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The Role of the Nigerian National Assembly in Conflict Management and Peacebuilding: A Legislative Perspective

George Thompson Sekibo; Iroye Samuel Opeye; & Ojo Olusola Matthew

Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, National Open University of Nigeria

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Abstract

This research explores the involvement of the legislature in the processes of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Recognized as the cornerstone of democratic governance in all democratic states, the legislature holds the crucial responsibility of enacting laws that promote peace, order, and effective governance. In fulfilling its constitutional duties, the legislature often steps in to address gaps in key areas essential for the sustenance of democracy. This study specifically examines the Nigerian National Assembly's influential role in conflict management and peacebuilding, set against Nigeria's complex socio-political landscape, characterized by deep ethno-religious, cultural, and economic diversity. The main objectives were to assess the impact of inclusive decision-making, legislative actions, legal frameworks, and the adherence to democratic principles on the country's efforts at managing conflicts and promoting peace. Utilizing a qualitative research approach, this study draws on secondary data to highlight the significant contributions made by the National Assembly between 2006 and 2015 under Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Umaru Musa Yar'adua/Goodluck Jonathan. The research identifies critical issues addressed through inclusive legislative processes, such as the controversial six-year tenure extension proposal by Obasanjo, the constitutional gap concerning presidential power transition, the government-labour dispute over the 2012 Anti-Subsidy Removal Strikes, and the Niger Delta Militancy Amnesty. It concludes that one of the National Assembly's primary functions is to uphold democratic norms, which significantly influences its role in managing conflict. The presence and actions of the legislature were instrumental in preventing potential economic and political crises during these administrations. Ultimately, the Nigerian National Assembly has played a pivotal role in advancing conflict management and peacebuilding through thoughtful legislative actions and sound resolutions.

Keywords: Conflict Management, Legislature, Nigerian National Assembly, Peacebuilding.

Introduction

Conflict and peace are fundamental components of human society, and managing conflict while fostering sustainable peace are crucial responsibilities for governments worldwide. Effective conflict resolution and peacebuilding mechanisms are essential for promoting stability and development, particularly in countries like Nigeria, which is marked by diverse ethnic, religious, and socio-economic challenges. The legislature, as a vital branch of government, plays an instrumental role in shaping policies, passing laws, and overseeing measures that address conflicts and promote peace. This paper examines the role of the Nigerian National Assembly in conflict management and peacebuilding.

As the representative body of the people in a democracy, the legislature has the potential to be an effective institution for managing conflicts (Egobueze, Ogele, Ajunwo, 2020). Taylor (2005) in Kaa, Wosu & Banigo (2021) argues that legislatures are key to ensuring pluralism, protecting minority interests, and facilitating the proper functioning of government. By taking a comprehensive approach to contentious national issues, the legislature, through its legislative actions and committee processes, contributes significantly to conflict management and peacebuilding. It promotes inclusive decision-making, fosters the development of sound legal frameworks, and upholds democratic principles, ensuring the representation of diverse stakeholders' voices. Additionally, the Nigerian National Assembly utilizes institutions like the Public Complaints Commission (Ombudsman) and its committees on Ethics, Code of Conduct, and Public Petitions to address grievances and violations of citizens' rights, playing a crucial role in resolving administrative injustices and promoting peace within Nigerian society.

Statement of the Problem

Sections 4(1) and 4(7) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) delineate the legislative powers at both the federal and state levels. In contexts where institutions are frail, equipping legislatures with the ability to manage conflict and foster peace becomes an essential aspect of democratic functioning (Kaa et al., 2021).

Under the leadership of Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, and Goodluck Jonathan, Nigeria faced considerable challenges stemming from political unrest and conflicts. Critical issues, such as debates surrounding tenure extension and the transfer of power from the president to the vice president, were prominent during these periods. Furthermore, the Niger Delta region witnessed heightened unrest, with militant groups like MEND demanding a larger share of oil revenues and advocating for environmental justice. The 2011 general elections were marked by extensive violence, particularly in the northern states, where opposition supporters contested Goodluck Jonathan's electoral victory, leading to over 800 deaths and the displacement of thousands.

Throughout the administrations of Obasanjo, Yar'Adua, and Jonathan, the National Assembly played an essential role in managing conflicts and advancing peacebuilding efforts, initiating various reforms and programs aimed at addressing national challenges. This paper, therefore, aims to explore the role of the Nigerian Legislature in conflict management and peacebuilding, with a focused examination of the National Assembly's contributions.

Research Questions

i. In what ways do legislative actions help in reducing conflicts and fostering long-lasting peace in Nigeria?
ii. How significant is the role of the Nigerian National Assembly in supporting peacebuilding initiatives across the country?
iii. What influence does the Nigerian legislature have on national peace efforts?

iv. What obstacles does the Nigerian National Assembly encounter when promoting legislative peacebuilding measures?

Objectives of the Study

i. To assess the effectiveness of legislative actions in conflict resolution and the promotion of sustainable peace in Nigeria.
ii. To evaluate the role of the Nigerian National Assembly in advancing peacebuilding within the country.
iii. To analyze the impact of the Nigerian legislature on national peace efforts.
iv. To investigate the challenges the Nigerian National Assembly faces in advancing legislative peacebuilding strategies.

Research Methodology

This research adopted a qualitative approach, relying on secondary data for analysis. The method focuses on reviewing existing literature, documents, and data to extract valuable insights into a specific research topic or question (Fink, 2014). Unlike more traditional literature reviews, which may involve gathering a wide range of sources and employing extensive data collection methods, a desk-based review primarily utilizes available published materials that are directly relevant to the study. This method is particularly fitting for examining the role of the legislature in conflict management and peacebuilding, as it allows for an in-depth exploration of the legislative functions involved in preventing and managing major conflicts that could otherwise lead to national crises.

Conceptual Analysis

- **Conflict Management**: Conflict management refers to the use of various processes, tools, and skills to address disagreements and disputes in a constructive and respectful manner. This involves resolving conflicts collaboratively through effective communication strategies, such as active listening and assertive speech.
- **Legislature**: The legislature is a body of elected representatives that crafts laws intended to promote good governance within a nation. It consists of members drawn from various constituencies.
- **Nigerian National Assembly**: The Nigerian National Assembly is the legislative institution responsible for lawmaking in Nigeria. It operates as a bicameral legislature, consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives.
- **Peacebuilding**: Peacebuilding encompasses actions taken to create or sustain peace, particularly in areas affected by conflict.

March and Olsen's "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life"

In their influential work "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life" (March & Olsen, 1984), the authors emphasized that traditional political theories often treat politics as a reflection of society, viewing political events as the outcome of individual behaviors driven by self-interest, historical factors, and resource allocation. Parliaments, in any democratic system, play a crucial role in bridging the gap between the electorate and the executive, acting as intermediaries in the political process. Well-structured political institutions are key to institutionalizing these functions, as they shape political outcomes by influencing the power dynamics and strategies of political actors, including those in the National Assembly (Hall, 1986; Adetiba & Asuelime, 2018).

According to March and Olsen (1984), political institutions, shaped by historical factors, establish the framework within which rules and operating procedures are embedded in a political system. The more deeply entrenched these elements are, the better they explain the behavior and performance of institutions. In this context, the accountability of the legislature is vital for the effective functioning of the National Assembly. Regardless of political affiliation, the legislature represents the interests of the people. This highlights the centrality of accountability in maintaining a well-functioning government.
Accountability involves holding elected representatives accountable for their actions and decisions. It is the responsibility of parliament to ensure transparency, ethical conduct, and accountability within the government. However, in Nigeria, elected representatives have often been criticized for their lack of accountability, with scholars like Alabi (2009) and Wapmuk (2017) highlighting a consistent trend of institutional weakness.

Overview of the Nigerian National Assembly: The Legislature

The Nigerian National Assembly serves as the principal legislative body responsible for lawmaking in the Fourth Republic of Nigeria (Samuel, 2019). Established under Section 47 of the Nigerian Constitution (Federal Government of Nigeria, 1999, in Toyin, 2020), it operates as a bicameral legislature, comprising a Senate and a House of Representatives. The lawmaking powers of the National Assembly are explicitly outlined in Sections 4(1) and 58 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended). Its structure is modeled after the U.S. Federal Congress (Toyin, 2020), and it operates out of Abuja, the seat of the Nigerian government.
The legislature is an essential component of any democracy, functioning as the body responsible for creating laws and reflecting the sovereignty of a nation (Nwabueze, 2007). Legislators are viewed as representatives of the people, playing a key role in democratic governance (Egobueze, 2020). As Okosi (2010) and Benjamin (2021) argue, the legislature acts as the institution through which the collective will of the people is articulated and enacted. Elected members represent the interests of the population from their respective senatorial districts and constituencies, holding significant influence over public policy (Egobueze, 2020).
The National Assembly is central to establishing legal and institutional frameworks that promote transparency and accountability in public service (Toyin, 2020). Onwu (2023) asserts that the legislature emerged out of a need to ensure government accountability. Its primary functions include lawmaking, representation, and oversight, all of which are essential to ensuring the government's actions align with public interests. Through legislative measures, the National Assembly shapes the legal, economic, social, and political direction of the country (Toyin, 2020). The legislature also plays a vital role in monitoring the executive's implementation of laws, reinforcing its role as a check on executive power.

Broad Roles/Functions of the Nigerian National Assembly

In addition to lawmaking, the Nigerian National Assembly holds several critical functions. These include ratifying treaties, amending the constitution, managing public finances, conducting investigations, confirming presidential nominees, and overseeing government activities (Sekibo, 2024). The legislature's work often involves collaboration with major stakeholders, civil society organizations, and experts in various fields. Engaging citizens through public hearings is key to ensuring that the legislature genuinely represents the interests of the populace (Wim, 2015). According to Sekibo (2019), public hearings provide a platform for gathering information, promoting transparency, and involving the public in decision-making processes. These hearings facilitate collaboration among legislators,

experts, and members of the executive, fostering a more informed and coordinated approach to governance.

Effective Debate and Resolutions

Debate within the National Assembly is essential for ensuring that the views of the general population are accurately represented. This process emphasizes inclusivity, ensuring that minority perspectives are heard and integrated into decision-making (Ashley, 2023). Rather than strictly adhering to majority rule, inclusive decision-making seeks to balance all interests, aiming for outcomes that reflect a broad spectrum of viewpoints. By cultivating empathy, leaders can ensure that diverse perspectives are incorporated into legislative decisions, fostering a sense of belonging and addressing the needs of all citizens (Pamela & Sheri, 2022).

In parliamentary democracies, it is crucial to balance efficiency and transparency in the legislative process to gain widespread societal support for laws. Evidence-based policy making (EBPM) is fundamental to this process, as it ensures that decisions are based on solid evidence and the needs of the population (Abraham, 2021). Public hearings are a vital aspect of this process, enabling citizens to contribute their views on proposed legislation and ensuring that government decisions genuinely represent the will of the people (Wim, 2015).

Legal Framework

A legal framework refers to the system of laws, regulations, and procedures that govern a particular domain or sector, providing the structure and guidelines for the creation, enforcement, and protection of legal rights and responsibilities (Vladan, 2022). It plays a vital role in promoting economic efficiency, safeguarding individual rights, and serving as the foundation for legal processes and services. The evolution of a legal framework is shaped by historical events, political institutions, and societal norms, adapting over time to address emerging challenges and needs. In Nigeria, the National Assembly plays a central role in developing the legal framework for conflict resolution and peacebuilding, crafting laws that support good governance and ensure compliance (Samuel, 2019). Recently, the Rivers State House of Assembly has taken an active role in conflict management, helping to stabilize the political environment (Anthony, 2016).

Challenges Faced by the National Assembly in Conflict Management and Peacebuilding

The National Assembly faces several challenges in its efforts to promote good governance and prevent conflicts. These challenges include interference from the Executive, Judiciary, and other external bodies such as religious organizations, NGOs, and civil society groups with local or international backing. Such external pressures can undermine the effective formulation of policies aimed at conflict management and peacebuilding.

National Assembly in Constitutional Reform: Tenure Elongation Under President Olusegun Obasanjo

The Presidential system in Nigeria is governed by term limits, which dictate the maximum duration a president can hold office (Section 135(2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended). These provisions also define the President's powers and the manner in which they should be exercised (Section 5). While these norms are common in democratic systems, some African leaders have attempted to bypass constitutional limits. An example occurred during President Olusegun Obasanjo's second term (1999-2007), when he sought to extend his tenure by two years in 2006. This

attempt to lengthen the presidential term ignited widespread debate, highlighting the tension between democratic consolidation and political opportunism. Scholars stress the need to respect term limits and the rule of law to maintain democratic accountability and good governance (Saliu & Muhammad, 2020). Obasanjo's bid for tenure extension faced strong opposition from various stakeholders, including the National Assembly, the media, NGOs, and civil society organizations, ultimately failing. This episode underscored the importance of adhering to constitutional limits and respecting democratic principles. Obasanjo has since advised other African leaders against pursuing similar measures, recognizing the dangers of undermining constitutional provisions (PM News Nigeria, 2022).

Lacuna in the Constitution: Power Transmission from President to Vice President

The Nigerian Constitution, like many others, outlines protocols for the transfer of power in cases of presidential incapacity or temporary unavailability. However, a significant gap exists regarding the procedures for such transitions, as illustrated by the case of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. During his prolonged illness, which required medical treatment abroad, the National Assembly had the authority to assess the situation, evaluate its impact on governance, and take necessary actions to address the leadership vacuum. Despite the prolonged absence of President Yar'Adua, there was no clear provision in the Constitution for the smooth transfer of power to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan. This ambiguity led to a leadership vacuum, resulting in governmental uncertainty, policy paralysis, and a lack of decisive action. The absence of a defined power transmission procedure caused significant disruption in the governance of the country. Though constitutionally, the Vice President was next in line, he lacked the mandate to assume presidential duties. This highlighted the need for constitutional amendments to address such gaps and ensure a seamless transition of power during unforeseen circumstances. In 2010, the National Assembly took action by amending relevant sections of the Constitution, introducing the doctrine of necessity, which enabled the smooth transfer of power to the Vice President during times of presidential incapacity.

Democratic Norms

Democratic norms encompass the implicit guidelines governing the conduct of democratic systems, such as maintaining civility between political factions, accepting election results, and tolerating dissent (Lieberman et al., 2019). Fundamental to these norms are the rule of law, freedom of speech, and respect for human rights. When these principles are upheld, they create an environment where conflicts are resolved through legal processes, open discussion, and peaceful means (Lieberman et al., 2019). Adherence to democratic values positively influences conflict management and peacebuilding efforts (Mike, 2019; Sarah, 2008; Clare, 2023). Encouraging democratic leadership within social movement organizations, which incorporates inclusive decision-making, individual and collective expression, and responsible group efforts, can facilitate conflict resolution and help prevent violence.

Legislators, as the representatives of the people, hold the responsibility of crafting, implementing, and enforcing laws that serve the citizens. They are key players in the policy-making process, setting objectives, evaluating policy options, and ensuring government accountability. A robust democratic society and its institutions increase the likelihood and effectiveness of third-party interventions in conflict resolution. Democracies and international organizations often act as mediators in such conflicts. The process of democratization reduces the chances of civil unrest, especially those arising from internal struggles for control, and this positive impact tends to be long-lasting. Maintaining a strong democracy requires active citizen participation, which can be fostered through the promotion of democratic values and the practice of internal democracy within organizations.

Conflict Management

Conflicts emerge when various individuals, groups, communities, or nations pursue goals that are incompatible or conflicting (Okogba, 2020). The underlying causes often include resource shortages, differing interests, disparities in values and principles, or a sense of marginalization by others in the pursuit of shared objectives. These conflicts may originate within an entity, leading to interpersonal, intra-group, or intranational conflicts. Alternatively, they can arise from disagreements between groups, creating intergroup or international tensions (Mlambo & Adetiba, 2019).

Conflict management, as defined by Best (2007) in Ali (2024), involves employing a variety of strategies to reduce the negative impact of conflicts. This is done by engaging the parties involved in the dispute. Often referred to as "conflict regulation," this process addresses issues at different stages of the conflict.

Toyin (2020) further defines conflict management as the use of strategies to resolve conflicts, aiming to control their intensity and mitigate their negative consequences within a group. This includes promoting cooperation, collaboration, and compromise, and striving to eliminate psychological barriers to consensus and group synergy. Conflict management typically involves techniques such as problem-solving, goal setting, resource expansion, avoidance, smoothing, compromise, authoritative control, and adjustments to human and structural factors.

Peacebuilding

Peace, as described by Ali (2024), is not only the absence of war, fear, or suffering but also signifies a state of harmonious coexistence. Ibeanu (2006), cited in Ali (2024), argues that peace is an ongoing process involving activities that promote development and reduce conflict, both within individual societies and internationally. Peace is thus more than the mere absence of violence; it also includes justice, equality, respect for human life and dignity, tolerance, a balanced ecosystem, and the attainment of inner peace and completeness.

Benjamin (2016) defines peacebuilding as efforts aimed at preventing the initiation or recurrence of violent conflict by establishing lasting peace. It addresses the root causes of violence, sets societal norms for peacefully resolving disputes, and stabilizes society politically, socially, and economically. Peacebuilding encompasses various actions by governmental and civil society entities at community, national, and global levels, working to eliminate the underlying causes of violence and ensuring that people live free from fear, want, and humiliation before, during, and after conflicts.

Peacebuilding efforts can be direct, focusing specifically on the factors that fuel or mitigate conflict, with the goal of reducing structural or direct violence. Alternatively, it may involve multi-level, multi-sector strategies that include funding, communication, coordination, and addressing sectors like governance, security, justice, and development within the society.

Conflict Management and Peacebuilding via the Ombudsman

The Nigerian National Assembly engages in conflict management and peacebuilding through the establishment of the Ombudsman, also known as the Public Complaints Commission, which operates under the Public Complaints Commission Act, CAP P37 LFN 2004. Similar to the National Assembly Service Commission and the National Institute of Legislative and Democratic Studies, the Ombudsman is directly overseen by the National Assembly, which appoints its chairman and thirty-six commissioners. The Ombudsman addresses violations of fundamental human rights, focusing on administrative injustices committed by government agencies or public organizations. Individuals who have faced rights violations can file complaints, and the Commission investigates these grievances. If

substantiated, it takes corrective measures, compelling organizations or institutions to rectify the issues. The National Assembly oversees this process, ensuring that workers' and citizens' rights are protected against government or corporate overreach.

Conflict Management and Peacebuilding through the Ethics, Code of Conduct, and Public Complaints Committee of the National Assembly

The Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Ethics, Code of Conduct, and Public Petitions play crucial roles in conflict management and peacebuilding on behalf of the National Assembly. As outlined in the Standing Orders of the Senate and House, these committees handle petitions submitted by Nigerians regarding human rights violations that have not been addressed by courts. They address numerous petitions annually, offering relief to individuals, particularly in cases involving government agencies or corporate bodies. This proactive approach not only helps resolve grievances but also contributes significantly to conflict management, furthering peacebuilding goals.

Impact of Inclusive Decision-Making in Conflict Management and Peacebuilding

The legislative body in Nigeria plays a critical role in fostering peace and managing conflicts, particularly by adopting inclusive decision-making processes. According to Rebecca (2019), the involvement of civil society representatives in legislative processes has contributed to enhancing peace frameworks in post-conflict settings. The National Assembly's involvement during the administrations of Yar'adua and Goodluck Jonathan was pivotal in resolving conflicts, notably in mediating government-labour disputes and addressing the fuel subsidy strikes. Their proactive measures, including forming committees to oversee the subsidy regime and engaging labor unions to prevent strikes, helped stabilize political dynamics and support ongoing peace efforts in the country (Anthony, 2016; Ashley, 2023). This approach not only addressed immediate conflicts but also laid the foundation for stronger governance and political stability (Andreas, 2020).

• **Study 1 - Nigeria's Third-Term Controversy - 2006**: In 2004, President Olusegun Obasanjo established a Presidential Committee to explore political reforms, including the controversial proposal for a single six-year term. The subsequent Political Reform Conference produced over 180 recommendations, but the issue of a six-year term sparked significant public backlash. When the proposal reached the National Assembly in 2006, both the House of Representatives and the Senate rejected the clause, effectively ending the third-term agenda. This event highlighted the legislature's crucial role in shaping political reforms and responding to public concerns.

Legal Frameworks Promoting Conflict Management and Peacebuilding

The National Assembly has instituted legal frameworks aimed at strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms within Nigeria. These frameworks emphasize the importance of resolving internal legislative conflicts to ensure democratic consolidation and prevent potential disruptions to national peace. Furthermore, the legal structures advocate for comprehensive strategies to counteract terrorism and other forms of violence (Rebecca, 2019).

• **Study 2 - Electoral Reforms, 2011**: Under the leadership of Yar'Adua and Jonathan, Nigeria faced significant political and ethnic tensions, which the National Assembly sought to address through electoral reforms. Amendments to the Electoral Act aimed at increasing transparency and reducing manipulation, thereby preventing post-election violence. The Justice Uwais Commission's recommendations, implemented prior to the 2011 general elections, helped improve the electoral process, contributing to a more peaceful and credible election cycle (Martin, 2020).

Democratic Norms and Their Role in Conflict Management and Peacebuilding

A democratic system must ensure political competition, inclusive participation, and civil engagement to effectively manage conflicts. According to Egobueze (2020), these elements are vital for fostering peace in both divided and less conflicted societies. Democracy has proven to be a promising conflict management tool due to its structure, which enables the resolution of social conflicts through established institutions and rules (Sisk, 2003; Abraham, 2021). The legislature has been instrumental in managing conflicts arising from political ambitions and economic interests, both within the political class and the broader society (Anthony, 2020).

• **Study 3 - Resolving the Niger Delta Crisis**: A significant priority during the Yar'Adua and Jonathan administrations was addressing the Niger Delta crisis. The National Assembly played a central role in enacting legislation and securing funding for the Niger Delta Amnesty Program, which aimed to reintegrate militants through vocational training and job creation. This initiative helped alleviate the region's militancy, improved oil production, and increased government revenues, thus contributing to peacebuilding and addressing underlying socioeconomic issues (Rita, 2011).

Pecuniary Interests and Challenges in Decision-Making

Despite the National Assembly's efforts in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, several challenges hinder effective decision-making. Among these are pecuniary interests, the protection of political party agendas, and self-interest, which often undermine the legislative process. Public hearings, although integral to democratic engagement, frequently exclude large segments of the population, focusing instead on elites and experts. This exclusion limits the inclusivity of legislative decisions and reduces the breadth of perspectives considered. Addressing these barriers and promoting adherence to the rule of law are crucial for improving democratic consolidation and minimizing conflicts within the legislature.

Conclusion

The study underscores the crucial role of the National Assembly in fostering conflict management and peacebuilding in Nigeria, especially through inclusive decision-making processes. Rebecca (2019) highlights the Assembly's contribution to post-conflict peace processes by actively involving civil society representatives and broadening stakeholder engagement, which led to the development of more effective governance and peace frameworks. During the presidencies of Yar'adua and Goodluck, the legislature played an integral role in mediating conflicts, such as resolving government-labor disputes, addressing the fuel subsidy strike, and rectifying constitutional ambiguities related to the transfer of power between the President and Vice President. The research also explores the conflict management efforts during President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration, particularly in addressing the tenure elongation issue, which had the potential to disrupt national peace and stability. The inclusive approach to conflict resolution not only resolved immediate disputes but also played a significant role in reinforcing political stability and fostering ongoing peacebuilding in the country.

Recommendations

In the process of national reconstruction and the pursuit of lasting peace, the following reforms are recommended for the National Assembly, spanning institutional, constitutional, administrative, economic, and social sectors:

1. The National Assembly should enhance its efforts to ensure broad participation in its decision-making processes. Specifically, public hearings at the zonal level should be mandated to allow a larger portion of the population to engage in conflict management and peacebuilding efforts.

2. Civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, and labor unions are crucial for shaping national policies that promote and sustain good governance. The National Assembly should actively encourage the involvement of these groups in its decision-making processes, as they serve as vital intermediaries between the legislature and the public.
3. Since National Assembly members are elected to represent their constituents, it is essential that they hold regular consultative meetings in their constituencies. This will expand the scope of participation and ensure that decision-making is more inclusive.
4. For effective national service, it is imperative to prioritize public interest over personal or political gains. National Assembly members should refrain from decisions influenced by political party agendas, regional, or ethnic considerations. This is especially important in a diverse nation like Nigeria, where decisions made should be respected and aimed at unifying the country.

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