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THE ROLE OF THE LEGISLATURE IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND PEACEBUILDING: A STUDY OF THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (2006 – 2015)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of the legislature in conflict management and peacebuilding. It was established that the legislature, being the fulcrum of democratic governance in all democratic nations, is empowered to, among other functions, make good laws for peace, order, and good governance. In carrying out its functions, the legislature intervenes to fill observed lacunae in critical areas for the continued survival of democracy. This study explores the significant role of the legislature in managing conflicts and promoting peace, focusing specifically on the Nigerian National Assembly. Nigeria, a nation with numerous ethno-religious, socio-economic and cultural diversities, has faced persistent challenges related to conflict management and peacebuilding. The objectives of the study were to evaluate the impact of the National Assembly's inclusive decision-making, legislative actions and legal frameworks, and the upholding of democratic norms on conflict management and peacebuilding in Nigeria. Employing a qualitative review methodology, this study relies on secondary data sources; this investigation highlights the National Assembly's substantial contributions between 2006 and 2015 during the administrations of Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Umaru Musa Yar'adua/Goodluck Jonathan. With the National Assembly interventions through inclusive decision-making approach, sound legislative debates and quality resolutions, critical national issues such as the six-year tenure elongation proposed by Olusegun Obasanjo, the constitutional lacuna in transmission of power from a president to the vice president in cases of the unexpected, the government-labour dispute on Anti-Subsidy Removal Strikes of 2012 and the Niger Delta Militancy Amnesty agitation were laid to rest. From the study, it was found that one of the key functions of the legislature was to uphold democratic norms, which in turn impacted conflict management. The presence of the Nigerian legislature was seen in the issue of conflict that would have led to an economic and political downturn in the country during the aforementioned administrations. In conclusion, the National Assembly of Nigeria has played a crucial role in advancing conflict management and peacebuilding through its legislative decisions and sound resolutions.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict Management, Legislature, National Assembly, Peace Building.

Introduction

The ability of governments around the world to manage disagreements while building and maintaining peace is essential, as both conflict and peace are inherent to human society. To maintain stability and progress in nations like Nigeria, characterised by a multitude of ethnicities, religions, and socioeconomic disparities, it is essential to implement effective peacebuilding and conflict management methods. In its capacity as one of the principal governing organisations, the legislature is vital in formulating policies, passing laws, and supervising the implementation of initiatives to end hostilities and foster peace. This research delves at the function of the Nigerian National Assembly, the supreme legislative body of the nation, in resolving conflicts and fostering peace.

As the democratic government's voice for the people, the legislature can mediate disputes when they arise (Egobueze, Ogele, Ajunwo, 2020). State legislatures, according to Taylor (2005) as cited in Kaa, Wosu, and Banigo (2021), safeguard minority interests while ensuring the government functions properly. This means that while making decisions, the legislature considers all relevant factors, including contentious issues and national policies, and uses its deliberative and committee processes to reach a comprehensive conclusion. As a result, we can see how legislatures play a part in peacebuilding and conflict management by, for example, encouraging inclusive decision-making, creating a solid legal framework, and maintaining democratic norms, which make sure everyone's opinions are considered. As a result, the goals of the research have taken shape

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The Public Complaints Commission, often known as the Ombudsman, and its committees on Ethics, Code of Conduct, and Public Petitions are important resources for the Nigerian National Assembly's efforts to manage conflicts and establish peace. The Commission and the Committees look into administrative injustices committed by the government or public institutions against less fortunate Nigerians, with the goal of mending violations of fundamental rights of Nigerians.

Statement of Problem

Legislative authority in Nigeria is divided between the federal and state levels, as stated in Sections 4(1) and 4(7) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The effectiveness of democracy in a time of institutional instability depends on giving lawmakers the authority to settle disputes and promote peace (Kaa et al., 2021).

Numerous problems with civil instability and wars beset Nigeria throughout the presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo and that of Yar'Adua/Goodluck Jonathan. There was a lot of anxiety over the president's authority transition to the vice president and the possibility of a tenure extension. In addition, militant groups like MEND, which fought for environmental justice and a fairer share of oil profits, caused turmoil in the Niger Delta area. Over 800 people died and hundreds more were forced to flee their homes as a result of the 2011 general elections, which were marked by

widespread violence, particularly in the north, as supporters of the opposition fought over Goodluck Jonathan's triumph. The National Assembly played a pivotal role in Nigeria's conflict management and peacebuilding initiatives during each of the three current presidents, Goodluck Jonathan, Yar'adua, and Obasanjo. Looking at the Nigerian National Assembly in particular, this research hopes to show how lawmakers may help with conflict management and peacebuilding.

Research Questions

1. How do legislative interventions contribute to mitigating conflicts and promoting Sustainable peace in Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of the Nigerian National Assembly's contribution to peacebuilding in Nigeria?
3. What are the impacts of the Nigerian legislature on National Peace Efforts?
4. What are the challenges faced by the Nigerian National Assembly in promoting legislative Peacebuilding initiatives

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the effectiveness of legislative interventions in mitigating conflicts and promoting sustainable peace in Nigeria.
2. To evaluate the extent of the Nigerian National Assembly's contribution to peacebuilding in Nigeria.
3. To examine the impacts of the Nigerian legislature on National Peace Efforts.
4. To examine the challenges faced by the Nigerian National Assembly in promoting legislative peacebuilding initiatives.

Literature Review

Overview of the Nigeria National Assembly: The Legislature.

In the Fourth Republic of Nigeria, the principal body charged with enacting legislation is the Nigerian National Assembly (Samuel, 2019). According to the Federal Government of Nigeria (1999, cited in Toyin, 2020), Section 47 of the Nigerian Constitution established the bicameral legislature. According to Section 47 of the 1999 Constitution as modified, it is comprised of a House of Representatives and a Senate. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as Amended) grants it the authority to establish laws through a specified procedure, as stated in Section 4(1) and Section 58. The United States Congress served as an inspiration for Nigeria's National Assembly (Toyin, 2020). Abuja is home to numerous branches of the Nigerian government, including the National Assembly. Legislative power is inherent to democracies since it allows for the establishment of new laws and is a defining characteristic of national sovereignty (Nwabueze, 2007). According to Egobueze (2020), legislatures are created to act as representatives of the people and are crucial in a constitutional democracy. They are seen as a distinct institution and might even be the symbol of democracy.

According to Okosi (2010) and Benjamin (2021), the legislature is the national entity that is in charge of draughting laws and through which the collective will of the people is expressed and put into action. As mentioned earlier, the legislature functions as a representative body, with representatives chosen from senatorial districts and federal constituencies to serve the country. What gives the legislature its formal lawmaking power and its capacity to impact public policy is significant (Egobueze, 2020). It is the responsibility of the National Assembly, Nigeria's legislature, to establish the norms and policies that would make public sector accountability and transparency a reality (Toyin, 2020). The necessity to hold the government to account for its actions gave rise to the legislature, as stated by Onwu (2023). So, the legislative branch is responsible for creating laws and regulating the executive, judiciary, and executive branch agencies. As a cornerstone of democracy, lawmaking is necessary for the expression of popular will through the State's legal framework. The people's desires are reflected in the laws passed by the legislature, which serves as their conscience. The Nigerian legislature, like legislatures worldwide, primarily serves to make laws, represent the people, and oversee government operations. So, the legislative branch directs the executive branch to carry out its duties in a way that is consistent with the nation's legal, economic, social, and political goals (Toyin, 2020). As a result, the legislative function is vital since it checks and balances the executive branch, which is responsible for carrying out the laws. This is accomplished through its supervision function, which ensures that laws and regulations are implemented appropriately.

Broad Roles/functions of the Nigeria National Assembly

In addition to its principal job of creating laws, the legislature also has the following other functions, as stated by Sekibo (Parliamentary Discuses 2024, p. 15): Among its many powers are the following: ratification of treaties, committee work, the authority to amend the constitution, control over public funds, oversight of government activities, confirmation of presidential nominees, the power to impeach the president, control over its internal affairs, representative functions, and constituent services. The majority of these tasks necessitate the participation of key opinion leaders, members of civil society, NGOs, and specialists in relevant domains. For a democratic government to truly serve the people's interests, it is essential that citizens participate in these hearings (Wim, 2015). The purpose of a public hearing is to educate the public about a topic of public interest or to gather information that can be used to improve the legislative process, as stated by Sekibo (Parliamentary Terminologies 2019, pp. 396–398). He went on to say that public hearings give people a voice in the important issues that affect their government and allow them to see how their representatives are working to improve the country. It facilitates communication between lawmakers, subject-matter specialists, and government officials in the executive branch, which helps everyone see things from the same perspective and work together more effectively.

Effective Debate and Resolutions

In order to promote inclusiveness, good debates and resolutions strive for a wide range of public opinions, making sure that everyone's perspectives are heard and taken into account. A dynamic process, inclusive decision-making seeks and enhances minority opinions, providing a platform for individuals who may otherwise be marginalised (Ashley, 2023). Furthermore, she highlighted that her method aims to balance different interests while keeping everyone focused on the end goal, rather than strictly adhering to the'majority rules' notion. Through cultivating empathy, leaders have the ability to incorporate team members' diverse perspectives and life experiences into a collaborative decision-making process. Decisions are made in a more inclusive manner, which helps the team satisfy its needs and fosters a sense of belonging. According to Pamela and Sheri (2022), lawmakers have a vital role in encouraging inclusive decision-making.

The philosophy and practice of legislation emphasise that in parliamentary democracies, the process of lawmaking must strike a balance between openness and efficiency in order to garner broad social support for laws (Voermans et al., 2015). In order to make policies that are inclusive and based on evidence, an efficient framework for EBPM is required (Abraham, 2021). He maintains that the opportunity for citizens to voice their views on proposed legislation at public hearings is a crucial part of the legislative process. If our democratic government is serious about representing the interests of the people, we need citizens to show up to these hearings (Wim, 2015).

Legal Framework

An industry's or jurisdiction's legal framework is its body of rules and regulations that lay out the groundwork for the creation, maintenance, and enforcement of individual and collective legal rights and obligations (Vladan, 2022). Efficiency in the economy, protection of individual rights, and the provision of legal actions and services all depend on it. As time passes and new circumstances arise, the legal framework adapts to meet those needs by drawing on past events, governmental structures, and cultural mores. The development of a legislative framework for the resolution of conflicts and reconstruction in Nigeria is greatly influenced by members of the country's National Assembly. Legislation that promotes efficient government and ensures compliance with specific statutes is their responsibility (Samuel, 2019). The legislature, particularly the House of Assembly of Rivers State, has been actively involved in conflict management in recent years, leading to an improvement in political stability (Anthony, 2016).

Challenges faced by the National Assembly in Conflict Management and Peacebuilding

In the pursuit of good governance aimed at preventing conflicts and crises, the National Assembly faces several challenges, including Interferences between the Executive arm of government and the Judiciary. Other interferences include religious bodies, non-governmental organisations, and civil

society organisations backed by local or international collaborators. Such undue interferences could dilute effective policy formulation for conflict management and peacebuilding.

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

According to Section 135(2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended, the period a government may be in power is constrained by term constraints, which are a prerequisite for the presidential form of governance. Also outlined in Section 5 of the Constitution are the President's powers and the procedures for carrying them out. This is how most democracies work, although some African leaders have tried to get around the constitution's limitations. This happened, for instance, in Nigeria under the presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo, which ran from 1999 to 2007. Obasanjo sought to prolong his presidency in 2006 by proposing a term extension from four to six years. The delicate balance between the consolidation of democracy and political opportunism was laid bare by this action, which sparked heated debate. Scholars stress the need of respecting term limits and the rule of law in order to guarantee responsible leadership (Saliu & Muhammad, 2020). A lot of people were against President Obasanjo trying to stay in office for another term. Many groups and individuals were against this move, including members of parliament, news outlets, NGOs, and civil society organisations. The project's ultimate demise underscores the importance of leaders respecting democratic principles and fulfilling their constitutional duties. The incident serves as a cautionary tale, showing how nations can get themselves into needless crises by manipulating term constraints. The vital importance of constitutional adherence in maintaining stability and democratic institutions has been emphasised by former President Obasanjo, who has warned African leaders against such behaviours (PM News Nigeria, 2022).

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

Similar to other constitutions, the Nigerian one lays out the steps to take in the event of the president's illness or temporary absence. However, as President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's example shows, there is a serious gap in the clear rules for these transfers. While President Yar'Adua was sick, the National Assembly could decide what to do to fill the leadership void, what that void meant for government, and how to evaluate the situation. President Yar'Adua's serious sickness necessitated medical care overseas, posing a formidable task to the government. The smooth transfer of power to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan was not predetermined, even if he was absent for a long time. Uncertainty, policy paralysis, and a lack of direction ensued as a result of the nation's leadership void. Everything went downhill for the government and the country as a whole since there was no clear procedure for transferring control. We failed to take into account critical decisions and essential operations. The Vice President was technically the next in line to the presidency, although he did not have the power to act in the president's absence. This crisis highlighted the critical importance of amending the constitution to

overcome current gaps and ensure continuity of administration in the face of unforeseen circumstances. By establishing the theory of need and revising relevant sections of the constitution in 2010, the National Assembly significantly contributed to the preservation of constitutional integrity and made it easier for the vice president to assume office without a hitch.

Democratic Norms

According to Lieberman, Robert, Suzanne, Thomas, Kenneth, and Richard (2019), democratic norms are the unspoken rules that govern democratic behaviour. These rules cover a wide range of topics, including but not limited to: civility between political parties, acceptance of election results, and tolerance for disagreement. Essential democratic ideals include respect for human rights, free speech, and the rule of law. By upholding these principles, we can create a setting where people are more likely to resolve conflicts using peaceful means, open communication, and the law (Lieberman et al., 2019). Resolution of conflicts and construction of peace are positively impacted by upholding democratic standards (Mike, 2019; Sarah, 2008; Clare, 2023). Supporting democratic leadership practices within social movement organisations can help reduce violence and promote peaceful settlement of conflicts. These practices include open and transparent decision-making, the ability for individuals and groups to express themselves, and responsible teamwork. Legislators are responsible for representing the people in creating, enforcing, and revising laws and regulations that everyone must adhere to. They play a crucial role in ensuring government accountability, determining policy goals, and assessing potential policy alternatives. There will be more frequent and effective third-party involvement in dispute settlement in a strong, democratic society and its institutions. In such cases, mediators are often democracies and international organisations. Internal power struggles are a major source of civil strife, and democratisation reduces this risk. This good effect lasts for a long period. The active engagement of citizens is crucial to the strength and efficiency of any democracy. One way to encourage this engagement is to promote democratic values and institute internal democracy within an organisation.

Conflict Management

Incompatible or discordant interests pursued by multiple individuals, groups, communities, or nations give rise to conflicts (Okogba, 2020). The underlying reasons sometimes involve a lack of resources, conflicting interests, contradictions in beliefs, standards, and values, and a sense of being left out by other groups in the pursuit of shared objectives. Disagreements can arise from anywhere inside an entity, leading to arguments within individuals, groups, or even countries. Conflicts can arise on a personal, intergroup, or global scale when different groups or individuals act in conflicting ways (Mlambo and Adetiba, 2019). Both Best (2007) and Ali (2024) agree that conflict management is all about finding ways to lessen the negative impact of conflicts. The persons involved in the dispute must be actively involved for this to be achieved. One term for conflict management is "conflict regulation," and it

entails dealing with problems as they arise throughout a conflict. The goal of conflict management, according to Toyin (2020), is to control the intensity and negative effects of group conflicts by the use of techniques to confront and generate them. Promoting positive traits like teamwork, harmony, and compromise is part of this effort, as is the elimination of mental roadblocks to reaching a consensus and maximising group output. The process usually involves multiple tactics for resolving conflicts, such as problem-solving, achieving higher-level goals, increasing resources, avoiding problems, smoothing things out, compromising, authoritatively commanding, and making changes to people and structures.

Peacebuilding

To begin with, according to Ali (2024), peace is more than just the absence of violent conflict, fear, anxiety, grief, or war; it also represents peaceful coexistence. As cited in Ali (2024), Ibeanu (2006) argues that peace is an ongoing process that includes activities related to development promotion and conflict mitigation, both within and between civilisations. Therefore, peace encompasses more than just the lack of violence or conflict; it also includes justice, equality, progress, rule of law adherence, respect for human life and dignity, tolerance among individuals, restoration of ecological balance, and most importantly, the attainment of inner peace and wholeness. According to Benjamin (2016), the goal of peacebuilding is to create conditions that will discourage the outbreak or return of violent conflict. It stabilises society on all fronts—political, social, and economic—by addressing the root or potential causes of violence and setting a precedent for peaceful dispute resolution. In order to prevent, mitigate, and ultimately end violent conflicts, peacebuilding encompasses a wide array of activities carried out by various governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on local, national, and international scales. In order to reduce structural or direct violence, peacebuilding may entail a purposeful effort that targets the factors that cause or alleviate conflict. It could also mean efforts to coordinate procedures for humanitarian relief, development, governance, security, justice, and other governmental sectors in tandem with one another, as well as with effective communication and funding.

Conflict Management and Peacebuilding via the Ombudsman

Under its enabling legislation, ACT, CAP P37 LFN 2004, the Nigerian National Assembly established the Ombudsman, technically known as the Public Complaints Commission, to assist with conflict management and peacebuilding. Like the National Institute of Legislative and Democratic Studies and the National Assembly Service Commission, which are both officially acknowledged as branches of the National Assembly and report directly to it, the Ombudsman also performs comparable tasks. The National Assembly selects the 36 members of this Commission and serves as its chief executive. Addressing administrative malpractices or injustices inflicted upon persons by government or public institutions is the principal emphasis of the Commission's efforts to redress abuses of fundamental human rights perpetrated by employers in Nigeria. Institutionalised victims of human rights abuses have the

option to file complaints with the commission, which will then launch investigations. The Commission takes administrative steps to require the offending organisation or government body to resolve the issues raised if the investigations confirm the validity of the complaints. The National Assembly is tasked with supervising this committee, particularly when it comes to matters concerning the public interest and labour. Establishing the Commission, Section 5 of the Act lays out its powers and responsibilities, including the authority to summon individuals or entities suspected of wrongdoing to account, as described in Section 9. When it comes to limiting the abuses of power by corporations or governments, this body is crucial in protecting the rights of citizens and workers on behalf of the National Assembly. Those without the means to seek redress in appropriate courts can rely on the Ombudsman to protect their basic rights.

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

As per Standing Orders 97 (IV) of the Senate and 20 (7) of the House of Representatives, the Senate and the House of Representatives Committees on Ethics, Code of Conduct, and Public Petitions perform multiple duties in the area of Conflict Management and Peacebuilding on behalf of the National Assembly: Nigerians regularly direct these committees to investigate and resolve petitions brought to the Senate or House of Representatives. Without having been presented to courts with the necessary authority, these petitions usually concern violations of basic human rights. Every year, the committees painstakingly handle hundreds of these petitions, providing recourse to wronged persons, particularly in instances involving public entities or corporations. As a conflict management strategy, this proactive approach helps achieve peacebuilding's overarching objective.

Theoretical Review

March and Olsen's "The New Instructional Theory"

"The New Institutionalism: Organisational Factors in Political Life," a 1984 publication by March and Olsen, put out the argument that the prevailing political theories frequently depict politics as a reflection of society. Politics, in their view, is all about the distribution of resources, and political phenomena are just the sum of individual actions driven by rational self-interest. They also see history as a major factor in shaping decisions and the outcomes that result from it. The role of parliaments as intermediaries between the electorate and the executive branch is vital in democratic political systems. By impacting the identities, power dynamics, and strategies of political actors—including members of the National Assembly—well-structured political institutions are crucial for directing and institutionalising these principles, which in turn shape politics and impact political outcomes (Hall, 1986; Adetiba & Asuelime, 2018).

A political organization's norms and operational procedures are defined by its political institutions, which in turn are based on its political history (Adetiba & Asuelime, 2018). The ability of these aspects to shed light on the conduct and performance of institutions is, therefore, enhanced the deeper they are embedded inside such organisations. Members of the National Assembly can only carry out their duties effectively if the legislature is held to account. Like the legislature in any democratic nation, the National Assembly of Nigeria acts as an impartial advocate for the people. The importance of holding government officials accountable cannot be overstated. To hold the central "peoples' representatives" accountable, one must look at their political actions, both as individuals and as a group. Parliament has an obligation to provide constant accountability, genuine political behaviour, and openness in government as a result of the focus and placement of their constitutional mandates. According to Alabi (2009) and Wapmuk (2017), elected leaders in Nigeria have been found to have a pattern of vulnerability.

Research Method

Using secondary data, this study used a qualitative approach. According to Fink (2014), this review method is used to obtain insight into a specific topic or research question by examining existing literature, documents, and data. A desk-based review mostly uses already published material and papers that are easily accessible and pertinent to the study, as opposed to more traditional literature studies that may use a wider variety of sources and more thorough data collecting methods. The function of the legislature in conflict management and peacebuilding is evaluated through a desk review. Based on secondary sources, this study provides a thorough evaluation of the legislative branch's involvement in handling big conflicts that might have led to national catastrophes, making it an appropriate methodology.

Findings and Contribution to Knowledge

The legislature's inclusive decision-making affects the promotion of conflict management and peacebuilding in Nigeria

Rebecca (2019) argues that by involving representatives from civil society and increasing stakeholder engagement, the National Assembly has helped to build stronger peace processes and governance frameworks for post-conflict situations. In managing conflicts and constructing peace, the National Assembly was crucial under both the Yar'adua and Goodluck governments. They played a crucial role in mediating and resolving conflicts, especially in the gasoline subsidy strike and government-labour issues (Anthony, 2016; Ashley, 2023), which allowed them to address the concerns of different parties and encourage local ownership of the agreements. The National Assembly formed ad hoc committees to probe and oversee the fuel subsidy regime and to avert strikes by actively communicating with workers. Political stability and continuing peacebuilding efforts in Nigeria were greatly enhanced by this inclusive decision-making method by the legislature of the National Assembly (Andreas, 2020).

Study 1- Nigeria's Third Term Controversy - 2006: On December 7, 2004, President Olusegun Obasanjo appointed a Presidential Committee to prepare a roadmap for a National Political Reform Conference in Nigeria, with the stated goal of strengthening democratic principles and improving the country's political procedures. Reforms in the areas of constitution, political parties, elections, justice and law, civil society, consultation and consensus building, prisons and police, and the structure of government were among the eight main topics identified by the committee headed by Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi. The result was the 400-member Political Reform Conference, presided over by Justice Nikki Tobi, which met for four months to deliberate in depth on more than 700 memoranda and come up with 187 suggestions. Despite widespread agreement, the report's two outstanding issues—a single six-year term and resource control—presented obstacles. The populace was outraged when the report reached the National Assembly and revealed the controversial six-year single term. Because the constitutional provision needed a two-thirds majority in both chambers and the approval of two-thirds of all state assemblies—neither of which were reached—the third-term clause was voted down by the House of Representatives and the Senate on May 16, 2006, marking the end of the contentious agenda.

- **Legal Framework has an impact on promoting conflict management and peacebuilding in Nigeria.**

The National Assembly in Nigeria has implemented a legal framework to promote conflict management and peacebuilding (Rebecca, 2019). This framework recognises the importance of managing conflicts within the legislative body itself, as conflicts can hinder democratic consolidation. Additionally, the framework acknowledges the need for multi-faceted approaches to managing conflicts and preventing terrorism in the country.

Study 2 - Electoral Reforms, 2011 Political instability, security issues, and ethnic conflicts were some of the major challenges that Nigeria faced throughout the administrations of Yar'Adua and Goodluck Jonathan. In order to tackle these challenges and prevent unrest after the election, the National Assembly prioritised electoral reforms. More openness, less manipulation, and assured election credibility were the goals of the Electoral Act's revisions. An important factor in the avoiding of conflicts was the Assembly's focus on encouraging peaceful electoral procedures. The extensive electoral reforms proposed by the Justice Uwais Commission in its report were the basis for those implemented by Attahiru Jega and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the run-up to the 2011 general elections (Martin, 2020).

- **Upholding democratic norms has an Impact on enhancing conflict management and peacebuilding in Nigeria.**
- (Egobueze, 2020) lays out the three pillars upon which a democratic system rests: inclusive participation in the selection of leaders and policies through free and fair

elections; a degree of civic and political engagement; and meaningful competition for political power among individuals and organised groups. Because its principles, institutions, and laws are built to address social disputes in both societies with profound divisions and cultures with less conflict, democracy has potential as a strategy for conflict management (Sisk, 2003; Abraham, 2021). Internal and externally caused disputes have both been managed by the legislature (Anthony, 2020). Political class members' excessive eagerness to keep power for economic benefits is a major source of these conflicts.

Study 3- Resolving the Niger Delta Crisis: A key priority throughout the administrations of Yar'Adua and Goodluck Jonathan was finding a solution to the Niger Delta conflict. A number of intervention programs, including resolutions on motions and other legislative initiatives, were crucially implemented by the National Assembly to tackle this situation. The National Assembly was heavily involved in draughting and allocating funds for the Niger Delta Amnesty, which was launched by Umaru Yar'Adua in 2009 (Rita, 2011). To address the underlying causes of militancy and contribute to peacebuilding in the region, the initiative aimed to reintegrate former militants into society by providing vocational training, education, and employment opportunities. The government was able to raise more money to address the complex issues of poverty once the militancy situation was resolved, which led to an increase in crude oil production.

Pecuniary Interests in Decision-Making

Making good decisions in Nigeria's National Assembly isn't always easy. Some of the main things that get in the way of good decision-making include economic interests, self-preservation, and the preservation of political party interests. Furthermore, the vast majority of citizens are typically left out of public hearings held by the National Assembly, with only the most privileged and knowledgeable individuals being invited to participate. Because of this omission, the majority of the population's opinions will not be considered during legislation. Following the rule of law and reducing the attractiveness of legislative posts to lessen conflicts are important components of promoting democratic consolidation.

Conclusion

According to the results, the National Assembly plays a pivotal role in promoting inclusive decision-making, which is essential for conflict management and peacebuilding in Nigeria. More robust peace processes and governance institutions in post-conflict situations were developed, according to Rebecca (2019), thanks to the Assembly's engagement of civil society representatives and enhancement of stakeholder participation. In an effort to resolve government-labor problems, the petrol subsidy strike, and the constitutional gap in the handover of power from the president to the vice president, the legislature took the initiative to mediate conflicts during the Goodluck and Yar'adua administrations. This

research looked at how President Olusegun Obasanjo's government handled conflicts, with a focus on the tenure extension issue that threatened the safety of the country. Not only did the inclusive approach to conflict resolution address pressing challenges, but it also significantly strengthened political stability and ongoing peacebuilding efforts in Nigeria (Anthony, 2016). Notable examples of the Assembly's varied contributions include its intervention and successful negotiation of a peace agreement during the Anti-Subsidy Removal Strikes in 2012, the creation of a legislative framework for the resolution and building of peace, and electoral reforms in 2011. Additionally, the Assembly's involvement in addressing the Niger Delta conflict in 2009, through initiatives such as the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme, demonstrates its dedication to resolving root causes and fostering peace in the area (Salami, 2022).

Recommendations

In the reconstruction and pursuit of lasting peace, parliaments should consider the following reforms in institutional, constitutional, administrative, economic, and social realms:

1. The National Assembly should improve its efforts to ensure majority participation in its decision-making process. Particularly, zonal public hearings should be enforced to allow the majority of the population to take part in its conflict management and peace-building efforts.
2. The participation of civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations, and labour unions is key to enforcing good national policies capable of ushering and sustaining good governance. The National Assembly should encourage more participation of these groups in its decision-making process, as these groups stand as bridges between it and the people.
3. Since the National Assembly members are elected to represent constituents, it is important to make it mandatory that they hold regular constituent consultative meetings in their constituencies to open the scope of participation in their decision-making.
4. Effective national service requires self-denial and the elimination of pecuniary interests in decision-making. Other interests, such as protecting political parties and political party leaders and regional and ethnic interests, should be avoided in a nation with all kinds of diversities so that the resolution taken shall be treated with the utmost respect.

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