

The Legislature and Economic Recession in Nigeria: an Assessment of the Role of the National Assembly

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Abstract

This paper argues that the legislature in every democratic setting plays a stabilizing role on the economic progress of the state. It not only aids the consolidation of democracy but also ensures economic development within the state through the process of law-making, appropriation exercise, oversight functions amongst others. Thus, the fundamental functions of the legislature need to be overhauled whenever occasions of economic instability surfaces. This unarguably is the case with the recent economic recession that bedeviled the Nigerian state exemplified in high rates of inflation, unemployment, currency devaluation and general decrease in standard of living. One is therefore instigated to question the fundamental responsibility of the Nigerian National Assembly in the face of daunting economic retrogression. Given the above, the paper is interested in studying how well the National Assembly has employed its Power of the Purse in regulating both fiscal and monetary policies especially as they affect the current downturn in the Nigerian economy irrespective of the legislative-executive faceoff which is thwarting the economic progress of the Nigerian state. In doing this, the paper relies on both primary and secondary sources of data. The judgmental sampling technique was employed to gather data from 250 sampled population drawn from both the staff and elected National Assembly members. The structural functional approach was used for theoretical assessment of the subject matter. Major findings of the paper show that intra-party brawls, executive/legislative face-off, low capacity of legislators, politicization of legislative aides and lack of fiscal federalism are parts of the harbingers of the economic meltdown. The paper recommends that to eschew future trends of economic recession, the legislature should employ institutional measures to adequately check the complacency of governmental institutions and agencies while stemming other setbacks like intra-party crises amongst others.

Keywords:

Economic recession,
Legislature, National
assembly, Fiscal
federalism,
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Background to the Study

The legislature is an important institution of government, with the function arguably at the very heart of democracy; encompassing law making, representation, interface between the citizenry and the government and offering most comprehensive platform for citizens' participation in governance irrespective of gender, ethnic, religious and ideological leanings (Ojo and Omotola, 2014). As Jibril (2004) puts it:

...Parliament is not a Congress of Ambassador from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates, but Parliament is a deliberative Assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole, where the local purposes not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole.

Implicitly, the citizens are the direct stakeholders in the enterprise and institution of the Legislature. Writing on the critical role of the legislature and its place in the affairs of men, Anyaegbunam (2003) opined that 'Corporate deliberation, decision making and execution have remained prominent features of man's Community relationship for ages'. There is however, avalanche of scholarship efforts on the legislature, yet this cannot be said of the Nigerian Legislature. The presumption has much to do with the inchoate development and growth of the legislative arm of government in Nigerian, which hitherto was characterized with history of disruptions, and re-establishments, occasioned by political upheaval, military interregnum and uncertainties, being the major casualties of military intrigues.

Whether or not their activities are besieged with occasional setbacks, it is pertinent to submit that the legislature has some fundamental role to play in the development of any nation's economy. This is hinged on the fact that their oversight functions, lawmaking responsibility and budget appropriations empowers them to make some significant contributions to economic development of the state. Extending this assumption further, the legislature is the epitome and the very essence of good government as claimed by Ake (1996) who further observed that the potency of the legislators lies in its ability to ensure that decision making powers rest with the populace and the will of the people is translated to government policies.

In the same vein Aiyede and Njoku (2014) opined that the Legislature is a key institution of democratic governance, a key institution of representation and accountability in the running of the affairs of the State. That is in fact, the very essence of its establishment, in order words, the legislature impliedly is the very reason, why the state is created, perhaps deriving from the very origin of the modern State.

Writing in this order, Mukherjee and Ramaswanny (2015:193) and re-enacting that great mind of Hobbes in the Leviathan notes:

Since the first law of nature enjoined individuals to seek peace, the only way to attain it was through a covenant leading to the establishment of a state, individuals, surrendered all their powers through a contract to a third party who was not a party to the contract but nevertheless received all the powers that were surrounded. The Commonwealth was constituted when the

multitude of individuals were united in one person when every person said to the other, "I Authorize and give my Right of Governing myself, to this Man, or this Assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy Right to him and Authorize all his Actions in like manner (2015 :120).

The legislature by all intent and purposes is established to be the very basis of good governance, knowing too well that Monarchies and Aristocracies of antiquities had wrought a lot of pains, hardship and discomfort to the subjects. No wonder military dictatorships or one man rule, anywhere it still exists remain an aberration in governance. The Legislature by its very existence is meant to checkmate the excesses of the Executives by ensuring that the leaders (the executives) conform to set of rules, guarantee basic equality with every other member. This is because the sovereign must treat all the individuals equally in matters of justice and levying taxes as Hobbes had supposed. In the words of Hobbes, Justice means equality in treatment and equality in rights (Ake, 1996).

Hence, one can culpably ensnare the legislature in times of economic recession and general reduction in economic activities proven by wide-scale poverty, unemployment, decrease in standard of living, unchecked inflation, grossly devalued currency amongst others. In fact, the thesis of this paper rests on critically appraising the task, pain and gains of the legislature in the recent economic recession that bedeviled the Nigerian economic landscape beginning from the 2nd quarter of the 2014. Apparently, save for the intra and interparty wrangling; avoidable executive-legislative faceoff; late passage of appropriation bills and poor follow-ups after oversight functions; the Nigerian economy would have been managed in such a way that global oil price slump and any other potential factor would not have made it to delve into full-blown economic recession and near-depression.

Against this backdrop, this paper intends to critically assess the role of the legislature in quelling the economic recession currently bedeviling the Nigerian state and ensuring overall economic development. In doing this, this paper is parted into four sections: the general introduction, conceptual and theoretical explorations, data presentations and analysis and summary and recommendations.

Research Questions

Arising from the above introduction, the paper raises the following research questions:

- i. What is the relationship between legislative oversight and economic recession in Nigeria?
- ii. How has the National Assembly effectively ensured national development by their *right over the purse?*

Research Hypotheses

This paper intends to test the following hypothesis

- Ho.** There is no significant relationship between the opinion about the legislature and economic recession in Nigeria and educational qualification
- Hi.** There is significant relationship between the opinion about the legislature and economic recession in Nigeria and educational qualification

Conceptual and Theoretical Exploration

Economic Recession

Economic recession like most social science terms has got no universally accepted definition. To Biafore (2009), it refers to a “slowing in economic growth”. The period in view showcases an economy where jobs are lost in their numbers, much money chase few goods and currencies are largely devalued, among other harsh economic indices. It is in the light of these realities that Igwe (2005) has observed that recession refers to:

A backward march, or reversal, of the economy over a relatively long term, believed by some economists to be part of a regular cyclical phenomenon of decline which must inevitably follow some periods of sustained growth or “over-heating”. There is no scientific basis for the cyclical theory of Recession, for such a theory must equally embrace a Recession in other spheres of existence, including the individual, family, group, as well as national and international. Recessions are an unavoidable crisis of any imperfect or unjust economic systems, such as the variants of capitalism, including unequal competitions, rivalries and mutual struggles, often develop a negative character, one of whose many consequences can be a Recession.

In economic studies, “recession is referred to as a general slowdown in economic activity over a sustained period of time, or a business cycle contraction” (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/recession>). Economists thus argue seriously that during recessions, many macroeconomic indicators vary in a similar way.

Hence, production as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment, investment spending, capacity utilization, household incomes and business profits all fall during recessions. On the effects of recession on the state of a nation’s economy, Biafore (2009) notes that while compounding the problem of the economy, “recessions lead to lower interest rates on savings because the Federal Reserve Board cuts the federal funds rate to boost the economy. Worse yet, layoffs are common during recession”. This aspect of course explains the massive retrenchment of bank workers in Nigeria recently. On the predictability or timing of the occurrence (of recessions), scholars are not fully agreed on whether it is predictable or not.

To Biafore (2009) “the problem is, recessions are difficult to recognize when they arrive and almost impossible to predict. In fact, it takes a while, sometimes a long while, to find out that a recession has already began”. During the 2007- 2009 recession though, economists identified a number of possible predictors before the world economy went fully slow. These predictors included a staggering fall in the mortgage market, a significant stock market (investment) drop, with that of Nigeria almost gone comatose, inverted yield curve and three-month change in the unemployment rate and initial jobless claims, among others. From the above, economic recession could emanate from poor management of the economy of the state, lack of economic diversification, inefficient legislation on taxation, lack of saving, collusion between the legislature and the executive and the inability of the legislature to pass bills which can steer the wheels of economic development like the Petroleum Industrial Bill in Nigeria.

Meanwhile, the economic recession being witnessed by Nigeria in recent times, stems from the turmoil in global commodity markets, witnessed in the second half of 2014 which brought their full weight to bear on the Nigerian economy in 2015. Oil prices fell 66.8% from \$114/barrel recorded in June 2014, to \$38.0 by December 2015. Prices fell even further in 2016, to \$32.6 as at 3rd February, 2016. Beyond commodity markets, recent developments in the global economy created a trifecta of headwinds that the nation has to contend with (NBS, 2017).

Legislature

Writing on the concept of legislature, Ghai (2016) noted that the term is generic, which for him means a body which legislates. According to him, the term “leg” means law and “lature” the place, etymologically legislature means a place for law-making. Another term, which is used synonymously as legislature is “parliament” the word is derived from the French word “parley” which means to “talk” or to discuss and deliberate. “Parliament” therefore means the place where deliberations are held. According to Ghai, (2016:2):

The legislature is that organ of government which passes the laws of the government. It is the agency which has the responsibility to formulate the will of the state and vest it with legal authority and force. In simple words, the legislature is that organ of the government which formulates laws. Legislature enjoys a very special and important position in every democratic state. It is the Assembly of the elected representatives of the people and represents national public opinion and power of the people.

This definition of the legislature by Ghai no doubt is revealing and encompassing as it tends to capture all the gamut of legislatures, embracing representation and law making as basic characteristics. Yet the definition appears to have vested so much power to the legislature to the point of ignoring the place of the legislature in a constitutional government or regimes. In this regime the constitution is the grand norms. The legislature as defined by Ghai may be defining its archetype of the parliament of United Kingdom; which does not have written constitution.

Meanwhile, in a constitutional government, the legislature is not supreme, rather it is the constitution. As a result of the supremacy of the constitution Section 1 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended provides that, “this constitution is supreme and its provisions shall have binding force on all authorities, including the legislature (sic) and persons throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria”

Commenting on this constitutional provision, Professor Jadesola O. Akande (2000:16-17) opined that:

The constitution is the grand norm, that is, the fundamental law. Thus any law which is inconsistent with the provisions of the constitution is to the extent of that inconsistency null and void. All other legislation take their hierarchy from the provision of the constitution. By the provision of the constitution, the laws made by the National Assembly are next, followed by those made by the Houses of Assembly. Thus, all laws made by Parliament are secondary to the constitution even though parliament has the power to amend the constitution.

It is in recognition of the pre-eminence of the constitution that Anyaegbuanam (2003:25) opined that, “the constitution is the supreme law of the land. It enjoys overriding superiority over all laws and institutions within its jurisdiction. The supremacy of the constitution demands that it subordinate all the laws, policies and initiatives to its prescribed limits and procedure. Writing on the concept legislature Simbine, (2010:2) noted that:

The Legislature is an assemblage of the representatives of the people elected under a legal framework to make laws for the good health of the society. It is also defined as “the institutional body responsible for making laws for a nation and one through which the collective will of the people or part of it is articulated, expressed and implemented.

Arising from the above is that the legislature which is constituted by the representative of the people and acts as their agent is the very essence of liberal democratic tradition. Theoretically, political pundits and commentators acknowledge the legislature as one of the major indicators of democratic indices amongst other indicators like political parties, periodic elections and freedom to express fundamental human rights.

The legislature is considered as the symbol of sovereignty of a state and therefore represents the first independent organ of the state power. It was to this that Egwu, (2005:19) defined the legislature “as a body of persons in a country or a state vested with power to make, alter and repeal laws in the realm of representation and the state of sovereignty. With the instrument of the constitution as a tool for achieving the will of the state, the National Assembly is legally charged with the responsibility of driving development within the state. This therefore shows a manifest function of the lacuna of the Nigerian national assembly in the face of the daunting economic recession. This of course presents the premise of the discourse of this paper.

Theoretical Framework

Various theories abound that could be adopted as framework upon which the literature could be built, these theories range from; Structural Functionalism, Systems theory and theory of checks and balances. All these theories have certain intellectual relevance to the subject-matter but for the sake of application to the case study, the Structural-Functional approach is considered most appropriate. User Agreement Privacy Policy Privacy Policy User Agreement Although structural functionalism predated systems theory it still presupposes a "systems" view of the political world. Similarities link functionalism to systems analysis.

Basic Theoretical Assumptions of the Theory

According to Merton (1968), the social system is the prior causal reality and the system parts are functionally interrelated, all social phenomena have functions for the larger social system. Concerning these functions, the theory has the following assumptions:

1. They may be functional for the whole system or only part of it
2. There may be functional alternatives
3. There may be multiple consequences from particular phenomena, The and finally
4. Dysfunctions account for tension and change in the system
5. Approaches assume that systems can be identified and specified, that the boundaries are measurable

6. They cannot explain the existence of societies in the first place
7. It cannot easily explain rapid Social change and social conflict
8. Explanations can be tautological

Susser (1992) writes that both focuses on input—output analysis, both see political systems as striving for homeostasis or equilibrium, and both consider feedback in their analysis. Yet functionalism is significantly different. Applying Functional Analysis to the Study of Politics according to Michael G. Smith (1966), four approaches are useful in the comparative study of political systems: process, content, function, and form. Studies based on process and content face huge obstacles.

In developed countries, the processes of government are "elaborately differentiated, discrete and easy to identify," but in simpler societies, the same processes are rarely differentiated and discrete". They occur within the context of institutional activities that are difficult to analyze for political processes. The more "differentiated and complex" the government processes, the "greater the range and complexity" of content. Since content and process are "interdependent and derivative," they require independent criteria for studying government. The functional approach does not have the same limitations as process and content, It defines government as all those activities that influence "the way in which authoritative decisions are formulated and executed for a society" (Easton, 1957).

From this definition, various schemata were developed to study the functions of government. Easton listed five modes of action as elements of all political systems: *legislation*, *administration*, *adjudication*, the *development* of demands, and the *development* of support and *solidarity*. These were grouped as input and output requirements of political systems. An Example of the Structural Functional Approach and systems Theory Structural functionalism analysis consists of nothing more than stating empirical questions in one of the following forms or some combination of them: (a) What observable uniformities (or patterns) exist in the phenomenon under study? (b) What conditions result because of the phenomenon? (c) What processes occur as a result of the conditions? The first question asks: What structures are involved? The second: What functions have resulted because of the structures? Asked in the opposite direction, different results could occur: What functions exist? What structures result from the functions?

The Relevance of the Theory to the Paper

Essentially, the legislature as a symbol of true democracy makes laws which the executive is under obligation to implement. The judiciary is legally called upon in the determination of civil rights and obligations to interpret the laws. This system of government understands from the onset that powers may be abused and therefore introduced a system that guarantees checks and balances amongst the three arms of government. Therefore, through the power of interpretation, the courts can declare laws made by the legislature unconstitutional, null and void and of no effect whatsoever.

On the other hand, the legislature has the power of oversight over the execution and administration of laws by the executive. The executive holds the powers of investigation, coercion and implementation of laws and can as well use these powers to call the legislature

and judiciary to order. In other words, it implies that the three organs of government according to Onyekpere, (2012) should be kept apart from each other in the interest of individual liberty and it is a perfect system created for the overall benefit of the citizens.

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 (Johari, 1989:280). The principal function of the executive is to execute laws, orders, rules, regulations, decrees, prevention of the breaches of law, rendering a host of social welfare services and meting punishment to the delinquents so as to maintain peace and good government. On the other hand, in spite of its primary function of legislating laws, amending or repealing existing laws, the legislature serves a number of overlapping objectives and purposes to improve the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of governmental operations; evaluate programmes and performance; detect and prevent poor administration, waste, abuse, arbitrary and capricious behaviour, or illegal and unconstitutional conduct; protect civil liberties and constitutional rights; inform the general public and ensure that executive policies reflect the public interest; gather information to develop new legislative proposals or to amend existing statutes; ensure administrative compliance with legislative intent; and prevent executive encroachment on legislative authority and prerogatives encapsulates in oversight functions (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congressional_oversight).

Congressional oversight takes place when the National Assembly (the Senate and the House of Representatives) continually review the effectiveness of the executive arm in carrying out the congressional mandates through supervision, watchfulness, or review of executive actions and activities. This helps the National Assembly to establish issues and address problem areas in order to make the necessary improvements or changes to create an effective process. This legislative process brings to the knowledge of the public what the executive branch is doing, and it affords the electorates the opportunity to see what public office holders are actually doing, whether they are really serving their collective interest or not. This ultimately is the theoretical basis of the Structural-Functional theory.

Methodology

The research is a descriptive survey conducted in National Assembly and within the University of Abuja, Abuja. In gathering data for this research, the paper relies on both the primary and secondary sources of data. In view of this, information were retrieved from journal articles, conference papers, textbooks and the internet while the questionnaire was used as instrument for generating information from a drawn sample size of 250 respondents gotten from among National Assembly Staff (both legislators and staff) and the University of Abuja community. With the aid 3 research assistants, 250 questionnaires were distributed and 240 were returned representing 96% of the total response generated. The outcome of the research is descriptively presented below using statistical tools like tables, frequency and percentage distribution.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

| S/N | Variables | Options | Frequencies | Percentages (%) | Cumulative Percentage (%) |
|-----|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Sex | Male | 145 | 60.42 | 60.42 |
| | | Female | 95 | 39.58 | 100 |
| | | | 240 | | 100 |
| 2 | Age (in years) | 18-35 | 59 | 24.58 | 24.58 |
| | | 35-Above | 181 | 75.42 | 100 |
| | | | 240 | | 100 |
| 3 | Religion | Christianity | 109 | 45.42 | 45.42 |
| | | Islam | 105 | 43.75 | 89.17 |
| | | Others | 26 | 10.83 | 100 |
| | | | 240 | | 100 |
| 4 | Educational Qualification | No Formal Education | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | ND/NCE | 32 | 13.33 | 13.33 |
| | | HND/BSC | 186 | 77.50 | 90.83 |
| | | MSC/PHD | 22 | 9.17 | 100 |
| | | | 240 | | 100 |
| 5 | Occupation | Legislator | 82 | 34.17 | 34.17 |
| | | NASS Staff | 92 | 38.33 | 68.50 |
| | | Academia | 66 | 27.50 | 100 |
| | | | 240 | | 100 |

Source: Field Research, 2017

Table 1 Discussions

From table 1 above, 60.42% of the respondents are males while 39.58% of the respondents are females. More so, 24.58% of the respondents are between the age-bracket of 18-35 while 75.42% are 35 years and above. Again, religion of the respondents shows that 45.42% are Christians and 43.75% are Muslims while 10.83 indicated other religions.

In addition, 0% of the respondents agreed that they have no formal education, while 13.33% of the respondents indicated that they have ND/NCE, 77.50% submitted too that they have acquired HND/BSC and 9.17% of the respondents said they have got MSC/PHD. Finally, 34.17% of the respondents are legislators, while 38.33% are National Assembly staff and 27.50% of the respondents are extracted from the academia.

Table 2: Questions Relating to the Role of Legislature in Economic Recession in Nigeria

| S/N | Variables | Options | Frequencies | Percentages% | Cumulative Percentage% |
|-----|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Opinion about the meaning of lawmaking and legislative oversight. | Yes No Undecided | 232 7 1 240 | 96.67 2.92 0.41 | 96.67 99.59 100 100 |
| 2 | Opinion about the meaning of economic recession. | Yes No Undecided | 230 2 5 240 | 95.83 0.83 2.08 | 95.83 96.66 100 100 |
| 3 | Opinion about the relationship between legislative oversight and economic development in Nigeria. | Yes No Undecided | 183 50 7 240 | 76.25 20.83 2.92 | 76.25 97.08 100 100 |
| 4 | Opinion about whether the inability of the legislature to pass PIB, whistle blowing and repealing of land use act led to the economic recession. | Yes No Undecided | 190 41 8 240 | 79.13 17.08 3.33 | 79.13 96.21 100 100 |
| 5 | Opinion on whether lack of fiscal federalism and resource control contributed to economic recession. | Yes No Undecided | 220 20 0 240 | 91.67 81.33 0 | 91.67 100 100 100 |
| 6 | Opinion on whether executive-legislative faceoff and internal party wrangling affect legislative <i>right over the purse</i> . | Yes No Undecided | 180 39 21 240 | 75 16.25 8.75 | 75 91.25 100 100 |
| 7 | Opinion on whether the failure of the National Assembly to keep faith with the core mandate of legislation, <i>control of the purse</i> and budget padding led to the current economic recession. | Yes No Undecided | 209 31 0 240 | 87.08 12.92 0 | 87.08 100 100 100 |
| 9 | Opinion on whether inadequate legislation on taxation and poor saving of excess crude liquidity led to economic recession. | Yes No Undecided | 207 30 3 240 | 86.25 12.5 1.25 | 86.25 98.75 100 100 |
| 10 | Opinion on whether the National Assembly contributes significantly to the current economic recession | Yes No Undecided | 142 87 11 240 | 59.17 36.25 4.58 | 59.17 95.42 100 100 |

Source: Field Research, 2017

Table 2 Discussions

From the table 2 above, 96.67% of the respondents agreed that understand the meaning of lawmaking and legislative oversight while, 2.92% responded negatively and 0.41 remained undecided. However, 95.83% of the respondents submitted that they know concept of economic recession while 0.83% agreed they did not know and 2.08% remained undecided. In addition, 76.25% of the respondents agreed that there is relationship between legislative oversight and economic development while 20.83% disagreed and 2.92 remained undecided. Also, 79.13% of the respondents agreed that the inability of the legislature to pass the PIB, whistle blowing act and repeal the land use act are contributory factors to the economic recession while 17.08% disagreed and 13.33 remained undecided.

Moreover, 91.67% of the respondents affirmed that lack of legislation on fiscal federalism and resource control also contributed to the economic recession while 81.33% of the respondents disagreed and 0% remained undecided. Furthermore, 75% of the respondents opined that executive-legislative faceoff and internal party wrangling within the APC affect the legislative fundamental right over the purse, while 16.25% of the respondents answered to the negative and 8.75% remained undecided. 87.08% of the respondents submitted that the failure of the National Assembly to keep faith with the core mandate of legislation, control of the purse and budget padding led to the current economic recession, 12.92% disagreed in this regard while 0% remained undecided.

More still, 13.33% of the respondents said that the performance of the National Assembly is influenced by national interests; patriotism, representation and service delivery and 79.17% disagreed in this regard while 7.5% remained undecided. Most of the respondents affirmed that inadequate legislation on taxation and poor saving of excess crude liquidity led to economic recession with 86.25% affirming this while 12.5% disagreed on this and 1.25% remained undecided. Finally, the opinion on whether the National Assembly contributes significantly to the current economic recession was supported by 59.17% and 36.25% while 4.58% remained undecided on it.

Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis stated before now spread into null and alternate hypothesis and they are stated and tested below:

Table 3: On the relationship between the legislature and economic recession in Nigeria

| Response | Educational Qualification of Respondents | Total | | |
|-----------|--|---------|---------|-----|
| | | HND/BSC | MSC/PHD | |
| Yes | 38 | 73 | 41 | 152 |
| No | 10 | 20 | 19 | 49 |
| Undecided | 17 | 13 | 9 | 39 |
| Total | 65 | 106 | 69 | 240 |

Source: Field Research, 2017

Ho. There is no significant relationship between the opinion about the legislature and economic recession in Nigeria and educational qualification

Hi. There is significant relationship between the opinion about the legislature and economic recession in Nigeria and educational qualification

The chi-square is calculated below:

$$Fe = \frac{RT \times CT}{GT}$$

Where:

RT = Row Total

CT = Column Total

GT = Grand (or overall) Total

The Chi-square (χ^2) calculated value is obtained using the formula:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \left(\frac{Fo - Fe}{Fe} \right)^2$$

Chi-Square Table

| O | E | (O-E) ² | (O-E) ² /E |
|-------|-------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 38 | 41.17 | 10.05 | 0.24 |
| 73 | 94.64 | 468.29 | 4.95 |
| 41 | 43.7 | 7.29 | 0.17 |
| 10 | 13.27 | 10.69 | 0.81 |
| 20 | 21.64 | 2.69 | 0.12 |
| 19 | 14.09 | 24.12 | 1.71 |
| 17 | 10.56 | 41.47 | 3.93 |
| 13 | 17.23 | 17.89 | 1.03 |
| 9 | 11.21 | 4.88 | 0.44 |
| Total | | | 13.4 |

Source: Field Research, 2017

χ^2 Calculated = 13.4

χ^2 Table Value = 5.99

From the above, the chi-square calculated is more than the chi-square table value. We therefore reject Ho which is the null hypothesis and accept Hi which is the alternate hypothesis. The interpretation is that there is significant relationship between the opinion about the legislature and economic recession in Nigeria and educational qualification of respondents

Major Findings

From the above data presentation and analysis it is apt to posit that the Nigerian National Assembly has not been keeping faith with its core mandate of effective legislation on budget appropriation, economic development, oversight function, economic diversification, taxation and excess crude savings amongst others. It therefore makes the following conclusions:

- i. There is relationship between legislative oversight and economic recession in Nigeria.
- ii. The National Assembly has not effectively ensured national development by their *right over the purse*.
- iii. Poor savings overtime has affected economic development and encouraged economic recession in the last 10 years.
- iv. The National Assembly is partisan in terms of its role of law making, representations and oversight duties among others.
- v. Bribery, budget padding and partisanship contribute to the recent economic recession in Nigeria.

Recommendations

With the above conclusion in mind, the research makes the following recommendations:

- i. The three arms of government viz: the legislature, judiciary and executive should effectively ensure and act in accordance with the provisions of the rule of law, principles of checks and balances and the ethics of separation of power as these will aid them in eschewing whatever form of faceoff between or among them;
- ii. Since the National Assembly is directly responsible when there is no meaningful economic progress, they should strive, through their power over the purse to effectively drive national economic development by equitably allocating resources to areas of urgent needs;
- iii. The National Assembly should make legislations that would direct savings of returns made from excess crude sales; this will of course avoid the unnecessary sharing of excess crude by Governors and government agencies.
- iv. For the sake of patriotism, the National Assembly should conduct its lawmaking, representation and oversight duties without recourse to party affiliation, ethnic and religious sentiments as these are always harbingers of economic and political ruin.
- v. Bribery, budget padding and evidence of party sentiment should be criminalized when they form threat to national development. This will go a long way in instilling sanity, transparency and unity of purpose amongst members of the National Assembly.

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