

**ASSESSMENT OF THE 9TH NIGERIA SENATE'S PARLIAMENTARY
OFFICIAL REPORTING AND EFFECTIVE LEGISLATION**

BY

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DECLARATION

I **KOREDE OMOLADE ROSELINE** hereby declare that this project titled **Assessment of the 9th Nigeria Senate's Parliamentary Official Reporting and Effective Legislation** has been carried out by me. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and list of references provided. No part of this project was previously presented in any institution.

Signature: _____

CERTIFICATION

The dissertation titled: **ASSESSMENT OF THE 9TH NIGERIA SENATE'S PARLIAMENTARY OFFICIAL REPORTING AND EFFECTIVE LEGISLATION** presented by **KOREDE OMOLADE ROSELINE PG/NILS/1818059** has met the partial requirement for the award of Masters Degree in Parliamentary Administration (MPD) of the National Institute of Legislative and Democratic Studies/University of Benin (NILDS/UNIBEN).

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APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

This Project is dedicated to God Almighty who is the giver of wisdom and knowledge.

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ABSTRACT

Oftentimes, Legislators as well as members of the public from within and outside the country request the National Assembly Official Report Department for Hansard of proceedings on Bills or Motions to follow debated issues and the resolutions passed due to the unavailability of the Hansard online. Arguably, it is not certain if all the Legislators are well informed about the existence of where and how they can trace their contributions to Debates in a masterpiece called Bound Volume. This study examined the 9th Nigeria Senate's Parliamentary Official Reporting vis-à-vis the effectiveness of the Legislation. Specifically, the study examined the availability and accessibility of the Senate Official Report (Hansard) and assessed the awareness level of the Legislators regarding Official Reporting and its importance. It also investigated the effectiveness of the Official Report Department in the delivery of daily Hansard; and examined the factors hampering the performance of the National Assembly Official Report Department. The study is motivated by the fact that the Nigeria 9th Senate did not have the daily production of Official Reports (Hansard) nor did it produce Bound Volumes of the Official Reports as it is obtainable in other Parliaments globally.

The study adopted a quantitative research method design. Specifically, data were obtained using the administration of questionnaire within two (2) groups namely; the staff of the Official Report Department, and distinguished Members of the Senate. The study adopted descriptive and content analysis methods. Collected data were analyzed using SPSS and NVivo analysis packages.

Findings showed that legislators can access the Hansard by visiting Official Report Department whereas, most of them have never accessed the Hansard before. It also showed that legislators are mostly aware of the existence of Official Report and its utmost importance in the Legislature following its numerous benefits. It established that

Official Report is vital in enhancing the effectiveness of the Legislators. However, the legislators' attitudes to accessing the Official Report as well as timely service delivery of the Official Report Department is very poor and below expectation. Uploading Hansard online would significantly enhance the legislators' accessibility of the Official Report.

The study concluded that there is a high level of Official Report awareness among the legislators and that Official Report is important in the Legislature. However, legislators' attitudes to accessing Official Report is very poor and call for concerns. Therefore, there is need to sensitize the legislators on Official Report, and adequately equipping the Official Report Department with modern technology to facilitate the upload of Hansard online for easy access. Similarly, the creation of a conducive working environment for the staff of the Official Report Department to enhance efficiency was also recommended.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Parliaments all over the world are regarded as an organ of government responsible for making laws, overseeing the executive and representing the interest of citizens on issues concerning their welfare. In the context of Antonio as cited in European Parliament (2019), any Parliament had to pass, in front of its citizens, what we consider to be the ultimate test of effectiveness for the out-coming legislature. It is undoubtedly not without reason that effectiveness of legislature is approached as a primary way for answering the citizens' concerns which adheres to the principles of democracy and social justice accordingly (Elihaika, 2013). In any democratic state the Constitution of the country allows the people to be aware of the affairs of their Parliament. In diverse societies, political representation has become crucial for good governance through citizens' representation in the decision-making process.

Incidentally, the legislature is regarded as a representative institution representing the interest of the people and promoting public interest. It is a platform for the articulation and expression of the shared will of the people and a vital link between citizens and government (Ali and Abdulsalam, 2021). Bishin (2009), asserted that political representation embodied in the legislature is fundamental in a democratic state. This suggest that good governance requires legislative effectiveness in performing the vital role of citizens' representation for a sustaining democracy in complex and diverse societies. Equally, for legislative effectiveness, parliaments ought to understand the importance of parliamentary official reporting as a means to bring them closer to citizens. In turn, to increase citizen participation and thus enhance citizen engagement. In Nigeria, Constitution permits the public to have depth knowledge of the day-to-day affairs of the Parliament (i.e. the National Assembly)

since the National Assembly is accountable to the people. In this sense, the concept of Official Reporting (OR) of all Proceedings in the Parliament's Chambers is one of the mechanisms that public use to assess the effectiveness of the Parliament.

All over the world, Official Report also known as Hansard plays a crucial and very important role in Parliaments. This is devoted to recording all Proceedings in the Chambers for record purposes and for the public to know the depth of the debate on any Bill or Motion in the Chamber and for future generation to read and make research on. The origins of today's Hansard can be traced back to the early years of the nineteenth century. However, it has only been considered a truly authoritative account of Parliament's proceedings since the latter part of the nineteenth century (Factsheet G17, 2010).

The development of the Hansard could be traced to when newspapers were first allocated seats in the Public Gallery of the House of Commons United Kingdom (UK). The Official Report was the first real advance towards an impartial account of the proceedings of Parliament occurred during the Napoleonic wars, when William Cobbett followed his History of Parliament 1066 – 1802 with the printing of parliamentary debates as a supplement to his Political Register ((Elihaika, 2013; Factsheet G17 2010). Debates was the first structured attempt to record the proceedings of the British Parliament, though it was much less comprehensive and accurate than today's Official Report.

Today in the UK Parliament, Hansard provides a clear and independent record of proceedings in the Chamber of the House of Commons, the sub-chamber in Westminster Hall and House of Commons General Committees. In many instances, this will mean consulting the debates of the Standing Committee or Public Hearing on a Bill in addition to the main volumes of Hansard. (University of Southampton, 2022).

Thus, Hansard is a full report in the first person of all speakers although it does not always report every word said by Members.

In Nigeria, after her independent in 1960, Nigeria adopted the Westminster Parliamentary system of government. Nigeria has a bicameral legislature. Similar to the UK Parliament, the Official Report Department of the Nigeria Parliament is responsible for the production of the Hansard, and by implication of the Senate Standing Rule of 2003; *“An official Report of all speeches made in the Senate, Committee of the Whole, which shall be as near as possible verbatim shall be prepared under the supervision of the Editor”*, Official Reports are not possible until when they are vetted by Editors. Due to the nature of their assignments in the Chambers, they are regarded as core staff of the Legislatures, without them there is no other staff (as of now from any Department) who can record and produce the Daily Hansard (Niyi and Gani, 2019). Many instances, Hansards are used by the Legislators and the public to buttress their cases or to defend their cases in courts. It is also used for future references and for posterity. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the 9th Nigeria Senate’s Parliamentary Official Reporting vis-à-vis the effectiveness of the Legislation.

1.2 Statement of the Study Problem

Ideally, the production of Official Report (Hansard) is daily and the bound volume every week as it is done in other Parliaments around the world. For example, UK Parliament produces daily Parts in printed form by 7:30 a.m. the following day and by 8:00 a.m. on the Internet. Weekly editions and Bound Volumes are also produced (UK Parliament n.d). In the Senate of the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, member ought to have access to the daily Hansard and Bound Volumes to boost their participation in the proceedings and to comprehend knowledge of the previous debate. Nigerians as well should be able to know the contribution of

their representatives during any debate especially as relates to their welfare or constituency concern and this can only be possible if the Hansard is accessible.

Inarguably, following the lack of Hansard production in the Senate, it is obvious Hansard is faced with number of problems. The 9th Nigeria Senate did not have the daily production of Hansard neither did it produce Bound Volumes of the Official Reports as it is obtainable in other Parliaments globally. In the past, Bound Volumes of the Official Report were produced for the Senate but in recent time no production of such has been witnessed. The Senate Official Report department has tried as much as it can to safe keep their reports up to date while waiting for funds in order to produce it in Bound Volumes. Often times, the public from different part of Nigeria and outside have approached the Official Report Department to request for certain Hansard of proceedings on a Bill or Motion to know what was debated and the resolutions passed due to the unavailability of the Hansard online.

Furthermore, arguably it is not certain if all the Legislators are well informed about the existence of where and how they can trace their contributions to Debates in a masterpiece called Bound Volume. There are however, a few who are aware but there is nothing that they can do unless they have the cooperation of the Principal Officers. Others misunderstood it for media reporting and this made some of the ignorant legislators to relax during debate without making any contribution even when it affects their constituents. Also, some members request for the Hansard only when in urgent need either for a court case or when they want to make reference to what they or other member said during a particular debate on a subject matter in their absence.

Moreover, repetitions, redundancies, obvious mistakes etc. are very common in members' speeches during debates. Some speak English like their local languages, which requires rearrangement and correction since the 1999 Constitution, section 97(1) says: *the business of the National Assembly shall be conducted in English.* The

same Constitution, section 65(2)-(a) sets educational qualification of the Nigerian legislator as low as secondary school certificate or its equivalent. Also the Senate Standing Rule gives no permission for speech to be read while moving a motion or debating. These pose challenges to the Official Reporters and the Editors because apart from identifying what constitutes repetitions, redundancies, etc. centers on grammar. Therefore, the problem on how to enhance the Hansard production becomes a concern. Based on the foregoing, this study assessed the 9th Nigerian Senate's Official Reporting vis-à-vis the effectiveness of the legislation.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. How available and accessible is the Senate Official Report (Hansard)?
- ii. How informed are the Legislators regarding the Official Reporting and its importance?
- iii. How effective is the Official Report Department of the Senate in the delivery of timely Official Report?
- iv. What are the factors hampering the performance of the Official Report?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to examine the effects of Parliamentary Official Reporting of the 9th Nigerian Senate and effective Legislation. The specific objectives are to

- i. examine the availability and accessibility of the Senate Official Report (Hansard);
- ii. assess the awareness level of the Legislators regarding Official Reporting and its importance;
- iii. investigate the effectiveness of the Official Report Department of the Senate in the delivery daily Hansard; and
- iv. examine the factors hampering the performance of the Official Report Department.

1.5 Scope of the study

This study focused on assessing the Parliamentary Official Reporting of the 9th Nigerian Senate with a view to determining the nexus between Official Reporting and Effective Legislation. Explicitly, the study is limited to an assessment of the activities of Official Report Department of the National Assembly. Hence, the longitudinal scope of the study is limited to two (2) groups namely; Staff Official Report Department and the Senate which include distinguished members to ascertain how Official Reporting (Hansard) has helped in carrying out their legislative function.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is beneficial not only to researchers but also to all the stakeholders in the legislature and constituents. Official Reporting (Hansard) is an important way of keeping legislature open and accountable. Many people including the Legislators do not know what “Parliamentary Official Reporting (Hansard) is, hence the significance of Official Reporting to Parliamentary Legislation. This study creates awareness of the significance of Official Reporting to Parliamentary Legislation, and the qualities of Official Reporting. It also serves as a reference for future researchers on Official Reporting since little or no such has been done before in the country. In addition, this study also gives Legislators and indeed all stakeholders insight into how to enhance Hansard production.

1.7 Area of Study

The survey focused is National Assembly; a bicameral legislature established under section 4 of the Nigerian Constitution. The National Assembly is Nigeria’s legislative arm of government. One can rightfully say that the sovereignty of the people resides in the legislature. There are basic things most people know about the National Assembly such as that it is made of two Chambers – the Senate and House of Representatives, and that there are 109 elected members in the Senate and 360 members in the House of Representatives. However, the National Assembly is much

more than that and this work tries to explain the many facets and functions of this great institution. Thus, this study specifically focused on the upper Chambers of the National Assembly – The Senate.

1.8. Operational definition of significance of terms

Hansard

Hansard also known as Official Report (OR) can be defined as an edited verbatim Report of reported proceedings, in which Member's words are reported in accordance with terms of reference, as drawn up by a Select Committee of the British House of Commons in 1907 (Okon, 2019). It is the verbatim report of debates of the parliamentarians in the Floor of the Senate or House of Representatives in case of Nigeria Parliament with each speaker's name affixed to what he or she said during the debates. It is prepared under the supervision of the Final Editor of the Senate or the Editor of the House of Representative in the Official Report Department.

Bound Volumes

This is the compilation of daily Hansard of a particular Assembly. They are produced in volume because of the number of pages. For example, Hansard of one session may be divided into two Volumes i.e, Volume I and Volume II. It is the material in the Advance Sheets, with additions and corrections, published in a permanent hardcover form. It is the most important aspect of Hansard production.

Legislation

This is the process of making or enacting laws; it is law which has been promulgated by a legislature or other governing body or the process of making it (Niyi and Gani, 2019).

Effectiveness

This is the ultimate goal for any regulation, which is defined as the extent to which regulators achieve their goals (Xanthaki, 2010). Effectiveness is a rather factual quality, whose presence is easily established by means of measurable criteria.

1.9 Organization of Chapters

This study is well-thought-out into five chapters. Chapter one consist of 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 comprised of the review of germane literature with extensive discussion of the empirical literatures, conceptual clarification 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 reviewed appropriate literature to the study. The chapter begins with the conceptual clarifications, followed by the empirical literature related to the study. It also included review of theories and the last part of the chapter discussed theoretical framework adopted in the study.

2.1 Review of Concepts

2.1.1 Parliamentary Official Reporting (Hansard)

Aranta (2014) wrote that Hansard is the name of the Englishman who in his time became so interested in debates on policy matters that he decided to keep records of such debates. The records and information voluntarily kept by him became an invaluable asset to policy-makers of the old, who then decided to store them for future references, as a reward or compensation to the pacesetters, (Mr. Hansard). His name was later immortalized and the official report is equally referred to as the legal/official journal of the Parliament.

Official reporting is a means of communicating to the general public of what the lawmakers do in the legislature. It informs the public of the debates of the legislators before a certain decision is reached. Erskine May an authoritative source on parliamentary procedure says that: Official Report is a full report, in the first person, of all speakers alike, a full report being defined as one, “which, though not strictly verbatim, is substantially the verbatim report with repetitions and redundancies omitted and with obvious mistakes corrected, but which on the other hand leaves out nothing that adds to the meaning of the speech or illustrates the argument”.

The aforementioned definitions aptly explain the principles followed in official reporting. However, the message must be clear and accurate. Therefore, Official Report prides itself on its accuracy as a report of proceedings, a source of information

and an historic resource. Like in every communication, the official Reporter is the source in the process of official Reporting. This is known as ideation in the communication process. The reporter must know that he is not writing from his own idea or knowledge. He must be alert to what the speaker is saying. When it comes to encoding which is the actual writing of what he hears, he must bear in mind the Erskine May's definition of an Official Report which entails omission of repetitions and redundancies and correction of obvious mistake (Livinus, 2008).

2.1.2 Concept of legislation

This concept is the process of making or enacting laws. Legislation is law which has been promulgated by a legislature or other governing body or the process of making it. Before an item of legislation becomes law it may be known as a Bill, and may be broadly referred to as "legislation", while it remains under consideration to distinguish it from other business. Legislation guides the policy of government and ensures a code of conduct between citizens as well as between the government and the citizens; It is by means of legislations that state administrations in Nigeria implement party programs, policies, and react to the needs for basic changes in economic, social and political structure in the state (Niyi and Gani, 2019).

2.1.3 Concept of Effectiveness

It would be wrong to define effectiveness of legislation in a vacuum. From an instrumental functional perspective, legislation is one of the tools available to governments in their attempt to regulate behaviours in response to undesirable social phenomena. Governments come to power with a mandate: in democracies, the constituting elements of that mandate are agreed with the people during elections; in autocracies, the constituting elements of that mandate are decided by dictators and imposed on the people (Xanthaki, 2008). Whichever way the mandate comes about, it sets out a list of policy aims that are attainable by means of regulatory reforms.

These reforms can be achieved by a great variety of regulatory tools, ranging from flexible forms of traditional regulation (such as performance-based and incentive approaches), to co-regulation and self-regulation schemes, to incentive and market based instruments (such as tax breaks and tradable permits), to information approaches, and, last and not least, to the traditional, overestimated and highly popular tool of legislation. In fact, alternative tools for regulation are a better choice for governments (Xanthaki, 2018). After all, these are free from the many inherent limits of legislation, such as reliance on diverse regulatory agents, expression in a rigid unfriendly written communication, inherent aversion of citizens to legal texts, and a complicated interconnection with the other legislative texts in the labyrinth of the statute book. Viewing legislation as a regulatory tool leads easily into the definition of a good law. A good law is simply one that is capable of contributing to the production of the desired regulatory results (Xanthaki, 2018).

The ultimate goal for any regulation is effectiveness, which is defined as the extent to which regulators achieve their goals (Xanthaki, 2010). Effectiveness is a rather factual quality, whose presence is easily established by means of measurable criteria. For example, if the aim of the regulation is to reduce the number of illegal abortions within a jurisdiction, efficacy is easily assessed by data setting the number of illegal abortions before and after the regulation was put to place. A reduction in the number of illegal abortions proves efficacy of regulation, whereas an increase or plateau in the numbers of illegal abortions points to inefficacy, hence the importance of Legislative Official Reporting. Undeniably, assessing efficacy is not such a simplistic task.

2.1.4 Historical Background of the Official Reporting

It is a fact that very little is known about Hansard which is the official complete report of proceedings in a Parliament or Legislature. It is named after Thomas Curson

Hansard who used to publish the report of debates at the UK Parliament in the early 19 Century (Daniel, 2008). The history of the Hansard began in the British Parliament. Before 1771, the British Parliament had long been a highly secretive body. Although the official records of the actions of the House was publicly available, but there was no record of the debates officially preserved by the government. The publication of remarks made in the House became a breach of Parliamentary privilege, punishable by the two Houses of Parliament. As the populace became interested in parliamentary debates, more independent newspapers began publishing unofficial accounts of them (Suleman, 2018).

In 1771 Brass Crosby, who was Lord Mayor of the City of London, had brought before him a printer by name John Miller who dared publish reports of Parliamentary Proceedings openly. The Mayor released the printer, but the House felt offended by this act and ordered Brass Crosby to appear before it to explain his actions. Crosby was eventually committed to the Tower of London, but when he was brought to trial, several judges refused to hear the case and after protests from the public, Crosby was released. Thereafter, Parliament ceased to punish those who published the proceedings of its debates, partly due to the campaigns of John Wilkes on behalf of free speech. There then began several attempts to publish reports of debates (Wikipedia: Hansard/<http://en.wiki.org>; Parliament Western Australia).

Official Reporting of Parliamentary Proceedings began in the British Parliament in 1803 when the press was allocated seats in the public gallery of the House of Commons. The reports were published in William Cobbett's *Parliamentary Debates*. Luke Hansard was the British Government's printer at that time. Luke's son, Thomas Curson Hansard, in 1811 purchased Cobbett's interest in the publication of parliamentary debates, and in 1829 he decided that the title page should bear his name. Since then the *Official Report* of the House of Commons has usually been

known as *Hansard*, and the name has been adopted for the Official Reports of a number of legislatures throughout the commonwealth.

Therefore, the early editions of *Hansard* are not to be relied upon as an absolute guide to everything discussed in parliament. There were competitors to *Hansard*. For example, there was one J. H. Barrow who published his own “Mirror of Parliament” from 1828 to 1843. Although Barrows work was more comprehensive, he checked each speech with the Members and even allowed them to correct anything they had said earlier but which they wished they had not. “The Times: Newspaper also published debates in the 1880s. In 1889 the house decided to encourage *Hansard*s publication by subsidizing the cost of his production. This was also an attempt to have a more permanent record House. This enabled *Hansard* to include more speeches and an almost verbatim record of the front-bench speeches (Daniel, 2008).

In 1909 Parliament took over the publication of *Hansard* and thus started a fully comprehensive account of every speech made on the Floor of the House. A decision was taken to publish the debates of the two Houses in separate volumes. Now, *Hansard* is no longer a verbatim Account of debates in the House. This is because repetitions, redundancies and obvious errors are now corrected. The official report is a full report in the first person (Aranta, 2014).

In Nigeria, the history predates 1931. The early production of verbatim recording of Parliamentary Proceedings was carried out by colonial Shorthand Writers but in 1951, two Nigerians who were trained as *Hansard* Reporters started working alongside their colonial Reporters. Before and after the attainment of independence, more Nigerians were trained abroad to take over the job from the colonial staff. This goes to show that recognition had been given to *Hansard* Reporters in Nigeria as far back as 1931. However, as late as 1959, there was no organized and formal training of Official Reporters. There was a particular cadre of staff in the Ministries who were

assembled to do the job when Parliament was about to sit. Very good and efficient Confidential Secretaries were drafted to Parliament to undertake the duties of Official Reporting till the end of the session. After the Session, these officers are sent back to their various Ministries and Departments. These Confidential Secretaries therefore trained themselves to acquire high speeds in Shorthand and Typewriting, but their educational background did not matter much (Ayodele, 2004).

The first organized training for Official Reporters was done in 1960 when a crop of very efficient Nigerian Confidential Secretaries were sent to Nsukka and another batch to the Pitman's Central College, London for an 18-month course in Verbatim Reporting. Thereafter, the training was handled by the Federal Training Centers in Nigeria and at a point by the Kaduna Polytechnic (Daniel, 2008). Democracy got the boot again in 1983, and 16 years after (1983-1999), the House of Representative Debates Volume 1, First Session, 3rd June – 8th September, 1999 shows that only Messrs. A. O. Sadiq, I. E. Ikebude, S. O. J. Bernard and late A. E. Ogbobor were still in the reportorial saddle of the National Assembly, afterwards, some group of Reporters took over from them (Aranta, 2014).

Recently the management of the National Assembly set up an inter-agency Technical committee made up of officials from the National Assembly, the National Assembly Service Commission (NASC) and NILDS under the co-ordination of the Director-General of NILDS. The inter-agency work led to the accreditation of HND in official Reporting at NILDS in 2018, which is the recognized institution to award the qualification in Nigeria. So far about 30 Official Reporters have graduated from the HND programme. NILDS has also continue to provide induction courses for newly appointed official reporters at the NASS.

Similarly, the report of the Technical Committee also led to the establishment of a professional body to be known as the Parliamentary Management Institute of

Nigeria (PMIN) which will set standards for career development in the legislative service. All these are efforts made by the leadership of NASS to revive the declining importance of the official reporters cadre in legislative operations (Omolori, 2017).

2.1.5 Who is an Official Reporter?

Official Reporter is an impartial umpire who writes down the debates in the first person, that is, in the active voice. It is this form of writing in the active voice that makes official reporting different from what is known as mass communication which is writing for either print or electronic media house (Livinus, 2008). Official Reporter does not analyse or exaggerate what is said by a speaker. There is no room for that. However, the message must be clear and accurate. Therefore, Official Report prides itself on its accuracy as a report of proceedings, a source of information and an historic resource.

Like in every communication, the Official Reporter is the source in the process of Official Reporting. This is known as ideation in the communication process. The reporter must know that he is not writing from his own idea or knowledge. He must be alert to what the speaker is saying. When it comes to encoding which is the actual writing of what he hears, he must bear in mind the Erskine May's definition of an official report which entails omission of repetitions and redundancies and correction of obvious mistake (Livinus, 2008).

2.1.6 Significance of Parliamentary Official Reporting in Legislation

The Hansard is a very official document of the Legislature and the leadership of the Parliaments all over the world ensures that Hansard Reports are written, edited and printed before the next sitting day. Suleiman (2018) in his Paper "Significance of Hansard Report as a Legislative Document identified the following points:

- i. Hansard Reporting serves as a true, complete and accurate records of Reports of debates and Proceedings of the Parliament;

- ii. It is a legal document of the Parliament which originated from the British House of Commons in 1909 and same was adopted by other Parliaments worldwide hence, Hansard Report is referred to as legal document;
- iii. It serves as the source of reference material for many scholars, researchers, policy-makers, legislators, administrators, students and the general public;
- iv. It serves as a morale booster to the elected Members of the Parliament as it enhances their public image since contributions on the Floor of the House are reported and reproduced in Official Report;
- v. It helps the public and members of the constituencies of the Legislators to assess the performance of their elected members to the debate and proceedings of the House/Senate;
- vi. It serves as a window in which the outside world especially other democratic governments, parliaments, international institutions and foreigners use to measure the standard and qualities of debates of any given Parliament and to judge their performance level and their democratic experience, processes and best practices; etc.

Hansard captures in print the thoughts, aspiration, vision and goals, a legislator verbally canvasses on behalf of his constituency or even policy and legislation that is of national or international importance (Ayodele, 2004). For instance, Members introduced Motions or matters concerning their constituencies or national importance particularly, issues that directly affect the security, welfare and wellbeing of the citizens. Issues concerning the infrastructure, education, health, and fundamental right of the citizens. Example, in the Senate Proceedings of 12th May, 2020, there was a Motion sponsored by Senator Sani Mohammed (Niger East), on the “Urgent need for the Federal Government to take drastic actions to bring an end to the act of Banditry and Kidnapping in Niger East Senatorial District”. This is a matter of National

Importance that affects life, property, security and welfare of the citizens, and it is the responsibility of the Legislators as their representatives to protect their interest at national level. (Hansard records this).

Parliament is a house of record, therefore, the significance of Hansard Report in Parliament cannot be overemphasized, since it keeps records of all the Proceedings of the Parliament. As in the case of Hansard of 5th May, 2020, where Senator Peter Nwoboshi, Chairman of NDCC raised a Point of Order, on Personal Explanation, concerning a debate on a Motion “Urgent need to investigate Alleged Financial Recklessness in the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)” sponsored by Senator George Thompson Sekibo (Rivers East). He said

I come under Order 43, Personal Explanation. It will be necessary for me to place on record because this is a house of record, and whatever we say here will always come out and you may be held responsible for that. My learned colleague in the BAR, Senator Bala Ibn Naállah raised a Point of Order, in the process, he said that the Committee failed to perform its duty, that is his reason, and it is on record. Then when the issue was raised again, he went further to say that Senator Sekibo did not bring it on behalf of the Committee. I am at a loss about that. First, Senator Sekibo is a member of the Committee on Niger-Delta, and everything he brings here was in consonance and with the approval of members of this Committee. For him to say that unless the Motion is brought in the name of the Committee, is a misnomer, and Motions are not brought in the name of Committees. It has never happened in this Senate, and I stand to be corrected, unless a report is brought to the name of a Committee.

This goes to show the significance of Hansard as a historic record of the Parliament. Most times whenever there is an argument of such manner in the Chamber, the President makes reference to Hansard to be able to reconcile such an argument because, everything is being recorded, both printed and audio.

Hansard can also serve as a Legislative Image Maker. Bernard (1998) as cited in Ayodele (2004) says that Bound Volume of Hansard are sent to the national libraries, the universities, international organizations, like United Nations, the African Union, ECOWAS Secretariat, Commonwealth Secretariat and Parliaments of other

countries. Ian Church also asserts that *all of Commonwealth Parliament, including those in Canada and Australia still look with affection and respect to the Hansard from which they took their name and method, in Westminster.*

With the support of the Commonwealth, Parliaments do have association and cooperation through which Legislators exchange ideas, and foster legislative cooperation and ideals. One of the ways they exchange information is through Hansard. For instance, in the National Assembly Library, there are copies of Hansard from British House of Commons and Australian Parliament. This will also help the Legislators to be able to research other Parliamentary Hansard and attain an International Best Practice Standard in terms of law making.

Hansard also helps when it comes to Ministerial screening and their nomination, the legislators can make reference to Hansard archives and check the criteria and method used and also the kind of questions asked during these Legislative activities. It also helps them when it comes to the Presentation and Consideration of Appropriation Bill. As we know, Nigerian Ministers defend their budgets every year before the National Assembly which is done at the various Committee level. Opportunity is given to them to justify their proposed estimates and show why some proposal should not be reduced or should be added (Ian Church: *The Ear of History*, 1997).

By the provision of Section 88 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), the National Assembly has oversight functions over the Federal Ministries, Departments, and Parastatals, etc. That means that any Minister can be called upon during and after budget year, to come and explain how well he has complied with the budget goal he enunciated during the budget defense. Committee Hansard report is a valuable reference material with which members can easily recall all that transpired between them and individual Ministers during the Budget defense.

This also helps the Minister to prepare his briefs adequately along those lines, when the legislators call him to appraise his performance in the budget year.

In Britain, Ministers or their representatives are allowed to visit Hansard Offices to check the transcripts of their speeches before they are printed and to also suggest corrections. But are not permitted to change the sense of what they have said (Ayodele, 2004). This shows that the Ministers too know that they are being recorded during their budget defense and that will make them to be careful on how they spend or allocate funds in their respective Ministries. Therefore, Hansard can also be a check on the Executive Arm of Government.

Reporting the Committees: As mentioned earlier, Committee Hansard is also another tool that Legislators used to enact and process an effective legislation. Though at a time, in Britain, Committee Hansard was unpopular, MPs saw it as detailed and uninteresting debates that are destined to gather dust on some remote bookshelf. Therefore, it was largely ignored. The official report, as already pointed out, has the responsibility to produce an official report of all speeches made in the Committees, but strictly at public sittings.

The Senate Standing Order 2011; Rules of Procedure for Committee in general, Rule 102 (c) on page 123 states that:

Each Committee is authorized to have printed and bound testimony and other data presented at hearings held by the Committee. All costs of stenographic services and transcripts in connection with any meeting or hearing of a Committee shall be paid from the contingency fund of the Senate or of the appropriate Committee.

The importance of Committee Hansard was appreciated during the National Assembly contract Saga, which was investigated by Senator Kuta Ad-hoc Committee on Senate Contract Awards in July 2000. Every Senator demanded Hansard so that they could read the proceedings of the Committee before commenting on the

Committee's Report. That is one of the importance of Committee Hansard, it serves as educational resources on different subject matters, it is meant for further research either on the establishment of a new Bill or Amendment, Repeal, and enactment of a Bill. (Ayodele, 2004).

Senate 2022 Standing Rule 81 (I), states that: when a Bill has been read the Second Time, it shall stand committed to a Standing Committee. Section 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution empowers the National Assembly to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation to any part thereof. This confirms that a particular Bill may touch on the interest of every Nigerian citizen, therefore, any Bill that is committed to a relevant Committee must attract Public Hearing. Stakeholders, Media, Civil Society Organizations and different groups both professional and non-professional will be invited to present their views on the Bill. It is important to note that Committee Hansard should be available to the public, both for research and posterity. It also help Legislators to take informed decisions on a Bill or Reports that are submitted before the Senate by Committees for consideration and legislative actions.

What legacies have the others left behind, as far as Hansard is concern?

Hansard enables Legislators to assess his contributions to debates at a particular period, on a view to improve on areas of lapses. From time to time Legislators are first timers and one of the things they can rely on to make them progress quickly is Hansard. In fact, if Hansard is available to them as at when due they would have learnt a lot about their predecessors, even before they were elected.

Ayodele (2004) in his Book: "Hansard the Legislator's Footprints" cited Mallam Shehu Shagari (Sokoto West): who later became the first Executive President of this country in 1979. He said:

Sir, we must be ready to face hard facts before we plunge ourselves into dangerous ground. We have reached ourselves into dangerous

ground. We have reached the stage when freedom for Nigeria is not only desirable, but also inevitable. Sir, let us talk more and think on unity, without which there could be no real and everlasting freedom.

Achievement of free donor self-government or independence is not an end in itself, I say, that it is not even the means to an end, but only an awakening to the realization of greater responsibilities, immense sacrifice, will and desires for unlimited courage.

Well, some people think that freedom means self-government for their regions to do what they like; some the opportunity to break Nigeria into bits and pieces; some, the chance to acquire new kingdoms or domains. Some might even welcome it now. This is the crux of Nigerian politics at independence what follows?

Looking at these contributions they are food for thought for all Nigerians of today and they pose great challenges to our legislators particularly in terms of intellectual and visionary discourse on crucial issues of the moments. Hansard documents these varying ideas and opinions, and when you read, you can see how legislators walk to and fro on crucial matters, holding some grounds and yielding some; brokering consensus or compromising altogether in the interest of the nation or their constituencies. It is in the Hansard that you will read about a Bill or a Report that looks good at the presentation stage, only to be shot down in a minute by argument based on superior knowledge or information.

2.1.7 Mode of Operation of Official Reporting

Official Reporters work as a team. At the beginning of the day's job, a Reporter known as the Chief Reporter prepares a roster for the day's work. This is done by listing the names of the reporters and allotting alphabets to them. At the bottom of the roster is also listed the Editors for the day and the alphabets they would edit. Also including the roster are the Committee assignments, and outside assignment if any. The Reporters go into the Chambers in turn. There is a kind of relay where as one reporter approaches the end of his allotted time, usually 10 minutes, another reporter is by the side ready to take over. This is technically known as "take".

In the Dáil and Seanad Chambers, the team that produces the Official Report of the Houses of the Oireachtas includes the Editor of Debates and Chief Reporter,

three deputy editors, assistant editors, administrative staff and parliamentary reporters. The Editor manages the whole operation while each deputy editor takes charge of the report of the Dáil, Seanad or Committees. Assistant editors check the report for accuracy and continuity while the administrative staff members provide support by logging Committees and by checking, collating, formatting and publishing parliamentary debates and questions. (dail 100 Eireann, n.d)

Parliamentary reporters, who make up the majority in the team, are the ones most likely to be seen dashing, pen in hand, from their desks to the Chambers or Committee rooms to take a log of who is saying what to whom. The desk reporters sit prominently at a table in designated area in the Chamber and in the very centre in some parliaments where they are best placed to hear and see everything. When taking notes they must listen carefully not only to the speaker whose microphone is switched on but also to those Members who are making off-microphone contributions. They must even keep an eye on Members' body language to predict who is about to interrupt next. They often need to contact Members to verify quotations and statistics, for example, and they must ensure they have all the information they need before they dash back to their office to transcribe the recording of the debate they have just heard.

The Reporter is expected to produce by transcribing the audio into script, ready for editing within an hour and a half. Reporters must be able to marry their takes at the end of the day so that the end of the first writer's script dove tails into the beginning of the second writer's script and so on. When the reporter finishes his transcription, he copies his job into a flash or sends it through the local network to his allotted Editor. (National Assembly Hansard Style Manual).

2.1.8 System Used in Official Reporting

As a result of developments in information technology, practitioners in different Parliaments all over the world use different systems in the production of

Official Reports. In the beginning, Official reporting started by practitioners who had acquired high speed in shorthand and typing. The shorthand speed required at that time ranged from 160wpm to 200 wpm. There was no hearing aid as we have today, which was the system used in Nigeria Parliaments until as late as 1980s when audio transcription started. Afterward, cassettes recorder was introduced, and there was less emphasis on the acquisition of high-speed shorthand writing, but the ability to hear well from a recorder cassette and a good computer knowledge and keyboard skill was concentrated. (Livinus, 2008).

Other systems like Stenograph writing system, Voice Activated Transcription, Dictaphone Aided Transcription and Digital Transcription were introduced, and that has help in easy transcription and production of Hansard. Nigerian Parliament is still working towards getting Voice Recognition Transcription Application whereby the system will transcribe your audio recording to text, as it is said by the speaker. Putting all the necessary resolutions accordingly and using some of the Parliamentary terminologies, for example: question put and agreed to or negative, Report/Petitions laid on the Table, Point of Order; putting the necessary Headings and subheading on each item discussed on the Order Paper is also the responsibility of the Official Reporter.

2.1.9 Constitutional Provision backing up Official Reporting (Hansard) in Nigeria

The Senate Standing Order 2022, Order 105 (1) – (4), states that:

- (1) An official report of all speeches made in the Senate, Committee of the Whole and the Committees of the Senate which shall be as nearly as possible verbatim, shall be prepared under the supervision of Editor.
- (2) The report shall be published in such form as the Senate may direct, and a copy thereof shall be sent to each Senator as soon as practicable after the conclusion of each sitting.

(3) A Senator may, on any day following that on which the official report containing a speech by him was issued, notify the Editor of any purely verbal corrections in that speech for inclusion in the bound volume of such report.

(4) If a Senator disputes the correctness of the record of any speech or seeks to make any material change in the record, the President of the Senate shall rule thereon and shall publication of the speech in accordance with his ruling which shall be communicated to the Senator concerned and shall be final.

The recognition of Hansard Report in Senate Standing Orders shows how relevant and significant Parliamentary Official Reporting is to the Parliament and the entire citizens across the globe.

2.1.10 The Nexus between Parliamentary Official Reporting and Effective Legislation

The importance of Hansard is evident in the significant roles that it plays. The Standing Rule of the Senate 2022, Section 105 (3) Page 167 states that:

A Senator may, on any day following that on which the official report containing a speech by him was issued, notify the editor of any purely verbal corrections in that speech for inclusion in the bound volumes of such report.

Official Report i.e, Daily Hansard, as is called in the House of Commons, enables a Member to quickly relive the previous day's proceedings, appraise his contributions and agree or disagree with what has been credited to him. If he notes such disagreement and informs the Hansard Department at the appropriate time, all necessary corrections will be made, but will not add or remove anything from the debates.

In the classical sense the key role of Parliament is to make new laws and change or improve old laws. Legislators are also to attend, participate, initiate and sponsor Bills, Motions as well as lobby and influence the passage of Bills, in order to bring good governance to the people. However, the election of incompetent, inexperienced

representatives or persons with lower levels of education affects the quality of the legislative process. In other words, effective legislation rests on two pillars: a) Parliamentarians need to have the required expertise and support to make effective and fair laws and b) There must be a sense of minimum cooperation within parliament and between parliament and the Executive, in particular as regards the sensitive issue of state (Economic Commission for Africa, 2010).

Hansard is an important tool used by the Parliaments to achieve effective legislation, by reading a copy of Official Report, one would be able to know the intention of the Lawmakers for enacting a particular piece of legislation. Therefore, Official Report is written in a peculiar style following what is known as legislative procedure. Legislators need the help of the Hansard Report to research on previous relevant Bills, Motions and other matters that concern them. It is a well-known fact that most of the Legislators are not expert or experienced in some of the areas. Therefore, the Hansard is a very good document that help them in drafting and debating on effective legislation. The daily record of the proceedings is always available for everybody's consumption and retention (Bernard, 2008).

It is important to note that the Hansard Bound Volume is also another document used by the Legislature, which is annually produced by the Hansard Department on quarterly basis. The purpose of Bound Volume mainly is to provide a continuous linkage of the series of events and debates in Senate as chronicled in the daily records. It served as the permanent record of the day to day business of the Senate for a set period (Bernard, 2008).

2.1.11 Process of Enacting a Bill into Law

It is important in a democracy for citizens to be able to see what their elected representatives are saying. After all, the job of a Member of Parliament is to represent his constituents; Hansard gives you a chance to read exactly what your representatives

are saying about a Bill as it is considered by Parliament as well as providing accountability to the public. Hansard is often used in court cases to help clarify what Parliament intended when it passed a particular piece of legislation. If the reason for, or meaning of words used in an Act are unclear, the debates in Hansard often provide the answer. These days, the Hansard page of the Parliament website also displays on-demand video from Parliament TV as well as the transcript of speeches.

For more clarification, I will therefore discuss the process and procedure of enacting a Bill into law by the Legislators, through the use of Hansard Style. As we all know, a Bill can be defined as a draft proposed law presented to the Parliament for discussion and proper legislative action. A Bill undergoes 3 stages before it can become a law, for clarity, I will therefore briefly discuss how this is being recorded in Hansard Report.

Niyi and Gani (2019) in a Presentation” The Bill Process and Constitutional Amendments in Nigeria gives the following stages of Bill”

First Reading

After a Bill has been introduced into Parliament, it is received, printed, and disseminated. Upon the Short Title of the Bill being read aloud by the Clerk, the Bill is deemed to have been read the first time. At this stage, Hansard records the proceeding, and it is being rendered as Bill read the First Time (in italics) and the name of the sponsor is being credited, just after putting the Short Title of the Bill.

Second Reading

At the Second Reading, the general principles of the Bill is being debated and the debates are recorded in Hansard. At the end of the debate, a vote is put to determine whether the Bill will proceed to the Committee stage or die.

Committee Stage

Following the Second Reading of a Bill, the Bill is committed to the relevant Committee for a more thorough examination and further legislative action in detail.

At this stage, the relevant Committee examines each provision and holds Public Hearings; inviting relevant stakeholders, citizens, media houses, Civil Society Organizations, etc. to discuss and also throw more lights on the Bill, by sensitizing the public on the importance of the Bill. However, while anyone may make suggestions, only members of the Committee may propose an amendment. The Committee then reports its findings on the Bill with all the amendments to the larger House at Plenary. The committee then recommends whether a Bill should be adopted as-is, amended, or dropped. As we know, the citizens also play a vital role in making decision on any Legislation, therefore, Hansard report plays a vital role in educating both the Legislators and the public by recording and reporting Committee Proceedings and also making reference to the previous Legislations that are been recorded and archived in Parliamentary Website, Libraries and other networks.

Reports Stage

The Committee reports the Bill to the House, including any proposed amendments, which the House deliberates and then makes professional recommendations to the House to either accept or reject through a vote. This has also been recorded in Hansard, following the Senate style and parliamentary procedure. Example: The Chairman of the Committee will move a motion for the Senate to receive the Committee Report, it will also be seconded by a Member, question will be proposed (this can be either ayes or nay) then the Report will be laid on the Table accordingly.

Third Reading

At the Third Reading of a Bill, the Committee reports the Bill to the general House with any proposed amendments. The Bill is then voted upon by the Senate, and either "dies" or "passes". If it passes, the Bill is printed and sent to the House. At this stage the Senate will discuss the Report of the Bill in detail. It will be considered Clause by Clause in the Committee of the Whole, whereby the President will be the

Chairman of the Committee and all Legislators being Members of the Committee. Also, at this stage Members can contribute as many times as possible, proposing suggestions and amendments.

This is also being recorded in the Hansard, following the relevant procedure. By putting the Clauses and their headings accordingly, thereby resolving on the question put on them. Example: '*ordered to stand part of the Bill*' or "*deleted and retained*". This is rendered all in italics. After that, the President will revert to Plenary to Report Progress and then motion will be moved for the Bill to be read the Third Time. Question will also be proposed by the President or the presiding officer to determine whether the Bill be read the Third Time and if the response in affirmative, it is rendered in Hansard as "Bill read the Third Time and Passed".

2.2 Review of Related Empirical Literature

The unanimous views as related to the objectives of this study in the literature are on legislative effectiveness. The effectiveness of a legislator may be measured in different ways, including but not limited to the number of Bills sponsored by the legislator, whether the Bills see any action, whether the Bills are reported from Committee, whether they pass the chamber, the proportion of the Bills sponsored that succeed, and whether Bills sponsored by different members possessing similar characteristics are more likely to succeed. These indicators of measuring the effectiveness of legislators have been examined by different studies.

Cox and McCubbins (1993) posited that Bills sponsored by mainstream legislators are more likely to be successful either because the sponsor's ideology sends a signal that a proposal reflects the preferences of the entire legislature or party median. The study also highlights that the role of the sponsor's ideology may differ depending on the stage of the Bill because parties play a central role in setting the floor agenda. This position lends credence to the party-dominated committee theory which holds that

legislative power lies with the political parties. The study by Hall (1996) highlighted that committee leaders tend to possess attributes and resources that contribute to their effectiveness in crafting and advancing policy proposals that are more likely to win the support of other legislators. This supports the informational (chamber-dominated) theory which stresses the role of committees in the legislative process.

The importance of co-sponsoring of Bills was examined by Wilson and Young (1997), arguing that the number of co-sponsors is one indicator of legislative effectiveness and that a long list of cosponsors is a clear indication that a Bill has broad support across ideological and/or partisan lines. This view is closely linked with the positive political theory of legislature which sees law-making as a bargaining process where legislators bargain and form coalitions in order to facilitate their individual goals. The issue of longevity was stressed by Wawro (2000), stressing that longer serving members possess better information about the preferences and priorities of other members as well as better understanding of the legislative operations. Therefore, these should make them more effective. Also, the study argued that greater electoral pressures may suggest that junior members may be unusually active and possibly more success on matters of particular relevance to their constituencies. The study by Adler and Wilkerson (2005) emphasized the importance of Bill contents and therefore suggested that Bills be distinguished by their scope and urgency of required action.

Maxwell *et al.* (2014), assessed the effectiveness of legislators in Nigeria using the Legislative Effectiveness Score (LES) approach proposed by Volden and Wiseman. The study deviated from the often controversial issue of astronomical remuneration of the legislators to assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the individual legislators. Maxwell *et al.* (2014) findings show that on average, legislators with experience sponsored approximately 2.58 Bills per head in the reviewed period, while those without legislative experience sponsored approximately 2.32 Bills per

head. Their findings supported the views in the literature that longer serving members of the legislature tend to be more effective.

Furthermore, Victor *et al.* (2016) assessed the performance of the Nigerian Legislature in the Fourth Republic (1999-2015). The study assumed that a docile or weak legislature as a democratic institution is a threat to democratic growth and sustenance in a polity. The study adopted the descriptive and survey methods of investigation. The findings of their study revealed that the legislature as an important political institution is entrusted with the functions of representation, law-making, public participation and education as well as oversight which are vital to democracy. It was further noted that in Nigeria, the culture of meaningful representation is yet to evolve, while the functions of law-making, public participation and education have not been well entrenched in the political system.

Salisu and Avidime (2016) researched on democratic governance in the fourth republic. They concluded that while moderate gains existed under the fourth republic, the woes and pains that had befallen the country since the inception of democratic governance in 1999 were overwhelming. They argued that the character of the state, the pattern of politics afford responsible leadership had dented the ability of the system to offer goods and services to the populace. These had in turn constrained popular political participation in state affairs, reinforced a great sense of marginalization and alienation in the minds of many citizens.

Moreover, Bakere (2020) evaluates the Nigeria legislature. The study employed a modification and domestication of Volden and Wiseman's LES model to come up with a measuring toolkit: LES Model suitable for comparative evaluation of the Nigerian legislature using institutional approach. The LES model was used to evaluate the National Assembly over three Assemblies and the findings show that the Nigerian legislature was ineffective during the 4th Assembly and fairly effective

during the 5th and 6th Assemblies. Based on the volume of Bills processed, the paper concluded that the National Assembly has a high prospect to perform better. The paper recommended, among others, a robust capacity building for lawmakers especially on how to push Bills through the legislative cycle to become laws that will impact positively on the people.

Andrew *et al.* (2021) probed the effectiveness of the oversight functions of the National Assembly in Nigeria between 1999 and 2019. They showed that since the birth of the Fourth Republic in 1999, legislative oversight had been a useful instrument for checking the excesses of the Executive and its agencies as well as monitoring the activities of government as a whole. It was used at different times to request government agencies for information and clarification of policies as well as investigation of infractions of public trust and led to the reversal of some unpopular policies as well as recovering of funds found to have been wrongly appropriated. However, the study observed that the oversight function of the legislature had been hampered by alleged cases of corruption in the legislature, shallow democratic culture, undue interference in the activities of the legislature by individuals and groups outside the legislature, alleged encroachment on the powers of other arms of government and inadequate funding of the legislative committees, among others. Andrew *et al.* (2021) concluded that effective legislative oversight in Nigeria requires the active involvement of non-state actors and agencies, strengthening of the committee system in the legislature, proper funding and orientation about parliamentary procedures for legislators.

Building on the aforementioned, the related reviewed studies are previous related studies on this topic such as effectiveness of the Nigerian Senate and Legislation process. However, there is dearth of literature on the effectiveness of

legislation in Nigeria using Official Reporting as base tool for assessment. Hence, this study fill the existing gap in literature.

2.3 Review of related theories

Scholars such as Alabi (2010), Igbokwe-Ibeto and Anazodo (2015) to mention but few examined the system theory and found that it is too mechanical while there cannot be complete separation of functions among the departments/organs of the Parliament. They further stressed that the Parliament is an organic whole with shared responsibilities. It is on this premise that the National Assembly needs to maximize the Official Report Department functions.

Kast and Rosenzweig (1972) stressed that the organizational management systems consist of many internal subsystems that need to be continually aligned with each other. No wonder McShane and Von Glinow (2003) pictured that as organization (such as the National Assembly) grows, it develops more and more complex subsystems that must coordinate with each other in the process of transforming inputs to outputs.

One of the clearest statements relating Systems Theory and organizational behavior comes from Carroll and Tosi's book, *Organizational Behavior* as cited in Daft (1983): "A system is a set of interrelated components surrounded by a boundary which absorb inputs from other systems and transforms them into outputs that serve a function in other systems. Complex organizations are open systems, interacting with an outside environment and adjusting to it.

Chikere and Nwoka (2015) revealed that the systems theory has been likened by many management experts to the three – part production process of an organizational activity. They revealed that Katz and Kahn in their analysis of the basic properties of an organization had also identified the input – throughout – output process. Also, according to Igbokwe-Ibeto and Anazodo (2015), the essence of system

theory is to emphasize the fact that the various sub-systems of an organization (such as the Official Report Department of the National Assembly), must not only be implied in the right order and sequence, but that they must interact harmoniously and in a symbolic relationship to make the whole of the system function satisfactorily.

The aforementioned studies made the system theory recognized worldwide as approach to be adapted by organization for their efficiency and effectiveness in the dynamic and changing environments. Hence, this study adopts the system theory as its theoretical framework. Subsequent section describes the System Theory.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

According to Wehrich, *et al* (2008), the system theory allows the organization receives inputs, transforms them and exports the outputs to the environment as shown in the basic input-output model below.

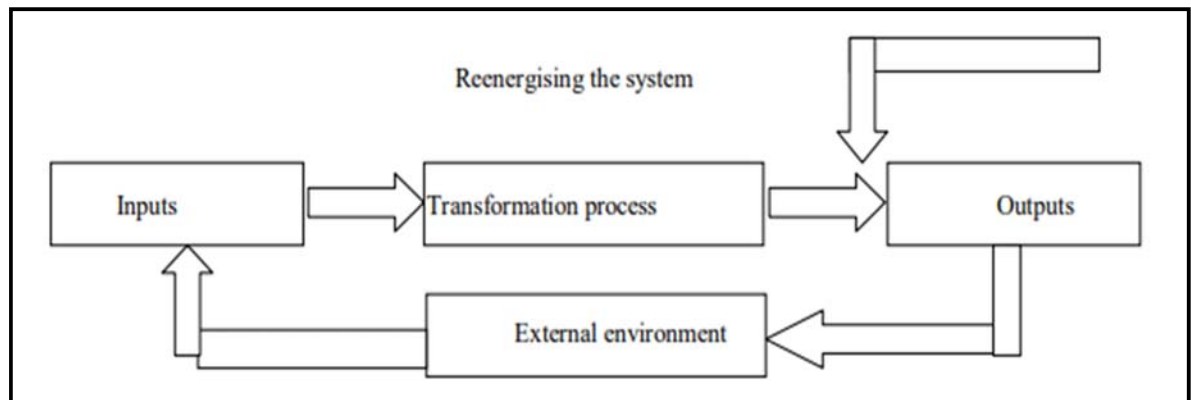


Fig 2.1. Input-Output Model of System Theory

Source: Wehrich, *et al* (2008)

The above model requires expansion and development into a model of process, or operational management that indicates how the various inputs are formed through the managerial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling. However, the following are the basic components of a system.

Inputs – In this scenario, the National Assembly composition of inputs from the external environment may include civil organization groups as well as groups of people making demands on the public organization through their representatives.

Transformation process – In an organizational system, inputs are transformed in an effective and efficient manner into outputs. This can be viewed from different perspectives. Focus can be on such legislative functions.

External variable – As a component of the systems model, the external environment plays a key role in the transformation of inputs into outputs. While it is true that organizations have little or no power to change the external environment, they have no alternative but to respond to it.

Outputs – Inputs are secured and utilized by transformation through the managerial functions such as the Parliamentary Official Reporting of the National Assembly – with due consideration for external variables into outputs.

Reenergizing the system – It is worthy of note that in the systems model of management process, some of the outputs become inputs again. Apparently, the satisfaction and new knowledge or skills of employees become important human inputs.

As related to the Nigeria legislative system, a number of problems confront and complicate the National Assembly service delivery. For example, poor or faulty documentation of plenary process policy. The systems theory, centers on the interaction between a system and sub-systems within a holistic entity as well as in the interacting sub-systems. Therefore, the principle of system theory is to emphasize the fact that the various sub-systems such as the Official Report Department of the National Assembly, must not only be implied in the right order and sequence, but that they must interact harmoniously and in a symbiotic relationship to make the whole of the system function satisfactorily (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Anazodo, 2015).

The system theory is relevant and applicable to the Nigerian Parliamentary system. In that vein, a Parliamentary system is one in which the various sub-systems interact in harmonious relationship towards the achievement of the parliamentary and

societal objectives. Besides, if any of the sub-system is malfunctioned, this has an adverse effect on the operation of the whole or entire systems, which then becomes an ailing system as a result of one or some defective sub-systems. The emphasizes is on the vital need for maximization, co-operation and co-ordination in the management of Official Report Department of the National Assembly to be well placed and equipped to work in close co-operation and harmony with all its members/units in order to achieve the desired objectives and goals.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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

3.1 Research Design

Following the objectives of the study, this study adopted a quantitative research design which aims at discovering how many people think, act or feel in a specific way. Quantitative projects involve large sample sizes, concentrating on the number of responses, as opposed to gaining the more focused or emotional insight that is sometimes the aim of qualitative research (DJS Research, nd). The standard format in quantitative research design is for each attribute, incorporated in the entire data sample were analyzed fairly. The data supplied were coded into a numerical format, and analyzed in a quantifiable way using statistical methods. Quantitative research design leans towards favouring categorical information. This design ensures that the process of quantitative research is far more efficient than it would be if qualitative styles were employed.

3.2 Population of Study

The targeted population of this study include the staff of the Official Report Department of the Nigerian National Assembly as well as distinguished members of the Senate. The targeted respondents were limited to two (2) groups namely the staff of the Official Report Department, and Distinguished members of the Senate. These groups are experienced politicians and National Assembly workers from different tribes, religions and educational backgrounds. Thus, the population of this study

comprised different respondents from different backgrounds such as religion, tribe, educational qualifications and different years of experience.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

This study utilized purposive sampling techniques since there is no agreed sample size range, based on that, the sampling procedure is targeted at specific respondents in a population. Thus, to have a rich source of information, with the necessary flexibility to probe deeper during the administration of questionnaires, this study adopted a purposive sampling procedure. The study purposely sampled thirty (30) Distinguished Senators and thirty (30) staff of the Official Report Department, National Assembly. Thus this study sampled, a total number of 60 respondents.

3.4 Instrument of Data Collection

The study utilized a structured questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The administration of questionnaire is an excellent way to gain a rich source of data. The questionnaire is made up of close-ended and open-ended questions. Questionnaire administration is done physically, however, due to the Senate's break, work schedule and convenience, some of the questionnaire administration sessions were conducted via phone calls and 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 a particular research question.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were entered, coded and analyzed using NVivo and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The study employed a descriptive analysis technique.

3.5.1 Descriptive Analysis Techniques

Data were analysed to describe and summarize information points constructively such that patterns emerged to fulfil every condition of the data. It provided a conclusion of the distribution of data collected. The descriptive analysis techniques this study adopted include word cloud, frequencies, percentages, charts as well as cross-tabulations.

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 the assessment of the Parliamentary Official Reporting of the Nigerian 9th Senate and the effective Legislation. Each sub-section has individual interpretations in the context of the study and analyses carried out with respect to all forms of respondents' opinions in percentages and all data were analyzed using IBM-SPSS version 23 and Nvivo analysis packages.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.1 depicts the common demographic characteristics of the two categories of respondents (i.e. Staff of Official Report Department and the distinguished Members Respondents) in this study. The table below reveals that just above half of the staff of Official Report Department (ORD) respondents (55%) are female while majority of the Senate respondents are male (83%). The age groups of the respondents shows that most of the ORD respondents (64%) were between 31-50 years of age, while half of the Senate respondents were above 51 years. Similarly, the educational level of the respondents as presented in Table 4.1, depict that all the respondents (both the ORD and Senate) possessed either HND/BSc (64%=ORD, 65%=Senate) or High Degrees (36%=ORD, 35%=Senate). In addition, Fig 4.1 presents the study respondents years of experience as ORD respondents and the Senates respondents. The figure reveals that most of ORD-respondents (60%) had above 10 years working experience as staff in Official Report Department. Also, Fig 4.1 shows that significant minority of the Senate-respondents had above 8 years working experience in the Senate. Subsequently, Fig 4.2 (word-cloud) presents the Senate respondents' job designations. The figure reveals that the job designations of the Senate respondents are appropriate for this study. Therefore, the

demographic information of both respondents deduce that the respondents have the useful and essential knowledge needed to achieve the research objectives.

Table 4.1. Common Demographic Information of the Respondents

| Variable | Category | Official Report Department | | The Senate Respondents | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Gender | Female | 16 | 55% | 5 | 17% |
| | Male | 14 | 45% | 25 | 83% |
| Age Bracket | 21-30 Years | 3 | 8% | - | - |
| | 31 - 40 Years | 8 | 28% | 7 | 24% |
| | 41 - 50 Years | 11 | 36% | 8 | 26% |
| | 51 Years and above | 8 | 28% | 15 | 50% |
| Highest Educational Qualification | HND/BSc | 19 | 64% | 20 | 65% |
| | Higher Degree | 11 | 36% | 10 | 35% |

Source: Field Survey 2023

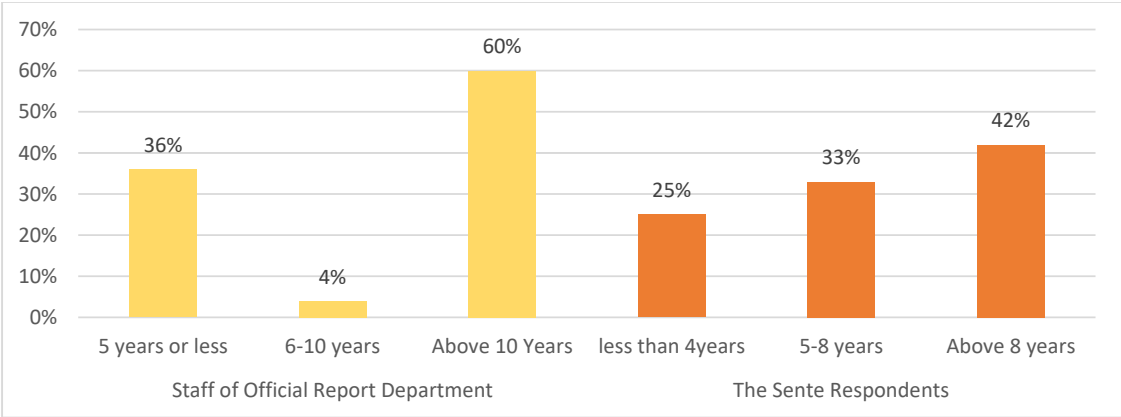


Fig 4.1. Respondents Years of Experience



Fig 4.2. The Senate Respondents’ Job Designation

4.2 Assessment of the Availability and Accessibility of Official Report – Objective One

Fig 4.3 and Fig 4.4 present the respondents’ opinions analyses as regard the Legislators accessibility to Official Report. According to Fig 4.3, despite that most of the Senate respondents acknowledged that they can access the deliberations of the Senate sittings (i.e. Official Reports) either through visiting the National Assembly library (25%) or Official Reporting Department (42%), most of them had never accessed Official Report/Hansard before. Hence, this figure infer that the legislators’ attitudes to accessing Official Reports/Hansard is very poor and below expectation. Consequently, Fig 4.4 reveals that uploading Hansard online would significantly enhance the legislators’ accessibility of Official Report/Hansard.

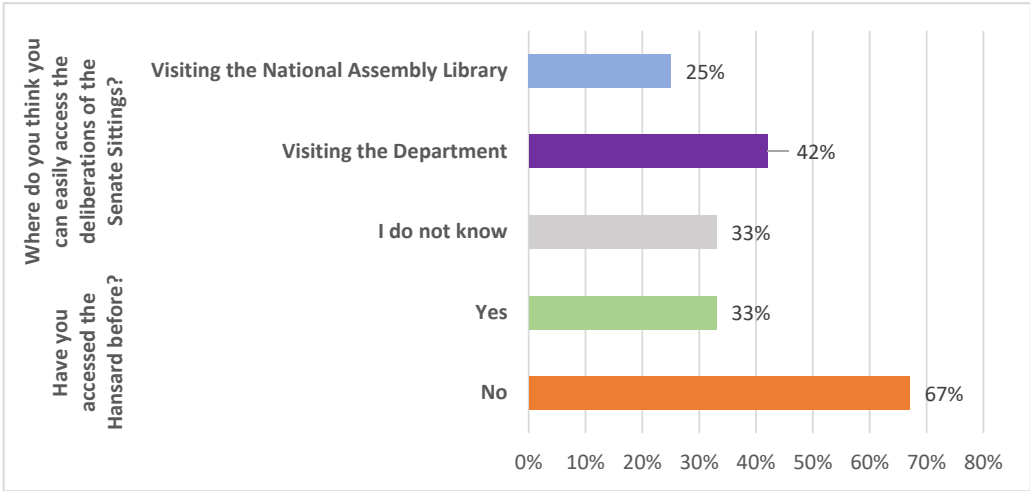


Fig 4.3. Legislators Access to Official Report/Hansard (a)

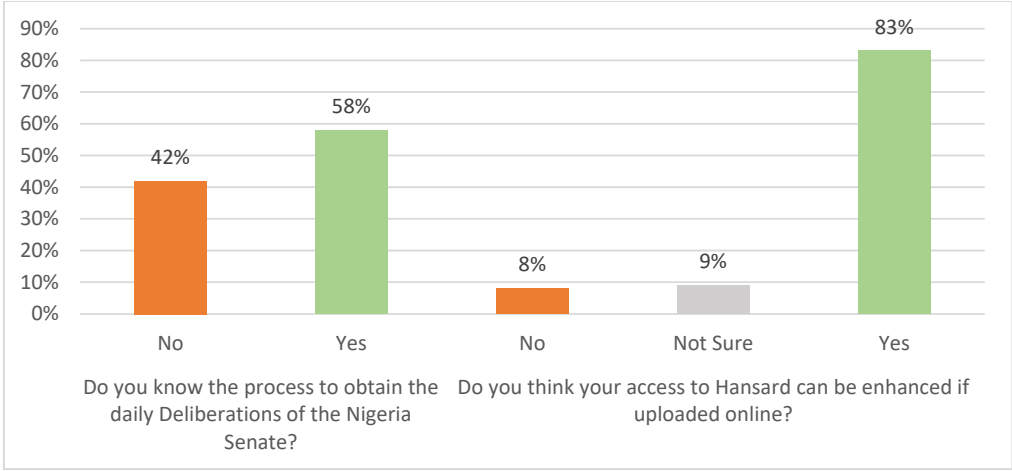


Fig 4.4. Legislators Access to Official Report/Hansard (b)

4.3 Assessment of the Awareness Level of the Legislators as regards Official Reporting and its Importance – Objective Two

This section discusses the analysis results of the Senate respondents views as regard the Official Reporting (OR) level of awareness among the legislators, it also discusses the importance of OR. According to Fig 4.5, most of the respondents (75%) were fully aware of the daily sittings of the Senate report documentations, as such they are fully aware of existence of Official Report (Hansard). Thus, by implication the legislators are mostly aware of the existence of Official Report (Hansard).

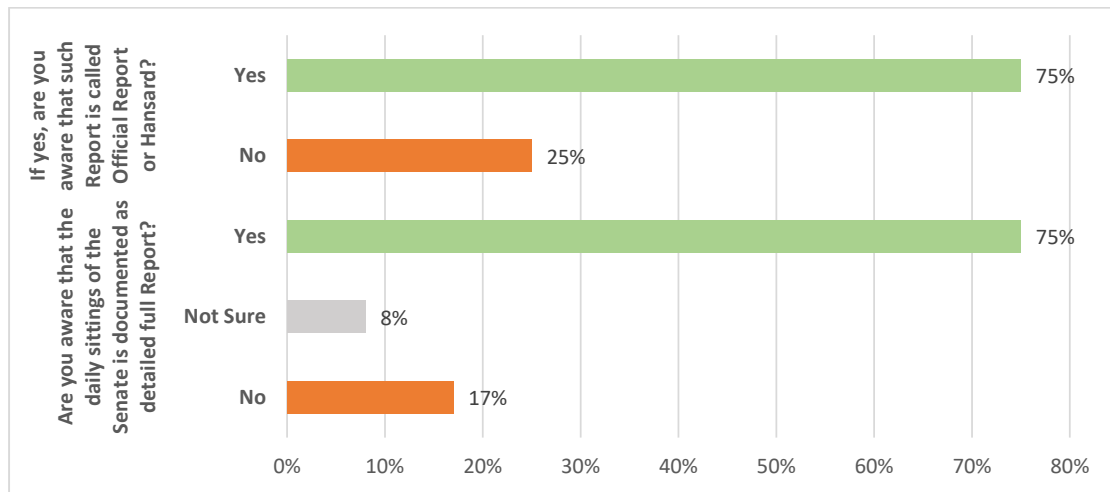


Fig 4.5. The OR Legislators' Awareness Level

Subsequently, Fig 4.6 and Table 4.2 depict the responses analyses (content analysis) of the respondents as regard the importance of the Official Report/Hansard. According to Fig 4.6, most of the Senate respondents admitted that Official Report is important to legislator's performance. Table 4.2 presents the considered significant reasons why Official Report is important to monitor legislators' performances. According to Table 4.2, the following reasons were considered most essential by majority of the respondents (83%) on Official Report importance in the Senate: (i) To access the past deliberations on a Motion or Bill; (ii) To know members contributions on a particular Motion or Bill; (iii) To be updated on previous sittings' deliberations; and (iv) To enable my Constituents access my contribution and performance on any debate. Hence, by

implication Fig 4.6 and Table 4.2 infer that Official Report/Hansard is of utmost important in the Legislature.

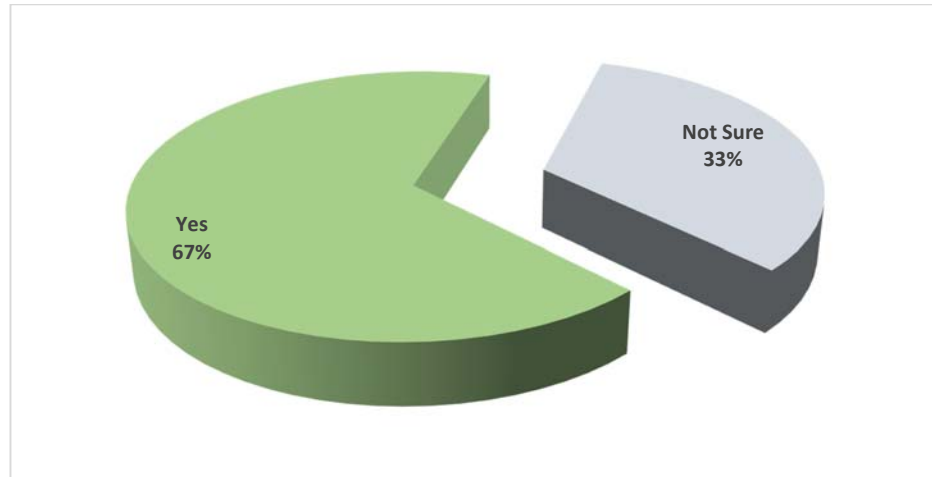


Fig 4.6. Do you think Official Report is important to Legislator's performance?

Table 4.2. What do you considered the most important benefit of Official Report (Hansard)?

| | |
|---|------------|
| To access the past deliberations on a Motion or Bill, To know members contributions on a particular Motion or Bill, To be updated on previous sittings' deliberations, To enable my Constituents access my contribution and performance on any debate | 83% |
| To access the past deliberations on a Motion or Bill | 8% |
| To enable my Constituents access my contribution and performance on any debate | 8% |

Source: Field Survey 2023

4.4 Effectiveness Assessment of the Official Report Department in the Delivery of Timely Official Report – Objective Three

This section discourse the analysis results of the effectiveness assessment of the Official Report Department in terms delivery of timely official report. According to Fig 4.7, about half of the respondents admitted that the ORD capacity is satisfactory. Most of the ORD-respondents acknowledged that it takes them Hours (68%) to produce their respective tasks. Also, most of the ORD-respondents admitted that it takes them Weeks (68%) to make Hansard of a sitting available. This finding deduce poor effectiveness and performance of the Official Report Department, hence the capacity of the department is not satisfactory.

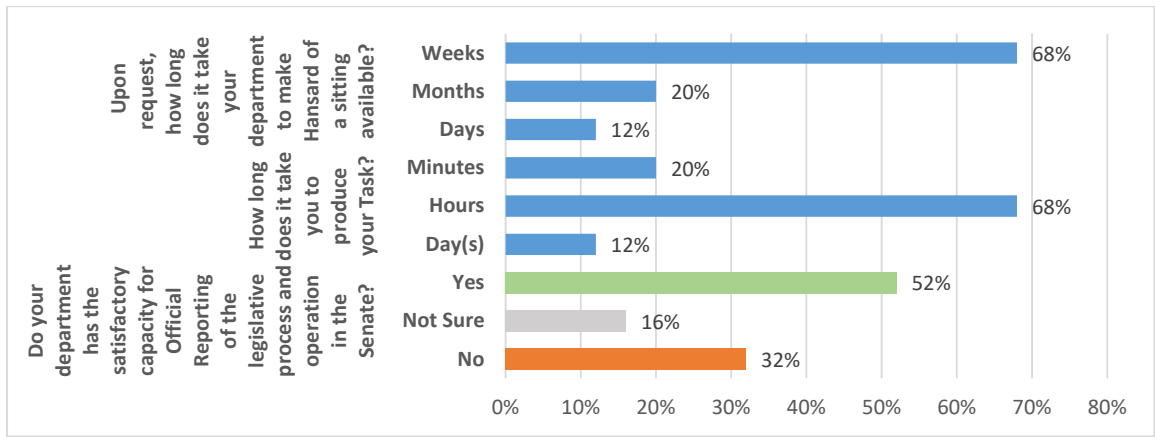


Fig 4.7. ORD Capacity and Delivery Time Assessment

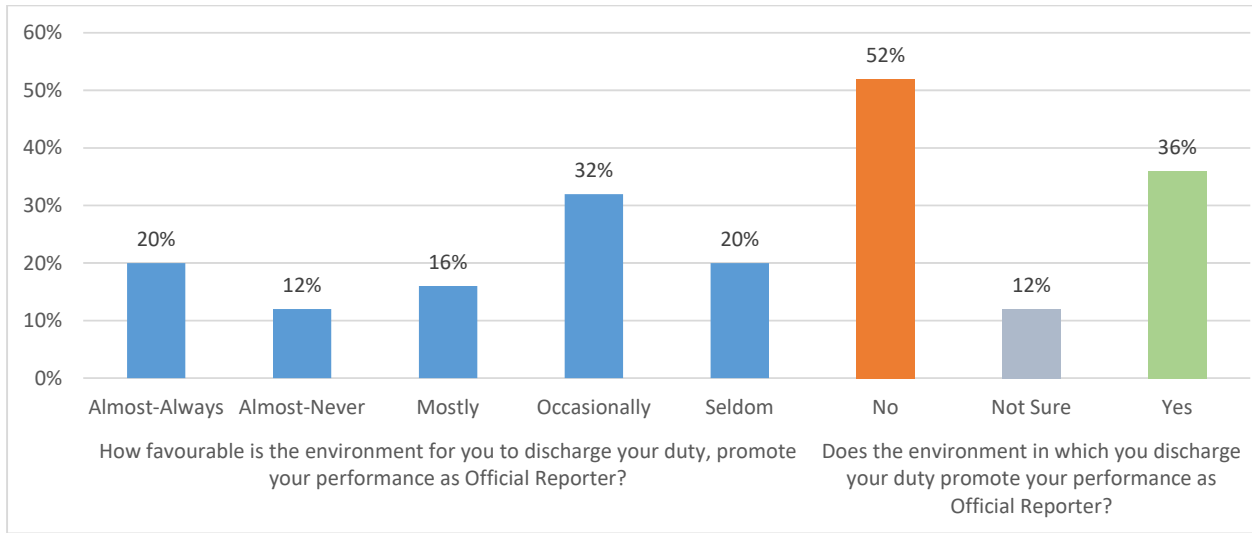


Fig 4.8. ORD Work Environment Assessment

Subsequently, Fig 4.8 assesses the environment at which the Official Report Department functions. According to the figure, just above half of the ORD-respondents (52%) acknowledged that the environment in which they discharge their duty does not promote the department performance. Consequently, Fig 4.8 significant minority of the ORD-respondents admitted the environment at which the department operates or discharges its duty is occasionally favourable and Fig 4.9 depicts a very poor performance of the ORD. Hence, these finding infer that the working environment of the ORD is not favourable enough to enhance their service delivery.

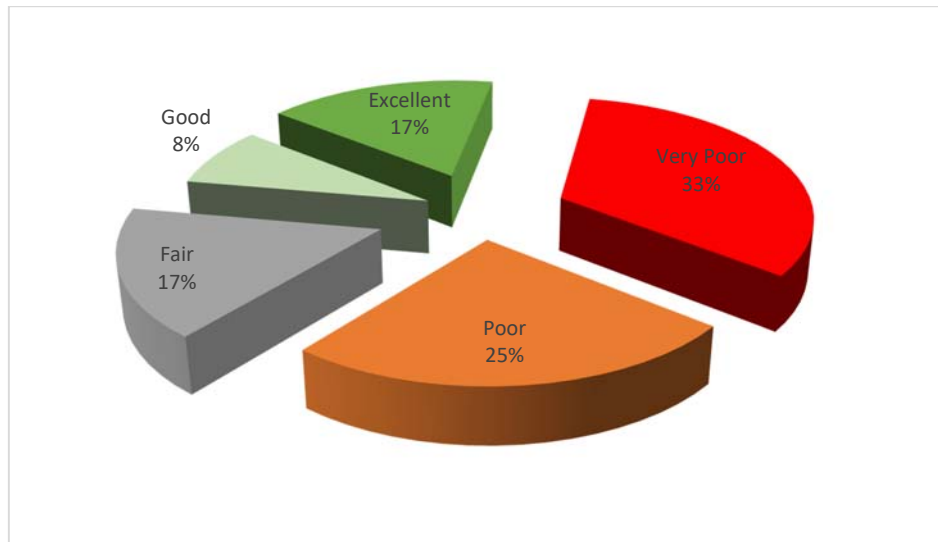


Fig 4.9. How effective do you perceive the performance of the Official Report Department to be?

4.5 Identification of the Factors Hampering the Performance of the Official Report Department as Regard the Parliamentary Official Reporting Production – Objective Four

In addition, Fig 4.10 and Table 4.3 present the analyses of the challenges hampering the effectiveness of the department. According to Fig 4.10, majority of the ORD-respondents acknowledged that there are factors hampering the performances of the department. Explicitly, among other findings Table 4.3 reveals that “None conducive environment; Lack of necessary equipment to work; Legislative practices and Rules; Nonchalant attitude of the heads of the department; Lack of motivations; Extension of time during sittings; and Unclear accent of some legislators; are major factors hampering the department performances.

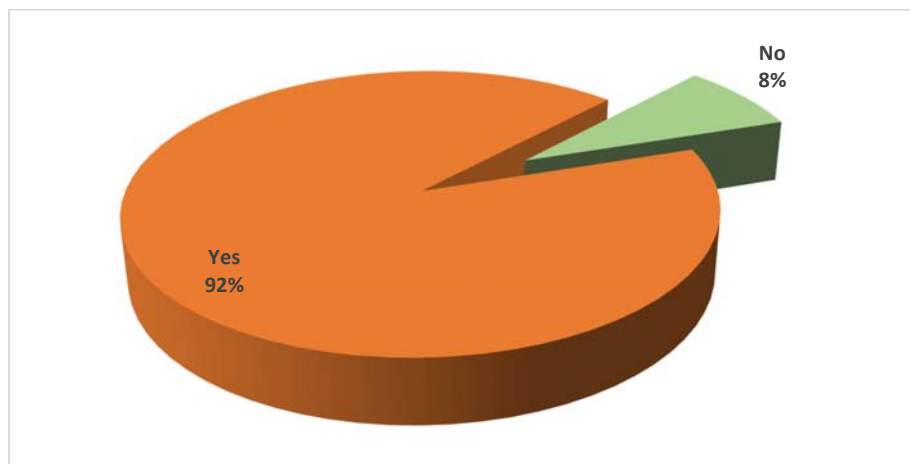


Fig 4.10. Any factors hampering the performance of the Official Report Department as regard the Parliamentary Official Reporting production?

Table 4.4. Official Report Department Challenges

| | |
|---|-----|
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, c. Legislative practices and Rules, d. Nonchalant attitude of the heads of the department, e. Lack of motivations | 4% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, c. Legislative practices and Rules, d. Nonchalant attitude of the heads of the department, e. Lack of motivations, f. Extension of time during sittings | 4% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, c. Legislative practices and Rules, d. Nonchalant attitude of the heads of the department, e. Lack of motivations, f. Extension of time during sittings, g. Unclear accent of some legislators | 20% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, c. Legislative practices and Rules, e. Lack of motivations, f. Extension of time during sittings, g. Unclear accent of some legislators | 8% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, d. Nonchalant attitude of the heads of the department, e. Lack of motivations | 4% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, d. Nonchalant attitude of the heads of the department, e. Lack of motivations, f. Extension of time during sittings, g. Unclear accent of some legislators | 16% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, e. Lack of motivations | 4% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, e. Lack of motivations, f. Extension of time during sittings, g. Unclear accent of some legislators | 4% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, e. Lack of motivations, g. Unclear accent of some legislators | 4% |
| a. None conducive environment, b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, g. Unclear accent of some legislators | 4% |
| b. Lack of necessary equipment to work | 4% |
| b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, e. Lack of motivations | 4% |
| b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, e. Lack of motivations, f. Extension of time during sittings | 4% |
| b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, e. Lack of motivations, g. Unclear accent of some legislators | 12% |
| b. Lack of necessary equipment to work, f. Extension of time during sittings | 4% |

Source: Survey 2023

4.6 Evaluation and Discussion of Findings

The study has so far established that legislators are mostly aware of the existence of Official Report (Hansard) and it is of utmost important in the Legislature following its numerous benefits include: (i) access the past deliberations on a Motion or Bill; (ii) know members contributions on a particular Motion or Bill; (iii) update on previous sittings' deliberations; (iv) enable Constituents assess their contributions and performance on any debate. Rationally, following the highlighted importance of OR, this study established that OR/Hansard is vital in enhancing the effectiveness of the

Legislators. However, the legislators' attitudes to accessing Official Reports/Hansard as well as service timely delivery of Official Report department is very poor and below

expectation. Nonetheless, uploading Hansard online would significantly enhance the legislators' accessibility of Official Report/Hansard.

Consequently, the study further established unpromising operational activities of the Official Report Department in the National Assembly. Explicitly, the empirical findings revealed poor effectiveness and performance of the Official Report Department as most of the ORD-respondents admitted that it takes them Weeks to make Hansard (Official Report) of a sitting available, thus this implies the capacity of the department is not satisfactory. This study attributed the poor effectiveness and performance of the Official Report Department to unfavourable working environment condition of the department. Besides, it is important to note that the study empirical findings are distinctive when compared to the existing literature.

Moreover, following the poor performance and unfavourable working environment condition of the Official Report department, the study revealed factors hampering the performances of the department vis-à-vis the legislative effectiveness, explicitly, these include “None conducive environment; Lack of necessary equipment to work; Legislative practices and Rules; Nonchalant attitude of the heads of the department; Lack of motivations; Extension of time during sittings; and Unclear accent of some legislators; are major factors hampering the department performances”.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study focuses on assessing the Parliamentary Official Reporting of the Nigerian 9th Senate vis-à-vis the effectiveness of the Legislation. Extant relevant literature were reviewed. The study adopts descriptive analysis methodologies such as frequency, percentages, charts and word cloud to analyze the respondents' opinions.

5.1 Summary of Findings

Findings show Legislators' attitudes toward accessing Official Reports are very poor and below expectation because the findings revealed that Hansard is available in Official Report Department as most of the legislators acknowledged that they can access the deliberations of the Senate sittings (Hansard) through visiting Official Report Department whereas, most of them had never accessed Hansard before.

The descriptive analyses on objective two revealed that legislators are mostly aware of the existence of OR/Hansard and its utmost importance in the Legislature as it is evident that Official Report /Hansard enhances the effectiveness of the Legislators.

Findings also show that the effectiveness and performance of the Official Report Department are very poor and below expectation due to unfavourable working environment hence, the capacity of the department and Service timely delivery of the Official Report is not satisfactory.

Consequently, the study descriptive analysis established that there are factors hampering the effectiveness of the Official Report department following the poor performance of the Official Report department.

5.2 Conclusion

Consequent to the study's major findings, the study concludes that there is a high level of Official Report (Hansard) awareness among the legislators and Official Report

utmost importance in the Legislature, however, legislators' attitudes to accessing Official Reports/Hansard is very poor and call for concerns. Moreover, following the empirical results of the effectiveness of the Official Report Department in the delivery of timely Official Reports, the study concludes poor effectiveness and performance of the Official Report Department. It thus established unpromising operational activities of the Official Report Department in the National Assembly. Explicitly, the study revealed that the delivery time of the Official Report is poor as it takes weeks to make Hansard of a sitting available due to the poor capacity of the department and unfavourable working environment.

To sum up, the study concludes that “No conducive environment, Lack of necessary equipment to work, Legislative practices and Rules, Nonchalant attitude of the heads of the department, Lack of motivations, Extension of time during sittings, and Unclear accent of some legislators” as major factors hampering the department performances in enhancing the effectiveness of the Senate.

5.3 Recommendations

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

The National Assembly may adequately and modernly equip the Official Report department to upload Hansard online as this would significantly enhance the legislators' accessibility of Official Report/Hansard which can be accessed all over the world.

The National Assembly may wish to sensitize the legislators during their orientation programme on the importance of Official Reports/Hansard in enhancing legislative effectiveness. This will improve their participation and contribution during any debate in the Chambers.

A conducive working environment may be provided by the National Assembly management for the staff of the Official Report department for promising operational activities of the Official Reporter to guide against unnecessary interferences that may cause distractions to produce timely Hansard.

The Management of the National Assembly may continue the collaboration with the NILDS to sustain the various short courses, professional and academic programmes on the Official Report to enhance the capacity of the staff of the Official Report Department, this will motivate the staff and increase more professionals in the department.

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