

Executive-Legislature Rift, Corruption and Implications for Nation-Building in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the consequences and implications of system flaws which breed rift in the process of establishing functional Executive/Legislature relations, a necessary pre-requisite of nation-building and democratization in Nigeria. This paper takes a historical analysis to access the inherent challenges of corruption on the legislative arm of government in their performance of over-sight functions. The balance of power and separation of power thesis were used as a framework for analysing the need for continued Executive/Legislature relations in consolidating democracy in Nigeria. The paper discovered that institutionalized corruption amongst the legislative organ of government is a major impediment to the discharge of over-sight function amongst legislative officers. The paper recommends radical constitutional reforms model aimed at witting down the powers of the legislature as regards over-sight function and their roles limited to advisory functions thereby limiting bribes in the discharge of responsibility.

Keywords: Corruption, Over-sight, Democratization, Relations, Nation-Building

Introduction

The practicability of presidential democracy is hinged on a functional separation of power system where all arms of government have a considerable level of power and influence which is correspondent to their function and office. The theory of separation of power is however enhanced by a system of checks and balances which is prima facie of liberal democracy, and enables good governance and nation building.

The model of democracy practised in Nigeria which is premised on systemic separation of power and checks and balances however breeds all forms of anti-democratic acts which includes corruption emanating from over-sight functions performed by the legislative arm of government, a fallout of which affects the relationship between the legislative and executive arms of government therefore undermining democratic governance and sustenance. The task of nation building across the world requires a holistic determination of common good which is the responsibility of all actors in a system. Similarly, a rancour free executive-legislative relation is a major determinant of any democratic system.

This paper is posed to examine the intricate issues that are a fall-out of performing constitutional stipulated responsibility in Nigeria as it affects the relationship between the legislature and the executive arm of government. The paper provides a historical exposition of the role of corruption in Legislative/Executive relationship in Nigeria and its challenges to nation building.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored in the theories of separation of power and checks and balances. Based on the nature of this work which is meant to access the inherent rift that is seen in executive/legislative relations in Nigeria's quest for democratization and nation building; the needed conditions for democratic consolidation and comprehensive national development.

The major proponent of the theory of separation of power is baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu, an 18th century French social and political philosopher. His publication, Spirit of the Laws, is considered one of the great works in the history of political theory and jurisprudence, and it inspired the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Constitution of the United States. He asserts that, the political authority of the state is divided into legislative, executive and judicial powers. He further

argues that, to most effectively promote liberty, these three powers must be separate and acting independently.

Separation of powers, therefore, refers to the division of government responsibilities into distinct branches to limit any one branch from exercising the core functions of another. The intent is to prevent the concentration of power and provide for checks and balances.

The doctrine of the separation of powers implies that there should be three separate organs of government with their separate sets of functions and powers. The presidential system of government being practiced in Nigeria makes provision for separation of powers, apportioning disparate powers and duties to the executive, legislative and judicial arms of government. Fundamentally, the legislature as the custodian of true democracy makes laws which the executive is under responsibility to implement. The judiciary on the other is legally called upon in the determination of civil rights and obligations to interpret the laws.

According to Johari (1989:280) “The functions of the government should be differentiated and performed by different organs consisting of different bodies of persons so that each department be limited to its respective sphere of activity and not be able to encroach upon the independence and jurisdiction of another”.

The genius of Montesquieu lay in reformulating an idea connoting a political balancing of economic and social interests or sharing of powers by corporations, communes and municipalities, into a system of legal checks and balances between parts of a constitution (Sabine ad Thorson, 1973:514). Montesquieu proposed that all political functions are necessarily classifiable into legislative, executive or judicial. In other words, Montesquieu conceptualizes a system of government in which each traditional arm of government (i.e. executive, legislature and judiciary) maintain clear and distinguished functions of its own as allotted to it by the constitution with checks and balances from the other two arms. To safeguard liberty, each of these sets of functions must be separate and act as checks and balances on one another. The constant aim is to divide and arrange the branches of government in such a way that each may be a check on the other to check tyranny in government.

Executive-Legislative Arm of Government: A conceptual Analysis

Democratic practises across the world are premised on the place of power sharing and discharge of functions amongst institutions whose existence is dependent on each other. This relationship is however a product of constitutional provisions that stipulates functions and powers based on offices, therefore the ability of an arm of government to carry out a task is a product of what is allocated to it from the constitution.

The executive and legislative arms are very important institutions in any democratic regime. This is because they play very crucial role in the policy making and implementation processes for the good governance of the democratic society. For instance, Laski (1967) sees the “executive as occupying a very crucial position in the administration of a state. Laski therefore observe that the executive in all democratic systems exists to first and foremost, decide on the final choice of policy to be submitted for acceptance to the legislative assembly; secondly, it is its business to see to it that the public services fully apply to that policy as intended by the legislature; and thirdly it ensures that it delimits and also coordinates the activities of the different departments of state”. The executive is therefore the organ of the state that is bestowed with basic responsibility by the constitution to manage and administer the resources of the state for the common good of the citizens.

The legislature and executive are two very important political institutions in presidential democratic regimes and they have a very critical task to play in promoting good governance. The achievement of this task however is dependent on whether the relationship that exists between these institutions is constructive or conflictive. In Nigeria’s Fourth Republic for example, the relationship between the executive and legislature has been characterised more by dysfunctional conflicts which often deadlocks the policy making and implementation process, ultimately inhibiting good governance (Momodu and Matudi, 2013:32).

The executive is that branch of government whose primary function is the discharge of state function and on whose should the running of the state rest. The function of the executive includes but not limited to running the machinery of government; formulations of national policy and to ensures that those policies are finely and timely implemented to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the masses. It is that branch of government that is charged with the implementation and enforcement of laws and policies and the administration of public affairs (New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy).

To Maduabuchi in (Onyebuchi,2013) and Andre (1994) while the executive as an arm of government is responsible for policy formulation, evaluation and execution to realize set targets, the legislature enacts laws and make the same functional as instrument of cohesion in the society. Based on the above definitions, Anazodo, Igbokwe-Ibeto & Nkah (2015), states that “it is evident that all the levels of government, be it executive, legislature and judiciary, each of them may not necessarily subsist without the other, meaning that each organ of government is mutually reinforcing and contingent upon the success or failure of the other. Yet, legislatures all over the world have garnered influence that transcended the traditional role of rule-making or law-making”. It is no longer “reduced to mere sound boards or mere rubber-stamps endorsing policies already framed by the executive.

The executive is therefore seen as the appendage and embodiment of the legislative arm just as the judiciary as the third arm is seen as the arbiter of the two (Ekhaton, 2003; Bade, 2000). Within the Presidential system of government being practice in Nigeria, the executive includes the President and the Cabinet members as well as a variety of departments and agencies at the federal level, Governors and their Commissioners at the state level and Chairmen and their Councillors at the local government level.

On the other hand, the legislature is that arm of government whose primary responsibility is the making of law, passing of bills, budget appropriation and on a general note; sees to the discharge of over-sight function that includes regular assessment of the activities of the executive arm of government. Corroborating the forgoing position, Merzy (Omenka, 2011:55) asserts that “law making is not the sole or most salient function of the legislature”. Buttressing the above, Riggs (1983) points out that “throughout history, the legislature is a functionally adaptable institution that can do a variety of things in a political system”. The implication of the forgoing position rest on the fact that apart from the primary responsibility of law making for the legislature is known for, it also has a significant role of checking or succinctly put; the task of helping the masses get the best from the legislature through over-sight functions.

Toeing the same line of thought, Jibo (2000) avers that “the legislature has both law-making and over-sight functions. He argues that legislature all over the world have act as agencies of political recruitment; that legislature themselves could represent the views of the people to non-legislative elitics in the executive and the civil bureaucracy, educate and inform the public on major political issues”. He goes further to state that the executive branch is “overseen by the legislature in keeping with the consideration of good governance”.

Fundamentally, the legislature is that arm of government that reflects the aspirations and desires of the generality of the citizens. The legislature is made up of different people from different sections of the country who have the mandate of their people to represent them in the council or National Assembly. When a decision is reached in the legislature, it is a product of the wish of the people who are comprised of both the ruling and opposition parties. The executive equally has the mandate to represent the interest of the nation but usually from the point of view of the ruling party.

Oversight function is also a very important role of the modern legislature. Oversight function particularly appears to preoccupy modern legislatures. According to Verney (1969), the watchdog function is perhaps more important for a legislative assembly than that of law-making (p. 167). The legislature provides the institutional mechanism for ensuring accountability and good governance. Staphenurst also noted that ‘In most countries, the legislature is constitutionally mandated as the institution through which governments are held accountable to the electorate’. The role of oversight of executive administration thus specifically entails: scrutinizing and authorizing revenues and expenditures of the government and ensuring that the national budget is properly implemented.

The constitutional power to participate in budgetary appropriation gives the legislature needed political influence to shape governance, and possibly carry out reforms that are sustainable. In this regard, Saffell (1989) asserted that ‘no function of the congress is more jealously guarded or more basic to administrative control than the power of the purse’ (p. 69). In the same vein, Posner and Park (2007) affirmed ‘Legislatures in some countries have gained a role in approving macro fiscal frameworks’. The Nigerian legislature belongs to the class of legislative assemblies vested with preponderance of power over fiscal matters, perhaps.

It is important to state that, the nature of relationship established by the Executive and the legislature is a basic condition for the success or otherwise of a country’s democracy. Therefore, a relationship that is filled with suspicion and acrimony is a danger for democratic practises and democratic consolidation. Alluding to the forgoing position, Momodu (2012) posits that in electoral democracies world over, the executive and legislative arms of government are vehicles for engineering good governance for the purpose of delivering the dividends of democracy to the citizens. He goes further to state that “the quest for good governance in Nigeria has been threatened more by the unending conflicts between the legislature and executive who are often entangled in a constant battle for supremacy and control of the policy making and implementation process, thereby jettisoning the tenets of the principles of separation of powers which clearly states that the three arms of government namely, legislature, executive and judiciary shall be independent of the control of each other.

Nation Building and the Challenge of Corruption

What corruption represent is not easily definable because it means different thing to different people because what corruption to a personality will be very different to another because of individual values and drive. Therefore, the concept corruption has a multiplicity of definition which is based on context and content of the action in question. Commenting on the difficulty associated with the definition of corruption, Barnes and Tsuwa (2011:202) avers that “another reason that makes it difficult to understand corruption is the difficulty gathering adequate accurate data on the subject. This difficulty emanates from the fact that, despite the much talked about presence of corruption; documented facts and incidences of corruption are hardly obtainable”.

Despite the problem of conceptualization that bedevils the concept, Sorkaa (1999) says, corruption exists when an individual illegally or illicitly puts personal interest above those of the people and the ideals he or she pledges to serve. Nye (1998) sees it as, a kind of behaviour, which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private regarding pecuniary or status gains”.

According to Abdul-Ismael (2007), the word, corruption is derived from a Latin word “rumpere” meaning “to break”. Corruption implies the breaking of established codes of behaviour for the benefit of the perpetrator. It involves the abuse or perversion of public power for private gains. In public discussions, corruption is used to capture such acts as embezzlement of public funds, bribery, nepotism, fraud whether on a small or large scale, impairment of integrity or departure from accepted societal norms.

Accordingly, in the Anti-corruption Act (2000); the Nigerian government describes corruption as literally antithetical to development and progress. Giving a more holistic definition, Odekunle (Barnes and Tsuwa 2011:204) asserts that “in popular understanding, any of the following is corruption; asking or taking of free gift, or favour in each for the performance of such a legitimate task; the pervasion of obstruction of the performance of such a task or the performance of an illegitimate task; hoarding, collusion, price fixing, smuggling, transfer-fixing... election rigging, illegal arrest or harassment and intimidation, abuse or misuse of office powers, and privileges... unfair and unjust acquisition of wealth, forgery of any kind, diversion of public funds”.

The World Bank defines corruption as: “The abuse of public office for private gains. Public office is abused for private gain when an official accepts edicts or extorts a bribe. It is also abused when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit. Public office can also be abused for personal benefit even if no bribery occurs through patronage and nepotism, the thereof state assets or the diversion of state resources.

The most pressing problem confronting the continent of Africa in general and Nigeria in particular is the lack of sincere desire by the continent and nations political class to forge a common front that will serve the overall interest of the poor masses whose daily aspiration is to inhabit a continent and a country that has the prospect of meeting its expectation across board. This problem is however compounded by the menace of corruption that has become synonymous with every face of human life including the business of governance.

Consequent upon the foregoing, Barnes and Tsuwa (2011:201) asserts that:

Corruption is one of the most dangerous social ills in any society. This is because corruption, like a deadly virus, attacks the vital structures that make for the society's progressive functioning, thus putting its very existence into serious peril. This truism makes the poor nations more vulnerable. This is because, those nations and their people are usually poor and when some of them are opportune to occupy leadership positions, they without impunity, divert the limited but valuable funds and resources that are initially earmarked for industries, hospitals, schools and other infrastructures into their personal coffers. Most of these activities are carried out through outright embezzlement, misappropriation, kick-backs, over-invoicing by agents of government, squandermania, manipulation.

The above position gives a proper light to the problem posed by corruption on the continent of Africa on the one hand and on the other hand on the Nigerian state's quest for sustainable development which is the hallmark of nation building and by implication the unconditional satisfaction of the aspirations of the masses who are the direct beneficiary of the programs and policies of government.

On the hand, Nation building is conceived as the concerted effort of all sections, actors and forces in a given system that is aimed at moving the system towards the pace of development. Therefore, it is important to note that, any positive move that will drive the needed societal development and transformation and integrating hitherto dispersed system is geared towards nation building.

Consequent upon the above (Oghi and Ajayi, 2011:196) state that, "Nation building as a process is historically contingent. The importance of this lies in the fact that development or growth of nations is tied to factors that influence the process".

In the words of Gambari (2013:4), "Nation-building has many important aspects. Firstly, it is about building a political entity which corresponds to a given territory, based on some generally accepted rules, norms, and principles, and a common citizenship. Secondly, it is also about building institutions which symbolize the political entity – institutions such as a bureaucracy, an economy, the judiciary, universities, a civil service, and civil society organizations. Above all else, however, nation-building is about building a common sense of purpose, a sense of shared destiny, a collective imagination of belonging. Nation-building is therefore about building the tangible and intangible threads that hold a political entity together and gives it a sense of purpose".

It is apt to therefore conclude that the seen and unseen efforts of all stakeholders in a country's developmental and progress agenda are all drive towards nation-building and that, though it is not an automatic process, it definitely happen with time especially when those efforts are concerted and are a product of holistic efforts.

Akoto (2010) defines nation-building as the conscious and focused application of our people's collective resources, energies, and knowledge to the task of liberating and developing the psychic and physical space that we identify as ours. It involves the development of behaviors, values, language, institutions, and physical structures that elucidate our history and culture, concretize and protect the present, and insure the future identity and independence of the nation. Nation building is deliberate, keenly directed, focused energetic projection of national culture, and collective action to develop a political and economic system.

From the political perspective, it is in the area of developing and instituting a democratic policy. Nation building thus entails the ability of the nation-state to sustain itself as a sovereign by giving

freedom and liberty to its people to use a well laid mechanism or system of leadership recruitment and leave a legacy or culture of smooth succession of power to future generation.

From economic context the greatness of individuals is through the success which a nation makes in industrial development for improved production of goods and services. It improves the standard of living of the people and builds the mind of the people together to want continues existence as one nation.

Gambari elucidates this by saying that in reality; the greatness of a nation has to be earned and is not determined just by the size of its population or the abundance of its natural resources. China and India have the largest populations in the world, but they are only now rising as important global players. On the other hand, Japan has few natural resources, but has long managed to turn itself into a global economic powerhouse... "In today's world, skills, industriousness, productivity, and competitiveness are the determinant factors of national greatness. Not even the possession of the nuclear bomb is enough to make a nation great without reference to the industriousness and creativity of its citizens" (Gambari 2008).

Therefore, Wikipedia (2013) defined nation-building as the process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the State, it is a process which aims at the unification of the nation's people within and outside so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run.

Commenting on the implication of corruption on nation-building process in Nigeria, Ejukonumi (2008) states that "One area in which attempt at nation-building in Nigeria has become problematic is in the area of corruption. It is so much the worry among concerned citizens –academic and non-academic that workshops seminars and conferences have been organized at different fora to chart a way out of the quagmire. Yet, the problem subsists as was shown in the recent case of an Assistant Director in the Federal Civil Service, embezzling pension funds that ran into billions of Naira".

The Nigerian Legislature and Oversight Functions

Legislative arm of government apart from the traditional function of law making include caring out functions, provisional duties to check the activities of the executive arm of government. This function is contained in Section 88, Sub-sections 1(a)(b) and 2(a)-(b) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which provides that "each House of the National Assembly shall have power by resolution published in its journal or in the Official Gazette of the Government of the Federation to direct or cause to be directed an investigation into (a) any matter or thing with respect to which it has power to make laws; and (b) the conduct of affairs of any person, authority, ministry or government department charged, or intended to be charged, with the duty of or responsibility for (i) executing or administering laws enacted by the National Assembly, and (ii) disbursing or administering moneys appropriated or to be appropriated by the National Assembly". Sub-section 2(a)-(b) further stipulates that "the powers conferred on the National Assembly under the provisions of the section are exercisable only for the purpose of enabling it to (a) make laws with respect to any matter within its legislative competence and correct any defects in existing laws; and (b) expose corruption, inefficiency or waste in the execution or administration of laws within its legislative competence and in the disbursement or administration of funds appropriated by it".

Principally, Section 89 of the 1999 Constitution empowers the legislature to procure evidence, summon persons to give evidence and require such evidence to be given on oath through examination of witnesses. The National Assembly has the power to summon persons to procure additional document or oral evidence and (where necessary) issue a warrant to compel attendance by any person so required, on the pain of punishment if they fail to attend. The legislature has the constitutional responsibility to supervise and regulate the activities of the executive arm of government of the federation to eschew waste and ensure fiscal discipline, observance of the rule of law and strict compliance in implementing laws as passed by the legislature, and execution of development programmes and policies. If the National Assembly loses faith in an agency, the Congress can respond in a number of ways to put things in their proper perspectives. For example, Congress can pass a law to overrule agency decisions, and/or

to narrow the agency's jurisdiction. It can use its appropriations power to restrict the agency's funding. It can also narrow the agency's regulatory authority.

According to Ndoma-Egba (2012), legislative oversight refers to the power of the legislature to review, monitor and supervise government agencies, programmes, activities and policy implementation strategies of the executive arm of government. This is to ensure that the arm sustains the principles of good governance, remains responsive, transparent and accountable to the electorates. The committee structure of the National Assembly (House of Representatives and Senate) is being used to execute oversight functions through supervision, watchfulness, or curtail excesses, review of executive actions and activities. Oversight functions ensure that activities of the executive arm of government and its agencies are kept under constant surveillance and scrutiny by the legislature.

Historical Analysis of Executive-Legislative Rift in Nigeria

The doctrine of separation of power and checks and balances are a basic requirement for the sustainability of democracy across the world. This twin principle allows for valuable interaction amongst the various arms of government whose existence is supposed to fundamentally enable the smooth running of the various institution of government so that it will continue to serve its enviable function of service delivery to the people.

Consequentially, the administration of the state structure cannot progress without the emergence of friction or rift amongst the various arms of government because the association and interaction amongst human beings is not without its challenges. Therefore, given the separation of governmental powers amongst the various arms of government and the eventual interaction that will exist between them, therefore, there is the likelihood of the eruption of rift and conflict.

In their analysis of executive/legislative relations in Nigeria via series of issues militating against their interaction Momodu and Matudi, 2013 state that Executive-legislative relations in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic have been two-fold dimensional-namely, collaborative executive-legislative relations and conflictive executive-legislative relations. With regard to the latter, it has been observed that, in 2001, two years into the commencement of Fourth Republic in Nigeria democratisation process, conflict between the National Assembly (House of Representatives and Senate) and the executive at the Federal level of government existed, which was widely presented by the press.

On several occasions conflict between executive and legislature have been heating up the polity, to such an extent that Nigerians have feared that the Fourth Republic would be short-lived due to the recklessness and greed of some political elites. As Soyinka (2010) assert that Nigerians should rescue the nation from the cabal of reprobate gangsters, extortionalists, and even political murderer.

The remote cause of rift and conflict of interest between the legislature and executive are of government are tied various factors which ranges from personality class or superiority complex to corruption. Corroborating the above, Rockman (1983) identifies some causes of executive-legislative conflict namely "pride and personality clash, executive dominance, ignorance of the constitution, functional overlapping and legislative performance of oversight function. Generally, the causes of executive-legislative conflict are highlighted thus; Struggle for power and domination; Conflict of roles; Limited conceptualization and understanding of their constitutional responsibilities; High-handedness of the executive over the legislature; Greed and hypocrisy of members of the two organs; Lack of patriotism; Corruption; Poor leadership skills, and Poor conflict management skills".

Fundamental amongst the issues that caused rift and conflict between the Executive and Legislative arm of government in Nigeria since our return to constitutional democracy especially as regards discharge of stated executive and legislative function borders around corruption and money changing hand during the discharge of over-sight responsibility by the members of the legislative chambers respectively.

Another issue of conflict between the both arms of government according to Murray (1975), that when the executive and legislature are headed by different parties, there is bound to exist conflict,

this is likely to render the government ineffective as a result of disagreement in policy directions. This argument should not be considered as a blanket statement, because there are many instances where the leadership of the executive and legislature belongs to the same party, yet they are enmeshed in conflict of interests.

A typical example of this scenario was what happened at the beginning of Nigeria's Fourth Republic, where the leadership of both the executive and legislature belonging to the same ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), yet the executive led by President Olusegun Obasanjo, displeased with the way the parliament was querying its submissions to the parliament; the President therefore, sponsored his loyalists within the parliament and they succeeded in impeaching three consecutive Senate Presidents namely Senators Evans Enwerem, Chuka Okadigbo and Adolfus Wabara including the Speaker of the Federal House of Assembly, Honorable Salisu Buhari, who was impeached for forgery of certificate. Clearly, the conflict-ridden relationship that exist between the executive and legislature has been slowing down the process of governance, thereby having debilitating effects on good governance in the country.

Ezeani (2010) notes that in spite of the importance of legislative oversight in contemporary democratic governance, it has been controversial in all ramifications in the political scene and has remained the major source of executive and legislative conflict in Nigeria. A former Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Honourable Justice Oluwadare Aguda had once argued that oversight functions as was carried out by the legislature was often unconstitutional and violates the principle of separation of powers which is basic to democratic government. He observed that "the legislature in Nigeria is systematically usurping the functions of both the executive and the judiciary", warning that "this could hamper political stability and socio-economic development" (<http://www.thenationonlineng.net/2011/index.php/politics/48492-national-assembly.html>).

Therefore, the central thesis of the criticisms of legislative oversight is its integrity which has been subjected to questions by critics who contend that oversight has become a political tool for the harassment and blackmail of members of the executive branch and perceived political enemies or rivals.

It is argued that this scenario gave credence to former President Olusegun Obasanjo's stance on different occasions on oversight functions, whereby it is alleged that he directed some of his Ministers to ignore National Assembly summons because he considered such political aberrations as undue interference, illegal acts and ungodly avenues for corruption and extortions of resources from the Ministers. Notwithstanding, the legislature with its robust legal instruments, is the symbolic arm of government that determines the effectiveness or otherwise of democratic governance.

The present administration has witnessed increasing controversies owing to large scale disagreement between the legislature and executive arm of government. These series of disagreement is a product of friction between the arms in their discharge of legislative and executive functions, namely oversight function on budget appropriation and approval (budget paddling), party influence on the leadership of the legislative houses (Senate and House of Representatives), appointment and confirmation of ministerial nominees and lastly delay in governance functions.

The present National Assemblies is filled with countless allegations of corruption especially owing to request for gratification and hike of budget proposal for personal satisfaction. The House of Representative Chief spokesperson in a shocking revelation alleged the Speaker, the Minority Leader and other leadership of the house of corrupt practise of falsification of budget figure which resulted in disagreement. This situation not only put to question the continued discharge of oversight function by the law makers but also raises fears on the minds of the electorate against the credibility and workability of the present democratic system in Nigeria and the sincerity of the nations-handlers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In general, issues affecting Nigeria's democratization agenda as regards functional relationship between arms of government bows down to rift and irreconcilable difference which undermines nation-building in Nigeria and democratic consolidation. It is worthy to note that corrupt practices which are

become part of governmental and human process in developing democracies like Nigeria makes Executive/Legislative functioning unpleasant.

Most importantly, the relationship that exist between the Executive and the Legislative arm of government when on the positive side will aid democratization and will the country's drive for consolidating the gains of democracy and by extension develop the capacity of every person to fulfil personal and collective aspirations.

Based on the above position, this paper recommends the following measures which will help reduce and possibly eradicate corrupt practises which have become a recurring problem in Executive/Legislative relations and consequentially establish good and acceptable democratic practises which are required for nation building and democratic consolidation.

- i) There is need for the re-working of the Nigerian constitution all-round consultation with the people which will reduce the powers of the legislature on oversight function to mere advisory role on the functions of the executive arm of government, by this position; government institutions will limit the prospect of money changing hands whenever the legislature's carryout oversight functions.
- ii) The process involved in monetary appropriation should be carried out through independent body's aside the legislature which will consequentially limit the prospects of budget paddling which has become a culture amongst the members of the Executive and Legislative arm of government.
- iii) Thirdly, there is need for the nation's political class to imbibe individual culture of integrity which will discourage corrupt practises amongst politicians and public officials who run the executive arm of government.
- iv) Also, given the zero tolerance for corruption stand of this present executive, it become binding on all arms of government to collaborate with the executive branch of government to flush all acts that is inimical to the country's democratic drive and consequentially on the nation building process.
- v) Finally, it is important for all stakeholders irrespective of political affiliation to see the county's nation building process as an all-inclusive task, thereby appreciating the fact that every action or inaction by the citizens will adversely undermine the nation building process and this will adversely affect all and sundry.
- vi) There is need for the establishment of procurement, administrative and monitoring body that will ensure the legislators are excluded from the contract process which is a major mishap on the developmental process of the country.
- vii) The legislators should be made as a matter of constitutional provision not to add to budgetary proposal presented by the executive when carrying out their appropriation duties.

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