

**Legislative Oversight and Accountability,
A Study of the 8th Senate Committees on Power, Works and Housing (2015-2019)**

BY

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APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that this research project has been carefully supervised, read, assessed and approved as having met the necessary conditions required for the award of Masters in Legislative Studies, in the NILDS-UNIBEN Postgraduate Programme.

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DECLARATION

I, Ebonugwu Chijioke Chukwunyere, hereby declare that this dissertation was solely carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Abdullahi Zainawa. All tests consulted and other sources of materials used in this work have been duly acknowledged in the bibliography and the project has never been submitted to any institution for an award

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DEDICATION

This dissertation work is deservedly dedicated to God for his Awesome Grace and Blessing in the course of running this programme.

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Abstract

The National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is widely perceived by the public to be inept in the area of legislative oversight. This study understand the basis for this reputation, by identifying the problems associated with oversight performance through revisiting the origins of legislative practice in Nigeria particularly, the activities of the Senate Committee on Power, Works and Housing' (2015-2019) are thoroughly probed. By utilizing data from interviews, in addition to copious evidence derived from previous studies in the field. It is apparent that effective legislative oversight is a precursory measure to the attainment of good governance goals. A series of events placed the Eight National Assembly in the spotlight of a rising conversation on oversight performance. Constitutional issues, budget delays and poor performance, inconclusiveness of high profile investigation into corrupt practices and breach of public trust and the unsavory role of some legislators in managing the crises are some of the serious issues examined. Findings were laid out in an analytical manner, coming to the conclusion that the performance of oversight functions can only translate to socio-economic benefits for Nigerians if and when sections of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are amended, when legislators are the inventive in advancing the national interest over self-interest and political party affiliations, Also, maximum cooperation from the executive arm of government will make it a realisable dream

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Legislature serves as an essential institution for any democratic government. Its existence predates the advent of modern democracy. The emergency of the legislature dates back to the twelve century and a product of medieval European civilization transformed in the age of democracy to suit the needs of contemporary political system (Loewenberg 1995: 736). Boynton (2001:279) states that before and after the 2nd World War, nations grew in number, constitutions incorporate national legislature to replace extant governing institutions throughout the world while their influence of legislature continue to be on the rise in 21st Century approaches. According to Yaqub (2004) the popularity of the legislature cannot be divorced from the wave of democratic growth across the continents. Indeed, if democracy is a system anchored on the informed and active participation of the people, the legislature is a vehicle for equal and wider representation. In Nigeria, the legislature is the central institution of its representative democracy, therefore, accountability in governance can be strongly enhanced with a strong legislative institution.

The existence of legislative institution comprises representatives of the people as a hallmark of democratic government from non-democratic ones. The legislature differs in composition from one system of government to another as well as in their mode of representation. For instance, in parliamentary systems, members of the legislature are fused with members of the executive while in the presidential system, the legislature and executive are separated from other arms of government by different individual to promote good governance. However, the legislators are elected in some countries like Nigeria, while in some other countries they are appointed. In spite of the differences in legislature across the world, they have a common structural character that distinguished them from other arms of government in a democracy. As noted by Saliu (2004), the common feature of legislator is their relation between members is not that of authority and subordination but that of equality of members since they derive their authority from being representatives of the people. The legislature may exercise

different functions from time to time depending on the political system. The two cardinal principles of legislature in democratic setting is law making and acting as watchdog on behalf of the people, without which democracy becomes ineffective. Odinga (1994) noted that

Setting is law making and acting as watchdog on behalf of the people, without which democracy becomes ineffective. Odinga (1994) noted that: “if the constitution is the embodiment of the aspirations, ideals and collective will of the people, the parliament is the collective defender and watchdog of the aspirations, ideals and collective will of the people, If the constitution is the social contract between the people and government, the parliament is the advocate for the people and the arbiter of the national interest. Indeed, if the constitution is like the Bible, Quran and other religious treatises the covenant between the people and their leaders, the parliament is the repository and protector of the oracles of the political covenant and social contract between the people and government.

Consequently, for any democracy to grow, the legislature not only make laws for the good ordering of the society (including appropriation laws) but must as well ensure that such laws are not violated by other arms like the executive Poteet (2010). This it does by acting as watch-dog over their policies through its oversight function. Most constitutions tend to document these two important functions of the legislature (Taiwo & Fajingbesi, 2004). In other words, legislatures accomplish their tasks through men and women of proven integrity and good character that eschew temptations of falling to such issues legislated against. It is by this action that the legislature can be considered as a sub-unit of good governance and democratic sustenance. Legislative oversight is one of the core functions of the legislature and can be better situated within the context of inter-governmental relations, which means that for any organ of government to perform its functions effectively, it must relate with other organs, as a measure of checks and balance. Therefore, accountability which connotes bringing into account the activities of an organization, government Ministries, Departments and Agencies can only be possible with proper legislative oversight.

It is against this backdrop that this study attempts to critically appraise the relationship between legislative oversight and accountability, particularly on the activities of the 8th session of the Senate Committee on works, Power and Housing.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) clearly provides in Section 88 and 89 for the powers to conduct investigations, procure evidence and issue summons/warrants to compel the attendance of any person by the National Assembly, it specifically in 88(2)b gives it power to expose corruption, inefficiency and waste in governance. One would expect that being that institution constitutionally empowered to make laws and investigate matters within the purview of its lawmaking jurisdiction; the legislature, will perform this sacred function judiciously and by so doing, assert itself as a true representative of the multi-ethnic conglomeration, Nigeria.

Quite regrettably, this ideal has not been sufficiently attained. There seems to be a lacuna between the constitutional objective on oversight and public perception of what is being done in reality by the legislators and this constitute a problem (Yaqub, 2004). There is a growing discontent in the Nigerian public that the legislature has derailed in its responsibilities to Nigerians, and, instead, has championed a course of elite parochialism and insensitivity to the plight of the average Nigerian citizen. In recent times, these concerns have deepened bothering on the bogusness of remunerations, salaries and allowances of legislators, the seemingly unserious nature of legislative business, incessant holidaying and recesses and the unending nature of politicking which characterizes their everyday activities and to which they seem to be much more interested than the business of governance. It appears legislators over the years have taken a detour from their primary constitutional functions and instead have concentrated more on individual pursuit of wealth, privilege, patronage and enrichment by any means possible. The resultant effect of which has fanned the embers of corruption and decay in the system. This, accordingly to Yaqub (2004), constituted the major challenge and is at the kernel of legislative irresponsibility, a great departure from the task upon which legislators were elected by constituents.

Over the years, the noble goals of accountability by the Nigerian government through the creation of public agencies have been truncated by the lack of accountability on the part of corrupt public officials entrusted to manage these agencies and lack of trust on the part of citizens about government actions. Therefore leakages in the political system becomes prevalent without proper legislative scrutiny on the part of the legislators, hence the legislators are seen as the central nerve between their constituents and the executive as the central institution of Nigeria's representative democracy.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to examine the relationship between legislative oversight and accountability with references to the Senate Committees on Power, Works and Housing of the 8th Session of the National Assembly.

The study has the following specific objectives:

- i. To assess the oversight activities in the eighth session of the Nigeria Senate Committees on Works, Power and Housing.
- ii. To examine the impact of the oversight functions of the Senate Committee on Power, Works and Housing on executive accountability.
- iii. To ascertain the challenges confronting the 8th Senate Committee on Power, Work and Housing of the National Assembly in the performance of its legislative oversight functions.
- iv. To proffer solutions on how the legislature can effectively carry out its oversight function.

1.4 Research Questions

This study therefore, seeks to provide answers to the following pertinent research questions

- i. What are the oversight activities carried out by the Senate Committee on Power, Works and Housing in the 8th Assembly?
- ii. To what extent did these oversight activities impact on executive accountability in the Power, Works and Housing sector during the period 2015-2019?
- iii. What are the challenges that could restrain the legislature from performing its constitutional role with regards to control of public funds?
- iv. What are the possible recommendations that could enhance the effective performance of oversight functions by the National Assembly?

Squarely on the oversight activities of the Senate Committee on Power, Works and Housing of the eight session of the National Assembly covering the period 2015-2019.

However the research work is being constrained by the inaccessibility of some legislators, financial constraints and dearth of information.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This investigation will be of immense relevance as it would present the issues concerning oversight activities of the Senate Committee on Power, Works and Housing of the National Assembly. It will also contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the way that it enriches existing literature on oversight as a useful legislative tool necessary to achieve sustainability, inclusiveness and development of the different aspect of the Nigeria society. It would provide useful insights to the National Assembly and state legislative bodies on public perception of its activities. The findings of this study would be beneficial to the Senate, House of Representative, development partners, non-governmental organizations and civil society groups with keen interest on the activities of the legislature. Also, it will serve as a reference point to other arms of government, researchers and students'. Finally, the work will resolve theoretical issues regarding the gulf between constitutional provisions and the reality of performance by the legislature.

1.7 Definition of Key Concepts

Legislature: Obadan (2016) defines the legislature as one of the three organs of government made up of the representatives of the people. The main task of this organ is to make laws that guide the country. In addition to its law making function, it also performs some other legislative functions which is technically referred to as legislative oversight. It involves activities such as constitutional amendments, overseeing the activities of the executive arm of government, impeachment and confirmation of public officers, approval of annual budget proposals and authorization of government spending etc.

Unicameral Legislature: A unicameral legislature is that law making organ which as only one chamber of proceedings.

Bicameral Legislature : A bicameral legislature is a legislative arrangement that involves the use of two chambers or houses; in nomenclature, one is considered as the upper chamber and the other as the lower chamber, however, the power are equal and coordinate.

National Assembly: The National Assembly is the two legislative houses at the federal level with members drawn from all states of the federation, The members of the House of Representatives' are drawn from all federal constituencies based on the principle of population, while the members of the Senate are drawn from all states based on the principle of 'equality of states.

Oversight: Oversight simple means the act or job of directing work that is being done or regulatory supervision of state expenditure towards transparency and accountability of the

public resources. Pelizzo et al (2006) in a World Bank Institute publication on “Parliamentary Oversight for government Accountability” explain legislative oversight as the legislative supervision of the policies and the programmes enacted by the government. They also explain that oversight is the supervision of what the executive branch of government has done as well as policies and legislative proposal.

Public Accountability: According to Kopell (2005) Public accountability is the process through which those in power are being held accountable in public for their acts and omissions, for their decisions, their policies, and their expenditures. Public accountability therefore, is means to ensure public management of resources held in trust for the common good of national development. The ‘publicness’ of public accountability relates to at least two different features. First of all, ‘public’ relates to openness. The account giving is done in public, i.e it is open or at least accessible to citizens

1.8 Organization of Chapters

In view of the approved research guideline of the institution, the structure of the study is logically divided and presented into five chapters.

Chapter One. Presents the background of the study. This included information on the issues necessitating the research, the statement of the study, the leading objective of the research and aspects bothering on the scope and significant relevance of the study.

Chapter Two covers literature review which was conducted to the extent of available information on the research theme which included conceptual, theoretical and empirical arguments presented by different scholars and authorities on the nature of oversight function of the Legislature as a prerequisite for accountability and good governance. Through this review, the researcher indentified the gap in knowledge as well as theoretical framework which provides guide and focus to the study

Chapter Three concerned itself with the research methodology. To this end, the design adopted for the research, clear definition of the study population, sampling technique and method of date analysis among others were outlined, giving a sound basis for gathering of data for the study.

Chapter Four critically presented and analuzed the data collected where the research questions were being answered.

Chapter Five consists of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the research work.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed relevant literature , (both domestic and global) as it concerns the legislature and oversight within the context of oversight in Nigeria, then established a theoretical framework that best suits the study, upon which a correlation was drawn to establish the linkage between the theoretical framework and the subject under study.

2.1 Legislature

Legislature is referred as parliament in Britain, national assembly, congress in United State (Abonyi, 2006). The legislature occupies a key position in the democratic process of government, with the purpose of articulating the collective will of the people through representatives government (Okoosi- Simbine, 2010). Awotokun (1998) states that legislature is an arm of government made up of elected representatives or constituted assembly people whose duty is to make laws, control the activities of the executive and safeguard people's interest. Anyaegbunam (2000) define legislature as the role of making revising amendment and repealing laws for the well-being of its citizenry it represents. Lafenwa (2009) defines legislature as people chose by election to represent the constituent units and control government. Okoosi-Simbine (2010). Asserts that legislature is law-making, and policy influencing body in the democratic political system. The two makers can be described in the site of sovereignty. The expression on the will of the people. This is derived from the people and should be exercise according to the will of the people they represents. Bogdanor (1991) affirms that legislature is derived from a clam that its members are representative of the political community, and decisions are collectively made according to complex procedures. The state of the legislature has been identified as the strongest predictors on the survival of every democratic development (Okoosi-Simbine, 2010). The centrality of the legislature is captured by Awokokun (1998) when he asserts that legislature is the pivot of modern democratic systems. Edosa & Azelama (1995) states that legislatures vary in design, structure, organization, operational procedures, and selection process as well as sizes, tenure of office and nature of meetings.

In a bicameral type of arrangement two legislative chambers exist in a country; one chamber seems to dominate the other, Nwabueze and Mueller (1985) noted that when they viewed that there exist some forms of dominance of one chamber to the other in some legislation, terms of office, size of the constituencies represented. However, they intricate rules adopted usually harmonize the legislative function of the two chambers. (Upper and lower chamber). Edosa and Azelama (1995) assert that bicameral legislative is common in federal states that stem from the imperative of one house to protect the interests of minority groups in such states. Nigeria operates in a federally bicameral arrangement on the dictates of 1954 Lyttleton Constitution. The House of Senate (Upper House) and House of Representatives (lower House) jointly called

National Assembly of Nigeria. The two chambers act as a check on other arms of government; such checks are minimal because the major policy demand debate is on party affiliations rather than National interest (Edosa & Azelama, (1995). This arrangement enhance passage of law and gives opportunity for division of labour between the two houses (Okoosi-Simbine, 2010). In addition, bicameral legislature provides an opportunity for wider representation of various interest groups in a country from one democracy to the other. Nwabuzor and Muller (1985) notes that such factors like presiding officer, order of business, legislative process, legislative committee, inter-party discipline manner of debate consideration account differently among countries, Nwabuzor and Muller (1985) assert that countries that operate short-term tenure for legislature do so because the representatives reflect on the betterment of public preference in respect of government policy. The long-term tenure ensures the stability of national interest which has no changing public opinion.

2.2 Accountability

According to Ninalowo (2003, 1-32), ‘accountability implies that government functionaries should be prepared to be answerable for their actions at all times to member of the public and be able to justify their actions at the level of moral and ethical standard.’ In the same vein, Agba et al. (2008, 187-204) posit that ‘accountability demands that the public should know when money came into government treasury and how the money was used.’ On his part, Richardson (2008, 15-20) holds that accountability is a fundamental requirement for proper management of resources for development in any society. According to Koppel (2005, 94-108), accountability has five dimensions, namely, transparency, liability, controllability, responsibility and responsiveness. These five dimensions are fundamental for the proper management of resources in any organization or a nation for enhanced performance.

Furthermore, accountability is vital to good governance, and good governance ‘seeks to improve the capacity of the state, encompassing a variety of strategies to increase efficiency and effectiveness of government performance’ (Omona 2010, 129-159). For adamolekun (2005, 3-16), a government is accountable when its leaders are responsive, when they have respect for the rule of law, and when citizens can seek redress in the courts for acts of omission and commission by the government and its officials. In the same vain Gregory (2007, 339-350), holds that accountability arrangements ‘are intended to ensure both the constitutionally appropriate use of elective political power itself, and the coordinated, systematic and planned bureaucratic implementation of the policy purposes defined through the exercise of that power.’

2.3 Oversight

The oversight function is a major component of the activities of modern legislature irrespective of the form of government in practice. NDI (2000), states that the function of oversight is to wield enormous powers in governance by executive arms. Saliu and Muhammad (2010) indicate that legislative body takes active role in understanding and monitoring the performance of the executive arm and its agencies. It is described as surveillance on the activities of the executive arm. The legislature oversees government affairs and hold the person responsible for any actions and omissions (Fashagba, 2009). Adebayo (1986) reveals that legislative oversight cross-check the executive by examining the activities of some chief executive, ministries, department and agencies of government. The commonwealth parliamentary association (2002) assert that the principle behind the legislative intent. The legislative function does not end only on the passage of bills by to follow the activity linked to lawmaking. It is the responsibility of legislature to ensure that such law are being implemented effectively. The representative looks diligently in all the affairs of government. The eyes and voice to the will of its constituents (Simmons, 2002). The oversight function of the legislature exists as a corollary to the law-making process for instance the legislature controls the executive in financial behavior and appointment of key officials such as ambassadors, ministers/commissioners amongst others. Lafenwa and Gberevbie (2007) assert that effective legislature in governance enhances transparency, accountability, efficiency and fidelity in government.

Many scholars and authorities have done important works on the legislative oversight functions or responsibilities of the legislature over the years. While we do not intend to exhaust these works in this review, a consideration of a number of them would suffice to bring afore the essential modus operandi of legislative oversight responsibility of the legislature.

To begin with, it may be worthwhile to consider in passing the ideal of oversight, since that is very central to our subject matter. While doing this, our intention is to delve into the conceptual nitty-gritty of oversight functions. We are instead concerned with a review of just a few relevant conceptions of legislative oversight capable of boasting our understanding of legislative oversight functions of the legislature.

According to Sako (2003:35) oversight functions or legislative oversight refers to the requisite checks and balances by the legislature that provides ongoing monitoring of policy formulation, implementation and evolution of the executive. This definition, among other things, pre-supposes oversight responsibilities as an activity that is associated with the

legislature. It affords the legislature the opportunity for maintaining a peer review mechanism at the governmental level to ensure that the political system function optimally. In this respect, the power of legislature functions becomes crucial in the understanding of legislative oversight functions.

As embodied in the Standing Orders of the National Assembly (the legislature), the oversight control over the executive, the legislature itself pick the tread of certain matters (e.g corruption against the administration or a ministry) and instituting legislative enquiries through its committees, (Sections 86 and 87 of the 1999 Constitution). In such case, a Minister justifies proposals requiring heavy financial expenditure. The Committee serves as watch-dog over the executive. By virtue of the Committee' powers under the provisions of Sections 86 and 87, can make the executive, and in particular, the President to sit up by adhering strictly to the constitutional provisions.

Nwabueze (1974) opines that some classical political theorist like John Stuart Mill states the primary task of the legislature is to check executive recklessness. The proper office of the legislature is to watch-god and control the government, through the light publicity on its acts, to compel a full exposition and justification of all of them which anyone considers questionable and, if men who compose the government abuse their trust.... To expel them from office (272-274)

Mensma (1969:68) emphasizes that however; the legislature shares in this power through its budgetary role and oversight functions. He cogently remarks the following in relation to the above.

“Thus the power to make law is shared in the sense that while the legislature initiates and passes Bill, the Executive assents to or vetoes then the Judiciary when requested declares them Constitutional or Unconstitutional. Conversely, the power to specific policies and programmers' of action, and to implement them, within the law, is vested in the executive. However, the legislature shares in this power through its budgetary and oversight function”. (1969:68)

Infact Mensma's remarks above represent an all-time platitude about Separation of Powers of government. To say the least, it captures the logic of the Principles of Checks and Balances characterizing the notion of legislative oversight of the National Assembly.

In relation to the above, Stapenhurst, Johnston and Pelizzo (2006:78) asserts in “The Role of Parliament in Curbing Corruption” that:

The right to check the abuse of power, mismanagement of funds, and waste of national resources or non –application of appropriated funds to the right purpose is very important part endowed with coercive powers to enable it carry out this onerous oversight function. The goals are to ensure that the laws made by the legislature are faithfully implemented, to curb corruption and abuse of office or power (Asobic 2004:25).

Effoduh (2006:220-221) has offered something which its consider more comprehensive and incisive. According to him, oversight functions consist in the followings:

The monitoring of executives for efficiency, probity, transparency and fidelity, to ensure that funds appropriated by the parliament are used legally, effectively, and for the purposes for which they were intended. It is the looking back on government spending and activities to determine whether there was waste or corruption and to ask “value for money” questions. More so, it includes investigation to detect waste and corruption, formal audit or evaluation to assess program effectiveness or efficiency and hearing to air issues or concern” (Effoduh. 2006:220).

Effoduh’s definition cited above is both comprehensive and eclectic. It is comprehensive because it recognizes the bulk of salient issues which are ordinarily involved in oversight functions within the context of the National Assembly. It is eclectic for it represents a synthesis of some major views on the phenomenon of oversight functions of the parliament. We adopt this conception of oversight functions based on its apt relevance to the subject matter of the study.

It is important to clearly clarify the relationship between oversight functions and the National Assembly (legislature) based on existing literature. According to (Effoduh 2006:220-221), “conducting oversight function on the executive may be less politically rewarding than sponsoring legislation or serving constituent, and may be politically dangerous”. However, vigorous oversight promotes accountability of the executive more effectively than any other mechanism, and thus, is based on a strong legislature. Buttressing this view further, Effoduh adds that two sets of powers are very important for the legislature to exercise its oversight role:

The power to confirm appointments made by the executive... these include cabinet and sub-cabinet positions, ambassadorship, judicial appointment, and sub-national positions... a related power is the ability to remove political appointees for wrong doing, malfeasance or ineptitude.... Powers related to the budget... from the power to review and comment to the power to amend or to specify exactly how the budget will be allocated (Effoduh 2006:221).

Admittedly, Effoduh's observation and contribution to the corpus of legislative oversight functions of the National Assembly is quite plausible. This is to a reasonable standard or extent in line with the position of the ongoing study.

On his part, Liman (2004:33) "the legislature as an arm of government: power, duties and responsibilities of the legislature" in "legislating for democracy", emphasized that inextricably tied to the legislator's power of investigation is what has to come to be known as Legislative Oversight. To him, he aptly captures the essence of oversight functions of the legislature in the following lines.

"A continuous review by the National Assembly of the way in which the executive arm of government implements its mandates.... It has become necessary for legislators to follow up and monitor such implementation to ensure that what was enacted is enforced correctly. (33).

Dwelling more on this view, he asserts:

"The Legislature has the power of oversight... this is to ensure probity, accountability and proper functioning of those institution and those assigned with the responsibility of managing them". (Liman 2004:33)

In fact, he identifies the power of investigation as one of the most potent powers of the legislature. He opines that the 1999 Constitution empowers the legislature to investigate on "any matter or thing with respect to which it has power to make laws.... Enacted by the National Assembly and disbursing or administering moneys appropriated due to be appropriated by the National Assembly. (Anyanwu 199:35). On the other hand, (Abdullahi 2004:163-164). "in Principles and Strategies for Legislative/Executive Partners for stable Democratic Development and good Governance" in "Legislating for Democracy" 2004 rightly views legislative oversight functions of the legislature thus:

Control over public funds and Oversight functions are well provide for under Section 80 and 89 of the 1999 Constitution (Abdullahi 2004: 163-164). According to the Sections 80 and 89).

For the purposes of any investigation under section 88 of this Constitutional and subject to the provision thereof, the Senate of House of Representatives or a committee appointed in accordance with section 62 of this Constitution shall have power to (a) procure all such evidence, written or oral , direct or circumstantial, as it may think necessary or desirable, and examine all persons as witnesses whose evidence may be material or relevant to the subject matter; (b) require such evidence to be given on oath; (c) summon any person in Nigeria to give evidence at any place or produce any document or other thing in his possession or under his control, and examine his as a witness and require him to produce any document or other thing in his possession or witness and require him to produce any document for other thing in his possession or under his control, subject to all just exceptions; and (d) issue a warrant to compel the attendance of any person who, after having been summoned to attend, fails, refuses or neglects to do so and does not excuse such failure, refusal or neglect to the satisfaction of the House or the committee in question, and other him to pay all costs which may have been occasioned in compelling his attendance or by reason of his failure, refusal or neglect to obey the summons, and also to impose such fine so imposed may be prescribed for any such failure, refusal or neglect; and any fine impose shall be recoverable in the same manner as a fine imposed by a court of law; and summons or warrant issued under this section may be served or executed by any member of the Nigeria Police Force or by any person authorized in that behalf by the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as the case may require (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 as amended).

Abdullahi (2004) asserts that the legislature can be described as the engine of democracy while the executive is the driver. He opines that if the vehicle is sound, the responsibility of checking the driver (Executive) to ensure that he does not drive recklessly with fatal consequences to the democratic project becomes that of the legislature. The position of (Adejokun 2004:172), is not different from the above. He maintains that in “Legislative Relation through Effective Liaison in Nigeria” in “Legislating for Democracy.

A critical review of the above view suggest something interesting. While the above may be true of the prevailing practice of oversight functions, it is not very often or continuous in the

history of Nigeria Legislature. The point to note is that Legislative Oversight in Nigeria can be negatively or positively inclined in practice.

Other scholars whose work are worthy of our review in this study abound. (Ojo 1997:304-306) remarks that the legislature can pass law for the executive to implement it programs'. The power to investigate and sanction as a matter of evidence respectively is the implied power of legislative oversight of executive performance. But there is no gain saying the fact that, under the present Nigeria governmental system., both the executive and the legislature are sometimes seen to be passing between "Seylia and charybdis" and in opposite directions at the same time. This is due to principally the fact that barely twenty Years of Nigeria becoming independent; we were having trial with a system of government where in the relationship between the executive and the legislature is a far cry from what it supposed to be (Ojo 1197:304-306).

On his part, ex-president Shehu Shagari (1983) at a press conference intimated thus:

We are still very much in the experimental stage and it will take some time to be able to define in precise and clear-cur terms the relationship between the executive and the legislature. The legislative oversight of the executive is a lip service as the executive in reality controls and directs the legislative activities, being part and parcel of the legislature and the principal actor there in (Shagari1983).

On the other hand, the American Congressional Dictionary describes Legislative Oversight as

Congressional review of the way in which Federal Agencies implement laws to ensure that they are carrying out the intent of the Congress and to inquire into the efficiency of the implementation and the effectiveness of the law (American Congress Dictionary).

Similarly, the Legislative Re-location Act 1946 defines Legislative oversight as

The functions of exercising continuous watchfulness over the executive of the law by the executive branch to ensure that implementations are inconsonance with Congressional intents (Act 1946).

The above views on this concept of Legislative Oversight are in good light. However, the reviewed of only addressed legislative oversight conceptually without the context of the legislature serving as watchdogs of the executive in curbing corruption, inefficiency and waste. However none of them has specifically studied oversight of the 8th Assembly.

2.4 Representation

Representation is the central role of the legislature; the complexity of modern administration has made it impossible for the people to run the affairs of the state as it was in the early Greek City State Akintayo (1999). Legislative institution is a mechanism in which the population, special interests and diverse territory are represented and guaranteed at the scheme of things. Edosa and Azelama (1995) argued that representative function provides a platform where citizens and different groups is opportune to have a say in governance. This gives different groups in a society or groups the opportunity to articulate and advance their interest and concerns. Akomolede (2012) states that representation play dual roles. First, they represent their people to government and second, they represent government in their constituency. Saliu and Muhammad (2010), state that the fulcrum of a legislature articulate and aggregate diverse interest of the represented constituencies into the policy process. The functions of representation enhances the legitimacy of public policy, reduces alienation and reduce estrangement between government and the governed to enhance stability in the system. Davies (2004).

2.5 Financial Function

It involves an authorization of expenditure for government. Sanyal (2009) states that all government expenditure needs to be scrutinized and sanctioned by the legislature, this can be done at annual budget process, Kaiser and Halchin (2012) assert legislative function as a catalyst for sustainable democratic governance. The legislature involves in the control of public expenditure and taxation and fund management to better the life of the entire citizens.

2.6 Committee Function

Haywood (2007) sees committee functions as the power houses of the legislature; they examine legislative measures in detail. The committees oversee bills and financial demands of the government, and issues relating to ministries and financial function of the government as it concerns auditing (Edigheji, 2006). The legislative committee' functions carry out the investigative power of the legislature. The standing committees of the legislature are divided and utilized for exigency purpose, this is appointed in response to a particular development on ad hoc situation (Fashagba, 2010). The legislature is the people's branch which the purpose of expressing the will of the people. The instruments and opportunities of the chief executive is

responsible for managing the machinery of government, inter-state diplomacy, budget development and this veto power makes the chief executive an advantage over the legislature and hence continues to exert the executive dominance (Rosenthal et.al., 2003).

Burnell (2003) states that legislature experience secular decline, unable to arrest the accumulation of executive power driven by global financial, economic and political forces. Ray (2004) asserts that legislatures have declined in respect of powers in relation to the executive power of governments. Adebo (1988) revealed that the legislators in Nigeria's 2nd republic spend part of their tenure on the issues of accommodation, comfort and salaries for members and threatened to boycott sittings indefinitely if their demand for luxury were not met by the government (Fashaga, 2010).

2.7 The Principles of Separation of Power, Checks and Balances

According to the eighteenth century French Political Thinker, Barron de Montesquieu, in his book "Espirit des Lois" or the "Spirit of Law" published in 1748, he argued that in order to protect the citizen's from tyranny of their rulers, the three functions of government should be separated among each other. He further argued that if liberty and freedom were to be maintained, the three arms must be separated and entrusted in different people. He believes that this system would provide a safeguard against concentration of too much power in a single authority.

Montesquieu, understanding the complexities of modern day government and its overlapping roles and functions, sought to keep distinct inevitable in several ways and sometimes resulting in stalemate. This process has helped to smoothen the processes of interaction among the three arms of government beyond the imagination of the proponents.

Alongside the principle of Separation of Power is another parallel concept "Checks and Balances". As a corollary of the Principles of Separation of Powers, is a complex framework of government that reflects the preoccupation of men of the 18th Century till 2015. This concept opines that the three arms of government must act as a check on one another. (Nwabueze 1974:272) "Presidentialism" has offered something which we consider more comprehensive. To him, Checks and Balances consist in the following:

System rest on an open recognition that particular functions belong primarily to a given organ while at the same time superimposes a power of limited interference by another organ in

order to ensure that the former does not exercise its acknowledged functions in an arbitrary and despotic manner. That is all the system seeks to do (Nwabueze 1974:272)

The experience of the practices was first embodied in the 1979 Constitution. This was after the experimentation of the Westminster parliamentary system of democracy in the first republic. These became the center-piece of constitutionally delegated duties of the three arms of government.

Section 88 (2)(b) of the 1999 Constitution empowers the National Assembly to conduct investigation, gather information on proposed Bills to prevent and expose corruption, inefficiency or waste in the executive and in disbursement or administration of funds appropriated by it. Suffice is to note that the fundamental of legislative oversight is predicated on the Budget, or of legislative oversight is predicated on the Budget or Appropriation Act implementation.

While the concept of Checks and Balances may be relevant to our understanding of legislative oversight, all the literature reviewed only scoped themselves within the confines of legislative oversight theoretically as a mechanism for checks and balances. However, this study concerns itself will go further to practically appraise legislative oversight in the Eight Senate, with a special focus on the Senate Committees on Power, Works and Housing. No literature so far has appraised the oversight activities in the Eight Senate with a special attention to the aforementioned committees, hence this study is intended to fill that gap.

2.8 Theoretical Framework: The Principle of Separation of Power on Sight

The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended), recognizes the need for separation of the powers of government, as it provides for the division of powers into three; the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary (Section 4,5 and 6 of the 1999 Constitution). The principle of Separation of powers in the 1999 Constitution (as amended) is premised on the need to protect the fundamental human rights of the people. While some scholars advocate for a total separation of powers, some others advocate for a system of checks and balance where it is premised on the perceived impracticality of the complete separation of powers. (Godswealt et al, 2016).

Separation of powers in its practical operation involves the sharing of government responsibilities, a system of checks and balances which allows each arm of government to

defend its position within constitutional framework of government. It needs flexibility, understanding and cooperation among the arms of government with each arms recognizing the limits and enforcing them (Godswealt et al 2016).

The emphasis is son understanding and cooperation among the arms of government, which is necessary in order to achieve good governance, such that the citizens can enjoy the dividends of democracy. Unfortunately, a large number of Nigerians hold the wrong belief that when there is cordial relationship between the executive and the legislature, then the executive has pocketed the legislature and there is no Separation of Powers. Members of NUJ will need to work with NILDS to change this wrong notion, so that our people will know that Separation of Powers encourages cooperation, not conflict.

There are some key areas where, there had been challenges with Separation of powers in the country, since the return to democratic government in 1999. I wish to emphasis three of such areas, in this paper, namely, discharge of Oversight functions by the Legislature, Budget consideration and approvals, and activities of Political Party leaders and political godfathers.

2.8.1 Discharge of Oversight Function

The importance of oversight functions of the legislature in any given democratic society system cannot be overemphasized. However, one f the areas where there has been allegations of contravention of separation of powers in Nigeria, the discharge of oversight functions by the Legislature (Fagbadebo and Francis, 2016). There has been instances of allegation of the legislature trying to usurp the powers of the executive through their oversight functions, resulting in conflict amongst the two arms.

Oversight enables the legislature to identity deficiencies in the original statute and make necessary adjustments and refinement (Oleazek, 2014; cited in Fagbadebo and Francis. 2016). The exercise of oversight is a statutory mandate that affords the legislature the opportunity to ensure an effective, efficient and frugal executive. Through continuous review of government actions, the public is presented with an opportunity to assess the performance of the government. In a way, oversight is an accountability measure in Presidential System (Fagbadedo and Francis 2016),

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section is concerned with the way and manner through which data are collected and analyzed. The key defining nature of a research is its scientific method. The scientific method is considered to be a systematic search for knowledge to solve problem. For a body of knowledge to be acceptable as the result of research the method by which it was gathered must be scientific. This implies that the knowledge must have been gathered through a method that is systematically, empirically and verifiably derived, upon which generalization are made. Research data are types of information, collected, observed or created for the purpose of analysis or to produce original results, while the research methodology is concerned with the way and manner in which data were collected and analysed.

3.1 Research Methodology

The study adopts survey method using both primary and secondary data. In survey research independent and dependent variables are used to define the scope of study, but cannot be explicitly controlled by the researcher. Before conducting the survey, the researcher must predicate a model that identifies the expected relationships among these variables. The survey is the constructed to test this model against observations of the phenomena. In contrast to survey research, a survey is simply a data collection tool for carrying out survey research, Pinsonneault and Kraemer (1993) defined a survey as a “means for gathering information about the characteristics, actions, or options of a large group of people”. Surveys can also be used to assess needs, evaluate demand, and examine impact (Salant & Dillman, 1994, p.2). The term survey instrument is often used to distinguish the survey tool from the survey research that it is designed to support.

The population of the study included the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing, and oversight committees of Power, Works and Housing in the National Assembly.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) argue that the choice of whether to do qualitative or quantitative research depends on the nature of the research question. This study aim at examining oversight functions of the legislature as a prerequisite for accountability and good governance. It is on this basis that qualitative methods were employed in order to answer the research questions. Qualitative research methods such as interviews are generally suitable for uncovering detail which would not easily be established through qualitative research methods. Research design for this study, is an ex-post-facto design, which literally means “after-the-fact”. Ex-post facto design is concerned with the study of events that have occurred independently or without the manipulation of the researcher. The data collection methods were essentially qualitative.

3.2 Primary Source of Data Collection

The primary source of data collection will consist of questionnaire administration to various stakeholders, especially the general public in ascertaining their views and opinion on the effectiveness of legislative oversight in ensuring accountability in governance in Nigeria. Committee clerks of the relevant committees under study will also be interviewed on the activities and impact of their committees in ensuring accountability and curbing corruption, inefficiency and waste.

3.3 Secondary Sources of Data Collection

Secondary data is also sourced from published materials from the internet as well as from the Libraries of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies, the National Assembly and materials from the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing. Also, websites, magazines, newspaper articles, textbook, etc, were used for this study. Reports of Committees of the Senate Committees on Power, Works and Housing, Sessional Reports, Appropriation Acts, Journals, Articles, Magazines, Newspapers, and Internet etc.

3.4 Sampling

Sampling can be defined as “.....the process of selecting units (e.g., people, organisations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen (Trachoma, 2006, n.p.). It is possible therefore to use sampling techniques to select a smaller group – or sample – from the population that will statistically represent the whole population.

It is often necessary to use sampling because researchers usually do not have the time, energy, money or resources to study the whole population.

The sampling method to be used to determine interviewees was based on purposive selection. According to Groenewald (1986), in a purposive selection, the sample is the result of a process of selection which is intentional or non-random. This form of sampling technique is pre-determined. Purposive sampling represents a group of different non-probability sampling techniques. Also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling, purposive sampling relies on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units. (e.g., people, cases/organisations, events, pieces of data) that are to be studied. Usually, the sample being investigated is quite small, especially when compared with probability sampling techniques.

Unlike the various sampling techniques that can be used under probability sampling (e.g., simple random sampling, stratified random sampling, etc.), the goal of purposive sampling is not to randomly select units from a population to create a sample with the intention of making generalisations (i.e., statistical inferences) from that sample to the population of interest.

The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable you to answer your research questions. The sample being studied is not representative of the population, but for researchers pursuing qualitative or mixed methods research designs, this is not considered to be a weakness. Rather, it is a choice, the purpose of which varies depending on the types of purposive sampling technique that is used. For example, in homogeneous sampling, units are selected based on their having similar characteristics because such characteristics are of particular interest to the researcher. By contrast, critical case sampling is frequently used in exploratory, qualitative researching order to assess whether the phenomenon of interest even exists (amongst other reasons.)

Sampling for this study had to be purposive because the researcher intended to interview only members of the Federal Ministry of Works, Power and Housing and the Senate Standing Committee on Works, Power and Housing because they are suitable to provide information for the study. This sampling method was appropriate in this research as it aimed to investigate responses from a particular determined. A total of 100 questionnaires is administered among five legislators, twenty legislative, support staff,

three committee clerks, as well as 24 other parliamentary staff. Meanwhile, 60 questionnaires were retrieved.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

This study would employ qualitative and analytical method of data analysis and presentation. This would be achieved through making valid inferences from data to their context by taking account of the historical records that are salient and worthy of note and those that are irrelevant and require to left out. Narratives and descriptions of data would be made by providing theoretical and empirical evidences to justify claims with the purpose of making the research findings reliable, valid, replicable and generalizable.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter provides the extent of Effectiveness of the Oversight Function of the National Assembly and how it promotes accountability especially as it concerns the Eight National Assembly. It is pertinent to provide a premise upon which relevant inferences can be made within the context of the subject matter, hence the need to examine the research questions identified in this study.

4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON POWER, WORKS AND HOUSING

As one of the most important activities of the National Assembly, the Senate Committee on Power, Works and Housing has a parliamentary and critical functions of overseeing all aspects of activities of the Ministries of Power, Works and Housing. It involves major six aspect of legislative oversight that has been posited by scholars (Hamalai 2010:142 and Janda, Berry and Goldman, 1992:406) which include openness, accountability, fairness, supervision, monitoring and sanction. According to Hamalai 2010; 142, there are two perspectives to oversights – internal and external. The internal aspect entails internal audit, assessment of internal controls and financial management of organization. The external aspect is concerned with the oversight exercised by parliamentary commissions, ombudsman, judiciary, anticorruption bureau, the civil society, the media, and international society. The Commission (House of Senate Committees) engage in in-depth analysis of legislative jobs through oversight functions.

They further assert that oversight is not an easy task because it needs detail information. Performing oversight, they say, “does engender a cordial relationship between the executive and legislature. Oversight connotes legislative “supervision” or “watchfulness” of responsibilities handed down to the executive arm and officials. Legislative oversight is the legislature’s review, monitoring and supervision of government agencies, programs, activities”, as well as policy implementation (Hamalai 2014:37; Hamalai & Ajiboye, 2014:62; Arishe, 20188. This however was major consideration in detailing the oversight activities of the Senate Committees on Power, Works and Housing as shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 : Detailed Summary of Oversight Activities of the Senate Committees on Power, Works and Housing

Date	Oversight Activity	Details
2016	Public Hearing	1. Public hearing in 2016 on the hike of electricity and the ailing Ajaokuta Steel Company
	Oversight Visit	<p>The House Committee on Power undertook three oversight visits to some Agencies and some selected TCN Projects in Kaduna. The Committee visited the following offices and location from Wednesday, 7thFriday - 9th December, 2016.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Kaduna Electricity Distribution Company b. Kaduna Forum Office c. Kaduna State Government House d. Meter Installation Site (NITR QTRS) e. Meter Testing Centre, near Barnwa Round-about f. TCN Regional Office (Mando Transmission Centre) g. National Steel Raw Materials Exploration Agency <p>The first oversight visit was done in Abuja from Tuesday, 18th – Thursday, 20th October, 2016 on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing, Abuja b. The Nigeria Electricity Management Service Agency (NEMSA), Head Office Abuja c. The Rural Electrification Agency (REA), Head Office, Abuja d. The National Integrated Power Plant (NIPP), Abuja. e. The Nigeria bulk Electricity Trading Company (NELMCO), Head Office, Abuja.

		<p>f. The Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Head Office Abuja,</p> <p>g. The National Power Training Institute of Nigeria (NAPTIN) Head Office Abuja.</p> <p>The third oversight took place on Monday 20th February 2017. The Committee visited the Abuja Electricity Distribution Agency (AEDC).</p>
2017	Public Hearing	<p>i. Joint Investigative hearing on “Urgent need to save the 215 Kaduna Power Plant November,2017</p>
	Oversight Visit	<p>i. Oversight visit took place from Monday, 30th October 2017 to Tuesday, 31st October 2017. The Committee visited the following places in River State:</p> <p>ii. Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company (PHEDC)</p> <p>iii. National Power Training Institute Area Office in Afam, River State.</p> <p>iv. Transmission Company of Nigeria (TNC), Office in Afam, Rivers State.</p>
2018	Oversight Visit	<p>i. The Headquarters of the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria December 2018. The Committee visited the</p> <p>ii. Federal Housing Authority on Thursday 13th December, 2018. The Managing Director briefed the Committee on the activities and key programmes of Federal Housing Authority including the Budget performance, Direct Construction Projects, Public Private Partnership Projects, Social Housing Projects and Programmes specifically designed to improve the activities and performances of the Authority.</p> <p>iii. The Zuba Mass Housing Project. Budget performance in 2017 was predicted on improved revenue generation and completion of housing estates and infrastructures across the states.</p> <p>- The Sources of funding are revenue generation through estate Federal appropriation through the Committee.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Committee on power embarked on three(3) oversights to the following places. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Ikeja Electricity Distribution Company (IKEDC) (b) Benin Electricity Distribution Company (BEDC) (c) Enugu Electricity Distribution Company (EEDC)
	Budget Defence meeting	<p>The talking point of the meeting are as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Completion of construction of units of house under the National Housing Programme in 34 States of the Federation. ii. Completion of construction of the ongoing Federal Secretariats in Six (6) States of Anambra, Bayelsa, Ekiti, Nasarawa , Osun and Zamfara; iii. Payment for the Completion of Mausoleum and Library Complex in Honour of Late Rt. Hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe which was commissioned on Thursday 24th January, 2019 by President Muhammadu Buhari; iv. Upgrading, Completion and Running of Building Crafts Training Schools in Harvey Road Yaba, and Onikan, Lagos. v. Provision of Infrastructure; Electricity, Access Roads, Drainages and vi. Erosion Control for Social Housing in Akwa - Ibom, Cross River, Enugu, Ogun, Delta, Abia, Nasarawa and Sokoto States: vii. Special Project Unit (SPU) Settlement of Outstanding liabilities in MDGs. viii. SDGs and Direct Mandate Project; The Ministry also requested for additional fund to meet up with the outstanding Organisations commitment to Shelter Afrique Programme of which Nigeria is a Major player.

Source: Underlying information from Sessional Reports

4.2 LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

To understand the extent to which legislative oversight plays a role in good governance and accountability, we will take a critical look at the key assertions by lawmakers in the 8th Assembly. According to Dogara (2016).

The national assembly has contributed more to our democracy through its power to conduct investigations that has been credited to it. It has carried out countless investigations and exposed corruption and mismanagement of government resources on a massive scale. Landmark investigations have taken place in many sectors of the economy including power sector fuel subsidy, customer service, capital market, petroleum subsidy, transport, pensions among others.

This assertion has been questioned in many climes especially with the rather abysmal level of prosecution of corrupt government officials. Nigeria's transparency index of 144 in the world is a testament to this fact as against 136 in 2014. There is no clear cut turnaround in the performance of oversight activities translating into improved governance, with the legislative arm still guilty of working as an appendage of the executive.

4.3 Challenges of Legislative Oversight in Nigeria

The oversight functions of the legislature in Nigeria faces enormous challenged that should be overcome for it to lead to good governance. Dogara (2016) has identified the following as some of these challenges:

1. Lack of co-operation by some Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the executive branch
2. Public misconception on the mandate, role and activities of the legislature
3. Inadequate funding of oversight activities such that in highly technical areas of oversight, there may not be enough resources to engage the kind of technical assistance required to conduct a proper oversight.
4. Few bad eggs that may not live up to their oath of office and legislative duties. In addition, like in any human institution, private interest and personal ego among the legislators is a propensity for conflict, and by implication, an impediment to good governance.

This standpoint has been echoed by Mba (2014) as thus: The leadership of the National Assembly often demonstrate propensity for conflict between and within the two legislative chambers. This has been ascribed to the role of the state in Nigeria which is becoming increasingly obvious as a means for the achievement of private interest and personal ego. The condition of the country's under development means that political or state power offers opportunities for public office holders to rise above the general poverty and squalor that

pervades the entire Nigerian society. Perhaps political power has service the private interest of the members of the national Assembly and has been used to foster private interest for the benefits of their family, friends and praise singers. State power is probably the easiest means for which one enriches oneself for whoever has acquired it (Mba, 2014)

4.4 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter covers the presentation and discussion of findings of this research study. The findings of the study are based on the objectives stated in Chapter one. This Chapter is divided into several subsection that discuss the findings including characteristics of respondents; different oversight tools, effectiveness legislative oversight with respect to accountability and factors hindering legislative oversight. These findings answered the research questions and set a room for wider discussion.

4.5 Characteristics of Respondents: The researcher collected data based on respondents characteristics such as age, position and highest level of education achieved. The background characteristics of the respondents in this Study were important as MPs are influenced by their characteristics in making decisions. Moreover the use of characteristics of respondents can be used to show if the information collected was representative of the population as explained by Purdie (2002).

4.5.1 Characteristics of Respondents Based on their Age.

The respondents were asked to state their age in the questionnaires and the responses were summarized in Table 4.1

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage
21-40	15	25
41-60	26	43
61-80	19	32
Total	60	100

Source: field survey

The age distribution is a reflection of the level of involvement of the older people in the decision making process. Considering that the respondents were carefully chosen to reflect those who are considered as stakeholders and enthusiasts in legislative climes. It is clear that

the aged population constitute a larger percentage of those directly and indirectly involved in the legislature.

4.5.2 Characteristics of respondents based on their level of education

The researcher asked the respondents to state their highest level of education

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary School	0	0
Secondary School	10	17
Ordinary National Diploma	14	23
HND	25	42
M. Sc and Above	11	18
Total	60	100

Source: field survey 2019

Figure 4.2.2 reveals that the study covered respondents from all educational levels. The largest proportion being tertiary institution graduates at 42%, 18% of the sample of study hold maters degree and above. 23% are Ordinary National Diploma holders.

4.2.3 Characteristics of Respondents based on their affiliation to the legislature. For ease of analysis, all percentage values were rounded off to the nearest whole number.

4.3: Level of Affiliation

Level of Affiliation	Frequency	Percentage
Legislature	5	8
Legislative Support Staff	20	33
Committee Clerks	3	17
Other enthusiasts	24	42
Total	52	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

Figure 4.2 drawn inferences on the distribution of respondents, as it becomes evident that it is quite difficult to get access to the actual legislators in various committees. Our respondents are most individuals that are other stakeholders in the legislative purview rather than the actual legislators.

4.5.4 Awareness if the Concept of Oversight roles

Before conducting research on tools of oversight used by legislators, the researcher posed several questions to the respondents to test their understanding on oversight. As presented in research objective, the performance of legislators is highly influenced by their understanding on oversight: The finding is summarized below.

Table: 4.4 Are you familiar with oversight function of the Legislature

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	40	67
Not Sure	6	10
Disagree	14	23
Total	60	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

Based on table 4.4, 40 (67%) of the respondents agree that they are familiar with oversight functions of the legislature, 6 respondents (10) are not sure, while 14 (23%) of the respondents disagree on whether they are familiar with the concept of legislative oversight. It is clear from the foregoing that most of the respondents are quite familiar with the concept of oversight functions of the legislature.

Table 4.5 Are you familiar with the tools of legislative oversights?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	17	62
Not Sure	13	22
Disagree	10	16
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey 2019

Table 4.5 Indicates that more than half, 37 (62%) of the respondents agree that they are familiar with the tools of legislative oversight.. 13 (22%) are not sure, while 10 (16%) do not seem familiar with the tools of legislative oversight.

4.5.5 Reasons for the legislature's failure in performing the constitutional role with regards to control of public funds.

To understand the possible reasons for the perceived non-performance of oversight recorded in table 4.6 and 4.7 below

Table 4.6 Corruption does not impede the performance of legislative oversight

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	17	28
Not Sure	7	12
Disagree	36	60
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey 2019

From table 4.6, 17 (28%) of our respondents agree that corruption does not impede the performance of legislative oversight in the eight assembly, 7 (12%) are not sure and 36 (60%) disagree that corruption does not impede the performance of legislative oversight.

Table 4.7 Integrity deficit is not a hindrances to the performance of legislative oversight

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	12	20
Not Sure	0	0
Disagree	48	80
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey 2019

In table, it becomes clear that 12 (20%) of the respondents are of the opinion that integrity deficit is not a hindrance to the performance of legislative oversight, and nobody indicated not being sure. However, 48 (80%) of the respondents disagree that integrity deficit is not a hindrance to the performance of legislative oversight.

4.5.6 Attitudes of Legislators and committee toward embarking on Oversight Responsibility

Legislative oversight is a key function of the legislature, aside legislation. It is widely held however, the performance of legislative oversight has been hampered by the willpower of measure of willingness of legislature to undertake legislative oversight.

Table: 4.8: Legislator perform well in carrying out legislative oversight

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	37	62
Not Sure	1	2
Disagree	22	36
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey 2019

Table 4.8 shows that 37 (62%) of the respondents agree that legislators perform poorly in carrying out their oversight functions. 1 (2%) respondent indicated not sure while 22 (36%) of the respondents disagree that legislators perform poorly in carrying out oversight functions.

4.5.7 The Relationship between Legislative Oversight and Accountability

To understand the relationship between legislative oversight, good governance and accountability, there is need for the formulation of relevant research questions to that effect.

Table 4.9 and 4.10 addresses the relationship between legislative oversight, good governance and accountability.

Table 4.9: Legislative oversight is a prerequisite to good governance in the 8th assembly.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	20	33
Not Sure	1	2
Disagree	39	65
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey 2019

In table 4.9, responses show that 20 respondents (33%) agree that legislative oversight is a prerequisite to good governance in the eight assembly. Only 1 respondent (2%) indicated not being sure, while 39 (65%) of the respondents disagree that legislative oversight is a prerequisite to good governance in the eight assembly.

Table 4.10: Legislative oversight is a prerequisite to accountability in the 8th assembly.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	15	25
Not Sure	12	20
Disagree	33	55
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey 2019

From the above, most of the respondents (33%) seem to disagree that legislative oversight is a prerequisite to accountability in the 8th assembly, 15 (25%) agreed, while 12 (20%) indicated not being sure.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

The findings from the discussion above reveal that there is disconnect between the performance of oversight functions by the 8th assembly and accountability, as well as good governance according to the relevant stakeholders that constitute our respondents. What this means is that the National Assembly in this period still grappled with the same issues that affected other assemblies since 1999, issues of sleaze patronage, misappropriation, looting and general insincerity towards the public. When legislators through their respective committees are alive to their responsibilities and carry out mandates without fear or favour, oversight becomes productive and legislation is strengthened. This in turn serves as a corrective measure to the excesses of the executive and the lives and economic realities of Nigerian are better for it.

Also the Federal Government is better able to deliver on its promises and Nigerian are equally better able to rip the dividends of good governance as well as a more accountable legislature.

The legislature made efforts to consolidate on the frantic efforts of the 7th assembly through the legislative agenda which was predicated on building a new image for the legislature. Emphatically, the legislature must be credited for taking care of some of its actions-points, however, issues bothering on corruption, budget delays, inability to conclude high profile cases of mismanagement and waste in government and its apparent inability wittingly or unwittingly to blow the whistle on the Executive cost it quite a lot in popularity with the public.

If it must be taken seriously by the people, the time has come for the National Assembly to walk the talk and tackle real issues like the submission of annual budget which often do not correspond with Medium Term Expenditure Framework and Fiscal Strategy Paper (MTEF/FSP); The absence of rolling plans, intermediate plans, and Long term development planning are grey areas needing serious attention. All these issues if carefully revisited and reviewed will result in sustained economic growth and improvements in the lives and wellbeing of the people . Only then will legislative perceptiveness change for the better.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section covers the outline of the examination theme. Conclusion in view of the discoveries of the exploration and proposals for further research

5.1 Summary

In a fully functional democratic setting, the legislative arm of government is the apparatus for ensuring public accountability. Undoubtedly, the legislature is the focal requisite in ensuring good governance and delivering the public good to the polity. The study examined some scientific parameters of legislative oversight of the National Assembly in its 8th Session with specific focus on the House Committees on works, power and housing of the 8th Senate of the National Assembly.

Accordingly, the study investigated legislative performance and how much impact it has on the lives of Nigerians in terms of accountability and good governance. To adequately investigate this problem, research questions were raised, to answer pertinent research issues related to the variables of the study under investigation. This was followed by the research methodology where the sources of data, research design and methods, method of data analysis and techniques were discussed as well.

The quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis was employed in the study while we relied on secondary sources of data such as text books, journals, official publications, seminars, conference and workshop papers, magazine, newspapers, internet documents etc. Thus, the Chi-square method of statistical analysis was employed to provide statistical analysis of responses to structure questions and interpretations where illustrated on statistical tables and figures in the study and also to determine the reliability of the study. The entire work was

divided into five chapters. In chapter one, the study laid a background and established a research problem and emphasizes the goal and need for addressing the problem.

The chapter two was a review of the extant literature which examine legislature, oversight and accountability. This was followed by chapter three which is the research methodology. It also examined oversight reports of selected committees of the Senate Committee on Works, Power and Housing within the period under study. Chapter four and five analysed respondents' data conducted via a field survey and summary conclusions and recommendation were made.

5.2 Conclusion

The developing pattern in advanced majority rule governments is the utilization of the Committee framework with an undeniable point of interest at it licenses parliament to send its assets proficiently and successfully, both regarding individuals and time, to inspect mind boggling and far reaching issues more completely than when they are talked about on the floor of the House. First, the entire Senate does not have the advantage of time to consider matters in every single specific subtle element; henceforth, advisory group frameworks are unavoidable in the administrative and oversight business of the legislature and the committee play a strategic role in this regard. For another, against the scenery of the unpredictability and assortment of the issues that face modern parliaments, the interest on the season of officials calls for specialization and division of work.

In setting up committees, the general practice crosswise over nations is to perceive the current bureaucratic organizations, for example, Ministries, Department and Agencies differs where administrative oversight is required and create committee to supervise these agencies of government. At the end of the day, all part of the official arm of government have relating authoritative panels through which parliamentary oversight is worked out. To be sure, it is a

protected prerequisite in many majority rules systems of the work that boards are formed to mirror the size and reach of government to guarantee that no portion of it is forgotten.

Each part of oversight is supposed by law. The forces may be communicated or suggested in the Constitution. Another wellspring of forces is the Standing Order/Rules of the parliament. Likewise, the instruments with which the capacities are performed are numerous. Truly, most legislative assemblies have created sacred systems and devices intended to encourage the execution of their oversight capacities in connection to the official branch. The execution of this part is done through an extensive variety of channels, associations and structure. Strikingly, the allocation process gives an essential chance to the lawmaking body to practice administrative oversight. Through the administrative force of the satchel, every one of the Committees, especially the Appropriation Committee, assume unmistakable parts in oversight and can impact official conduct and government strategy course all the while. However, the legislature must comprehend the operations of the administration, to have the capacity to settle on educated choices on the laws which it passes and to lead oversight adequately. Considering the measure of Committees in respect to the aggregate number of individuals in both Chambers of the National Assembly over the times of this study, at first glance, it appears that the Committees are somewhat vast. However, on an apprehension, the purpose behind this is not implausible. The official arm of government, which the National Assembly manages, is intricate and vast. Thusly, the Committees would become correspondingly. Something else, the National Assembly will most likely be unable to perform its obligations adequately and proficiently. The solution therefore lies not in the expansionist approach which has become the convention, the United States Congress, for example, has only handful of committees but with sub committees handling most of the activities. Also this will save cost and preserve the respect and authority legislative committee are known for.

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the above findings of this study, the following recommendations for policy makers or decision makers and especially members of the National Assembly and State Assemblies are hereby proposed to guarantee effective oversight.

1. Oversight committees should be adequately funded in the legislative budget so that these committees should desist from the habit of running to the MDAs they oversight for funding. This recommendation will help in curtailing corrupt tendencies and compromise of the oversight process.
2. Oversight is not merely an ex-post activity, it should be an ongoing exercise and that one area the National Assembly needs to work on. It is more reactive than pre-emptive. Therefore, the committees inaugurated by any of the assembly should always consolidate and continue on an oversight activity carried out by any of the administrations.
3. Emphasis should be laid on building capacity of committee staff and legislators in the areas of monitoring and evaluation of policy, programmes and project. This should be done through enhanced training on the tools and techniques of legislative oversight.
4. There should be a periodical review of actions taken on oversight discoveries to be sure the bureaucracy is implementing the recommendations of the National Assembly.
5. Maximum cooperation from the executive arm of government, starting with the Federal Executive Council (FEC), is essential to the effectiveness of oversight. Therefore cooperation between the executive and legislative arm of government is needed for smooth oversight activity.

Legislators must downplay political considerations and see the incentive in doing their jobs honourably and promote the national interest. Hence the appointment of chairman and members of committees should not be based on political patronage but on merit and capacity.

Membership of committees should be strictly by specialization and professional knowledge in order for the legislators to do quality work.

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Appendix 1
Questionnaire

Legislative Oversight and Accountability: A Study of the 8th Senate Committee on Power, Works and Housing (2015-2019)

Survey Questionnaire

UNIBEN-NILDS Post Graduate Programmes

National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS)

Nigeria.

Dear Respondent,

This research instrument is designed to study Legislative Oversight and Accountability; A Study of the 8th Senate Committee on Power, works and Housing (2015 – 2019).

I will be very glad if you could respond to the attached questions faithfully and honesty, as your anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed. The information you provide will only be used strictly for this academic exercise. There is no right or wrong answer.

Thanks in anticipation of your much needed understanding and co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Instruction

Make a tick(f) in the appropriate box to indicate your response to the following questions. Only one, or a times, two answer is needed in every question.

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. State which profession you belong: Legislature [] Civil Society [] Academician []
Civil Servant []
3. Please state the category you belong to in your Assembly, Principal Officer [] Committee Staff [] First Time Member [] Other rank/File []

4. State your academic /Professional qualification
 WASC NCE/ND HND/1ST DEGREE MASTERS DOCTORATE
DEGREE OTHERS
5. State your age in years. Below 30 years 31-35 years 36-40 41years and above
6. Marital Status: Married Single Divorced Widow
7. Your duration of service in your Organization/Assembly. 1-10years 11-20 21-30years
 31-40 years Retired
8. Do you believe that the National /Assembly have a significant role to play in exposing
corruption, inefficiency and waste through its oversight activities? Yes No
9. If your answer to the question above is yes, how do you gauge the role of the legislature in
regards to oversight in Nigeria? Below Expectation Relatively Effective very
Effective
10. How representative is the appointment of Committee Chairpersons and Deputies in the
Senate? Non Representative at all Relatively Representative well –Representative
Over-Representative
11. do you agree that a Constitutional amendment will enhance oversight of the legislature at
all levels of governance
12. Unfavourable oversight conditions and Weak Response to National issues is the bane of
effective oversight activity in Nigeria.
Strongly-agreed Agreed Strongly-disagreed Disagreed
13. The Civil Society has a role to pay in shaping the role of the legislature in its oversight
activities. Strongly agreed Agreed Strongly disagreed Disagreed
14. Developing partner strategy will enhance effective oversight of the legislature in the areas
of Power, Works and Housing in Nigeria
Strongly agreed Agreed Strongly disagreed Disagreed
15. Can you please mention some cultural challenges associated with oversight activities of
the legislature in the areas of Works, Power and Housing
(1) (ii)
(iii) (iv)
16. Do you think that the political parties have role(s) to play to in influencing the thie
outcomes of oversight activities?
Strongly agreed Agreed Strongly disagreed Disagreed

17. There is a positive correlation between legislative/executive relations and enhanced oversight activity.
Strongly agreed [] Agreed [] Strongly disagreed [] Disagreed []
18. Oversight training for legislators and committee staff of the Senate Committees on Works, Power and Housing can enhance the technical capacity for effective oversight.
Strongly agreed [] Agreed [] Strongly disagreed [] Disagreed []
19. Please suggest measures to enhance legislative oversight in Nigeria
- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

Appendix II
Interview Guide

Legislative Oversight and Accountability: A Study of the 8th Senate Committee on Power, Works and Housing.

General Background Information

1. Committee Designation.....
2. Name and Designation of the Interviewee
.....

CHECKLIST

1. Can you please introduce yourself?
2. What are the oversight activities carried out by the Senate Committee on Power in the 8th Assembly?
3. What are the oversight activities carried out by the Senate Committee on Works in the 8th Assembly?
4. What are the oversight activities carried out by the Senate Committee on Housing in the 8th Assembly?
5. To what extent did these oversight activities impact on executive accountability in the Power, Works and Housing sector during the period 2015-2019
6. What are the challenges that could restrain the legislature from performing its constitutional role with regards to control of public funds?
7. What in your opinion are the possible recommendations that could enhance the effective performance of oversight functions by the National Assembly