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## “Intergovernmental Relationship in Nigeria and State Building Process”

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### Abstract:

*Nigerian federalism has morphologically included wrangling over intergovernmental relations. The 1999 Nigerian Constitution clearly and concisely delineates the roles, authorities, and jurisdictional boundaries that fall under the scope of the country's political system. Nonetheless, during the political regime of former President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration in Nigeria's fourth republic, interstate ties were severely damaged by a lack of economic justice brought on by jurisdictional scruples. As the supreme authority, the federal government controls all state and municipal government operations and behaviour. The main argument of this article is that in order to establish national cohesion and integration as platforms for growth and IGR of multifarious and sharply divided societies such as Nigeria, effective statebuilding measures are necessary. Using secondary data based on textual analysis, five efforts were evaluated, exposing the basic inconsistencies in these state-building activities. To expedite national integration and growth, it is necessary to revisit and tweak the philosophical underpinnings and usefulness of certain of these projects.*

**Keywords:** *Intergovernmental Relations, Federal and Local, Fourth Republic and State-Building.*

### Introduction:

The interactions and relationships that exist between the several tiers of government within a federal system are referred to as intergovernmental relations. This covers the coordination and collaboration of the federal, state, and local governments in Nigeria with regard to matters like policy formulation, distribution of resources, and provision of services. Nigeria is a federal capital territory and a federal republic with a constitution that upholds federalism. While the federal government is in charge of topics pertaining to the entire country, each state has its own government and is in charge of specific aspects of governance. The present democratic regime in Nigeria, which started in, is referred to as the Fourth Republic. 1999, following years of military control. With a president serving as both the head of state and government, it is distinguished by a federal form of governance.

Since the beginning of the Fourth Republic, the nation has held multiple elections, with power peacefully shifting between various political parties. Over time,

Nigeria has become more and more defined by its fault lines and weaknesses, which highlights the necessity of state building in Nigeria as a crucial process for fostering democracy, stability, and development at the state level and ultimately contributing to the nation's overall progress and prosperity.

### **Intergovernmental Relations:**

An intergovernmental connection is the interaction of the many governmental levels within a political space. Without involvement, government programmes and initiatives would be a total failure. To accomplish governmental aims and objectives, communication between the federal, state, and local governments is necessary. Believes that intergovernmental interactions are related to states having federal administrative systems, where significant sub-national units (province, region, or state) and the federal, central, or national government have formal constitutional relationships. This aims to strengthen the establishment of cooperative rather than competitive relationships between the federal, state, and local levels of government by fostering peace and harmony among them. Federation and to address the issue of poverty in both urban and rural areas. Assertions that the topic of relationships between and among governments at the local, national, and international levels is well-established. While some of these relationships are formal, most of them are formed informally. Formally, through several written treaty types with different levels of formality, the connections are suitably institutionalised. In a federal state, there are various types of intergovernmental connections. These connections have a wider scope overall. These stand for the main categories of federal unions' intergovernmental connections. The systems that are listed below can be classified as either horizontal or vertical relations.

### **Vertical Relationship:**

**Federal-State relations:** Relationships between the federal and state governments: These can be characterised as interactions pertaining to the implementation of policies.

**Federal-local relationship:** Also known as interactions between the federal and local governments, this kind of relationship is not typical in all federal political systems. It always happens when a local government experiences a natural disaster that is more severe than what the state government can handle. A prime illustration of this is the federal government's recent intervention in Oyo state, Nigeria, following a flood that affected a greater population in certain local governments. This led to the federal government allocating some cash to address the issue through the state governments' political apparatus.

**Relationships between the federal, state, and local governments:** This usually occurs in a country such as Nigeria, when the federal government decides to connect with the local government through

the political channel of the state government. Direct interactions between the federal government and local government without first passing through the state government are becoming increasingly rare. State-local relationships are those that exist between local and state governments that are under their respective purviews. A great example of this is the joint account between the state and local governments.

### **Horizontal Relationship:**

**State-state relationship:** This refers to the exchanges that take place between two states. Occasionally, when two states are part of the same political party, it is feasible. The main objective of this partnership is to collaboratively pool resources in order to accomplish developmental objectives. One common illustration of this is the joint ownership of Nigeria's Ladoke Akintola University, which was founded by the states of Osun and Oyo.

**Relationship between local governments:** This is relevant when two or more local governments band together to start a specific project or initiative. It is imperative to combat potentially non jurisdictionally bounded harmful environmental hazards. An excellent illustration of this is the emergence of epidemic diseases, which may be borderless. Therefore, in order to address the threat, the affected local governments must work together to implement corrective measures.

An informal intergovernmental relationship exists within a country's federal political spectrum as well. This covers the regional ties inside the nation's geopolitical zone. The Nigerian oil-producing states' forum of governors is a prime illustration of this. It could also take the shape of a political organisation, like the People Democratic Party (PDP) state governors' forum. Drawing on the theory presented above, intergovernmental connections are politically essential in a federal system. Government cooperation is therefore essential to the efficient operation of the government and to the improvement of the general welfare of the populace.

**Federal and Local:** The state of Nigeria is federal. Nigeria's adopted constitution is appropriate for a federal system of government. Nigeria's strict and codified constitution is supposed to guarantee the right distribution of authority and operation in comparison to a federal state. It is also expected to prevent any undue influence from reaching the three tiers of government. This is the purpose and concept of federalism. Federalism, which is huge among federalists, is best defined by K.C. Wearer as a means of allocating powers so that conflicts will eventually arise between local and federal governments. When this happens, political members of the federal union have an obligation to intervene and restore political order to the system. Nigerian government levels should cooperate with one another to maintain the country's federal framework in order to boost effectiveness. The application of economic justice, fairness, equity, and the resolution of disputes in intergovernmental relations are crucial for the growth of good governance in Nigeria. Every government has a defined domain of power. While government ought to be autonomous and well-coordinated, it should also be

contained inside its own boundaries and function as such. Federalism is the process by which a federation's constituent units are constitutionally granted political and economic authority in a way that prevents any one unit from having an undue influence over any other. To effectively administer the business of its citizens, each unit in this tier of government must appropriately and maximally concentrate its powers. This is what devolution of power is all about.

According to the federalism philosophy that Nigeria has embraced, a federal structure requires each government to have autonomy, which is predicated on each government's independent existence and freedom from the influence of another government. Consequently, each government operates as an autonomous institution that can handle its own business without interference from another government, rather than as an adjunct of another government. Nonetheless, it's crucial to remember that the federalist philosophy is distinguished by the following characteristics:

- 1) The constitution's supremacy, which is typically codified and strict
- 2) Redistributing and devolution of authority and functions
- 3) The judiciary's independence and supremacy

To put it simply, cooperative federalism is the practice of a transformational intergovernmental relationship. At this point, it is important to remember that cooperation between a federation's component units is essential to its collective development and is necessary for the organisation to remain cohesive. The three tiers of government must continue to be autonomous while working together for the reciprocal and complementary purposes of cooperation, not dominance, according to the letter and spirit of federalism. Federalism is not always a cooperative system. Nigeria is currently a federation with a competitive, rather than a cooperative, and centralised, rather than a decentralised structure. She appears to have lost her cooperative bond due to this status, which is thought to be the driving force behind general and even development within the federal framework. For this reason, a large number of people are demanding that Nigeria's federalism be restructured. The three levels of government will fairly depend on one another for both individual and group development thanks to cooperative federalism. Nigerian federalism has given the various tiers of government a structure for working together and managing the nation's diversity. Nonetheless, there are still issues in maintaining efficient intergovernmental relations and meeting the requirements of every Nigerian.

As Nigeria's third level of government, the local government is recognised by the constitution and is granted some latitude and autonomy in how it carries out its functions. Its autonomy is not absolute, though, since it still has certain functional, financial, and administrative ties to the federal and state governments, and these linkages have an impact on its autonomy.

**Fiscal Relationship:** The National Assembly, a branch of the federal government, is responsible for deciding how much money from the federation account is allocated to each local government in the

nation under section 162(3) of the 1999 constitution. Additionally, in accordance with S. 162(5) of the Constitution, the National Assembly itself determines the portion of the Federation Account that is credited to the local governments in Nigeria and allocated to the States for the benefit of respective local governments. The federal government thus sets the amount that is distributed to the local governments from the federation account, thereby establishing the fiscal connection between the federal and local governments.

**Functional Relationship :** Section 2 of the Fourth Schedule to the 23 1999 Constitution describes the activities that the Local Government may carry out in tandem with other tiers of government, so capturing the functional link between the federal, state, and local governments. These include the delivery and upkeep of primary, adult, and vocational education; the supply and upkeep of health care services; and any other duties that the State House of Assembly may assign to the Local Governments. Nigeria's intergovernmental relationship is typified by a functional approach, in which various governmental levels collaborate to advance the common good and guarantee the efficient provision of services to the Nigerian populace.

**Administrative Relationship:** The federal and local governments have a wide range of administrative ties. These consist of the following: - Law enforcement, peace, and security; these are necessary for a Local Government to have an efficient administrative framework. In this sense, the armed forces—including the police—assist local governments. Local governments rely on federal security agencies to assist them in enforcing bylaws, safeguarding their treasuries and other assets, and collecting their legal revenue. – Access to Donor Agencies: Without authorization from the federal governments, the nation's donor agencies find it difficult to establish relationships with local governments in rural areas. Local governments receive access to these donor agencies through the federal government. Programmes to Alleviate Poverty: The majority of Nigeria's impoverished live in the rural areas where local governments are based. Therefore, the projects aimed at reducing poverty offer genuine forums for administrative communication between the federal and local governments. 24 – Capacity building and training: The federal government, through the office of the secretary to the government of the federation, facilitates capacity building initiatives that offer chances for contacts between the federal and local governments.

#### **Fourth Republic:**

Since its establishment in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed notable shifts in its intergovernmental relations. The country's fourth republic is distinguished by a dynamic and intricate interaction of power dynamics among the federal, state, and local governments. The Fourth Republic's constitution lays out each level of government's duties and powers in detail, but in reality, there have been conflicts and difficulties in their relationships, with resource distribution and revenue sharing being major problems in Nigeria's intergovernmental relations. The state and municipal governments

mainly depend on federal funding, yet the federal government controls the majority of the nation's earnings from resources like oil and gas. This has frequently resulted in arguments and debates regarding the allocation of funds, making certain nations feel underfunded and marginalised. The question of decentralisation and autonomy in intergovernmental interactions in Nigeria is also crucial. Although the state and municipal governments are given certain autonomy under the constitution, in reality, the federal government frequently has a great deal of power over them. Calls for more decentralisation and power devolution to the lowest echelons of government have resulted from this. The various levels of government have had difficulty coordinating and cooperating, which has resulted in inefficiencies and effort duplication. The need for improved coordination and collaboration between the federal, state, and local governments is especially apparent in sectors like infrastructure development, healthcare, and education. As the various levels of government in the fourth republic of Nigeria negotiate their respective roles and responsibilities within a convoluted federal system, intergovernmental relations have been characterised by a mixture of cooperation and confrontation. To maintain efficient governance and progress at all governmental levels, more communication, collaboration, and adherence to the constitution are required going forward. In Nigeria's Fourth Republic, executive-legislative confrontations have been a recurring aspect of democratic governance.

Many analysts have maintained that the conflicts between the legislative and executive branches over the legislature's monitoring function in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2014 were essential for the advancement of democratic values in the country's political process. The calls for responsible governance in Nigeria had gained some traction thanks to several government institutions and parastatals. Nonetheless, the experiences of the nation since 1999 have shown certain personal aspects to the conflicts between the two branches of government, even though they still appear to be constitutional issues. As has been said, an examination of the legislature's and the executive branch's interactions since 1999 has exposed a tangle of disputes and controversies with significant effects for the country's democratic process and the efficient operation of government. The contentious nature of the executive-legislative ties under Nigeria's presidential system during the course of succeeding administrations since 1999 was marked by conflicts, political competition, and mistrust towards one another. These have been significant contributors to government inefficiency, showing up as deadlocks in the creation and execution of policies and the allocation of funding. In Nigeria in 2012, the ongoing disputes between the legislative and executive branches have a negative impact on the country's democratic stability and growth. 2009 reasoned that unstable connections between the legislative and executive branches continue to be a primary cause of political instability in Nigeria. Fights between the executive and legislative branches encourage the development of democratic values in industrialised democracies. Achieving more precisely defined domains of

influence for the two branches of government is one of these values since courts are more likely to step in during impasses over policy. Furthermore, conflicts between the two branches encourage a vigorous discussion on creating strong institutions in 2014 in addition to increasing commitment to institutionalising a strict regime of accountability governance. The narratives surrounding the crises of seated leadership involve the continuation of hostilities between the two arms; yet, the results in Nigeria's presidential system are not the same. This is an ongoing problem that shows itself as unrestrained struggle among the political elite for control of the state's essence, ostensibly for a calculated political advantage and unjustified financial benefit linked to the Nigerian people.

### **State building:**

Nigeria's journey towards state-building has been difficult and complex since the country's 1960 independence from British colonial authority. In its quest to construct a powerful and efficient government, the nation has encountered various impediments such as political unpredictability, dishonesty, conflicts between different ethnic and religious groups, and financial difficulties. The creation of a democratic political system in Nigeria, complete with regular elections and peaceful handovers of power, has been a crucial milestone in the process of state-building. Nonetheless, the nation has seen problems with political violence, voter intimidation, and electoral fraud, all of which have damaged the legitimacy of the democratic process.

This section's task is to provide a thorough evaluation of some of the state-building initiatives of Nigeria's successive federal or central governments in order to offer practical and long-lasting answers to the perennially puzzling Nigerian Question, which has consistently shown the politically astute to be incorrect. Some academics are inclined to see these programs—which include regionalism, state creation, the federal character principle, the National Youth Service Corps, and the establishment of Unity schools—as accommodating methods, policy options, or answers. As a concept in socio-political analysis and as a policy option for managing complex power relations among the diverse and heterogeneous units of a nation-state, regionalism lends itself to a multiplicity of uses, including rearranging distributional inequities and allocative inefficiencies in resource management. The latter use of regionalism is the main focus of this research. This is the foundation for its perception as “a principle which seeks to attribute a unit within a federation with a distinct individuality, with a claim upon the loyalty of its inhabitants, competing with, if not overriding, loyalty to the Federal state. Nigeria is associated with the following historical turning events or milestones in regionalism: 1914, 1939, 1954, and 1963. Nigeria's history is noteworthy for the unification of the protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria with the Colony of Lagos in 1914, which made it possible for Nigeria to be divided into two separate areas. In 1939, the Southern region was split into Eastern and Western regions. The North, West, and East, which are home to the majority of the population, are recognised as the three dominating regions under the 1954

Constitution. The Mid-West region was added in 1963, bringing the total number of areas to four. The main political, administrative, economic, and sociocultural divides in Nigeria were highlighted by these occurrences. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that regionalism, as a state-building project or policy choice for handling issues related to pluralism, combined a variety of social formations and ethnic nationalities under an unworkable paternalistic postcolonial federal state, which either created or encouraged the Nigerian question. The administration has put in place a number of reforms with the goals of strengthening economic development, lowering corruption, and enhancing governance. But there's still a long way to go before resolving the fundamental problems impeding Nigeria's state building efforts.

### **Nigeria's state-building faces a number of obstacles, including:**

Socioeconomic inequality is one obstacle to Nigeria's state-building.

Constitutional disputes.

Establishing institutions for growth and democracy.

Leadership difficulties.

Historical aftereffects of colonialism.

### **Conclusion:**

In a federal democracy, intergovernmental relations are very important. The fourth republic's depiction of the intergovernmental relationship in Nigeria was one of discord. The main points of contention under President Olusegun Obasanjo's Fourth Republic administration were resource control, increased revenue allocation, and the difficulty of establishing local governments. To facilitate government policies and initiatives in Nigeria, interactive federalism and a cooperative approach to dispute resolution are required. Government programmes will face significant setbacks in the absence of reciprocal relationships and understanding among the various levels of government. Within the federal political architecture of Nigeria, every level of government has unique characteristics. It is impossible to overstate the importance of state and municipal governments in the overall execution of government policy. It is the duty of the federal government to enact policies that would improve the lives of the populace as a whole. These policies must be implemented locally through the political support of state and local governments in Nigeria. Every form of government will inevitably encounter conflict. When this happens, political members of the federal union have an obligation to intervene and restore political order to the system. Every level of government in Nigeria should support one another's efforts to maintain the country's federal state in order to improve performance. Economic justice, fairness, equity, and mitigation of intergovernmental relations conflicts are essential components for advancing good governance in Nigeria.

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