IMPROVING EXECUTIVE – LEGISLATIVE RELATIONSHIP IN NIGERIA DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: CHALLENGES AND REMEDIES

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Abstract
This study critically interrogated the root causes, challenges and remedies for Executive – Legislative conflicts in democratic governance in Nigeria. The study relied heavily on secondary data from in-depth desk review of books, journals, magazines, government documents, internet publications, newspapers etc. Also, the study made use of primary data from interview of key stakeholders in Nigeria Politics such as: the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, leaders of political parties and pro-democracy Organizations. The essence of the interview is to complement and authenticate some of the views previously expressed by the key stakeholders which were documented in the various sources of the secondary data utilized for this study collected from the field work. Since the data collected for the study is qualitative in nature, content analysis was adopted as the method for data analyses. Also, the Role conflict theory was adopted as the theoretical framework of analysis which equally guided the study in the collection of relevant data and formulation of the interview questions for the political stakeholders in Nigerian Politics. The result of the findings from the content analysis of the secondary and primary data collected reveal the following areas as the major sources of conflicts in the executive – legislative relationship in the democratic governance in Nigeria namely: Violations of Constitutional provisions by the executive and legislature; Lack of respect for the rule of law and the principles of separation of powers; Management of Public funds especially in the area of the screening and approval of Budget; Performance of oversight functions; performance of Law making function by the legislature such as the passage of the Electoral Act bill 2018 and the
Veto by the President; Appointment and ratification of key government functionaries such as the refusal of the legislature to confirm Mr. Magu, the former Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), boss in 2016 and 2017 respectively etc. Based on the main findings of the study, the following Major recommendations were made as remedies and panacea for improving the executive – legislative relationship in the democratic governance in Nigeria viz:- Both organs of government should respect the rule of law/separation of powers and consult regularly in the area of disagreement; Both organs should see the supremacy of constitution as uppermost in the discharge of their respective roles, and appreciate that the essence of constitutional provisions is to ensure good governance through their independent and co-operative roles; open up effective communication channels for uninterrupted information flow to promote mutual understanding and cooperation between the two organs; Dialogue and regular meetings by both organs of governance should be institutionalized and Financial autonomy for the legislature.

Keywords: Executive, Legislature, Democracy, Governance, Challenges, Remedies.

Introduction:
It has been observed that Executive – Legislative conflict is arguably a major source of political instability in modern African States. Indeed, unlike the case of advance democracies where such contradictions are conceived as imperatives for deepening the democratic experience, in Africa, they are usually regarded as the indication of deep crises precisely because of the way they are perceived and managed by the dramatics personae of the system (Okpeh, 2014). Thus, (Okpeh, 2014), noted that rather than interrogate the reasons and causes of the executive – legislative conflicts in Africa, in order to come to terms with their very nature and character, such unfortunate developments in intra – governmental relations were, for a very long time, seen as evidence and therefore justifications for regime and/or administration change. The result was that, sustainable democracy on the basis of an effective and efficient political system was not only jeopardized, but its prospects remained elusive for a fairly long time.

However, following the entrenchment of democratic transition in the continent during the twilight of the 20th century, particularly after the collapse of the Eastern bloc and the globalization of bourgeois liberal values, the prevalence of executive-legislative conflicts in the political system of modern African nations has warranted a thorough diagnosis and understanding of the problem especially in a big country like Nigeria, to which most African states looks up to as a model of democratic governance because of her strategic political and economic importance in the continent (Okpeh, 2014).

The Work is primarily focused on critical and adequate interrogation of the roots and causes, as well as remedies for the executive – Legislative conflicts in Nigeria Democratic Governance.

Consequently, to critically and adequately interrogate the roots and causes, as well as remedies for the executive legislative conflicts on Governance in Nigeria, which is the focus of this work; there is the need for an analysis in historical perspective of the trajectory of the
challenges in the relationship between the two arms of the government since under the colonial administration in the country, which arguably laid the foundation for the present crisis in their relation today.

Root causes of Conflicts and Challenges of Executive – Legislative Relationship in Democratic Governance in Nigeria.

The conflict between the executive and the legislature in post-colonial Nigeria (Ukase, 2014) should be seen within the context of the over-accumulation, over-development and over-growth of the powers of the executive vis-à-vis the legislature during the long period of colonial and military rule. He noted that the conflict between these branches of government in post-colonial Nigeria is based, quite often, on trivialities and the struggle for supremacy in the power matrix of the state, which is a clear reflection and manifestation of politics in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular which is characterized by fierce and vicious scramble and competition for political office and the wealth that went in.

In juxtaposing the parliamentary and the presidential system of government already put to test in Nigeria (Ukase, 2014), argues that no system of government is in itself a perpetual perfection. The success or otherwise of any political system is dependent upon its operators. Therefore, the failure of the parliamentary system of government and the conflict between the executive and the legislative branches under the presidential system of government operational in Nigeria is largely due to the inability of the practitioners of these democratic models to internalize and effectively practicalize these systems.

One issue that is central to the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria is the intermittent and unending feud and contest for power and supremacy between the triumvirates of power, that is, the executive, the legislature and the Judicial branches of government. In the study of the relationship between the three branches of government in Nigeria, especially under the Presidential system of Government adopted between 1979 and 1983 and from 1999 – 2020 (Nwankwo, 2020; Barnabas, 2019; Ukase 2014), observed that the relationship between the executive and legislative branches was excessively and highly conflictual, with serious attendant implications on the entire democratization process in the country.

Similarly, Nwaogu, (2013) collaborating the views of Ukase, (2014) noted that one of the major challenges which Nigeria had to grapple with at independence was the hang-over of the British-Styled parliamentary system of government. Some members of the legislature were assigned ministerial portfolios under the principal of collective responsibility, since that time, the essence of synergistic roles between the legislature and the executive had become instructive. However, the rancor and bickering that characterized the first republic culminated in the January 15, 1996 military coup. The coup and the consequent 13 years usurpation of the reins of governance denied the two arms of government the ample time to mature over time in its relationship.

The above explains the reason why the framers of the 1979 constitution moved to guard against the friction of parliamentary system adopted American styled presidential system that has the principle of separation of power. Thus, a bicameral legislature – the senate and the House of Representatives came into being after the 1979 elections perhaps, due to effective
control of the leaderships of the two arms by the then ruling party (NPN), there was no rampant cases of executive–legislative feud in the second Republic era (Nwaogu, 2013).

The legislature in the botched Third Republic obviously had no impact. The sit-tight disposition of the then Head of State, Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, and the annulment of the June 12, 1993 Presidential election that would have ushered in a democratically elected President, hampered the work of the National Assembly already in place. According to Amadi, (2005); Nwaogu (2013) and Barnabas (2019), the situation could be aptly described as thus:

“the Senate under Babangida was pure hogwash, not because the politicians were not prepared to make it work, but because Babangida put up a long list of legislative no-go areas which resulted in the virtual incapacitation of the upper house of the so called Third Republic Senate. The implications are more obvious today”.

At the return to civil rule in 1999, which marked the beginning of the fourth Republic, there were high hopes that the lessons of the past would be brought to bear in the executive–legislative relations. Under the presidency of General Olusegun Obasanjo, National Assembly had “no-love-lost” relationship with the executive arm. It manifested in the frequent change of leadership in the two chambers of National Assembly, especially the Senate, where five Senate Presidents emerged between 2003–2007 under the Obasanjo Presidency. Similarly, tinkering with executive bills and proposals by the legislature under the Obasanjo Presidency where seen as affront to the executive. The military psyche that pervaded the landscape over the years, just like what is happening currently in Nigeria under the Buhari Presidency, hardly gave way for enthronement of true democratic ethos.

Between 2007–2015, when late President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua and subsequently Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, two non-military persons mounted the saddle of national leadership; the executive-legislative relations had blossomed. There was stability in the leadership of the two chambers of the National Assembly, while the hitherto threats of impeachment have reduced. It does not however, mean that there was no area of conflict but the two arms had discovered their complementary roles in delivering the public good and enhancing national security.

The three organs of government, though separated in functions, they interrelate in the execution of such functions to ensure accurate checks and balances which will help to promote good governance and bring in better dividends to the populace. In actual sense, it is executive that dictates the tempo of government and the speed with which development occurs. The legislature however, occupies a prime position in the constitution as the distinctive mark of a country’s sovereignty (Nwaogu, 2013). Furthermore, (Nwaogu, 2013) notes that “the sovereign power of the state is therefore identified in the organ that has power to make laws by legislation, and to issue “commands” in the form of legislation binding on the community”. The Legislature is the only place where democracy is seen in action in the forms of robust debates and considerations of motions and resolutions.

Analyzing the activities of both arms of government namely the executive and legislature (Nwaogu, 2013) asserts that the legislature reflects the aspirations and desires of the generality of the citizens. The legislature is made up of different people from different political parties.
who have the mandate of their people to represent them in the National Assembly. When decisions is reached in the legislature, it is a consensus of both the ruling and the 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. As the direct representatives of the citizens, the legislature is not meant to be an appendage of the executive by always affirming and approving all executive actions. It is meant to ask questions to ensure that the executive actions correspond to the yearnings of the citizens. But experience has shown that most times, when the legislature asks such questions; it is often, misconstrued as confrontation and this gradually builds up to friction and mutual distrust between the two bodies. It is not expected to be so, because the path to the strengthening of democratic institutions and maintenance of national security, good governance and development lies in the ability of both the executive and the legislature to work in the interest of the nation.

According to the second Republic President of the Senate Dr. Joseph Wayas (Nawogu, 2013), “the right thing to do was for both the executive and the legislature to close ranks and work together to do what is right for the country”. The bottom line is that some collaboration in functions promotes harmony in government and some separation makes for liberty, while both are essential for efficiency. The activities have been notably observed in the following areas of collaboration between the executive and the legislature in running the affairs of our nation in the views of (Nwankwo & Barnabas, 2019; Ukase, (2014) and Nwaogu, 2013) namely:-

i. Management of Public Funds.

Since the emergence of the fourth Republic, there has been executive and legislative feud over the National budgets. In the cause of such disagreements, the Federal Legislature has always painted as specialized in mutilating the budget after the executive has painstakingly prepared it. The accusation on the legislature is that it often inserts projects not contemplated by the executive into the budget thereby distorting the economic parameters of the budget.

An example to substantiate the above assertion is the 2017 budget which generated protracted controversy between the executive and the legislature, because the executive accused the legislature of insertions and infractions into the budget by the way of introducing constituency projects not captured by the executive in the original version of the budget estimate submitted for approval. The legislature was alleged through the principal officers of both chambers to have committed what in the legislature parlance in Nigeria is called “budget padding”. This accusation or allegation caused serious delays in the passage and approval of the 2017 budget and signing into law by the President Muhammadu Buhari to last for over seven months.

The underlying issue however, is that the budget belongs to the people. So, in as much as the executive sees itself as being in charge of the details of the financial outlook and structure of the economy, it is the duty of the legislature, as the representative of the people, to ensure that the budget reflects the feelings and desires of the various constituencies in the country. After all, the constitution says that Mr. President shall lay an estimate before the National Assembly. This presupposes that the parliament has the
power to jerk up or cut down the estimate, taking into cognizance the revenues accruable and the most pressing socio-economic challenges.

The constitution places the legislature in charge of the public fund while the executive is in charge of the approved budget. Section 80 subsection 3 of the 1999 constitution clearly states that “No Money shall be withdrawn from any public fund of the Federation, other than the consolidated fund of the federation, unless the issue of that money has been authorized by an Act of the National Assembly”. The same power is also conferred on the states legislature in section 120, of the 1999 Constitution which provides that “No money shall be withdrawn from the consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation except to meet expenditure that is charged upon the fund by an Appropriation Act, Supplementary Appropriation Act, an Act passed in Pursuant to section 81 of this constitution”. The legislative function in respect to the control of public funds is hinged on the fact that the executive prepares the spending pattern and will also disburse the money. The legislature therefore, by such power, can give conditions and place limitations on spending and how funds are to be used.

ii. Oversight
This is one of the main areas of serious challenges in executive-legislative conflicts in Nigeria. This is one function all things being equal, that should easily allows for partnership between the executive and the legislature. However, this has not been the case in Nigeria, because the executive always feels that each time the legislature undertakes any oversight function, the intention is to witch hunt the executive by exposing its weaknesses or misapplications of the rules. In the minds of those who run the executive arm of the government; legislative oversight function in Nigeria is always an exercise intended to blackmail and expose the executive to public ridicule (Nwankwo & Barnabas, 2019; Ukase, 2014 and Nwaogu, 2013). A recent example is under the 9th National Assembly chaired by the Senate President Ahmed Lawan and Speaker of the House of Representative Hon. Femi Gbajamila, respectively, where the relevant committees were conducting oversight functions of some ministries and parastatals namely:- Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC); Ministry of the Niger Delta Commission; Ministry of Labour and Productivity; Ministry of Power and Housing; Ministry of Transportation etc which degenerated into a show of public odium and shame following the bitter altercations and hot exchange of uncomplimentary words against each other by the representatives of the executive and legislature during the performance of the oversight functions. In fact, the oversight function exercise by the respective committees of the National Assembly had to be halted or stopped by the Leadership of both Houses for peace to reign, because the situation was getting out of hands since tamper has risen on both sides namely the representatives of the executive arm who are the ministers, permanent secretaries and Directors and the members of the legislative committees performing the functions/exercise. Consequently, the Presidency through the President Muhammadu Buhari, had to intervene to normalize relations between the members of the executive and legislature by setting up an executive – legislative interrelations committee chaired by the vice-president Yemi Osibanjo with the responsibility to synergize and harmonize from time to time the views of the executive and legislature on critical issues of National importance to forestall bad blood and conflicts which often arise from lack of
constant communications and interactions which hitherto had given room for the misunderstanding of the views and intentions of both arms on some issues under consideration. Also, to douse and lower the tension between the executive and legislature in oversight functions, President Muhammadu Buhari directed the presidency to organize a retreat in the Aso Rock Villa in which all the ministers and members of the National Assembly attended to synergize and harmonize strategies for amicable and peaceful relations going forward especially in the defense of the 2021 Budget appropriations. It was thereafter, the retreat that President, Mohammadu Buhari had to present the 2021 Budget to the 9th National Assembly for consideration and approval.

It is therefore important to note that both arms of government strive for the same thing – which is to spend money judiciously and as allocated so that government will have a positive impact on people’s lives. As long as the legislature is legally vested with the power to control the purse of the nation, it follows that it has the power to know how the monies are spent. Otherwise, the principle of checks and balances would be a mere paper tiger.

Sections 82 – 89 of the 1999 constitution capture the need of such oversight functions, not just as an expression for legislative check on the executive but also for the efficiency of the executive in discharging it constitutional functions. Section 88(1) of the constitution explains that powers of investigation conferred on the National Assembly are exercisable for the purpose of enabling it to “make laws” with respect to any matter within its legislative competence, correct any defects in existing laws; and 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”. The oversights functions are seen as ways in which the legislature works with the executive to assess government operations and determine the impact on the people. Through oversights, the legislators are meant to know if existing laws help the executive work effectively or if they create obstacles for them in the implementation of policies. In essence, oversights are not meant to witch-hunt as often misconstrued by the executive in Nigeria, but in our opinion to ensure conscientious application of appropriated funds by government bodies with the aim of promoting good governance and it is the duty of the legislature to provide that transparency.

iii. Law Making Function:
This is another area of serious challenges in executive-legislative Relationship in Nigeria. Experience has shown with ample examples serious suspicions attached to any bill passed by the legislature which requires the assent of the president who is the Head of the executive before it becomes a law. The executive in Nigeria whether imagined or real, had the notion that most often than not, the bills passed by the legislature always have “salient bubbly traps”, which if not properly scrutinized by the president before giving assent, would come to hunt and hurt the executive in future. For example a case in point is the amended electoral Act Bill 2018 which has been passed by the legislature for four times and on each occasion the president had withheld assent on strong suspicions, which are not made public. However, political analyst and scholars have decipher that it is because if the bill is passed into law it is likely to undermine his political fortunes in 2019, re-
election because the chances of using the state apparatus like the security agencies in rigging elections will be highly checkmated (content analysis of secondary data and field work, 2018 by Barnabas and Nwankwo).

It is important to emphasize that the legislature and the executive must collaborate in law making despite the fact that the constitution assigned such powers to the legislature. By virtue of Presidential or Governorship assent to bills, such powers are being shared by the two organs. If such collaboration does not exist, the legislature would simply do all the readings on a bill passes it and say it has become a law. But after passing a bill, the legislature must send it to the president or governor who is the head of the executive for his assent before it becomes Law. In this sense, lawmaking is not strictly the business of the legislature alone. This is one major areas of serious challenges in executive – legislative relationship since the beginning of the fourth Republic in Nigeria.

iv. Appointment and ratification of Key government Functionaries.
This is another major area of challenges in executive – legislative relations in Nigeria. The feeling of the executive is that any nominations for appointment submitted to the legislature for approval should be expressly done without questions and scrutiny by the legislature. Any time the legislature decides to critically and objectively examine through background checks the competence and integrity of the executive nominees either for ministerial or other appointments is seen by the executive as unnecessary interference and political witch-hunt. A good and typical example is the screening and confirmation of the appointment of the immediate suspended former acting chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Mr. Ibrahim Magu which was twice submitted to the legislature in December, 2016 and in March 2017 respectively; but were in each occasion denied confirmation by the legislature for obvious reasons bothering on security report of the Directorate of the State Service (DSS) on the integrity of Mr. Magu to hold such an exalted office with impeccability.

It is important to observe that the President is legally empowered to appoint key functionaries of government institutions. But the legislature is also empowered to screen such nominees to ascertain their credibility to hold such positions. Therefore, collaborations are necessary to ensure that those selected by the president are qualified and capable of discharging the assigned responsibilities. An example is the recent forwarding of the name of Miss Lauretta Onochie, a Special Assistant (SA) to President Muhammadu Buhari, and alleged card carrying member of the All Progressive Alliance (APC), for screening and confirmation by the Senate of the 9th National Assembly as a Resident Electoral Commissioner; notwithstanding the clear provisions in the 1999 constitution as amended that any nominee for appointment to such an exalted office must not be partisan, or belong to any political party standing with impeccable integrity and unquestionable records. Although the confirmation of Miss Lauretta Onochie was eventually rejected by the senate, but the questions in the lips and minds of many good Nigerians are asking is how come that the executive did not do a thorough background checks on this nominee or was it a case of executive impunity and recklessness hoping that the legislature would be intimated not to question or scrutinize the background of the nominee Miss Lauretta Onochie. This executive carelessness and impunity especially in
the nomination and assigning of portfolios to the nominees without recourse to qualifications and competence are some of the reasons why some legislators has recently moved to demand and insist that the executive must attach the proposed portfolios of the nominees during screening to ascertain the capability or otherwise to handle specific roles in government.

The above discussed challenges are to mention but a few. It practically and empirically, as well as theoretically, demonstrates beyond any reasonable doubt, that there are serious challenges in the executive – legislative relationship in democratic governance in Nigeria, which if not critically and adequately interrogated could at worst derail and truncate the democracy; while in the meantime deny the citizens the accruable dividends of democracy and if left to exacerbate and unchecked could led to the actual disintegration of the Nigerian State.

In conclusion, from the foregoing challenges of Executive –legislative Relationship in Nigeria, it is evident that in practice, there is only quasi – separation of powers (Nwankwo, 2020: Content analysis of Secondary data). The challenges examined above in the relationship between the executive and legislature in Nigeria has shown that if there is no harmonious corporation and collaboration between the two arms of government, there will be no sense of common purpose in governance. It therefore, becomes imperative and desirable that the relationship between the legislature and executive must remain cordial and be guarded jealously. Any conflict and challenges that may arise in the discharge of their functions should be immediately resolved, otherwise they impact directly on the Nations good governance, development and security as is being currently experienced in Nigeria today, which calls for critical and objective interrogations into the matter and articulation of a pragmatic steps for the way forward through discussion of possible remedies to Executive-Legislative conflicts in Nigeria democratic governance.

**Remedies to Executive-Legislative Conflicts in Nigeria Democratic Governance**

Democracy has come to stabilize in Nigeria since 1999-Date, under what has come to be popularly known and referred to the Fourth Republic. According to Ezirim (2017), Democracy has become a global phenomenon and it has consistently shown that it works in other countries; therefore, there is no reason why it cannot work in Nigeria. We cannot do without good governance in Nigeria as that is the only way we can be sure that the entity called Nigeria remains one, indivisible and cohesively potent to face the challenges presently occupying us. Ezirim (2017) further observed that for good governance to be visible, those at the helm of affairs must be alive to their duties, to ensure continuous and prompt deliverance of the dividends of democracy. It is within the purview of consolidated democratic governance in Nigeria that all the indices that can make for sustained democratic dividends can be possible by the enthronement of rule of law, good governance, effective communication with the electorate by the political class, adequate employment, balanced allocation of resources and provision of basic amenities. This consolidation of democracy is dependent on the strength and maturity of the political class which is heavily represented by the executive and the legislature, as they play more advance and more visible roles them the judiciary. This strength and maturity is tested in their working relationship which is most visible in what the citizen’s gain from government.
As right observed by (Fawole, 2013, Eme, 2016; Ezirim, 2017; Barnabas, 2019; and Nwankwo, 2020), for the doctrine of separation of powers to function, have real effects and go beyond mere rhetoric, upholding the supremacy of the constitution as the fundamental law is Sine-qua-non, an inescapable desideratum. Each branch of government must not only be willing and ready to defend its own turf from encroachment by other branches, but it must also scrupulously eschew the tendency to interfere in the respective domains of the other branches and at the same time, understand that the constitutional function of the other arm is not necessarily to witch-hunt but to ensure compliance with the rule of law. Only by a scrupulous adherence to this doctrine can a young democracy like Nigeria be carefully guided and nurtured through its inevitable teething stages to reach maturity.

Unnecessary demonstration of arrogance by the executive or show of bravado and belligerence by the legislature towards the executive can only create a gridlock capable of slowing down progress and endangering democracy. In actual fact any gridlock resulting from arrogance and face-offs is capable of prompting a democratic reversal, a prospect that Nigerians, a people that had suffered pain and agony under ruthless military dictatorship and made almost super human sacrifices in order to enthrone democracy in the fourth Republic after the annulment of the June 12, 1993 elections, cannot afford. It would appear the inheritors of the mantle of power in the new democratic dispensation are not the ones who laboured for it. Perhaps that is why it is convenient for them to engage in the crudest form of prebendal politics, looting the treasuries with impunity to satisfy individual idiosyncrasies and sybaritic indulgences relying heavily on the use of brutal forces through the activities of the security operatives namely the police and military which recently culminated to a strong protest from the youths of Nigeria on the streets of most of the states in Nigeria including the federal capital territory (FCT) Abuja with the #EndSars protest. However the eventual military massacre of the unarmed protesters at the Lekki Toll gate Lagos, resulted to mass destruction of Government and individual properties and the looting of the Covid-19 palliatives stored in various warehouses across the states and FCT Abuja by hoodlums which were initially sponsored by the government and protected by the security operatives to dislodge and disperse the peaceful #EndSars protesters. The use of crude force backfired after the security operatives on the alleged orders from the above used live bullets and ammunitions to dislodge the peaceful protesters with the concomitant effects of the sponsored hoodlums having a field day by looting and vandalization of public and private properties and palliatives war-houses across the states of the federation and FCT Abuja (Ezirim, 2017, and Nwankwo, 2020).

The conduct of most of our executives and legislatures have shown them as people almost totally benefit of deep knowledge of democracy and lacking in commitment to the most elementary principles of democratic governance (Ezirim, 2017 and Barnabas & Nwankwo, 2019). Not only are they ill-informed, but are also often crude and arrogant in their conduct, engaging in needless face-offs with one another to the dismay of the poor citizens (Ezirim, 2017 and Nwankwo, 2020). A recent example is the face-offs between the Minister of Niger Delta commission Senator Godswill Akpabio, Minister of Labour and Productivity Senator Chris Ngige and Minister of Transportation Rotimi Amaechi to mention but a few, had a very serious face-offs with the members of the 9th National Assembly respective committees that oversights the activities of their ministries. Both the leadership of the executive led by the President Muhammadu Buhari and the leadership of the legislature led by the Senate
President Ahmed Lawan and Speaker of the House of Representatives Hon Femi Gbajamila, had to intervene to stop the executive-legislative crisis under the 9th National Assembly from degenerating into an imbroglio and war of public shame which could destabilize our nascent democracy. The leadership of the Executive and legislature had to agree for the setting up of an Executive-legislature advisory committee under the chairmanship of the Vice-President Yemi Osibanjo to synergize from time to time on serious matters before executive introduction into the legislative chambers. Consequently, a retreat was organized to normalize relations and cool risen tampers before the executive introduction and president laying of the 2021 budget Estimates for the consideration and passage of the 2021 appropriation bill by both chambers of the legislature (Nwankwo, 2020)

The legislative power that the constitution gives to the legislature is the actual power of the people to determine what laws and rules would govern them. The implication is that the legislature is directly exercising this power for and on behalf of the Nigerian citizens who elected them as representatives. It is therefore a weighty responsibility that must not be trifled with, trivialized, abused or used for selfish purposes (Ezirim, 2017, Barnabas, 2019 and Nwankwo 2020). The legislature in the views of these scholars, must therefore, be conscious of the needs, wishes, preferences, aspirations and sentiments of the generality of Nigerians in the performance of the onerous duty of making laws for the peace, order and good governance of the federation or any part thereof. It is expected that the legislators must be convinced that any law they make would be consistent with the peoples' expressed wishes as they understand them, and in accordance with the dictates of the constitution as the fundamental law. It is only when the elected representatives of the people obey these cardinal rules that popular democracy can have any meaning and relevance to the people of Nigeria and of course result to prompt and meaningful deliverance of democratic dividends in the governance of the country.

On the other hand, the executive is expected to do its part and be seen to be executing the laws made by the legislature for the good of the polity. The expectations on the executive arm of government are enormous, and as long as they are given the free hand to deliver their electoral promises, they should do well to redeem their pledges (Ezirim, 2017, Barnabas, 2019 and Nwankwo, 2020). For instance, the three scholars cited above all agreed that while the executive must ensure nominees are people that can scale through the hurdles of legislative scrutiny, the latter should also ensure that it does not always politicize this as a result of non-settlement, or because of partisan affiliations of the nominees.

The scholars also noted (Ezirim, 2017, Barnabas, 2019 and Nwankwo, 2020) that for the legislature to be thorough and do a good job of screening and confirmation of the candidates the executive should add the proposed portfolio of the nominees so as to prevent incompetent candidates from engaging in matters that requires professionals. In the views of the scholars, what matters is putting that round peg in that round hole. When round pegs are put in round holes, democratic dividends will abound in Nigeria of today, and the challenges being experienced currently in executive-legislative relationship since 1999-date, wound reduce drastically.
Methodology:
The study essentially was based on data generated from secondary sources which includes books, journals, magazines, newspapers etc. the qualitative data generated from the indepth-desk review of the secondary sources were analyzed using the content analysis method.

Also, the study made use of primary data from interview of key stakeholders in Nigeria politics such as; the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, leaders of political parties and pro-democracy organization. The essence of the interview is to compliment and authenticate some of the views previously expressed by the key stakeholders which were documented in the various sources of the secondary date utilized for this study. Furthermore, the study employed role theory which assumes role conflicts as its theoretical framework and tools of analysis. The theory assumes that individuals and groups, in any society or organization, are assigned distinct and shared roles. In the discharge of these roles, any act of role violation engenders conflict. The results of analyses demonstrate a correlation between violations of the provisions of the 1999 constitution and manifestation of executive-legislature conflicts in democratic governance in Nigeria. These conflicts, arising from role diffuseness, hinder effective policy-making and policy-implementation. A reduction in the rate of the conflicts is imperative to avoid their negative consequences. Thus, the need for the executive and the legislature to adhere to the principles of Rule of law, separation of powers and accountability, in promoting roles specificity is proffered.

Conclusion
This study is an analysis of conflicts and challenges between the executive and legislature on governance in Nigeria, since 1999-date and the remedies and way forward. It demonstrates that violations of constitutional provisions by the executive and the legislature engender executive-legislative conflicts. These conflicts hinder good policy-making and policy-implementation with cumulative effect of poor socio-economic and political well-being of Nigeria citizens in other to ensure harmonious executive-legislative relations, there is inevitable need for observing the principles of separation of powers and rule of law, enforcement of accountability for increase performance of executive-legislative roles.

Recommendations:

i. Both organs of governance should respect the rule of law/separation of powers and consult regularly in the areas of disagreement

ii. Both organs should see the supremacy of constitution as uppermost in the discharge of their respective roles, and appreciate that the essence of constitutional provisions is to ensure good governance through their independent and co-operative roles.

iii. Any grey area relating to the various functions of the executive and legislature in the constitution should be made explicit or amended to shun ambiguity capable of creating jurisdictional struggle

iv. The executive should not, in any way, interfere in the selection process of legislative leaders, while the legislators should place national interests above every other interest in the conduct of its affairs.
v. Open up effective communication channels for uninterrupted information flow would be helpful in promoting mutual understanding and co-operation between the two organs.

vi. Dialogue and collective planning should be the hallmark of collaborative administration between the two organs.

vii. Regular meetings by both organs of governance should be institutionalized.

viii. Regular workshops, seminars, conferences and retreats should be co-organized on good and responsible governance.

ix. Joint town hall meetings should be promoted and organized and outcome should be the plank for future planning.

x. Prompt payment of allowances and other legal entitlements of the legislators will motivate the legislators in the conduct of their affairs and cultivate healthy relationship with the executive.

xi. Need for financial Autonomy of the legislature. The implementation of financial autonomy of the parliament is a necessary precondition for enduring democracy. The financial autonomy will make the legislators independent as their allowances and other legal entitlements are warehoused in the Assembly. The executive arm would no longer be in position to unduly influence their legislative decisions or oversights.

xii. Periodic publications of income and expenditure of both organs should be circulated, debated and verified to promote accountability and increase the volume and quantity of dividends of democracy that accrue to citizenry.

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