning effectively. These findings are unique as literatures seem to be very scanty regarding examination of the oversight functions of the House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Summary

This study focuses on examining the Nigerian legislative oversight functions on telecommunication towards making the telecommunication firms in the country to be responsible and its operating environment in line with international best practice. Extant relevant literatures were reviewed. The study adopts descriptive and chi-square analysis methodologies to analyze the respondents' opinions. The overall summary from the descriptive analyses of the public-respondents revealed the prevalence of some of the telecommunication firms' misconducts which include deceptive marketing, hidden charges, poor network coverage, poor customer service, doubt about personal information handling, and lack of value for money paid for services/products (unsatisfactory product or services). The descriptive analyses also revealed that most of the public members are not aware of the existence of Committee on Telecommunication in House of Representatives. And the empirical results from the chi-square analysis, returned that the Committee is not effective in discharging their statutory functions as far as issues of Telecommunication misconducts are concerned.

#### 5.2 Recommendations

Consequent to the study aforementioned findings, the following recommendations are drawn:

- The House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication should create more public awareness (i.e. sensitizing the public) as regard their statutory oversight functions;
- The House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication should regionalize public hearing regarding telecom services;

- Is difficult to perceive that the House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication lacks standardized oversight manual, hence the House should earnestly come up with a standardized oversight manual for the Committee; and
- The House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunication should construct workable platforms to harness complaints/opinions on the operational activities of the Telecommunication companies.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

From the aforementioned major findings of the study, specifically the prevalence of the telecommunication firms' misconducts such as deceptive marketing, hidden charges, poor network coverage, poor customer service, doubt about personal information handling, and lack of value for money paid for services/products (unsatisfactory product or services), if not intensely address would continue to rise the rumbling tensions in the public. In addition, the empirical findings that most of the public members are not aware of the existence of Committee on Telecommunication in House of Representatives, this infers that the Committee fails to carried the public along as they oversight the operational activities of the Telecommunication companies. Last of all, the study concludes that Committee is not effective in discharging their statutory functions as far as issues of Telecommunication misconducts are concerned. And funds, lack of platform to harness complaints/opinion, lack of standardized oversight manual, lack of cooperation by the executive arm, unwillingness of telecom subscribers to volunteer information/opinion, and lack of cooperation from the telecom providers were established as factors hindering the Committee from functioning effectively.

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## APPENDIX I

### Public Questionnaire

#### Section A: Bio-data

1. What is your gender category? (a) Male (b) Female
2. What is your age-bracket? (a) 21-30yrs (b) 31-40yrs (c) 41-50yrs (d) 50-60yrs (e) 61-70yrs
3. What is your highest current qualification (a) Primary/FSLC (b) SSCE (c) OND/NCE (d) HND/BSc (d) Higher Degree
4. Are you a Telecom subscriber (i.e. phone user) (a) Yes (b) No
5. If “Yes” for how long have you been a telecom subscriber (i.e. phone user) (a) less than 5years (b) 5-10 years (c) 11-15 years (d) Above 15 years
6. What is the service that you assign greater importance? (a) Voice calls (b) SMS (c) MMS (d) Internet (data)

#### Section B: Operational Effects of the Telecommunication Firms

**Strongly Disagree - SD, Disagree - D, Neutral - N, Agree - A, Strongly Agree - SA**

S/N	Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA
7.	The instructions about the products/services provided by your network operator are clear and self-explanatory					
8.	Your network operator products and services provisions are satisfactory					
9.	The provision of services by the network operator occurs as contracted					
10.	Many of the Telecoms firm marketing are deceptive					
11.	Your network operator provides information adequately, clearly and objectively					
12.	Your network operator provides a quick and efficient services					
13.	As a subscriber, when you have unresolved situation, your network operator demonstrates determination to solve it					
14.	Your network operator products are questionable					
15.	You feel unsafe regarding your personal information you provided to your network because of fear that your information can be disclosed and use incorrectly					
16.	Your network providers are fun of hidden charges					



17.	The network providers' data services are sloppy					
18.	Many of the network operators have poor network coverage					
19.	The value for money of services provided by your network operator is not appropriate					

20. How would you rate, overall, the quality of services provided by your network operator (a) Very Poor (b) Poor (c) Fair (d) Good (e) Excellent

**Section C: Oversight Functions of the Legislature on Telecommunication Firms**

21. Are you aware of the existence of Committee on Telecommunication in House of Representatives? (a) Yes (b) No

22. Do you have access to any member of the abovementioned Committee? (a) Yes (b) No

23. Do you perceive the Telecommunication Firms are not statutorily accountable to the Legislature i.e. the Committee on Telecommunication? (a) Yes (b) No

24. Do you think the Legislature (the Committee on Telecommunication) have special mechanisms for overseeing the Telecom companies? (a) Yes (b) No

25. How would you rate, the overall effectiveness of the Legislature in overseeing the Telecom companies (a) Very Poor (b) Poor (c) Fair (d) Good (e) Excellent

26. What are the possible ways you think the Legislature could improve the service delivery of Telecom companies in the country?

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Legislature Questionnaire

1. What is your gender category? (a) Male (b) Female
2. What is your age-bracket? (a) 31-40yrs (b) 41-50yrs (c) 50-60yrs (d) 61-70yrs (e) 71-80yrs
3. What is your highest current qualification (a) Primary/FSLC (b) SSCE (c) OND/NCE (d) HND/BSc (d) Higher Degree
4. How long have you been in the Legislature (a) less than 4years (b) 5-8 years (c) Above 8 years
5. Does the House Representatives Committee have special mechanisms for overseeing the Telecom companies? (a) Yes (b) No
6. If yes, please specify the type of mechanism

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7. Does the public have access to the Committee to discuss issues relating to the misconducts of Telecom companies? (a) Yes (b) No
8. Has any members of the public ever met you to discuss issues relating to the misconducts of Telecom companies? (a) Yes (b) No
9. Is the Committee active in terms of making sure the Telecommunication companies are accountable to the Legislature? (a) Yes (b) No
10. How accountable has the Telecommunication firms been since the emergence of the 9<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives? (a) Very Poor (b) Poor (c) Fair (d) Good (e) Excellent
11. How does the Committee exercise oversight over the Telecom companies, please describe?

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12. Does the Committee have special mechanisms to oversee follow-up actions by the Telecom companies to policies/regulations? (a) Yes (b) No

13. If yes, please specify the type of mechanism

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14. What are the challenges hindering the effectiveness of the Committee in overseeing the Telecom companies?

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