

## Legislative—Executive Relations in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic: A Review

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### Abstract

This paper examines legislative-executive relations in Nigeria’s fourth republic and provides meaningful suggestions that will assist in strengthening the relationship that will, in turn, ensure good governance and promote democratic tenets in the country. The data for the study were collected using secondary sources. Secondary sources comprise of a comprehensive review of the literature (books, journal, publications of governments and non-governmental bodies). It finds out that the nature of the relations between the legislative and executive arms of government is complex but vital lessons can be drawn from these relationships. Thus, the paper recommends that continuous dialogues are the key to cordial relations and that the principles of separation of power should be respected in the dealing of both the legislative and executive arms of government as this is an important and guaranteed way of ensuring and promoting cordial legislative-executive relations.

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### 1. Introduction:

Since the entire people of a country cannot individually participate in the day-to-day running of the government at a given time, they must entrust their duties and right of participation to an elected few through the democratic process. These elected few are executives and the legislators who formed the basic political structure of the democratic political system. Although the legislative arm, in particular, is known by divergent names in different countries, such as Congress, Knesset or Duma, Assembly, or Parliament, everywhere the legislature performs similar functions of lawmaking, passing of motions into resolutions, and making a significant contribution by passing bills into law for the overall development of the nation as the authorized representatives of the citizens of their various constituencies (Tom &

Attai, 2014). The nature or kind of relationships between the legislature and executive vary largely from country to country, from Britain to the United States, and from South Africa to Nigeria (Tom & Attai, 2014). The United States of America’s presidential system was founded on a clear separation of powers, with each institution or arm of government having a distinct duty and responsibility, thereby encouraging the principle of checks and balances in all governmental activities to avoid the domineering influence of one arm of government over the other, thus enduring accountability in governance (Fashagba, 2009). The passers of the War Power Resolution in the United States of America in 1973, which overrides the presidential veto, made significant changes in the legislative-executive relations in the country, and subsequently served as a permanent shift in

the political landscape of the nation, as well as a resurgence of the power of the Congress with an era of legislative—executive relations in issues of national interest (Bhattacharya, 2014). It is important to note at this point that the presidential system allows for elections of the president and legislatures separately thus creating a situation that allows for the pursuance for dual policies' legitimacy, which often creates room for interaction between the legislature and executive and sometimes stalemates thus shaping the power struggle over the supremacy or otherwise (Oni, 2013; Abonyi, 2006).

The constitution of the United States of America gives the legislative and executive arms of government clear and separate responsibilities; thus, the legislative-executive relations are strictly based on principles of separation of power, as stipulated in the constitution of the country (Oni, 2013). Both the legislature and the executive have their powers, duties, authority, and democratic legitimacy from the constitution-making difficult for any arm to control the other, for examples the executive cannot dissolve the legislative arm and the members of cabinets are not directly responsible for the legislature as just the legislature is equally not directly accountable to the president, thus providing a clear observance of the principles and tenets of separation of power in their relationship (Smith, 2010; Oni, 2013).

However, legislative—executive relations in Great Britain where a parliamentary system of government in practice greatly determines the kind of relationships among the political parties form the government and ability of the government to win most supportive voters of the parliamentary members (Mbah, 2000). Here legislative—executive relations are largely determined by the strength and influence of the ruling party in the parliament; thus, legislators are most often under pressure to support the executive leadership that they help produce (Oni, 2013; King, 1976).

In Africa, for example, Malawi operates a hybrid system of government, which has the features of a parliamentary and presidential system running together, as the constitution spells out the duties of all arms of government. The legislative—executive relations are structured in such a way that the president has supreme control over the legislature, as the legislature is largely a rubber stamp arm of the government as it is considered treasonous to go against the president (Oni, 2013). Although the constitution provides for checks and balances as a mechanism against supreme control of one arm of government over the other, the reality is the following the amendment of the constitution of the country, one-party state, and supreme executive power was technically vested on the executive president (Oni, 2013). Thus, making the kind and nature of legislative-executive relations in Malawi is so determined by the executive arm led by the president. The South African constitution provided for separating power between the arms of the government, with adequate provision for checks and balances to ensure responsiveness in governmental administration remains the basis for legislative-executive relations. The nature of legislative-executive relations in South Africa is centered on the constitutional provisions, which basically allows the legislature to serve as a watchdog, a pillar of ensuring accountability, responsiveness, implementation of policies, and overseeing the performance of the executive to the citizenry (Munzhedzi, 2017).

The legislature and the executive as the mainstay of representative democracy are pertinent to democratic consolidation, as both arms of government serve the purpose of checks and balances; and are strategically and constitutionally positioned to undermine any authoritarian tendencies in the country and ensure an adequate and responsive government in the delivery of public services as well as safeguard the rule of law and

constitution adherence (Aliu, 2013). Despite the lofty goal of the arms of government, the cordial relationship needed between the legislature and executive in Nigeria, especially in the fourth republic, unfortunately, seems to be cordial. The legislative-executive relations in Nigeria's Fourth Republic are more conflictual in almost all spheres of their constitutional mandate, thus heating up the political atmosphere (Fatile, 2017).

This paper examines legislative—executive relations in Nigeria's fourth republic to provide meaningful suggestions that will assist in strengthening the relationship that will, in turn, ensure good governance and promote democratic tenets in the country. It adopts a secondary method for data collection and content analysis. This section lays out of paper began with an introduction that explains the dynamics of legislative-executive relations in global democracies citing examples from the USA, Britain, China, South Africa, Kenya, and of course issues arising from Nigeria. The second section explains the basic concepts of legislative-executive relations under a presidential, parliamentary, and hybrid systems. The third section maps the Historical and Constitutional Insights into legislative-executive relations. The fourth section maps the relations and complexities associated with the relationship in the Fourth Republic in some cases. The next section provides lessons to be drawn from these relations, and finally, conclusion and recommendation.

## 2. The main objectives of this study:

- To examine the key factors impacting legislative—executive relations during Nigeria's fourth republic
- To analyze how constitutional provisions have shaped the dynamics between the two arms of government
- To identify major issues/ conflicts that have arisen in legislative-executive relations from 1999—present

- To evaluate the implications of strained legislative—executive ties for governance and democracy in Nigeria

- To provide recommendations for improving coordination and cooperation between the legislative and executive branches

### General Research Question:

- What is the nature of the relations between legislative executive in Nigeria's Fourth Republic?

## 3. Fixing the Puzzle: Concept Formation and Theoretical Inclination:

The legislatures vary in terms of role, structure, and composition across the world where a democratic system of governance is practiced (Tom and Attai, 2014). The most popular forms of legislatures are the unicameral and bicameral types, whereas the unicameral legislature has only one legislative chamber, the bicameral type of legislature has two chambers often called the Lower and Upper Houses. Some refer to the Lower House as the House of Representatives and the Upper House as the Senate as it is known in Nigeria, although they both exhibit common features not minding the structural differences (Tom and Attai, 2014). Legislature-executive relations are critical to any democratic system of government as it ensures the sustenance of trust in the institutions, legitimacy, and trust in the entire governance process; this kind of relationship that exists at any point in time remains a significant indication of what the citizens of the country are expected in political and socio-economic policies of the government (Aliu, 2013).

The legislature is that arm of the government that occupies and plays a crucial role in the overall running of the government to check the excesses of the other arms of government and guarantee governance in the country. The legislature is that branch of government which has defined purpose of formulating laws, articulating these laws, and

deliberating on them to form an expression of the collective will of the citizenry in furtherance of the genuine democratic political system (Okoosi-Simbine, 2010; Bernick & Bernick, 2008; Fatile, 2017). Although the forms of legislative duties and powers in exercising its mandate as well as intra-legislative relations differs from country to country, basically it is a shared collective expression of the sovereignty of the citizens which they represent. Thus, the legislature does not only make laws for good governance but also serve as watchdog to the excess of the executive, promote democratic consolidation and population participation in all policies of the government (Mbah, 2014).

The executive arm of government play an important role in policy implementation and is in charge of the day-to-day running of the government. The executive occupies a critical position in the state. It plays administrative role and through it policy decisions are made and implemented as acted by the legislators, via the coordination of the daily activities of various departments and units within her unit (Laski, 1992; Fatile, 2017). The executive arm formulates national policies sent to the legislative arm for input and deliberation and subsequently passed into law, while the executive arm carries out the implementation of such policies. The executive initiates or formulates programs and policies, and subsequently implements and coordinates such policies after the passage into law of those policies and programs by the legislators thus giving legal backing to the programs (Fatile, 2017).

A peaceful coexistence between the two arms of government that is the legislative and the executive in the broader sense can be guaranteed when the city has confidence in the political institution that is free of continuous interference and when there is mutual respect (Aiyede & Isumonah, 2002). The relations between the legislative and the executive are constitutionally defined which assist in structuring the model of

interactions between them (Lijphart, 2004). The nature of relations between the legislative and the executive in a presidential system of government most often faced with issues because the structure or the institutional arrangements bequeathed on the system which often interactive and issues of national concern, which often lead to stalemate or left unresolved (Hammond & Butler, 2003). Legislative—executive relations ensure democratic consolidation and guarantee good governance and greater democratic dividend especially in political institutions such that the legislature and the executive interact cordially and respect the tenets of separation of power and constitutional responsibilities (Aiyede and Isumonah, 2002). Legislative—executive relations represent and show a fundamental characteristic of a democratic system of government where existing structures and institutions are respected and allowed to function independently.

Legislative—executive relations either under the presidential and parliamentary or hybrid system are greatly determined by the beliefs, the attitude of the executives and legislators because complex or non—complex relations largely depends on formal (constitutional provisions and laws) or informal practices (Bernick and Bernick, 2008). Legislative-executive relations greatly depend on the quest for power within the legislative assembly and between the legislative and the executive (Penning, 2003). Thus, Penning (2003) indicated that three (3) modes of legislative—executive relations exist: the executive dominates the assembly (parliament), the legislative dominates the executive or the legislative and executive are a balance. The scholar further stated these legislative—executive relations are majorly based on the role of the Head of State (President) as the constitution provides in their dealings with the legislature, the use of confidence votes which both the legislative and executive may use to achieve a certain objective, and the use of constitutional

provision vested on the executive were their stalemate in the assembly. Similarly, Anyaegbunam (2000) demonstrated three kinds of legislative-executive relations, the polarized relationship which is frosty in nature, and a cordial relationship where mutual understanding over policy formulations and implementation often prevailed even in a face of disagreements, and relationship characterized by hostility thus creating an atmosphere of disharmony. In Nigeria, legislative—executive relations in the country's current presidential system of the government have shown more executive influence and attempted to control the legislature by the executive have often met serious challenges, even though some cases have the approval of the executive arm of government in the country and still have some level of imprint on the legislature. Legislative—executive relations in a parliamentary system of government give the legislative arm powers over the government they often exercise during policy issues and on individuals in the form of influencing their decisions. The kind of legislative-executive relations at a particular point in time is greatly influenced by the nature, structure, and attitude of because the political system is a product of behavioral attributes of the political class or political actors as each system gives some constitutional duties, responsibilities, and privileges to both the legislature and the executive. Hence, the way these privileges is exercise depends on the kind of relationship that existed between them (Oni, 2013).

#### 4. Setting the Stage: Historical and Constitutional Insights:

Studies have shown that the legislation formally started in 1922 because of the Clifford Constitution that made a provision for four Nigerian to be elected into the Council of fourth—six members, while others apart from the four elected were handpicked for the representation of various interests (Tom & Attai, 2014). Although, before

the 1922 Clifford Constitution after the combination of the Northern and Southern protectorates, a legislative body was put in place comprising of thirty-six people selected and picked by the colonialist government to form the Nigerian Council, while way before the Legislative Council existed to mainly oversee the affairs of the colony when the colonialists officially took over Lagos (Adebo, 1988; Tom & Attai, 2014). The legislative-executive relations at this period of Nigeria's history were that of colonialist master and servant relations, which was mainly beneficial to the colonialists. The legislative—executive relations were that of the handpicked or selected few on one hand (legislators) and the colonialist on the other (executive). These legislative—executive relations in the early days of colonialism in the country were major in safely guiding the collective interest of the colonialist through the involvement of the locals in the name of participation. The legislative—executive in vogue during this period with the existence of the Nigeria Council was that of executive superiority where the legislative arm could rarely reject an executive proposal as well as lacking law/policy—making powers, but only exist to modify or amend what the executive may be presented (Nwaubani, 2014). The Nigerian Council, despite being large by the term of representation and composition the power to operate independently and control its finances, was greatly absent because of the dominance of the executive as the council was reduced to a debating organization of the Governor General Annual Address (Nwaubani, 2014).

Richard's constitution of 1946 and Macpherson's constitution of 1951 continued with the elective principle with an increase in the number of elective representatives in the Colonial Legislative Council (Tom & Attai, 2014). The Westminster Parliamentary system was in place in Nigeria's independence in 1960 with a bicameral legislature with the House of

Representatives and the Senate, with 312 members elected in the House of Representatives and the 44 members selected from the federal system in place for the Senate (Adebo 1988). The legislative-executive relations in the first republic allow both the Senate and House of Representatives as well as the executive to consolidate the independence of Nigeria and strengthen the institutions of the state. The exercise of the legislative duties of the National Assembly, especially in appropriation, was prominent in this period as an input of both the House of Assemblies on executive bills was felt and the power to modify and reject the proposal or bills was exercised, thus enhancing the legislative executive. However, the legislative arm of the government in Nigeria's first republic was mild because they, unfortunately, found themselves under a more solid executive thus legislative executive during this period of the nation's life was a weak legislative house verse a strong executive branch of government (Fashagba, 2009). The legislative—executive relations in Nigeria's first republic were that of the legislature was humanely an appendage of the executive that clearly shows legal independence and absence of mutual respect for the constitutional responsibility of the legislature as they were made to do the bidding of majorly the executive arm of the government, as reflected in the government intervention of the 1964 Western Regional Crisis without due regards to the legislature (Nwaubani, 2014). And when the executive arm of government created Mid—West Region, the legislative input was manipulated and minimum because the Western region was under administrator and the West House of Assembly was basically not available to determine or otherwise of the split in its region (Nwaubani, 2014).

The bicameral legislature was maintained in Nigeria's second republic with a new nomenclature National Assembly, and there was no structural difference in the legislative in the aborted third

republic with geographical representation with each of the then 19 federating states subdivided five (5) roughly equal territorial constituencies with each of them presenting a senator (Tom & Attai, 2014). The legislature was strengthened in the second republic because of the constitutional provision for a presidential system and direct election used during this period, as the legislators commanded some respect (Dudley, 1982). The commanding respect that the legislature of the second republic got did not stop the frosty legislative—executive relations during this era. The legislative—executive relations in the second republic were sore with allegations of continuous obstruction, and self—aggrandizement, and subsequently, both chambers were reluctant in passing the budget, which was delayed for about four months for these reasons (Tom & Attai, 2014). The second republic witnessed issues such as headship tussle in the legislative arm of the government, which was further aggravated by the absence of an independent and cordial relationship between the legislative and executive (Fashagba, 2009). The legislative—executive relations were lopsided, as the executive was stronger and existed as an overriding political institution, while the legislature was more of an ineffective and inefficient body incapable of performing its fundamental or constitutional responsibilities of formulating and constructively critical of government finance and policies (Nwaubani, 2014).

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provided for a bicameral structure that is the Senate called the upper legislative chamber, and the House of Representatives, which is called the lower chamber, constitutes the National Assembly, while the constitution in section 4 provides legislative powers. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria practically provided or granted the power of legislation to the chambers as captured in Section 4, Subsection 1 thus: "the legislative

powers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be vested in a National Assembly for the Federation, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives". The 1999 constitution further demonstrated the need for peaceful co—existence, which is needed for good governance, thus providing the need for more robust and cordial relations between the legislative executive (Mbah, 2014). The 1999 amended constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides the ratification of the appointment made by the executive arm. The screening and confirmation of appointees of the executive as spelled out in the Section 147 Sub—section 2 and Section 154 Sub—section 1 empowers the Senate to confirm nominees for ministerial positions, ambassadorial positions, and members and board of some agencies of government (Michael, 2013). Amongst the appointment of the executive that requires confirmation of the executive are Niger Delta Development Commission, the Code of Conduct Bureau, the Independent National Electoral Commission, the Federal Character Commission, the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission, the National Population Commission, the Police Service Commission and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Michael, 2013).

## 5. Zooming-in on the Fourth Republic:

### Selected Cases:

Legislative—executive relations in Nigeria's fourth republic has been devoid of cooperation, while conflict and confrontation over the exercise of power, responsibilities, and tussle over public policy decisions and of course implementation thus seemly making this republic the most problematic issues in the country's democratic dispensation (Oni, 2013; Aiyede, 2005). Unlike the previous, the times the legislature in the fourth republic was prominent in exercising its constitutional responsibilities, thus making them more proactive by going beyond just lawmaking

to conducting oversight on the executive arm of the government through various steering committees and carrying out investigations into issues of public importance such as the Zaki - Biam and Odi invasion of the military through the order of the executive, as well as courage this legislature to overriding the executive on some policies (Nwaubani, 2014). The legislative and the executive arms of government in the current fourth republic have witnessed a serious tussle over a series of issues beginning with the high allowance and salaries of the legislators that the executive clearly show their displeasure, and the alleges executive interferences in legislative activities have no doubt increasing disharmony among the bodies. Akomolede & Akomolede (2012, p. 67) clearly stated the nature and modality of this executive interference thus

*It is however disheartening to say that the exercise of the above function to ensure good governance for the benefit of all and sundry is often interfered with and hampered by the executive. This is done, first and foremost, by the executive ensuring that their cronies are elected as the leaders of those houses through excessive politicking orchestrated and funded by the executive. Again, where the legislature musters enough courage and ventures to carry out any of the oversight functions, the executive often resorts to the use of money to pursue a "divide and rule" agenda to break the rank and file of the legislators.*

The legislative—executive relations in Nigeria's fourth republic have deteriorated into a conflict that often affects policies that would have to ensure good governance and delivery of democratic dividends to the citizens who elected them (Fatile, 2017). The legislative—executive relations under the 4th and 5th National Assembly were not so cordially partly to due personal interest from both the legislative and the executive arms of the government. The political leadership tussle of the lower chamber between the then Speaker of the House of Representatives Ghali Umar Naa'baba and the

then President Olusegun Obasanjo led to frosty relations between the legislative – executive because the president made attempts to remove the Speaker through the members of the House that were loyal to him through an impeachment motion. This was equally in the case in the Senate where the consistent remove of the Senate President was attributable to the executive interference in the activities of the legislators (Fashagba, 2009). The attempts at removing the Speaker of the House of Representatives at the early stage of the fourth republic was extended to the Senate that succeeded via the influence of the executive. The personality clash between the former speaker of the House of Representatives Ghali Umar Na’abba and the former executive president Olusegun Obasanjo undisputedly led to frosty relations between the legislative and executive of the government at the beginning of the fourth republic in 1999, and the then Speaker of the house barrage several allegations against the executive (Kabir, 2016). The political tussle between the then president and the Speak of the House of Representatives was apparently blindsided by the emergence of the Ghali Umar Na’abba as the Speaker of the House lacked the backing of the president after the sudden remover of Salisu Buhari over certificate racketeering that he presented, which invariably has the support of the president (Ihenacho, 2002). The legislative – executive relations escalated because of the displeasure of the president over the emergence of the Na’abba thus deploring spurious impeachment plan toward the speakers and allege of money and the promise of a return ticket to members of the House of Representatives to perform this plan (Ihenacho, 2002).

Both Evan Enwerem and Chuba Okadigbo, who were Senate Presidents from 1999–2000, were removed courtesy of the executive influence over the constitutional functions of the legislative. However, the arrival of Senator Anyim Pius Anyim (2000–2003) prompted some levels of

legislative-executive relations at the expense of the constitutional responsibility of the upper chamber. And the unilateral decision of the executive to implement the verdict of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) over the handing over the Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon led to more frosty and frightening relations between legislative and executive considering the sudden removal of the previous Senate President Pius Okadigbo and Adolphus Wabara sway of the executive (Fashagba, 2009). Legislative – executive relations under the administration of Umaru Musa Yar’Adua and Goodluck Jonathan improved substantially and partially due to the coordination of the office of the Special Adviser to the executive president on National Assembly matters and it promptly executive – relations conference organized to promote political stability and stimulate smooth and harmonious relations among the two arms of government (Eme & Ogbochie, 2014).

The issue of budget padding remains to dominate the 8th National Assembly, which invariably causes frosty relations between the legislative executive in Nigeria’s fourth republic. The padding issues in 2005 cost the seat of the then-Senate President Senator Adolphus Wabara in the legislative arm and the eventual dismissal of Professor Fabian Osuji, who was then the Minister of Education from the executive arm of the government, as the financial inducement was carried purposely to give a passage of the inflated budget of the ministry of education, thus generating some backlash between the two bodies (Fashagba, 2009; Osuji 2005). Even in the 4th and 5th National Assemble the legislative – executive relation was frosty due to the issue of discriminatory budgetary implementation. The implementation of the annual budget distorts the relations between the legislative executive this period because the legislature on their part tries to make the executive not only accountable to the people in the implementation of budgetary provisions the selective implementation



of projects in the budget most draws backlash and displeasure of the legislators (Fashagba, 2009). The 2016 budgetary proposal was one of the most controversial appropriation bills in the history of Nigeria because of padding of the budget was heavily irreconcilable differences was discovered during the scrutiny of the document by the legislature, as inflated estimates were included in the provision of MDAs and two versions of the budgets as at that time existed in the National Assembly, leading to the throwing of accusation and counter—accusation between the legislature and the executive (Theophilus & Perpetua, 2016).

Prominent among the issues that have led to frosty relations between the legislative—executive is the unilateral scrapping of some existing policies by the executive that the legislators felt was a fundamental responsibility as the constitution requires them to carry along in the making and repealing policies legally formulated by the assemble, some such policies are the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF), while the legislators also aroused concern over the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) Act, Electoral Act 2001 over insertions of clauses, which they consider a controversial and unilateral change in budgetary provisions by the national assembly, which the executive always express their displeasure (Obi, 2013; Onimisi, 2014; Onimisi, 2018). The legislative—executive relations in the fourth republic were even more confrontational during the performance of oversight responsibilities of the legislative arm of the government, which in most cases, the executive arm sees this discharge of the function of the legislature as witch—hunting and a form of intimidation.

The relations between the legislative and the executive in Nigeria's fourth republic were frosty when it comes to nominations and confirmations of a candidate for the executive position because of a series of rejections by the legislators that

often does not please the executive. The most obvious in the rejection by the 8th Senate of Ibrahim Magu for the position of head of the anti-corruption body, the Economic and Financial Crime Corruption (EFFC) to the displeasure of the executive arm of the government. A number of rejections were promptly captured by Fashagba, (2009), such as the nomination and rejection of Professor Babalola Borisade in 2003, who was nominated for the ministerial position and subsequently rejected by the Senate over his failure to adequately resolve the Academic Staff of the Union of Universities (ASUU) prolong industrial action 2001, while he was in charge of the Ministry of Education, although he was later confirmed after a few months. Again, the scholar captures the rejection of Mrs. Mobolaji Osomo, who was also nominated for the ministerial position and the rejection of another candidate nominated by the executive as she replaced Ambassador Bayo Yusuf was based on her inability to explain the full meaning of the acronym NEEDS (National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies), also rejected was Mr. Augustus and Dr. Obadiah Ando ministers in the early stage of the fourth republic.

The legislative-executive relations in the fourth republic have been characterized by disagreements and conflict basically because of the different perspectives and views of both bodies, these disagreements although not new to emerging democracy made worsened in the country because of personal interest and ego tribal and sectional interest, and the fear of mutual suspicions of both the legislators and executive (Mbah, 2014). Beyond the issue of personal interest and ego, is the issue of budget padding, the financial responsibility of the legislature and power of appropriation of both the Senate and House of Assemble, which is basically to cut the excesses and control of the executive has in the fourth republic hindered the legislative relations. The legislature is saddled

with the appropriation of public funds in Nigeria under the amended 1999 constitution of the country as stated in Section 81/82, which clearly stated that before the fund is withdrawn from the Consolidated Revenue of the country the approval and authorization must be gotten from the National Assembly deployed by the Assemble to curtail the executive has led to more frosty legislative—executive relations (Michael, 2013). The executive recent times has gone ahead to withdraw from the Consolidated Revenue of the Federation for the purchase of Fighter Planes without recourse to the National Assembly for appropriation that the legislature has frowned at, thus constituting tension and acrimony among the legislators and executives.

## 6. Connecting the Dots and Lessons Learnt:

*Cordial legislative-executive relations:* Cordial legislative-executive relations are critical to the promotion of good governance and deepening democratic principles in any nation of the world. Cordial legislative-executive relations do not only promote good governance, it ensures the smooth running of the government, and of course, any democratic system is also adopted. Harmonious relations between the legislative and the executive bring sanity to the polity of the country, thus guaranteeing peace and co—existence, which is needed for governance to thrive in the country. The cordial legislative—executive relations remain one major means of ensuring democratic dividend to the country's citizens because smoothing running of the daily activities of the government is best guaranteed when all the arms of government are working together thus relegating the fear of recklessness and tyranny as well as promoting strict adherence to the principles of separation and constitutionalism (Fatile, 2017; Omotola, 2008).

*Accountability in governance:* The cordial relations between the legislature and the executive would ensure accountability in governance,

adequate and prompt response to the aspiration of the citizen, formulation, and implementation of the laws that will promote democratic tenets, enforcement of rules, and issues of national integration would literally be resolved and democratic institutions in Nigeria would strengthen and grounded in the discharged in stationary duties (Davies, 2004). And importantly since the legislature has the responsibility to represent and express the needs of aspirations of the people, as well as to make laws, and debates, deliberate and regulate the activities and operations of the government, and put into consideration various interests, strata, and divide in a multi—ethnic society such as Nigeria (Bakare, 2009; Michael, 2013). This makes it imperative for cordial legislative relations in Nigeria for the opinion, views, and interests of most of the citizens is considered during the formulation and implementation of policies.

*Effective mechanism for conflict resolution:* Cordial legislature—executive relations would serve as an effective mechanism for conflict resolution, mediation, and agents of the promotion of industrial harmony. Over time, the legislature has assumed the responsibility of mediation between the executive and some bodies/agencies, and their intervention has led to several industrial harmony and calling-off industrial actions such Academic Staff Union of Universities verse the Federal Government, Major Oil Marketers, and the Federal Government, and the Labor Union and the Federal Government among others (Michael, 2013).

*Frosty cordial legislative—executive relations:* The frosty legislative—executive relations in Nigeria's fourth republic, which saw the removal of about three Senate presidents in the space of three years and the attempted removal of a number of speakers of the House of Representatives, which was heavily influenced by the executive arm has led to a worrisome dimension in the relations of two arms thus creating a logjam in socio—economic and political issues, disconnect in public policy

formulation and implementation and matters of national importance thus making the goal of providing good governance to the citizen far from being achieved (Aiyede 2005; Fatile, 2017). The legislative—executive relations are fundamental to the expression of the will and meeting the aspirations of the citizen because an absence of cordial relations between these two important bodies of government would keep the government far from meeting its target of good governance for most of the populace. The frosty relations between the legislative and executive, unfortunately, hampered the quest for good governance, subsequently denying Nigerians the benefits of democracy.

## 7. Conclusion and Recommendations:

The paper explores the imperative of the legislative-executive relations in the Nigerian fourth republic with a particular focus on a few core issues that have affected the cordial relationship needed for the country's quest for democratic consolidation and in the long run will help in not only widening democratic principles, but it will be deepening democracy and promoting good governance in Nigeria. The legislative—executive relations should be free of one influencing the other because this kind of relationship is counter-productive as it will affect the good and effective governance in the country. Ensuring good governance requires all stakeholders, which include both chambers of the national assemblies and the executive arm of the government and heads of ministries and parastatals as a matter of national importance to be almost not on the same page to guarantee democratic dividends to the citizen of Nigeria.

The business of ensuring good governance requires the cooperation of both the legislature and executive arms of the government; thus, bills and policies that concern the socio-economic, political, and general welfare of the citizenry

should be subjected to scrutiny by a joint committee that includes both chambers (Senate and House of Representatives) and the executive before it is presented for general deliberation of all members of parliament. This would not only ensure better and cordial relations between the legislative and the executive, but also reduce the incidents of rejection of bills and democratic principles is better ensured and good governance is guaranteed. Dialog is another important tool for strengthening legislative—executive relations in Nigeria. All issues that seem unclear to both the legislature and the executive can be resolved and made clear through dialog. These two important arms of government must always engage in continuous or regular dialog as this will ensure and promote cordial relations between the bodies. While continuous dialogues are advocated, the principles of separation of power should be respected in the dealing of both the legislative and executive arms of government as this is an important and guaranteed way of ensuring and promoting cordial legislative-executive relations.

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