

An Analysis Of The Effectiveness Of Sub-National Legislature In Nigeria: A Syudy Of Niger State House Of Assembly, 2007-2015

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Abstract

The legislature is the institution of government whose main roles is the making of laws for the good government of the country. In every nation, the legislature as the accredited representatives of the people has the duty of promoting national development through its chain of activities. The aim of this study is to assess the effectiveness of the Niger state House of Assembly in law making between 2007 and 2011. The data for this study was obtained from secondary sources such as documents accessed books, journal articles, newspapers, as well as encyclopedias while descriptive approach and content-analysis of secondary sources extracted from documents accessed books, journal articles, newspapers, as well as encyclopedias was employed. We discovered that law making process in the Niger state House of Assembly is an interesting chain of activities, which involves passing of motions into resolutions and bills into laws which depending on certain circumstances contribute in one way or the other to development of Niger state. On the whole, we discovered also that the legislature in the Niger state House of Assembly between 2007 and

2011 were more effective than the legislature in the Niger state House of Assembly between 2011 and 2015 in terms of the numbers of bills passed.

Keywords: Legislature, Niger state, Bill, Nigeria, Government.

Introduction

Democracy is all about ensuring popular participation and control of the process of government.

Since all the people cannot participate and individually control their government at the same time, they entrust these rights and duties to an elected few among them known as legislators. The legislature is called different names in different countries. For instance, it is the national assembly in Nigeria, Parliament in Britain, Congress in USA, Supreme Soviet former USSR, Diet in Japan and Duma or Knesset in Israel (Laxmikanth, 2006).

The legislature is ubiquitous in every system of government to perform legislative functions. The law-making process is an interesting chain of activities, which involves passing of motions into resolutions and bills into laws which depending on certain circumstances contribute in one way or the other to national development. In every nation, the legislature as the accredited representatives of the people has the duty of promoting national development through its chain of activities.

The legislature is the institution of government whose main roles is the making of laws for the good government of the country. They are basically two types of legislatures, viz, the unicameral which is suited for quick decisions and bicameral which is for balanced decisions. The former is a single chamber legislature, while the latter is two-chambered. The two chambers may be called Senate (House of Lords or Upper House) and house of representatives (House of Commons or Lower House). A joint session of the two may give you a National Assembly (Nigeria), Parliament (Britain) or Congress (USA).

Apart from law making, the legislature approves the appointments of important state officers, all the policies of the executives and the annual budget; supervises and controls government agencies or statutory cooperation's, probes the activities of any government department or institution; represent and educate the people, the electorates or public interest; offers a training ground for politicians in public work. In addition, the legislature has power to remove or

elect the president. It can remove through impeachment or passing a vote of no confidence and dissolution of parliament. On the other hand, it could elect through turning the legislature into an electoral college for that purpose.

In Nigeria, legislature has the mandate and is under obligation to initiate debate and show concern on matters affecting the generality of people in the country. Expectedly such activities should be directed toward reversing declining economy, stabilizing the polity and integrating society with overall aim of enhancing national development. In spite of the criticality of the legislature to national development, it is clear from Nigerian experience that some legislatures fail to play such role with expected level of success. Comments, observations, and experiences have proved that Nigerian legislature have failed to live up to its constitutional responsibility of being harbinger of national development as it is struggling to overcome the executive interference, crippling internal conflict, inexperience, corruption and materialistic obsession (Edet & Amadu, 2014).

However, arguably most studies on the legislature are still focused on the Western experience, and more particularly the experiences of just two institutions: The British House of Commons and the U.S Congress (Essaiasson and Heider, 2000). Few studies of parliaments in developing countries of the global South are available. An important example of this is the Parliaments in Asia (Norton and Ahmed: 1999). In particular studies of parliaments in Sub-Saharan Africa can simply be described as very scanty. Again, most of these few works are in fact focused on South and Southern Africa. Some of these include works by; Burnell (2003), Geisler (2000), Krafchick and Weiner (1998), Calland (1997, 1999) and Kotze (1996). Others include works by Ankama (1996), Suttner (1995, 1996), Zin zindhoue (1994), Mathur (1991), Meinhardt (1990) and Adar and Nkosi (2004).

The work assesses the effectiveness of the Niger state House of Assembly in law making between 2007 and 2015 and be presented by means of a descriptive approach and content-analysis of secondary sources extracted from documents accessed books, journal articles, newspapers, as well as encyclopedias. It is against this background that the following section sets out the meaning of legislature, an overview of the functions of the legislature, functions of the National and state Houses of Assemblies as well as assess the effectiveness of the Niger state House of Assembly base o bill passed.

Meaning of Legislature

Legislature is generally referred to as an official body, usually chosen by election, with the power to make, change, and repeal laws; as well as powers to represent the constituent units and control government (Lafenwa, 2002:5). The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Political Science (1991:329) defines legislatures as political institutions whose members are: Formally equal to one another, whose authority derives from a claim that the members are representative of the political community, and whose decisions are collectively made according to complex procedures. (Blackwell Encyclopedia of Political Science, 1991:329)

Loewenberg (1995:736) defined legislatures as “assemblies of elected representatives from geographically defined constituencies, with lawmaking functions in the governmental process”. In the same vein, Jewell (1997) identified two features that distinguish legislatures from other

branches of government. He opines that legislatures have formal authority to pass laws, which are implemented and interpreted by the executive and judicial branches and their members normally are elected to represent various elements in the population. It is significant to note that legislatures vary in terms of composition, structure and role, from one democracy to the other. Strictly speaking, legislatures are divided into two types. They are the bicameral and the unicameral types.

The unicameral legislature has only one chamber or house while the bicameral variation has two.

All communist regimes, including China, many Latin American countries, Norway, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Israel, Lebanon, and New Zealand had unicameral legislature (Bone, 1972).

The bicameral structures are made up of the Upper House and the Lower House. Some countries designate their Upper House as the Senate and the Lower House as the House of Representative. Typical examples of this are the United States of America and Nigeria. In England, the House of Lords and the House of Commons are the designations for the Upper House and Lower House respectively. This structural variation notwithstanding, legislatures tend exhibit some basic common characteristics. Generally speaking, their members are formally equal to one another in status. For another, the authority of members depends on their claim to representation of the rest of the community.

Furthermore, as Loewenberg (1971) opines, quality of status also determines that members of parliament work collectively, either in

meetings of the entire membership or of committees of members. These characteristics portray the legislature as what it is by its nature and design, a functional institution. Ogunna (1983:85) opined that it must, among other things be Truly representative in character, knowledgeable and mature in judgment, selfless, responsive, responsible, competent and effective in the discharge of its functions, discreet in the judicious exercise of its powers, and high in its integrity. The human society is an organic phenomenon. As such, it is never static. The pressures of geophysical and the natural interaction of its parts render the human society always dynamic. It is the task of the legislature to make laws and policies to guide the societal dynamism into the smooth channels of growth and development for the good of all. Any policy that is not supported by the legislature is not sustainable. It follows that the state or level of national development of the country is strongly determined by capability of the legislature (Edet & Amadu, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

Scholars and Researchers have developed a number of theories to explain the roles of the legislature in a democratic system such as Positive political theory (PPT) which assumes self-interested political and bureaucratic actors who behave strategically to further their goals. The focus is on the reelection motives of politicians and the civil servants' desire for influence and promotion as well as future employment in the private sector.

This theory takes certain aspects of the institutional structure as given and explores the behavior of political and economic actors within that structure. PPT, although more fully developed in the United States, need not be limited to a presidential system with a two-house legislature and a supreme court. The claim that political actors behave strategically subject to institutional constraints is a broad and general one (Rose-Ackerman, 2007). However, this theory is suitable for comparative legislative studies.

Rational choice perspectives are concerned to explain why, within particular institutional frames, legislators go about their business in particular ways and with what effects. The key advantage of rational choice approaches is that they offer 'clear and refutable statements about what is expected to happen, under what circumstances, and why' (Gilligan and Krehbiel, 1994: 211). In reducing propositions to restricted 'stylized facts', however, rational choice models are open to the accusation that they are 'unrealistic' and fail to capture the complexities associated with the 'real world' of legislatures. A main

disadvantage is that rational choice approaches are prone to generate over-simplified models which require complex statistical manipulations to validate their relatively simple propositions.

In this study, we shall employ the Political Settlement Analysis. Political settlements are the expression of a common understanding, usually forged between elites, about how power is organized and exercised. They include formal institutions for managing political and economic relations, such as electoral processes, peace agreements, parliaments, constitutions and market regulations. But they also include informal, often unarticulated agreements that underpin a political system, such as deals between elites on the division of spoils. The political settlements approach highlights those national and sub-national leaders, elites and their followers are the primary agents of contextually appropriate solutions to the myriad collective action problems that define many development challenges. The starting point for a political settlements approach is therefore careful political analysis that can: (a) map the key political actors; (b) identify their interests and recognize their forms of power (political, economic, social and ideological); (c) understand their relations with supporters; and (d) appreciate the issues, narratives, beliefs and ideas that shape how and why they interact with each other (Hudson & Leftwich, 2014; Parks & Cole, 2010).

An Overview of the Functions of the Legislature

In English political history, the legislature appeared in the 13th century as an assembly of knights and burgesses summoned irregularly by the monarch for consultation on taxation. By the end of the seventeenth century, the bourgeoisie had successfully used parliament to secure its political aims. Thus, parliament became the instrument by which newly powerful group in society could advance their interests and introduce innovations into and modernize the society. Parliament was used to bring development to the English society and has ever since continued to be used for this purpose. Most legislatures do this in the nations that they serve (Edet & Amadu, 2014).

In modern time, legislature performs representational function. Principally, the people's representatives for the singular fact that they are elected by the people, especially under a democratic regime, hold the mandate of their constituencies within the polity (Edet & Amadu, 2014). Sodaro (2007:179) put it thus: 'the essence of representative democracy lies in the delegation of governmental power and responsibility to a small number of people by the citizenry as a whole'.

Consequently, legislature is expected to pursue good public policies for national development. The legislature is important, in governance generally. Its traditional function is, however, to make laws. Any actually functioning legislature, as Bone (1972) had been estimated, spends of its time fifty per cent on the passage of legislation, ten per cent on appropriations, and forty per cent on policy formation and control.

In a democracy, the legislature plays an important role in the amendment of the national constitution, selection and appointment of senior government as well as the supervision of social, political and economic conditions in the country. All these activities together promote development in the nation. They channel societal dynamism into desirable paths (Meehan et al, 1966). Less formally than in law-making, the legislature serves as a training ground for national leaders. From their different constituencies, legislatures meet at the house and gain exposure to representatives across the nation and handle nationwide issues and affairs for and on behalf of the nation.

The legislature is very crucial in enforcing accountability and responsibility in any democratic setting. 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. The legislature provides the institutional mechanism for ensuring accountability and good governance. Stapenhurst also noted that 'In most countries, the legislature is constitutionally mandated as the institution through which governments are held accountable to the electorate'. Such oversight functions include 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 leads to national development.

Besides, 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. Similarly, Fashagba (2012) affirmed that legislatures in some countries have gained a role in approving macro fiscal framework. The Nigerian legislature belongs to the class of legislative assemblies vested with preponderance of power over fiscal matters, perhaps.

Further still, the legislature promotes national unity. Members develop a sense of identification with the entire nation for which they make policies and laws and whose problems they set out to solve at each legislative session. It educates the members in practical politics. As they involve in the process of law-making and policy formation, Gross (1953) opined that legislators are exposed to the conflicting political interest, at work on each issue and how to solve the problems that are created by such conflicts.

Jewell (1997) observed that they become adepts in reconciling conflicting political interests in the nation. Thus, they move towards becoming statesmen. The legislature develops them into the proper type of manpower for the service of the nation. Where this is successfully achieved, no national development is greater than it. In sum, the legislature has as its duty as Bryce observed "to give effects to the will to a free people scattered over a country or state, holding them together in one great body while also enabling each division of the population to enact laws appropriate to their respective needs" (Bryce, 1971: 23).

The modern legislature serves as an agent of reform in the state. In a state where some members of parliament are ideologically inclined the desire to implement their reform agenda will greatly influence their behaviors in the assembly. As area legislature, the assembly serves as forum for discussion of ideas and policies and it provides a formal platform for deliberation among significant political forces in the life of a political system (Fashagba,2012).

Also, the transformative legislature actively translates ideas into laws. The transformative legislature enjoys a huge measure of institutional autonomy to act on bills or policy proposals emanating either within the assembly itself or from the executive arm of the government. They mold and transform bills and proposals into laws, irrespective of the source.

Functions of the National and State Houses of Assemblies in Nigeria

The powers, duties and functions of Nigerian legislature are well spelt out in the 1999 constitution. In section 4 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) provisions for the exercise of legislative powers by both the National Assembly and the States Houses of Assembly which powers must be exercised for purposes of achieving good governance, amongst others are made. Section 4 of 1999 constitution states

The legislative powers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are vested in a National Assembly for which consist of a Senate and a House of

Representatives. The National Assembly have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation or any part thereof with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative list set out in Part 1 of the Second Schedule of the Constitution.

In addition, the National Assembly have power to make laws with respect to the following matters:

(a) any matter in the Concurrent Legislative list set out in the first column of Part II of the Second Schedule to the Constitution to the extent prescribed in the second column opposite thereto; and

(b) any other matter with respect to which it is empowered to make laws in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

(5) If any Law enacted by the House of Assembly of a State is inconsistent with any laws validly made by the National Assembly, the law made by the National Assembly shall prevail, and that other Law shall to the extent of the inconsistency be void.

(6) The legislative powers of a State of the Federation are vested in the House of Assembly of the State.

(7) The House of Assembly of a State shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the State or any part thereof with respect to the following matters, that is to say-

(a) any matter not included in the Exclusive Legislative List set out in Part I of the

Second Schedule of the Constitution;

(b) any matter included in the Concurrent legislative list set out in the first column of Part II of the Second Schedule to this Constitution to the extent prescribed in the second column opposite thereto; and

(c) any other matter with respect to which it is empowered to make laws in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.

On the whole, the constitution recognizes the principle of separation of power by making provisions for upholding this in the constitution.

The National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives) is empowered to legislate over matters in the Exclusive list to the exclusion of the Houses of Assembly of the state. It can also make laws in respect of matters contained in the Concurrent legislative list to the extent that is also provided in the same schedule to the constitution.

The States Houses of Assembly are empowered to make laws in respect of matters contained in the concurrent legislative list as it is provided for in the schedule to the constitution. Again, the legislative houses at the federal and state levels are empowered to make laws on any other matter in respect of which the constitution has conferred powers on them to make laws.

Historical origin of Legislature in Nigeria

The development of the legislative institution in Nigeria according to Adebo (1988) can be traced 1861 when the colonial government officially occupied Lagos. As a means of governing the colony of Lagos, the colonial Governor established a Legislative Council to oversee the affairs of the Colony. The ten hand-picked members of the legislature had only two members who were Nigerians. The Legislative Council did not perform any law-making function but served as an advisory body to the colonial governor.

In 1900, the protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria were established by the British Government to replace the administration of the Royal Niger Company and the Niger Coast, protectorate over the North and South respectively. Six years later, the colony of Lagos was annexed to the Southern Protectorate. In 1914, the two protectorates were amalgamated to form the Colony and protectorate of Nigeria (Flint, 1960).

A new legislative body called the Nigerian Council comprising thirty-six members who were randomly selected and handpicked by the colonial government to represent, business and other interests. Six of the members were Nigerians. The Council just like the Lagos Council that preceded it had no legislative power and performed no legislative functions. A major constitutional development that affected the development of the legislature occurred in 1922 when the Clifford Constitution made provisions for the election of four Nigerians out of a total Council of forty-six members. The remaining forty-two members were selected, nominated or handpicked by the Colonial Governor to represent private and business interests (Crowder, 1968). The introduction of this elective principle was carried over into the 1946 Richard's and the 1951

Macpherson Constitutions as each subsequent constitution tried to increase the number of elective Nigerians into the Colonial Legislative Council.

In 1960 Nigeria became independent and adopted the Westminster Parliamentary system of government. During her first republic, Nigeria had a bicameral legislature. There were, for the Federation, the Senate and the House of Representative and, for the Regions, the House of Chiefs and the House of Assembly. The Senate and the House of Chiefs were the Upper Houses for the Federation and the Regions respectively. The House of Representatives was made up of 312 members elected nation-wide to serve for five years and a Senate of 44 members selected from the various components of the Federal System (Adebo 1988).

A slight change came in the second republic. The federation retained her bicameral model which was renamed as the National Assembly but the states became unicameral systems. The same arrangement was in operation during the aborted third republic. The basic of popular representation in the National Assembly of the second republic was both numerical and geographical. For elections to the House of Representatives, the nation was divided into electoral districts subject to the constraint that no one constituency's boundaries might lie within more than one state. Dividing the number of registered voters nation-wide (in 1979, 47.7million) by the number of seats to be filled in the House (450), on average of every 100,000 or so voters represented by one deputy (Graf, 1988).

For elections to the senate, on the other hand, representation was by geographical unit. Each of the 19 states, regardless of population, was subdivided into five approximately equal territorial constituencies, each of which returned one senator. The reason for instituting this principle of geographical representation and establishing a second chamber related to the same complex of forces and interests that produced federalism and the federal character of Nigeria. The bicameral federal legislature in the second republic, composed of a House of Representatives of 450 members and a Senate of 96, was structured as the highest representative body of the liberal-democratic order and was the agency through which popular sovereignty was transmitted. As such it was supposed to articulate the will of the people, and its legislation was passed in the name of the people for the advancement of the national development.

The legislature in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria exists at national, state and local government levels. At the national level it is a bicameral structure that constitutes the National Assembly: the senate which is the upper legislative house and the House of Representatives which is the lower chamber. The senate, as in the United State of America, symbolizes the equality of the states that make up the federation. It also enjoys the privilege of confirming appointment of key functionaries like Ministers and Ambassadors. The house of Representatives, on the other hand, directly represents the people. The constitution further provides for a House of Assembly in each state of the federation, while a legislative Council exists in the local governments, performing essentially the same functions. The National Assembly has a total membership of 469 legislators. The Senate has 109 members. Each state is represented by three senators, while the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja is represented by a senator. The House of Representatives has 360 members. Unlike the Senate

which the representation is based on equality of the state, representation in the House of Representatives from each state is determined by the population.

Effectiveness of Niger State House of Assembly, 2007-2011

Niger State was created on the 3 February 1976 out of the then North-Western state during the regime of General Murtala Ramat Mohammed; the state formerly began to function on April 1st of that year, with eight local government councils (LGAs) namely: Chanchaga, Rafi, Gbako, Etswan, Suleja, Mariga, Magama and Lavun. Etswan Local Government was later divided into two (Agaie and Lapai LGAs). Between 1979 and 1983 during the second republic, when Mallam Muhammadu Awwal Ibrahim was the Executive Governor of the State, eighteen LGAs were created: Kuta, Paikoro, Chanchaga, Rafi, Gbako, Katcha, Lemu, Lapai, Agaie, Suleja, Mariga, Bangi, Magama, Auna, Lavun, Mokwa and Jima-Doko. But when the military came into power in 1984, it was reverted to the original eight LGA structure. However, Chanchaga was split into two-Minna Municipal council, with Minna as headquarters while Kuta remained the headquarters of Shiroro LGA, the former name of Chanchaga LGA.

The LGAs in Niger State became Nineteen in 1991 when President Ibrahim Babangida created Nine States and additional LGAs in Nigeria. By 1996 when Late General Sani Abacha created six additional states and 182 LGAs in the entire country, Niger State got additional six LGAs, namely, Katcha, Munya, Mashegu, Edati, Tafa and Mariga bringing the total to 25 LGAs seats (<http://www.cpahq.org/cpahq/core/parliamentInfo.aspx?Committee=NIGER>).

The Niger State House of Assembly is the legislative arm of Niger State situated opposite the Niger State New Secretariat, Minna. The 8th Niger State House of Assembly is currently under the All Progressives Congress being the ruling party in Niger State. The Niger State House of Assembly is made up of 27 Honourable Members which cut across the 25 Local Government Areas of the State, elected to represent their respective constituencies for a period of 4 Years. Kontagora and Bida are divided into 2 constituencies respectively.

Chronology of Honourable Speakers since creation of Niger State in 1976 to the incumbent speaker who emerged after the 2015 general elections ; Below is a chronological list

Rt. Hon. Mohammed Danrangi, Rt. Hon. Moh'd J. Tswana, Rt. Hon. Ndanusa Hassan

Rt. Hon. Prince Garba A. Bosso, Rt. Hon. Usman A. Jikantoro, Rt. Hon.

Haruna A. Labaran
 Rt. Hon. Pharmacist M. M. Alkali, Rt. Hon. Sa'idu Ndako Idris, Rt.
 Hon. Umar Musa MA AL
 Rt. Hon. Moh'd Tsowa Gamunu, Rt. Hon. Isah B. M. Kawu, Rt. Hon.
 Barrister Adamu Usman
 Rt. Hon. Isah B. M. Kawu and the incumbent Speaker, Rt. Hon.
 Ahmed Marafa Guni who was elected unopposed
 (<http://facesinternationalmagazine.org.ng/?p=21297>).

Table 1 Bills Passed by the Niger State House of Assembly, 2007 – 2011

S/N	BILLS	REMARKS
1	A bill for A Law to amend the statutory officers (emoluments) law 2007. Passed Thursday 25 th October, 2007	Assented
2.	The year 2007 reviewed budget: passed: Wednesday 7 th November, 2007	Assented
3.	A bill to repeal local government (Amendment) Law 2007 And establishment of 17 development areas in Niger state. Passes: Monday 14 th February, 2008	Assented
4.	The local government (council elections) Amendment law 2007.Passed: Tuesday 5 th February, 2008	Assented
5.	The yea 2008 Appropriation bill Passed: Tuesday, 25 th March, 2008	Assented
6.	A Bill for a law to provide for the establishment of assembly service commission. Passed: Wednesday 26 th March, 2008	Assented
7.	A Bill for A Law to Provide for The Establishment of Niger State Law Reform commission. Passed: Thursday 5 th June, 2008	Assented
8.	A bill to provide for the establishment of Niger State Emergency Management agency. Passed: Tuesday, 14 th October, 2008	Assented
9.	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of Niger Delta Schools of Nursing and Midwifery. Passed: Wednesday 15 th October, 2008	Assented
10.	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of Niger state road maintenance agency (NIGROMA) Passed: Tuesday 28 th October, 2008	Assented

11.	A Bill for A Law to Establish the Niger State Aids Control Agency. Passed: Wednesday, 12 th November 2008	Assented
12.	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of Niger State small, medium and micro finance agency. Passed: Tuesday 18 th November, 2008	Assented
13.	The year 2009 appropriation bill (budget Passed: on Thursday 15 th January, 2009	Assented
14.	A bill for a law to establish Niger state pilgrim welfare commission. Passed Wednesday 18 th march, 2009	Assented
15.	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of state agency for community and social development and other matters related thereto. Passed: Wednesday 25 th March, 2009	Assented
16.	A bill for a law to establish local government ward development projects committees in the 274 wards in Niger State. Passed: Thursday, 2 nd April, 2009	Assented
17.	A bill for a law to amend the local government law 2001 and for connecting purposes (operationalizing the 17 development areas in Niger state). Passed: Thursday, 2 nd April, 2009	Assented
18.	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of Niger state school of health technology Minna and Tungan Magajiya. Passed: Tuesday 20 th October, 2009	Assented
19	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of a primary health care development agency and for other related matters. Passed: 8 th December, 2009	Assented
20.	The year 2010 appropriation bill Passed: Tuesday 23 rd February 2010	Assented
21.	A bill for a law to provide and protect the right of the child in Niger State and other related matters 2010. Passed: Wednesday 7 th April, 2010	Assented
22.	Local Government Appropriation Bill 2009 Passed: 12 th July, 2010	Assented
23.	A bill for a law to provide for the prudent management of the state resources, ensure long term micro economic stability, secure greater accountability and transparency in fiscal framework and establishment of the responsibility	Assented

	commission to ensure the promotion and enforcement of the state economic objective and other connected purposes. Passed: 23 rd August, 2010.	
24.	A bill for a law to provide for the public procurement bill 2008. Passed: 23 rd August, 2010	Assented
25.	A bill for a law to establish Niger state commodity and export promotion agency (NSCEPA). Passed: 11 th September, 2010	Assented
26.	A bill for a law to establish Niger state polytechnic Zungeru 2010. Passed: 25 th November, 2010	Assented
27.	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of private school board in Niger state and for other connected purposes. Passed: 16 th December, 2010	Assented
28.	A bill for a law to enable Niger state to raise internal loans of N30,000,000 from the capital market through the issuance of securities inform of registered bonds for the specific development of projects authorized by the state execution council and for all other matters thereto. Passed: 6 th December, 2010	Assented
29.	The year 2011 appropriation bill Passed: 1 st March, 2011	Assented
30.	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment of Niger State Bureau of Statistics 2010. Passed: 8 th March, 2010	Assented
31.	A bill for a law to provide for the establishment and compositions of the Suleja area planning and development authority. Passed: 3 rd April, 2011	Assented
32.	A bill for a law to amend Niger state environmental protection agency law 1996. Passed: 3 rd April, 2011	Assented
33.	A bill for a Law to amend the Niger state agricultural development project edict 1988 and for connected purposes. Passed: 17 th May, 2011.	Assented
34.	A Bill for A Law to Establish the Niger State Electricity Board and For Connected Purposes.	Assented

	Passed: 18 th May, 2011	
35	A bill for a law to establish Justice Lami Fati Abubakar College of Arts and Islamic Legal Studies, Minna 2010 Passed: 24 th May, 2011	Assented
36.	A bill for a law to establish Niger State College of Education, Minna Passed: 24 th May, 2011	Assented
37.	A bill for a law to establish Niger state planning commission and for matters connected therewith. Passed: 24 th May, 2011.	Assented

Source: Niger state House of Assembly Gazette, (2011).

Table 2 Bills Passed by the Niger State House of Assembly June 2011–February 2014

S/N	BILLS	REMARKS
1.	A Bill for A Law to Amend the Local Government (Council Elections) Law 2002 And to Provide for Electoral Offences Under the Local Government (Council Elections) Law of Niger State and For Other Connected Purposes. Passed: 28 th September, 2011	Assented
2.	A Law to Provide for The Establishment of Vigilante Group and For Connected Purposes. Passed: Tuesday, 20 th February, 2012	Assented
3.	A Bill for A Law to Establish Niger State College of Nursing Science 2010. Passed: 21 st February, 2012	Assented
4.	A Bill for A Law to Establish Niger State Quality Assurance and Standards Agency for Schools 2010 Passed: Wednesday 22 nd February, 2012	Assented
5.	A Bill for A Law to Establish College of Agriculture Mokwa 2011 Passed: Thursdays 23 rd February, 2012	Assented
6.	Appropriation Bill for Year 2012 Passed: 6 th March, 2012	Assented
7.	A Bill for A Law to Repeal Local Government (Establishment of Ward Development Projects Committees) Law 2009 And Amended Local Government (Establishment of Ward Development Projects Committees) Law 2011 And for Connected Purposes Passed: Wednesday 7 th March, 2012	Assented
8.	The year 2012 local government budget Passed: Wednesday 6 th June, 2012	Assented

9.	The year 2013 estimate Passed: 9 th January, 2013	Assented
10.	A bill for a law to make provisions for collection and administration of revenues due to the government of Niger State and for other connected purposes. Passed: 9 th January, 2013	Assented
11.	A Bill for A Law to Establish Niger State Drug and Hospital Consumables Management Agency 2010 Passed: Tuesday 22 nd January, 2013	Assented
12.	A bill for a law to establish Niger State Traditional Medicine Board and other matters related thereto. Passed: Wednesday 23 rd January, 2013	Assented
13.	A bill for a law to establish IBB Specialist Hospital 2011 and for matters connected therewith. Passed: 23 rd January, 2013	Assented
14.	A Bill for a Law to Amend the High Court Law of Niger State. Passed: 12 th March, 2013	Assented
15.	A Bill for a Law to Amend the Sharia Court of Appeal Law. Passed: 12 th March, 2013	Assented
16.	A Draft Bill for a Law to Establish an Advisory Council on The Exercise of Prerogative of Mercy Inn Niger State Passed: 12 th March, 2013	Assented
17	A Bill for a Law to Establish Broadcasting Corporation of Niger State Passed: 3 rd April, 2013.	Assented
18	A Bill for a Law to Establish Niger State Television Corporation Bill 2008 Passed: 3 rd April 2013.	Assented
19.	A Bill for a Law to Amend the Niger State Urban and Regional Planning and Development Board Law No. 3 of 1999 Passed: Tuesday 5 th June, 2012	Assented
20.	A Bill for a Law to Amend the District Court's Law Cap. 37 To Enlarge the Jurisdiction of The District Course and for Connected Purposes. Passed: Tuesday 5 th June, 2012	Assented
21.	A Bill for a Law to Provide for Amendment of The Local Government Law 2011 Passed: Wednesday 6 th June, 2013	Assented

22.	A Bill for a Law to Established Niger State Geographic Information System Agency and Matters Connected Therewith Passed: Thursday 25 th , July 2013	Assented
23.	A Bill for a Law to Establish Niger State University of Education Law 2013 and for Other Connected Purposes. Passed: Wednesday 11 th September, 2013	Assented
24	A Draft Bill on The Niger State Vision 30:20:20 Passed: Thursday 12 th September, 2013	Assented
25	A Bill for a Law to Amend the Niger State Pilgrims Welfare Commission Law 2009 And for Connected Purposes. Passed: 12 th September, 2013	Assented
26	A Bill for a Law for The Establishment of Minna Airport City Agency: Thursday 21 st November, 2013	Assented
27.	Niger State 2030 Supplementary Appropriation Bill. Passed: 5 th December, 2013	Assented
28.	Niger State Appropriation Bill 2014 Passed: Tuesday 24 th December, 2013	Assented
29	Niger State Local Government Appropriation Bill 201 Passed: Wednesday 5 th February, 2014	Assented

Source: Niger state House of Assembly Gazette, 2011

Analysis of Bills Passed by the Niger State of Assembly

A critical analysis of the bills passed by the Niger State House of Assembly between 2007 and 2011 shows that a total of 37 bills have been passed and assented to by the Executive. While between 2011 and 2014 a total of 29 bills have been passed and assented by the Executive. From Niger state House of Assembly gazette more bills have passed by the State legislature between 2007 and 2011 compared to the total numbers of bills passed between 2011 and 2015. Thus, it can be said therefore that the legislature in the Niger state House of Assembly between 2007 and 2011 were more effective than the legislature in the Niger state House of Assembly between 2011 and 2015.

Conclusion

The legislatures in Africa are victims of the dynamics of historical exigencies. They were created to be weak, and the legacies of legislatures' subservience to executive control have remained entrenched since independence. Post-independence political and constitutional developments in Nigeria further reinforced the

weakness. Under the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides for a federation with bicameral model known as the National Assembly consist of House of Senate and House of Representatives but the states are unicameral systems known as the House of Assembly in each state of the federation, while a legislative Council exists in the local governments, performing essentially the same functions. The Niger state House of Assembly between 2007 and 2011 has passed 37 bills which have been assented to by the Executive. While between 2011 and 2014 it has passed 29 bills which was assented by the Executive.

Recommendations

From our study in order to make the present legislature in the legislature in the Niger state House of Assembly between 2015 and 2019 to be effective in terms of law making we suggest that

The legislature should be insulated from the influence of the executive. This influence, in most cases, is counter-productive as it is meant to sway the minds of the legislators from the serious business of law-making.

Law-makers should be more responsible and responsive to their responsibilities. The excuse that is often given that bills take time to go through the legislature because of lack of quorum is not tenable anywhere in the world.

Moreover, programmes of capacity building for the legislatures in the Niger state House of Assembly need to be expanded and reinforced in line with the needs and peculiarities of individual legislators as well as international reform guidelines and shared experiences (not 'best practices').

Lastly, active collaboration and partnerships between the legislatures on the one hand and the civil society organizations and donor agencies on the other hand can be mutually rewarding in the efforts towards consolidating the nascent and emerging democratic ethos in Nigeria.

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