



**Constituency Offices and Good Governance: An Assessment of the Nexus in Nigeria  
1999 - 2019**

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**Abstract**

*Military incursion into government and governance undoubtedly remains impediment to national growth and development in Nigeria. Fortunately too, the Nigerian Federation has witnessed virtually two decades of uninterrupted democracy and democratic process. However, the state still grapples with good governance cum development in infrastructures, provision of adequate primary and secondary healthcare, security of citizens' lives and property among many other human needs. This study examines the nexus between constituency offices and good governance so as to determine their relevance, accessibility and sustenance within the context of Nigeria's twenty years of uninterjected democracy particularly by the military. It adopts descriptive analysis, resting on secondary data source. Elite theory serves as its theoretical framework in order to enunciate the elements characterizing public decision-making in the context of constituency offices' structuralisation in the country. The study concludes, among other observations, that constituency offices are rarely established and where available, usually situated in personal estates as well as parliamentarians are highly dogmatic in decision-making. It therefore, recommends that stringent constitutional measure should be provided for the mandatory establishment of constituency offices in centralized locations and legislators be legally committed to be formally accountable to their constituencies and constituents on regular basis including recall process of defaulting legislators be made an easy exercise.*

**Keywords:** Constituency Offices, Personal Estate, Structuralisation

**1. Introduction**

Nigeria has undoubtedly been faced with challenges relatively to insecurity, accessing good governance by the citizens, instability as well as growth and development threatening its corporate existence. Indeed, Scholars and public opinions still considered that the hitherto colonialism and rampant militarization in governments and governance in the country have created hugely to the plethora of challenges affecting development and national security in the country.

Despite the validity of the above assertion, records essentially indicate as well that the Country has witness robust democracy and democratisation process for about two decades now, but apparently without tangible progress derived so far, and for this reason, many



Nigerians are beginning to yearn for the resurface of military regime in the political system, so as to register their disdain for bad democratic government and governance. Indeed, according to Ezenyili (2012) “there is no doubt that the transition from military to democratic government in 1999, marked a new beginning of democratic governance in Nigeria, however, Nigeria’s democracy has remained unstable since the country returned to democratic form of governance”.

Currently, Parliamentarians or National Assembly Members in the Nigeria wield so much power to themselves and operationalise same with impunity without recourse to be accountable to the people they represent, let alone seek any meaningful input from them even in matters that directly affect them (constituents). The Legislators, characterised by unfired aim and dogmatic approaches across the country, often deny the constituent-electorate access to reasonable information on public policies and possible feedback, hence, the need to evaluate the nexus between the establishment of constituency offices and good governance in the country, cannot be over emphasized. The core aim of this impact assessment is to interrogate constituency office’s establishment so as to determine the nexus and disconnection between legislators and their constituencies and constituents within the context of the framework in Nigeria.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *Conceptualization*

*Democratized Government:* Modern states are presently democratic which allows citizens’ participation in electoral process, making free choice of representatives to constitute the government, as the mechanism through which governance for the distribution of the common wealth to the citizenry, protection of lives and property amongst many other mandate are expectedly guaranteed. Democratized government, distinct from militocracy or fascism is a manifestation enthrone and enhancing the rule of law guaranteed citizen’s obedience rights and freedoms and wealth creation, as well as sustaining political participation through rights/periodic elections and national interest protection within and outside the state.

Indeed, looking at democratiseddemocratised government and governance, Attahiru (2011) affirmed that Nigerians having been searching for democracy through constitutional reforms and intricate political engineering and experimentation, spelt out in successive transition programmes, they have however been continuously disappointed, a better future for Nigeria may well depend on the nurturing of ‘people-driven’ concepts of democracy and the institutionalization of a genuine democratisationdemocratisation process. Obviously, Attahiru’s position fortifies the fundamentals in democracy defined by Abraham Lincoln (1809 - 1885) as “government of the people, by the people, for the people.” It also showcases the fact the Nigerian state and her citizens are narrow mindedly being denied the dividends of democracy by political elite despite its over two decades of resurgence. According to UNECA and Lindberg, (2009) and Diamond (2008) cited in Adejumobi (2010):



*Undemocratisation process in Africa has been many forms, and the course, trajectory, and outcomes have been mixed in the last two decades in which re-democratisation begun, the overall picture is that there has been only marginal progress on governance in Africa.*

Sadly, almost all the democratiseddemocratised governments in Africa have been contending with the challenges of good governance to the people and national security threats. Corruption has been systematically inhibited and brazenly become a norm within public institutions whose domain, regulation of the nation's common wealth is deposited thereby jeopardizing meaningful growth and development as well as threat to national security of these States. Corruption has taken the centre stage in the democratised government in Nigeria to the extent that public and civil servants abuse their offices with impunity. For instance, Ibrahim Magu, the Chairman, and other management staff of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) saddled with the responsibility of containing economic sabotage and corruption against the State, are currently being investigated for corruption, suggesting that there are roadblocks to a strong democracy in Nigeria at all levels of government, conflict-triggered by political competition and communal, ethnic, religious or resource allocation rivalries, poses a major threat to democracy, and corruption pervades the daily lives of Nigerians (USAID,2019).

*Good Governance Phenomenon:* The concept of good governance is fast becoming a critical parameter use in determining the positive impact of a prevailing government on the lives of its citizens in a democratic system. This is why in advanced democracies, unlike the Third World or developing democracies, efforts are being made to reasonably and adequately manipulate States' economic resources for the social welfare of citizens and providing security to their lives and property by the governments. Government is considered good or bad by evaluating the extent to which its citizens are treated in the context of State's economic resources relations, guaranteed human rights, freedom of choice of representation and expression of opinions as well as healthcare delivery and political participation. Indeed, many State governments are beginning to be refused aids, grants and loans by other States and world financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Funds among other financial institutions having being adjudged a bad government.

Undoubtedly, the core aim of providing and operating constituency offices by parliamentarians is to bring government closer to the people for interactions and accountability and serve as feedback mechanism as well as input in public policy decision-making process. This was why Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) cited in Ibrahim (2011) described good governance by asserting that "a nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones." Mandela's postulation is an indication, as democracy entails, that good governance triumphs only when majority of the citizens are in good living and positive social conditions cum security of lives and property, guaranteed job security as well as shelter by the governments.



Good governance serves as responsive to the present and future needs of the organization, exercises prudence in policy setting and decision making, with the interests of all stakeholders taken into account and has eight major characteristics vis-a-vis: rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, accountability and participation (Governance Pro, 2010). According to Ezenyili (2012) the issue of governance is now a major concern and without good governance, arguably, the developing countries (Nigeria) have little or no chance to progress. Ezenyili's observation buttressed the pivotal role constituency offices are considered to play complementarily to government roles so as to offer the citizenry dividends inherent in democratic practice, which of course has been very difficult to realize virtually across all the federal constituencies established/existing in the country, despite that good governance is a functioning public sector that respects principles such as transparency and participation and is accountable to its citizens, a dynamic civil society that can express and responds to the needs of the poorest members of society, and a justice system that provides legal security, all contribute to human security, poverty reduction, protection of the environment... (Australian Development Cooperation, 2006 p6). The irony is that, in Nigeria, as it is currently, ADC'S description of good governance does not seem to be readily available and workable due to apparent absence and/or malfunctioning constituency offices it characteristically highlighted as fundamental condition.

Toksoz (2008 p.13) observed that good governance depends on the ability of state organs and public service organisations to encourage participation, and also depends on a consistent, transparent, and accountable public administration that ensures the fairness and effectiveness of decisions and their implementation. Unarguably, government decision to create interactive framework such as constituency offices is not a misplaced priority, but however the 'abracadabra' (maneuvering) tendencies of the originators and executors remain worrisome to deserve critical assessment in the context of relationship, performance and sustenance for the benefit of the constituents-electorate. Looking at how good governance has become a serious challenge to many States and non-State actors including itself (ADC) within local and international environment, Austrian Development Cooperation (2011 p.6) confirmed that:

*In a global world with a hitherto unattained level of economic, technological and political freedom, there is nevertheless more poverty than at the end of the Cold War... At least officially, more democratically governed states than ever before,... there has been an increase since the 1990s in the number of violent conflicts within states in which civilians are the primary victims.*

ADC's observation captured the spree of violence that continue to reign within the confines of developing democracies including Nigeria and where good governance described by Annan cited in ADC (2011) as a key to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), ... of course now Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs), present the world for the first time with a compact set of international goals by which to



measure poverty reduction, human development and encouragement protection is obviously fast becoming a mirage.

*Accountability as a Mechanism for Good Governance*

The phenomenon of accountability has become a critical mechanism to reckon with in a democratic environment where government and its other institutions are basically expected to take cognizance of citizens' input in decision-making process, the rule of law is strictly adhered to and participatory democracy through which electorate engage in free choice of those to represent as well as serve their interests in the constituted authority. In this vein, accountability as a fundamental feature of democracy becomes an essential index of adjudging an administration a good or bad government.

Laxmikanth (2005) cited in Ado (2017) posits that accountability connotes the obligation of the administrators to give a satisfactory account of their performance and the manner in which they have exercised power conferred on them. For Olowu in Ademolokun (2005) cited in Ado (2017) accountability conventionally refers to answerability for one's actions or behaviour,...with three crucial components: a clear definition of responsibility, reporting mechanisms, and a system of review, rewards and sanctions. Of course, Olowu's postulation seems affordable and applicable in advanced democracies rather than Third World States (like Nigeria) where virtually democratic tenets including accountability have been deliberately relegated to the background by the political leaders or elite whose main interests matter most to them at any point in time in the context of public policy formulation. Eghe (2002) cited in Ado (2017) described administrative accountability as the ability of the officials to give satisfactory account of the exercise of the powers or discretion vested in them to someone whom it is due, failing which some kind of punishment may follow. Existing literature indicate that in some sovereign States, government officials including heads of government such as the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Natenyahu have been accused, investigated and charged to court on corruption basis. More so, the Lebanese Prime Minister, Hassan Diab resigned from the seat of power because his government was accused of systemic corruption believed to have culminated into the chemical explosion accident that led to the untimely death of over three hundred Lebanese and destruction of properties in Lebanon. These exemplification cannot replicate themselves in Nigeria and many other African States occasioned by systematic and possible constitutionalized corruption.

Agba (2008) cited in Gberevbie, Shodipo & Oviasogie (2013) upholds that accountability implies that government functionaries should be prepared to be answerable for their actions at all times to members of the public and be able to satisfy their actions at the level of moral and ethical standard. Political Office Holders (POHs), including Parliamentarians in Nigeria expropriate State's powers with brazen impunity against accountability which represents openness, feedback and responsibility owed the people in any democracy. Accountability also connote that the power of 'Recall' of defaulting representative(s) is vested in the constituents despite the fact that it has not been successfully deployed as fundamental democratic instrument in the political system such as the unsuccessful recall



process against former Senator Dino Melaye in the Upper Legislative Chamber- The Senate.

According to Omoma (2010) in Gberevbie, Shodio & Oviasogie (2013) accountability is vital to good governance and good governance seeks to improve the capacity of the State, encompassing a variety of strategies to increase efficiency and effectiveness in government performance. Apparently, the conscious posture of Legislators not to provide constituency offices, and/ or establish same in personal estate, openly negates the principle of structuralisation of Constituency Offices for easy accessibility to constituents and contradicts Adegite's (2010) assertion cited in Enofe, Aigboduwa, Audu & Idemudia (2015) that accountability is the obligation to demonstrate that work has been conducted in accordance with agreed rules and standards and the officer reports fairly and accurately on performance results vis-a-vis mandated rules and plans.

#### *Constituency and Constituency Offices*

*Constituency:* Constituency refers to an area or sphere of legislative representation, be it senatorial districts or federal constituencies as the case may be in Nigeria. Meaning that it is a demarcation for the purpose of political representation in government, most especially in a democratic political system.

According to Yusuf and Zengeni (2018 p.2), constituency is a community or an area represented by an office holder or a community whose electorates send a representative to National Assembly. The description suggests that constituency is a political arrangement designed for maximum representation in the government for decision making input purpose, hence, Benjamin (2010) cited in Yusuf and Zengeni (2018) uphold that in Nigeria, each state is divided into three senatorial districts and there are also 360 Federal Constituencies in the entire country. Unarguably, the above postulation implies that there ought to be in existence over four hundred constituency offices across the Nigerian State, but however, this is far from reality because as it presently stands, rarely any State in the country can be identified with three centralized and adequately equipped constituency offices in any of its federal constituencies, despite their relevance described by Britannica (2020) as the basic electoral unit into which eligible electors are organised to elect representatives to a legislature or other public body.

*Constituency Offices:* Literarily, an office represents an established framework or structure where official duties and tasks are formally carried out. An office creates opportunity for interactions and interdependence. Therefore, one can refer to constituency office within a political system as a fundamental framework established within senatorial districts and federal constituencies, so as to serve as mechanism through which legislators, as elected representatives interact with their constituents on regular basis for accountability and input purposes.

According to Constituency Handbook for Elected Representatives in Namibia (2020)...one of the biggest challenges for elected representatives is to identify: 'public interest' and solutions thereof, developing, initiating, facilitating, and encouraging constituency



development projects in your constituents and increase your popularity. Indeed, CHERN's opinion also suggest the critical role of constituency services (CSs) described by Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (2010) in Dan-Azumi (2018) "as an important components of effectiveness in legislative representation, and the conscientious representation of the electoral constituency through the agency of constituency office". The case of Nigeria is quite pathetic, constituents have to contend with the rigours of uncoordinated protocol and sometimes, bulldozed their ways through, from the hands of so-called Political Thugs serving as 'bouncers' shielding their principals, despite the fact that according to Smith (2003) cited in Dan-Azumi (2018) constituency office in legislative sense is an organised office space or an outlet often located at the electoral district/constituency of the legislator where a member of a local, regional or national legislative house is able to engage and meet their constituents, while Dan-Azumi (2018 p.3) described constituency offices as contributive to effective community aspirations and needs into national policy or legislation. Undoubtedly, virtually most of the constituency offices that seem to exist across the Nigerian Federation are miniature in nature and sometimes, they are converted into Legislator's relaxation centres, thereby apparently distorting good governance and accountability as well as posing as stumbling blocks for constituents' input in public policy decision-making process, be it overtly and/or covertly. Hence, Jimoh (2019) asserted that constituency outreach, strengthening the linkages between a legislature and the people is necessary step for promoting peace and stability in a democratic system; however, constituency outreach by the 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly was poorly communicated due to lack of appropriate structure for feedback, even most members who were identified with constituency offices intensified visits to theirs at the hype of the general elections. Jimoh's statement cannot be underestimated. It is an indication that most Legislators including other elected political elite habitually abstain from their own people immediately they are elected and sworn-in, whereas, such behaviour does not permit them to be conversant with the people's needs as well discourages accountability to the people.

*Issues and Challenges to Constituency Offices in Nigeria 2011-2019*

Constituency office has been identified as one of the most formidable mechanism through which governance in a democratic system brings about good governance and accountability to the people. The framework, if properly established and committed, serves as interactive contact centre between elected representatives and their constituent-electorate. However, in Nigeria, just like in many other States, constituency offices seem to contend with the challenges of establishment and performance. While in the advanced world, Parliamentarians intensify efforts towards ameliorating these challenges or forces, the scenario in Nigeria in particular is distinct and pathetic as they can only collect the funds involved in constituency projects without commitment to make such projects available for the citizens' benefit due to inherent selfish interests among these elite. Supporting this assertion, Abati (2019) posits that members of the Nigerian National Assembly, and by extension lawmakers across the country, have been under scrutiny lately with regards to their engagements with citizens-voters whose interest they are expected to represent in parliamentary issue - Constituency projects and constituency offices. Abati





(2019) also averred that president Muhammadu Buhari brought the issue of constituency project to public attention when at an event organised by the Independent Corruption Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), lamented that there is very little evidence or benefit to the grassroots of the one trillion naira that had been earmarked for constituency project in the last Ten years. For ICPC in Abati (2019), the North East is the most affected region where constituency projects were not carried out or abandoned either due to Boko Haram insurgency or the negligence of the lawmakers from the area. It is was obvious that the Parliamentarians' actions in the North East were deliberate so that funds allotted thereto are diverted to their private pockets and no query to such misdeeds. According to Punch cited in Abati (2019) five months after inauguration, Senators are yet to set up constituency offices, Lawmakers shun constituents even though they expected to have constituency offices in the same manner in which they open campaign offices during the election season.

CHERN (2020) maintained that member of parliament face many challenges in terms of expectations, some of these expectations arise from previous election related messages which are impossible to fulfill in the short time that you have been in office, and limited amount of resources available to your disposal as elected representative to provide or address all the needs of your constituents. Although, one can identify the critical role finance plays in the execution of projects, however, in Nigeria's context, huge amount of money committed into funding constituency projects so far, as lamented by President Muhammadu Buhari in one of his addresses does not in any manner indicated scarcity of funds for constituency projects in the country, but rather implied arrant embezzlement of constituency project funds. Hence, Dan-Azumi (2018) affirmed that as is the practice in many parts of the world, in addition to basic salaries, Nigerian Legislators receive administrative funds to run their offices, including constituency offices. Unarguably, the attitude of Nigerian political leaders including Legislators negate that of their counterparts in developed democracies where the citizens and constituents remain the focus point which according to Witner (2014) that:

*Their focus was on putting people first ours was not a political office. We focused on serving the people well and I don't ever regret that decision because I do believe constituency offices should be focused on helping all of the people all of the time and everyone should feel very welcome approaching you or your staff with problems or concerns. Their first loyalty was to the people in the riding and I fully believe that's how it should be...*

Witner's statement was democratically driven, but does not exist within Nigeria's polity. For example, the kid glove attitude applied in the fight against corruption by the government in Nigeria and the open abuse of female counterpart by some male National Assembly Members contradicted and relegated Witner's postulation on Legislators to the background.





*Theoretical Framework - Elite Theory*

Existing society is characterized by certain elements to prevail in the management and allocation of State's scarce resources. The few elements scrambling for such State power are referred to as the Elite. Elite Theory emphasizes on the existence of few individuals usually responsible for the coordination of government affairs on behalf of others (masses) in their majority within a political system. Hence, Almond, Powell, Strom & Dalton (2004 p28) observed that above the populace is a group of a few thousand political elite who manage the actual workings of the political system. The theory holds that every society consists of two categories of men (a) the elite or the minority within a social collectivity (such as, a society, a state, a religious institution, a political (party) which exercises a preponderant influence within that collectivity; and (b) the masses or the majority which is governed by the elite (Gauga, 2007 p440).

Mosca (1896) as one of the leading proponents of the Elite theory circle, cited in Gauga (2007) posited that the people are necessarily divided into groups: the rulers and the ruled, the ruling class controls most of the wealth, power and prestige in society and exercises all power, whatever form of government might be adopted; the ruled are not competent to replace it. Advocate of the Elitist theory believed that in every society, democratic or undemocratic, certain few individual elements are increasingly on ground to take major control of state's institutions for decision-making process (public policy) on behalf of those in majority, because they (elite) have possessed certain leadership qualities and traits to do so against the masses whom Mosca (1896) in Gauga (2007) referred to as "incompetent".

The theory in this context, explains the behaviour of certain elements/ forces in decision-making process, with regard to the establishment of Constituency Offices as feedback and accountability mechanism to the constituents in Nigeria. Elite include: Political Leaders, Parliamentarians, economic, social and, educated elite, as well as other bourgeois elements in the society. They are characterized by unified perpetual quest for hegemony in any society they find themselves.

Proponents of Elite Theory are not farfetched. They include but not limited to the likes of Robert Michel, Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca among others. Elite theory fortifies this study in establishing a Primea facie, that leadership is reserved for few persons including Parliamentarians. It also explains the fact that decision-making process and decision-instruments are in the hands of the few called Elite, as such, policies are usually Elite's own interests against the masses as electorate - constituents. For instance, the idea to establish constituency offices in the Federal Constituencies across the Nigerian Federation is people/citizens' inclined but however, the inability to provide the framework by policy makers contradicts democratic tenets and good governance.

Despite its relevance to this study in particular and many others in general, Elite theory has been criticised by Scholars. Mill (1956) in Garner, Ferdinand & Lawson (2009) argued that the problem with the political elite approach is that it arguably does not tell us very much



at all about the exercise of power. Mill's argument cannot hold in this context because there may be deliberate attempt by the proponents not to clarify and popularize the modus operandi of the use of power by the elite, but rather through their actions and or in actions. For example, the inability of the political leaders including National Assembly Members not to provide feedback mechanism structure such as Constituency Offices across the country was a calculated attempt to deprive the constituents-electorate their rights to be accountable to by their representatives-Political Elite.

### **3. Methodology**

The study employed descriptive analysis and made use of the secondary method to access data for analysis, thus suggesting that it is qualitative in nature.

### **4. Synergy between Constituency Offices and Good Governance**

The relationship between parliamentarians and their constituents cannot be separated if good governance is considered to exist in a political system. Thus, constituency office serves as a fundamental framework through which both parties (Legislators and Constituents) constantly interact with one another over critical interests and feedbacks in a democracy. Hence, Wollack (2012) posited that if parliamentarians don't fulfill their special role, the entire democratic system is placed in jeopardy. For Hubli (2012) though public trust in parliaments around the world is low, participants acknowledged that parliaments remain essential to democracy, while Power (2012) posited that new developments in communications technology as well as the growth of Parliamentary Monitoring Organisations (PMOs) have contributed to increased public demand for information and influence in the parliamentary process, more accountability from MPs and better constituents services.

Undoubtedly, the key components of good governance which include human rights, freedoms, accountability, transparency, participation and inclusion, cannot be relegated to the background if democracy is to be sustained in a society such as Nigeria. For this purpose, Carothers & Brenchenmacher (2014) affirmed that accountability, transparency, participation and inclusion represent vital embodiment of the opening to politics,... they bridge three distinct practitioner: communities that emerged from this new direction-those focusing on governance, on democracy and on human rights. Unfortunately, this scholarly position is nonexistent or counterproductive in a country like Nigeria where the attitude and behaviours of those in government towards the citizens is oppression, hence, Carothers & Brenchenmacher (2014) however, maintained that many developing country governments have (rhetorically embraced the value of accountability, transparency, participation and inclusion and joined international initiatives aimed at furthering these principles. Through the use of constituency outreach activities, elected officials can become better informed and therefore better positioned to address the needs of their constituents in a timely and consistent manner, and can help streamline constituency services and improve the efficiency of outreach activities (Carothers & Brenchenmacher, 2014). Carothers and Brenchenmacher's postulation is an illusion in Nigeria as a society where elected government officials political appointees arrogate absolute power to



themselves to the extent that protocols, rules, and regulations are often breached against those they claim to represent. Hence, National Democratic Institute (2019: 6-8) argued that for democracy to gain roots and good governance to flourish in Africa, the primary function of the members of parliaments should be to find out what people want and what their pressing issues are so that the legislation the parliament passes could deal with those central issues, Economic Commission for Africa Parliament should strive to empower citizens to actively participate in the governance processes through active participation in elections, constitutional reforms, and contributing to the government policy agenda and parliamentarians should be more opened and easily accessible to the public so that the citizens could follow more closely the activities and operations of the parliament in decision-making process that affect their lives, including governance.

Good governance and constituency offices observed in the context of election, Omuilisi (2019) posits that the electoral system of a country is the critical institution which shapes and influences the rules of political competition for state power because it determines what parties look like, who is represented in the legislature, how accountable these representatives are to the electorate and above all, who governs. According to UNDP CORNER (2013) no matter the means of election, citizens expect to see their MP on a regular basis where the MP's constituency is located outside of the capital where the parliament sits, it can be a challenge to be required to be in parliament for sessions that may last nine or ten months out of every year, but the ultimate goal is for citizens to know the MP is working for them while in the capital and for the MP to use various tools to be in constant dialogue with constituents. From all indications, the role of constituency offices in enhancing and sustaining democracy and good governance in any society cannot be underestimated. Government may have failed in their responsibility of providing the needs of its citizens as constitution demands, but such gap could be bridged through the efforts of vibrant and regular Parliamentarians-Constituents' relationship codified through an ideal and formal framework-Constituency Office.

##### **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Political instability creates critical threats to socioeconomic activities, national security and development to any state faced with it. Unarguably, the Nigerian state has been contending with myriad of challenges including electioneering and electoral process; thus creating environmental instability and disunity among the people on different divides. The core of Nigeria's instability is the inability of the government and its proxies to be able to provide serene environment for socioeconomic activities to triumph, subdued electoral process and deprivation of free choice of representatives through robust, credible, free and fair elections to be conducted by an impartial electoral umpire. Political Elite connive within its circle to perpetually hold onto political power for selfish interests in decision-making process against the interests of the populace, thereby depriving them (masses) access to good governance and creating unimaginable wide gulf between government and good governance and the populace in majority.



Evidently, Constituency Offices are projected to serve as fundamental mechanism towards accessing good governance and accountability. But however, this frame work rarely exist across the country and where any is established, they are usually confined within the personal estate of the Parliamentarian(s) thereby hampering accessibility of constituents. Therefore, it is recommended among others that there is need for the constitutionalization of constituency offices situated in a centralized location and easily accessible to the citizens-constituents across the country. Parliamentarians or National Assembly Members, through constitutional provision, be mandated to be accountable to their Constituencies and Constituents through regular interactive session/deliberation. Constitutional and/or Electoral Act provisions be established for easy “Recall” process of defaulting Parliamentarian(s) and any other Political Office Holders (POHs) in Nigeria.

The study contributes to the body of knowledge through the availability of new and resourceful information in the context of Parliamentarians and citizens-constituents’ relationship in Nigeria. It exposes the necessity for comparative analysis on Legislator’s performance in Nigeria with its counterparts in other democracies in the world, and opens doors for increasing empirical assessment on the level of compliance in the establishment of the framework (Constituency Offices) in the country.

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