

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE
SUSTENANCE OF DEMOCRACY
(A STUDY OF NIGERIA 1999-2015)

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**THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE SUSTENANCE OF DEMOCRACY
(A STUDY OF NIGERIA 1999-2015)**

BY

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APPROVAL PAGE

This research has read and approved as meetings the requirement for the award of Higher National Diploma in the Department of Public Administration, College of Business and Management Studies, Jigawa State Polytechnic, Dutse.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declared that besides the references made in this research work, the idea contained are solely a record of my original research work undertaking under the supervision of Mallam Janaidu Muhammed and that the work is not copied, neither has it ever been presented here in Jigawa State Polytechnic nor elsewhere for the award of certificate. All sources are duly acknowledged and to the best of my knowledge, all information herein is original.

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the research work for this project has been conducted and prepared by Abba Ali Musa with Reg. No. HND/PAD/18/010A was carried out under my supervision.

Mallam Janaidu Muhammed

Sign and Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Almighty Allah for the ability given to me to perform this gigantic task and also to my parents for their support throughout my life in fact they will forever be remembered.

And my Late Sister Safiya Abba Musa, may her soul rest in perfect peace (Amin).

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In the name of Allah the beneficent and most merciful, peace and blessing of Allah be upon his beloved Messenger Muhammad (S.A.W). I specially acknowledge my Father Alh Abba Musa, my Mother Malama Halimatu Saadiyya Abba Musa and my brothers and Sisters and my lovely and caring wife Khadija Abdullahi for their relentless effort to see my studies consummated and also acknowledge the contribution of my entire course mate especially Abba Ahmad and Abdulrazak Shitu, may God bless them all.

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ABSTRACT

The research has taken a cursory study on The Role of CSOs in the sustenance of democracy a study of Nigeria from 199-2015. Four research questions; What are the roles of civil society in third world nation with particular reference to Nigeria? What are the contributions of Civil Society in the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria? What are the main challenges and constraints faced by Civil Society in the sustenance and promoting democracy and good governance? How the role and performance of civil society can be enhanced in carrying out their primary duties? The liberal theory of civil society was adopted as a theoretical framework for analysis. Taking a historical perspective, relevant literatures on civil society and democracy, the evolution of the CSOs in Nigeria, their activities during and after the Military era were x-rayed. The research established that CSOs plays vital role and have contributed tremendously to the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria by protesting against tenure elongation, participation in the electoral reform, advocacy for the passage of the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill into law, voter education and mobilization and election monitoring. However, CSO have not done enough and are facing a number of challenges. In fact, while the number of registered CSO has increased, good democratic governance dividends still elude the country. With massive army of unemployment, bribery and corruption is rife with resurgence of clandestine militia groups spread all over the country, ethno-religious violence and extra judicial killings are rampant. It is therefore finalized or concluded that the civil society cannot be over emphasized in the democracy, development, economic and the upliftment of the principles of fundamental human rights in Nigeria in particular and the Africa at large. The findings of the research study unveil that civil society had have played a critical roles and contributed immensely in the development and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria but a lot need to be done. This is because while the number of registered CSO has increased, good democratic governance dividends still elude the country. Thus, the study recommended that, the structure, activities as well as leadership quality of CSOs must be improved and there should be a way in which CSOs could be independent politically and financially to carry out their activities without any external influence or interference.

CHAPTER ONE GENERAL BACKGROUND

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Civil society groups in Nigeria have been indispensable actors in the democratization process especially since the return of civil rule in 1999. A vibrant civil society is sine qua non to the sustainability of any nation 's democratic process and social development. Studies have shown that the role of civil society groups is vital in the political, social and economic development of African countries (Diamond, 1999; Ndegwa, 1996; Yohanness, 1997; and Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). According to Yohanness (1997), this role can be view from three dimensions. First, improving the quality of governance; second, developing the capacity of governments to apply the principles of accountability, transparency and openness; third, working towards gaining the commitment of all elected officials, public servants, and NGOs to good governance. In view of these, one can infer that, civil societies have, contributed immensely to democratic consolidation and sustainable development in Nigeria. In fact, the responsibility of ensuring sustainable development rest on the shoulder of civil society. This is because; they are the agents of development in any nation. They serve as the internal correctional mechanism to check and balance on the activities of government to avoid wasteful spending, misappropriation and embezzlement of funds and help determine or prioritize the needs of the people (African Development Forum [ADF], 2004).

Civil societies have globally become active non-state agents of democratic governance saddled with the multifaceted responsibilities of providing social welfare, economic empowerment, humanitarian services, political participation, human capital development and economic activities, Keane (1989) and Ikelegbe (2013). Besides, civil society has become important agents for engendering good democratic governance through the promotion of accountability, transparency, rule of law, curtailment of human rights abuses, and capitalist exploitation. Civil society is seen as the cumulus of voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, and autonomous associations different from the state, business and family and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules that is open to the public Woods (1992). It is known as the third sector because it serves as a vibrant social intermediary between the state, business and family. Harbeson (1993), postulated that Civil society in Africa and Nigeria in particular is a recent phenomenon that

characterized the recent ascendancy of neoliberal democratic institution. According to Ikelegbe (2007), civil society provides the oil that lubricates the relationship between the government, business outfits and the people. He observed that emerging democracies especially in Africa and Nigeria cannot be consolidated or sustained without a virile and vibrant civil society.

Democracy is about effective and efficient representation and delivery of the dividends of good governance to the masses. Aiyede (2003), posited that Civil society is sine qua non to democratic governance, which explicitly is about providing social security, expanding and advocating for economic opportunities, rule of law, freedom of press, nipping in the bud ethnoreligious violence, provision of basic infrastructural facilities, guarantee of oppositions, and a regular free and fair election. However, to Hearn (2001), because the state represents the interest of the ruling class, whose interest is to perpetually control the apparatus of state power and machinery of government at all cost, the interest of the people especially in emerging democracies in Africa tend to be disregarded. Coupled with this is the poverty of democracy in Africa which is manifest in the rising profiles of poverty, dictatorship, human rights abuses, hunger, insecurity, endemic corruption and bribery, environmental degradation, diseases, illiteracy, gender violence and underdevelopment Abutudu (1995).

As Fatton (1995) observed, the states in Africa are incapacitated and irresponsible to the wellbeing of the people which it claims to protect. In the midst of these ad infinitum problems, the civil society is therefore, expected to serve as a watch dog against excesses of government and capitalists by providing a platform for aggregating and championing the interest of the people both in urban and rural areas to demand delivery of good governance from the government.

Civil society organizations in contemporary Nigeria had considered to be active groups and in some cases inactive in performing their primary duties or seem to have gone to slumber. Thus, the sporadic cases of election riggings, stuffing and snatching of ballot papers and boxes, corruption, unbridled executive recklessness, project abandonment, neglect of rural women and incessant hikes in prices of petroleum and school fees leading to increased school dropout, kidnapping, banditry and general social and economic insecurity are rife and rapidly on the increase in Nigeria while civil society watches and remain hapless.

This research work is therefore, an attempt to examine civil society and democratic sustainability in Nigeria fledgling democracy (1999-2015) from historical perspective. What have been set to achieve is to assess the extent to which civil society in Africa's most populous Country-Nigeria, has been able to stimulate the entrenchment of good governance, democratic sustenance and national reconciliation since the return to democratic rule in 1999.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The of lack a positive effect on the role of civil societies has called to question on the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria. Civil society groups in Nigeria have been indispensable actors in the democratization process especially since the return to civil rule in 1999. As agents of social change germane for mass reorientation and mobilization, they have helped in the sustenance and deepening of democratic governance by providing a critical socio-economic and political services to Nigerians in both urban and rural areas. However, in spite of the ubiquitous nature of civil society in contemporary Nigeria's democratic governance, there still exist, immense lacunae in the nation's current democratic governance. The democratic system in Nigeria is riddled with corruption, bribery, nepotism, human rights abuses, electoral frauds, godfatherism, violence, economic injustice and the rise in ethnic militia movements that tend to make mockery of Nigeria claim to democratic governance. Thus Therefore, this research study intends to look at the roles of civil societies in effectively ensuring the continuation of democracy in Nigeria (1999-2015), it will also highlight some of the problems that could militate against the emergence of a viable civil society and look at how the strength of Nigeria civil society could be enhanced.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The research study is primarily to find the roles of Civil Society in promoting democracy, good governance, peace and national reconciliation in Nigeria. Through the uses of all forms of secondary data and document analysis. this study has the following objectives:

1. To determine the roles of civil society on the sustenance of democracy in third world nation with particular reference to Nigeria.
2. To examine the contributions of Civil Society in the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria.

3. To explore the main challenges and constraints faced by Civil Society in the sustenance of democracy and good governance in Nigeria.

4. To recommend the way forward and propose the conditions under which the role and performance of civil society will be enhanced in Nigeria in particular and in third world nations in general.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The effectiveness of civil society in easing democratic transition in Nigeria with special reference to its consolidating role has been perceived too weak. It is therefore, timely and patient to look into the issues and proposed a way forward to dispute the outlined weakness. Democracy is still largely adjudged as the best form of government because of the freedom (bill of rights) it ensured in any given polity.

Therefore, this research work is attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the roles of civil society on the sustenance of democracy in third world nation in general and particularly in Nigeria?
2. What are the contributions of Civil Society in the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria?
3. What are the main challenges and constraints faced by Civil Society in the sustenance and promoting democracy and good governance?
4. How the role and performance of civil society can be enhanced in carrying out their primary duties?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study will lie in the difference; it is capable of making to the enhancement of democratic ethics in the Nigeria political system. Its premise is that civil society has a great role to play in expanding Nigeria nascent democracy across its territorial boundaries.

It will also contribute to the advancement of knowledge as it relates to this field of enquiries. It is hope that it will provoke further research in the nearest future.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research work is restricted to the geographical entity known as Nigeria from 1999 to 2015 with the analysis of the actions and inactions of various civil society groups found in it. These various groups will be used as studies from time to time as the circumstances demands, however, these does not mean that when the situation demands, references will not be drawn from other countries in as much as it will help to advance this research work.

1.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

As the case usually is, there are certain limitations the researcher will be faced with in the cause of this study. One is in the area of finance which might have a direct consequence on the quality of suitable materials. Apart from finance, also considering the fact that research work of this nature are often done within a time frame, the study therefore cannot be exhaustive in its entirety. However, it is hoped that these constraints so named will be checked mated by making the best use of the materials that researcher have and spending more than necessary time in the research report will be minimal, thus making the objectives and significance of the study.

1.7 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, it is situated between latitudes 400E and 1400N and longitude 300E and 1400E of the Greenwich meridian. It is bounded in the west by the Republic of Benin, on the north by the Republic of Niger, on the north-east, by Lake Chad, on the east by the Republic of Cameroun and in the south by the Atlantic Ocean. It has a total area of 923, 768 square kilometers. It has a total of 910, 770 landed mass and 13,000 square kilometer water ways. It is mostly located in the tropical region. Nigeria has a population of about 206,139,580 million (National Population Commission, 2020).

As one moves from the north to the south, the vegetation progressively changes from savannah grassland to tropical rain forest. Typically, there are two main seasons: rainy season and dry season interspersed by the harmattan season. The rains are heaviest in the south and thinnest in the north. Since the 1970s desert encroachment and desertification have become a serious environmental

problem to the northernmost states. There are about more than 300 different ethnic groups within the boundaries of Nigeria including the three major ones, the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The ethnic, cultural and economic variations and long years of intermingling among the various groups have combined to produce very rich cultures and art forms which form the heritage of modern Nigeria. It is estimated that 50 percent of Nigerians are Muslim, 40 percent are Christian, and that the remaining 10 percent practice various indigenous religions. Muslims can be found in all parts of Nigeria, their strongest foothold is north among the Hausa and the Yoruba. Christianity is most prevalent in the south of Nigeria.

The Nigerian state is a colonial creation. It is a product of a historical antecedent that arose out of European adventurism with its eventual culmination in the colonization of Africa. Thus, while the European explorers discovered the undeveloped estate that later became Nigeria, the missionaries established the presence of Europe in the area to pave the way for the eventual arrival of the European traders with their aggressive trade interest. First, the European explorers, second, the European Christian Missionaries and, third, the European traders played very important roles in the chronological sequence of events that led to the colonization and creation of the Nigerian state. It was the aggressive economic interest and the contestation for the avaricious acquisition of the natural wealth of the native peoples that encouraged the convocation of the inglorious Berlin Conference of 1884-85. Arising from the Berlin Conference, the European interlopers adopted more carefully articulated control mechanisms to bring their effectively occupied territories under their control. It was at the Conference that the British got the imprimatur from the circle of European collaborators to occupy the area that later became known as Nigeria.

Nigeria was established in the late nineteenth century, starting with the Colony of Lagos in 1861. Subsequently, the Oil Rivers Protectorate was created in southeastern Nigeria and the Royal Niger Company was given a charter to control what later became Northern Nigeria. By 1900, there were the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. In 1904, the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was divided into Central and Eastern Provinces, west and east of the River Niger. Thus, the Northern Protectorate and the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were amalgamated in 1914 to create modern Nigeria, largely to save the British treasury from direct financial responsibility for the administration of Northern Nigeria. However, despite

this purported amalgamation, the British continued to run the two halves of the country—North and South—as separate political and administrative entities with little common linkage outside of common economic infrastructure such as roads, railways and a common currency. Amalgamation entailed neither a unification of colonial policies in the two halves of the country nor the development of an integrated administration (Oyovbaire, 1983). Different systems of law and land tenure were developed in the two halves. The attempt to extend the Northern aristocratic system of Indirect Rule to eastern Nigeria for fiscal and ideological reasons failed woefully. Thereafter, different systems of local governance were also developed in different parts of the country. The governance of Lagos Colony, where a limited elective principle was introduced, was also different from the rest of Southern Nigeria.

The Nigerian Council, including six prominent traditional rulers from the northern and southwestern parts of the country, was constituted in 1916, ostensibly to create a national platform for this bifurcated colony. The council met rarely; in reality, the inward-looking colonial administrative ethos and practices in both the North and the South ensured that the two halves of the country continued to evolve as separate entities. And the political and administrative cleavages were further accentuated by colonial prejudice. British administrators serving in the North often regarded Southerners as unruly savages, while those in the South regarded Northerners as ignorant and backward. Such was the “partisan” gulf between the colonial administrations of both Northern and Southern Nigeria that a standard joke among educated Nigerians in the 1930s was that the two British administrations would have gone to war but for the presence of the Nigerian population separating them (Afigbo, 1989). The colonial administrative staff in the North were particularly prone to a separatist psychology (Bell, 1989). This structural and psychological divide woven into the very structure of the colonial state permeated the society and remains engrained in Nigerian political life. Furthermore, the colonial policy of Indirect Rule, conducted through local chiefs, accentuated localism. Lord Lugard, the deliberate architect of this bifurcated colony based on regionalism and localism, left in 1918, bringing to an end a period in which Nigeria existed in name only.

One of the few efforts at unifying the peoples of the country was the Clifford Constitution of 1922, which sought to integrate the two Southern provinces and the Colony of Lagos, while at the same

time creating more scope for the participation of the Western-educated elite. A legislative council was established to replace the Nigerian Council and the Lagos Legislative Council. For the first time, direct elections were extended outside the Colony of Lagos, with the inclusion of an elected member from Calabar in the southeast. Though only four of the 46 members of this council were elected, the new council stimulated nationalist sentiments and political party formation.

By 1938, the National Youth Movement, representing the new educated and commercial elite of Lagos, had superseded the Nigerian National Democratic Party, formed in response to the Clifford Constitution. Both parties had "national" in their names, but this was a claim sustained more by aspiration than reality. Both represented the nascent elite of Lagos and its immediate surroundings, but claimed to speak for the "nation". The impact of the Second World War was to increase the tempo of the social and political ferment, with ex-servicemen, organized labour and students joining the fray. Many more parts of Southern Nigeria were thereby drawn into the "nationalist" movement. An umbrella movement, which later became the National Council of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC), was formed in 1944 to agitate for better educational provision. Though it had the Lagos elite at its core, it was able to incorporate a few individuals from the North into its ranks, if only for a while. The Richards Constitution of 1946 sought to respond to the postwar pressures. It formally introduced regionalism as a premise for governance, giving a *de jure* foundation to an extant reality. This regionalism also corresponded to ethnicity: with the Hausa-Fulani in Northern Nigeria, Igbo in the Eastern Region and the Yoruba in the Western Region, the territoriality of ethnicity was enhanced. The ethnic minorities in each region were forced to accommodate as best they could to the rising tide of majoritarian hegemony in each region.

The MacPherson Constitution of 1951 sought to respond to Nationalist Movement that is, NCNC criticisms of the Richards Constitution. Its lasting legacy was to further entrench regionalism in the Nigerian state. Common economic infrastructure, particularly the marketing boards, was regionalized, creating even more powerful incentives for ethno-regional elites to organize along regional lines for the control of the marketing board surpluses. Regional Parliaments were also introduced, channeling political aspirations into regional institutions. A national House of Representatives was put in place in Lagos, composed of representatives of the regional assemblies. African ministers were put in charge of regional and central ministries. Not only were the entire

administrative and fiscal structures of governance now formally regionalized, Nigeria also developed a bifurcated nationalist movement with a modernist nationalism in the South, based on a Westernized elite and enlightenment ideals, and a more traditional nationalism in the North, based on Islamic traditionalism and aristocratic symbolism.

The nationalists' political movement was firmly split along ethno-regional lines: The Hausa-Fulani-dominated Northern People's Congress (NPC) in Northern Nigeria, the Yoruba-dominated Action Group (AG) in the Western Region and the increasingly Igbo-dominated NCNC in the Eastern Region. In federations, political parties have the important responsibility of building bridges, but these parties not only reflected the extant cleavages, they helped to shape and intensify them (Dare 1988). In each region, ethnic minorities were increasingly discriminated against. In a trenchant criticism of Nigerian democratic practice, Nolutshungu (1990) argues that Nigerian regional elites who developed within the contours of each region sought to maintain their privileged domain by "sanctifying" the regional artifice. They developed a common notion of democracy: "as the context within which competition was to be undertaken rather than the issue contested. Democracy was not championed or challenged with respect to its content of rights, but was the mechanism through which political power would be gained or distributed, and with it economic power and status" What emerged from this notion of democracy was an intensely regional and conflictual political system, led by "juggernauts" representing the major ethnic group of each region: Sir Ahmadu Bello for the Hausa-Fulani in Northern Nigeria, Nnamdi Azikiwe for the Igbo in the Eastern Region and Obafemi Awolowo for the Yoruba in the Western Region. Each elite group wanted to succeed the departing colonial authorities, or to have a major say in the successor regime; political elites, local businessmen and administrators all had a stake in this competition. Parties "were contrived for political advantage rather than as the expression of primordial identities and sensibilities" Nolutshungu (1990). Between 1951 and 1966, the parties clashed over a number of issues.

First, they clashed over the date for the granting of regional self-government. While the Southern regions wanted an early transfer of power, the North was fearful of such a development.

Second, the regional parties clashed over the nature of the constitutional settlement for independence in 1960. A particular sticking point was the insistence of regional leaders from the

Northern Nigeria at the 1958 constitutional conference that half of the seats in the proposed independence Parliament must be conceded to the Northern Region on the basis that it contained more than half of the national population. As a result of the adoption of this constitutional principle, parliamentary representation was determined by regional quota, and not actual votes won; the North got a built-in veto power within the federation.

Third, after independence, the regional parties engaged in intense confrontation with each other over the allocation of federal projects, particularly the proposed iron and steel project that each region coveted. In 1964, the NCNC government of the Eastern Region issued a statement bitterly attacking its alliance partner at the federal level, the Northern-based NPC, of using "the little power we surrendered to them to preserve a unity which does not exist" in order to direct money obtained from oil resources in the east "our money" to carry out development projects in the North (Okeke, 1992).

Fourth, since the allocation of political seats and economic resources was based on the size of each constituency's population, the conduct of censuses became a highly charged affair as each region sought to inflate its figures. Fifth, there was an incessant struggle over the criteria for the allocation of state revenue. Which authority had the power to collect which taxes, and how federally collected revenues were to be distributed to the composite units of the federation became issues of constant political disputation.

Apart from these specific areas of disagreement, there was also the constant factor of the fear of being excluded from the post-colonial settlement. This fear of being outwitted by its ethno-regional rivals, each regional elite contributed to the escalation of ethnic and political tension. In the process, a political system has been consolidated based on cultural plurality, elitism and communal cleavages (Oyovbaire, 1983).

While each majority ethnic elite sought to ensure its stranglehold on its region, it also sought to create a winning coalition at the center by exploiting minority grievances in the other regions. As a result, the Mid-West Region was created for ethnic minorities in 1963 out of a politically weakened Western Region (Omoigui, 2002). The continuing instability within the political system,

coupled with the sustained resentment of many minority ethnicities, led to the collapse of the First Republic in January 1966 and the emergence of military rule.

Many military regimes have sought to restructure the country by dismantling the regional framework so central to ethnic political contestation. Explicit efforts were also made to address minority grievances. The result has been a sustained process of state creation, from the four regions of 1963, to the 12 states of 1967, to 19 states in 1976, to 21 in 1987, to 30 in 1991 and finally to 36 states in 1996. During the same period, the third tier of governance in the federation, the local government authority, expanded from about 330 to 774. However, far from curbing ethno-regionalism, the state creation process simply restructured it. Without their regional institutional backbone and now split into many states, hegemonic ethno-regional elites adopted other symbols and rituals as rallying points, leaving the tripolarity of the political system almost intact. Meanwhile, some minority ethnic groups secured states or local governments of their own, sometimes in an uneasy alliance with other minority groups, leading to the emergence of "majority" minority groups in some states and local governments.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Conceptual clarification is a major requirement for any scientific or empirical research. It lay the basis for outright understanding of major concepts that will be used, this is because concept is the building block of any given discipline.

1.8.1 Civil Society

A whole range of social groups that seeks to operate independently of the state such as private business enterprises, labor unions, trade association, religious bodies, student organizations, artistic and publication (Gold 1999).

Civil society according to Chukwuma, (2005) is defined as a set of institutions, organization and behavior situated between the state, business world and family. These include non-governmental organization, private voluntary organization, people's organizations, civic organization, organization, community based organization, cultural, gender, religious, and social organizations. In a similar vein, Ikelegbe (2013) defined civil society as the associational life of citizens characterized by

common interests, civil and public purposes, and voluntary collective autonomous actions. It also stretches to include all those associations that enable citizens to participate voluntarily, freely and openly within the public realm, and operate and function independent of and outside state and corporate powers though, relating with them. Civil society acts as a buffer against the power of the central government and in that capacity encourages individuals to follow their own courses without fear of intimidation from the central government.

Besides, civil society is also defined as the arena outside of the family, the state and the market where people associate to advance common interest. The essence of civil society is the advancement of the interest of a group of people with a common socio-economic, political or cultural interest with the objective of not to capture political power or make profits but to provide and advance the course of good governance and common good of its members (Ghaus-Pasha, 2004). To Tocqueville, civil society refers to associational activity that occurs in political space outside the state, an ideology that gained renewed momentum in the 1980 and 1990s as organizations and activists struggled to challenge dictatorships and illiberal regimes.

Uwan and Yearoo (2009) define civil society as the set of institutions and organizations that interface between the state, business world and the family. They further argued that civil society is the arena of un-coerced collective actions around shared interests, values. In theory the institutions are different from the state, business and family world though in practice, the boundary between the state, family, market and civil society are often complex, blurred and negotiated. They identified civil society to include Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs), Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), people's organizations, community based organizations (CBOs), civic clubs, and trade unions.

Civil society is therefore, in this research work taken to mean the third sector, the collectivity of associational groups that is different from the state, business and family that is geared towards the promotion of group goals and objectives. Civil society provides the necessary social lubricants that interface between the government and the citizens especially in the promotion of good democratic governance. Their responsibilities are clearly defined and cut across social, political, economic and cultural matrix of human society.

1.8.2 Democracy

Democracy is a buzz word that lacks a generally acceptable definition globally; this even partly, explains why some autocratic regimes have branded themselves to be democratic. Democracy is in fact, the most promiscuous word in world affairs and public discourse. According to a former American president, Abraham Lincoln (1863), democracy is defined as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. Democracy is about the sovereignty of the people, effective representation of the people, accountability, and rule of law, free and fair periodic elections, and provisions of basic infrastructure, social security, and transparency in management of common wealth.

Fadakinte (2013) democracy is a form of government by mean of which citizens, through free and open institutional arrangements are empowered to choose and remove leaders in a competitive struggle for peoples' vote. Diamond (1999) avers that Liberal Democracy is a representative kind of governance in which qualified adult members of a given society elect their representatives through a periodic free and fair election. Democracy has recently become one of the fastest growing forms of government because of its ineluctable drive towards human freedom. It entrenches unlimited freedom and rule of law. Ideally, as a result of this, civil society is a symbol of true democracy.

Democracy is about effective and efficient representation and delivery of the dividends of good governance to the masses. It is a political system providing for the participation of citizens in political decision making often by the representatives of governing bodies (Giddens 2001). However, Schumpeter, (1967) posits that the democratic method is that institutional arrangement which realizes the common good by making the people themselves decide who are to assemble in order to carry out its will. And this generalization of the term has prompted imam (1991) to conceptualize democracy as the people's right to participate fully in the discussions and decision on the issues that affect them and take control over their lives. This right may however be very difficult to be claimed in today's Nigerian democratic environment because the right to participate fully in decisions is contradictory with the right to be involved in the democratic process that

brought the governance itself. This means that the choices of the masses are not truly the representation of the people at the government. The practice of democracy as mentioned earlier in Nigeria today, is supposed to be in line with the view point of Enemuo (1999) who sees democracy as a system of government referring to political situation that is characterized by qualities of liberty, freedom of speech and freedom of action.

1.8.3 Democracy Sustenance:

A state of affairs in which none of the major political actors, parties, organized interest, forces or institutions, considers that there is no alternative to democratic processes to gain power and no political institutions has a claim to the action of democratically elected decision makers.

Sustenance as in consolidation is the process by which democracy becomes so broadly and profoundly legitimate among its citizens that it is very unlikely to break down. It involves, behavioral and institutional changes that normalize democratic politics and narrow its uncertainty. This normalization requires the expansion of citizen access, development of democratic citizenship and culture, broadening of leadership recruitment and training, enhancement of national integrative instruments and other functions that civil society performs. However, most of all, and most urgently, it requires political institutionalization. Thus, democracy can best be sustained when we have a good reason to believe that it is capable of withstanding pressure or shocks without abandoning the electoral process or the political freedom on which it depends, including those of dissent and opposition. Moreover, this will require a depth of institutionalization reaching beyond the electoral process itself. Lay Diamond (1995).

From these, however, a variety of different criteria has been proposed in the literature in order to identify a sustained democracy when we see one. Democracy is consolidated when a government that has itself been elected in a free and fair contest is defeated in a subsequent election and accepts the result. The point of this criterion is that, it is not winning office that matters, but losing it and accepting the verdict, because this demonstrates that powerful players, and their social backers, are prepared to put respect for the rules of the game above the continuation of their power. On the other hand, the second option favours a simple longevity or generation test. Twenty years say, of regular competitive elections are sufficient to judge a democracy consolidated, even without a

change of ruling party, since habituation to the electoral process would make any alternative method for appointing rulers unthinkable.

Apart from these two criteria, democracies emerge and become sustained, not out of any principled commitment to democratic norms, but when the major political players recognize sufficient common interest in establishing electoral procedures and subsequently see that their interest in keeping to the rules of the game outweighs the costs to them of their being undermined. The foregoing has demonstrated that the sustainability of democracy is a product of many factors or conditions operating together. No one condition on its own will be either necessary or sufficient but an accumulation of facilitating conditions can be expected to enhance the prospects for the survival of electoral democracy. The project is clearly more difficult in some circumstances than others, and faces much more formidable obstacles in some countries than others. It is a task in the social sciences to identify these circumstances and subject them to comparative analysis.

It is unequivocally glaring to discern the fact that the concept of democratic sustenance has the problems of homonymity (one word meaning many things). For the purpose of this research work however, democratic sustenance means the capacity of the polity to nurture and consolidate democracy over a very long time spell with little or no threat to the abortion of democratic experiment and disintegrative elements in whatever form and pretense (J. Linz 1990).

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade the world has witnessed a dramatic expansion in the size, scope, and capacity of civil society (CS). The expansion of CS is aided by the process of globalization, a growing of democratic governance, telecommunications and economic integration. Together with this, interest in the role of CS also has been growing in recent years. Despite of all the increasing interests of the role of CS, the very concept of CS is seen as complex and difficult to define. The task of defining the concept, identifying CS's essential features and designing a strategy to assess its state is, in itself, a complex and potentially controversial process (Fioramonti & Heinrich, 2007). Civil society can mean different thing to different people depending on what kind of democratic society one has in mind and taking into account the specific political and cultural context in which it operates. More so, the interest of international organizations, international civil society organizations, development and donor agencies in the support and funding of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the third world, was part of efforts to scale down and divest roles from the failing post-colonial states, to strengthen private sector driven development initiatives, promote participatory development efforts and particularly deconstruct state centralized and top down development.

Civil society has become across the world, the non-state emergent agent for providing critical social welfare, social services, humanitarian services, socioeconomic empowerment, political participation, human capital development and productive economic activities. But more importantly, it has become the popular agent for instituting accountability, transparency and good governance, restraining state abuses, resisting the untamed effects of market forces and strengthening public scrutiny (Keane 1989 and Ikelegbe 2013)

In fact, the diversity of efforts of the civil society formation in relation to critical areas of human and national existence, have made it look like it is central to governance at local, national and international levels, the resolution of societal ills and the generation of sustainable development. The international community and governments have tended to embrace CS with high hopes and potentialities as capable of redressing the character of the post-colonial states and contributing

substantially to sustainable development. The CSOs are seen as facilitating divergent voices, broadening rights and freedoms, strengthening collective decision making, participation and consensus building and empowering ordinary people. The CS formation has become so important that its involvement is seen as legitimizing of policies and processes.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Civil society (CS) is both an organizational structure and an analytical tool for the analysis of politics and development. As a structural entity, its precise content and boundary is contested. As an analytical framework, its relevance and potency is also contested. Civil Society (CS) is the associational life of citizens characterized by common interests, civil and public purposes, and voluntary collective and autonomous actions (Grindle, 1996 and Ikelegbe, 2001). It comprises self, autonomous and non-state associations that are voluntarily constituted, self-generating, self-supporting and self-governing (Ikelegbe, 2005). It is those associations that enable citizens to participate voluntarily, freely and openly within the public realm, and operate and function independent of and outside state and corporate power, though relating to them. It comprises clusters of diverse and overlapping non-governmental institutions through which collective and shared wills and interests are articulated, projected and defended. It is the organized socio-political and economic life of citizens and communities, for the mobilization of actions and engagements in relation to their needs, interests, existence and survival. The civil society organization (CSO) is the major non-state structure by which people relate to themselves and through which they relate to the state and socio-political purposes.

According to Temitope (2015), the concept of civil society is extensive and generally falls into three broad functional categories: first, as an alternative to the state; second, as a supporter or ally to the state; and third, as a counterbalance to the state and its policies. Civil society to him, is uniquely Western in origin and, as a result, requires historical and contextual amplification when applied to postcolonial developing nations like Nigeria. Specifically, the unique circumstances surrounding Nigeria's traditional societies before and during colonization, its quests for independence, and the characteristics of the period following independence provide context for discussing how CSOs may be used to foster democratic governance.

As earlier stated the historical origins of the concept of civil society stem from Western ideas of transforming the post-communist society. In *Civil Society: History and Possibilities*, Sudipta K. and Sunil K. (2001), present a compilation of studies that addresses the manner in which a post-communist society interacts with the state especially in terms of the development of autonomous institutions of "all spheres of social life... outside the jurisdiction of the State. Besides the civil development of the post-communist society, the compilation also explores the room for these new associational movements as a vehicle for "radical democratic aspirations."

According to Kaviraj and Khilnani (2001), contemporary discussions of civil society visà-vis Third World societies would best correspond to the 19th-century early industrialization period in Western societies. On this assumption, Khilnani (2001), addresses the developmental context of civil societies, placing both geographic spaces on an equal footing rooted in the "reorganization of their societies around the power of the modern State" and defining associated developmental metrics and standards.

In Africa in particular, the failure of many modern states to materialize has created a situation where some governments are unable to project influence, capability, or capacity beyond their immediate geographic (office) spaces. In this context, civil society is usually externally funded and primarily a service delivery agent. In Africa, civil-society entities tend to be backed by foreign aid and fill the void that inefficient states leave in meeting the basic needs of their citizenry and alleviating crippling poverty. In this role, CSOs literally fulfill the function of the state; hence, becoming an alternative for providing public good.

According to Paulos M. (2006), this observation goes hand in hand with the prevailing mission of most non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to improve the stunted development-centric needs of people; e.g., health, education, and welfare.

Civil society is considered to be a key sector in the governance equation—what some researchers consider the fifth pillar of open democracy. Similarly, Guillermo O'Donnell posits that a consolidated democracy has both horizontal and vertical accountability because it has gone through the institutional reforms that improve the representative functions of democratic

governance by strengthening political parties and their linkages to social groups, reducing fragmentation in the party system, enhancing the autonomous capacity and public accountability of legislatures and local governments, and invigorating civil society.

Steven Friedman (2010), argues that organized civil society is a tool for consolidating and strengthening democracy because it encourages the organization and participation of citizens, but he cautions against limiting that participation solely to CSOs. Friedman alludes to the pitfall of assuming that citizens can be represented through the civil-society paradigm only. Acknowledging the benefits of civil society in helping educate and coalesce citizenship and nationalism, Daniel Hammett (2014) presents civil society as a Western concept that provides a viable tool for Africans. He asserts that organizing to promote citizen demands is not necessarily oppositional toward the state. He frames civil society as a multifaceted tool that can be molded to represent any heterogeneous society in working with the state or contesting political powers. In this paradigm, civil society can fall prey to cooptation by the state. But it can also be used to project the value of heterogeneity and nationalism and to knit together the diverse interests active in public life. Evidence of this type of CSO was common during transitions between military and civilian regimes during the turbulent years of the 1980s and 1990s. New civilian authorities often created unions, truth and commission agencies, anti-graft commissions, and other agencies with the premise of creating space for civil-state dialogue, action, and development. In almost all cases, these agencies are eventually coopted into the patronage stream.

Civil society can also serve as a pure critic of the state. It can function as an oppositional watchdog that slants toward presenting a counterpoint to state actions. While this third perspective occasionally has undertones of the previous perspective, it primarily centers on the capabilities and capacity of civil society within the modern authoritarian construct. In this context, Stephen N. (1996), is among those who argue that CSOs, including NGOs, are charged with opposing "undemocratic governments and furthering and sustaining democracy." In this respect, the role of civil society is beyond filling the service void left by the state. Studies by Naomi C., Harbeson J. and Bratton M. (1994) and (2003) respectively, promote this argument that the primary function of CSOs is to drive change. Writing mostly in the 1990s, these analysts look beyond the role of civil society during the immediate transitions from authoritarian rule. They contend that civil

society is charged with not settling for half-formed democracies, but rather, with pushing to the farthest extent possible from a grassroots level to a mature, fully oppositional party system.

As previously mentioned, theorists such as Montesquieu advocated that civil society was necessary to counter tyrannical authoritarian dictums. As a counterpoint, writing in 2003, Howard Wiarda considers the prevalence of nondemocratic regimes in sub-Saharan Africa and how those regimes so "limit, co-opt, weaken, or destroy all civil society groups that they cannot themselves control." He presents a fairly gloomy picture of civil society's ability to make gains on behalf of citizens and argues that the form of civil society that emerges under authoritarian regimes is one of "corporatism" or state-owned civil society.

The concept of civil society is not new in Nigeria political lexicon, a lot of scholars, social, political and economic has written so much about it and its perceived role.

Mutan (2003), sees civil society as a wide range of association and other organized collections capable of articulating the interest of their members, molding and constraining state power. According to him, their demand provides input for the democratic political process which at times is aggregated by political parties. Their approval or disapproved of what goes on in government contributes to accountability. He further postulates that a count which is well endowed in this respect is well positioned to democracy and ensuring good governance. It is in this same vain that a weak civil society is often used and explained as the failure of democratization.

Gold (1999), sees civil society as a "whole range of socially groups that seeks to operate independents of the state and the communist party" such as private business enterprises, labor unions, trade unions, professional association, religious bodies, student organizations, artistic as publications. His interference is that civil societies are not only independent of the state but as interest group they push forward their demand which contrast that of the government. In other words, it might be for a particular class interest or the interest of the society as a whole, hence, he differentiate civil society from associational group though, sometimes, these terms are use inter changeably. Associational groups are more specific in their demands than civil society.

Diamond (1995), viewed civil society as that realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self-generation, self-supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order and a set of shared rules. Thus, civil society is an intermediary entity standing between the private sphere and state, it is distinct from society in general, in that it involves citizens acting collectively in the public sphere to express and hold state officials accountable.

He lists the characteristics of civil societies as follows:

1. An organized civil society serves as a check against the excesses of government, human-rights violations, and abuse of the rule of law and monitors the application of constitutional provisions.
2. It increases the participation and the skills of all the various segments of a society and instills a sense of tolerance, thrift, hard work, moderation, and compromise among the various competing parties in the society.
3. It serves as an alternative to political parties and can offer a refuge for those who are shut out from their rights due to non-membership in given political parties.
4. It serves to enhance the bargaining power of interest groups and provides inclusive mechanisms for them.
5. It has a role in mitigating the excesses of fundamentalist extremists and maximalists who tend to have a very narrow view of life, in the context of either/or. It thus also provides other alternatives for negotiation within a multifaceted society.

Diamond again distinguished further the difference between civil society from other society in general. This distinguishing factor is basically "interest", it is defined interest that makes member to act collectively in actualizing the goals, aims and objectives. This interest in some cases runs courage to government (state) policies, but on the other hand among civil society group, they do try to find a common ground to act.

In doing this, Diamond says they exchange information. He further describes functions of civil society in a democracy setup, these includes providing the basis for the limitation of state power. It is supposed to supplement the role of political parties to articulate, aggregate and present their interest.

Oyeybare (2000), conceptualized civil society as consisting basically of non-state and non-government group's activity organized to pursue definite issue and interests; he went on to exhaustively list some of them in the Nigeria context. They include the following among other tribal and ethnic associations, the various non- government groups, professional interest group of numerous occupational practices such as pharmacists, nurses, and dentist, media practitioners, proprietors, journalists, youth and student groups, churches, mosques and related ecclesiastical organizations, human rights and civil society liberties bodies groups, the environment (environmentalist) and similar nature oriented advocacy groups, organization for the preservation and advancement of traditional institutions and values, labor and trade union market associations, farmers and gender-based groups, even militant and violence-prone association in his view constitute part of civil society in Nigeria. He like the others, made a distinction between civil society groups which are democratic inclined and focused, and those which are not so inclined and motivated. This is because there are some civil society groups that are legally registered and many others which operated openly without legal accreditation, and are outside the law and norms of society. Looking at the pluralistic and complexity of Nigeria as a society. The activism of civil society as a collectivity of new social formations has to grapple with the pluralism of the Nigeria corporate society.

Therefore, Oyeybare (2000), concluded that the full value of civil society in relations to the sustenance of democracy can be related only if civil society has time to grow and develop and is able to transcend its own contradiction.

Uchendu (2000), in his analysis of civil society was more interest in what differentiates a civil society from the political society or state, to him, in its modern expression the concept of civil society aids the understanding of their relationship of government to pre-political and extra political associations, it addresses the concept of political space and the consequences that flow when it is differentiated as it is in modern state. The idea that a public sphere can be distinguished from a civil society and that while both co-exist in a policy each has important roles to plays in promoting the welfare of individual and groups which are central to the concept of civil society. These ideas in his views had only gradually evolved in Western Europe and North America and

have not been fully integrated into the political culture world-wide. He went further to stress that the head of civil society rooted in the notion of "natural law".

The central hypothesis been that man is not by nature ordered towards society rather he orders himself toward society, promoted by self-interest. These could be seen from the view expressed by the social contact theorists Thomas Hobbes, John Locks and Jeans Jacques Rousseau (Uchendu, 2000). Despite the divergent views of these scholars as to the origin of the state, a common ground can be noted that the desire of man to live a much more organized life where the common goal can be much more assured gravitate them towards reaching agreement to ensure this.

Thus, the philosophical state emerged. Strauss (1972), building on this, reminds us that the "desire of self-preservation is a passion, a powerful passion that makes itself the basis of civil society". In other words, Strauss makes natural law a sufficient basis for all rights and duties in society and derives man's civil duties from the right of self-preservation.

Civil society therefore, refers to the space for collective action around shared interests, purposes and values, generally distinct from government and commercial for-profit actors. Civil society includes charities, development NGOs, community groups, women's organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, social movements, coalitions and advocacy groups. However civil society is not homogeneous and the boundaries between civil society and government or civil society and commercial actors can be blurred. There is certainly no one 'civil society' view, and civil society actors need to contend with similar issues of representativeness and legitimacy as those of other representatives and advocates. Despite its complexity and heterogeneity, the inclusion of civil society voices is essential to give expression to the marginalized and those who often are not heard. Civil society actors can enhance the participation of communities in the provision of services and in policy decision-making.

In its simplest form democracy is rule by the people. As such it is both a form of rule and a model of political organization channel towards national/ethnic integration and economic development. As a form of rule it consists of mechanisms and procedures for exercising and limiting the exercise of power in historically determined contexts. As a model of political organization, it contains a

number of core principles that place value on human life and dignity and in many cases sets mechanisms for their realization as a united group (Kuna, 2005). As such, democracy represents a form of power and a model of politics that in narrow terms confers on citizens the right to directly take political decisions by majority rule.

However, Schumpeter, (1967) posits that the democratic method is that institutional arrangement which realizes the common good by making the people themselves decide who are to assemble in order to carry out its will. And this generalization of the term has prompted imam (1991) to conceptualize democracy as the people's right to participate fully in the discussions and decision on the issues that affect them and take control over their lives. This right may however be very difficult to be claimed in today's Nigerian democratic environment because the right to participate fully in decisions is contradictory with the right to be involved in the democratic process that brought the governance itself. This means that the choices of the masses are not truly the representation of the people at the government. The practice of democracy as mentioned earlier in Nigeria today, is supposed to be in line with the view point of Enemuo (1999) who sees democracy as a system of government referring to political situation that is characterized by qualities of liberty, freedom of speech and freedom of action.

Nigeria's brand of democratic governance is like what Diamond (2002) refers to as electoral authoritarianism i.e. a 'pseudo democracy' in which political pluralism has not been completely closed off, rather, multiple parties are allowed to contest elections that are held at regular constitutional intervals but in which opposition parties and candidates are not allowed full freedom to campaign and given a fair chance to win. Formal democratic institutions like multiparty elections and parliament exists precisely to obscure and sometimes soften the reality of authoritarian domination (Diamond, 2002). Rather than a true form of rule, they are a legitimizing façades with which to purchase some acceptance from the international community and the domestic constituency and internal division of the ethnic groups. A number of generic problems obstruct the consolidation of democracy and national unity in Nigeria. The most urgent and pervasive problem is the weakness and frequency in the decay of the rule of law. No greater problem alienates citizens from their political leaders and institutions that supposed to encourage national integration and undermines political stability, national unity and economic development

than gross endemic corruption on the part of government and political party leaders, judges and officials up and down the bureaucratic hierarchy. The more endemic the problem of corruption, the more likely it is to be accompanied by other serious deficiencies in the rule of law like smuggling, drug trafficking, criminal violence, personalization of power human rights abuses, and disinterestedness in national integration. Democracy goes beyond elections, hence, the people should be seen to be involved in the decision making process of government.

Another is the term "the common people" democracy is class recognizing terms, and the term the people refers to the common people as distinguished from kings and so on. Equality too should be noted. The equality of rights and privileges (political, social and legal) among citizens is crucial or the true definition of democracy to have a genuine democracy, there must be first and foremost a real equality of citizenship.

Urofsky (2006), noted eleven (11) root principles of democratic government, these are:-

1. Constitution
2. Democratic election
3. Federalism
4. Rule of law
5. An independent judiciary
6. Power of the president
7. Roles of civil society group
8. Roles of a free media
9. Public right to knowledge
10. Protecting minority right
11. Civilian control of the military

Based on the above postulations one will quickly note that an indispensable existence of civil society is a precursor to a truly democratic state. This is because it's their role to ensure that all those principles of democracy are achievable.

The open space for civil society operations in Nigeria is one of its greatest prospects. Unlike in some other countries, there is little or no restriction on the civil society to organize itself through the formation of non-governmental organizations or civil society organizations or coalitions. There are also little or no restrictions on holding of public meetings. Additionally, there are also some recent statutes that enhance civil society engagement or participation in the anti-corruption crusade in the country. For instance, prior to the enactment of the Fiscal Responsibility Act 2007, the budgetary process in the country was non-participatory and secretive. There were no mechanisms for public monitoring of budget implementation. In the absence of a general access to information law, the Fiscal Responsibility Act made radical provisions for access to information with regard to the budget process. Section 48 (1) provides that the Federal Government shall ensure that the fiscal and financial affairs are conducted in a transparent manner and accordingly ensure full and timely disclosure and wide publication of all transactions and decisions involving public revenues and expenditures and their implications for its finances (IJADS 2017).

The Fiscal Responsibility Act is also innovative in that it empowers Nigerians to enforce the provisions of the Act through appropriate judicial orders. By section 51 of the Act, every Nigerian shall have the legal capacity to enforce the provisions of the Act by obtaining prerogative orders or other remedies at the Federal High Court, without having to show any special or particular interest. This provision is significant in overcoming the usual problem posed by the doctrine of *locus standi* in the enforcement of public laws. However, one of the limitations of the Fiscal Responsibility Act is that, in view of the fact that Nigeria is a federation, its provisions do not to a large extent apply to State and Local Governments (IJADS 2017).

2.2 EMPIRICAL LITERATURES

In most cases critical policy decisions are better fashioned out when they are subjected to the crucible of civil society debates and criticisms (John, 2012). Thus, issues like the power exercised by the electorate via the ballot box, criticisms to which public policies are subjected, debates carried out by individuals and organizations, comments by academicians, public opinions, have elements of CSO influence. The first and most basic role of civil society is to limit and control the power of the state. Of course, any democracy needs a well-functioning and authoritative state. But

when a country is emerging from decades of dictatorship, it also needs to find ways to check, monitor, and restrain the power of political leaders and state officials.

Nigeria has ratified both the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and the African Union Convention Against Corruption. These international treaties impose obligation on Nigeria to ensure the participation of civil society in the fight against corruption. The UNCAC, in Article 5, provides;

“Each state party shall, in accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system, develop and implement or maintain effective, coordinated anti-corruption policies that promote the participation of society and reflect the principles of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity, transparency and accountability”.

The UNCAC, in Article 13, provides for; “the engagement of civil society in the anti-corruption programme”. Section 22 of the 1999 constitution provides; “The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people”.

CSOs have played vital roles in the enthronement of democracy as well as, the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. Many of these groups like Campaign for Democracy (CD), Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR) and Civil Liberties Organizations (CLO) were instrumental in the restoration of civil rule. It would, be recalled, that between 1993 and 1999, in collaboration with the Nigeria Labor Congress, which is another civil society organization, these groups fought the Nigerian military to a standstill. They mobilized students and workers for civil disobedience, strikes and protest marches across the country. Many in their ranks were killed and maimed while some lucky few were able to make good their escape into exile (CIVICUS Civil Society Index, 2007; Omode and Bakare, 2014).

Ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo 's administration (1999-2007) attempted to insert an elongation clause in the constitution to ensure his continuous stay in office. However, protest against the tenure elongation bid was championed by the National Civil Society Coalition against Third Term

(NACATT) steered by Bamidele Aturu who challenged President Obasanjo that the "third term agenda is immoral, corrupt, divisive, insulting, an evidence of failure, capable of creating a political uncertainty and, of course, it is unconstitutional..." (Saliu and Mohammed, 2007). Other civil society organizations that participated in this protest are; Peoples Problems and Solutions (PPS) organization, Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria and individuals like Prof. Wole Soyinka, former governor and factional chairman of the Alliance for Democracy (AD), Chief Bisi Akande, Prof. Ropo Sekoni, Dr Joseph Oladokun, Solomon Olufelo and Adeola Odusanya among other (Omede and Bakare, 2014)

A decision by the Nigerian government to halt a hefty fuel subsidy on January 1, 2012 prompted one of the largest and most coordinated protests in Nigeria's history. Activists like Femi Falana, Olisa Agbakoba, Festus Okoye and several others resoundingly rejected the action (Jibunoh, 2012). In addition to these are various other protests led by various CSOs in Lagos, Kaduna, Abuja, Kaduna, Kano and other parts of the country. Some of these protesters were mobilized by a group known as Nigeria Unite Against Subsidy Removal led by Dino Melaye (current Senator, APC Kogi State), who was later arrested.

One of the unforgettable efforts of the CSOs in the consolidation of Nigeria's democracy was the unflinching support they gave to the Justice Uwais Electoral Reform Committee (ERC) inaugurated on August 28, 2007 by late President Yar'adua. CSOs submitted tones of memoranda to the ERC offering suggestions on how Nigeria can break the chain of her electoral debacle. Indeed, significant number of the 22 member ERC was drawn from the civil society groups. They helped in analyzing the challenges of Nigeria's previous elections as well as charted the way forward. During the constitutional and electoral reform public hearings, CSOs were there in good numbers to present memoranda. This led to a better legal framework for elections that Nigeria currently has (Ojo, 2011). In addition, CSOs played a prominent role in ensuring the credibility of the widely acclaimed 2011 elections. First, they embarked on vigorous voter education using both the traditional and social media for their campaigns. Some other CSOs deployed thousands of observers to follow through and report on the electoral process (Omede and Bakare, 2014). National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) led a media protest over Chibok Girls in the year 2014 after a stakeholder's conference in collaboration with National Union of Yobe State

Students in Damaturu. The Academic Staff Union of Secondary School Teachers in Bauchi State, Network of Civil Society Organisations, Centre for Information Technology, Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics and many other CSOs and NGOs expresses their grievance over the abducted Chibok Girls. Africa Arise for Change, another CSO, expressed appreciation to the military over the rescue of one of the Chibok girls and calls for Nigerians to be optimistic (AAC, 2016).

Recently, a similar removal of fuel subsidy by President Buhari was welcomed with a very scarce protest, although the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has been upright about it. The protest was rare due to the hope majority has on the current administration compared to the past administration. In fact, some CSOs like Stand Up Nigeria (SUN) led by Comrade Philip Agbese announce their total support of it with activists like Dino Melaye in attendance, who protested against the same issue last administration (Ikenna, 2016).

Another CSO, The Centre for Social Justice, Equity and Transparency (CESJET) commended the Federal Government's decision to remove fuel subsidy, emphasizing that it will put a lasting end to the incessant fuel crises in the country. CESJET frowned at the continuation of spending over 1 Trillion Naira by the government over fuel subsidy (Ikenna, 2016). More so, The Coalition of Civil Society Against Corrupt Persons in Nigeria has berated Nigeria Labour Congress over protests against removal of subsidy, saying it shows they are out of tune with the thinking and yearnings of Nigerians, their President, Linus Ejiogo said (Ikenna, 2016).

Two different groups stormed the National Assembly recently to demand an end to ongoing budget impasse. The protesters said the standoff between federal lawmakers and the executive was putting the country's economic progress on hold. The first group identified themselves as Nigerians United for Progressive Change (NUPC) was convened by Solomon Adodo and the other group Citizens United for Peace and Stability (CUPS) was convened by Bunmi Awoyemi (Ogundipe, 2016).

CSOs can therefore foster and support grassroots organizations to become more numerous, sizeable, resourceful, and self-reliant. Also, grassroots contacts enable CSOs to provide critical information on potential crisis and thus contribute to early warning systems. There is the cost

effective argument. Typically, CSOs require less financial inputs than government agencies and therefore are more cost effective, an attribute that is important in financially constrained third world countries. CSOs can be more resourceful and innovative as they involve local communities in the identification and resolution of development problems which are more cost effective, more sustainable, and more compatible with community values and norms.

Civil society encompasses the expertise and networks needed to address issues of common concern, including corruption. Most of the corruption in a society involves two principal actors, the government and the private sector. Civil society is typically the major victim. As power devolves from the centre to local authorities, opportunities for corruption shift downwards towards new actors who are in more direct contact with civil society. This means that the ability of civil society to monitor, detect and reverse the activities of the public officials in their midst is enhanced by proximity and familiarity with local issues. Indeed, this may be the training ground needed to gain the experience and confidence necessary for action at the national level. It is also important to note that civil society can be a part of the solution or a part of the problem. This is because in normal situations, every society gets the type of government it deserves. The attitude of civil society to corruption may also influence the attitude of government officials and the private sector to it. The converse is also true. Sometimes, if government does not respond to public concerns, civil society can, and will, organize to defend its essential interest. The real role of civil society must be to claim and defend its own core values, and not leave this integral function to those in power (Ninamani, 2016).

2.3 THEORETICAL FREMEWORK

This research work will employ the idea of liberal theory of civil society in order to undertake a critical study of the civil societies, their actions and inactions, their relationships as well as the influences they have in the development and sustenance of democracy in Nigeria. Therefore, on the course of this research work, liberal theory is adopted as a framework theory of analysis.

Liberal theory of civil society holds that the existence of civil society is highly imperative in a democratic society because it promotes freedom, equality, tolerance, accountability and progress. Liberalism is a negation to autocratic ideology and is sine qua non to democracy. As a political

ideology, liberalism espouses citizen's freedom of association, expression, thought among others (Fadakinte 2013).

To the liberals, civil society is crucial in any democratic nation, especially in a multi-ethnic society because it promotes unrestricted freedom, tolerance, and equity, freedom of expression and association which is germane for building a violent free democratic society. By providing guidelines and legal provisions for openness and freedom, citizens are better informed and empowered to participate in governance. The survival of these liberal tenets inhibits the emergence of dictators and attenuates democratic culture. Within the above perspectives, civil society stands as an alternative way to aggregating social, political and economic forces outside the state which help to monitor, observe and gauge government policies and programs on the citizens and to articulate the views and interests of people outside the arena of political corridor to the government.

Liberalism which emerged with the fall of feudalism and the triumph of capitalism is contemporarily been advance guarded by liberal institutions like the United Nations Organizations, (UNO), International Monetary Fund, (IMF), World Bank(WB) African Union, (AU) among others. These agencies believe that the existence of civil society helps to deepen democracy by promoting accountability, transparency and prudence in governance. In fact, western donor organizations like IMF and WB have made the establishment and promotion of virile civil society as a prerequisite for granting foreign development assistance to developing countries of Africa and Asia.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Methodology is defined as a series of choices: choices about what information and data to gather, choices about how to analyze the information and data that you gather and other methodological choices. It is also defined as a systematic way to solve a problem. It is a 'science' of studying how research is to be carried out. Essentially, the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology (Kothari, 2012). The research strategy used in a conducted study is usually shaped by the research method. The research method is generally chosen with the research aims and objectives in mind.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopts a combination of historical design and qualitative method of analysis. These obviously requires the reliance on secondary data for analysis. The justification for choosing the historical design was informed by the need to interpret past trends of events or facts in order to gain clearer perspective of the present happenings in the democratic setting. Moreover, historical records and textual information is required for secondary data analysis.

3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE

This research study was conducted in Nigeria between 1999 to 2015. The sampled population were drawn from the civil societies that were in existence during the period stated and the historical analysis of their actions and inactions in the sustenance of Nigerian democracy. Secondary sources of gathering data is employed in this research work in answering the research questions and other relevant analysis. This is based on content analysis and critical review of both hard and soft copy of related materials, literatures, journals, magazines and textbooks etc.

3.3 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The study adopted a secondary source of data collection through the review of Literature from journals, magazines, textbooks, government white papers, unpublished works and Internet materials. As a descriptive research, it employs a historical style in looking at the evolution and contribution of CSOs to the democratization process in Nigeria, especially from 1999 – 2015. The study adopted content analysis as a method in analyzing the data collected. The adoption of content analysis technique is to ascertain whether data from documentary sources support the questions raised by the research.

3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The research instrument used for this study was document analysis. This instrument was designed to obtain secondary data from the sampled population based on the objectives and research questions of the study.

3.5 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Collection and analysis of documents has been the most important part of this research process. This research study has a broader understanding, particularly of the selected research questions, especially in regards to contextual factors relevant for CSOs in Nigeria. Most of the data used for this analysis is documents derived from secondary sources. As pointed out by Bryman, such information can be very important for researchers conducting case studies of organizations and using methods such as participant observation or qualitative interviews (Bryman, 2008). Analyzed documents include textbooks, journals, reports, research papers, master thesis presentations etc.

CHAPTER FOUR PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

There is acute paucity of literature, especially quantitative and statistical data on the growth and development of civil society organization in Nigeria since independence. However, in this study, attempt is made to identify and chronicle the major changes and continuities in civil society organizations development in various political phases of Nigerian history. As a result of this, this research work briefly reflected on civil society during the colonial era and focused more on how successive post-independence civilian and military administration and regimes policies and programs impinged on civil society organizations and interrogated the commitments of civil society to the sustenance of democracy, peace building and national development.

4.1 EVOLUTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NIGERIA

The emergence of civil society particularly in the democratic process is a twentieth century social phenomenon in Nigeria. Although some scholars have argued that civil society existed in pre-colonial Nigeria, it remains unknown how and what roles they played in pre-colonial development especially with regards to slavery and traditional dictatorship. According to Rodney, European colonialism was a watershed in the annals of African history. It provided vent that gave fillip to the growth of social consciousness among Africans which in turn culminated to the formation of associational groups that served as watchdog to the colonial government (Aiyede 2003). However, according to Ikelegbe (2013), during the colonial epoch in Nigeria, associational groups like the Nigerian Student Association (NAN), Egbe Omo Oduduwa, Jamatu Arewa, Nigeria Trade and Labour Unions, Tin Miners Association of Nigeria, Association of Nigerian Coal Workers, Muslim and Christian (Faith based) organizations helped to stimulate and galvanize collective force that laid the foundation for civil society in Nigeria. He further surmised that, with colonialism, new social exchange, modernism and attendant social dislocations provided a new platform of consciousness and agitation which catalyzed the formation of communal, traditional, cultural and other groups. The nationalist movement and decolonization period is regarded as the initial golden age of civil society. With the granting of independence to Nigeria by Great Britain on the 1st October 1960, the emergent political leaders attempted, as expected of any democratic state, to deepen the growth and development of democratic culture by providing a virile space for

the existence of civil society organizations but the efforts of the post-independent leaders were scuttled by Military intervention in Nigerian politics in 1966 (Ikelegbe 2013).

Thus, from 1966 to 1979, Nigeria was under successive military regimes that were highly dictatorial and anti-civil society. Although very few existed during this era, they were very vocal and confrontational despite military intimidation. With support from international civil society organizations, many local civil society organizations in Nigeria began to agitate for the return to civilian rule. Members of civil society groups organized mass campaigns and encouraged strike actions. With their support, the then military head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo, returned Nigeria to a democratic government following the election of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in late 1979 (Ikelegbe 2001). Sahagari's administration also known as the Second Republic (1979-1983) was characterized by the resurgence and proliferation of civil society organizations. CSO helped to expose some corrupt politicians while others were engaged in mass socio-political mobilization. In spite of the success of democratization processes in Nigeria during President Shehu Shagari's administration, the military in a coup d'état led by General Muhammad Buhari, again struck on the 31st December 1983 thereby terminating the second republic.

Buhari hurriedly banned all political parties and associations including public gatherings, jailed some politicians and human activists and stymied press freedom. Unfortunately, Buhari regime only lasted for less than three years as General Ibrahim B. Babangida toppled him in 1985. General Ibrahim Bangida's regime marked a turning in the history of civil society movement in Nigeria for several reasons which shall be poignantly adumbrated. Firstly, the military regime of Ibrahim B. Babangida (1985-1993) was the longest lasting military regime, ever in the history of post-colonial Nigeria. This unsavory scenario created immense challenge for the growth and development of civil society. Through military fiat, Babangida banned all kinds of political or public gatherings, imprisoned human rights activists and civil society advocates. For instance, members of the Nigerian Labour Congress, (NLC) shortly after their nationwide protest of December 1987 had many of its union leaders imprisoned. Members of the Nigerian Medical Association, (NMA), Academic Staff Union of University (ASUU) faced similar threats and attacks. Besides, the regime adoption of the neoliberal economic policies of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) as

recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank heightened the economic and social woes of Nigerians and this increased the tempo of civil society activism as many associations rose to challenge this opprobrious economic policy. In fact, the policies of SAP culminated to the retrenchment and massive unemployment in country coupled with astronomic rise in prices of basic food items in the midst of a depreciated national currency value (Lee 2007 and Abutudu, 1995).

Another corollary issue to the above was the anti-democratic posture of Ibrahim Babangida, particularly in his lack of interest in the transition process. Although he did set up the transition machinery, he oscillated between dictatorship and democracy. This reached its apogee with the annulment of the June 12 1993 presidential election that was described by both local and international observers as the fairest and freest election ever conducted in Africa and was proclaimed to have been won by a Yoruba business mogul, MKO Mushood Abiola (Fatton 1995, Osaghae 1997 and Diamond 1999). In addition, Babangida suspended all judicial deliberations relating to the election results and abolished the electoral commission. This act of autocracy was condemned by all civil society and prodemocracy groups in Nigeria. Consequently, civil society organizations organized massive nation-wide protests which almost brought the country to a standstill. He set up a public bureau to work in collaboration with few Civil society organizations to tour the country and gather the opinion and inputs of Nigerians on the Structural Adjustment Program. At the end of the nationwide tour and consultation, over 27,000 suggestions were gathered. The regime also created the Directorate of social mobilization (DSM), Directorate for Mass Mobilization, Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) and a Public Complaint Commission (PCC) these institutions were saddled with the responsibility of civic education and mass mobilization, economic and social justice, and aggregation of public complains. These institutional mechanisms were created as a response to the effervescing and dogged confrontational approach of the civil society groups (Fatton 1995, Osaghae 1997 and Diamond 1999).

Arising from the economic and social hardships of the 1980s associated with the SAP, wives of military and paramilitary agencies in Nigeria began to form associational groups to assist their members especially those in need. In this perspective, the Nigerian Army officers' wives

Association, Nigerian Navy Officers' Wives Association, Nigerian Police Officers Wives Association, Prison officers' wives Association and others. Although these associations did help in providing economic welfare services to their members, they failed to advocate for democratization. In collaboration with the Association for Better Nigeria, (ABN), a front organization formed by IBB allies, they criticized the electoral commission and MKO Abiola, the acclaimed winner of the June 12 1993 presidential election and advocated for the outright cancellation of the election results (Fatton 1995, Osaghae 1997, Diamond 1999).

By 1989, two vocal human rights civil society organizations were formed. These include the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR) formed with the mandate to free political prisoners and Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) saddled with the responsibilities of human rights protection, judicial freedom and advancement of the rule of law. According to Fatton, Osaghae and Diamond, CLO and CDHR treated cases of people detained through opprobrious military decrees. In 1990 following increased commitments and public pronouncements of General Babangida to organize election and return the nation to civil rule, CDHR and CLO merged to form the Campaign for Democracy (CD) with the mission to articulate holistic political agenda that will end military rule, organize protests that will end SAP and to champion a common course for all Nigerians groups in the country through mass mobilization.

Retrospectively, the Campaign for Democracy (CD) immensely provided the final push that led to the ultimate overthrowing of General Ibrahim Babangida in 1993. However, the exit of the military did not bring the desired success that civil society groups had clamored for. This was because he refused to hand over power to the presumed winner of the June 12 1993 presidential election and instead set up a transitional Interim National Government (ING) headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan. The legitimacy of the ING angered many prodemocracy groups and many went to court to challenge the legitimacy of the ING. This led to the ruling of a federal high court in Lagos that the military takeover was illegal and declared that the mandate of Abiola should be implemented. This never came to fruition as General Sani Abacha, the only military officer who remained in the NG, usurped power from chief Ernest Shonekan after three months. This ushered in a new era of horrendous military dictatorship characterized with

hallucination of civil society organizations, arrests, imprisonment and hanging of human rights and prodemocracy activists.

During the military regime of late General Sani Abacha, in Nigeria, (1993-1998), the National Democratic Coalition, (NADECO) was an amalgamation of principal civil society and prodemocracy groups that organized massive protests to defend the democratic transition programmes during the fourth republic 1999 (Fatton 1995, Osaghae 1997 and Diamond 1999).

4.2 CATEGORIZATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN NIGERIA

Different types of civil society organizations (CSOs) exist in contemporary Nigeria. Although establishing quantitatively, the exact number of CSOs in modern Nigeria is difficult due to their diverse nature and paucity of data. However, as Ikelegbe argued, it is easy to categorize and dimension the various CSOs in Nigeria using some criteria (Ikelegbe 2013).

Ikelegbe categorized CSOs in Nigeria into five. These include; primary or primordial groups, secondary associations, grass-root organizations, issued based groups and Non-Governmental Organization. Primary or primordial groups are usually socio-cultural, ethnic, and religious and ethnic based. Examples of associations within this group are Afenifere, Ohaneze Ndi Igbo, Arewa Consultative Forum and Ijaw Youth Movement. The era of military dictatorship in Nigeria, they helped to mobilize its people and take a decision on a given state policy (Ikelegbe 2013).

The secondary or middle level associations are socio-economic, professionally and labour based groups. Also inclusive in this category are business groups including the organized private sector associations. Specific examples include Manufacturer Association of Nigeria (MAN), National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), and Women in Nigeria (WIN), Market Women Association of Nigeria (MWAN), and Women Advancement Forum (WAF). In addition, the numerous professional associations like Nigeria Medical Association, Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), Trade Union Congress (TUC) Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), and Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) also fall under the secondary or middle level CSOs in Nigeria (Ikelegbe 2013). Grass-root based CSOs include Community Based Organizations (CBO), Community Development Association (CDA) and Age Grades

Associations. Ikelegbe also noted that also include diverse local associations of survival, recreation, development support and mutual support groups. Issue based groups on the other hand comprise advocacy groups, gender, youth empowerment, environmental groups and rights associations. Examples of CSOs within this category are; Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAAN), Journalist Against Aid (JAAIDS). (Ikelegbe 2013).

The most diverse and complex strand of CSOs in Nigeria is the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) sector. With over 10,000 in the 1990s, it has leaptfrogged to over 30,000 in the 2000s. NGOs can be sub-categorized into advocacy organizations, public awareness and communications organizations, social service and Welfare organizations, human capital development, action research, humanitarian assistance and peace building groups. Examples of groups within this arena in Nigeria include; Academic Associate for Peace work, peace and Development Organization, Women Health Research Centre, Environmental Right Project, Campaign for Democracy and Human Rights (CDHR). (Ikelegbe 2013).

4.3 CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIC SUSTENANCE

Civil society is sine qua non with liberal democracy. As a social force, civil society organizations have multiplicity of role to play within any democratic society. Gaus-Pash (2005), argued that civil society help to deepen good governance by providing certain basic services which the state and private sector may be unable to provide. These she identified as advocacy, mass mobilization, monitoring of state performance and accountability. Aisha further observed virile civil society promote good democratic governance through public policy and advocacy, regulation and monitoring of state performance and the action and behavior of public officials and by building social capital and enabling citizens to identify and articulate their values, beliefs, civic norms, and democratic practices, ...by mobilizing particular constituencies especially the vulnerable and marginalized section of masses, to participate more fully in politics and public affairs, by development work to improve the wellbeing of their own and other communities (Gaus-Pash 2004).

Civil society organizations in a democratic society are expected to engage in the design, monitoring and implementation of public projects and budgeting. As a third sector, they are critical

lubricants and observers in state articulation of state budgets by ensuring that such budgets either at the federal, state and local levels are people-oriented and gendered. The essence of this is to also ensure that the implementation of national budget is transparent while advocacy to agencies and ministries in which capital and recurrent expenditures were budgeted for are judiciously utilized. Within the ambit of rule of law, civil society organizations are to discover and make public, cases of corruption by people entrusted with government authority in budget implementation and to also advise government appropriately in budget designs at the initial stage. Through consistent advocacy and monitoring of actions and behavior of public officials, civil society organizations deepen the growth and consolidation of democratic culture by nipping in the bud bureaucratic red tapes which often culminate to waste of state resources and unscrupulous attitudes of public officers. Besides, through this means, efficiency in democratic governance is maintained (Osaghae 1997 and Diamond 1999).

Democracy is about equality and elimination of discriminations irrespective of race, class or ethno-religious or cultural affiliations. In this perspective, Ikelegbe (2007) asserts that civil society organizations ensure that there are adequate constitutional provisions that promote equity and to also monitor and advocate for its implementation and practice in a democratic nation. It is expected that civil society stimulate good democratic governance by promoting equity in all ramifications especially by reporting cases of discriminations to the public. Furthermore, they help to reform victims of racial, ethnic or cultural discriminations by rendering instant psychological and socio-economic stop-gap measures. For instance, civil society organizations are critical in protecting victim of genocidal attacks in Rwanda in 1994 and in Nigeria during the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. In these cases, Civil Society Organizations helped to provide victims with relief materials such as beds, food items, toiletries, water, and medical support among others. In fact, Lee (2007) posited that post-civil war government's policies of reconstruction, reconciliation and rehabilitation in Nigeria were greatly carried out by civil society organizations.

Fukuyama (2011) avers that Civil society is a cognomen for liberal democracy because it promotes the building of social capital. Social capital is another great component of civil society which has globally been acknowledged as been critical and imperative in promotion of cooperation, trust, friendship and solidarity among members. Fukuyama observed that social capital is that common

spirit of unity, trust, love and camaraderie usually associated and built by members of a civil society over a period of time.

Besides, members of civil society provide a virile platform for galvanizing group trust through consensus building and value cum interest distribution. Fukuyama, Diamond, Bratton and Gaus-Pash, have poignantly articulated in their respective studies how associational groups outside state control enhance the development of common trust, identity and spirit de corps kind of attitudes that douse conflicts and eliminate discrimination and injustice which usually stimulate intra and inter group hostilities and reduce democratic consolidation especially in a pluralistic society.

Human development, economic transformation, and equitable allocation of public projects to reflect the national character of the federating units in a pluralistic democratic society have become contentious issues in emerging democracies in Africa and Asia. Piqued by poverty and feeling of injustice, people in some parts of Nigeria, for instance, had resorted to violence confrontations often leading to loss of lives and destruction of government projects. Therefore, civil society organizations provide preemptive cushion that neutralizes tendencies of injustice in the distribution of national projects like Federal school, National stadia, companies and other state treasures by advocating and setting parameters for the location of state projects to reflect equity and fairness especially in the minds of the people of the federating units or constituent groups (Fukuyama 2011 and Diamond 1999).

Mercy (2012) in her study poignantly identified the interconnecting web between civil society and democratic sustenance which help to promote overall development in a civil state. Specifically, she averred that civil society enhance the sustenance and consolidation of participatory governance through voter education, election observation, campaign finance monitoring, election tribunal monitoring, electoral reform advocacy, conflict mitigation, access to justice, public interest litigation, budget tracking, constituency outreaches, as well as research and documentation in thematic areas of democracy and governance.

Civil society as the third sector with membership across different facets of the society and associational group no doubt represent recipe for good democratic governance. As agents of social

change, they are ready-made mechanism for curtailing and monitoring executive recklessness and abuse of public trust (Mercy 2012).

4.4 ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE SUSTENANCE OF DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

The civil society groups have largely been affected by the nature and politics of Nigeria since independence. According to (Civil Society Index, 2007), after the civil war of 1967-1970, the role of the civil society groups majorly shifted to preserving national unity, national reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. With increase in oil revenue, emphasis shifted to the development of infrastructures and provision of social services. From early 1979 up to the end of the military era, the role of the civil society groups adapts to modern challenges of managing an ailing economy through Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Rationalization, Nationalization and with the return of democracy; Privatization, Poverty alleviation, empowerment etc.

Also, before the advent of the fourth republic, CSOs played vital role in the enthronement and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. Many of the groups like Campaign for Democracy, NADECO, Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR) and Civil Liberty Organization were instrumental in the restoration of civil rule in Nigeria. It would be recalled that between 1993 and 1999, in collaboration with the Nigeria Labour Congress, which is another civil society organization, these groups fought the Nigerian military to a standstill. They mobilized students and workers for civil disobedience, strikes and protest marches across the country. (CIVICUS Civil Society Index, 2007).

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that the role of civil society in the democratization process in Nigeria according to Omode and Bakare, 2014 include:

1. Opposing authoritarian and undemocratic principles and values.
2. Establishing human rights legal standards and advancing the application of human rights norms through high test cases.
3. Promoting legal and judicial reform through legislative advocacy.
4. Providing legal assistance to disadvantaged persons, communities and groups.
5. Supporting the government through constitutional litigation.

6. Advancing the application of international legal instruments on human rights in Nigerian law.
7. Working with government and their institutions to promote laws, policies and practices that address the rights of poor and excluded communities.
8. Voters' education on electoral principles and guidelines.
9. Training of election observers and monitors, election tribunal monitoring and electoral reform advocacy.
10. Peace building and Conflict mitigation, promoting access to justice, public interest litigation, budget tracking, constituency outreaches as well as research and documentation in thematic areas of democracy and governance
11. The promotion and the defense of the constitution and rule of law.

Thus, the first and most basic role of civil society in any political setting is to limit and control the power of the state. Of course, any democracy needs a well-functioning and authoritative state. But when a country is emerging from decades of dictatorship, it also needs to find ways to check, monitor, and restrain the power of political leaders and state officials. This is why according to

Adele (2001) the role of civil society groups can be enumerated as follows:

1. They serve as watchdog to check the excess of government and expose, curtail violations of human rights, abuse of the constitution, they also exercise control over democratic political institutions.
2. They supported the role of political parties in stimulating political participation, increasing political efficacy and skills and promoting appreciations of the obligation of democratic citizens in a democratic setting, the more important role of political parties stimulating political participation will be much more visible if such role is complemented by the various civil society group that we have in the society. In the case of Nigeria, it has been observed that an average Nigeria is skeptical about the various political parties and profess membership of it because of selfish interest.
3. They provide a crucial arena for the development of such democratic attributes as tolerance, willingness to compromise and respect for opposing viewpoints.
4. They help traditionally excluded group such as women, the handicapped and representation of their interest.

5. They thus widen the political space by generating a more expensive and sophisticated political outlook and tolerance.
6. Civil society organization helps in the recruitment and training of new political leaders in technical administrative skills and normative standards of public accountability, transparency, responsiveness and inclusiveness.
7. They are important channels of information dissemination and thus help citizen in collectively pursuing and defending their interests and values.
8. Civil society organization when engaged in election monitoring enhances voter's confidence and affirms credibility by exposing electoral fraud and other undemocratic activities.

Thus, civil society organizations have played vital roles in the enthronement of democracy as well as, the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. Many of these groups like Campaign for Democracy (CD), Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR) and Civil Liberties Organizations (CLO) were instrumental in the restoration of civil rule. (CIVICUS Civil Society Index, 2007).

In most cases critical policy decisions are better fashioned out when they are subjected to the crucible of civil society debates and criticisms. Thus, John (2012) posited that issues like the power exercised by the electorate via the ballot box, criticisms to which public policies are subjected, debates carried out by individuals and organizations, comments by academicians, public opinions, have elements of CSO influence.

4.5 THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE SUSTENANCE OF DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

Civil society's contribution in the sustenance of democratic governance as highlighted by scholars revolve round advocacy, civic engagement, sensitization, election monitoring, media watch, budget tracking, provision of socio-economic services, legislative advocacy, promotion of inter and intra ethnic peace, among others (Baryart, 1986, Osaghae 1997, Diamond 1999, Mercy 2012, Fadakinte 2013). This section identifies some civil society groups in Nigeria and their contributions

and also examines some of the threats to Nigeria democracy even in the midst of the proliferation of civil society.

Civil society organizations in Nigeria have since 1999 tried to advocate for the delivery of certain basic dividends of democracy to the citizens. Through public protests, consultations and media research, CSOs monitor the performances of elected representatives and demands response from them on certain national or local development issues (Mercy 2012). For instance, since 1999, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) has played immense roles in civic engagements, research and documentations. Also, it has organized seminars and symposium for elected representatives, political parties and members of the public on several issues bordering on democracy and development. Thus, civil society had contributed in the democratic development in Nigeria through the following:

The Third Term Agenda Struggle

Ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo 's administration (1999-2007) attempted to insert an elongation clause in the constitution to ensure his continuous stay in office. This issue is however controversial due to the fact that the President did not make any categorical statement on his willingness or otherwise to go for another term, but actions and utterances of his aides without rebuff from him indicated his willingness to have an extension (Saliu and Muhammad, 2007). These included the purported circulation of a strange document by Prof. Jerry Gana, the then Special Adviser on Political Affairs to the President, at the NPRC (National Political Reform Conference); Open support for third term by the PDP national chairman, Dr. Ahmadu Ali and other party stalwarts; sharp reactions to opponents of third term by the government; purported attempt to bribe the National Assembly over the issue among others (Anifowoshe, 2006 Idowu, 2006 and Archibong, 2005,).

The disclosure by the Vice President Atiku Abubakar at an anti-third term forum in Abuja eloquently gave insight into what the President 's mindset was (Saturday Sun, April 8, 2006). Largely, antagonists of the third term bid cuts across different facets of the Nigerian society. This included prominent political actors including the Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, some members of the PDP, other political parties and civil society organizations (Saliu & Muhammad, 2007).

Of such protest against the tenure elongation bid by the civil society is the one championed by the National Civil Society Coalition against Third Term (NACATT). Bamidele Aturu, the Steering Committee Chairman of NACATT, challenged President Obasanjo that the "third term agenda is immoral, corrupt, divisive, insulting, an evidence of failure, capable of creating a political uncertainty and, of course, it is unconstitutional..." (Vanguard, January 05, 2006). Other civil society organizations that participated in this protest are; Peoples Problems and Solutions (PPS) organization, Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria and individuals like Prof. Wole Soyinka, former governor and factional chairman of the Alliance for Democracy (AD), Chief Bisi Akande, Prof. Ropo Sekoni, Dr Joseph Oladokun, Solomon Olufelo and Adeola Odusanya among other (The PUNCH, March 12, 2006). The Centre for Legislative Studies (CLS), a non-governmental organisation, invited stakeholders on March 26, 2006 at the International Press Centre in Ogba, Lagos to analyse the propriety of the agenda in line with the public hearing of the National Assembly Joint Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution, this afforded Nigerians another opportunity to X-ray the issue once more.

The stakeholders, who came from the media, human rights community and politics, concluded that the third term agenda is an ill wind that will blow nobody any good and that the public hearing on the constitution amendment was a sham (The Punch, April 7, 2006). All these and many more protests from the civil society groups paved way for the senate arm of the National Assembly on Wednesday May 16, 2006 to throw out, in its entirety, a bill seeking 116 amendments/alterations of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria which sought a three-term maximum of 4 years each for the President and the Governors as opposed to a two-term of 4 years each prescribed by the Constitution (see <http://www.socialistworld.net/doc/2335>).

The Fuel Subsidy Removal Struggle

A decision by the Nigerian government to halt a hefty fuel subsidy on January 1, 2012 prompted one of the largest and most coordinated protests in Nigeria 's history. The removal of the fuel subsidy with the claim that Government was spending more than 25 percent of her annual budget on the fuel subsidy and disregarded of the negotiations with the labour unions and civil society erupted National commotion witnessed by immediate increase in the price of fuel, transportation and food. The abrupt nature of the removal of the subsidy which was seen by some as act of

insensitivity by a government that is out of touch with the economic struggles of the majority of the Nigerian people was welcomed by tens of thousands of Nigerians with protest against the removal of the subsidy. Even before the removal of the subsidy, activists like Femi Falana, Olisa Agbakoba, Festus Okoye and several other activists, held a meeting with President Jonathan and his aides, which resoundingly rejected the planned removal of fuel subsidy on Saturday 10th December 2011 (Sahara Reporters, 2011). In Lagos, protesters massed at Ojota for a rally that was convened by the Save Nigeria Group. Musicians, movie stars and leaders of civil society groups all addressed the huge crowd as they denounced the government's attempt at creating hardship for the people. Part of the plan, as explained by Femi Falana, a lawyer, is to occupy the Gani Fawehinmi Park, venue of the protest, until the government backs down on the policy. In Abuja, the federal capital, Abdulwaheed Omar, president of the Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC led a rainbow coalition of civil society groups and trade unions to defy official ban on the protest (Adewuyi, 2012).

This action on the part of the civil society in the removal of the fuel subsidy was not limited to the shore of the country, the protests by Nigerian in Diaspora were held in major cities around the world such as UK, Canada, USA, Ghana, South Africa and other countries (Social Development Integrated Centre [SDIC], 2012). After one week of protests over the removal of fuel subsidy by the federal government, which crippled economic and social activities in Nigeria, the Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC, and Trade Union Congress, TUC, suspended the nationwide strike on Monday 23rd January 2012. The decision of the two main trade unions to suspend the strike came just a few hours after President Goodluck Jonathan announced an immediate reduction in the price of fuel from N141 to N97 per litre. The labour leaders, however, explained that one of the major gains of the protest was that through the strikes, mass rallies, shutdown, debates and street protests, Nigerians demonstrated clearly that they cannot be taken for granted and that sovereignty belongs to them (Ajaero, 2012).

The recently removal of fuel subsidy by President Buhari also came with a very scarce protest, although the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has been upright about it. The protest was rare due to the hope majority has on the current administration compared to the past administration. In fact, some CSOs like Stand Up Nigeria (SUN) led by Comrade Philip Agbese announce their total

support of it with activists like Dino Melaye in attendance, who protested against the same issue last administration (Ikenna, 2016).

Another CSO, The Centre for Social Justice, Equity and Transparency (CESJET) commended the Federal Government's decision to remove fuel subsidy, emphasizing that it will put a lasting end to the incessant fuel crises in the country. CESJET frowned at the continuation of spending over 1 Trillion Naira by the government over fuel subsidy (Ikenna, 2016). More so, The Coalition of Civil Society Against Corrupt Persons in Nigeria has berated Nigeria Labour Congress over protests against removal of subsidy, saying it shows they are out of tune with the thinking and yearnings of Nigerians, their President, Linus Ejiogo said (Ikenna, 2016).

The Freedom of Information Act 2011

The passage of a Freedom of Information law is a victory for Nigerian democracy. A law that stipulated that all institutions spending public funds will have to be open about their operations and expenditure while citizens will have the right to access information about such activities. The F.O.I bill was first submitted to Nigeria 's 4th National Assembly in 1999 when the country returned to democracy but did not make much progress. It returned to the legislative chambers in the 5th National Assembly in 2003 and was passed in the first quarter of 2007 by both chambers. However, President Olusegun Obasanjo vetoed it. It returned to both chambers of the 6th National Assembly in 2007 and was finally passed on 24 May 2011. (Sunday Trust, 5th June 2011).

This success is chiefly attributed to the relentless efforts of the coalition of Nigerian civil society groups who have long worked and advocated for the passage of the F.O.I Bill under the leadership of the Right to Know Movement (RKM), Media Rights Agenda (MRA) and the Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI). The significance of the inclusive joint workings of the CSOs is captured in the words of Edetaen (2011) that, the signing of the F.O.I Bill into law is the clearest demonstration ever of the power of civil society working together to influence public policy and initiate reform in making government work for the people. In the same vein, the Associate Legal Officer, Open Society Justice Initiative, Maxwell (2011) submitted that: "The new law will profoundly change how government works in Nigeria. Now we can use the oxygen of information

and knowledge to breathe life into governance. It will no longer be business as usual." (Sunday Trust, 5th June 2011).

The Doctrine of Necessity Clause 2010

CSOs also rose to the occasion to demand for the recognition of the then Vice President Goodluck Jonathan as the Acting President when late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua was indisposed and was away to Saudi Arabia on medical treatment between November 2009 and March 2010. Civil rights organizations such as the Save Nigeria Group and Enough is Enough Group actually seized the initiative, mobilized and marched on the National Assembly to demand for a resolution that will give due recognition to vice president as acting president. This led to the adoption of the now popular "Doctrine of Necessity" by the National Assembly on February 9, 2010 (Ojo, 2011). The Senate based its resolution to declare Jonathan as the Acting President on the Doctrine of Necessity. According to the Senate President, David Mark;

A rigid and inflexible interpretation will not only stifle the spirit and intendment of the Constitution, but will also affront the doctrine of necessity. The doctrine of necessity requires that we do what is necessary when faced with a situation that was not contemplated by the Constitution. And that is precisely what we have done today. In doing so, we have as well maintained the sanctity of our Constitution as the ultimate law of the land (Oyesina, 2010).

It is uncontested that the history of Nigerian democracy with regard to the doctrine cannot be completed without recourse to the input of the CSOs.

The Electoral Reform Act 2007

One of the unforgettable efforts of the CSOs in the consolidation of Nigeria 's democracy was the unflinching support they gave to the Justice Uwais Electoral Reform Committee (ERC) inaugurated on August 28, 2007 by late President Yar'adua. CSOs submitted tones of memoranda to the ERC offering suggestions on how Nigeria can break the chain of her electoral debacle. Indeed, significant number of the 22 member ERC was drawn from the civil society groups. They helped in analyzing the challenges of Nigeria 's previous elections as well as charted the way forward. During the constitutional and electoral reform public hearings, CSOs were there in good numbers to present memoranda. This led to a better legal framework for elections that Nigeria currently has (Ojo, 2011).

The contributions of CSOs in electioneering activities cannot be overemphasized. They embarked on series of advocacy to mobilize the citizens and encourage them, to actively participate in the voter registration exercises that preceded the elections. Coming together under the umbrella-Domestic Election Observation Groups (the group which included the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Labour Monitoring Team (LMT), Women Environmental Programme (WEP), Muslim League for Accountability (MULAC), Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD); Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), Alliance for Credible Elections, Citizens Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFCR) and the Electoral Reform Network (ERN); deployed approximately 50,000 trained election monitors throughout the country during the 2007 general election (Akinboye and Olorunboba, 2007). In addition, CSOs played a prominent role in ensuring the credibility of the widely acclaimed 2011 elections. First, they embarked on vigorous voter education using both the traditional and social media for their campaigns. Some other CSOs deployed thousands of observers to follow through and report on the electoral process.

In the build up to the April 2015 elections in Nigeria, the civil society sector was involved in all the stages of preparations, voting and collations, declarations of election results. According to Ikechukwu (2015), A situation Room, a coalition of 60 local civil society organizations were involved in the minute by minute observation and monitoring and analysis of trends and events of the 2015 Presidential election. Following the challenges that besieged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) during the Presidential election in some parts of Nigeria, the Situation Room noted thus;

...is unacceptable, the inability of INEC to deploy its officials and election materials on time to allow for timely commencement of polls...officials and materials did not reach significant number of poll opening. This delayed accreditation and voting and led to continuation of poll till late into light in many places situation room wishes to draw urgent attention to three critical areas of challenges, namely; (1) late commencement of elections; (2) challenges with accreditation process; (3) performance of security agencies and use of social media (Ikechukwu, 2015).

Through this process of critical criticism and identifications, civil society helps to deepen democratization processes. However, one of the major defects with civil society in Nigeria

democracy is their elitist nature. Most of the CSOs with interest in governance or democracy issue are usually located in urban centres while the few in rural areas lack the necessary financial and administrative savvy to entrench and promote good governance.

4.6 ANALYSIS OF THE ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NIGERIA

The concept of CSOs is predicated on the idea that citizens are the core element of the organization. However, across the globe, the administrative structure of these organizations is primarily an elite-driven cadre that are able to organize around a set of interests such as human rights, women's rights, education, and budget transparency. According to liberal democratic theory, these varied interests lead to a proliferation of different interest-based CSOs (Okafor, 2007). The ensuing competition among the CSOs should lead to mass mobilization and some form of government response.

In Nigeria, NGOs and CSOs are numerous, yet limited mass mobilization around interests means the state does not respond to the masses or the elites that run the organizations. The reasons for this are varied and problematic as articulated in the research published in 2007 by Professor Obiora Chinedu Okafor. The study looks at the composition, structure, and geopolitical locations of the range of NGO/CSO categories that exist in Nigeria civil/political rights NGOs, social/economic rights NGOs, gender-focused NGOs, and minority/environmental rights NGOs and conclusions are extrapolated across the general NGO/CSO population in Nigeria. For example, most Nigerian CSOs are urban based (in Lagos or Abuja). Yet because most of the Nigerian population is rural, the ability to gain legitimacy at the grassroots level is limited. Another issue is the personalistic nature of most CSO/NGO administrations, most are externally funded and locally "managed" as opposed to funding through membership which would potentially broaden the influence and legitimacy of the organization with the grassroots population. As a result, Okafor concludes that virtually all of these NGOs are, in practice, controlled (with few effective internal checks) by a powerful founder/CEO, who is the Oga (or undisputed boss) of his/her organization. Without a powerful membership, such founder/CEOs usually reign over their organizations largely unconstrained by the local community. Having thus largely excluded from their real ranks the very population of average Nigerians whose interests they want to advance.

Okafor further concludes that the primary driver for the personalistic default is to maintain control of the associated funding flow.

Other factors that seem to dilute the effectiveness of the entire NGO/CSO community include the urban bias of most CSOs, which leads to significant neglect of rural areas, and the proliferation of CSOs leading up to and since the 1999 democratic rule, which has proved somewhat detrimental in that the growth of NGOs (many of which are very transient because they lack structure and objectives and therefore fail within a short timeframe). Ultimately, Okafor concludes that the (mainly intentional) "exclusion of the vast majority of Nigerians [rural and urban] from participation in the structure and governance of these NGOs/CSOs helps explain the limited nature of success that these groups have had in engendering the transformation" and grassroots mobilization that would engage the state.

Corruption which has been defined as the abuse of public office for private gain; dishonesty for personal gain, dishonest for exploitation of power for personal gain, depravity and extreme immorality and also as the manipulation of conditions to attain exclusive benefits to individuals or groups at the cost of social benefits is rife in Nigeria fourth republic democracy (Uwen and Yearoo 2009, Adeyemi 2012).

Political corruption especially at the state and local Government levels are rife but CSO have not been able to actively confront this menace. Civil society has not been able to legally confront corrupt politicians through citizen litigations. What is common in Nigeria is mere criticisms and comments on pages of newspapers and magazines. More worrisome is the fact that some local Civil Society Organizations have in certain grand corruption cases, staged public protests against the prosecution of high profile individuals in the country. For instance, the former Governor of Bayelsea state, DSP Alamesigha who was the executive governor between 1999 to 2006 was never challenged by any CSO until he was arrested in the UK. Although he dubiously maneuvered the UK Metropolitan police and ran to Nigeria by disguising himself in female attire, he had never been tried since his return, in fact, he was later granted a state pardon by the immediate past president of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan. Similarly, the former governor of oil-rich Delta State, James Ibori, who is currently in jail in London, was accused of money laundering and abuse of

public thrust in Nigeria. However, when Nigeria law enforcement agents particularly, the antigraft agency- Economic and Financial Crimes Commission(EFCC), made attempts to arrest and prosecute him in Nigeria, members of the law enforcement agents were confronted by his tribal and clannish association the Ijaw Youth Movement (IYM) resisted and engaged the police and EFCC officials in violent confrontations claiming that their son had not done any wrong (Adeyemi 2012).

Many Federal and state legislators, Ministers, Local Government chairmen had in several occasion been indicted for corruption. For instance, Nigeria had about seven Senate Presidents impeached between 1999 and 2007. Their impeachments were based on corruption cases. Also, the first female speaker of the House of Representatives in Nigeria was impeached on ground of corruption. There were also, cases of grand legislative corruption involving the Hon. Herman Hembe bordering on mismanagement of pension and stock exchange funds. Others were the senator Nicholas Yahaya, and Hon. Elumelu rural electrification scandal and more recently, the petroleum subsidy scandal numerous number of CSO in Nigeria between this era of turmoil, none of them openly condemned the act through advocacy or legal means. James Ibori, moved freely and even attempted to contest the 2007 presidential election until he was miraculously arrested, tried and imprisoned in London by the Metropolitan police, in UK (Adeyemi 2012).

The inability of elected representatives to deliver on campaign promises despite receiving jumbo salaries and allowances. For instance, in 2010, the former Central Bank of Nigeria Governor, Sanusi Lamido lamented that Nigeria spent over 25% of its annual budget on the National Assembly alone while the majority of the citizens lived in abject poverty. (Vanguard Newspaper, Dec. 4th, 2010). Besides, the number of bills that had been passed by the National Assembly in Nigeria since 1999 up to 2015 is not in any way commensurate with the salaries and allowances spent on them.

In the Nigeria oil sector, there have been excessive cases of corruption and abuse of public trust by managers of the industry and the political class. Nigeria annual crude oil production average 710 million barrels with 2.36 trillion cubic gas per year of which 68, 66(bct) is flared monthly representing about 823.92 billion (bct) annually. In monetary terms, Nigeria lost \$72 billion to gas

flare (Ogbo 2011). More worrisome is the poor comatose state of Nigeria four refineries located at Port Harcourt, Warri, and Kaduna. Established with an installed daily production capacity of 445,000 barrels, however, none of the refineries is presently functioning. Instead, Nigeria imports millions of barrels of refined fuel from other countries at exorbitant prices. This has led to incessant hikes and scarcity of fuel in Nigeria with attendant increase in household commodities and transport fairs (Shedrack 2015).

Although oil has been the mainstay of the economy since 1970s, the revenues generated have not been judiciously utilized due to corruption. For instance, between 1970 to 2005, oil contributed \$391.6 billion to government and the foreign exchange earnings from oil between this period was valued at over \$593.6 billion (Ogbo 2011). In spite of these huge revenues, the economy has not grown nor the standard of living of Nigerians improved significantly.

The lack of transparency and existence of obsolete laws in the sector have created avenues for perpetration of corruption. For instance, between 1999 and 2007, President Olusegun Obasanjo sold ten oil blocks without proper bidding process to his political allies and business associates. This is made possible because of lack of transparency, accountability and the existence of archaic laws in the sector. For instance, the petroleum industry Act of 1969 gives the authority to allocate oil blocks in Nigeria to the minister of petroleum who is under, and answerable to the president. This explains why since independence, bidding process and allocation of oil blocks had been abused by the executive, and bedeviled by corruption (Ogbo 2011).

In 2004, a South African based news print reported that a former president of Nigeria awarded a \$ 1 billion oil block in the Niger Delta region to his wife's hair dresser (Business Times, October 31, 2004). Also, in 2007, the acting Director of Petroleum Resources, (DPR), Mohammad Aliyu Sabo testified before the National Assembly members on the cases of corruption in the awards and sales of oil blocks that "there are cases of insensitive and sharp practices in the oil sector and that even important documents on oil blocks allocation were missing. He further declared; we can only give what we have, because we cannot find some of the documents" (Ogbo, 2011). The probe panel also discovered that Shell Plc had in December 2003 paid \$210 million as signature bonus to the Federal Government of Nigeria but only the sum of \$1 million was reflected in the records.

Earlier in 2003, the sum of \$2.5 million was paid for OPL 257, by vintage oil but was spent five years before it was receipted on July 8, 2008.

In terms of public re-orientations and political enlightenment and civic education, civil society organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria have not performed well. Nigeria is a populous country with thirty-six (36) states and the Federal Capital territory, Abuja and further sub divided into seven hundred and seventy-four (774) Local Government Areas. With over 200 million people, less than 30% of these are literate while over 75% resides in rural areas lacking access to basic social amenities. Although majority of Nigerians are domicile in rural areas, well-funded and articulate CSO which can educate the masses and conduct civic education are majorly based in urban centers mainly the FCT and in states and local government capitals. The effects of this elitist character of CSO could be gleaned in the staggering proportions of invalid or blank votes, ethnoreligious violence, and electoral fraud (Shedrack, 2015).

Worthy of note is the issue of invalid/ blank votes that had characterized successive presidential elections in Nigeria since 1999. For instance, in 1999 presidential election, a total of 57,938,945 registered voters, the voter turnout was 30,280,052 while invalid/ blank votes stood at 29,848,441. Similarly, in the April 2003 presidential election, a total of 60,823,022 people were registered while voter turnout was 42,018,735 and invalid/blank votes was 2,538,246. In addition, in the April 2007 presidential election, registered voters were 61,567,036 while invalid vote was over 8%. In 2011, invalid and blank votes were 1,259,506 (Vanguard Newspaper, April, 23 2011).

The high preponderance of invalid votes in contemporary democratic experience of Nigeria amidst multiplicity of civil society groups had been linked to the passive and drifting role of civil society groups and electoral umpires in Nigeria. Majority of the invalid votes are from rural areas where there are high rates of poverty and illiteracy. Closely related to this is the issue of electoral frauds which had plagued Nigeria's nascent democracy since the return to civil rule in 29th May 1999. Although the 1999 presidential election because fairly devoid of excessive frauds, mainly because it was midwife by the military that of 2003 and 2007 was marred by irregularities. There were numerous cases of ballot box snatching and stuffing of ballot papers, under age voting, intimidation of voters, attack of electoral officials, and hijacking of electoral materials by political

thugs among other electoral malfeasances. What did civil society group do as all these anomalies happened? Why should all these occur amidst charades of CSOs? In fact, after the 2007 presidential election, the late president Umaru Musa Yar'adua acknowledged that the election that brought him to power was rigged but promised to carry out electoral reforms. There were high cases of stolen mandates. In fact, civil society organizations which observed and monitored the elections with copious evidences of electoral malpractice could not go to court to challenge any of the results. For instance, following the 2007 governorship election in Nigeria, election results were overturned in Kogi, Sokoto, Edo, Bayelsa, Ogun and Ondo state by the court on the grounds of electoral frauds (Shederack 2015).

Furthermore, since the returned of civilian rule in 1999, the ethnic militia groups have negatively affected the delivery and pursuit of the dividends of good governance to the people. In contemporary Nigeria, ethnic militia groups like Odua Peoples' Congress, Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra, Egbesu Boys, Ombatse, Niger Delta Volunteer Force, Arewa People's Congress and other clandestine socio-cultural associational groups have by the manifestation of its activities hindered democracy. Although these groups from liberal perspective, are classified as Civil Society Organization but their incessant use of force and violence which have led to loss of lives and property in different parts of Nigeria work against democracy in Nigeria (Ikelegbe, 2013).

Vaaseh (2014) argued that some civil society groups in Nigeria have stymied the growth and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. He poignantly pointed out that the OPC was involved in the killing of police officers and innocent Hausas in Lagos state in 2009. Danladi and Hembra (2015) using the Ombatse militia in Nasarawa State, North central Nigeria observed that while there are increase in the proliferation of militias as a result of state failure and weak civil society, consolidating Nigeria's nascent democracy will be very difficult. This view was corroborated by that of Agbu (2011) whose study surmises that a major problem to nation building and democratic consolidation in post-military Nigeria is the rise and activities of ethnic militia groups. Danladi and Tanko (2015) had further opined that with the unregulated activities of militant socio-cultural associational groups, particularly the Ombatse in Nasarawa state, the pursuit and realization of sustainable development will be not being feasible. They advocated for the criminalization of

Ombatse by the government and the punishment of promoters of such violent prone association in Nigeria.

Ombatse was for instance responsible for the death of seventy-eight (78) members of the Nigeria security operatives comprising of the Police and State Security services personnel who were on their lawful assignment at Alakio village in Nasarawa state in 2013. Similarly, during this fracas, about twenty innocent citizens were killed and police vehicles destroyed. Since 2013, Ombatse had been involved in communal clashes with other non-Eggon ethnic tribes in Nasarawa state including the arrest and torture of Fulani pastoralists. Since the resurgence of Ombatse militancy, civil society organizations in Lafia and other parts of Nigeria have not made any frantic efforts toward mediating advocating for criminalization of Ombatse. Moreover, with copious evidences of grave human right abuse been perpetrated by Ombatse, no civil society has dared file a law suit against Ombatse either in Nigeria or the International criminal court. Although, the promoters or sponsors of the Ombatse had been identified by government of Nasarawa state, civil liberty organizations have not advocated for sanction or prosecution of indicted members. (Danladi and Tanko 2015)

Social capital is another great component of civil society which has globally been acknowledged as been critical and imperative in promotion of cooperation, trust, friendship and solidarity among members. Fukuyama observed that social capital is that common spirit of unity, trust, love and camaraderie usually associated and built by members of a civil society over a period of time (Fukuyama 2011) For instance, members of a socio-cultural associations like the Igala Cultural and Development Association(ICDA), Christians Association of Nigeria (CAN), Muslim League of Nigeria(MLN), Federation of Muslim Women in Nigeria (FORWAN), and other tend to trust and cherish one another over a period of time. This trust, Fukuyama noted is imperative in building mutual peace, tranquility and cohesion especially in a multi-ethnic liberal democratic state.

Within the Nigeria's democratic landscape, this has not been sustained since the emergence of the fourth republic. This is because, there are immense internal crack and disunity among member of most civil society groups especially cultural associational groups in Nigeria. for instance, there is problem in CAN as a result of its recent alignment and identification with members of political

parties in Nigeria. This has made some Christian bodies in Nigeria to break away from CAN. Similarly, the onslaught of Islamic terrorist group, Boko Haram in Nigeria, which has killed many Muslims and non-Muslims in Nigeria has created a high sense of suspicious among Muslim organizations in Nigeria. In fact, corruption has negatively affected the sociocultural and political fulcrum of modern Nigeria and this has been responsible for the high spate of intra and inter-ethnic violence in Nigeria (Fukuyama, 2011).

However, in an attempt to checkmate the activities of the CSOs in Nigeria, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) published in December 2014, an assessment of NGO/CSO guidelines in Nigeria. Of note, the 1999 and 2010 modifications to the Nigerian Constitution continue to guarantee the freedom to freely form associations that serve in a watchdog capacity for state policies. The ICNL assessment discusses the 2014 federal initiative to create a series of pending CSO/NGO legislative actions primarily focused on regulating the acceptance and utilization of financial contributions from donor agencies. Nigerian NGOs/CSOs are primarily externally funded, meaning the proposed bill has the potential to curtail CSO/NGO functionality in Nigeria (ICNL, 2014).

The proposed bill also introduces the first attempt by the federal government to engage with and fund CSO efforts in Nigeria. The ICNL describes the bill as follows: The creation of a "Civil Society Regulatory Commission (CSRC)," which would be "peopled by civil society activists and... free from undue State's interference that will regulate the conduct and activities of civil society organizations in Nigeria," with the following functions:

1. Registering CSOs in Nigeria;
2. Sanctioning CSOs that abuse the ethics or rules of the Commission; and
3. Proposing that grants be made available by the National Assembly to CSOs.

The Conference report proposed that "statutory funds to be known as "Civil Society Grants/Fund" be annually appropriated by the National Assembly for civil society activities, in order to strengthen the ability of CSOs to perform their watchdog roles, act as checks against impunity by State actors, and to enthrone an open, just and accountable society. The Fund/Grant shall be managed by the CSRC. The proposed bill is expected to be voted on after the 2015 elections. As

contradictions within the membership make it difficult to agree on common positions during the period of engagement with the state. Such inherent divisiveness weakens efficiency and makes the associations vulnerable to penetration by government agents.

3. Inadequate Funding

Most Nigerian prodemocracy CSOs are donor-dependent and the focus of foreign donors on democracy in Nigeria have expanded from supporting pro-democracy organizations to include the support for democratic institutions like the legislature, judiciary and other democratic institutions. This fiscal factor has also reduced the activities and impacts of some prodemocracy CSOs in contemporary Nigeria.

4. Government Patronage

Most often, the Nigerian private media, under the umbrella of the Nigerian Union of Journalist (NUJ), rely heavily on government patronage (advertisement) for survival and their independence has been seriously compromised for this reason. There have also been claims that the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) leadership compromised with government in the 2012 and 2015 strike/mass protests against the withdrawal of subsidy on petroleum products.

5. Lack of internal democracy

The lack of internal democracy in most of the Nigerian CSOs makes it difficult for members of these organizations to learn democratic values/norms within their organization. Thus, they cannot adequately inculcate this principle to citizens.

6. Lack of Skills for CSOs

The civil society organizations are also faced with lack of capacity in terms of knowledge, skills and methods of advocacy. It is expected that any organizations that wish to engage the state must be well equipped with superior knowledge and articulation of stronger points. This is still absent in many of the civil society organizations in Nigeria (Ojo, 2011).

7. Corruption and Personal Enrichment

There have been accusations of corruption, ranging from lack of transparency in the utilization of donor-funds to outright embezzlement/conversion of foreign donations to personal use. This tends to weaken the CSOs 'moral right to engage the state. It also hinders people of integrity and value from associating with them. The impact of their advocacy for

a change is also limited, because it is stated that he who comes to equity must come with clean hands.

8. Lack of State Support and Partnership

The relationship between CSOs and the state is largely characterized by suspicion and tension. For the most part, state officials have viewed CSOs as competitors of power, influence, and legitimacy in the public sphere rather than as development partners.

4.8 STRENGTHENING THE ROLE AND PERFORMANCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NIGERIA

In order for the democratization process in Nigeria to be sustained and dividends of good democratic governance delivered to people, civil society need to be properly repositioned and strengthened. Strengthening civil society is therefore imperative so that they can improve upon the current poor existing structures of CSO. Thus, the role and performance of civil society can be enhanced by adopting the following measures:

On the Poor Funding

Poor funding has been a major problem sapping the vitality of civil society in Nigeria and Africa in general (Diamond 1999, Mercy 2012 and Fadakinte 2013). Majority of the civil society organizations in Nigeria depend largely on external source usually foreign donor agencies to finance their activities. In fact, virtually all the donor agencies have vested interest in certain areas of the nation and thus, money released for projects does not in many cases reflect the pressing needs of the people instead the donor goals and objectives stands clear. As a result, adequate constitutional provision on funding of civil society in Nigeria should be made. This could be achieved by creating a consolidated or national trust fund integrated in the national budget where registered civil society organizations in Nigeria can apply for fund annually. When this is done, it will help reduce over dependency of Nigeria civil society on external donor agencies with their stringent conditionality and narrow interest. As the common saying of he who pays the piper dictates the tune syndrome is not good as currently obtained in Nigeria.

The Urban and Elitist Nature of CSO in Nigeria.

Civil society organizations are greatly highly concentrated in urban centers with high number of educated elites as members. This has led to high rates of illiteracy and poor democratic culture among the rural poor. The effects of these can be seen in the staggering proportion of invalid votes and ethno-religious cum communal clashes in different parts of Nigeria. A way out of this ruse is to de-urbanize civil society in Nigeria by ensuring that CSO concerned with human rights, women empowerment, poverty reduction, civic education is located or headquartered in rural areas instead of urban centers. Closely related to the above is the issue of elitism of CSO. There is need for the integration of rural dwellers in civil society to actively participate in advocacy. This will help give them a sense of belonging in the civil society advocacy and engagement and coupled with the fact that most of the sensitive information needed for addressing the problems usually identified by CSO are domiciled with the people who are involved in the problem.

The Leadership Issues in the CSOs.

The issue of quality and responsive leadership is one that affects the entire polity of Nigeria and not just the civil society alone. However, from the past twenty years of unbroken democratic experience, it is clear that poor leadership is one of the banes of civil society in Nigeria. Some of the leaders of trade and labor unions in Nigeria had at critical moments abandoned their responsibilities of monitoring the activities of the state. Many had even ventured into active politics and are serving as state governors, ministers, senators and chairmen of local government councils. As Fadakinte (2013) observed, Comrade Adam Oshiomole, served as the president of Nigerian Labor Congress, (NLC), later served as the governor of Edo state. Professor Pat Utomi, who founded the Value for Leadership Center in Lagos contest Presidential election in 2003 and 2007, Pastor Tunde Bakare, established the Save Nigeria Foundation but contested the 2010 presidential election as a deputy to Muhammad Buhari under the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria party. The implication of the penchant by leaders of civil society in Nigeria have limited their performance and reduced the perception and attitude of the masses toward the third sector in Nigeria.

One of the ways to curtail this attitude of the leaders of CSO, especially from venturing into politics is to establish centers for training and retraining of civil society advocates and members. Such

centers may be affiliated to universities or research institutes within the country where lecturers and civil society experts can teach, mentor and educate members and leaders of civil society towards making them understand in nitty-gritty the dynamic and trajectories of the third sector. This will also improve their performance and empower them with requisite skills to contribute to democratic governance in Nigeria. In addition, if this is done, it will help inculcate the ideology and philosophy of civil society activism into the members.

The Corruption and Bribery in the CSOs.

Corruption and bribery is endemic as well as an enemy within. It is a canker worm that has eaten deep in the fabric of the country and had stunted growth in all sectors. It has been the primary reason behind the country difficulties in developing fast. The cancerous nature of corruption makes it difficult for any part of the Nigeria polity to be immune from it. Although, there are fewer cases of corruption in the third sector in Nigeria, there are reports of mismanagement of funds meant for development by students and labor unions in contemporary Nigeria (Acemoghi, 2000).

For instance, the Nigeria Labor congress in Nigeria since March 2015 has been embroiled in corruption and crisis leading to break ups and parallel leadership of the union. According to Peter Okwori, the Christain Association of Nigeria, (CAN) top leaders have recently been involved in party politics, manifest in their public support and collaboration with corrupt individuals in the society. Also, the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) an umbrella body comprising of all students in Nigeria, both home and abroad was involved in the endorsement of political aspirants during the build-up to the 2015 general election. NANS executives at the state and local levels also endorsed certain politicians at the state level. This scenario portends grave danger for civil society. First, with the corrupt nature of the state and political class, these aforementioned labors, trade, religious and student unions easily get bribed and co-opted by the state thereby reducing their level of activism and watchdog roles in governance. Secondly, with financial inducements from the politicians, these civil society groups get embroiled in crisis over sharing of booty thereby creating division and leadership crisis. Strengthening these civil society groups in light of this quagmire is through re-orientation and financial support from donor agencies and proper media monitoring of the activities of CSO in Nigeria.

The Nigeria Bar Association, (NBA), and Nigeria Union of Journalists, (NUJ), should collaborate and render free legal services and media coverage to other Civil society groups within the country. The NBA should apart from condemning unjust government policies and program but file law suits against government in fulfillment of their role of citizen litigation and advocacy. Furthermore, the NUJ should intensify effort in rural cum advocacy journalism to help bring news and special documentaries from rural areas that may not be financially new worthy in the capitalist democratic state.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

This project work was mainly based on the statement which focused on the role of civil society in democratic sustenance. A study of Nigeria, 1999-2015. Chapter one of this historical research work discussed the general introduction or explanation on civil society, democracy and as well as democratic sustenance in Nigeria and the history of the study area (Nigeria) was made, especially with particular reference to the timeframe of the study, 1999-2015.

The chapter two of this study deals with the analysis of the literature review of the research topic. The chapter also discussed about the theoretical approach used in further discussing the topics or in answering the questions posed in this research as well as the empirical literatures used in this research work.

Chapter three of this study is about the methodology applied in doing this research work followed by research design and how data collection and analysis is organized. The chapter also explained the designation and the instrument used in collecting data.

Chapter four is the most important part of the whole research work and mainly about comprehensive analysis, discussion of research findings and the main research questions and related questions arise throughout the research process. The chapter begins by making a critical analysis of the evolution and categorization of CSOs in Nigeria, their roles and contributions as well as the challenges and constraints faced by civil societies in Nigeria. Thus, measures were provided through which their roles could be enhanced.

The chapter five is the last chapter and summarizes the cores of what has been discussed and found in the research work. Also some recommendations were made and at the end of the research, is reference list of the materials consulted.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Civil society organizations, (CSOs), no doubt, have been critical agents of change and participants in the democratization process in Africa before and after the 1990s. There is however, noticeable relaxation and laxity in activism since the new millennium. With the withering of military and authoritarian rules in Africa, the level and intensity of Civil society advocacy, protests, watchdog and state monitoring and general commitment to the Promotion of transparency, equity, accountability, freedom of speech, thought, association, advocacy, civic education, judicial

multi ethnic and religious society like Nigeria by being an arena for all groups to debate and express different interest openly. Democracy is not stable if people with similar interest, identity and religious associate each other. Many SCOs in Nigeria are staffed with same religious or ethnic group indicating that pluralism is clearly lacking. Therefore CS should improve to be an arena for pluralistic discourse- regardless of ethnic and religious background.

- 43 Civil Society Organizations should reorganize themselves to be more coordinated and collaborative forces that could have significant impact on government decision-making process. However, they clearly lack coordinated effort or strategy with fragmented in goals and operations with each pursuing their own interest without taking proper consultation or communication with others. There should be a call for nationwide civil society conference where representative could come up with a more coordinated platform with proper strategy to further agendas more to do with national level rather than small scale ethnic line or communal line impact. Such initiative can create a mechanism, which could potentially empower CSOs across the country through technical guides related to rules and organizational skills.
- 44 There are civil societies with ambitious goals and strong will to democratization and peace, however structurally weak and incapable of organizing well. Such organizations need supports in every means through clear guidelines that special attention should be given to them. Because they are incapable of advertising their agendas to the world or online market as these organizations are often led by people based in rural area. They should be strengthened and financed so that impact generated by CS actors inside Nigeria is equally distributed and balanced.
- 45 In order to ensure that civil society plays more viable and pragmatic role in democratic governance in Nigeria especially in the future, emphasis must be geared toward proper funding of CSO to reduce their over dependence on foreign donors often with skewed interests. Also, the training and retraining of civil society leaders, advocates, and non-members is highly imperative and germane in the democratic system in Nigeria.
- 46 Finally, civil society is not simply in tension or opposition with the state. Being independent from the state doesn't mean that CSOs are always to attack the government. Rather the role of CS is to be part of change agents in nation building by acting as examples

abide by democratic principles and a supplementary to state's implementation of what the people desire. In doing so, CSO will contribute very positive role in promoting democracy and good governance in Nigeria.

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