

**ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY IN STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA: A
STUDY OF THE 8TH ASSEMBLY**

BY

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CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled “*Assessment of the Performance of the National Assembly in Strengthening Democracy in Nigeria: A Study of the 8th Assembly*” presented by Chima Ngozi Wilson (**PG/NLS/1714039**) has met the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Parliamentary Administration (MPD) of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies/University of Benin, Edo State.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is a product of my own research efforts, undertaken under the supervision of Dr Josiah Sabo Kente. It is an original work and no part of it has ever been presented for the award of any degree anywhere. All sources of information used have been duly acknowledged through the references.

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APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that this dissertation “*Assessment of the Performance of the National Assembly in Strengthening Democracy in Nigeria: A Study of the 8th Assembly*” has been read and approved as having met the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Parliamentary Administration of the University of Benin/National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies is approved for contribution to knowledge.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Almighty God for His grace that has never waned in my life, to my colleagues whose support and backing I received when I began to pursue legislative career as an officer in the National Assembly, and all those who are in pursuit of academic excellence.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APU – African Parliamentary Union

CFRN – Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

CSOs – Civil Society Organizations

ECA – Economic Commission for Africa

FCT – Federal Capital Territory

FES – Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

IPOs – International Parliamentary Organizations

IPU – Inter-Parliamentary Union

IRI – International Republican Institute

PDP – People’s Democratic Party

PLAC – Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre

NSIP – National Social Investment Programme

USAI – United States Information Agency

YIAGA – Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth & Advancement

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to examine the extent of the effects of the role of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening Nigeria's democracy. Therefore, it sought to; identify the roles of the legislature in a democracy, assess the efforts of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening democracy in Nigeria, identify the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its effort aimed at deepening democracy in Nigeria, and proffer solutions to the challenges that militated against the 8th Assembly's actions aimed at strengthening democracy in Nigeria.

The study adopted the survey research design using questionnaire and structured interview as the instruments for data collection. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents that provided primary data, while secondary data was taken from published

materials. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0) was used to analyse quantitative data, while the content analysis was employed in analysing qualitative data.

The analysis in the study revealed that respondents agreed that the legislature have roles in strengthening Nigeria's democracy. In view of this, respondents listed the roles to include: representation, law-making, oversight and adjudication. However, the study showed N-Power and Not Too Young To Run/Age Reduction Bill as most renowned and specific efforts by the 8th National Assembly geared towards strengthening Nigeria's democracy. Nevertheless, some challenges identified by respondents as impediments to the drive by the legislature in strengthening Nigeria's democracy includes but not limited to: instability of the legislature due to the abortion of successive republics (11.7%), high rate of legislative turnover (24%), low institutional development (25.3%), lack of legislative autonomy (19.5%), composition and qualification of members (19.5%), etc.

Subsequently, the study concluded that for the survival of any democratic development, the legislature is its strongest predictors. Thus, the legislature is the pivot for modern democratic systems.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Democracy is by far the most popular form of government in the world today (Anifowose & Enemu, 1999; Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, FES, 2008). It is also a concept that is often misconstrued, misapplied or misused (Ajaegbo, 2014). On this note, Ajaegbo argued that defining democracy has proved elusive and this explains why the concept has no generally accepted definition. Therefore, the definitions that abound cuts across cultures and continents and raises fundamental questions on its precise import and application.

According to Hornby (2010, p. 389), democracy is “a system of government in which all the people of a country vote to elect their representatives”. In the opinion of Appadorai (2004, p. 137), “democracy may be described as a system of government under which people exercise the governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by themselves”. Hence, the popular phrase of Abraham Lincoln as quoted by the United States Information Agency, USIA (1991, p. 4) democracy is government “of the people by the people and for the people”. Lincoln’s proposition agrees with the elements of democracy listed by Heater (2003) which includes: equality, sovereignty of the people that must be demonstrated through periodic elections, respect for human life, the rule of law, and the liberty of individuals. Heater further explained the principle of popular sovereignty to mean, “The notion that ultimate power rests with the mass of the people”. Similarly, FES (2008) listed key elements of states organized under democratic principles to include among others: Fundamental freedom and fundamental rights, Rule of law, Separation of powers, the parliament, Elections, etc.

In order to strengthen democratic governance, institutions are key. One of such institution is the legislature. In this regards, Yaqub (as cited in Ewuim, Nnamani & Eberinwa, 2014) averred that if democracy is a system anchored on the informed and active participation of the people, the legislature is a vehicle for equal and wider representation. Therefore, the existence of legislative institution according to Ewuim et al., comprises representatives of the people as a hallmark of democratic government from non-democratic ones. On this note, the legislature enjoys the vested power of the people and thus represents the popular sovereignty as espoused by Heater (2003). According, Section 4(3) Part II of the 1999 constitution which dealt with Powers of The Federal Republic of Nigeria is to the effect that,

“The power of the National Assembly to make laws for the peace, order and good governance of the federation with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List shall, save as otherwise provided in this constitution, be to the exclusion of the Houses of Assembly of States”

Based on the foregoing, Sellers (2003) observed that the legislature is the single most important branch of government in any nation governed by the rule of law. Hence, when law rules (rule of law matters), the legislature matters, because the legislature makes the laws. On this note, Van Gestel (2013) argued that the legislature enjoys the place of primacy in governance. Going further, Sellers concluded that the central dilemma for drafters of written republican constitutions has been how to create a legislature that will make laws that advance and protect the common good of all citizens, without favouring one group over others. In this vein, Section 4 (3) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, CFRN (as amended) alluded to the place of the National Assembly to legislate for the peace and governance of Nigeria.

Legislatures in democratic countries perform some basic functions in common. These are representation, lawmaking, and oversight functions (Adegunde, 2018). Defining Representation – One major role of parliament in the governing process is to represent the

opinions and interests of the citizens. Members of Parliament are elected by a set of eligible voters who form a group of constituencies representing the whole country. In some countries where the quota system is practiced some seats are reserved to ensure representation of special interest groups. For example in Uganda a parliamentary seat from each of the 39 districts is reserved for women. The objective is to increase women's representation in Parliament.

Defining Lawmaking – Parliament enacts laws by subjecting issues of public interests to debate by drafting, modifying, and ratifying public policy into law Bills are introduced into Parliament either as public bills (related to public policy) or private bills (initiated by a particular interest group). When Bills are introduced in the house, they then go through a number of stages, this varies from country to country but the different stages can be summarized as follows: First reading, Committee stage, second reading, the Consideration stage, and Third reading before being passed for presidential or royal assent (Asimiyu, 2018).

According to Sections 4, 5 & 6 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), powers have been arrogated to each individual arm of government implying that no single arm should go about its duty in a manner capable of whittling the influence of another. In the same vein, FES (2008) noted the functions assigned the various arms of government as the: legislative power draws up and adopts laws; executive power enforces laws and government policies; and judicial power represents the legal framework for exercising the power. This, underscored the doctrine of separation of powers as espoused by Montesquieu.

From the foregoing, the doctrine of separation of powers bestows on the legislature the place of primacy in governance (Van Gestel, 2013) which essentially means that the business of governance begins with the task of law-making. Noting therefore that governance starts with law-making, the concept of rule of law which hallmarks every democracy will be eroded in the absence of laws – which is a primary responsibility of the legislature. By implication, there

will be resultant profound lack of respect for fundamental rights which may lead to breakdown of peace and order, consequently endangering democratic institutions and ideals.

Based on some version of the democratic peace theory which states that, “democracy is conducive to peace, prosperity, and mutual collaboration among democratic nations” (Matto, 2017), democracy is a derivative of peace which is ensured with the respect for constitutional provisions, and is an offshoot of laws enacted by the legislature within a precinct where the constitutional doctrine of separation of powers is upheld. Hence, the legislature serve as essential constituent for any democratic government and major factor in its sustenance (Ewuim et al., 2014).

In the light of the above therefore, this study is designed to assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening democracy in Nigeria.

1.2. Statement of the Research Problem

The role of the legislature in strengthening democracy cannot be overemphasized. Hence, Abegunde (2016, p. 227) “democracy is a system of government that gives people the opportunity for self-actualization through propelled political proficiency, economic development and social stability of the polity”. In a constitutional democracy (a democracy where the constitution is held as supreme) with those in government elected representatives of the people, democracies have established a ‘separate peace’ (Weede, 1992). This is to the effect that laws emanating from such democratic Nations are fashioned in a manner that would ensure peace (1999, Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, CFRN, Section 4(3)). This is to say that a strong correlation exists between democracy and peace on one hand, and by extension the legislature and democracy on the other hand. Instructively, peace is achievable by popular laws enacted by the legislature which would in the long – run advance other elements of democracy.

Summarily, the National Assembly represents peace, order and good governance (1999, CFRN Section 4(3)) through its constitutional role of law-making. Good governance which is a feature of democratic Nations becomes a mirage if legislations do not enjoy the citizen's support setting the stage for anarchy which means that peace and order would be greatly eroded thereby hampering the gains of democracy.

Deductively, democratic gains are sustained when constitutionality becomes an order of the day, constitutionality on its part is borne out of the effort of the legislature in the course of the discharge of its function of law-making.

Therefore, the essence of this study was to examine the extent of the effects of the role of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening Nigeria's democracy.

1.3. Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

- a. What roles do the National Assembly play in Nigeria's democracy?
- b. How is the performance of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening democracy in Nigeria?
- c. What challenges confronted the 8th National Assembly in its efforts to strengthen democracy in Nigeria?
- d. What are the strategies that will mitigate the challenges that confronted the 8th Assembly in its effort to strengthen democracy in Nigeria?

1.4. Research Objectives

The major objective of this research was to assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening Nigeria's democracy. The specific objectives are to;

- i. examine the roles of the National Assembly in Nigeria's democracy.
- ii. assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening democracy in Nigeria.
- iii. examine the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its effort aimed at deepening democracy in Nigeria.

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The research was based on the assessment of the performance of the National Assembly in strengthening Nigeria's democracy. In order to achieve this, the study reviewed works on democracy, and the roles of parliament in a democracy. The study was limited to the 8th National Assembly which was proclaimed on the 9th of June, 2015 to 9th of June 2019 under the chairmanship of Senator Abubakar Bukola Saraki, GCON.

The study does not intend to delineate between the activities of the Senate and the House of Representatives in the 8th National Assembly because they pass laws concurrently, hence, viewed as National Assembly within the stated scope of time. Also, the study further secluded State Houses of Assemblies because the assessment of the performance of the National Assembly was done within the context of the cardinal functions of the legislature being: lawmaking, representation and oversight, which state Houses of Assemblies embodies.

Finally, the study was limited to the lawmaking functions of the 8th National Assembly focusing on the National Social Investment Program (NSIP) which was included in the 2018 and 2019 Appropriation Bills, and the Constitution Amendment Act, 2018 (Age Reduction

Bill/Not Too Young to Run Bill). While the NSIP is designed to alleviate poverty thereby improving the standard of living of low income earning Nigerians, the Constitutional Amendment Act ensured inclusivity in governance, which is a hallmark of democracy.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study was designed to assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening democracy in Nigeria, efforts geared towards this end and an appraisal of the impacts or otherwise of such effort. Therefore, the National Assembly would be the major beneficiary of this study, as it will enable it appraise its efforts aimed at strengthening democracy in Nigeria, and introduce legislative proposals that would further deepen democratic ethos.

Other beneficiaries of this research are the: National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI), Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC), Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth & Advancement (YIAGA), International Parliamentary Organizations (IPOs); African Parliamentary Union (APU), Inter – Parliamentary Union (IPU); Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), etc. This would help in no small measure to sharpen the opinions of these stakeholders in ensuring the sustenance of democratic governance.

The study would also contribute immeasurably to the body of literature in this area and serve as source of information for researchers, policy makers and the society at large. It would also bring to rest the erroneous and widely held view that the legislature is the ‘least important/active branch’ of government.

1.7. Conceptual Clarification

Democracy

Democracy can be described as an institutional arrangement for arriving at political, legislative and administrative decisions. Therefore, for this study, democracy will imply the institutional arrangement of the legislature aimed at strengthening democracy in Nigeria.

Legislature

The legislature or parliament is where elected representatives of the people meet to deliberate and promulgate laws.

The 8th National Assembly

The 8th National Assembly refers to the legislative span of 2015 – 2019 within the Fourth Republic. The Fourth Republic on the other hand, is the democratic dispensation heralding the promulgation of the fourth post – independence constitution of 1999.

Strengthening Democracy

For the purpose of this study, strengthening democracy is referred to as all efforts geared towards further democratization, strengthening of existing democratic structures and institutions for the achievement of overall democratic goals.

1.8. Organization of chapters

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter One contains the general introduction, which consists of the background, statement of the research problem, research questions and objectives, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and the outline of the research. Chapter Two provides a thorough review of literature and theoretical framework. Also, Chapter Three focuses on a comprehensive statement of the research methodology. In addition, Chapter Four provides the presentation of data and discussion of results. Finally, chapter five provides summary of the study, recommendations, contributions of the research to the body of knowledge and conclusions based on the findings from this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter reviews different scholarly views on the concepts that were raised in the course of the study. It was therefore divided into three main sections namely; literature review, empirical review, and theoretical framework.

2.1. Literature Review

The legislature appeared in the 13th century as an assembly of Knights and Burgesses summoned regularly by the Monarch for consultation on taxation (Tom & Attai, 2014: 65). Adegunde (2016) added that by the end of the 17th century, the Bourgeoisie had successfully used parliament to secure its political aims. Thus, making parliament an instrument by which newly powerful group in society could advance their interest and introduce innovations into and modernize society.

In Nigeria, legislative activities predated the Nigerian independence. “This can be traced back to 1861 when the colonial government officially occupied Lagos and the Colonial Governor established a legislative council to oversee the affairs of the colony” (Adegunde, 2016, p. 228). However, only two Nigerians made the cut out of a total of ten members appointed to the council. The council served advisory purposes but lacked law-making powers. The law – making function was then the responsibility of the Colonial Governor.

In 1900, the Southern and Northern protectorates were established with the colony of Lagos being annexed into the Southern protectorate in 1906 by a proclamation of the colony Governor. These protectorates were amalgamated in 1914. After the amalgamation, the Nigerian Council was established with thirty – six members representing diverse socio – economic interests, however, only six were Nigerians. As it was in 1861, this legislative body

had no law – making powers. The Clifford constitution of 1922 had a significant improvement as it allowed the election of four Nigerians into the council of forty – six members; the remnants were often appointed (Adegunde, 2016). Richard and Macpherson constitutions of 1946 and 1951 respectively, made improvement on the number of Nigerians to be elected to the council.

At independence, the national legislature was modelled after the bicameral house of the Western Region which had the Houses of Chiefs and Assembly (Adegunde, 2016). According to Adegunde, the First Republic Senate had 44 members while the House of Representatives had 312 members. The state legislature that was hitherto bicameral in nature was replaced by a unicameral legislature known as the House of Assembly. To herald the birthing of a new Republic following series of aborted Republics (Adegunde, 2016), the 1996 boundary delimitation exercise was conducted establishing 360 federal constituencies and 109 senatorial districts (International Foundation for Electoral Systems, IFES, 2006).

To underscore the importance of the legislature in strengthening democracy, Adegunde (2018) explained that a virile legislature will promote political stability and economic development, while a weak legislature might either promote political instability, underdevelopment or corrupt, autocratic and oppressive government. Hence, Adegunde asserted that evidence of weak legislature abound in third world countries. In view of this, Okoosi-Simbine (2010) concluded that the legislature occupies a key position in the democratic process.

In ensuring democratic stability, Abegunde proposed a system driven by the primary functions of the legislature being: law – making, oversight and representation. Therefore, the roles of the 8th National Assembly will be discussed within the confines of Adegunde’s proposition.

2.1.1. Democracy

Democracy may be a familiar word to most, but it is a concept still misunderstood as well as misused, especially at a time when dictators, single – party regimes, and military coup leaders alike assert popular support by claiming the mantle of democracy (“Democracy in Brief”, 2000). However, various scholars conceptualize democracy from different perspectives. For instance, some view democracy as political competition through periodic elections, others see it as citizen participation, yet others align it with civil and political liberties (Rudebeck & Tornquist, 1996).

The most popular definition of democracy was given by Abraham Lincoln; in his Gettysburg address in 1864. He saw democracy, “as the government of the people, by the people, for the people” (Ajayi & Ojo, 2014, p. 108; “Democracy in Brief”, 2000). By this they meant that sovereignty belongs to or resides with the people. This seems to agree with the position of Dye and Zeigler (2003) that democracy means individual participation in the decisions that affect one’s life. They opined further that, traditional democratic theory has valued popular participation as an opportunity for individual self – development: responsibility for governing one’s conduct, develops one’s character, self – reliance, intelligence and moral judgment – in short one’s dignity. Hence, the description of democracy offered by Abraham Lincoln.

For Morlino and Leonardo (2004: 5 – 27), the concept of democracy means that “it has at least universal adult suffrage; recurring, free, competitive and fair elections; more than one political party; and more than one source of information”. He further posited that the existence of democratic institutions and rights in a polity to attenuate its being qualified as a democracy. Similarly, Addi and Lahonari (1997, p. 105) sees democracy as “the process by which power

changes hands without violence or force”. In the liberal perspective of democracy, Ojie (2006) described democracy in the following words,

The essential idea of democracy is that the people have the right to determine who governs them. In most cases, they elect governing officials and hold them accountable for their actions. Democracy also impose legal limit on the government authority by guaranteeing certain rights and freedom to their citizen (Ojie, 2006).

From Schumpeter (1943) to Przeworski, Michael, Jose and Fernando (2000), democracy is typically equated with the electoral process. Hence, Schumpeter (2013) saw democracy as a political method or type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political, legislative and administrative decisions. According to him, it is a method by means of competitive struggle for the peoples vote and this competition for vote is the distinguishing character of the democratic method.

In a similar vein, Almond, Powell, Strom and Dalton (2004) opined that democracy is a political system in which citizens enjoy a number of basic political rights and in which their most important political leaders are elected in free and fair election and accountable under the rule of law. Collier and Levitsky (1997) pointed out that the most widely employed definitions of democracy focus on the procedures of governance which agrees with the position of Almond et al. For Lipset (2013), democracy is a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the government officials and a social mechanism which permits the larger possible part of the population to influence decisions by choosing among contenders for political office.

From the various definitions of democracy, this study aligned with the positions of Schumpeter (1943) and Przeworski et al. (2000) in which democracy was equated with the electoral process. This is more so as this study hinges mainly on representative democracy, as well as the fact that the democracy is hinged on popular participation. On this note, Euripide

described a democratic state as one governed by people's representatives and for the many that have neither property nor birth (Sabine & Thorson, 1973).

However, Enemuo (2008) posited that many of the elements of democracy are largely attributable to the ancient Greece, especially the city of Athens. Consequently, the word democracy comes from the Greek word "demokratia" which means "rule of the people" or the Greek demos, "people" and kratos "rule" (Noah, 2006; Oche, 2004). It is also believed that modern democracy may have evolved from medieval institutions such as the British Parliament and the United States between 1860 and 1890, and later spread to other European countries and the rest of the world (Heater, 1964). However, there exist both historical and archaeological facts pointing towards the fact that the principles of democracy existed in other civilizations and so not exclusively from Greece; for instance, the principles of accountability, consensus building and popular participation were features of most pre – colonial systems of governments in Africa (Enemuo, 2008). For instance, universal adult suffrage, a pillar of democracy, was practiced in most post – colonial African nations before it was accepted in the United States of America.

As argued by Heater (1964b), the practice in ancient Athens has three distinct features. First, supreme power was vested in the 'ekklesia' the assembly of all male citizens¹, which each was entitled to participate in decision and voting. According to Wikipedia, the assembly was responsible for declaring war, military strategy and electing the 'stratego' and other official. Second, the system permitted the freedom of speech and third, it made all political offices open to all citizens. For instance, constituted authorities like judges accounted for their actions at the end of their tenure (Heater, 1964).

¹ See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecclesia_\(ancient_Athens\)#cite_note-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecclesia_(ancient_Athens)#cite_note-1)

In effect, democracy in ancient Greece meant direct and active participation of citizens in the affairs of the polis or city – state; the citizens were therefore governors who are one and the same subject of political authority and the creators of public rules and regulations (Held, 1993). In what seems to be an agreement to this position, Enemuo (2008) averred that the arrangement was feasible because citizenship was restricted to free – born adult male and female; however, children, slaves and aliens were excluded which makes it possible for direct citizens’ participation in decision-making. This system was further advanced by the slavery inherent. Aborigines dedicated their time on political debate and activities, while the slaves engage in direct production on their behalf. Time has changed, the Athenian democracy with obvious changes such as the replacement of the city – state with modern nation – state as the unit of political identification, and the disappearance of the socio – economic conditions under which this form of democracy thrived. This was aptly captured by Enemuo (2008) when he stated that, “the slave mode of production has been supplanted by the feudal system which, in turn, was superseded by the capitalist system”.

In Nigeria, Omoiya (2012) averred that some elements of democracy were inherent in the indigenous political systems operated in different parts of the country even before the advent of colonial rule. Aderibigbe (1965: 193 – 201) summarized it thus;

The Yoruba political system under the Obaship, (Kinship) guarantees good governance and people’s representation through established institutions. The Alaafin (King) of Oyo, who was often praised as having the powers of life and death, is in practice, not so absolute in exercising his powers. The Basorun, who is the head of the Oyomesi, the committee responsible for the selection of the new Alaafin, is by Oyo constitution, empowered to order an Alaafin to abdicate the throne, when the Alaafin is considered to have violated the Empire’s constitution.

The emirate system of Northern Nigeria was not exempted from this system of checks and balances inherent in the African political system. The Emir’s decisions were subject to the agreement of his council. The emirate council consisted of the Emir himself, the Waziri, the Khadi, the Chief Imam and other prominent chiefs that vary from one place to another

(Hunwick, 1965, pp. 267 – 288). This system prevented in no small measure absolutism and misuse of power by the leader.

2.1.2. Elements of Democracy

The elements of democracy according to Heater (2003) are: equality, sovereignty of the people that must be demonstrated through periodic elections, respect for human life, the rule of law, and the liberty of individuals. He explained that democratic equality implies, one man one vote, irrespective of differences in wealth, religion, intelligence, class, educational status, etc. It also connotes equal right and opportunity for all citizens to hold political office. This agrees with those highlighted by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, FES, (2008) and “Democracy in Brief” (2000) namely; fundamental freedom and fundamental right, elections, rule of law, separation of powers, democratic pluralism, the government and the opposition, public opinion and freedom of the media.

FES (2008) explained that human rights are much more than a mere component of democracy. It averred that they represent compulsory requirements for the well performing of a democratic system. On its part, “Democracy in Brief” (2000) argued that the relationship of citizen and state is fundamental to democracy. It also added the words of Thomas Jefferson of the United States Declaration of Independence:

We hold this truth to be self – evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That is to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed (“Democracy in Brief”, 2000: 7).

Accordingly, FES (2008) posited that elections constitute one of the most important pillars of democracy. On this note, “Democracy in Brief” opined that free and fair elections are essential in ensuring the consent of the governed, which is the bedrock of democratic politics.

Jean Kirkpatrick offered a description of democratic elections thus:

Democratic elections are not merely symbolic. They are competitive, periodic, inclusive, definitive elections in which the chief decision – makers in a government are selected by citizens who enjoy broad freedom to criticise government, to publish their criticism, and to present alternatives (“Democracy in Brief”, 2000: 12).

Kirkpatrick’s position agrees with the requirements of democratic elections suggested by FES (2008, p. 6). This implies that to ensure citizen participation in the democratic process – an element of democracy, period elections should be held where representatives are elected.

In view of Heater, “Democracy in Brief” and FES’ description of the elements of democracy, Sections 4, 5, and 6 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) is explicit on the division of state powers into three parts. Hence, FES (2008) explained that it is the constitution of a country that settles how the State power is to be distributed among different organs and what attributions are to be assigned to them respectively.

Similarly, the concept of pluralism represents the many and varied public and private institutions within a state (“Democracy in Brief”, 2000). It averred that many democratic societies have thousands of private organizations, some are local, some national. They serve mediatory roles, and also offering individuals with the opportunity to become part of their society without been in government. On it part, FES (2008, p. 12) opined that a plural society is characterized by respect, acceptation and recognition of all points of view; no matter how different or diverging they can be; and their dissemination, as well as their should not be faced with any obstacle. On this note, FES (2008) alluded that in a democratic state, there is always an opposition that exists parallel with the government. The opposition controls the government. Going further, FES noted that it constitutes a beacon for the government. In “Democracy in Briefs” (2000) position, political competitors don’t necessarily have to like each other, but they must tolerate one another and acknowledge that each has a legitimate and important role to play.

Public opinion in a democratic state is made up of citizens or specific groups that reflect on their community and express their criticisms, their proposals or their agreement to influence the construction of political will (FES, 2008). It echoed the importance of free and independent media when it averred that as far as the dissemination of positions and opinions are concerned, it is the media, that is to say television, radio, newspapers, and the internet (web logs) that play a decisive role. “Democracy in Brief” (2000) stated in affirmation when it posited that to make intelligent decisions about public policy, people need accurate, timely, unbiased information.

2.1.3. Types of Democracy

According to “Freedom House” (1999), there are three basic types of democracy namely;

- a. Direct or Plebiscitary as espoused by Jean Jacques Rousseau, in which all citizens are involved, that is, as in ancient Athens.
- b. Representative or Liberal democracy. Protagonists of this type of democracy are John Stuart Mill, James Madison and John Locke. This type view democracy as a system of rule embracing elected officials who undertake to represent the interest and views of citizens within the framework of the rule of law.
- c. Pluralist democracy. “Democracy in Brief” (2000) avers that in a democracy, government is only one thread in the social fabric of many and varied public and private institutions, legal forums, political parties, organizations, and associations. This diversity is called pluralism. It further asserts that, pluralism assumes that the many organized groups and institutions in a democratic society do not depend on government for their existence, legitimacy, or authority. John Schumpeter and Robert Dahl are protagonists of pluralism.

The above classification of democracy by Freedom House agrees with the types or models of democracy offered by Held (1993, p. 16) which are;

- a. Direct or participatory democracy. Collective decision or decision by citizens.
- b. The liberal or representative democracy. Accountable leadership.
- c. The Marxist tradition sometimes referred to as people's democracy. This according to Marxist theory of democracy seeks to extend equality of all citizens from the political to the social and economic sphere of life.

Arinze (2008) observed that democracy is also differentiated and modelled using two broad but similar variables. While the first focuses on the procedure, the second focuses on the actors, the people exercising the power legally vested on them. Therefore, based on this consideration, democracy can be direct or indirect (Diamond & Plattner, 2006; Merkel, 1999; Loewenstein, 1935; "Democracy in Brief", 2000).

Direct Democracy

In direct democracy, the individual is directly involved in political decisions. Though direct democracy has a global presence (Boyer, 1992; Butler & Ranney, 1994; Johnston & Qvortrup, 2002; LeDuc, 2003), and often portrayed as not only having its roots but also flourishing in Switzerland (Sullivan, 1892; Kobach, 1993; Zimmerman, 1999), its set of plebiscitary processes are practiced extensively in the United States. This was the system practiced in ancient Greece where the people met periodically to discuss affairs of the state (Nwankwo, 1998). According to Boyle (1995), Greek democracy had three main elements. In the first place, supreme control of affairs was vested in the assembly of citizens and all citizens took part in it by discussing and voting in the government of their own city. Secondly, every citizen enjoyed freedom of speech in order that all sides could be heard before a decision was taken. Thirdly, political offices were open to all citizens, who were chosen for these positions by lot. Checks and balances were elaborately built into the system to prevent concentration of power on any individual or group (Hansen & Fischer-Hansen, 1994). In small states like Athens, direct

democracy was possible because it was relatively small. The state system has assumed a different shape with tens and even hundreds of millions of people being governed under a single government. It is, therefore, practically near impossible for direct democracy to be practiced.

Indirect Democracy

This type is fundamentally a representative democracy. It is a type of government where the citizens or electorates are allowed to elect people to represent them in government and to act as their agents in making and enforcing laws (Nwatu, 2008). Representative democracy – essentially liberal and bourgeois – is the most widespread political regime in the world today (de Benoist, 2008). According to Benoist, representatives are authorized by election to transform the popular will into acts of government.

In Nigeria, representative democracy was adopted since independence in the quest to ensure the citizens' participation in governance and in the efforts to enhance grassroots and overall, national development (Nwatu, 2008). Therefore, an effective practice of representative democracy according to Heater (1964), does not only bring about the delivery of dividends of democracy, but builds bridges of social and political interaction between the people and their representatives.

2.1.4. Challenges of Strengthening Democracy in Nigeria

Adegunde (2016) captured the challenges of legislature in strengthening democratic governance in four folds being;

- a. Instability of the legislature due to the abortion of successive republics. In support of this assertion, Adegunde explained that Nigeria is relatively new among the countries practicing modern democracy in the world. He averred that the present republic, unlike the previous three republics, the legislature is enjoying its longest period of uninterrupted existence.

- b. Low institutional development. This has militated against the performance of the legislature. This is attributable to the incessant intervention of the military in governance. At any time the military occupied the leadership of the country, the legislature is always dissolved and legislative activities suspended (Adegunde, 2016). This in my view defines the legislature as the only institution of state that differentiates between autocratic (military) and democratic regimes. The epileptic operations of the legislature has accounted largely for its snail – speed rate of development.
- c. Autonomy remains a concern. With the executive’s influence on its finance, composition and workings, a shade is cast on its ability of independent thought and decision. According to Adegunde (2016), the executive manipulates party political processes to ensure its preferred candidates stand for election. This also underscores the ugly role of overbearing godfathers.
- d. The mode of composition and qualification of members. People with relatively no prior knowledge are allowed to stand in elections; apparently, they have the money to prosecute the electioneering process. Adegunde (2016) submits that, “Money is politics and politics is money in Nigeria”.

2.1.5. The Historical Evolution of Legislative Functions in Nigerian Constitutions

Three main types of legislature according to Oyediran (1990) seem to have evolved in Nigeria’s political history. First, is the legislature that can neither modify nor reject executive proposals or legislatures with little or no policy making powers? These were in vogue between 1914-1922, when the Nigerian Council had no legislative authority. Second, the legislatures that have power to modify executive proposals, but could not reject such proposals. This role was significantly played by most of the second chambers in Nigeria (between 1954-1966) especially with respect to legislations on appropriations. For instance, the House of Chiefs in the Northern region had no power to originate, amend, delay or reject money bill. However,

other bills had to have the “approval of the House of Assembly and the House of Chiefs (Oyediran, 1990; p 11). Third, is the strong, active legislature with strong policy making power. This type according to Oyediran (1990), enjoyed the power to reject as well as modify executive proposals and could even on its own propose legislative bills. This trend started with the 1979 constitution and has lasted till the present democratic era.

Impliedly, legislative evolution in Nigeria was gradual-from “minimal to marginal and finally to the active legislature. By and large, the evolution of legislative function in Nigeria is intricately interwoven with the advent and consolidation of British colonial administration. Indeed, as rightly observed by Omolewa (1986) between 1900 and 1946, British control over Nigeria was through the Governor who was appointed by the Crown (Queen of England) and was responsible to it. However, the exercise of power by the governor differed from “place to place considering not only, the territorial vastness but the cultural, historical, religious and linguistics antecedents of some Nigerian groups” (Eke 1996: p 33). He was the sole authority in Southern Nigeria from 1900 to 1906 and Northern Nigeria from 1900-1914. Basically, he governed without the assistance of an executive or a legislative council to advise him. He merely governed with the assistance of British officials whom he appointed and who were responsible to him (Omolewa, 1986). However, between 1862-22, a legislative council was established for Lagos to advise and assist the governor in the political affairs of Lagos and later southern Nigeria from 1906. This legislative council remained largely ineffective and advisory (Gambari, 1985).

The amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates into the protectorate and colony of Nigeria encouraged Lord Lugard, the first Governor-General of Nigeria to create the Nigerian Council in 1914. This council had jurisdiction over the entire country except Lagos colony where the Lagos legislative council still existed. However, the Nigerian council was a

failure right from its inception because though it was large by virtue of its composition and representation of the entire country, yet it had no powers whatsoever over legislation and finance. It was merely seen as a debating society which confined itself to the discussion of the annual address of the Governor General (Crowther, 1980).

In 1922, a legislative council for the entire country was established for the first time. It consisted of 46 members of which 27 were officials of Government and 19 unofficial. In addition, the council had majority of officials who were non- Africans. For instance, 10 of the unofficial minority were Africans only 4 whom were elected — 3 from Lagos and 1 from Calabar. This election was facilitated by the elective principle of the Clifford constitution of 1922. However, in reality, this council had jurisdiction over Southern province including Lagos colony. The governor as it were legislated for the Northern provinces especially through proclamations but unlike in the Nigerian council he ceased to be sole legislator. In effect, the council, rather than the governor became the “law-making authority” (Oyediran, 1998: P 83).

The constituted legislature of 1946, 1951-1954, 54-59 provided opportunities for gradual socialization of a Nigerian national political elite into the British parliamentary government before independence in 1960. For instance, the Richard’s constitution of 1947 provided for a central legislature council and regional council with two of the three regions (Northern and Western regions) having house of chiefs in addition to the regional House of Assembly. Arguably, the council was pan-Nigerian because it did not only increase the membership, but also adjusted the proportion of officials to unofficial members in favour of the latter.

The 1951 McPherson’s constitution retained the Unicameral legislature at the center and bicameral for the Northern and Western regions. However, Eastern region maintained a unicameral legislature like the Central government. The 1954 Lyttleton’s constitution also provided for a single chamber of House of Representatives of 184 members together with a

speaker, 3 ex-officio members and 6 nominated members. In addition, the Eastern region now had two regional houses - House of chiefs and Assembly, like the North and East. This legislative arrangement existed till 1960. The independence and Republican constitutions of 1960 and 1963 provided for two houses at the center, namely the House of representatives and the senate. The House of representatives consisted of 312 members elected from the single member constituency. The senate comprised nominated members from the 4 regions- East, West, North and mid west (created after independence). Each of the 4 regions had 12 members, while 4 came from the federal territory and 4 others were appointed by the president on the advice of the prime-Minister (Asobie, 1998). Under this dispensation, the national parliament (House of Representatives and senate) had the exclusive preserve of making laws for the whole country. Any bill except money bill could originate from any of the two Houses. As a matter of fact, only the House of Representatives could originate money bill but the senate had the power to delay it for one month only (Nwaubueze, 2002).

Similarly, each of the regions had a legislature consisting of a House of Assembly and a House of chiefs. What indeed applied to the National Assembly in terms of functions also applied to the regions? Thus, the legislative powers of the federation were shared between the federal and regional Assemblies. For this purpose, there were three legislative lists namely exclusive, concurrent and residual respectively. The federal legislature took care of matters in the exclusive list like defence, external affairs, currency, immigration, post and telegraphs, passport and visa, etc. while other matters in concurrent list—police, education, industrial development and agriculture etc. were shared by both the federal and regional houses. Residual matters were handled locally by regional Houses. However, where a law validly enacted by a regional Assembly was inconsistent with a law validly made by the parliament, the law enacted by the Federal parliament prevailed and the regional law became void to the extent of its inconsistency (Fed. Rep. of Nig. 1963 Sect. 64 (4)). In view of the above, it could be said that

the indigenization of the legislature which started in 1954 became totally accomplished between 1960-1966.

However, throughout the earlier period, the executive was undoubtedly the stronger political institution. The legislature was very ineffective because it was unable to perform one of the fundamental functions of a legislature — criticism through policies and finance (Oyediran: 1998). The Legislature which emerged in the second Republic (1979- 83) and the one in place between 1999-2003 seemed much more active, stronger and vibrant compared to previous ones. Perhaps, this could be attributed to the presidential system of government adopted by Nigeria between 1979 and 1999, which emphasized the constitutional role of the legislature.

2.1.6. Constitutional Role of the Legislature and the Development of Democracy in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the extent to which the legislature has creditably performed its constitutional responsibility is a matter of opinion. In the first republic, 1960-66, the legislature was perceptively an appendage of the executive arm of government and this no doubt affected seriously the independence of the legislature. By virtue of the parliamentary system which Nigeria practised at that time, the cabinet ministers (executive) also sat in the parliament. The parliament (legislature) more or less did the bidding of executive interest without considering national interest. This was clearly demonstrated in the direct manner the federal government intervened in Western Region crisis of 1964 without proper consultation with the legislature. Consequently, the federal government dissolved the regional House of Assembly, suspended the governor and declared a state of emergency in the region (Asobie, 1998).

Similarly, in 1963 the Federal government created a fourth region through constitutional manipulation without proper input from the federal legislature. In fact, the motion for the

creation of the mid-west region was initiated when the Western region was being administered by an administrator. This was basically done to deny the western House of Assembly the constitutional right of determining whether or not its jurisdiction should be split into two. The motion was subsequently passed by the federal legislature and followed by the legislatures of the East and the North but not by the western legislature which had been put out of existence by an act of the federal government (Dudley 1966).

In the second republic, between 1979-1983 the constitutional role of the legislature was strengthened. This could be attributed to the provisions of the 1979 constitution which was essentially presidential. Again, deriving from its new constitutional status, there was high public respect for the legislature since members were now directly elected (Dudley: 1982). Therefore, it was not surprising that the National Assembly took very seriously its legislative and non-legislative roles especially screening of government nominees and proper scrutiny of appropriation bills. At the state level, the legislature was relatively inactive perhaps because of the overbearing attitude and influence of state governors.

Again, the legislature in the 1979-83 era did not necessarily allow party affiliation to undermine its constitutional role it could be said that most of the members of the legislature were politically matured. The senate was headed by Dr. Joseph wayas and the speaker of the House of Representatives was Chief Edwin Umeozoke both of whom were experienced and matured politicians. This accounted for the stability enjoyed by the National Assembly during this period. Even when and where disagreements occurred either on inter or intra-party issues such as the NPN-NPP accord, it was not allowed to scuttle legislative independence (Joseph Richard, 1991). Indeed, in a multi-party democracy as was the case between 1979 — 83 in Nigeria, it was not always easy for a party to have an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly. In 1979, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) did not secure an absolute majority in

the National Assembly (House of Representatives and Senate) but it still managed to survive through consensus and consultation-attitudes seriously lacking in the present political dispensation where the “Peoples Democratic” Party (PDP) is virtually dominant, overbearing and perhaps absolute and out rightly autocratic” (Onome Osifo — Whiskey 2002, p. 23). The NPN secured 168 out of 450 seats in the House of Representatives and 36 out of 95 seats in the senate. In the state Assembly elections, the NPN secured 487 seats in 8 states representing a total of 36.1 percent (Iroanusi, 2000; Joseph, 1991). To ensure proper working of democracy especially in terms of easy passage of bills, the party, entered into an accord with the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP). Even at that, the accord never translated into easy passages of federal executive bills and policies without some concessions to the opposition through lobbying which implied expending large sums of money (Iroanusi, 2000).

However, there were some instances the legislature showed immense weaknesses during this era. For instance, in 1981, an NPN dominated Kaduna State House of Assembly impeached the Governor of the state, Alhaji Balarabe Musa of the Peoples Redemption Part (PRP) primarily because of the minority status of his party in the State Assembly. This action, no doubt constituted an abuse of legislative power and process which of course heightened political tension and seriously damaged the public image and reputation of NPN as a party and the legislature as the bastion of democracy in Nigeria (Asobic, 1998). Similarly, the ease with which president Shehu Shagari deported Abduirahaman Shugaba, a member of an opposition party, Great Nigerian Peoples Party (GNPP) from Borno State to Chad Republic without any legislative control showed how weak the legislature was at that time. There is also no doubt that the legislature was tainted by corruption. However, if it existed (and I am sure it did) it certainly was not at the same alarming scale as that of the executive arm of government, a trend described by Joseph Richard (1991, p. 1) “as prebendalism — a situation of intensive and persistent struggle to control and exploit the offices of the state.”

In the Fourth Republic, the legislature became much more prominent with wider powers. During that current dispensation, activities of the legislature provided great deal of news and their proceedings provoked much public interest. Ordinarily, the legislature cannot be described as inefficient. Its role certainly transcended law- making. It managed through many steering committees in both the House of representatives and senate to conduct investigations into matters of national and public interest, such as the invasion of Odi in Rivers State and Ziki - Biam in Benue State by Federal troops; the Kwande political crisis of April-June 2004, the Ikeja military cantonment bomb explosion and flood disaster in many parts of the country to mention just a few instances.

The senate showed tremendous courage and perhaps strengthened democratic ideals in Nigeria when it overruled an ordinance on pension for all past heads of state in Nigeria which was included in the 1999 constitution by the military. The senate, by virtue of this action excluded all former military heads of state from receiving pensions spelt out in the 1999 constitution for past presidents and vice-president (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, sect. 84). However, if the Fourth Republic witnessed a dynamic legislature, it also saw a legislature which for a greater period of its tenure was either involved in corruption scandal or one face — off or the other with the executive. These problems no doubt hindered efficiency within the legislature. Consequently, the public image of the legislature became very poor since the general idea was that it pursued personal rather than collective national interest (Aboyade, 2002). This was aptly demonstrated in the prolonged fight with the executive over outrageous salaries and allowances (especially the scandalous N3.5 and later N5m furniture allowance) for its members. Indeed, the public opinion was that the legislative was not necessarily doing what it was elected to do. As a matter of fact, to say that these allowances were outrageously high is to state the obvious. Perhaps, what was even more despicable was that these emoluments were collected by legislators regardless of public attitude and opinions against it (Ohwahwa 2000).

This no doubt showed how insensitive they were to public feelings and opinions.

By and large, accusations of corrupt practices and financial recklessness trailed the legislature throughout the period 1999—2003. Some of these allegations bothered on contracts awarded by the leadership of both senate and House of Representatives which obviously were not in line with the financial regulations of the National Assembly (Abati, 2000). These no doubt eroded public confidence in the leadership of legislature and accounted for the eventual removal of senate president late Dr. Chuba Okadigbo on the basis of the findings of Senator Kuta committee reports which was set up to investigate the financial dealings of the upper house. However, House of Representatives speaker, Ghali Umar Na'Abba was not only fortunate to escape probe but even had the temerity to question the right of Nigerians to know how funds were being handled by the law-makers (Akinyede, 2000). Naturally, it will be difficult for the legislature to investigate the executive if it was also involved in dubious contract awards. Worst still, efforts to investigate alleged corrupt practices against the leadership of the National Assembly by the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) was stoutly resisted. In a dramatic but resolute move, the National Assembly not only proposed a repeal of the anti- corruption law but finally granted some far reaching changes which more or less amounted to an outright abrogation of the ICPC (Osadolor, 2003).

If indeed the central legislature was enmeshed in profligacy, the states were nonetheless involved in obvious brigandry and perfidy. Public indignation towards reckless government spending in the state legislature were rife in Ekiti, Ondo, Rivers and other States of the federation. By May 2001, the Rivers State House of Assembly had practically “relocated to the United States “purportedly for the purpose of engaging on working tours that would assist members to learn the tenets of democracy” (Ejiogu, 2002). Similarly, in some states like Lagos,

Abia, Kebbi, Oyo, etc. it was very disturbing to witness legislators engage in physical combats and disorderly conducts to settle sensitive issues (Adebayo, 2002).

The legislators no doubt thought very highly of themselves and pursued vigorously their own interest even at the expense of national or public interest. It was therefore not surprising that legislators as representatives lived too high above those they were representing and even awarded themselves salaries and other emoluments far above those officially recommended by the National Revenue mobilization, allocation and fiscal commission. Thus, against a recommended monthly pay of N141, 847.97 each senator took home a whopping N503 ,226.06 while each member of the House of Representatives earned N526,820 against the recommended Salary of N138,964.84 (Tukur, 2002) What this implied is that the legislature generally paid themselves huge additions to their salaries. Indeed, to all intents and purposes, politics was no longer seen as means of rendering service to society but as means of providing for oneself. The legislators did not only pay themselves above official rates, but even took the president to court for withholding their salaries for two months because of some executive — legislative misunderstanding. Meanwhile, poor pensioners were being frustrated by government inability to pay their meager pensions regularly and the legislators who were elected to represent them did virtually little or nothing to alleviate their frustrations.

The National Assembly also had some characters whose intellectual credentials and democratic antecedents were highly questionable. This no doubt worked against the public image of the legislature as a democratic institution. For instance, it was alleged that Senator Joseph Kennedy Waku from Benue state openly called for a coup d'etat against an elected government of which he was a part. This outburst revealed the quality of representation Nigerians were getting from some of the elected legislators. Similarly, controversial Chief Arthur Nzeribe, who played active role in the scuttling of the June 12, 1993 presidential

election through the infamous Association for Better Nigeria (ABN) was an elected member of the Nigerian Senate. He was also reported to have given strong support to late General Sani Abacha's self-succession project, which was nationally and internationally condemned as anti—democratic. He also was the first legislator to call for the impeachment of president Obasanjo on the 25th of April 2000. Indeed, that such a person was elected into the senate is itself a very sad commentary on the kind of politics and democracy that exists in Nigeria. However, if by April 2000, he wanted president Obasanyo impeached, by March 2001, (the following year) he had become one of the foremost campaigners for the president's sole candidature in the 2003 presidential election (Tribune, 2000). It is significant to note that Senator Nzeribe at this time was not even a member of the ruling party PDP and Obasanjo was not even half way through his tenure as a president.

Related to this, was also the abuse of impeachment as both legislative and executive weapons of check. It would be recalled that before the visit of the former United States President, Bill Clinton to Nigeria in 2000, the House of Representatives had moved a motion of vote of no confidence on president Obasanjo. It could therefore be rightly argued that the greatest threat to Nigeria's fledgling democracy is not the military, but the internal bickering within the legislature, and between the legislature and the executive arm of government (Tell magazine, 2000). This situation was also responsible for the refusal of the then speaker of the House of Representatives, Na'Abba to allow Evans Enwerem (a former senate president) to preside over a joint sitting of the National Assembly in honour of a visiting Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien. This action was not only embarrassing to the nation but also a gross violation of the constitution because senator Enwerem had not been removed from office at that time. The impeachment issue reached its peak on August 2002, when the House of Representatives asked the president to resign from office within two weeks or risk being impeached. Public opinion was neither in favour of the president nor the propriety of the

allegations against him.

According to Adebayo (2002), the legislature was also guilty of the allegations they leveled against the president. Indeed, if the president had committed an impeachment offence, it was the 2001 doctored electoral Act of which the speaker of-the House of Representatives and Senate President were accomplices (Omale, 2002). As a matter of fact, it was not only improper but also hypocritical for the legislature especially the lower House to accuse the president of financial impropriety when its members had previously refused to subject themselves to any financial audit (Bature, 2002). However, it must also be admitted that the president contributed to the crisis. His overbearing attitude coupled with his belief that he could do without the legislature especially on important issues like Appropriation Act, sensitized the legislature against him. Again, by virtue of his style of leadership he had created many enemies some of whom were legislators from even his own party, PDP. It took the intervention of the PDP leadership and some elder statesmen especially former Heads of State like General Yakubu Gowon and Shehu Shagari to completely discourage the legislature from impeaching the president. Impeachment was not only restricted to the centre. In some states especially Abia, Enugu, Kano, Oyo, Benue, Borno, Kogi, Plateau, Bayelsa and Cross-River, speakers of state legislatures were unceremoniously removed from office through impeachment. In some of these states, the impeachment process was violent, lawless and chaotic. However, these episodes were merely taken as learning process considering the fact that Nigeria had been under military rule for a long time (Onuoha, 2002).

2.2. Empirical Review

Scholars have continued to conduct series of research on the roles of the legislature with the objective of arriving at viable recommendations on its activities conducive to strengthening democratic governance. Ikalumhe (2016) conducted a study on *The Role of the National Assembly in Sustaining Democracy in Nigeria: 1999 to 2015*. The study was aimed at examining the role of the National Assembly, arguably, one of the key institutions of democracy, played in protecting the country and sustaining Nigeria's democracy. The study established among other things that the National Assembly have played a significant role in sustaining Nigeria's democracy via the enactment of legislations to strengthen other democratic institutions. It concluded that within the period under review, the National Assembly rejected the proposal to amend the constitution and prolong the tenure of President Olusegun Obasanjo. Ikalumhe further asserted that through motions, petitions and resolutions, views and interests of citizens as well as groups were aggregated and represented. He however, concluded that government agencies should take such resolutions more seriously.

Similarly, Abegunde (2016) in his study *Legislature and Democratic Sustainability in Nigeria* which was designed to: study put the Nigerian legislature into historical perspective; investigate the functions of legislature in Nigeria democracy, as well as examine the challenges of legislature in sustaining Nigerian democracy. He noted that there is no amount of constitutional framework that would guarantee sustainable democracy that will translate to national development, without first making the process a "commonwealth" where everybody will be involve in its defense. Hence, he averred that democracy is a system of government where there is separation of power among three organs of government and the citizens enjoys adequate representation through the legislature. Abegunde concluded that the legislature is central to democratic stability, in that it regulates executive and judiciary from being autocratic in discharging their responsibilities. On this note, he stated that the legislature formulate laws

and enforce implementation of policies that will guarantee the fundamental rights of the citizens and equally state the powers of the government. Some challenges confronting the National Assembly in strengthening Nigeria's democracy according to him includes but not limited to: low institutional development, mode of composition and qualification of members, godfather factor, etc.

To Nwaubani (2014) in his study of *The Legislature and Democracy in Nigeria, (1960-2003): History, Constitutional Role and Prospects*, which was aimed at examining the constitutional roles of the legislature in the promotion of democracy in Nigeria revealed that the role of the legislature as a policy-making body and constitutional "watchdog" (via the use of the various instruments of oversight) cannot be over emphasized. However, he decried the negative public perception of the National Assembly in the democratic process. This Nwaubani attributed to the nature of Nigerian politics which he argued was often motivated by material and resources other than quest for service. On this noted, Nwaubani concluded that despite the numerous problems of the legislature in Nigeria especially between 1999- 2003, it still has good prospect as an efficient and primary democratic institution.

Finally, the Economic Commission for Africa, ECA (2004) in its study of *The Role of Parliament in Promoting Good Governance* designed to analyse the contribution parliament can make to promote good governance and consolidate democracy in Africa, focused on the representational role of parliament thereby examining how parliaments respond to the growing public pressure for greater involvement, information, accountability and better service delivery to citizens. ECA noted that people's involvement in policy decision making and implementation processes is an important aspect for the promotion of democracy and good governance and key to the promotion of development in Africa, particularly at a time the continent needs to marshal all its available resources for economic and social development. Some findings of its study includes: parliament as an institution is but a vital part, of the

democratic system, despite efforts undertaken by most African countries in promoting people's participation in decision making processes, a number of them still lack appropriate laws, policies and mechanisms towards enhancing citizens' participation in economic, social and political decision-making.

From the various studies highlighted above, it is instructive to state that, to the best of my knowledge, none of the studies reviewed investigated the most recent National Assembly being the 8th Assembly. Hence, in view of the historical nature of this study, its significant contribution to knowledge is that it examines the impact of the roles of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening Nigeria's democracy. In order to achieve this, this study identified its lawmaking function as a means of evaluating its role, specifically, the Age Reduction Bill (Constitutional Amendment) and the National Social Investment Programmes (NSIP).

2.2.1. Gap in Knowledge

The presentation of literatures was from historical perspective on the development of the legislature to clarification on key concepts of the study, then, to the empirical review of related contents. Pointedly, on the historical perspective as well as the development of the National Assembly, the various scholarly contributions are remarkable seeing that, they provided insights into the history of the National Assembly as well as its development as an institution over the years. Similarly, conceptual issues posed by the study such as the: meaning of the legislature and democracy were addressed with a good number of literatures. However, where discrepancies exist in literature, the study took positions with appropriate justifications.

On the empirical review, the studies conducted by Ikalumhe (2016), Abegunde (2016), Nwaubani (2014), and the Economic Commission for Africa, ECA (2004) were mentioned. Specifically, while Ikalumhe (2016), Abegunde (2016) as well as Nwaubani (2014) examined the National Assembly and democracy, ECA (2004) investigated the role of Parliaments in

ensuring good governance. It must be stated that these studies investigated the main variables in the present research, nevertheless, in a different contexts. Most significantly, while the present study measured the roles of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening Nigeria's democracy, the studies reviewed examined previous Assemblies. Similarly, whereas this study was delimited to the lawmaking role of the 8th Assembly viz a viz the NSIP and the Not Too Young to Run laws, the literatures presented, viewed the role of the National Assembly in sustaining democracy from a holistic view, focusing on the core functions of the legislature being: legislative, representation and oversight.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is the blueprint or guide for a research (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). It is a framework based on an existing theory in a field of enquiry that is related and/or reflects the hypothesis of a study (Adom, Hussein & Agyem, 2018). Sinclair (as cited in Adom et al., 2018) compared the role of the theoretical framework to that of a map or travel plan. Thus, when travelling, the map guides your path. Comparatively, the theoretical framework helps the researcher to remain within the confines of the accepted theories to make his/her contribution to the body of knowledge (Adom et al., 2018).

Therefore, I situated this study within the confines of the social contract theory.

2.3.1. Social Contract Theory

The social contract, originally published as “on the social contract” or “principles of political rights” in 1762 by Jean – Jacques Rousseau, is a book in which he theorized the best way to establish a political community (Rudebeck, 2012). The social contract which is believed to have originated during the age of enlightenment is concerned about the legitimacy of the state over the individual.

According to Rudbeck (2012), modern social contract thinking – first associated with Hobbes and later with Locke and Rousseau – is based on the notion that all human (or more precisely all men) are born free and equal. For Hobbes the social contract was an instrument to lift humans out of a state of nature and into a political community where the perpetual warlike conditions of the former would give way to the pursuit of a common good in the latter. This he proposes would be achieved by the establishment of a social contract to regulate the interaction between members of the group and empowered an authority to uphold the rules and regulations specified in the contract. Shapiro (2003) suggested that through the contract people would ‘forswear unilateral action in the defence of one’s rights provided all others forswear such action as well. This in practical sense, places the might of a state in one man (Lessnoff, 1986).

On his part, Locke suggested the sharing of sovereignty between the crown and the parliament. Locke argued that the social contract in England’s systems of mixed constitution became an agreement between the community and the government thus making the Crown accountable to the ruled (Rudbeck, 2012, p. 8) for “as supreme execution of the law made by a joined power of him with others, allegiance being nothing but an obedience according to law, which, when he violates, he has no right to obedience” (Locke, 1978, p.193). Locke further suggested holding the sovereign accountable to the law through revolution which was restricted to instances of gross violations or abuses. No other forms of contention were legitimate (Rudbeck, 2012).

Rousseau’s social contract agreed with Hobbes and Locke on undertaking obligations voluntarily (Rudbeck, 2012). However, he differed on its connectivity to history, hence, Damrosch (2007, pp. 346 – 347) saw the social contract as, “an implicit understanding that exists continuously, here and now, as the shared commitment without which no system of any kind can be legitimate”. His proposition accepted the general will as a norm, thereafter, he sort

for the entrenchment of direct democracy or what this study refers to as representative democracy. Rousseau's view was re-echoed by Gough (1936) when he argued that;

For the name social contract (or original contract) often covers two different kinds of contract, and, in tracing the evolution of the theory, it is well to distinguish them. Both were current in the 17th century and both can be discovered in Greek political thought.... [The first] generally involved some theory of the origin of the state. The second form of social contract may be more accurately called the contract of government, or the contract of submission.... Generally, it has nothing to do with the origins of society, but, presupposing a society already formed, it purports to define the terms on which that society is to be governed: the people have made a contract with their ruler which determines their relations with him. They promise him obedience, while he promises protection and good government. While he keeps his part of the bargain, they must keep theirs, but if he misgoverns the contract is broken and allegiance is at an end.

This study therefore, considers Rousseau's view of the people as the ultimate purveyor of sovereignty critical to it. Hence, it attempted to build its concepts according to the dictates of Rousseau's "general will". This is more so, as the legislature – elected representatives of the people – carries out its constitutional duties since according to Gough (1936), the social contract is primarily about protection and good government, which the legislature must ensure through the enactment of seasoned laws for strengthening democratic ethos.

2.3.2. Application of the Theory

The social contract theory adopted for this research cannot be more fitting in the sense that, this study focuses on the responsibility of the National Assembly to advance democratic tenets. In doing so, we must look at its lawmaking function within the context of the legislature's systemic characteristics as an agent entrusted powers to fashion laws for the socio-economic

and political gain of the citizenry. The legislature is a critical component of the three arms of government which form the structure of the Nigerian political system. Within this structure, the legislature performs functions which contribute to the effectiveness of the system to provide the dividends of democracy to the Nigerian people. Lawmaking is one of those critical legislative functions and its positive or negative conduct affects the output of the political system.

The social contract model further explains the nature and trajectory of governance in an ideal arrangement where roles are performed within the framework of extant provisions. Sadly, a sharp disconnect and blatant disregard for the demands of the good governance, justice, equity and probity has seen a reversal of roles in the Nigerian context, where executive and private Bills are seen to be self-serving or to advance predetermined political end. This leaves the legislature in a quandary in the performance of its role as a representative body.

From the foregoing, this study promises to be insightful, probing and interesting while humble recommendations will be provided to halt this ideological and cultural haemorrhage.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents and explains the methodology that was used for this study. It covers the study's research design, population of the study, sampling technique, sampling size, sources of data (primary and secondary), instruments of data collection, as well as the method of data analysis and presentation.

3.1. Research Design

Research design is a blueprint for conducting a study with control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings (Burns & Grove, 2003). Since this study is descriptive in nature, survey research design was used in this research work. Survey research design uses both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. Thus, I used questionnaire and structured interview in this study.

3.2. Population of the Study

The target population for this study were citizens within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The choice of FCT residents for the survey was purposive because this study assumes that the effects of the activities of the National Assembly is not peculiar to any place. It is important to note therefore, that the World Population Review, WPR (2019) put the population of Abuja at 3, 095, 118.

3.3. Sampling Technique

The sampling procedure for this was purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique is the deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities of information the informant possesses. It is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of informants. Simply put, a researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of their knowledge or experience (Bernard, 2002). Therefore, purposive sampling was used to select the respondents needed for this study because of the nature of the study.

3.4. Sample Size

The sample size for the study was determined using Cochran's Formula. The choice of Cochran's formula was deliberate because of the relatively large size of the population.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where: n = corrected sample size =?

$$p = z\text{-score of } 95\% \text{ level of confidence} = 1.96$$

$$p = \text{estimated proportion of the population which has the attribute in question} = 0.5$$

$$e = \text{Margin of Error (MoE) or desired level of precision} = 0.05$$

$$q = 1 - p = 1 - 0.5 = 0.5$$

$$\text{Hence, } n = \frac{(1.96 \times 1.96) \times (0.5 \times 0.5)}{0.05 \times 0.05}$$

$$= \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$

$$= \frac{0.9604}{0.0025}$$

$$= 384.16$$

$$\approx 385$$

$$\therefore n \text{ (sample size)} = 385$$

On the other hand, ten (10) respondents were chosen for interview from the sample size stated above being three hundred and eighty-five (385). This number was chosen purposively in view of the quality and depth of information desired.

3.5. Sources of Data

The data used for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Primary Data

The primary data was sourced from questionnaire and structured interviews as mentioned above. Respondents for the study were presumed to be literate and were conversant with the variables under focus in the study.

Secondary Data

The secondary data were sourced from books, journals, articles, newspapers, magazines, etc., and other relevant materials from the internet.

3.6. Instrument of Data Collection

The research instruments that were used for this study are the questionnaire and structured interview. The choice of these instruments of data collection was deliberate because the study sought both inductive and deductive knowledges. Thus, the questionnaire and structured interview served inductive and deductive knowledge purposes, as well as ensured the reliability of the information contained in each other.

3.7. Method of Data Analysis and Presentation

The primary data collected were analyzed, reframed and edited where necessary, in order to get rid of errors and ensure consistency. Responses to each question was also be categorized, discussed, summarized and classified. This process will aid in discarding unwanted responses and as well reduce the stress of tabulation. The Statistical package for the social scientists (SPSS) was used in analyzing the data collected. The method of analysis was simple descriptive statistics which include frequency table and percentage.

However, content analysis was used for qualitative data. Thus, qualitative data were coded in textual form. Finally, the data were presented in tables, charts, bars and graphs for easy comprehension.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter covers the presentation, analysis and discussion of the data that were collected in the field. Three Hundred and Seventy-Five (375) questionnaires were administered to respondents but only Three Hundred and Twelve (312) were returned completely filled. Also, only six structured interview were administered out of the Ten proposed for the study. The questionnaire as well as the structured interviews were administered to residents of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, and key informants respectively. Table 4.1 shows the summary of the distribution of research instruments.

Table 4.1: Summary of Research Instruments

S/N	Research Instrument	Returned	Not Returned	% Returned	% Not Returned
1	Questionnaire	312	63	83.2	16.8
2	Structured Interview	6	4	60	40

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Finally, the presentation, analysis and discussion of data was done according to the objectives of the study outlined in chapter one.

4.1. Social demography

Sex

The Table below shows the sex distribution of the population.

Table 4.2: Sex

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Male	153	49.0
Female	159	51.0
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

From Table 4.2, the sample size was made up of one hundred and fifty-three (153), 49.0% males and one hundred and fifty-nine (159), 51.0% females. The reason for the high number of female respondents could be due to gender sentiments attracted by the study due to my sex.

Age

Age distribution of a population is a vital component of the social demography of a study. Thus, the age bracket of the study population is shown in the Table below.

Table 4.3: Age Bracket

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
18-38	176	56.4
39-59	102	32.7
60 and above	34	10.9
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

From Table 4.3, the frequencies for the age brackets 18-38, 39-59 and, 60 and above are represented by 176 (56.4%), 102 (32.7%) and 34 (10.9%) respectively. The high frequency of age bracket 18-38 is unconnected to the desire of the study to seek information from the grass root which the stated scope of this study are targeted at, which apparently, represents the bulk of the educated pool of the respondents.

Education

As a part of the social demography of the study area, Table 4.3 presents respondent's level of education.

Table 4.4: Level of Education

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
FSLC	14	4.5
SSCE	90	28.8
OND/HND	79	25.3
BSC/BENG/BED/BA	96	30.8
POSTGRADUATE	33	10.6
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

The Table 4.4 shows that 14 (4.5%) of the respondents are First School Leaving Certificate holders, 90 (28.8%) are bearers of Senior School Certificate Examination, 79 (25.3%) OND/HND certificate holders, 96 (30.8%) are holders of various Bachelor's degrees, while 33 (10.6%) have postgraduate degrees. However, the seeming literate composition of the study area may be due to the drive/quest of government to educate the citizenry, and perhaps, the desire of the study is seek key informants.

4.2. Research Findings

This section provided findings based on the objectives stated in Chapter One.

4.2.1. Examine the roles of the National Assembly in Nigeria's democracy

Findings showed that a reasonably high number of respondents have heard about the National Assembly as shown in the Table below.

Table 4.5: Heard about the National Assembly?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	302	96.8
No	3	1.0
Can't Say	7	2.2
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

According to Table 4.5, 3 (1.0%) respondents have not heard of the National Assembly while 7 (2.2%) could not say if they have heard of the National Assembly or not. Comparatively, the respondents for this study were qualified to provide the information needed for the study since a majority of them are aware of the National Assembly. Going further, 257 (82.4%) of the respondents are aware of the roles of the National Assembly, 41 (13.1%) do not know the roles of the National Assembly, 11 (3.5%) could not state if they are aware of the roles or not, while 3 (1.0%) of respondents did not provide response to this question. On this note, it is pertinent to state that the majority of respondents being those with profound

knowledge of the roles of the National Assembly will suffice in ascertaining the impact of such roles in strengthening Nigeria’s democracy.

The frequency of the knowledge of the roles of the National Assembly is shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Knowledge of the Roles of the National Assembly

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	257	82.4
No	41	13.1
Can’t say	11	3.5
Missing responses	3	1.0
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

Pin pointedly, respondents noted the following as the roles of the National Assembly.

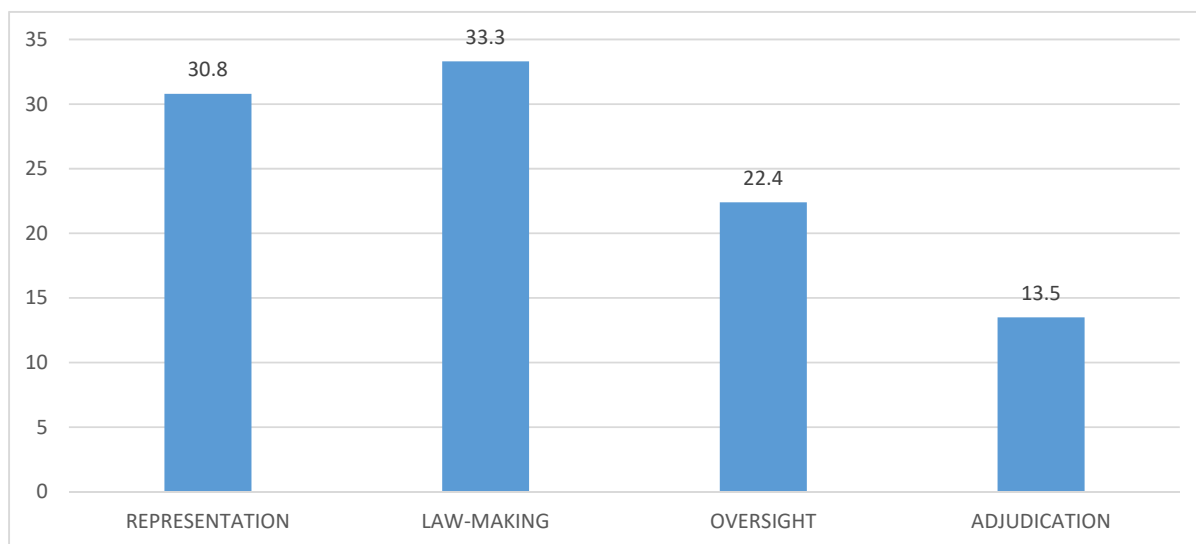


Figure 4.1: Roles of the National Assembly (Fieldwork, January, 2020)

From figure 4.1, the orderly arrangement of the roles of the National Assembly is; Law-making, Representation, Oversight and Adjudication. This agrees partly with the position of Adegunde (2016) when he concluded that in ensuring democratic sustainability, the system must be driven by the primary functions of the legislature being: law – making, oversight and representation.

4.2.2. Assess the Performance of the 8th National Assembly in Strengthening Democracy in Nigeria

Field data suggests that 212 (67.9%) of the respondents are familiar with the 8th National Assembly, 60 (19.2%) are not familiar with it, while 40 (12.8%) could not state for sure if they were familiar with the 8th National Assembly or not. This is contained in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Knowledge of the 8th National Assembly

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	212	67.9
No	60	19.2
Can't Say	40	12.8
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

Going further, respondents varied on their satisfaction with the way the 8th National Assembly carried out its roles. While 97 (31.1%) argued that they were satisfied with the 8th National Assembly in carrying out its role, 144 (46.2%) were not satisfied, and 71 (22.8%) were undecided on whether or not they were satisfied with the 8th National Assembly in carrying out its roles. This is represented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Satisfactoriness with the 8th National Assembly

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	97	31.1
No	144	46.2
Can't Say	71	22.8
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

The high number of respondents which were not satisfied with the 8th National Assembly could be due to the negative public perception of the National Assembly. In this vein, 111 respondents alluded that the 8th National Assembly was impactful in strengthening Nigeria’s democracy, 121 argued otherwise, while 80 respondents were undecided on whether or not was the 8th National Assembly made any impact on strengthening Nigeria’s democracy. These responses, are shown in the Table below.

Table 4.9: Was the 8th Assembly Impactful in Strengthening Nigeria’s Democracy?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	111	35.6
No	121	38.8
Can’t Say	80	25.6
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

The positions expressed in Table 4.9, further buttresses the negative public perception of the National Assembly. Thus, their roles are often unassumingly subsumed into those of the executives by the public. Therefore, based on Adegunde’s classification of democratic sustainability on the cardinal roles of the legislature, the performance of the 8th National Assembly in the area of oversight are shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Oversight

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	34	10.9
Satisfied	49	15.7
Neither	75	24.0
Dissatisfied	92	29.5
Very dissatisfied	59	18.9
Missing responses	3	1.0
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

From Table 4.10, 18.9% respondents were ‘very dissatisfied’ with the performance of oversight by the 8th National Assembly, 29.5% were ‘dissatisfied’ with its conduct of oversight, 24.0% were ‘neither’ satisfied nor dissatisfied, 15.7% felt ‘satisfied’ with the conduct of oversight, while 10.9% were ‘very satisfied’ with the conduct of oversight by the 8th National Assembly. However, 1.0% respondents was undecided on the conduct of oversight by the 8th National Assembly. In describing the importance of legislative oversight, Arowolo (2010) averred that “oversight or surveillance of the executive and the administration is premised on the ground that the legislature enact the laws that can create administrative agencies and these in turn are assigned functions and responsibilities by such enabling laws”. Similarly, Saliu and Mohammed (2010) alluded that legislative oversight is the process by which legislatures understand and monitor the performance of the executive arm and its agencies. On this note, Table 4.11 shows a list of select oversight visits by the 8th National Assembly.

Table 4.11: Select Oversight Visits by the 8th National Assembly

S/N	Visit	Date
1	Working visit to the Naval Headquarters	July 19 th , 2016
2	Nigerian Air Force (NAF) Training Command, Kaduna.	October 13 th – 15 th , 2016
3	Composite Group (CG 89) Bauchi.	October 13 th – 15 th , 2016
4	Tactical Air Command (TAC) Makurdi	October 13 th – 15 th , 2016
5	Headquarters Western Naval Command, Naval Dockyard, Training Command, Navy flying unit, and barracks at Ojo	January 25 th – 27 th , 2018
6	Joint committee visit to the Federal School of Social Works Emene, Enugu State	October 31 st , 2018
7	Joint committee visit to the National Centre for Women development, NCWD	December 3 rd , 2018

Source: Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Airforce, Navy, Women and Social Development (2015-2019)

In the aspect of law-making, 10.6% respondents expressed that they were ‘very dissatisfied’ with law-making in the 8th National Assembly, 29.5% were ‘dissatisfied’, 23.1% were ‘neither’ satisfied nor dissatisfied with law-making, 25.3% stated they were ‘satisfied’ with the performance of the 8th National Assembly in law-making, while 11.5% were ‘very satisfied’ with the 8th National Assembly in law-making. This is shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Law-making

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	36	11.5
Satisfied	79	25.3
Neither	72	23.1
Dissatisfied	92	29.5
Very dissatisfied	33	10.6
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, UNECA (2012), “in the classical sense the key role of parliament is to make new laws and change or improve old ones laws.” Hence, UNECA averred that “this is the reason why the parliament is also known as the legislature. This function places the primacy in governance on the legislature (Van Gestel, 2013). Thus, the generally held view that the business of governance begins with law – making. Adegunde (2016) explains that law – making is an interesting process which involves passing of motions into resolutions and bills into laws with the main aim of contributing to national development and defending the sovereignty of the country.

To Premium Times Nigeria (2019, October 5th), some of the bills passed by the 8th Assembly were regarded as a “landmark for the attention and wide reception they received”. Most lofty dreams which before now, lacked the force of law like the Age Reduction for elective positions to ensure inclusivity in governance, etc., were initiated and passed by it. A few examples are shown in Table 4.13:

Table 4.13: Bills passed by the 8th National Assembly and Assented to by the President

S/N	TITLE	BILL NO
1.	National minimum wage Act, 2019	SB 722
2.	2018 Appropriation Act	SB 575
3.	2019 Appropriation Act	SB 721
4.	Constitution Amendment Act, 2018 (Not too young to run).	Section 65(1)B, Section 106(b) age 30-25, Section 13(b) age 40-35
5.	Nigeria center for disease control and prevention (Established) Act, 2017	HB 573
6.	Anti – Torture Act, 2017	HB 120
7.	Compulsory Treatment & Care for Victims of Gunshot wounds Act, 2017	HB 119
8.	Agricultural & Rural Management Training Institute Amendment Act, 2016	HB 241
9.	Prevention of Crime Amendment Act, 2016	HB 233
10.	Small & Medium Scale industries development Agency Amendment Act, 2016	HB 259

11.	Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Act, 2016	HB 292
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Source: Bills, and Rules and Business Offices, National Assembly (2019)

In view of the scope of this study, respondents’ responses to the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) and the Age Reduction Bill (Constitution Amendment Act, 2018) are given below.

National Social Investment Programme (NSIP)

The Federal Government of Nigeria established the National Social Investments Programmes (NSIP) in 2016, to tackle poverty and hunger across the country. The suite of programmes under the NSIP focuses on ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable populations, including children, youth and women (National Social Investment Programme, NSIP, 2019). The NSIP noted that since 2016, these programmes combined have supported more than 4 million beneficiaries country-wide through a fair and transparent process supported by the Ministry of Budget and National Planning (MBNP) and other notable MDAs with aligned goals (NSIP, 2019). The NSIP (2018) states the following as some of the programmes under the National Social Investment Programmes (NSIP): National Cash Transfer Programme (NCTP), National Home Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP), Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP), N-Power – Volunteer and Job Creation Programme, etc.

The strategic objectives of the NSIP according to the National Social Investment Programme, NSIP (2018) are:

- a) Increase the poor and vulnerable households with access to income/livelihood by providing access to targeted funds, thereby improving household ability to absorb economic shocks

- b) Reduce inequalities and wide disparities
- c) Increase access to education and health services, as well as empowering vulnerable sectors thereby improving the quality of life index
- d) Reduce rate of youth unemployment, linking interested volunteers to address existing gaps
- e) Eradicate malnutrition in school age children by establishing a sustainable school feeding program
- f) Provide affordable credit for MSMEs thereby increasing business revenue and facilitating market linkages
- g) Stimulate productivity and growth, especially in our rural communities
- h) Bringing into visibility those who have never before been registered on any platform by capturing identities as required by our laws, for proper planning
- i) Promote access to financial services and increase rate of financial inclusion

Based on the foregoing, the performance of various NSIP programmes interrogated by this study being N-Power, NHGSFP and NCTP, will be discussed briefly. On this note, 18.3%, 23.7%, 22.1%, 22.4%, and 12.5%, rated the impact of the N-Power programme as bad, poor, fair, good and excellent respectively. Similarly, 1.0% respondents did not rate the impact of the N-Power programme. Table 4.14 shows the responses of respondents on the impact of the N-Power programme.

Table 4.14: N-Power

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	39	12.5
Good	70	22.4
Fair	69	22.1
Poor	74	23.7
Bad	57	18.3
Missing responses	3	1.0
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

In the same vein, respondents' views on the impact of the NHGSFP is contained in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: National Home Grown School Feeding Programme

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	17	5.4
Good	44	14.1
Fair	31	9.9
Poor	89	28.5

Bad	125	40.1
Missing responses	6	1.9
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

From Table 4.15, 40.1%, 28.5%, 9.9%, 14.1%, and 5.4% respondents rated the impact of the NHGSFP as bad, poor, fair, good, and excellent respectively, while 1.9% respondents did not provided responses on the impact of the programme. This few, may make up a greater number that have not heard or are not sure of the impact of the NHGSFP. Finally, views on the impact of the National Cash Transfer Programme (NCTP) are provided in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: National Cash Transfer Programme (NCTP)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	14	4.5
Good	28	9.0
Fair	61	19.6
Poor	94	30.1
Bad	115	36.9
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

Table 4.16 is indicative of the fact that the NCTP is unpopular and have underperformed. Where 19.6%, 9.0%, and 4.5% respondents rated its impact as fair, good and

excellent respectively, it is instructive to note that the NCTP is not renowned for its supposed vision and so, has not ultimately contributed in strengthening democracy which is by the way of creating equity.

Age Reduction Bill/Not Too Young to Run Bill (Constitution Amendment Act, 2018)

Nigeria has the third-largest youth population in the world and a median age standing at about 18 years (Gender IT, 2018, December 13th). However, the nation's political echelons, though, are dominated by older, over-50 politicians. This under-representation of a prominent section of the society, Gender IT reckoned lead to the campaign #NotTooYoungToRun. The "Not Too Young To Run" bill sought to reduce the presidential age limit from 40 to 35 and, for governorship positions, from 35 to 30. The bill was sponsored by Tony Nwulu in the House of Representatives and AbdulAziz Nyako and it addressed a major impediment to youth participation in politics. It was a positive action towards closing the representation gap and signaled a shift towards inclusive politics. As a result of the reduction of age limits, Nigeria witnessed a new wave of competent and credible young women and men who aspired to run for office in 2019 Elections. For the first time in Nigeria's post-independence history, young people between the ages of 25-30 were legally empowered to contest for seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Respondents' views on the impact of the Not Too Young to Run is shown below.

Table 4.17: Not Too Young To Run

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	48	15.4
Good	71	22.8
Fair	59	18.9
Poor	58	18.6
Bad	70	22.4
Missing responses	6	1.9
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

While it can be argued that there exist mixed reaction on the impact of the Not Too Young To Run Bill as seen above, it is important to state that participation in the electoral process does not translate into outright victory. However, since democracy is primarily about the freedom of participation, this law by itself deepened the democratic space with its numerous provisions that altered age barrier for elective offices. The impact of this piece of legislation can be seen in the distribution of youth candidacy as shown in Figure 4.2.

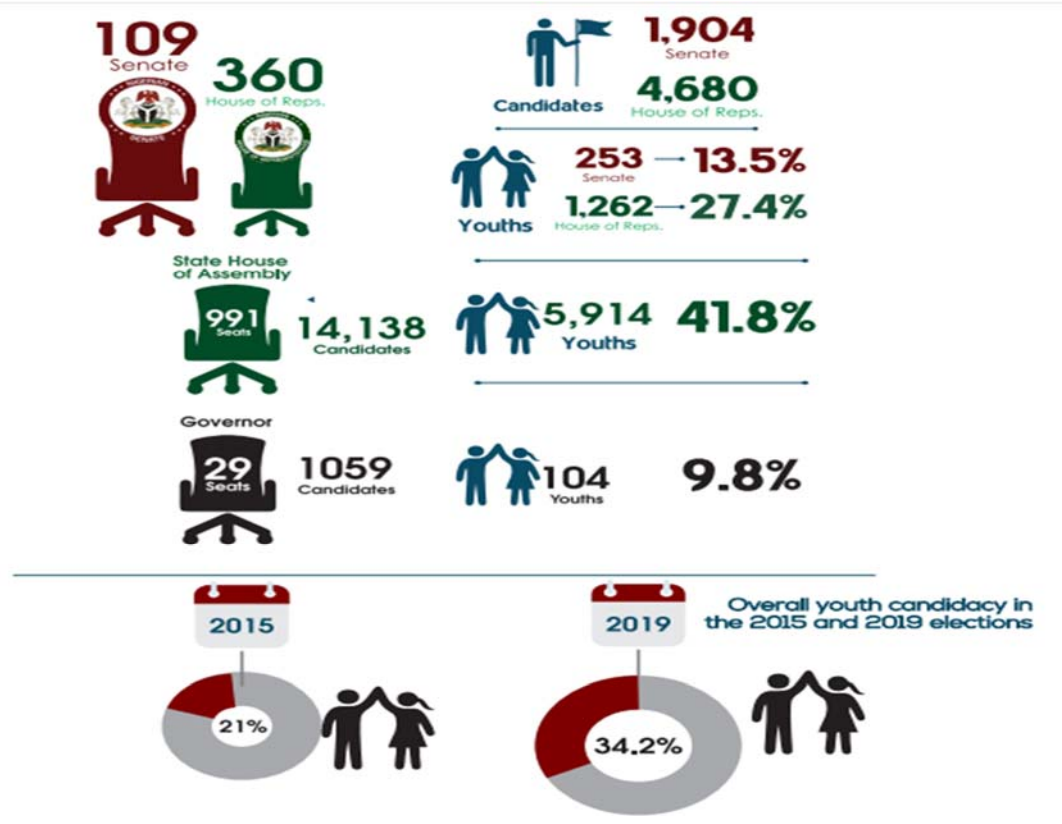


Figure 4.2: Youth Candidacy in 2019 Election (YIAGA Africa, 2019)

Going further, respondents varied on their opinion of the performance of the representative function of the 8th National Assembly. While 24.0% were ‘very dissatisfied’, 28.2% were ‘dissatisfied’. Also, 28.5% respondents stated that they were ‘neither’ satisfied nor dissatisfied with the performance of the representative task of the 8th National Assembly, 8.7% noted that they were ‘satisfied’, whereas 9.6% respondents were ‘very satisfied’. The negative public perception of the National Assembly comes to fore in considering the various positions expressed. These positions are shown in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Representation

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	30	9.6
Satisfied	27	8.7
Neither	89	28.5
Dissatisfied	88	28.2
Very dissatisfied	75	24.0
Missing responses	3	1.0
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020

Based on the above, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, UNECA (2012) noted that the representative role of the legislature involves “ensuring that citizens and other stakeholders have a voice at the National level and are, therefore, involved in National governance issues.” Therefore, it averred that “the representation of people and their interest is the basis of all parliamentary systems” (UNECA, 2012, p. 15). On this note, Chukwumerije (2014) reasoned that representation serves as the vehicle through which the views and concerns of a given constituency is conveyed.

Representation is an important function of the legislature. Hence, the National Assembly was divided into 360 federal constituencies and 109 senatorial districts to allow for adequate representation in governance (Adegunde, 2016). A section of the list of representative function undertaken by the 8th National Assembly is shown in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Select Representative functions of the 8th National Assembly

S/N	Visit	Date
1	IPU/UNWOMEN Annual Parliamentary Conference, New York	March 13 th , 2019
2	62 nd Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, New York	March 12 th – 26 th , 2018
3	61 st Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UN-CSW), New York	March 13 th – 24 th , 2018
4	Petition over nonpayment of compensation payable for interests on land acquired for Nigeria Army Barracks along Ibadan-Akure dual carriage way at Ibodi-Ijesa/Igila, Atakumosa West Local Government Area of the State of Osun.	✓
5	The attempted murder of Mr. Emmanuel Stephen by officers and men of Nigerian Navy led by an officer popularly called and known by his nickname “ Grand- P” OF Majidun Awori Navy Barracks, Ikorodu, Lagos State: Our demand for compensation to Mr. Emmanuel Stephen and Disciplining of the affected Officers and Men.	✓
6	Petition To Investigate The Invasion Of Federal Capital Territory Indigenes’ Land Around The	April 10 th , 2019

	Nnamdi Azikiwi International Airport By Nigerian Army.	
7	Complaint of my wrongful dismissal from the Nigeria Army by Eke Bartholomen.	✓

Source: Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Airforce, Navy, Women and Social Development (2015-2019)

Finally, Table 4.20 shows that 21.8% of respondents were ‘very dissatisfied’ with the conduct of the adjudicative function of the 8th National Assembly, 22.4% argued that they were ‘dissatisfied’, 35.3% were ‘ok’ with the adjudicative role of the 8th National Assembly, 11.5% were ‘satisfied’, 4.2% were ‘very satisfied’ with the adjudicative role of the 8th National Assembly, while 4.8% of respondents did not provide responses. At this point, it is pertinent to state that public education on the roles of the National Assembly is key, as the adjudicative function of the 8th National Assembly seems to be somewhat unpopular given that a vast majority of respondents (138 of 297) were largely not satisfied with the performance of this role.

Table 4.20: Adjudication

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	4.2	4.2
Satisfied	36	11.5
Neither	110	35.3
Dissatisfied	70	22.4
Very dissatisfied	68	21.8
Missing responses	15	4.8
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

From the foregoing, the performance of the 8th National Assembly can be summed up using the *Parliamentary Centre Report Card Methodology*² as shown in Table 4.21.

² See http://www.parlcent.ca/indicators/index_e.php

Table 4.21: 8th National Assembly Performance Report Card

	<i>Legislation</i>	<i>Oversight</i>	<i>Representation</i>	
<i>PERFORMANCE TESTS</i>	Level and Range of activity	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Openness and Transparency	Yes	No	Yes
	Participation	Yes	No	Yes
	Accountability	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Policy and Program Impact	Yes	No	Yes

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

Table 4.21 shows that legislative, oversight and representative activities were high in the 8th National Assembly. However, oversight continues to be less open and transparent compared to legislative and representative functions performed within the period. In the same vein, oversight was minimal in participation, and policy and program impact evaluation. This, notwithstanding, in the area of accountability, the 8th National Assembly was seen to have done well given certain indices.

4.2.3. Examine the Challenges that Confronted the 8th National Assembly in its Effort aimed at Deepening Democracy in Nigeria

Field data showed that 76.3% of respondents agreed that there were challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly, 7.7% thought otherwise, while 16.0% could not say if there were challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly or not. In the same vein, the key informants interviewed agreed that there were also factors that militated against the effectiveness of the 8th National Assembly in its drive to strengthen Nigeria’s democracy. The responses from the questionnaire are presented in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22: Challenges that Confronted the 8th National Assembly

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	238	76.3
No	24	7.7
Can't Say	50	16.0
Total	312	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, January, 2020.

Pin pointedly, respondents noted the challenges to include; instability of the legislature due to the abortion of successive republics which has hindered the development of the legislature, thus, amounting to low institutional development, high rate of legislative turnover, lack of legislative autonomy and, composition and qualification of members. These challenges are represented in the chart below.

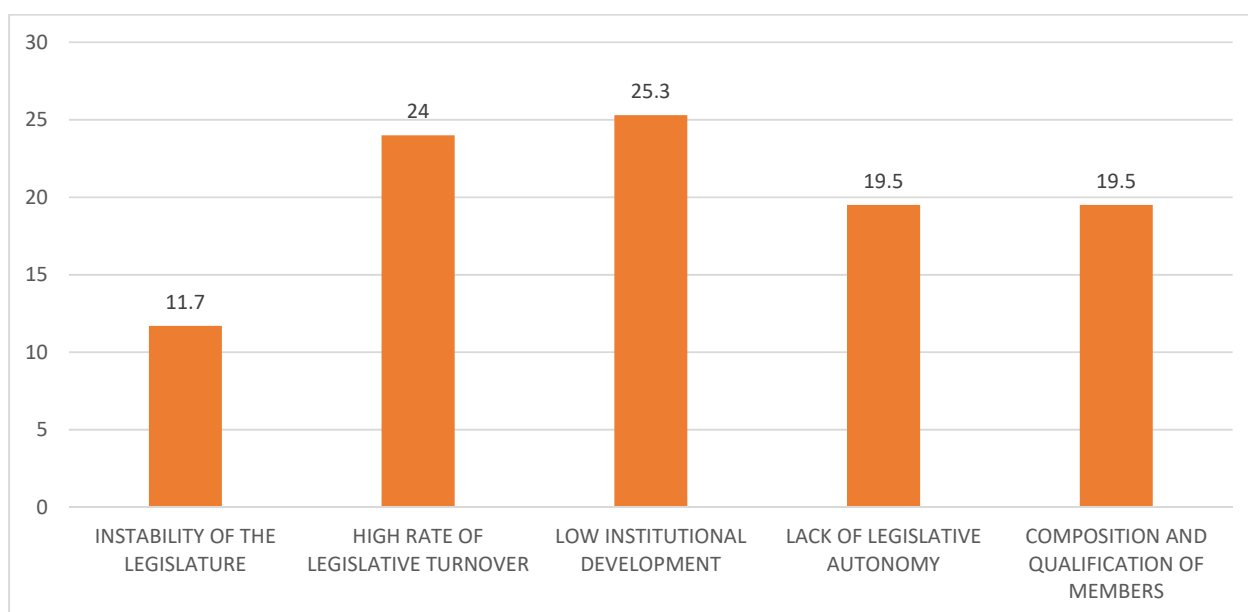


Figure 4.3: Challenges of Strengthening Democracy (Fieldwork, January, 2020)

Structure interviews carried out with key informants to ascertain the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its efforts to strengthen Nigeria’s democracy featured negative public perception of the legislature and, executive-legislative relations, most prominently. The latter, informants argued was responsible for the President assenting to only 80 (15.5%) of the 515 bills passed by the 8th National Assembly. On this note, it is pertinent to state that executive-legislative relations within the time scope was apparently conflictive.³ According to Rockman (1983), causes of executive-legislative could be: ego, personal policy goals, etc.

Consequently, the strategies listed by respondents to mitigate the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly includes; recruitment of qualified by political parties, continuous development for members and staff of the National Assembly, more credible electoral process, and ensuring legislative independence.

The suggested solutions are represented in the graph below.

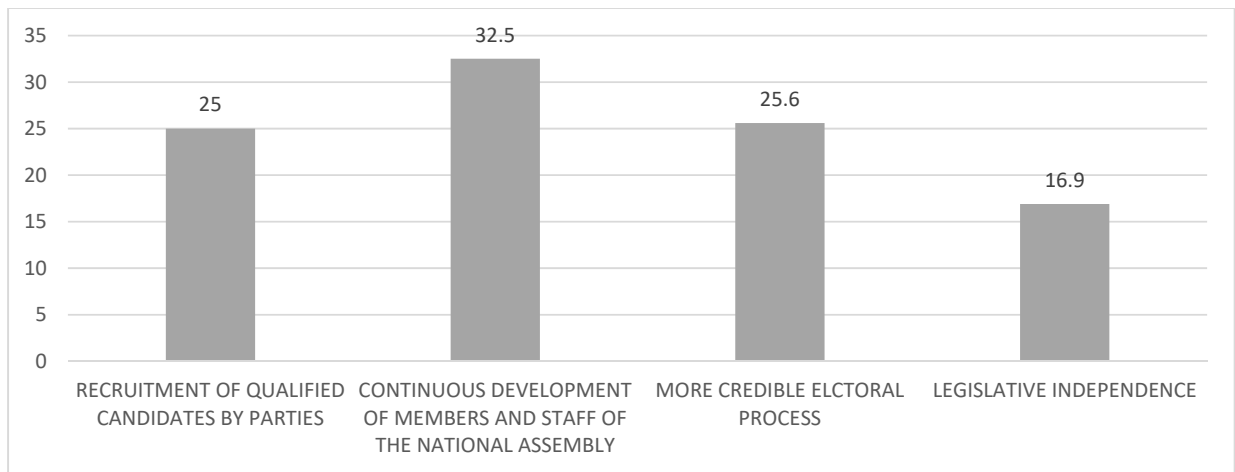


Figure 4.4: Solutions to the Challenges of Strengthening Democracy (Fieldwork, January, 2019)

³ Rockman argued that executive-legislative relations could be constructive or conflictive.

In consonance with the challenges stated above, majority of respondents identified continuous development of members and staff of the National Assembly, reduction of the rate of turnover, and recruiting of qualified candidates by political parties, as respective solutions to each of; low institutional development, more credible electoral process and composition and qualification of members. Similarly, key informants interviewed suggested public education and better understanding between executive and legislative players in cases of overlapping responsibilities, as strategies that would mitigate the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly. Public enlightenment becomes pertinent on the heels of negative perception of the National Assembly resulting from lack of knowledge of its functions and place as a foremost democratic institution.

4.3. Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the field data based on the set research questions.

4.3.1. What roles do the National Assembly play in Nigeria's democracy?

In answering the above question, the study noted the roles of the legislature to include: representation, law-making, oversight and adjudication. On this note, quite a number of respondents being 33.3% stated that their most familiar role of the legislature is lawmaking, 30.8% argued that they are more conversant with the legislatures' representative function, 22.4% of respondents opined that oversight is the legislature's most popular function, while 13.5% chose adjudication as the most popular function of the legislature.

4.3.2. How is the Performance of the 8th National Assembly in Strengthening Democracy in Nigeria?

To answer the above question, the scope of the study being lawmaking underpinned subsequently by the various pieces of legislations supporting the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) and the Age Reduction Bill (Constitution Amendment Act, 2018), are worthy of note. On a scale of bad, poor, fair, good and excellent, the various components of NSIP like N-Power, NHGSFP and NCTP, had 18.4%, 23.9%, 22.3%, 22.7%, and 12.6%; 40.8%, 29.1%, 10.1%, 14.4%, and 5.6%; and 36.9%, 30.1%, 19.6%, 9.0%, and 4.5% respectively. Similarly, the Not Too Young To Run/Constitution Amendment Bill had 22.9%, 19.0%, 19.3%, 23.2% and 15.7%. However, while it can be seen that the NHGSFP and NCTP programmes are not as popular as the N-Power programme, empirical data affirmed the popularity of the Age Reduction Bill/Not Too Young To Run, hence, YIAGA (2019) gave the breakdown of the number of youths that participated in the 2019 general elections as: 1, 904 (13.4%), 4, 680 (27.4%), 5, 914 (41.8%) and 104 (9.8%), for Senate, House of Representatives, State Houses of Assemblies and Governorships respectively. It is in this regard, that this study concludes that the Not Too Young To Run/Age Reduction Bill, deepened Nigeria's democracy with its core cardinal of inclusivity.

4.3.3. What Challenges Confronted the 8th National Assembly in its Efforts to Strengthen Democracy in Nigeria?

Like most issues in Nigeria, the 8th National Assembly was plagued with a number of challenges. According to respondents, some of the challenges includes: instability of the legislature due to the abortion of successive republics, which has resulted in its low institutional development,, high rate of legislative turnover, lack of legislative autonomy and, composition and qualification of members. Similarly, key informants interviewed concluded that the most

prominent challenges of the 8th National Assembly were: negative public perception of the legislature and, executive-legislative relations.

4.3.4. What are the Strategies that will mitigate the Challenges that confronted the 8th Assembly in its Effort to Strengthen Democracy in Nigeria?

This study concludes that the strategies that would mitigate the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly were: recruiting qualified representatives, continuous development for members and staff of the National Assembly, more credible electoral process, and ensuring legislative independence. In the same vein, key informants suggested public enlightenment and a cordial relationship between the executive and legislative.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter covered the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

5.1. Summary

The study was designed to assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening democracy in Nigeria. In this study, the 8th National Assembly refers to the legislative span of 2015 – 2019 within the Fourth Republic, while strengthening democracy are the efforts geared towards further democratization, strengthening of existing democratic structures and institutions for the achievement of overall democratic goals. On this note, democracy was conceived as the institutional arrangement of the legislature aimed at strengthening democracy in Nigeria.

The objectives of the study were to: identify the roles of the legislature in a democracy, assess the efforts of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening democracy in Nigeria, identify the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its effort aimed at deepening democracy in Nigeria, and proffer solutions to the challenges that militated against the 8th Assembly's actions aimed at strengthening democracy in Nigeria. This objectives were pursued vigorously using properly laid out research methodology.

Based on the above, the study adopted the survey research design, employing the purposive sampling technique. Data was collected with the use of questionnaires. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the key informants that provided the primary data, while the secondary data were taken from published materials. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0) was used to analyze quantitative data, while the content analysis was employed in analyzing qualitative data.

Findings showed that the role of the 8th National Assembly and by extension the legislature, is paramount in strengthening democracy. However, the Nigerian case is pathetic in that the public have a negative perception of the National Assembly which may have resulted from poor public education on the roles/importance of the legislature in a democracy. In this vein, specific subjects covered by the scope of this study such as the National Social Investment Programme and the Constitutional Amendment (Not Too Young To Run Bill), were not attributed to the efforts of the 8th National Assembly even though those were made possible because of constitutional role of law-making. Therefore, this study observed that there is inadvertent attempt to fuse the roles of the legislature with those of the executive. On this note, public enlightenment may have reduced the negative perception of the National Assembly given that credit for policies will be awarded duly.

Stemming from the above, the study noted the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its efforts geared towards strengthening Nigeria's democracy to include; instability of the legislature due to the abortion of successive republics, high rate of legislative turnover, low institutional development, lack of legislative autonomy and, composition and qualification of members. In view of this, the study suggested the recruitment of qualified representatives, continuous development of members and staff of the National Assembly, reduction of the rate of turnover, and ensuring legislative independence, as measures that would mitigate the challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly.

Succinctly, the study notes that primacy in governance lies with the legislature. Hence, every business of governance begins with the activity of law-making.

5.2. Conclusion

Democracy is a system of government that gives people the opportunity for self-actualization through propelled political proficiency, economic development and social stability of the polity. In order to sustain democratic ideals, the institution of the legislature is important. Hence, it is argued that democracy is a system anchored on the informed and active participation of the people, and the legislature, being the vehicle for equal and wider representation. On this note, the focus of this study was to examine the extent of the effects of the role of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening Nigeria's democracy. To this end, the law-making role of the National Assembly was critically examined, with specific focus on the National Social Investment Programmes (NSIP) and the Age Reduction/Not Too Young To Run Bill (Constitutional Amendment Act).

In view of the above, the National Assembly, which is constitutionally charged to make laws for the peace and good governance of the Federation, is a pivot for modern democratic systems. Hence, it would be safe to assert that it is the strongest predictors of the survival of every democratic development. Therefore, to strengthen democratic gains, the role of the National Assembly is cardinal.

Conclusively, it is imperative that the recommendations outlined in this study be implemented, so as to ensure sustained drive towards democratic tenets by the National Assembly. Efforts should therefore be made to improve the public perception of the National Assembly because apparently, there is an attempt to ascribe unto the executives the credit due the National Assembly. This is more so, as members of the public lack profound knowledge of the roles of the legislature.

5.3. Recommendations

In view of the findings in this study, the recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Public education: the public should be made aware of the workings of the legislature. Overtime, negative perception have continued to trail the activities of the National Assembly which may have resulted from poor public enlightenment campaign. This recommendation is particularly important especially on the heels of the fact that not many persons can differentiate between the activities of the executive and legislature in a constitutional democracy such as Nigeria's. It would also acquaint the public with what the legislature should do, have done or would have done.
- 2) Continuous development of members and staff of the National Assembly: It is a known fact that some law-makers as well as personnel of the bureaucracy of the National Assembly, display such an embarrassing level of ignorance of the legislative process such that one is compelled to wonder if they could contribute meaningfully to the legislative process. It is therefore recommended that a regime of training and retraining should be put in place to educate the law-makers and staff of the National Assembly on the business of law-making in the best interest of Nigerians. While it must be noted that arms of the National Assembly such as the National Institute of Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) has been undertaking this task conscientiously, members of the legislature as well as its bureaucracy should be encouraged to enroll for such trainings frequently so as to suit the ever-changing nature of the legislative process.
- 3) Recruitment of qualified candidates by political parties: the educational qualification of elected representatives comes to fore here. The argument however is, the process of recruitment of candidates are purely the prerogative of political

parties. Therefore, political parties should ensure the presentation of ably qualified candidates for elective positions, especially the National Assembly. This would cause a deficit in terms of training needs of members of the National Assembly.

- 4) More credible electoral process: Electoral process in Nigeria is bedeviled with corruption, nepotism, thuggery, Godfather factor and chicanery, etc. The effect of this is that the process in some cases has produced charlatans, nit-wits, booth-lickers, shenanigans and political jobbers, as well as placed preeminence on loyalty rather than competence. The presence of these shades of characters in the National Assembly for instance, derogates from the notion of good governance. It is the suggestion that this process be overhauled and revamped to ensure the election of representatives for purposeful and result-oriented legislation that would guarantee the sustenance of Nigeria's democracy.

5.4. Contribution to Knowledge

The contribution of this study to knowledge is that, it appraised the performance of the Economic Recovery Growth Plan which the NSIP is a part of, and also, creates an avenue for the assessment of the performance of the Not Too Young To Run Bill.

5.5. Suggestion for Further Research

Public Perception and the Legislature as a vehicle for Democratic Sustainability: Issues, Challenges and Prospects.

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Appendix I

Questionnaire

Dear sir/Madam,

Request for your assistance in completing this Research Survey

I am a student of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS/UNIBEN) carrying out a study on the topic: *Assessment of the Performance of the National Assembly in Strengthening Democracy in Nigeria: A Study of the 8th Assembly*.

In this study, strengthening democracy is referred to as all efforts geared towards further democratization, strengthening of existing democratic structures and institutions for the achievement of overall democratic goals. On the other hand, 8th National Assembly is refers to the legislative span of 2015 – 2019 within the fourth republic. The fourth republic is the democratic dispensation heralding the promulgation of the fourth post – independence constitution of 1999. Kindly answer the following questions for me as frankly as possible. These questions are only for research purpose and the information you give is strictly confidential.

Section A: Bio data

- 1) Your sex: Male [] Female []
- 2) What is your age bracket? 18 – 38 [] 39 – 59 [] 60 and above []
- 3) Level of education: First School Leaving Certificate [] Senior School Certificate Examination [] OND/HND [] BSc/BEng/BEd/BA [] Postgraduate [] others []

Section B: Identifying the roles of the legislature

- 4) Have you heard about the National Assembly? Yes [] No [] Can't Say []
- 5) Do you know the roles of the National Assembly? Yes [] No [] Can't Say []
- 6) If your response in 5 above is yes, tick the role you are familiar with. Representation []
Law-making [] Oversight [] Adjudication []

Section C: Assessing the efforts of the 8th National Assembly in strengthening democracy in Nigeria

- 7) Are you familiar with the 8th National Assembly? Yes [] No [] Can't Say []
- 8) Are you satisfied with the 8th National Assembly in carrying out their role? Yes [] No []
Can't Say []
- 9) Do you agree that the 8th National Assembly was impactful in strengthening Nigeria's democracy? Yes [] No [] Can't Say []

On a scale of 1-5, being 1=very dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=Ok, 4=satisfied and 5=very satisfied, rate the performance of the 8th National Assembly according to each of the following roles.

- 10) Oversight 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- 11) Law-making 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- 12) Representation 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- 13) Adjudication 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

On a scale of 1 – 5 with; 5 (excellent), 4 (good), 3(fair), 2 (poor) and 1 (bad), rate the impact made by the following programs supported by the 8th National Assembly.

- 14) N-Power 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []
- 15) Not Too Young to Run 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

16) National Home Grown School Feeding Programme 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

17) National Cash Transfer Program 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

Section D: challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its effort aimed at deepening democracy in Nigeria

18) Do you agree that there are challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its efforts aimed at strengthening Nigeria's democracy?

Yes [] No [] Can't Say []

19) Tick any of the options below if your response in Q. 18 is yes.

Instability of the legislature due to the abortion of successive republics []

High rate of legislative turnover [] Low institutional development []

Lack of legislative autonomy [] Composition and qualification of members []

Section E: solutions to the challenges that militated against the 8th Assembly's actions aimed at strengthening democracy in Nigeria

20) Which of these strategies would mitigate the challenges that confronted the 8th Assembly in strengthening democracy? Recruiting qualified representatives [] Continuous development for Members and staff of the National Assembly [] Reduction of the rate of turnover [] Legislative independence []

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix II

Interview Guide

I am a student of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) carrying out a study on the topic: *Assessment of the Performance of the National Assembly in Strengthening Democracy in Nigeria: A Study of the 8th Assembly*.

In this study, strengthening democracy is referred to all efforts geared towards further democratization, strengthening of existing democratic structures and institutions for the achievement of overall democratic goals, on the other hand, 8th National Assembly refers to legislative span of 2015-2019 within the Fourth Republic.

As I explained to you previously, this interview will cover two sections: challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its effort aimed at deepening democracy in Nigeria, and solutions to the challenges that militated against the 8th Assembly's actions aimed at strengthening democracy in Nigeria.

Section One: Challenges that confronted the 8th National Assembly in its Effort aimed at Deepening Democracy in Nigeria

1. What challenges confronted the 8th National Assembly in its efforts to strengthen democracy in Nigeria?

Negative public perception of the legislature []

Executive-Legislative relations []

Instability of the legislature due to the abortion of successive republics []

Low institutional development []

The mode of composition and qualification of members []

Section Two: Solutions to the challenges that militated against the 8th Assembly's actions aimed at Strengthening Democracy in Nigeria

2. What are the strategies that will mitigate the challenges that confronted the 8th Assembly in its effort to strengthen democracy in Nigeria?

Recruiting qualified candidates []

Continuous development of members and staff of the National Assembly []

Legislative Autonomy []

Public education []

Better understanding between the executive and legislature []

Thank you for your cooperation.