

**CONSTITUENCY OFFICE AND EFFECTIVE LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATION IN  
ABAKALIKI/IZZI FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY**

**BY**

**EMMANUEL NNABUIKE EZIKE**

**(PG/NLS/1900092)**

**IN PARTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTERS  
IN LEGISLATIVE STUDIES (MLS) OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR  
LEGISLATIVE AND DEMOCRATIC STUDIES/UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, EDO  
STATE.**

**JUNE, 2022**

**CERTIFICATION**

This dissertation titled “*Constituency Office and Effective Legislative Representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency*” presented by Emmanuel Nnabuike Ezike (PG/NLS/1900092) has met the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Legislative Studies (MLS) of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies/University of Benin, Edo State.

-----  
**Dr. Augustine Osigwe**

-----  
**Date**

-----  
**Coordinator**

-----  
**Date**

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is a product of my research efforts, undertaken under the supervision of Dr. Augustine Osigwe. 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 have been duly acknowledged through the references.

-----

Emmanuel Nnabuike EZIKE

**PG/NLS/1900092**

**APPROVAL PAGE**

This is to certify that this dissertation “*Constituency Office and Effective Legislative Representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency*” has been read and approved as having met the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Legislative Studies of the University of Benin/National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies is approved for contribution to knowledge.

---

**Dr. Augustine Osigwe**  
**Supervisor**

---

**Date**

---

**Dr A. Abiola**  
**Director PG**

---

**Date**

---

**Internal Examiner**

---

**Date**

---

**External Examiner**

---

**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my boss Hajiya Fatima Shinkafi, the Executive Secretary, Solid Minerals Development Fund (ES-SMDF) for her uncommon support and understanding.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My profound gratitude goes to my supportive and indefatigable supervisor Dr. Augustine Osigwe for his constant readiness to put me through in the course of fine-tuning this. I wish to also acknowledge my lecturers, Dr. Asimiyu Abiola, Dr. Jake Dan-Azumi, Dr. Adeyemi Fajingbesi, Dr. Joseph Asemota, Prof. Attahiru Jega, Prof. Sam Egwu, and the staff at the postgraduate school of the National Institute for legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS).

Other individuals worthy of mention also are my immediate supervisors in the office, Mr. Bello Munzali and Mr. Andrew Osogbo for their support and understanding throughout my period of study. My wife, Mrs. Ezike Emanuella and our lovely children Udochukwu, Amarachukwu and Ifechukwu are dully recognized for availing me the emotional stability to further my studies.

I wish to also express my sincere gratitude to my coursemates who contributed directly or indirectly to this work.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	
Certification -----	I
Declaration -----	II
Approval page -----	III
Dedication -----	IV
Acknowledgment -----	V
Table of contents -----	VI
List of Abbreviations -----	IX
List of Tables -----	X
List of Figures -----	XI
Abstract -----	XII
 <b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Background of the study -----	1
1.2 Statement of the problem -----	3
1.3 Research questions -----	5
1.4 Research objectives -----	5

1.5 Justification for the study -----	6
1.6 Scope and limitations of the study -----	6
1.7 Definition of key terms -----	7
1.8 Organization of chapters -----	8

**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

2.1 Concept of Representation in Nigeria -----	9
2.2 Legislature -----	12
2.3 Functions of the legislature -----	15
2.4 Constituency Office and Legislative Representation -----	18
2.5 Empirical review -----	21
2.6 Gap in knowledge -----	26
2.7 Theoretical Framework -----	26

**CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1 Research design -----	29
3.2 Sources of data -----	29
3.3 Study area -----	29
3.4 Population of the study -----	30
3.5 Sampling procedure and size -----	31



3.6 Survey instruments -----	32
------------------------------	----

3.7 Method of data analysis -----	32
-----------------------------------	----

3.8 Expectations based on the agency theory -----	32
---	----

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION**

4.1. Demography Information -----	34
-----------------------------------	----

4.2.Effects of constituency office on the well-being of the constituents -----	37
--	----

4.3.Mechanisms through which interaction exists between the constituents and their elected representatives -----	41
---	----

4.4.Factors influencing the performance of the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency office -----	43
---	----

4.5.Discussion of findings -----	46
----------------------------------	----

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

5.1 Summary -----	49
-------------------	----

5.2 Recommendations -----	50
---------------------------	----

5.3 Conclusion -----	51
----------------------	----

References -----	54
------------------	----

Appendix

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CLPR	Closed-List Proportional Representation
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
LGA	Local Government Area
NASS	National Assembly
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
PLAC	Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre
RMAFC	Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 2.1	House of Representative-Constituency
Table 3.1	Target Population
Table 4.1	Responses from the Questionnaire Administered
Table 4.2	Demography Information of the Respondents
Table 4.3	Responses on the effect of Constituency office
Table 4.4	Response of the respondents on the mechanism for interaction
Table 4.5	Response on the factors affecting the performance of federal constituency office

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

- Figure 4.1 Type of engagement in the constituency office
- Figure 4.2 Ways constituency office has impacted life positively
- Figure 4.3 Platforms for Engagement with Constituency office

## ABSTRACT

Broadly, this study assessed the influence of constituency office management in ensuring effective legislative representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency. The work inquired on the extent of utilization of constituency office by elected representative and their constituents to depend legislative representation, thereby providing resource for academic research and filled the void occasioned by dearth of literature on constituency offices, precisely in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency, Ebonyi State. Accordingly, the specific objectives were to: examine the effect of constituency office on the well-being of the constituents of Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency, examine the mechanism through which interactions exist between the constituents and their elected representatives, examine the factors influencing the performance of the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency office, and identify lessons that would assist in improving the relationship between the constituents and their elected representatives.

The study adopted the mixed research design using quantitative and qualitative data. Data were taken from primary (questionnaires) and secondary (official publications of the National Assembly and government journals, articles, magazines, and internet, among others) sources. Content analysis and descriptive statistics were used for the analysis of data. As a result, a simple percentage was used for the analysis of quantitative data while the content analysis was adopted for the analysis of qualitative data. Data were presented in themes, charts, and tables.

Objective one found that there exists a Constituency office for Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency located at Ogoja Road by Rice mill junction (scan filling station). The Constituency office serves as the link through which the electorates channel their requests to their elected representatives. Therefore, objective two showed that constituents reach their elected representatives through the use of phone calls, Email, Social Media, Radio/TV Phone-in Programs, and so on. Following, objective three revealed that constituency office has impacted constituents positively as it provided platforms where money/gift item are distributed to constituents, helps to secure jobs for unemployed constituents, serves as a platform for awarding scholarships, among others.

Although lack of professional staff, standard operating procedure, training of constituency office staff, among others, were found to be the factors affecting the performance of constituency office. Overall, objective four recommended the training and retraining of constituency office staff, strategic collaboration with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), transparency in the management of constituency office, etcetera, as lessons that can be applied for the effective management of constituency office in the future.

**CONSTITUENCY OFFICE AND EFFECTIVE LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATION IN  
ABAKALIKI/IZZI FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY, EBONYI STATE**

**BY**

**Emmanuel Nnabuike EZIKE**

**PG/NLS/1900092**

**BEING**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR  
LEGISLATIVE AND DEMOCRATIC STUDIES (NILDS)/UNIVERSITY OF BENIN  
POST GRADUATE PROGRAMMES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTERS DEGREE IN LEGISLATIVE  
STUDIES (MLS)**

**APRIL, 2022**

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background to the Study

In any democratic political system, representation has become a key and important aspect in deciding the role of the legislature. This refers to the process by which voters in a designated constituency select from a pool of candidates who are also from that constituency and elect them to the legislative branch of government to represent their interests (Blidook & Kerby, 2011). Legislators fulfill this responsibility by establishing specific links between the people and the government. They are required to act in a way that satisfies the voters' expectations. What they do and how they do it has grown in importance to the point where political scientists can no longer ignore it (Chaligha, 2009). Political theorists now consider it a determinant in determining the democratic nature of the legislative branch of government in particular, as well as the community as a whole (Fenno, 2000).

Constituency service, or conscientious representation of the electoral constituency through the agency of the constituency office, is an important component of legislative success (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre [PLAC], 2016). In the legislative sense, a constituency office is a structured office space or outlet, frequently located in the legislator's electoral district or constituency, where a member of a local, regional, or national legislative body can engage and meet their voters (Smith, 2003). It's also been characterized as a formal and non-partisan venue where a representative and residents can meet and discuss developmental issues; serves to promote relationships between lawmakers and citizens (Kenya's Parliamentary (Service) Act 2005). Constituency offices, in essence, symbolize the legislative representation principle of bringing representation home and taking parliaments to the people to address their issues and ambitions. In simple terms, a constituency office is a concept and practice that allows elected officials to

maintain close and interactive relationships with constituents, thereby strengthening democratic governance.

Fenno (2000) argued that constituency offices are critical forums for lawmakers to communicate with constituents on the responsiveness of government policy, to lobby for resource allocation to constituents/districts, and to provide other constituency-related services (cultural, jobs, and security). Macleod (2006) demonstrated that in Canada, constituency offices act as a forum for individuals and their politicians to discuss ideas. Smith (2003) previously discovered that representative perceptions of their constituents or districts influence their responsiveness and representation. Constituency officers, in general, are stated to assist in successful representation by providing constituents with the required channel for incorporating their community's ambitions and needs into national policy or law. Additionally, it serves as an information and resource center, storing data on constituency mappings such as demography, population, trade and commerce, socio-cultural and political dynamics for decision-making purposes (Macleod, 2006; PLAC, 2016). Despite their centrality to legislative representation, constituency offices and operations are frequently hampered by a variety of factors, including the absence of organic laws governing the establishment, services, management, and administration of parliamentary constituency offices and legislators' lack of political will to run effective constituency offices (Macleod, 2006).

The central role played by the constituency office in effective legislative representation cannot be overemphasized as this facilitates the presentation of the constituency interest in the parliament. Constituency engagement enhances the support of electorates toward their elected representatives. This trend has become more pronounced in parliamentary studies due to the vital role it plays in enhancing electorates' support in Nigeria. Given the rising trend of constituency services in Abakiliki/Izzi Federal Constituency, it is important to recognize the changing nature of legislative



representation whereby MPs give more attention to constituency services relative to that devoted to government legislation. Therefore, it is against this backdrop that this study examines how constituency office enhances effective legislative representation in Abakiliki/Izzi Federal Constituency of Ebonyi State.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

A basic function of government is the provision of public services and the preservation of human lives and properties (Awofeso & Irabor, 2020). These functions of government are at the core of the precepts of substantive representation. Pitkin (1967) categorized political representation, into symbolic representation, which embodies an idea or an entity; formal representation, which refers to institutional rules and procedures by which representatives are designated; descriptive representation, which refers to the similarities and differences between representatives and the represented; and substantive representation, which evokes the activities of representation. In fact, Section 14 (2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as altered) emphasized this notion of representation.

However, conversations on the utilization of the constituency offices by elected representatives to deepen legislative representation have been contentious. This is because according to Kamau (2015), the operation of such offices raises fundamental questions about the efficacy of government service delivery, the extent to which such service delivery can be made accountable, how public participation in policy-making can be made more meaningful, and so on. This notwithstanding, the popularity and operation of constituency offices seem to be hinged on the generally held political view that centrally placed politicians bring home development resources to local communities and groups in exchange for political loyalty. Implicitly, Kamau (2015) alluded that constituency services which are often fostered by constituency offices have

contributed to a system of political competition whereby political candidates are gauged partly on their effective utilization of such offices.

Despite the importance of constituency offices and the money made available to legislators for their upkeep in Nigeria (Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission [RMAFC], 2022), very few studies on the functionality of constituency offices and their impact on legislative representation and good governance, have been conducted with none dedicated to the effect of constituency office on effective legislative representation in Abakiliki/Izzi Federal Constituency. One of the few research works in this area evaluated the operational functions of constituency offices in the Federal Capital Territory and identified several challenges impeding constituency office functionality to include constituents' lack of clear understanding of the roles and functions of parliament and legislators, limited access to constituency offices, poorly equipped offices, and legislators' infrequent visits to constituency offices (Udefuna, Jumare, & Adebayo, 2013).

Also, Udefuna et al (2013) demonstrated that, rather than being neutral, constituency offices in Nigeria (where they exist) are largely partisan, and constituent engagement is based on political party or other similar affiliation, excluding the majority of constituents from interacting with their elected representatives. Therefore, if these offices are indeed to deepen legislative representation, questions should be asked on why such facilities are turned into political party annexes? How does the annexation of constituency offices as party offices impact legislative representation? Given this development, what representative alternatives do nongoverning party members have to access quality legislative representation? Besides, within the context of substantive representation which means the activities of representation itself, citizens' inalienable rights to legislative representation as enshrined in Sections 47 and 48 of the 1999 Constitution (as altered) are breached on one hand, and the nondiscriminatory provisions of Section 42 abused on the other hand. Against this

backdrop, this study seeks to assess constituency office management in ensuring effective legislative representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency.

### **1.3. Research questions**

The study would address the following questions:

- (i) What are the effects of constituency office on the well-being of the constituents of the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency?
- (ii) What are the mechanisms through which interactions exist between the constituents and their elected representatives?
- (iii) What are the factors influencing the performance of the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency office?
- (iv) What strategies can be implemented to improve legislative representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency through the constituency office?

### **1.4. Research objectives**

The main objective of this study is to examine the effects of constituency offices on legislative representation in the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency. Specifically, the study objectives include to:

- (i) Examine the effect of constituency office on the well-being of the constituents of Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency.
- (ii) Examine the mechanism through which interactions exist between the constituents and their elected representatives.
- (iii) Examine the factors influencing the performance of the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency office.

### **1.5. Justification for the study**

The importance of this research stems from its originality, as there is little research in the area of constituency office and effective legislative representation as an activity in Nigeria. As a result, very little is known about the scope of representative acts, and this study fills that void. The study is also significant in the academic and political worlds. When viewed from a substantive standpoint and through the actions of the representatives, it contributes to the literature on political representation in Nigeria. It proposes improved models of representative processes that will allow for a more in-depth understanding of the determinants of legislative representation. Aside from providing insight into citizens' perceptions of the legislative branch of government, the study demonstrates how legislators are connected with their constituents. In another sense, it contributes to a method of promoting representative democracy in Nigeria by analyzing the factors that affect representation and making recommendations that would guide policymakers in the proper act of representation. Because it focuses on the activities of representation, the study adds to the literature on how representative activities can be evaluated and how their impact can be measured to determine effectiveness.

#### **1.6. Scope and limitations of the study**

The study assessed the effects of constituency office on efficient legislative representation in Abakiliki/Izzi Federal Constituency covering the period of 2015 to 2019. The time and choice of this geographical location coincide with the renowned increasing discussions on the nature of legislative representation and the demand by the public for greater accountability and transparency in the National Legislature. Abakiliki/Izzi Federal Constituency is politically strategic being the capital city of Ebonyi State with the highest population within the state. Therefore, it becomes imperative in measuring the centrality of the notion of constituency office in ensuring an effective and efficient legislative representation given its relatively large size.

On the limitations of the study, the study's delimitation, in fact, poses a constraint to the application of its findings to the wider Ebonyi State because of the difference in the socio-cultural make-up. However, within the broader text of legislative representation, the outcome of this study would guide the reform of constituency office management. Consequently, engender effective representation in Abakiliki/Izzi Federal Constituency in particular and the country, in general, relying on the instrumentality of constituency office.

### **1.7. Definition of key terms**

**Constituency office:** A constituency is a definite geographical area for which someone is elected as the representative in a parliament or government. Therefore, a constituency office is a definite political liaison office where an elected member of the legislature interfaces with members of its constituency on the need for important legislative actions and representation. In fact, Smith (2003) posited that a Constituency Office is an organized office space or an outlet, often located in the legislator's electoral district/constituency, where a member of a local, regional, or national legislative house can engage and meet with their constituents.

**Legislative representation:** This is the avowed duty of elected representatives in every democratic system. Also, it refers to the relationship between legislatures and their constituents which is based on four fundamental principles: (1) perception of the constituency; (2) representation role and style; (3) activities; and (4) representational situation, which is subject to change as a result of responsiveness to their constituents over time

**National Assembly:** This is a legitimate assembly of elected legislators whose mandate is solely law making in Nigeria as enshrined in the 1999 constitution. Section 4 of the 1999 Constitution bestows the legislative powers of the Federation on the National Assembly.

### **1.8. Organizations of Chapters**

The first chapter contains a general introduction that includes the background, statement of the research problem, research questions and objectives, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study, definition of key terms, and dissertation outline. The second chapter provided a comprehensive review of the literature and theoretical framework. In addition, the third chapter concentrated on a comprehensive statement of the research methodology. While chapter four presented the data and a discussion of the results. And finally, chapter five provided a study summary, recommendations, research contributions to the body of literature, and a conclusion based on the findings of this study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter reviews different kinds of literature relevant to the study as well as provides the framework necessary for its conceptualization. Therefore, the significance of the chapter includes but is not limited to; enabling the researcher to conceptualize the study variables properly, examining the theoretical linkage, and establishing empirical evidence from other related studies.

## **2.1. The Concept of Representation in Nigeria**

The pre-colonial entities that make up modern-day Nigeria must be taken into account when discussing the history of representation in Nigeria. These organizations have methods for pushing their causes, political goals, and ideologies of representation. Sokoto, Bornu, Benin, Oyo, and the Old Calabar empires all claimed territory in this region (Saliu & Bakare, 2020). The systems of representative government within each of these territorial frameworks varied. As the name suggests, a chief, an Oba, or a king acted as a representative of the general population. Administrative tasks, in particular, were divided into various divisions to represent the interests of their subordinates (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre [PLAC], 2017). In the South, these systems were based on customary law, whereas in the North, they were based on Islamic law. People could still dethrone the King or Oba by banishing or compelling them to commit suicide if they viewed their rule as illegitimate, even if the term of the monarchs was indefinitely renewable (Barkan, 2009).

As a result of several British colonial enactments, Nigerians got the right to vote. While colonial rule lasted until 1960, the Southern and Northern protectorates were amalgamated in 1914 by the then-Colonial Governor-General Lord Lugard (Gidado, 2012). An elected legislature did exist, but it did not represent Nigerians' interests, and individuals had little say on how it worked. Only the coastal cities of Lagos and Calabar had elections at the time (Bakare & Bello, 2020). It was then that the Lagos town council was established and progressed up to the legislative council, which was then followed by the Lagos city council (Osagie, 2017).

Democracy has been restored in the country following a period of military control. The bicameral parliament is operated at the National Assembly. In the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, 109 senatorial districts and 360 Federal House of Representatives constituencies are represented in the National Assembly (Fashagba, Ajayi,& Nwankwo, 2019). Six geopolitical zones divide these single-member districts. So that there is equality and justice in representation throughout the country, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has established a demarcation model that is suited for local communities (Obadan, 2014). This is supposed to improve representation by putting legislators in direct contact with the public. Table 2.1 illustrates the delimitation of constituencies in Nigeria to achieve effective parliamentary representation in Nigeria. The illustration represents the composition of the House of Representatives since its membership is drawn based on population sizes as opposed to the Senates' which is based on "equal representation".

**Table 2.1: House of Representative-Constituency**

State	Zone	Constituency	State	Zone	Constituency
Abia	SE	8	Kano	NW	24
Adamawa	NS	8	Katsina	NC	15
Akwa-Ibom	SS	10	Kebbi	NW	8
Anambra	SE	11	Kogi	NC	9
Bauchi	NE	12	Kwara	NC	6
Bayelsa	SS	5	Lagos	SW	24
Benue	NC	11	Nasarawa	NC	5
Borno	NE	10	Niger	NC	10
Cross River	SS	8	Ogun	SW	9



Delta	SS	10	Ondo	SW	9
Ebonyi	SE	6	Osun	SW	9
Edo	SS	9	Oyo	SW	14
Ekiti	SW	6	Plateau	NC	8
Enugu	SE	8	Rivers	SS	13
FCT	NC	2	Sokoto	NW	11
Gombe	NE	6	Taraba	NE	6
Imo	SE	10	Yobe	NE	6
Jigawa	NW	11	Zamfara	NW	7
Kaduna	NW	16	Total		360
			Members		

Source: Department of Operations, INEC Office Abuja Nigeria 2021.

Representation has evolved from a scenario in which people were directly involved in societal decision-making to one in which this function is performed by a few individuals on behalf of the people (Nnamdi, 2017). It appears that the second scenario is better suited to our current social climate. Elections are been utilized to elect government officials who will commit their time and attention to the job, given the difficulties of modern society and the limited attention spans of its citizens (Saliu & Bakare, 2016). Despite this, democracy's fundamental principles have not shifted. Today, as in the past, there are still people who believe in the concept of political equality and the power of the people. Madison describes it as follows:

a superior political system that has the effect of refining and broadening public opinion through a select group of citizens whose wisdom can best discern the true interests of their country and whose patriotism and love of justice are least likely to be sacrificed to temporary or partial considerations.

In the above-mentioned viewpoint, Madison observed that in this case, the representation will be more in line with the public good. But herein lies the problem: the presence of representatives acting on behalf of the people, and the precise relationship between them and the people they represent, will determine whether or not the system meets the criterion of democratic legislative representation (Saliu & Bakare, 2016). Understanding the role of representation is required to address this issue and establish the link between the representative and the represented. It was because of this that the present study adopted the agency framework to conceptualize the link between the member representing Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency and the people of Abakaliki and Izzi Local Governments Areas relying on the instrumentality of the Constituency office.

## **2.2. Legislature**

Barkan (2009) posited that the term “legislature” is applied differently in various countries. For instance, the United Kingdom (UK) uses “Parliament”, Nigeria “National Assembly” and the United States of America (USA) “Congress”. This variation in nomenclature, notwithstanding, the legislature is generally known as the assemblage of the elected representatives with the mandates of legislation, representation, and oversight (Abegunde, 2016). According to Stapenhurst and Pelizzo (2004), the legislature is a sign of authority and legitimacy because it is composed of elected officials from delineated constituencies. As a result, Taiwo and Fajingbesi (2004) alluded that this government entity's principal duty is to represent constituents. Alternatively expressed, Dogara (2017) described the legislature as the branch of government responsible for passing laws and protecting the public's interests.

To Lafenwa (2009), the legislature is a legally binding body elected by the people which can also affect and control the election outcome. The legislature is a legislative, deliberative, and policy-

making body committed to preserving democracy. Drawing from this, Gidado (2012) stated that only the legislature can represent and convey the people's desire as they wield the peoples' will. Given this, Okoosi-Simbine (2010) noted that legislators are seen as the people's voice in the government apparatus. On this note, Anyaegbunam (2000) concluded that legislators help create, update, change, and repeal laws that help citizens. However, MacLeod (2006) identified the defining characteristics of a legislator to include that the legislature is recognized as having legislative authority and that members are elected to delineated constituencies. Therefore, Davies (2004) asserted that representative liberal democracy produces a healthy, dynamic, and credible legislative process. Explaining this notion, Okoosi-Simbine (2010) averred that the presence of the legislative institution means that the people retain political power and can delegate it to elected officials to represent them. After all, legislators are chosen to represent the people and thus act as intermediaries between the people and their government (Hofstetter, 2019).

An important determinant of a country's democratic survival and progress according to Poteete (2010) is the legislature. In fact, Taiwo and Fajingbesi (2004) insisted that the legislature is essential to democracy without which a country's democracy is in jeopardy. However, Edosa and Azelama (1995) concluded that a country's legislature decides its democratic political system. For example, the major distinguishing feature of parliamentary and presidential systems is the organization of the legislature. To illustrate, while the former utilizes the principle of collective responsibility in the administration of government, the latter emphasizes the division of governmental powers among the arms of government with defined term limits. Overall, democracy revolves around the legislature. Hofstetter (2019) aligned with this viewpoint when he stated that the legislature is the key to modern democracy. Therefore, the presence, as well as the powers exercisable by the legislative institution in a country, defines its democratic credential.

Legislatures are classified as unicameral and bicameral. In bicameral countries, one chamber appears to govern the other. When a legislature has two chambers, one of them possesses the power. In some circumstances, one chamber has a large legislative advantage (Nwabueze & Mueller, 1985). Political structures use bicameralism to handle the numerous legislative chamber functions and chambers to ensure the efficient representation of all citizens. This technique generally protects minority rights. Countries like Nigeria, the UK, and France use bicameral legislative arrangements as a self-check mechanism in the legislative process. According to Azelama and Edosa (1995), bicameral legislatures are more common in federal states because one house protects minorities or regional interests. Egwu (2005), therefore, added that several federal states have adopted bicameralism for this reason. The Senate and the House of Representatives make up Nigeria's National Assembly. Before Nigeria's bicameral system of legislature, the country had a unicameral legislature. This arrangement has been in existence till the return of the country's democracy in 1999.

The two chambers of the National Assembly serve as a system of checks and balances. This is because of the complexity inherent in the legislative process. For instance, political parties, Civil groups, government agencies, among others, seek to play a prominent role in key policy deliberations. Nevertheless, bicameral countries' constitutions ensure that all of their constituents' voices are heard in the legislative house. An effective and efficient legislative process, as well as representation, is made possible by a bicameral legislature with each member of the parliament having a constituency office in his/her constituency. Seeing the benefit of such constituency office, the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission [RMAFC] (2022) provides allocation for constituency expenses. Explicitly, RMAFC (2022) allocated N1,985,212.50/annum or N165,434.40/monthly for Members of the House of Representatives and N5,066,000.00/annum or N422,166.66/month for Senators as constituency allowances respectively. Generally,

bicameralism according to Heywood (2007) does not only slow down the speed with which bills are passed but fosters the division of effort between the two chambers.

### **2.3. Functions of the Legislature**

The legislature as observed by Barkan (2009) has distinct powers and functions in different states. In certain political systems, the legislature exerts actual authority by exerting considerable powers and making choices based on widely varied processes, whereas in others, the legislature works purely as a rubber stamp for actions taken elsewhere. For instance, Nijzink, Mozaffar, and Azevedo (2006) posited that the Soviet Union's legislature is seen as a rubber stamp assembly largely responsible for certifying the government's policies. Other observations on the African continent demonstrate that the inadequate structure of the legislative institution is linked to colonial history. For this reason, Thomas and Sissokho (2005) averred that the concept of the legislature as an instrument of government has been presented as a problem on the continent. On this account, the institution is mostly utilized for disseminating government policies and supporting the recruitment and retention of political operatives (Burnell, 2003).

Nevertheless, Ademolekun, Barkan, and Zhou (2004) claimed that African countries enjoy extensive legislative abilities despite the inadequacy of the legislature as claimed by academics. Different aspects influence the growth and operation of the legislature depending on the social structure and regulations of the countries (Barkan, Ademolekun & Zhou, 2004). According to Okoosi-Simbine (2010), several elements influence society and customs. It is also determined by social demands and customs, in terms of size, frequency, and method. Also, the rubber-stamp legislature is not exclusively African. Many assemblies fail because they are thought of as rubber stamp assemblies (Ray, 2004). Traditionally, the legislative branch has three major functions which include legislation, oversight, and representation. The core and vital responsibilities of the

legislature are specified in the constitution (Abonyi, 2006). In Nigeria, Sections 4, 48/49, and 88 are explicit on the lawmaking, representative, and oversight functions of the National Assembly.

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as altered) vests the legislative powers of the Federation on the National Assembly (see Section 4 of the 1999 Constitution). Similarly, Section 100 of the Constitution provided for the legislative powers of the house of assembly of a state when it stated *inter alia* that “the power of a House of Assembly to make laws shall be exercised by bills passed by the House of Assembly and, except as otherwise provided by this section, assented to by the Governor”. Based on this, lawmaker writes society's laws thereby making laws that benefit the state. These laws may come from the executive branch or private members (Benjamin, 2010). Hofstetter (2019) contends that laws must be designed with the public's interest in mind hence, bills should be studied before being passed (Abonyi, 2006). According to Heywood (2007), when the government oversteps its authority and makes concessions to specific groups of people, the legislative powers are often reduced to a mere deliberative assembly. As a consequence, Heywood added that many countries' legislative competence diminished in the twentieth century due to the rubber stamp ideology.

Oversight is a vital part of the legislative process. Indeed, Fashagba (2009) noted that Legislative oversight is usually referred to as a major component of modern democracy. As defined by Saliu and Muhammad (2010), parliamentary oversight or supervision is the monitoring and evaluation of the operations of government agencies. The legislative literature agrees that oversight is done to ensure compliance with legislative intents in the administration of governance. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association [CPA] (2002) concurred with the foregoing position when it stated that the legislature monitors executive activity to ensure that public policy is implemented following legislative intent. Therefore, the National Democratic Institute for

International Affairs [NDI] (2000) asserted that a legislature must monitor the activities of other arms of government. The issue originates from frequent executive power exercises.

The legislature's job is to monitor the government's actions as the business of lawmaking does not only stop at bill passage but goes further to ensure that such laws are correctly implemented (Okoosi-Simbine, 2010). Sections 88 and 89 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria permit the National Assembly (NASS) to conduct an investigation or cause an investigation to be conducted on matters it has powers to make laws. Therefore, although the National Assembly has been given legislative powers by Section 4 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's constitution 1999 (as altered) to create laws that meet the needs of the country's citizens, it is also a legislature's role to evaluate whether the laws it has passed accomplish their intended goals (s).

On the issue of representation, it must be stated that the legislature plays a crucial role in state governance because of the complexity of modern governance in Nigeria as well as the rest of the globe (Dogara, 2017). Therefore, following the dictates of delimitation, the legislative body serves as a vehicle for the representation of the interests of the populace. Sections 48/49 are emphatic on the bicameral nature of the National Assembly and sizes to be attributed to either of the Houses. Gidado (2012) emphasized the notion of the representative function of the National Assembly when he averred that people claim that the representational role of a legislature gives all citizens a voice in how the country is run. Consequently, citizens elect their legislators to represent diverse segments of society. This allows people to voice their problems and suggestions clearly and concisely (Simmons, 2002). Given the centrality of the representative role of the legislature, it is assumed that legislators have a dual role to play; they serve as a contact between the elected officials and the people they serve (Roberts, 2002); parliament serves as a forum for citizens to

express their views on political matters. Davies (2004) and Saliu and Muhammad (2010) summed that this is a fundamental part of democratic governance. Thus, democracy would be incomplete without the ability to pass legislation that guides the activities of the people.

#### **2.4. Constituency Office and Legislative Representation**

Political representation has drawn attention from both academia and political actors. According to Searing (1994), parliamentarians' concentration on constituents varies greatly, and this diversity cannot be fully explained by looking at election systems (Martin, 2011). A constituency is a geographical area from which a representative is elected into the parliament. Constituency servants are, in fact, elected officials who choose to devote their time and attention to their constituents through observable acts (Federico, 2011). Nevertheless, these elected representatives may have an order of priorities set which could be re-election, acquiring party, or legislative constituency office. Needless to mention their primary responsibility of drafting and amending the country's legislation.

All Parliamentarians claim to meet with their constituents and carry out constituency assessments and interventions. Specifically, the House of Commons Modernization Committee (2007) noted that since the Middle Ages, Parliamentarians have extended assistance to constituents in need as a part of their responsibilities as representatives. In fact, members of the public may voice their concerns about existing legislation or governmental policies at constituency meetings (House of Commons, 2013); notwithstanding, constituents are more likely to bring up personal issues during these gatherings.

A constituency office is seen as a building where elected parliamentarians interact with their constituents to facilitate the provision of their needs in the course of legislative business. Parties may find it beneficial to offer incentives and rewards for constituency service if they believe that



doing so will help them win elections; in other words, parties can operate as intermediaries between voters' and activists' preferences and the behavior of legislators (Marangoni & Tronconi, 2011). As a result, the focus of parliamentarians is on their constituency which is considered as a successful strategy in gaining the support of the electorates for re-selection from their respective parties (Federico, 2011). Indeed, early studies have identified that constituents present a varied range of issues to the constituency office (Rawlings 1990a, 1990b). All of these issues can be dealt with in one day in a constituency office - often all at the same time in what was referred to as “hit parade of obstacles” by Le Lidec (2009).

Parliamentary representatives can assist with only those issues that Parliament or the central government is responsible for, although constituents often turn to their members of parliaments (MPs) because they don't know who else can help them (House of Commons, 2013). When it comes to offering assistance and guidance, MPs go above and beyond their legislative functions. For instance, Loat and MacMillan (2014) posited that MPs frequently grumble about the number of hours they are required to devote to constituency work, yet they continue to do so even if the work falls outside of their purview (Siefken, 2014). This is to gain the support of their electorates which can be reciprocated as a way of gratitude during an election campaign and such, the concerns of their members are key to their legislative performance.

Since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, the practice of members of the National Assembly running constituency offices has become increasingly entrenched (Osagie, 2017). Although there is no explicit constitutional or legal framework for the establishment of constituency offices and services, it is nonetheless an integral part of the National Assembly's internal and personal administrative processes (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre [PLAC], 2016). Nigerian legislators receive administrative funds to run their offices, including constituency offices, in addition to their basic salaries, as is customary in many parts of the world (see Revenue Mobilization Allocation

and Fiscal Commission [RMAFC] Remuneration Package for Political, Public and Judicial Office Holders).

Senators (109) and Members of the House of Representatives (360) receive cash advances every quarter (3 months) to cover the costs of constituency office management, office materials, travel, refreshment, and meals, as well as the purchase of library books and periodicals (Fashagba, Ajayi, & Nwankwo, 2019). Udefuna, Jumare, and Adebayo (2013) noted that constituency offices serve as a conduit between legislators and constituents, ensuring the equitable and even distribution of infrastructure/development. This ensures that every part of the country is adequately represented in the National Assembly, the House of Representatives, and the Senate. Given this, parliamentarians, on the other hand, can recommend programmes and projects to be cited in their constituencies based on the needs and demands of their constituents (PLAC, 2016). Overall, the effectiveness of the constituency office is determined by how the staff interacts with the MPs about the needs of society and the groups that they represent in parliament.

Nigeria's National Assembly continues to grapple with the issues of openness, probity, accountability, among others, which makes these constituency offices ineffective in influencing quality representation by elected representatives. It was noted by PLAC (2016) that the Nigerian legislature has improved significantly over the years and only needs to implement programmes and policies that help build citizens' confidence in their ability to truly and effectively represent them, which is made possible when legislators are more committed to their constituencies and make themselves accessible to their constituents. According to Hofstetter (2019), however, citizen's commitment to their Member of Parliament is avoided by using narrative descriptions. Interactional problems such as the institution's "unknown" nature (Stokoe, 2013), contingency and entitlement (Drew & Curl, 2008), rationality and legitimacy (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006), and recruitment are dealt with in these accounts (Kendrick & Drew, 2016).

## **2.5. Empirical Review**

Several studies have been conducted on legislative representation and the establishment of constituency offices. The importance of constituency office cannot be overemphasized as it aids the legislators in the discharge of their duties effectively (Kamau, 2015). The effectiveness of legislative representation and constituency office management in Enugu East's Senatorial District and federal constituencies was evaluated by Dan-Azumimi and Okereke (2018). In the study, both primary and secondary data were used, with primary data generated from respondents via the administration of structured questionnaires. The study found that legislators maintain and operate constituency offices in Enugu East Senatorial Districts/Federal Constituencies, and they regard this as an important aspect of legislative representation. Even though funding is available for constituency work, there is no explicit legal or institutional framework in place to govern constituency services and office management.

Furthermore, constituents' awareness of constituency offices, as well as the interface between constituents and legislators, is generally low, with many constituents expressing dissatisfaction with the way constituency offices are managed. Dan-Azumimi and Okereke (2018) concluded that, despite having greater potential for improving engagement between legislators and constituents, constituency offices are still far from achieving this due to challenges such as low visibility, insufficient professional office staff, and a lack of political will. Therefore, Dan-Azumimi and Okereke recommended that to improve the efficiency of constituency offices, there is the need to establish a framework to guide constituency services, educate the public regularly, develop constituency management and administration manual that includes standard operating procedures, and provide regular training to constituency office staff.

Also, Oni, Oni, Gberevbie, and Ayodele (2021) investigated the relationship between e-parliament and constituency representation. The study used a mixed-method approach that included content analysis and case study design. Content analysis of the Nigerian National Assembly (NASS) website and a literature search was used to gather information. The goal was to assess the NASS website's accessibility, usability, and usefulness for citizen-legislator interactions to improve inclusive governance. According to the findings of the analysis, the implementation of e-parliament in Nigeria is still primarily at the information provisioning stage, with few supporting tools for interacting with and consulting constituents. Despite the numerous challenges encountered in the application of ICT tools, Oni, et al (2021) argued that e-parliament is critical to closing the wide gap between citizens and their representatives in Nigeria.

With e-parliament, the government's policies and programs, as well as their implementation, are in line with citizens' aspirations and expectations, which are regarded as critical to achieving the SDGs in Nigeria. Therefore, the concept of Legislative representation situated with the context of constituency office describes in the most suiting form, a traditional function of the Parliament. In fact, the role of representation is best described as being critical to the administration of the state. Indeed, it can be argued that the other functions of the legislature being oversight and lawmaking are driven by the precepts of representation. Within this context, the place of constituency office becomes pertinent.

Besides, Benson (2018) examined the effectiveness of legislator-constituency relations and the concept of representation in Nigeria taking into account constituency development funds. Approaching the issue of representation by assuming that substantive acts performed by representatives on behalf of constituents are important in determining whether or not representation occurs, empirical findings of the study showed that a lack of understanding of what

it means to represent, on the part of both representatives and constituents, combined with institutional features that do not foster accountability, has an impact on effective representation in Nigeria. Other factors that work against effective representation include constituents' non-participation in matters that directly affect them and the representatives' distant connections with the constituents. Benson (2018) recommended that, in addition to having institutional features in place that would improve the relationship between representatives and constituents, institutions through which representatives act should be strengthened by enacted laws that would bind representatives to act acceptably. Rules of ethics and responsibility can also be used to define acceptable behavior for representatives when acting on behalf of constituents. This can help to overcome some of the barriers to effective representation in Nigeria.

Ashworth and DeMesquita (2006) examined a model of legislative particularism to better understand how constituency service providers respond to changes in institutional and electoral environments. According to the study, increased partisan balance in the electorate, single-member districts, and independent executives all increase legislators' incentives to provide constituency service. The model's results were consistent with previous comparative-institutional empirical observations. Furthermore, the model addresses long-term trends in the United States that are not explained by existing models and generates novel hypotheses that can be tested empirically. This, changes in institutional and electoral environments, notwithstanding, Aleman, Micozzi, Pinto, and Saiegh (2021) investigated the relationship between constituency effects and legislative dissent in Argentina under closed-list proportional representation.

Aleman, Micozzi, Pinto, and Saiegh (2021) noted that the closed-list proportional representation (CLPR) electoral systems, according to conventional wisdom, create incentives for legislators to favor the party line over the positions of their constituents. However, even under the CLPR, electoral incentives may induce party leaders to tolerate "shirking" by some legislators. Aleman et

al, nevertheless, contended that when deciding who's deviations from the party line should be tolerated, party leaders, take advantage of differences in voters' relative electoral influence caused by malapportionment. Therefore, defections in roll call votes are expected to be more common among legislators elected from overrepresented districts than among those elected from other districts. Overall, Aleman et al (2021) suggested that even under electoral rules known to favor unified parties, there should be an expectation of strategic defections to please voters, which can be beneficial to the party's electoral fortunes.

Finally, Ewuim, Nnamani, and Eberinwa (2014) investigated how legislation promotes good governance and sustainable development in Nigeria, as well as the peculiarities of the country's constitution and laws, as well as the extent to which good governance has been promoted through legislation. Ewuim et al (2014) discovered that every government's responsibility is to secure all citizens collectively and willingly for peaceful and meaningful coexistence propelled by law and good governance. As a result, Ewuim et al observed that good governance is determined by the extent to which the efforts of the state, particularly human beings, are effectively and efficiently galvanized toward productive activities in the best interests of the state and citizens. According to the study, legislation is the result of an institutionalized law-making process; it is the most important weapon from which the government derives its laws. However, Ewuim, Nnamani, and Eberinwa believe that the failure of good governance is due to citizens' docility, both in developing and underdeveloped countries. Nonetheless, they observed that legislation has attained an enviable position in contemporary society's governance, such that it can be used to exclude any law emanating from any other source, including perceived or real but incorrect interpretation of any legislation.

Nigeria operates a representative democracy in the presidential form modeled after the United States. The National Assembly is the country's bicameral federal parliament. In the 36 states,

including the Federal Capital Territory, Representatives are elected from 109 Senatorial Districts and 360 Federal Constituencies (FCT). These single-member constituencies are separated into six geopolitical zones. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has adopted a delineation model appropriate for local areas to achieve a sense of fairness and equality in representation across the country. According to Dan-Azumimi and Okere (2018), this is thought to put representatives in closer contact with the people, thereby improving representation.

Since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, the practice of members of the National Assembly running constituency offices has become increasingly entrenched. Although little is known of this practice through the provision made for it by the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), there is no explicit constitutional or legal framework for the establishment of constituency offices and services. However, it has become an integral part of the National Assembly's internal and personal administrative processes. Nigerian legislators receive administrative funds to run their offices, including constituency offices, in addition to their basic salaries, as is customary in many parts of the world. Senators (109) and Members of the House of Representatives (360) receive cash advances every quarter (3 months) to cover the costs of constituency office management, office materials, travel, refreshment, and meals, as well as the purchase of library books and periodicals (National Assembly Budget Office, 2022).

## **2.6. Gap in Knowledge**

The relevance of constituency offices has grown in recent years. However, the concept's measurement has remained largely unexplored in the literature. On this note, the study of the impact of constituency offices on legislative representation becomes pertinent. This quest was further accentuated by the literary prominence given to the concept of constituency office. As a

result, this study assessed the effects of constituency offices on legislative representation focusing on Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency.

## **2.7. Theoretical Framework**

The Agency theory was developed by Jensen and Meckling (1976). The agency relationship was defined by Jensen and Meckling as a type of contract between a company's owners and its managers in which the owners (as principal) appoint an agent (the managers) to manage the company on their behalf. The owners must delegate decision-making authority to management as part of this arrangement. In brief, they proposed a theory of how a company's governance is based on conflicts of interest between the company's owners (shareholders), managers, and major debt finance providers.

Since its origins in economics, agency theory have been applied by scholars in a variety of fields, including organizational behavior, law, marketing, healthcare, accounting, and family business. The lens provided by agency theory is typically centered on either the principal-agent problem (principal-agent research) or governance mechanisms (positivist research). In essence, agency theory stems from an economic view of risk-sharing (Eisenhardt, 1989), which occurs between two parties, principals and agents, but each of the two parties may have different approaches to solving the problem (Jensen & Meckling, 1976).

However, at the heart of the agency theory is the concern of self-interest behavior, which may encourage an overzealous agent to act in the principal's best interests (Burnham, 1941). According to the principal, this divergence is a problem that affects the agency's costs (Fama, 1980). When the principal-agent relationship is established, the principal is aware of the agency costs. However, when the agent violates the agreement, the principal perceives that he or she has taken on more risks. As a result, the first agency problem (shifts in risk-sharing) appears. The second agency issue is directly related to the first. According to agency theory, when agents have equity in the firm,



they are more likely to adopt the actions desired by the principals as their own (Fama & Jensen, 1983).

Eisenhardt (1989) went on to theorize that when those actions are outcome-based, the agent is more likely to act in the principal's best interests. However, if there is a perceived inequity, agents are more likely to engage in self-interested behavior. When the agent acts in self-interest, information asymmetries arise, making the principal unable to properly monitor agent behavior. As a consequence, the measurability of outcomes (Anderson, 1985) becomes elusive, leading to another issue – monitoring agent behavior. Given the nature of the two agency problems, governance mechanisms are required to help align risk and monitor agent behavior, which brings us back to agency theory's positivist perspective. In summary, there are two perspectives on agency theory: principal-agent research and positivist agency theory. Risk-sharing and agent monitoring are two potential agency problems identified by principal-agent research. The two issues are linked in the sense that a divergence in risk-sharing creates information asymmetries, which reduces the principal's ability to monitor agent behavior. The shift in risk-sharing, whether perceived or actual, makes creating an ideal contract between the principal and the agent inherently difficult. Positivist agency theory is concerned with the critical governance mechanisms that limit agents' self-serving behavior (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Drawing from the principal-agent perspective, the study recognizes the existence of citizens from Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency (as principals) and the elected Member Representing the Federal Constituency in Nigeria's National Assembly as the Agent. Nevertheless, its key postulations of risk-sharing and agent monitoring are not viewed as a weakness in this study. Instead, this study aligns with the notion of agent monitoring and in this case, by citizens of Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency using the instrumentality of constituency office. While it must be asserted that agents in the exercise of their discretionary powers to ensure the best possible

outcomes for the principals may result in a negative outcome, this study notes that actions intended to result in positive outcomes must be carried out within constitutional bounds. Therefore, the agency theory (i.e., the principal-agent perspective) becomes relevant to the present study because of its ability to underpin the concept of agent monitoring which constituency offices are designed to achieve.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter introduces the components of the research methodology that was adopted for the study. It explains the various research methods that were used to achieve the objectives of the study.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

This study adopted the mixed research design using quantitative and qualitative data. Indeed, this study emphasizes the use of text and numerical data hence, the choice of the research design. Also,

the research design was adopted because the study employed the use of a questionnaire as the source of primary data and processed data depicting legislative activities in the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency. Indeed, the choice of the mixed method is justified because of the complementary nature of quantitative and qualitative data sets.

### **3.2. Sources of Data**

The sources of data for this study were primary and secondary. Primary data which refers to first-hand information acquired directly by the researcher was sourced using questionnaires while Secondary data which refers to processed data other than those gotten by the researcher on a first-hand account, were gotten from Official Publications of the National Assembly and the government, books, journal articles, newspapers, magazines, and so on, and materials from the internet.

### **3.3. Study Area**

The study area is Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency. In the manner of constituency delimitation, Abakaliki/Izzi comprises two local government areas; Abakaliki and Izzi. Like the Abakaliki local government which serves as the city centre, adjoining Izzi has its administrative headquarters in Iboko town. It is safe to state that both local government areas are at the heart of the city centre. Therefore, the choice of Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency becomes justified because of its centrality as well as the seeming presence of legislative activities within the area.

### **3.4. Population of the Study**

A research population is a big group of people or things who are the subject of a scientific inquiry and who share comparable traits. Common, unifying property or trait is shared by all individuals or items within a group. For this study, the population is the staff at the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal

Constituency Office, Civil Society Organizations [CSOs], Lawmakers, and the residents of Abakaliki/Izzi local government areas according to 2006 census data. The target population and their sizes are presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Target population

S/N	POPULATION	SIZE
1	Staff at the Abkaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency office	8
2	CSOs	18
3	Residents of Abakaliki/Izzi local government areas	1,152,117
4	Total	1,152,143

Source: Fieldwork (March 2022)

### 3.5. Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The simple random sampling technique was adopted for the selection of respondents. The simplest sampling technique is simple random sampling, in which a set of participants (a sample) are selected for research from a larger group (a population). Each person is chosen at random, and everyone in the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample. The number of participants/respondents that make up the population that is studied from which generalization can be made on the population, on the other hand, was determined using Taro Yamane's formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$$

Where: n = corrected sample size =?

e = Margin of Error (MoE) or desired level of precision = 0.05

N = population size=1,152,143

$$\text{Hence, } n = \frac{1152143}{1+1152143(0.05 \times 0.05)}$$

$$= \frac{1152143}{1+(1152143 \times 0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{1152143}{2881.36}$$

$$= 399.86$$

∴ n (sample size) = 400

The sample size for the study would be 400.

### 3.6. Survey Instruments

The questionnaire is the major research instrument for this study. Questionnaires are the main instrument for surveys. It is a set of standardized questions, often called items, which follow a fixed scheme to collect individual data about one or more specific topics. For this study, the questions on the questionnaire were structured to reflect the objectives of the study. Overall, these questions underlie the cardinal areas of legislative representation being (1) perception of the constituency; (2) representation role and style; (3) activities; and (4) representational situation.

### 3.7. Method of Data Analysis

The quantitative and qualitative methods were used for the analysis of data. Therefore, while the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 21.0) was used to analyze numerical data which would be presented in tables, percentages, etc., the content analysis was deployed in the analysis of qualitative data emphasizing the textual presentation of data. In all, results would be presented thematically.

### **3.8. Expectations based on the Agency Theory**

The Agency theory (principal-agent theory) was adopted for this study. It must be stated foremost that the principal theory adopted for this study being the principal-agent theory emphasizes a relationship between the electorates (citizens) and the elected (lawmakers/representatives). This is because the relationship espoused by the agency framework connotes the essence of representative democracy which is practiced in Nigeria. Indeed, the principals (citizens/electorates) bear the sovereign powers and surrender the same during periodic elections to agents (lawmakers) which in turn hold the vested power in trust. Therefore, applying the principal-agent theory in the relative sense and given the analytical delimitation of the study to legislative representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency, it is safe to state that the Member representing Abakaliki/Izzi in the House of Representatives-Honourable Sylvester Ogbaga (agent) in the course of discharging his representative function is expected to offer constituency services to the principals (citizens) dispassionately in the manner typical of the trust in which the powers was surrendered to him using the instrumentality of constituency office.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter offers the analysis and discussion of the data gathered in the course of this study. As indicated in section 3.5, four hundred (400) questionnaires were administered to respondents in the study area. However, 373 questionnaires were returned representing 93.25% as presented in Table 4.1. A review of the demographic parameters of the population was followed by the thematic presentation, analysis, and discussion of findings according to the objectives stated in section 1.4.

**Table 4.1: Responses from the Questionnaire Administered**

	Frequency	Percent
Response	373	93.25%
Non-Response	27	6.75%

<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>
--------------	------------	------------

**Source:** Fieldwork (March 2022)

The study had a response rate of 93.25% indeed, the response rate is high following the willingness of respondents to oblige the questionnaire administration. Schindler and Cooper (2009) recommended a response rate of 50% and above to be considered satisfactory for analyses. As such, the response rate of 93.25% as obtained in this study is satisfactory and adequate for analysis.

#### 4.1. Demography Information

The study used Tables to illustrate the respondent's comments based on personal data which include age, gender, education qualification, residential location, and marital status. The frequency and percentage distribution of the responders are described in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Demography Information of the Respondents**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	Age		
	18-30	84	22.5
	31-50	126	33.8
	51and above	163	43.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>2</b>	Gender		
	Male	211	56.7
	Female	162	43.3
	Transgender	0	0
	I prefer not to say	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>3</b>	Education		
	Primary School	11	2.9
	Secondary School	80	21.4
	University/Polytechnic/College of Education	226	60.6
	None	2	0.5
	Others	50	13.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>4</b>	Marital Status		



5	Married	226	60.6
	Single	118	31.6
	Divorced	6	1.6
	Separated	3	0.8
	Widow/Widower	20	5.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	Residence		
	Abakaliki LGA	190	26.4
	Izzi LGA	183	46.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork (March 2022)

The results in Table 4.2 show the age distribution of the respondents. Out of the total respondents, 84 (22.4 percent) are between the age of 18 and 30, 126 (33.8 percent) are between the age bracket of 31 and 50, while 163 (43.7 percent) are between the age of 51 and above. This finding reveals that the majority of respondents (43.7 percent) are 51 years and above given their experience and knowledge of politics and happenings around the constituency. The gender distribution of the respondents reveals that both male and female respondents are represented in the sample, with males accounting for 211 (56.7 percent) and females accounting for 162 (43.3 percent). The male dominance could be linked to the patriarchal nature of African society as well as cultural practices where the male gender is accorded more relevance in the society hence, placing men above women in elective positions. However, none of the respondents in the study area had the status of transgender, and none remained mute about his/her gender status. This issue of gender imbalance in political participation has necessitated various gender studies (Oluyemi, 2016; Adedayo & Adedeji, 2019) and international and domestic efforts (1995 Beijing Conference 30% Affirmative Action, 35% National Gender Policy, Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs], among others) aimed at achieving equality for all gender.

Furthermore, Table 4.2 indicated that 11 (2.9 percent) of the respondents have primary school qualifications, 80 (21.4 percent) have secondary school educational knowledge while 226 (60.6

percent) have either a university, polytechnic, and college certifications. It was noted that only 2 (0.5 percent) of the respondents in the study constituency had no educational qualification at all with 50 (13.4 percent) of the respondents having qualifications such as Post graduate diplomas, master and Ph.D. respectively. This result indicates that the majority of respondents in the study area have received some form of formal education, implying the possibility of political awareness and by extension, the knowledge of political participation and representation at the National Assembly.

The distribution of respondents' marital status revealed that over half (60.6 percent) were married, while 39.4 percent were single. The unmarried respondents were divided into three groups: divorced (1.6 percent), single (31.6 percent), separated (0.8 percent), and widow/widower (5.4 percent). Table 4.2 further shows that 50.9% of the respondents were from Abakiliki LGA while 49.1% were from Izzi LGA. This is a reflection of the respective population sizes of the respective local government areas that make up the federal constituency (see section 3.4). Therefore, data collection was seemingly balanced among the Local Government Areas.

#### **4.2. Effects of constituency office on the well-being of the constituents**

The Constituency office over time has been the link through which the electorates channel their requests to their elected representatives. In this case, the demands of the people reach their representatives through the constituency office where staff is stationed to manage the affairs of the representatives for effective governance. Although there is no legal framework backing the establishment of a constituency office in Nigeria, such an office has remained an integral part of the delivery of good governance which has become increasingly demanded. Reaffirming the words of Rawlings (1990a,) (1990b) and Le Lidec (2009), the constituency office manages and presents a varied range of issues to elected parliament members.

## *Effects of constituency office*

Therefore, the effects of the constituency office on the electorates are presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Responses on the effect of Constituency office**

S/N	Item	Yes	No	Can't Say
1	Are you aware that the constituency office can be used by your elected representatives to improve your wellbeing?	51.9%	22.6%	28.5%
2	Is there any constituency office in your federal constituency?	51.8%	30.5%	17.7%
3	If yes in 7 above, is the office accessible and easily identifiable?	48.2%	37.4%	14.4%
4	Do you think that the location of the constituency office discourages you from visiting?	14.4%	48.9%	36.7%

**Source:** Fieldwork (March 2022)

Table 4.3 shows the responses of the respondents regarding the effectiveness of the constituency office. It was noted that 51.9% of the respondents acknowledged that the constituency office can be used by elected representatives to improve the well-being of the electorates. This position aligned with Blidook and Kerby (2011). However, 22.6% of the respondents reported that they are unaware that the constituency office can be used by the electorates to improve their well-being while 28.5% of the respondents remained neutral on the claim. Furthermore, 51.8% of the respondents noted that there is a constituency office in their federal constituency while 30.5% responded with a “NO”. Consequently, only 17.7% of the respondents were neutral and responded that they cannot say if there is any constituency office in their federal constituency or not.

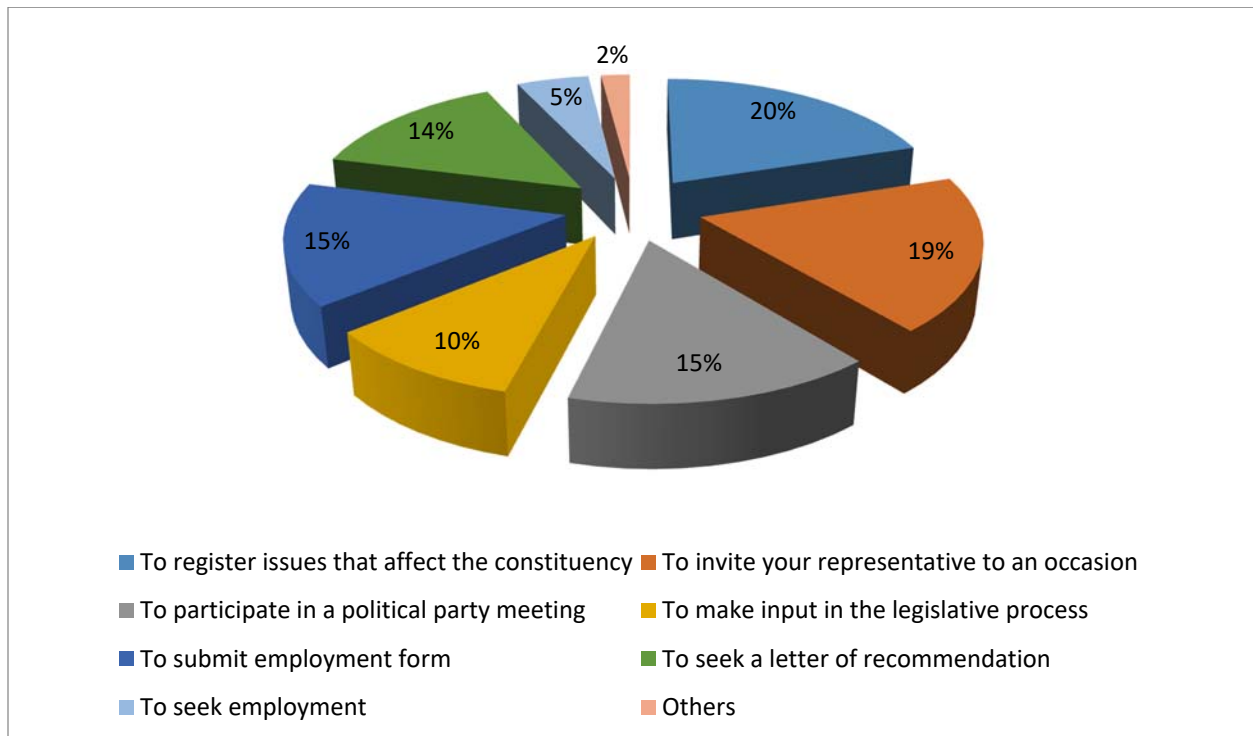
Concerning whether the office is accessible and easily identifiable by members of the constituency, 48.2% of the respondents held the view that the office is accessible and easily identified by constituents. Conversely, 37.4% of the constituents noted that the constituency office is not accessible and easily identified by people in the federal constituency. It was also revealed that 14.4% of the respondents responded that they cannot say whether the constituency office is

accessible and easily identified by members of the constituency. Constituency offices are used by elected representatives as a link to effectively carry out the mandate of the people in policy and governance duties (Ewuim et al, 2014).

***Type of engagement in the constituency office***

Based on the centrality of constituency office in legislative representation, responses were collated for the type of engagements, and the result is presented in Figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1: Type of engagement in the constituency office**



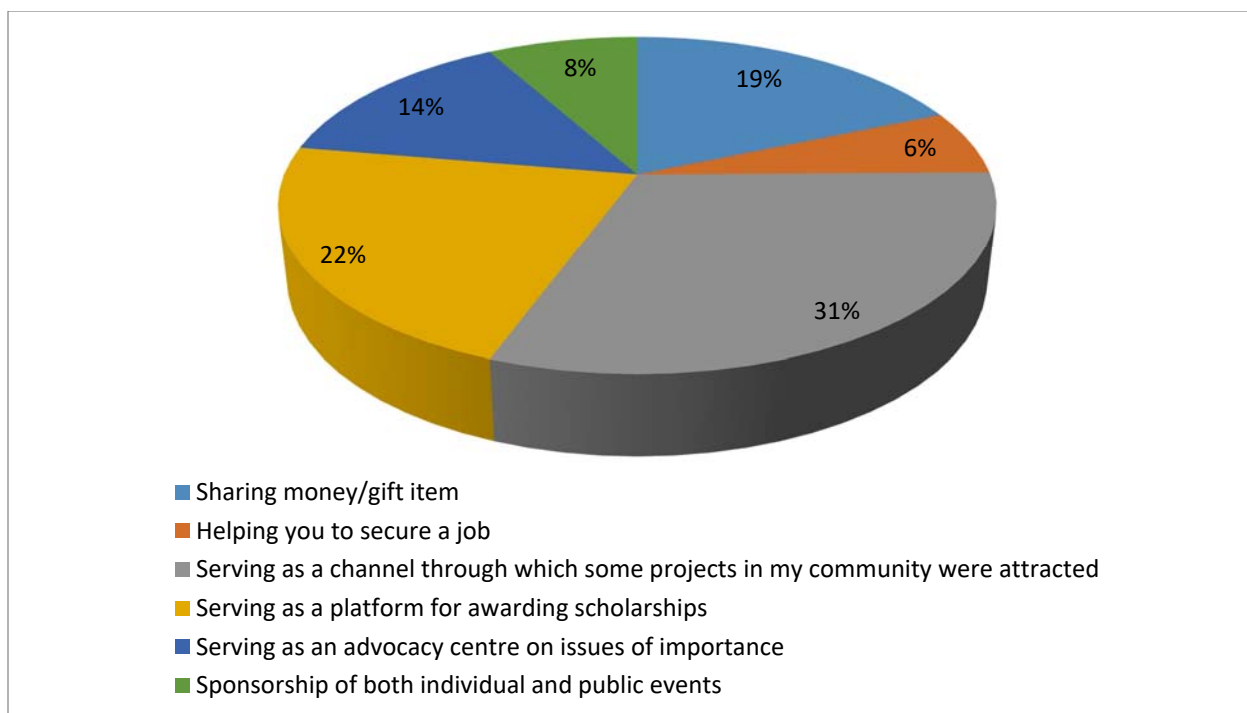
Source: Fieldwork (March 2022)

Figure 4.1 presents the outcome of the study concerning the type of engagement that occurs in the constituency office. The result of the study shows that 20% of the respondents acknowledged that they have been to the constituency office to register issues that affect the constituency. Also, 19% of the respondents indicated that they have been to the constituency office to invite the representative to an occasion. These events mostly attract members of the constituency as most of them display such presence for political gains (Martins, 2011). The constituency office has always served as a vehicle through which elected representatives interact with constituents. Given this, 15% of the respondents held the view that constituency office is used as a platform for participating in a political party meeting. While 10% of the respondents noted that constituency office is used to make input in the legislative process, 15% of the respondents stated that the constituency office is used to submit employment forms. Furthermore, it was observed that 14% of the respondents agreed that constituency office is used to seek for letter of recommendation for employment while 2% of the respondents acknowledged that they use the constituency office as a means of getting other things that affect them and the constituency.

#### ***Means through which constituency office has impacted the electorates***

The constituency office connects the people to the government and as such impacts the lives of the people positively as demonstrated in Figure 4.2.

#### **Figure 4.2: Ways constituency office has impacted life positively**



**Source:** Fieldwork (March 2022)

From Figure 4.2, 19% of the respondents posited that constituency office serves as the platform where money/gift item are being shared; 6% of the respondents noted that the constituency office helps to secure jobs for the unemployed electorates; the respondents (31%) stated that it serves as a channel through which projects are attracted; 22% opined that the constituency office serves as a platform for awarding scholarships. In addition, 14% of the respondents noted that constituency office serves as an advocacy centre on issues of importance while 8.1% of the respondent noted that constituency office is impactful by facilitating the sponsorship of both individual and public events.

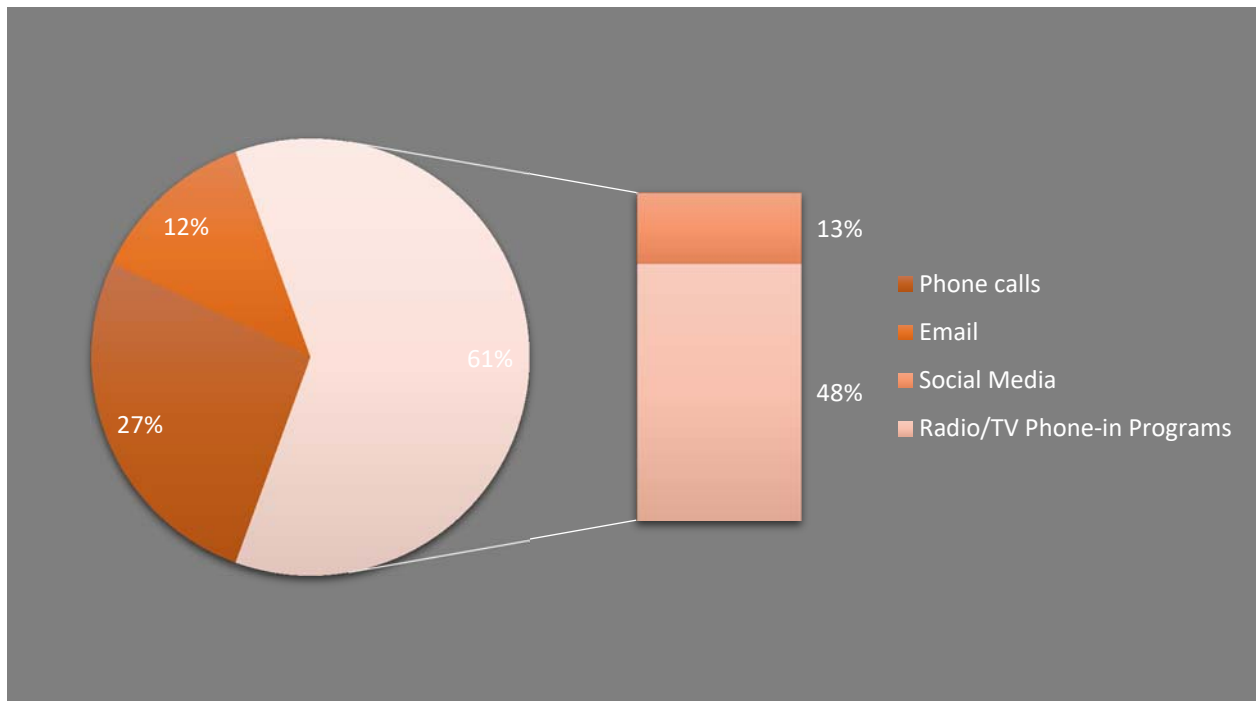
### **4.3 Mechanism through which interaction exists between the constituents and their elected representatives**

The possible ways or mechanisms for interactions between the elected representatives and the electorates are discussed in this section.

### *Mechanisms for engaging with the constituency office*

The study collated information concerning mechanisms through which interaction exists between the constituency and their elected representatives and the result is presented as thus:

**Figure 4.3: Platforms for Engagement with Constituency office**



**Source:** Fieldwork (March 2022)

Figure 4.3 represents the mechanisms through which members of the constituency engage with their elected representatives using the instrumentality of the constituency office. The result of the study revealed that 27% of the respondents use phone calls as a means of getting across to their constituency office while 12% noted that they reach the constituency office through Email. The rapid growth in media has allowed for a wider reach, especially between the electorates and elected representatives with 13% of the respondents noting that they reach the constituency office through Social Media whereas 48% of the constituents get across the constituency office through Radio/TV Phone-in Programs. The responses agree with Awofeso (2020) when he posited that representatives create different platforms through which they can interact with members of their

constituency. Dan-Azumi and Okereke (2018) are of the view that these platforms are the means through which representatives reach out to a large chunk of their constituents.

***Encounter/activities in the constituency office***

Following, therefore, the choice expressed above by respondents on the mechanisms through which interaction exists between the constituents and their elected representatives, Table 4.4 presents the outcome of the listed mechanisms.

**Table 4.4 Encounter/activities in the constituency office**

S/N	Item	Yes	No	Can't Say
1	Have you had any encounters with your federal constituency representative in your constituency office?	18.6%	54.9%	27.5%
2	Have you heard or seen your constituency representative visiting the constituency office?	25.5%	51.8%	23.7%
3	Do you think the constituency office is more alive during the electioneering periods?	64.2%	17.9%	17.9%
4	Political activities dominate what happens at the constituency office	52.4%	20.8%	26.8%

**Source:** Fieldwork (March 2022)

From Table 4.4, it was observed that 18.6% of the respondents have not had an encounter with their federal constituency representative in the constituency office while 54.9% and 27.5% expressed their nonaffirmative and neutrality respectively. Further, 22.6% of the respondents posited that they have not heard or seen their constituency representative visiting the constituency office whereas 51.8% and 23.7% chose No ”and“ can’t say responses. As a result, citizens of such areas travel to the National Assembly with the hope of interfacing with their elected representatives which in most instances is unlikely due to bureaucratic processes (Bakare, 2020).

Going further, Table 4.4 showed that 64.2% of the respondents believe that the constituency office is more alive during the electioneering periods while 17.9% and 17.9% preferred the “NO” and



“can’t say” options respectively. Drawing from this, on whether political activities dominate what happens at the constituency office, 52.4% of the constituents agreed to the dominance of political activities at the constituency office with 20.8% of the respondents stating the opposite “NO” response while 26.8% were undecided.

#### 4.4 Factors influencing the performance of the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency office

Although constituency offices are not enshrined in the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria, they have been created to support the political structure of elected representatives. These offices where they are present, are in most cases redundant due to various factors. In this light, responses were collated and presented in Table 4.5.

#### 4.5 Response on the factors affecting the performance of federal constituency office

S/N	FACTOR	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	Lack of professional staff	46.0%	35.4%	0%	6.2%	12.4%
2	Lack of standard operating procedure	46.9%	26.5%	5%	15.4%	6.2%
3	Lack of training of constituency office staff	47.8%	26.5%	6.2%	6.2%	13.3%
6	Absenteeism of constituents office staff	46.9%	12.4%	3.6%	30%	7.1%
7	Inaccessibility of constituent office to the public	59.3%	27.4%	0%	6.2%	7.1%
8	The nonchalant attitude of	57.5%	28.3%	6.2%	8.0%	0%

	constituents about the existence of the office					
9	Nonresponsiveness of the office to the demands of the electorates	38.9%	18.6%	6.2%	22.1%	14.2%
10	Lack of constitutional backing for the existence of the office	50.3%	23.4%	9%	8.2%	9.1%
11	Inability to have access to the elected representative.	49.3%	22.3%	6.2%	10.2%	12%

**Source:** Fieldwork (March 2022)

From Table 4.5, questions were set out for the respondents to identify the factors that impede the performance of the federal constituency office in the Abakiliki/Izzi constituency. However, 81.4% (46% + 35.4%) of respondents noted that lack of professional staff at the constituency office impede the performance of the office while 18.6% refuted the claim. Also, 73.4% of the respondents alluded that the lack of standard operating procedures hindered the effective performance of the constituency office. On the contrary, only 21.6% of the respondents observed that lack of standard operating procedure is not an obstacle the performance of the constituency office with only 5% of the respondents being neutral.

Lack of training of constituency office staff was also identified as one of the factors that affect the performance of constituency office as affirmed by 74.3% (47.8% +26.5%) of the respondents while 19.5% acknowledged that lack of training of constituency office staff does not affect the performance of constituency. 6.2% of respondents were neutral about the claim that the lack of training of constituency office staff affect the performance of constituency office. Furthermore, according to 59.3% of the respondents, absenteeism of staff of the constituency office affect the performance of constituency office with only a portion of the respondents (37.1%) stating otherwise. Nevertheless, Aleman et al (2021) in their study affirmed that absenteeism renders

service delivery inefficient. However, 3.6% others were neutral about the fact that absenteeism of constituency office staff affects the performance of constituency office. Inaccessibility of constituent office to the public as noted by 86.7% is an obstacle to the performance of constituency office while 13.3% of the respondents disagree with this position. Given the foregoing, it must be stated that constituency services/offices should be readily available as well as accessible to the electorates.

The nonchalant attitude of constituents about the existence of the office was affirmed by 85.8% of the respondents. This is because the staffing of constituency offices is believed to serve as compensation for support during the election period. However, 8% of the respondents disapproved of the statement that constituents are nonchalant about the existence of the constituency office. To determine the performance of the constituency office, 57.5% of respondents affirmed the nonresponsiveness of the office to the demands of the electorates. In contrast, 36.3% of the respondents disagreed with this claim. Similarly, the lack of constitutional backing for the existence of constituency office was noted by 73.7% of the respondents to impede the performance of the constituency office while 17.3% others stated otherwise. The absence of a legal framework for the management of constituency office, nonetheless, Loat and MacMillan (2014) and Siefken (2014) noted separately that when it comes to offering assistance and guidance, MPs go above and beyond their legislative functions stipulated in the constitution.

The inability to have access to the elected representative as observed by 71.6% of the respondents was identified as a major factor affecting the performance of constituency office. This finding, however, shows the level of restriction surrounding the operation/management of constituency office. In another way, 22.2% of the respondents posited that the claim of inability to have access to elected representative does not apply in Abakaliki/Izzi federal constituency. Overall, these

findings align with the position expressed by Dan-Azumimi and Okereke (2018) when they observed that the performance of constituency office is tied to management and operations as well as a definitive framework (legal or institutional) on how legislators should run constituency offices.

#### **4.5. Discussion of findings**

Based on the objectives outlined in this study, the findings of Rawlings (1990a) (1990b) and Le Lidec (2009) to the effect that the constituency office manages and presents a varied range of issues to elected parliament members thus, reaffirming the empirical results for objective one. As a result, the study found that constituency office is the link through which the electorates channel their requests to their elected representatives. Ewuim et al (2014) restated this when they averred that constituency offices are used by elected representatives as a link to effectively carry out the mandate of the people in policy and governance duties. In fact, 51.9% of the respondents stated that the constituency office can be used by elected representatives to improve the well-being of the electorates hence, aligning with the positions of Blidook and Kerby (2011). Federico (2011) stated that the growing rate of youth unemployment in the country has continued to attract complaints from all angles thereby placing the elected representatives at the fore and gateway for employment. Therefore, (Awofeso, 2020) concluded that this situation placed a level of responsiveness on elected representatives and hence, a show of solidarity with their constituents members along the line of providing constituency services.

Following objective two, the mechanisms through which interactions exist between the constituents and their elected representatives confirmed by respondents include the use of phone calls, email, Social Media and Radio/TV Phone-in Programs. These responses align with Awofeso (2020) as he asserted that representatives create different platforms through which they can interact

with members of their constituency. In addition, Dan-Azumi and Okereke (2018) identified these platforms as the means through which elected representatives reach their constituents. However, objective three outlined the factors influencing the performance of the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency office as listed by respondents: lack of professional staff at the constituency office which aligns with Abegunde's (2016) proposition to the effect that unprofessionalism has disrupted the effectiveness of governance in Nigeria.

Also, the lack of standard operating procedures, lack of training of constituency office staff, and absenteeism of constituency office staff which confirms Aleman et al's (2021) study that absenteeism renders service delivery inefficient, were other factors affecting the performance of constituency office. Besides, the inaccessibility of constituent office to the public, the nonchalant attitude of constituents about the existence of the office, the nonresponsiveness of the office to the demands of the electorates., the lack of constitutional backing for the existence of constituency office, and the inability to have access to the elected representative were also enumerated by respondents as factors impeding the performance of constituency office. Overall, these findings align with the position expressed by Dan-Azumimi and Okereke (2018) as they reasoned that the performance of constituency office is tied to its management and operations as well as a institutional framework on how they should be operated. After all, these factors represent vital lessons that can be learnt to assist in improving the relationship between the constituents and their elected representatives.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the summary, recommendations and conclusion of the study are presented. The summary is an overview of the study, the recommendations were suggested strategies to mitigate the factors impeding the performance of constituency offices, while the conclusion was informed position arising from various responses provided by respondents.

#### **5.1. Summary**

The study assessed the influence of constituency office management in ensuring effective legislative representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency. Specifically, the study examined the effect of constituency office on the well-being of the constituents of Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency, examined the mechanism through which interactions exist between the constituents and their elected representatives, examined the factors influencing the performance of the Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency office, and identified lessons that would assist in improving the relationship between the constituents and their elected representatives.

The study adopted the mixed research design using quantitative and qualitative data. Data were taken from primary (questionnaires) and secondary (official publications of the National Assembly and government, journal articles, magazines, and internet, among others) sources. The content analysis and descriptive statistics were used for the analysis of data. For emphasis, descriptive statistics was used for the analysis of quantitative data while the content analysis which emphasized the examination of documentary evidence was adopted for the analysis of qualitative data.

Although there are no extant laws like the Constituency Management Law of Lagos State at the National level, lawmakers in their bid to entrench the culture of representation facilitate constituency services using this means. The Constituency office over time has been the link through which the electorates channel their requests to their elected representatives. Therefore, findings revealed that there exists a Constituency office for Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency procured and managed by Member of the Federal House of Representatives within the ambit of constitutional mandates. This office is located at Ogoja Road by Ricemill junction (scan filling station). Further findings showed that members of the constituency engage with their elected representatives using phone calls, Email, Social Media, Radio/TV Phone-in Programs, and so on.

As a result, study demonstrated that constituency office has impacted positively in that it provide platforms where money/gift item, helping to secure jobs for unemployed constituents, served as a platform for awarding scholarships, among others.

Overall, the study identified lack of professional staff at the constituency office, lack of standard operating procedure, lack of training of constituency office staff, absenteeism of constituents office staff, inaccessibility of constituency office, the nonchalant attitude of constituents about the existence of the office, lack of constitutional backing for the existence of the office, among others, as the factors affecting the performance of constituency office.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

Given its findings, the study makes the following recommendations that would assist in improving the constituency office management:

- (i) Provision of Legal Framework for constituency office. To ensure effective legislative representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal constituency, there is the need for the National Assembly to enact a legal framework designed to guide its operation to improve the delivery of constituency offices in Nigeria thus positively impacting legislative representation. The enabling law will guide its operation and administration.
- (ii) Aside from the need for a legal framework to guide the functioning of constituency office, executive agencies such as the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) should make statutory provisions to maintain as well as create other channels through which constituency services would be best facilitated by the constituency office.
- (iii) Strategic collaboration of Civil Society Organizations. A substantive law guiding the operations of constituency offices must have in it a provision for collaboration with CSOs which is an integral part of an effective legislative representation to improve the performance



of constituency offices. The collaboration with credible CSOs would mitigate challenges militating against the effectiveness of constituency offices.

- (iv) Transparency in the operation of constituency offices. With extant provision enabling the collaboration with CSOs in the administration of Constituency office services, it is no doubt that the transparent operation of the constituency office would boost confidence in the essence of the use of constituency offices thereby entrenching effective legislative representation.

### **5.3. Conclusion**

Generally, the concept of constituency office allows legislators to access information and resources on the needs of those who elected them. This concept becomes more needful as elected representatives continue to face multiple challenges including the decline in public confidence and perceptions of corruption leading to ever-lower approval ratings and trust in the institution of the National Assembly. Consequently, constituency offices serve as an outlet for legislators to address some of the highlighted problems, determine the problems facing constituents, and educate constituents on the role of a parliamentarian.

The National Assembly provides funding for legislators to operate constituency offices (see Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission). This is in addition to budgetary allocations for zonal intervention/constituency projects often identified by legislators for inclusion in the national budget. As result, there was an imperative to assess how the constituency offices has affect legislative representative. This need, therefore, necessitated this study. Based on this, the study revealed that there exists a Constituency office for Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency which serves as the link through which electorates channel their requests to their elected representatives using phone calls, Email, Social Media, Radio/TV Phone-in Programs, and so on.

However, lack of professional staff at the constituency office, lack of standard operating procedure, lack of training of constituency office staff, nonchalant attitude of constituents about the existence of the office, the lack of constitutional backing for the existence of the office, among others, were identified as the factors affecting the performance of constituency office. Nevertheless, since constituency office has become a mainstay of effective representation if properly managed, the study suggested the strategic collation with CSOs, enactment of a legal framework, among others as strategies that would enhance the performance of constituency office.

Overall, given the place of the National Assembly as the representative of citizens elected from delineated constituencies (see Section 14 (2) of the 1999 Constitution, as altered), there is the need for a proper functioning constituency office to cater for the diverse and growing representational needs of citizens. Therefore, exercising its powers of lawmaking enshrined in Section 4 of the Constitution, the National should enact a constituency office law to cater for the administration and operations of constituency offices since the practice of the Constituency office has become acceptable as an essential part of legislative representation.

## REFERENCES

- Abonyi, N. (2006). *Intergovernmental relations in democratic federations*. Enugu: John Jacob's
- Adegunde, O. (2016). Legislature and democratic sustainability in Nigeria: History of legislature in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies*. III (III), 228-232.
- Adler, M. (1996). *The Common Sense of Politics*. New York: Fordham University Press
- Affairs, 3(1&2), 73 – 89.
- African Development, 31(3), 93 -119.
- Agencies: The Effects of Resources and Careerism. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 31(4), 585-609.
- Akintola, J. (1999): *Law Practice and Procedure of Legislature*. Ibadan: Spectrum Publishing.
- Aleman, E., Micozzi, J.P., Pinto, P.M. & Saiegh, S. (2021). Constituency Effects and Legislative Dissent Under Closed-List Proportional Representation. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 63(2), 78 – 99.
- Anifowose, R. (2008). *Constitution and constitutionalism*. In Anifowose, R. & Enemuo F. (eds).
- Anyaegbunam, E. O. (2010). *The Legislator's Companion: A Handbook for the National*

Assembly, State Houses of Assembly and Local Government Legislative Councils. Ibadan: Book Builders Editions Africa and Parliamentary Publishers Limited, Lagos

Awofeso, O., & Irabor, P. A. (2020). The Nigerian National Assembly and the oversight of constituency fund. *Global Journal of Politics and Law Research*, 8(1), 50-67.

Awotokun, A. (1998): “Legislative, Executive and Judicial Duties in Sustaining Democracy: A

Bakare, A.R. & Bello, M.L. (2020). Reforming the Nigerian National Assembly for Legislative

Barkan, J. D. (2009). African Legislatures and the “Third Wave” of Democratization. In *Legislative Power in Emerging African Democracies*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Benjamin, S. (2010). National Assembly: The Limit of Party politics In Legislative Process.

Bernick, E.M. & Bernick, L.E. (2008). Executive-legislative relations: Where you sit really does

Blidook, K., & Kerby, M. (2011). Constituency Influence on ‘Constituency Members’: The Adaptability of Rolesto Electoral Realities in the Canadian Case. *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 17(3), 327- 339.

Chaligha, A. (2009). Tanzanians and their National Parliament: What the People Expect of Members of Parliament(MPs),and what they PerceivetheirMPsare Delivering. *AFROBAROMETER Briefing Paper No.59*(March).

Channels TV (2020, 23<sup>rd</sup> July). NDDC Spent 1.3trn Between 2015 and 2019 – Senate Report. Classic Publishers Ltd.

Dan-Azumimi, J. (2019). *Legislative Oversight: Concept Bench-mark and Best Practices*. A Paper presented at the Orientation programme for members-elect of the 9<sup>th</sup> National Assembly.

Davies, A. E. (2004). “The Role of the Legislature in Fostering an Efficient System of Public DC: C.Q. Press.

Dogara, Y. (2017). High Turnover Rate Affects the Quality of legislation At NASS – Dogara. Available at <http://www.nta.ng/news/20170420-turnover-national-assembly-legislation-dogara/>

Ebeku, K. S. A (2020). Assessing the Performance of the Niger Delta Development Commission

Edigheji, O (2006): “Political Representation in Africa: Towards a Conceptual Framework”

Edosa, E. & Azelama, J. (1995). “Institutions of Government.” In Ikelegbe, A. O. (eds) Politics

Effectiveness: Issues, Constraints and Way-Forward. ACTA UNIVERSITATIS DANUBIUS, 12(1), 24-47.

Egwu, S. G. (2005). The Legislature in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. In Democratic Rebirth in Elements of politics. Lagos: Sam Ironsi Publications.

Ewuim, N.C, Nnamani, D. O & Eberinwa, O. M. (2014). Legislative oversight and goodgovernance in Nigeria National Assembly: An analysis of Obasanjo and Jonathan's administration. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 3(6), 140-153.  
executivelegislative handling of executive power vacuum in the Fourth Republic. *Africana*

Fashagba, J. Y. (2012). The Nigerian Legislature and Socio-Political Re-engineering the Fourth

Fashagba, J. Y., Ajayi, O.M. & Nwankwor, C. (2019). The Nigerian National Assembly: Advances in African Economic, Social and Political Development. <http://www.springer.com/series/11885>

Fashagba, J.Y. (2010). De-constitutionalising? Democratic governance in Nigeria: Assessing

Fatile, J. O. (2017). Legislative –Executive Relations and Public Policy Formulation and Federal Government Press.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Lagos:

Federico, R. (2011). The Constituency as a Focus of Representation: Studying the Italian Case through the Analysis of Parliamentary Questions. *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 17(3), 290-301, DOI:10.1080/13572334.2011.595122

Fenno,R.F.(2000).*CongressattheGrassroots:RepresentationalChangeintheSouth,1770-1998*.North Carolina: University of North CarolinaPress.

Finance” in Fageigbesi (eds.) Fiscal Federalism. CEMA/ACBE.

Gidado, M. M. (2012). Constitutional Role of the Legislature Viewed from a Nigerian Prism. Paper Presented at a Seminar for Legislative Aides to the Senate President at Nicon Luxury Hotel, Abuja 20th – 21st May, 2012.

Haider-Markel, D. P., Joslyn, M. R., & Kniss, C. J. (2000). Minority Group Interests and Political Representation: Gay Elected Officials in the Policy Process. *The Journal of Politics*, 62(2), 568- 577

Heywood, A. (2007). *Politics* (3rd Edition). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hofstetter, E. & Stokoe, E. (2015). Offers of assistance in politician-constituent interaction. *Discourse Studies*. 17(6), 724-751.

- Hofstetter, E. & Stokoe, E. (2018). Getting service at the constituency office: Analyzing citizens' encounters with their Member of Parliament. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326864471>
- Hofstetter, E. (2019). *Citizens Getting Help: Interactions at the Constituency Office*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/2134/22740>.
- House of Commons (2013). *You and Your MP: Brief guide*. London: Author. Retrieved from: <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-information-office/Brief-Guides/You-and-Your-MP.pdf> First accessed October 20th, 2013.
- House of Commons Modernisation Committee (2007). *Revitalising the chamber: The role of the back bench Member*. First Report of Session 2006-07, 13 June. London: House of Commons.
- Jensen, M. & Meckling, W. (1976). Theory of the firm: Managerial behavior, agency costs and ownership structure. *Journal of financial economics*, 3(4), 305-360.
- Kamau, G. (2015). Factors affecting successful completion of constituency development funded projects in Kenya: A case of Nyandarua county. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, III(3), 499-516.
- Lafenwa, S. A. (2009). The Legislature and the challenges of democratic governance in Africa:
- Lafenwa, S., & Gberevbie, D. (2007). Legislative Oversight and Cost of Governance in Nigeria. In Akpotor, A. et.al (eds) *Cost of Governance in Nigeria. An Evaluative Analysis*. Ekpoma: Ambrose Ali University Publishing House.
- Laffont, J. & David M. (2002). *The Theory of incentives-The principal Agent Model*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Laski, H. (1992). *A grammar of politics*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Le Lidec, P. (2009). French deputies, their assistants and the uses of staff appropriations: A sociology of political work. *Sociologie du travail*. 518, e117-e135.
- Loat, A. & Michael, M. (2014). *Tragedy in the Commons: Former Members of Parliament speak out about Canada's failing democracy*. Toronto: Random House Canada.
- MacLeod, P. (2006). How to Organize an Effective Constituency Office. *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, Spring.

- MacLeod, P. (2006). *How to Organize an Effective Constituency Office*. Canadian Parliamentary Review, 9-12.
- Martin, S. (2011). Using Parliamentary Questions to Measure Constituency Focus: An Application to the Irish Case. *Political Studies*, 59 (2), 472–488.
- matter. *Social Science Quarterly*. 89(4), 123-137.
- Meeting the Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria. Ibadan: NISER.
- Nigeria, 1, 1999-2003. A. T. Gana and Y. B. C Omelle (eds.) Abuja: African Centre for Democratic Governance.
- Nigerian Journal of Legislative Affairs*, 3(1/2), 44 – 72
- Nijzink, L., Mozaffar, S., & Azevedo, E., (2006). Can Parliaments Enhance the Quality of Democracy on the Continent? An Analysis of the Institutional Capacity and Public Perceptions. Working Paper No. 160. Centre for Social Science Research (CSSR).
- Nnamdi, C. (2017). *National Assembly: The Nigeria Number One Enemy*. <http://www.nairaland.com/3625827/national-assembly-nigeria-number-one>.
- Nwoba, M. O. E., Ojo, J., & Tiben, B. N. (2015). Understanding the dynamics of legislative
- Obadan, M. I. (2014). The National Assembly and Federal Budget. In L. Hamalai and R. Suberu (Eds.). *The National Assembly and Democratic Governance in Nigeria*. Abuja: NILS.
- Okoosi-Simbine, A. (2010). Understanding the role and challenges of the legislature in the Fourth Republic: The case of Oyo State House of Assembly. *Nigeria Journal of Legislative Affairs*. 3 (1& 2), 1-27.
- Omano, E. (2006). Political Representation in Africa: Towards a Conceptual Framework. *Africa Development*, XXXI(3), 96.
- Ong, M. (1976). The Member of Parliament and His Constituency: The Malaysian Case. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 1(3), 405-422.
- Onyango, G. (2019). Legislative oversight and policy-reforms in “unsettled” political contexts of public administration. *International Journal of Public Administration*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2019.1627556>
- Osagie, S. (2017). National Assembly Oversight Functions: Constitutional Provisions and Implications for National Development. <https://www.orderpaper.ng/national-assembly-oversight-functions-constitutional-provisions-implications-national-development/>
- Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre [PLAC] (2017). Guide to lawmaking in the National Assembly. Abuja: PLAC
- Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre [PLAC] (2016). Effective Representation in the National Assembly. Abuja: PLAC.

- Poteete, A. (2010). *Renegotiation of Executive Powers and Executive-Legislative Relations in powers in nigeran local government system: implications for rural development*. *Journal of Policy and Development Studies*, 9(4), 161-171. Prentice-Hall Private Ltd.
- Pitkin, H. F. (1967). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Rawlings, R. (1990a). The MP's complaints service. *The Modern Law Review* 53(1). 22-42.
- Rawlings, R. (1990b). The MP's complaints service. *The Modern Law Review*. 53(2). 149-169.
- Ray, S. (2004). *Modern Comparative Politics. Approaches, Methods and Issues*. New Delhi: Republic. <http://carllewan.com>.
- Roberts, F. (2002). "Performance Evaluation of the New Democracy" in Ajakaiye, D. (eds.),
- Rosenthal, A et al (2003). *Republic on Trial: The Case of Representative Democracy*. Washington
- Rosenthal, A. (1981). Legislative Behaviour and Legislative Oversight. *Legislative Studies*
- Rosenthal, A. (2014). Legislative behavior and legislative oversight. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 6(1), 115-131.
- Saliu, H. & Muhammad, A. (2010). Exploring the Parliament. *Nigeria Journal of Legislative*
- Saliu, H. A. & Bakare, A. R. (2016a). An Overview of the National Assembly in the 4th Republic in Nigeria. Paper presented at the 2nd National Conference on State, Governance and Insecurity in Nigeria. Organized by Department of Political Science. University of Ilorin.
- Saliu, H. A. & Bakare, A. R. (2016b). An Assessment of the performance of the 7th National Assembly in Nigeria. Paper presented at the National Conference on the Dynamics of Democratic Practice in Nigeria, 1999-2015. Organized by Aminu Kano Centre for Democratic Research and Training, Mambayya House, Bayero University, Kano on November 9-10.
- Saliu, H. A., & Bakare, A. (2020). An Analysis of the Role of the National Assembly in Nigeria's Fourth Republic and its possible reform. *Studia Politica: Romanian Political Science Review*, 20(2), 271-290. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-69930-2>
- Sam-Tsokwa, A. T. & Ngara, C. O. (2016). The National Assembly and the Budget Process in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: Tackling the Challenges of Timeliness. *Canadian Social Science*, 12(5), 1-7.



- Sanyal, K. (2009). *The Executive versus the Legislature*. New Delhi: PRS Legislative Research
- Stapenhurst, R., Pelizzo, R., Olson, D. M., & Trapp, L. V. (Eds.). (2008). *Legislative oversight and budgeting: A world perspective*. Washington, D. C.: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.
- Searing, D.D. (1994). *Westminster's World. Understanding Political Roles*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Siefken, S. T. (2014). The case against (or for?) casework: German MPs' service responsiveness in their district work with citizens. Presented at the ECPR General Conference. Glasgow, September 3-6.
- Skjæveland, A. & Christiansen, F.J. (2018). Putting Party First? Constituency Service in Denmark, Representation, DOI: 10.1080/00344893.2018.1461682
- Smith, A. (2003). *Brining Representation Home: State Legislators Among Their Constituencies*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press.
- Stapenhurst, R. & Pelizzo, R. (2004). Legislative Ethics and Codes of Conduct. Series on Contemporary Issues in Parliamentary Development. World Bank Institute Working Paper Series. Stock No. 37237. Available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/894431468323056040/text/33034a10ParliamentaryEthics1final.txt>
- Strøm, K. (1997). Rules, Reasons and Routines: Legislative Roles in Parliamentary Democracies. In: W.C. Müller and T. Saalfeld, eds. *Members of Parliament in Western Europe*. London: Frank Cass.
- The Nigerian Case. A seminar paper delivered at a conference on Governance and Development on Democratization in Africa: Retrospective and Future, Prospects, held on December 4-5, at University of Leeds, United Kingdom.
- Theoretical Discourse in Nigeria". *Indian Socio-Legal Journal*, 24(1-2).
- Udefuna, P.N., Jumare, F. & Adebayo, F.O. (2013). Legislative Constituency Project in Nigeria: Implication for National Development. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(6), 647-653.
- Wilson, W. (1885). *Congressional Government*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.
- Woods, N. D. & Baranowski, M. (2006). Legislative Professionalism and Influence on State
- Zajac, E. & Westphal, J. (1996). Director Reputation, CEO-board Power, and the Dynamics of Board Interlocks. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 41(3), 507-529.



**APPENDIX I**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**CONSTITUENCY OFFICE AND EFFECTIVE LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATION IN  
ABAKALIKI/IZZI FEDERAL CONSTITUENCY**

Dear respondent,

I am a master's degree student at the National Institute of Legislative and Democratic Studies/ UNIBEN programme. I am currently carrying out a research project on *Constituency Office and Effective Legislative Representation in Abakaliki/Izzi Federal Constituency*.

I seek your opinion on the questions below. You are not required to give your name. The information you give will remain confidential and will not be revealed to a third party. Thank you for your response.

**Section A: Demographic Information**

1. Age in years  18- 30  31- 50  51 and above
2. Gender  Male  Female  Transgender  I prefer not to say
3. Highest form of Education  Primary School  Secondary School  University/Polytechnic/College of Education  None  Others (please specify).....
4. Marital status  Married  Single  Divorced  Separated Widow/Widower
5. I am a resident of  Abakaliki LGA  Izzi LGA

**Section B: Constituency Office Management and Lessons to assist in improving the relationship between the Constituents and the Elected Representatives**

6. Are you aware that the constituency office can be used by your elected representatives to improve your wellbeing?  
 Yes  No  Can't say
7. Is there any constituency office in your federal constituency?  
 Yes  No  Can't say
8. If yes in 7 above, is the office accessible and easily identifiable?  Yes  No  Can't say

9. Do you think that the location of the constituency office discourages you from visiting?  Yes  No  
 Can't say

10. How often do you visit your federal constituency office?  Often  Always  Sometimes   
Rarely  Never

11. Do you have any means of contacting your federal constituency office without going there in person?  Yes  No  Can't say

12. Are you aware of any public sensitization of the people about the importance of constituency office?  Yes  No  Can't say

13. Do you think there is a need for more awareness about the existence of constituency offices?  Yes  No  Can't say

14. Are you aware of any town hall meeting held in your federal constituency office?  Yes  
 No  Can't say

15. What engagement have you ever had with your constituency office

To register issues that affect the constituency

To invite your representative to an occasion

To participate in a political party meeting

To make input in the legislative process

To submit employment form

To seek a letter of recommendation

To seek employment

Others (please specify) .....

16. In what ways do you think the constituency office has impacted your life positively

Sharing money/gift item

Helping you to secure a job

Serving as a channel through which some projects in my community were attracted

Serving as a platform for awarding scholarships

serving as an advocacy centre on issues of importance

Sponsorship of both individual and public events

17. Apart from personal visits, which other platforms can you use to engage your constituency office?

Phone calls  Email  Social Media  Radio/TV Phone-in Programs

Others (please specify) .....

18. Have you had any encounters with your federal constituency representative in your constituency office?  Yes  No  Can't say

19. Have you heard or seen your constituency representative visiting the constituency office?

Yes  No  Can't say

20. Do you think the constituency office is more alive during the electioneering periods?  Yes

No  Can't say

21. Political activities dominate what happens at the constituency office.  Yes  No  Can't say

22. Please, rank in your order of importance the factor that you think is affecting the performance of your federal constituency office?

S/N	FACTOR	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	Lack of professional staff					
2	Lack of standard operating procedure					
3	Lack of training of constituency office staff					
6	Absenteeism of constituents office staff					
7	Inaccessibility of constituent office to the public					

8	The nonchalant attitude of constituents about the existence of the office					
9	Nonresponsiveness of the office to the demands of the electorates					
10	Lack of constitutional backing for the existence of the office					
11	Inability to have access to the elected representative.					