

**THE IMPACT OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION ON
NIGERIA'S SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT: AN
APPRAISAL OF CIVIL LIBERTIES ORGANIZATION**

BY

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Approval Page

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Dedication

This research work is dedicated to Almighty God, for His everlasting Grace upon my life, to my Late father, Chief Godson E. Ofoneme for his effort to make me academically sound, even to the last of his breath. Also to my mother, Chief Mrs. R.U. Ofoneme for her tireless effort to keep the candle burning.

I also dedicate this research work to my loving siblings; Uchechukwu, Chinedu Yunglord, Ebere Isaac, Mmaduabuchukwu Jonathan, Chidiebere Ekwemba, Mmaduakonam, Elochukwu, Chukwuemeka, Chiagozie, Chukwuka for their unending sacrifice and moral support, words are not enough to thank you all. God bless you all abundantly.

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Long live Political Science Department
Long Live Caritas University
Long Live Nigeria.

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Abstract

The civil society and civil society organizations, have sacrificed their existence, goals and objectives to the course of the fight towards socio-political development in Nigeria. To this effect, they have made relentless effort and provoking arrangements, to ensure that the goals and objectives for which they are set up are achieved to a considerable extent. Hence in the course of their activity towards achieving this goal, they discovered that there are lots of factors undermining socio-political development in Nigeria and hence sought to put an end to them. Issues such as; poverty, corruption, unemployment and human rights violation have been a thorn on the neck for socio-political development in Nigeria and until this is made history, the Nigeria socio-political development will remain a mirage. Having discovered these problems, the civil society organizations have continued to fight these problems to a standstill to ensure that the development dream of the Nigerian socio-political sector is kept alive as we will see through the activities of the Civil Liberties Organizations (CLO)

In our attempt to analyze and investigate the problem associated with

this research work, we adopted the structural functional theory as our theoretical framework while the secondary method and documentary research was used for gathering and analyzing data. This research work on the Impact of civil society organization on the socio-political development (An appraisal of the Civil Liberties Organization) was carried out to ascertain the impact civil society organizations make on Nigeria's socio-political development and hence making useful suggestion that would further enhance socio-political development.

This study was divided into five (5) chapters. Chapter one (1) talked about the Background of the Study, statement of problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, hypotheses, methods of data collection and analysis, scope and limitation of the study as well as operationalization of concepts or terms. Chapter two (2) contains Sub-topics bothering on civil society organizations and democracy in Nigeria, stressing more on the origin and development of civil society organization in the post military Nigeria. This chapter further highlighted the dimensions of civil society organizations, with also the analysis of the objectives and roles of civil society organization. Chapter three (3) bothered on issues such as the driving forces of civil society organizations in Nigeria, this entails issues like; the perversity of corruption in Nigeria, the scourge of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria and of course the prevalence of human rights violation in Nigeria.

Chapter four (4) talked about the case study or appraisal of this research work, which is; the civil liberties organization and socio-political development. Further treating sub-topics like; civil liberties organization and the war against corruption in Nigeria, where I discussed the role civil liberties organization play in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

The chapter further analysed the role of civil liberties organization against the backdrop of poverty and their influence in poverty alleviation programme in Nigeria. The chapter concluded with the role of civil liberties organization in the protection of human rights in Nigeria. The fifth chapter (5) which is the last but not the less interesting, includes the summary of this research work, the conclusion and of course recommendation, where the researcher recommended points that would enable effective and efficient participation of civil society organization and subsequently increased growth in the socio-political development of Nigeria.

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Chapter One: General Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The topic “The Impact of Civil Society Organization on Nigeria’s Socio-Political Development: An Appraisal of Civil Liberties Organization”, was induced by the level in which the various civil society organizations in the country have strived to combat those issues that have continued to undermine the country’s bid to social and political development over the years. George Soros, in his book: *The Age of Fallibility*, Observes that society is suspicious of those who claim to be virtuous and not without justification. The claim of being virtuous is very controversial and is a characteristic of most civil society organizations. Whether they live up to this virtuous claim or not, is open to value judgment, subjectivity and as Soros argues that the burden of proof is certainly that of

the claimant. The implication is that it is misleading to make a sweeping assessment of the civil society organization and their activities. However, it is very necessary to check the extent to which they have made impact to improve public welfare, strengthened cultural, social, economic and political life-wire of the society.

It is also right to say that since the dawn of participatory democracy, the rights of citizens such as the freedoms of expression and of association are seen as sacrosanct. Often, these rights are provided in the constitution and other extant laws of the country. When people outside the corridors of power freely exercise these rights by volunteering to pursue a valued course or by protesting against a government policy, they double and are recognized as civil society group or organization. This tends to lend credence to the assertion of Abbie Hoffman who said many years ago that:

Democracy is not something you believe in or a place to hang your hat, but its something you do, you participate. If you stop doing it, democracy crumbles (1963:30).

A significant problem in most developing countries is over centralization of decision making and the lack of stakeholders involvement that permit patronage of powerful special interests and high levels of corruption. Scholars are agreed that lack of stakeholder buy-in attenuates the policy process, decreases efficiency and this in-turn affects economic growth. This is where civil society can play a major role by contributing to greater transparency and accountability.

Civil society is a “space” where function is to mediate between the individual and the state while there may not be a clear cut definition of civil society; they more or less agree that it comprises institutions such as

religious organizations, labour unions, charity organizations, community groups, non profits and the media. In advanced and virile democratic systems, these institutions supplement formal processes such as voting and help citizens shape the culture, politics and economies of their nation. Civil society organization tends to strengthen and raise the capacity of citizens to address social, economic and political developmental challenges.

Hence in this study, we attempt to expose or bring to limelight, the impact of these civil society organizations on the socio-political development of Nigeria, laying emphasis on the civil liberties organization (CLO). The Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) was established in 1987 as one of Nigeria's largest human rights organization. Its formation and emergence can be credited to a renowned Nigerian radical lawyer Olisa Agbakoba (SAN). The civil liberties organization investigates human rights abuses and campaigns,

through litigation, publications and communication with the government on behalf of people whose rights have been abused. It has published a number of reports on police brutality, military decrees, government impunity, the death penalty and annual reports on the human rights situation in Nigeria. Its legal aid project has represented over 4,000 indigent victims of human rights abuses. The organization also undertakes human rights education through its empowerment project, conducting clinics and seminars on rights issues. The government is extremely active in lobbying the government through dialogue and public censor and launching campaigns to end specific government abuses, hence providing an avenue for socio-political development in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The Civil Society Organizations play prominent role as the mouth-piece of the citizens on issues affecting the

people and the society at large, especially in the case of policies and ideas, that might threaten the peaceful co-existence of the citizens and hinder the socio-political development of the society. In Nigeria, the existence of repressive and unpopular governments for more than 20 years serve as impetus for the emergence and proliferation of organizations that seek to challenge the legitimacy of policy, programmes and ultimately the existence of these government. No doubt, the existence of these organizations, assisted considerably to open up space for the expression of dissenting opinions and what could be regarded as alternative voices. Unfortunately this very character and attribute has come to serve as a shield for some opportunistic and self-centered civil society organizations.

Key assumptions that connotes legitimacy to the existence of civil society organizations is that they are expected to be knowledge driven, which means that

actors, or at least members have requisite skills to investigate problems of society, proffer solutions and develop plans to facilitate buy on, by other segment of society and government. To this effect, some questions were raised in the course of this study, questions as; what is the problem prompting the study? Which ends up seeking to find the solution to the questions below:

- i. Is there any relationship between civil society organizations and democracy?
- ii. Is bad governance the driving force of civil society organizations in Nigeria?
- iii. To what extent has the civil liberties organization influenced the socio-economic and political development in Nigeria?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of this research is to assess the impact of the civil society organizations, on Nigeria's development. The specific objectives of the study are:

- i. To establish the relationship between civil society organizations and democracy.
- ii. To ascertain if bad governance is the driving force of civil society organizations in Nigeria.
- iii. To determine the extent the civil liberties organization has influenced the socio-economic and political development of Nigeria.

1.4 Literature Review

The activities of civil society organizations have over the years engineered several forms of development in Nigeria. Activities ranging from protecting against certain government policies to the organization of seminars, conferences and enlightenment programmes to educate the masses or citizens on the various human rights and

how to kick against abuse on such rights. Civil society organizations, through protest and campaigns have over the years worked to bring about accountability in government, in the sense that the government has become more accountable and responsible as a result of the eye cast on it by the civil society organizations, hence bringing about people oriented policies that further bring about development in the country.

Furthermore, civil society organizations as it relates to their impact on socio-political development have been subjected to different scholarly views in an attempt to ascertain the level of relationship or disparity that exist between the activities of civil society organization and Nigeria's socio-political development. On a plain or level ground or better still in a layman's term, socio-political development can be seen or comprises of two factors; social development and political development, otherwise known as socio-political development. Social development

on the one hand refers to a broad term that describes actions that are taken to build positive outcomes and prevent negative social outcomes that can adversely affect a community. These outcomes includes issues ranging from crime, poverty, gang activity, school disengagement, teen pregnancy, addictions and substance abuse, obesity, poor health, environmental degradation etc. The aim of social development is to improve the availability of support systems in the community that prevent negative outcomes before they occur or buffer (lessen) their impact. For example rather than reacting to crime after it has already happened, measures are taken within the community that prevent crime from ever occurring.

Good prevention starts with parents before they have children and very directly once conception has occurred. Evidence suggested that negative environments not only affect pregnant mothers but can very directly

alter the architecture of the brain of the unborn child. Social development is about creating environment that enable children and youth to thrive and not merely survive. In other words, social development refers to the ability to create an enabling environment or building a conducive environment for man to survive, while political development on the other hand refers to a durable shift in ideas or institutions that alters the feasible set of options open to solving political problems. The study of political development can also be understood as the study of the evolution of the structures of the state, in correspondence with the changes occurring in the economic and social dimensions of group life. Political development has been defined in many ways that reflect the passage of societies and analysts preoccupations. One formulation dwells on the emergence of national sovereignty and the integrity of the state, demanding respect and upholding commitments in the international

system. Others identify the domestic attributes of constitutional order and political stability, attained through the formation of a settled framework of government, reliable procedures for leadership succession and a consolidation of the territorial administrative reach of government.

Political development enhances the states capacity to mobilize and allocate values or resources to process policy inputs into implementable outputs. This assists with problem – solving and adaptation to environmental changes and goals realization. The contemporary notion of good governance also dwells on efficient, effective and non-corrupt administration. Social and political development seems to work hand-in-hand, hence this research topic seeks to find out the impact of civil society organization in the socio-political development of Nigeria, using the civil liberties organizations as an appraisal.

Bratton (1994:5) has warned of the dangers in appropriating a venerable concept such as civil society when trying to explain contemporary African politics. The dangers arise not only from the fact that the concept evolved on a distinctly European historical and cultural milieu, but also because its usage by political philosophers has changed dramatically overtime.

This point was undermined by Pelczynski (1984:3) when he opined that “few social and political concepts have traveled so far in their life and changed their meaning so much”. The practical dimensions of the dangers are evident on the work of analysts such as Mersha (1990:2) and Gold (1990:20) who tried to apply the concept to non-western politics (Ethiopia and China) and found it “unwieldy” and “complex” respectively. Although there is some degree of elusiveness and fugitivity in the nature and meaning of civil society, the difficulty in application experienced by some scholars

may not be unconnected to the tendency to adopt a “Eurocentric” mind set with its emphasis on individualism and libertarianism when operationalising the concept in non-western settings, rather than conceive of the concept as but one particular example of thinking politically about conflict, how it is carried out, and who has the ‘right’ to engage in it” (Calaghy, 1994:237) viewed from this perspective, civil society as we still see after exploring the layers of perceived meanings with which the term is burdened, is a useful formula for analyzing state – society relations, not just because it embodies a core of universal beliefs and practices about the legitimation of and limits to state power, but also because “it provides a vantage point for the study of political practices and social movements, as well as establishing the connections between power contestation and the response of the state” (Chandhoke, 1995:41).

Civil society organization is part of the approach that appears in academic literatures today, here, it regards the society as a certain arena or area of society, the public space between the state and the households, where groups constituted at a level beyond the family engage in public political activity (Bryant, 1990:6), Bratton, 1989:417). Although such political activity may be motivated by the quest for private advantage, it is not “private in the sense of being confined to the domestic or household arena. Instead, it is considered ‘public’ in two senses. It entails collective action in which individuals join to pursue shared goals; and it takes place in the institutional commons that lie beyond the boundaries of the household. A characteristic feature of this public space is the normative notion of civility defined not just in terms of simple courtsey and good manners, but a readiness to moderate particular individual and parochial interests in consideration of some common good through

which other's basic rights and interest would be protected. It is the acceptance of such collectivity and responsibility to the common good and the positive value of activities meant to safeguard it that are deemed to be at the core of civility and form what Still (1991:13) calls the fundamental virtue of civil society organizations. As John Dewey might have it:

Only by participating in the common intelligence and sharing the common purpose, as it works for the common good, can individual human beings realize their true individualities and become truly free.

Since the dawn of participatory democracy the rights of citizens such as the freedoms of expression and of association are seen as sacrosanct as I further stated this rights gives individuals and members of the society the freewill to join any organization that represent their

interest. Hence in Nigeria, there are so many civil society organizations, they include the following: The Alliance for credible elections (ACE – Nigeria), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (SCIA), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Trade Union Congress (TUC), Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), United Action for Democracy (UAD), Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), Electoral Reform Network (ERN), Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Civil Liberties Organization (CLO), Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) etc, But this research work will place more emphasis on its case study, The Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) in subsequent chapters. All these organizations mentioned above, all perform various functions in making sure the government is accountable and responsible to the people by check-making their policies and acting as watch –dogs

on the government which will further bring about socio-political development.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research work will provide relevant answers to the bothering thoughts of scholars who are interested in this topic.

Moreso, it will also provide guideline to policy makers as regards to the kind of policies they make, that will match the desires of a society and subsequently the various civil society organizations in Nigeria. If the policies made or adopted by a particular government in power, does not go down well with the people it might trigger reactions by the various civil society groups, whose impact can marr the government. But if the policy

is a good one, then the government would receive the applause and support of these groups.

Hence, this research work would help enhance the ideas and understanding of scholars and students alike, who are interested in this topic as the impact of civil society organizations would be studied and then one would know what kind of impact to expect from civil society organizations when certain policies are made. It is imperative therefore to note at this point that these impacts could be negative or positive, depending on the goals, objectives, demand, aspiration and modus operandi (modes of operation) of these civil society organizations or groups.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

There are several modes or theories used in the analysis of the political system or phenomenon by political scientists. But this study sees more appropriate

the use of Gabriel Almond' Structural Functional Model as a tool for analysis. The structural functional model primarily concerned itself, with the maintenance of order and stability in the society and the necessary arrangement within the society which maintain the said order and stability. Structural functional analysis originated in the biological and mechanical sciences of part of systems analysis. It was adopted and adapted as a mode of analysis in sociology and anthropology as its evident in the work of Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons. It was developed in political science by Gabriel Almond; S.P. Verma who stresses that structural functionalism revolves around two main concepts; functions and structures on the basis of which three basic questions could be posed.

1. What basic functions are fulfilled in any given political systems?
2. By what structures?

3. Under what conditions?

Functions have been defined by Merton Robert as those observed consequences which make for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system. S.P. Verma notes that while functions deal with the consequence involving objectives as well as processes or patterns of actions. Structures refer to the arrangement within the system, which performs the functions. The basic assumption of the structures function framework is that all system has structures, which can be identified and these structures perform functions within the system, necessary for existence. Thus, it is perceived by Gabriel Almond that all political system regardless of which they are remains in existence. In various political systems, these functions may be performed by different kinds of political structure and sometimes even by structures, which are of overtly, recognizes as being primarily political. Verma notes that there is no one

correspondence between functions and structures. A particular function may be fulfilled by a complex combination of structures just as structural arrangement may perform functions which might have different kinds of consequences for the structure in the analysis of the political systems, the analyst compare not simply the political structures since these may not actually be the mechanisms through which all the necessary functions are being performed or they may not be performing the functions originally allotted to them.

Structural functional analysis tries to shift the focus of analysis away from the observable institutional political mechanisms to any area where the actual performances of the functional requirement of the system are located. Political systems are therefore compared in terms of the manner in which structures perform the expected functions in the society. All political systems are

therefore perceived to perform two basic functions: Input and Output functions.

There are four input functions, which includes:

1. Political socialization and recruitment.
2. Interest articulation.
3. Interest aggregation.
4. Political Communication.

These are three output functions, which includes:

1. Rule making
2. Rule application
3. Rule adjudication

All input functions are seen as being performed by non-governmental organization or system of the society such as: pressure groups, interest groups, schools, family, political parties, independent newspapers, civil society organization etc. The output functions are all governmental and it is the governments and their

bureaucracies which make rules (Legislate), apply rules (administer) and adjudicate between individuals and groups (interpret) on the basis of rules. Political systems can therefore be analyzed and compared in terms of the degree to which their political structures are specialized, whether specific functions are performed through particular structure can perform a number of functions. In some political system such as those of the advanced industrial nations of America and Europe, structures are specialized, political roles differentiated and function specific.

In summary, it is to be noted that why the yardstick by which systems are measured consist of the functions which are performed by the political system the units which being analyzed and compared are the various structure which compose individual political systems. The analyst should attempt to see which structures or institutions fulfill the functions which are

ascribed to all political systems. Take interest aggregation as an example, it is defined as the way in which demands are combined in the form of alternative cause of action. In the combination various types of structures can play a part. Civil society organizations are perhaps the structures which usually attempt to combine and process demand under liberal democracy. Moreover, other groups such as trade unions, interest groups or non – governmental organizations can also achieve the same goal, sometimes alone, sometimes in collaboration with one another. These civil society organizations, perform input functions as stated above, placing demand on the government in order to achieve the set goals or objectives for which they were established.

1.7 Hypotheses

With references to the questions formulated at the statement of problem, the following hypotheses have been derived.

- i. There appears to be a strong relationship between civil society organizations and democracy
- ii. Bad governance is the driving force of civil society organizations in Nigeria.
- iii. The civil liberties organization has influenced socio-economic and political development of Nigeria.

1.8 Method of Data Collection/Analysis

The method of data collection used in this work is the secondary source of data. It implies the visitation to libraries, journals, newspapers, textbooks, and articles from the internet. Since the method of analysis is the secondary mode, the method of analysis is the qualitative

method, which implies that it is more of explanatory theories.

1.9 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of this study covers the activities of civil society organizations in Nigeria, with particular attention on the civil liberties organizations (CLO). Many of these civil society organizations tend to have branches nationwide of which civil liberties organization (CLO) is an is not an exception, but what helped in this research work was that their activities are narrowed, having one founder and a narrowed ideology, similar interest, goal and objective.

In the course of this research work, I encountered a lot of problems, that limited the scope and idea of the study, because the author of this work is not an island of knowledge, he therefore depended on library works, where there where few books, relating to the research

topic. Other activities in school, made sure the author had little time given to this work. But it is a thing to be grateful to God for, as this work turned out to be a success.

1.10 Operationalization of Concepts

In the study, some social, political and societal terms were adopted and applied in relation to the subject matter. They include the following:

- ❖ **Political Development:** Broadly the development of the institutions, attitudes and values that form the political system of a society.
- ❖ **Society:** The English word “society can be stretched or narrowed to cover almost any form of association of persons possessing any degree of common interests, values or goals.
- ❖ **Democracy:** The “government of the people, by the people for the people”, based in a nation “conceived

in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal, has had so many definitions, but none has been as simple, yet comprehensive as the one given above by one time. American President, the famous Abraham Lincoln (1809-65) at Gettysburg in November 19, 1863.

- ❖ **Poverty:** This is the state of one who lacks a certain amount of material possessions or money.
- ❖ **Human Rights:** This is related to civil rights, natural rights, people's right and civil liberties, insofar as all of them are concerned are concerned with the rights and liberties of individuals and groups within a free society.
- ❖ **Good Governance:** This is an indeterminate term used in international development literature to describe how public institutions and government conduct public affairs and manage public resources for the betterment of the entire society.

- ❖ **Bad Governance:** The opposite of good governance, involve the mismanagement and misconduct of affairs that would enable development and positive growth in the society.
- ❖ **Development:** The all-round inter-connected progressive transformation of man, society and nature made possible by his incremental mastery over them.

Chapter Two: Civil Society Organizations and Democracy in Nigeria

2.1 Origin and Development of Civil Society

Organization in the Post Military Nigeria

In societies attempting to move from authoritarian rule to democracy, monarchical impositions or forms of 'benevolent' military rule to a (multiparty or non-party) democracy which allows free competitions, free association, mobilises for the securing of human rights

(individual, clan, class and economic rights), the role of one of the building blocks of a democracy, the civil community or civil society, is of extreme importance” (Ian Liebenberg; 2000, p. 70). Like other social science concepts, civil society has been defined to mean different things. From its classified definition of civility (Politike Koinonia), defined by Aristotle to mean a ‘civilized and rational society’, he also argued that the civil society was coterminous with the state (Keane John 1988:35).

The above definition reflects the social transition from ‘rude’ forms of life to a ‘polished’ and or a ‘civilized’ society, hence the ‘civilized society’ or civil society (Keane John 1988:35). This concept has been challenged and re-defined by scholars to suit the reality of their time.

Thomas Paine, Hegel, Alex de Tocqueville and others, for instance, contrary to Aristotle’s view, argued that the civil society was different from the state; and the power of the state need to be regularly checked by the

civil society (organized citizens) (Keane John 1988:35). In his analysis of civil society's development, Keane himself draws a boundary between the state and society to show two distinct and competing realms. However, this work in consideration of limited space will not review more literatures on the above concept but will adopt the definition provided by Larry Diamond and that declared by Gordon White to be the most currently used definition. The justifications for this are based on the (much) similarity of the two definitions and the rate at which scholars have quoted these definitions of and these scholars works on civil society in recent time. The realm of organized intermediary groups that are voluntary self-generating independent of the state and the family and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules" (Diamond: 1997:21). "An intermediate associational realm between state and family and populated by organizations which are separate from the state, enjoy autonomy in relations

to the state and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protest or advance their interest or values” (White: 1996:182). From the above two definitions, it is clear that civil society is comprised of individuals acting collectively as an organized group, civil society organization (CSO) for some common public purpose, independent of the state; voluntarily constituted, not for profit and has its independent regulations.

The definition of democratization has consistently been subjected to analytical scrutiny by social scientists, in particular, the political scientists. In his definition, Conteh – Morgan (1998:4) argues that democratization is an increase in political equality and a decrease in coercive rule; although, he fails to say how. To him, democratization is above all a matter of power. He contends that it is power relations that most importantly determine whether democratization can emerge, stabilize, and then maintain itself in the face of adverse economic

conditions. Instead of calling it power relation, for Manor, the success of any democratization process to a large extent depends on government commitment (Manor, J. 2004). In their analysis of the distinction between democracy and civil rule, Levy and Bruhn (1995:208) argues that democratization is the transition towards democratic government; a movement from authoritarian to a democratic government. Others argue that democratization is synonymous to democratic consolidation and or the deepening of democratic practices (Diamond et al, 1995:54; Makun and Ihanvbere; 1998:305-29; Clark John F. 1998:97-123).

For this work, democratizations is defined to mean the opening of closed 'democratic space' and a continuous deepening of democratic practices; this entails a dethronement of authoritarian rule for the entrenchment of democratic governance.

Among the forces that dislodged entrenched authoritarianism in Africa and brought the beginnings of formal democracy in the 1990s, the continent's nascent civil societies were in the forefront (Gymah – Boadi, 1997:278). This statement and that of Ian Liebenberg could be said to capture the Nigerians experience under the military regimes (1985:1999) (fayemi:2005:120; Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 1998:315; Agbeze, O. 1998:124). However, contrary to the above claim is another position by Elke Zuem, who argues that Nigeria has recently once again become a democracy, not due to civil society agitation but rather the death of its military despite, Gen. Sani Abacha (p. 118). Nonetheless, it is also critical to point out here that the death of Gen. Abacha in 1998 brought another military regime, the Abubakar Abdusalami, which voluntarily relinquished power to an elected democratic government due to national and international pressure in 1999. Gen. Ibrahim

Babangida's decisions to "step aside" – voluntarily handing over to an interim national government (ING) on August 26, 1993 and Abdusalam Abubakar handing over to a democratically elected government in May 1999 were as a result of pressure from the Nigerian Civil society (Diamong, L. 1995:470-81; Fayemi: 2005:120; Mbaku and Ihonvbere, 1998:315; Agbese, O. 1998:124). If the above claims are true, then one can possibly argue here that, the Nigerian civil society actively contributed to the opening of military dominated and closed public space and the entrenchment of democracy in Nigeria.

Some scholars have argued that the types of civil society and government in place to a large extent determine the types of role and contribution the civil society organizations make to the process of democratization (Elke Zuarn p. 105; White, G. 185-189). The above assertion partly explains why roles of CSOs under the military government in Nigeria from 1985 –

1999 were significantly different from May 1999 till date under democratic regime. That is to say that the civil society organizations in the pre-military and military era in Nigeria had different ideology and objectives. Hence, after the military left, which can be termed the post military era, civil society organizations developed and had other goals and objectives, which they wished to achieve. Some civil society organizations hence began to spring up. They are classified into various types and also according to their contributions to democratization.

Special Research and Advocacy Groups

These are few without a membership base but effective think-tank research and policy advocacy NGOs. They have easy access to the Nigeria policy makers and have established cordial relationship with the foreign donors e.g. centre for Democracy and Development (CDD); Centre for advanced social sciences (ASS); African leadership forum (ALF), center for research and

documentation (CRD) etc. Some of these organizations do not only participate in drafting key policy documentation for the governments, they also consult for the present regime on governance, economic, security and development issues. They have contributed significantly through research and advocacy to deepen democratic practice under the present Nigerian government.

Specialized Human Rights and Democracy Advocacy Group

These are organizations founded by individuals, mostly during the military regime. Democratic credential within these types of organizations is usually poor. Most of them do not have members but few board members that are appointed by the founding directors. However, they specialize in redressing and campaigning against gender and human rights violations while majority of them are donor driven. (Work on election today and HIV/AIDS tomorrow). Few of them like Gender and

Development Action (GA.DA), Women Advocacy Research and Documentation Center (WARDC), Human Rights Law Services (HURILAW), etc are fairly active in policy influence and less donor driven. Nevertheless, most of these human rights and democracy focused organizations are yet to be transformed from adopting military advocacy strategy in their dealings with the present democratic government, hence their limited contribution to the democratization process in contemporary Nigeria.

Networks and Coalitions:

These are coalitions and networks formed by individuals and organizations (NGOs and CBOs) to campaign for specific changes to the Nigeria policy and or legal frameworks; Citizens Forum For Constitutional Reform (CFCR) established to campaign for a nationally acceptable Nigerian constitution, Electoral Reform Network (ERN) set up to campaign for a legitimate national electoral law, Transitional Monitoring Group

(TMG) set up to monitor transition programmes. Members of these coalitions and networks come from different types of CSOs identified in this work and each of the above coalition has more than 100 organizations as members across the country; other characteristics of these coalitions include elections of officials by members (majority of them have strong internal democracy, however “regular” elections depend on availability of funds as most of these organizations depends on donors and not membership dues for survival); effective in policy influence – TMG, CFCR, and ERN, for instance have produced alternative electoral laws and constitutions for the country and some of their recommendations are presently funding their ways into the new proposed Nigerian Electoral law and constitution being drafted by the Nigerian Legislators.

Trade Unions and Professional Bodies

These are organizations established to influence policies in favour of their members. They are very active in influencing economic and less of political policies. One of the leading and effective members of this group is the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC). It has a vibrant internal democracy, financially viable (less dependent on foreign donors) and is popular in mobilizing Nigerian workers to go on strike when the need arises and the government is aware of this strength and it is well respected for it. However, this strength has not been effectively utilized to deepen democratic practices from 1999 to date. Some of these organizations are beginning to collaborate with pro-democracy organizations on governance and human rights issues but such collaborations have been less effective.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

These are organizations formed by people living in the rural communities. The formation of most of these

organizations dates back to 1980s and they were founded mainly to respond to the economic challenges of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP). These organizations are still very active and effective on economic but ineffective on governance and democratic issues till date. There is also a strong disconnection between this group and the effective urban based pro-democracy, research and policy advocacy organizations and for this and other reasons; the CBOs have been less effective in influencing democratic practices at the local government level. Having seen all this, it is imperative to note at this juncture that the post-military civil society organizations developed from just contributing to political development into economic, social and health care development.

2.2 Dimensions of Civil Society Organizations

The dimensions of civil society organizations goes a long way in this work to highlight the wide scopes of their activities and the way they go about it in achieving their set goals and objectives, dimensions of civil society organization in this work further splits civil society organization into parts to see how their activities revolve. To that end, one can therefore posit that civil society has become an important concept in the social sciences and has emerged as a central topic among policy makers and practitioners alike.

With such prominence comes a need for clearer understanding, better information and ways to position civil society, polity and society at large. Many different definition of civil society organization exists and there is little agreement on its precise meaning, though much overlap exists among core conceptual components. While civil society organization is somewhat contested concept, definitions typically vary in the emphasis they put on

some characteristics of civil society organizations over others; some definition focus primarily on aspects of state power, politics and individual freedom and others more on economic functions and notions of social capital and cohesion. Nonetheless, most analysis would probably agree that civil society organizations is the sum total of institutions, organizations and individuals located among the family, the state and the market in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests. Civil society organization is made up of an organization of society, outside the stricter realms of state power and market interest. For Jurgen Habermas,

“Civil society organization is made up of more or less spontaneously created associations, organizations and movements, which find, take up, condense and amplify the resonance of social problems in private life, and pass it on to the political realm or public sphere”.

In the twentieth century, civil society became associated with notions of civility, popular participation and civil mindedness (Verba), the public sphere (Jurgen Habermas), social capital (George Putnam), Culture (Antonio Gramsci) and community (Amitai Etzioni).

The various concepts and approaches emphasise different aspects or elements of civil society organizations: Values and norms like tolerance in the case of civility; the role of the media and the intellectual; the connections among people and the trust they have in each other; the normal dimensions communities create and need; and the extent to which people constitute a common public space through participation and civil engagement. The complexity of civil society organizations and the many relations and intersections it has with the economy, the state and institutions like the family, the media or culture, make it not only possible but almost necessary to examine the concepts from different

perspectives and orientations. Some analysts adopt an abstract, systematic view and see civil society organization as a macro-sociological attribute of societies, particular in the way state and economy relate to each other. Others take on a more individualistic orientation and emphasise the notions of individual agency, citizenship, values and participation, using econometric and social network approaches in analyzing civil society organizations. There is also an institutional approach to study civil society organizations by looking at the size, scope and structure of organizations and associations and the functions they perform.

Civil society organizations includes multiple units each with its own range of dimensions and characteristics. For each unit (institutions, organizations, individuals) we would be interested in their basic structural features, the values the units they represent, the activities they carryout, and the contributions they

make. For example, the civil liberties organization (CLO) has institutional as well as organizational and individual and individualistic characteristics attached to them and their activities. Civil society organizations can be measured on various ways and at different levels: as separate units, each with specific characteristics, measures and data; or as a composite entity that combines individual components. Moreover we can measure civil society at local, regional, national and even international levels.

The dimensions of civil society organizations can further be highlighted, based on the functions they perform in the Nigerian socio-political system to this end, let us analyze some of the functions or roles civil society organizations are known for and that which shapes their identity.

❖ **Monitoring Role:** This varies from one programme and organization to another. The monitoring of the

executive, legislatures and judiciary for accountability and good governance for instance are most prevalent among the specialized research and advocacy NGOs while census, elections and budget implementation monitoring are common among the network and coalitions. They have been performing this role, pointing to mistakes and how governments can overcome such mistakes.

❖ **Capacity Building Role:** Training and sensitization of citizens on their democratic and human rights and how these rights can be protected e.g. the rights of the citizens to hold accountable the elected representative etc. This capacity building is not restricted to the citizens alone. The elected representatives have also benefited from such trainings democratic control of military and security establishment, the making of participatory and gender sensitive budgets etc. This type of capacity

building role is common among all the civil society groups aside from the CBOs.

The length, breadth and width of civil society organizations further speaking envelops so many sectors their activities ranges from humanitarian assistance, human rights violation protests, contributing to national policy formulation, achieving personal interests of members on a collective note and contributing to general development of the country. They do this by using various means, which include the mass media, protests, strikes, ultimatum etc. all this are aimed at achieving their aims, goals, and objectives. This makes civil society organizations complex and hard to understand as the various civil society organizations, have their various goals and objectives they want to achieve.

2.3 Objectives and Roles of Civil Society

Organization

Aid to civil society is becoming an increasingly important part of the development agenda. Located on the space between the family and the state, and promoting coordinated public actions among their members and other citizens, civil society organizations have been celebrated most often for their role in promoting and protecting democracy, firstly increasingly however their contribution to economic development and poverty reduction are also being acknowledge and supported. Secondly, a fundamental aspect of the operation of civil society organizations (CSOs) concern the mediating role that they play between the individual and the state, standing as a bridge to fill the lacuna between the state and the citizens in terms of policy formulation and implementation. Analysts have demonstrated empirically how both states and citizens

can benefit when a dense web of civil society organizations mediates the relationship between them. The performance of government programs is improved and the impact of state policy is enhanced and made more widespread when, instead of interacting with citizens as atomized individuals, state agencies deal with relatively organized citizens groups. Citizens are also able to derive greater benefits from government programs and from market opportunities when their individual efforts are organized and made more cohesive by civil society organizations (CSOs).

There are good reasons to believe why organizations originating in society can perform these mediating roles more effectively compared to other organizations that are initiated and controlled by the state. While analysts of development have focused traditionally on the resources and capacities that exist among state agencies, a relatively ignored resources, comprised by the talents and

energies that exist among the poor themselves, is increasingly being identified by recent studies conducted under the rubric of social capital. Civil society organizations, these studies indicate, are important for mobilizing social capital to serve development objectives.

Social capital has been defined as those aspects of social organization, including networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. Communities and groups that are more closely united by bonds of trust and networks of mutual assistance are more likely to achieve superior development performance compared to other communities and groups where such bonds and networks are weaker. Social capital in this reckoning has both a cognitive dimension – consisting of norms, values, attitudes and beliefs that predispose people towards collective action – and a structural dimension, composed

of formal or informal organizations that facilitate collective action for achieving some common objective.

Having a high level of social capital, a community is endowed with the capacity to tackle multiple tasks related to collective well being. Some agency is necessary, however, to harness this endowment and to convert it into a stream of benefits.

Poverty Reduction as a Role Played by Civil Society Organizations

The existence of a number of contenting definitions complicates the task of identifying civil society organizations. For the purpose of this volume, we have selected a broad based and relatively non-controversial definition that regards civil society as “the realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and

bound by a legal order or set of shared rules. It consists of a vast array of organizations, both formal and informal including interest groups, cultural and religious organizations, civil and developmental associations, issues – oriented movements, and mass media,, research and educational institutions, and similar organizations. Civil society organizations, fight a long way in the reduction of poverty, by making people friendly request and advocating for policies aimed at increased governments interest in the welfare of citizens as well as taking drastic measures to ensure these policies are carried out for the betterment of the lives of the citizenry. In Nigeria, several civil society organizations have made unrelenting efforts to make their voices heard on issues more bothering on poverty eradication or reduction.

Hence this role played by the civil society organization cannot be overlooked. In some cases, some of these civil society organizations take it upon

themselves to ensure that poverty is relegated to the background, through programmes aimed at reducing poverty. On the 6th of June 1994, the Society for Poverty Relegation and Eradication (SPRAE) organized a conference themed: “Poverty Has Overstayed” in Abuja, where they gave free lectures and seminars on how one can be self employed and make a living, without necessarily depending on the government, after which relief materials and self help equipments and machines were distributed, including; sewing machine, welding machines, etc. This and many more cases too may to mention are some of the ways civil society organizations have battled poverty.

Still on the Roles and objectives of civil society organizations, there are broadly three sets of functions performed to varying degrees by different types of civil society organizations:

- ❖ Articulating citizen’s interests and demands.

- ❖ Defending citizen's rights
- ❖ Providing goods and services directly, without recourse to state agencies. Each of these functions is important, given the particular context, for mobilizing citizens toward the various tasks involved in reducing poverty. It is important to recognize that there are variety of organizations, serving a multitude of objectives, each related to empowering citizens and mobilizing social capital to serve collectively valued purpose.

❖ **Articulating Citizen's Interest and Demands:**

This is an important function performed by civil society organizations. Particularly when state policies and the programs of government agencies do not take account sufficiently of needs of the poor or some other vulnerable sections, civil society organizations can step into this breach and help to represent their needs and interest. Cases from South Africa and Ukraine where civil

society actors have mobilized sections of society and where government policies have changed based on the interests and demands voiced by these actors, portray exactly what the various civil society organizations in Nigeria has been doing in the area of articulating citizen's interests and demand.

In South Africa, it was the rural poor, particularly women and non-white people, whose concerns were not addressed adequately or in any effective manner by government departments. Even after a more democratic and representative government had replaced the apartheid state, many women and non – white males continued to live amid grinding poverty. A group of national civil society organizations got together to device solutions to this problem. Acting in coordination with selected government agencies, they organized a series of poverty forums at different locations across the country, where the poor could come forward and speak about

poverty as they experienced it in their everyday lives. With this, policy makers now formulate policies regarding poor people in the country.

In the Nigeria experience, the Federal government came under heavy criticism by civil society groups over its decision to keep secret the planned beneficiaries of a N22 billion grant it gave to selected stock broking firms across Nigeria. The Federal Government, through the Asset management company of Nigeria, AMCON, decided to give N22 billion forbearance package to 84 of Nigeria's 200 stock brokers. The Minister of Finance, Ngozi Okonjo – Iweala, announced the forbearance package on December 3, 2012. AMCON, which is to disburse the largesse to the beneficiaries said although it has sent out letters to the respective brokers and is liaising with them, it does not plan to publish the list of the beneficiaries as it may impact negatively on the nation's gradually recovering stock exchange. However, Soji Apampa, a co-

founder of the integrity organization, said there as a general principle that the use of public funds be made known to the public. “People have the right to know about it”, Mr. Apampa said.

“Even if the funds are to be used for security reasons – the government may realize that it might not be able to divulge such information at a particular time, maybe for the sake of national security or for some other strategic reasons – the government has to give such information, if not at that time, then later”.

In the same vein, Lanre Suraju, group Chairman, Civil Society Network Against Corruption, CSHAC, said AMCON cannot justify its decision.

“Except there are some interior motives in the selection process, it is unethical for the government not to reveal the beneficiaries. They have a moral and legal/constitutional obligation to do so”.

Articulating interests and demands is a key function served by almost every civil society organization. While political scientists have traditionally ascribed the function of interest articulation to political parties, such parties and even where they are strong, they do not always represent the interests of the poor. Providing voice to the poor is consequently a function that can very often be performed only by active and accountable civil society organizations.

❖ **Defining Citizen's Rights**

Defending citizen's rights is an important theme in another group of cases that deal with pre-conflict or post-conflict situations. Civil society actors involved in this effort were not always or necessarily in conflict with the government. A successful program can be done through restoring mutual confidence and building partnerships among civil society organizations and government agencies. Civil society organizations in Nigeria have

always stood in the lacuna between the government and the citizens, to defend their rights where abused. Some cases below, shows the relentless efforts being made by some of the civil society organizations in Nigeria in the defense of human rights.

❖ **Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD)**

To promote human rights in Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers states in the Niger – Delta CEHRD will make regular trips into rural areas to investigate cases of human rights abuse, meeting with victims and local authorities. CEHRD will produce and distribute a monthly newsletter, human rights news, which documents and publicizes cases of abuse, along with an annual “Scorecard” report for human rights in the region.

❖ **Centre for Human Empowerment, Advancement and Development (CHEAD)**

This group promote human rights and the rule of law and to reduce the scourge of extra – judicial killings in South Eastern Nigeria. CHEAD conducts consultative meetings and capacity building workshops for market leaders throughout Abia State and the whole of Eastern Nigeria to improve their ability to diffuse violent mob action arising from marketplace disputes. CHEAD will also produce additional copies of extra-judicial killings in the South Eastern Zone. These and many more are the activities of civil society organization in defense of human rights in Nigeria.

Chapter Three: The Driving Forces of Civil Society

Organizations in Nigeria

3.1 The Perversity of Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption is the misuse of public power by elected politician or appointed civil servant for private gain. In order to ensure that not only public corruption but also private corruption between individual and businesses could be covered by the same sample definition.

Corruption is the misuse of entrusted power (by heritage, education, marriage, election, opportunity or whatever else) for private gain. The broader definition covers not only the politician and the public servant, but also the CEO of a company, the notary public, the team leader at a workplace, the administrator or admissions – officer to a private school or hospital, the coach of a soccer team etcetera. A much more difficult, scientific definition for the concept ‘corruption’ was developed by Professor (Emeritus) Dr. Petrus Van Duyne:

“Corruption is an improbity or decay in the decision-making process in which a decisions-maker consents to deviate or demands deviation from the criterion which should rule his or her decision-making, in exchange for a reward or for the promise or expectation of a reward, while these motives influencing his or her decision-making cannot be part of the justification of the decision”.

Political corruption is not a recent phenomenon that pervades the Nigerian state. Since the creation of modern public administration in the country, there have been cases of official misuse of resources for personal enrichment. Nigeria is ranked 139th out of 176 countries in transparency international's 2012. Corruption perceptions index, tied with Azerbaijan, Kenya, Nepal and Pakistan. The rise of public administration and the discovery of petroleum and natural gas are two major events seen to have led to a litany of ignoble corrupt practices in the country. Over the years, the country has seen its wealth withered with little to show in living conditions of the average human being. A Nigerian political leader, Obafemi Awolowo raised a salient issue when he said, since independence, our governments have been a matter of few holding the cow for the strongest and most cunning to milk, under those circumstances

everybody runs over everybody to make good at the expense of others.

The pervasive corruption has been blamed on colonialism. According to this view, the nation's colonial history may have restricted any early influence in an ethical revolution. Throughout the colonial period, most Nigerians were stuck in ignorance and poverty. The trappings of flash cars, houses and success of the colonists may influence the poor to see the colonist as symbols of success and to emulate the colonists in different political ways. Involvement in the agenda of colonial rule may also inhibit idealism in the early stage of the nascent nation's development. A view commonly held during the colonial days was that the colonist's property (cars, houses, farms etc) is not "our" property.

Thus vandalism and looting of public property was not seen as a crime against society. This view is what has degenerated into the more recent disregard for public

property and lack of public trust and concern for public goods as a collective national property.

Some writers have posited about the different potential causes of flagrant and pecunious graft that exists in the country: many cause of corruption. To some, societies in love with ostentatious lifestyle may delve into corrupt practices to feed the lifestyle and also embrace a style of public sleaze and lack of decorum. The customs and attitudes of the society may also be a contributing factor. Also a political environment that excludes favours towards elites or wealthy citizens may also be influenced by corruption. Wealthy elites may resort to sleaze in order to gain power and protect their interest. However, the bottom-line surmised from the views of most Nigerians is that corruption is a problem that has to be rooted out. In Nigeria another cause of corruption is ethnicity called tribalism in Nigeria. Friends and Kinsmen seeking favor from officials may impose difficult

strains on the ethnical disposition, of the officials. Many kinsmen may see a government official as holding necessary avenues for their personal survival or gain.

Pre-Independence and the First Republic Cases of Corruption

Corruption though prevalent, was kept at manageable levels during the First Republic. However, the cases of corruption during the period were sometimes clouded by political infighting.

Azikiwe was the first major political figure investigated for questionable practices. In 1944, a firm belonging to Azikiwe and family bought a Bank in Lagos. The bank was procured to strengthen local control of the financial industry. Albeit, a report about transactions carried out by the bank showed though Azikiwe had resigned as chairman of the bank, the current chairman of the bank was an agent of his. The report wrote that

most of the paid-up capital of the African Continental Bank were from the Eastern Regional Financial Corporation.

In Western Nigeria, Politician Adegoke Adelabu was investigated following charges of political corruption leveled against him by the opposition. The report had to demand for his resignation as district council head. In 1962, Chief Obafemi Awolowo was indicated and the Coker Commission of enquiry was set up, which found that a substantial amount of money was misappropriated from the coffers of the Western Region Government.

In the Northern Region, against the backdrop of corruption allegations leveled against some native authority officials in Bornu. The Northern government enacted the customary prescripts order to forestall any further breach of regulations. Later on it was the British administration that was accused of corrupt practices in the results of elections which enthroned a Fulani

political leadership in Kano, reports later linking the British authorities to electoral irregularities were discovered.

The Post Independence Corruption Cases

Gowon Administration

Corruption for the most part of Gowon's administration was kept away from public view until 1975. However, some informed officials voiced concerns, Gowon critics labeled his governors as misguided individuals acting like Lords overseeing their personal fiefdom. He was viewed as timid, in term of being decisive against corrupt elements in his government. In 1975, a corruption scandal surrounding the importation of cement engulfed his administration. Many officials of the defence ministry and the central bank of Nigeria where involved in the scandal. Officials were later accused of falsifying ships manifest and inflating the amount of cement to be purchased. It turned out that Nigeria had

ordered 20 million tons of cement from 68 international suppliers for delivery at Lagos when that port could accept only one million tons of cargo per year. When basic suppliers became stalled in the invariable port congestion, Nigeria attempted to impose an emergency embargo on all inbound shipping and to repudiate the contracts. In turn, its enraged suppliers tied up the country in litigation around the world for many years.

During the administration, two major individuals from the middle belt of the country were accused of corruption. The Nigeria government controlled newspapers: the Daily Times and the New Nigerian gave great publicity to denunciations of the administration of Gomwalk and Federal Commissioner Joseph Tarka by the two critics, A situation which may signal a cause of exigent action on corruption. In 1975, the administration of Murtala Mohammed later went on and made reformist changes. After a coup putsch brought him into

power, the government sacked a large number of government officials and civil servants, many of whom had been criticized for the misuse of power they wielded under the largely uneducated military of Gowon.

Shagari Administration

Corruption was deemed pervasive during the administration of Shagari. A few federal buildings mysteriously went on fire after investigators started probe on the finances of the officials working in the buildings. Late 1985, investigations into the collapse of the defunct Johnson Mathey Bank of London shed some light on some of the abuses carried on during the second republic. The bank acted as a conduit to transfer hard currency for some party members in Nigeria. A few leading officials and politicians had amassed large amounts of money. They sought to transfer the money out of the country with the help of Asian importers by issuing import licenses. In 1981, a rice shortage, led to

accusations of corruption against the NPN government. The shortages and subsequent allegations were precipitated, by protectionism. After his election the Nigerian government decided to protect the local rice farmer from imported commodities. A licensing system was created to limit the amount of rice import. However, an accusation of favoritism and government supported speculation was leveled against many officials.

Buhari Administration

In 1985, a cross section of political gladiators were convicted of different corrupt practices under the government of General Buhari. However, the administration itself was involved in a few instances of lapsed ethnical judgment. It is on record that the General himself was on his way to removing a Nigerian colonial from the army before his exit from power, though the removal may signal a hard – line on corruption, it is a far

cry from the 10 – 22 years of imprisonment, politicians under Shagari were sentenced to.

Babangida Administration

The regime of General Babangida is seen as the body that legalized corruption. His administration refused to give account of the Gulf war windfall, which is estimated to be \$12.4 billion. He annulled a democratic election in Nigeria on June, 12, 1993 and decided to instate Ernest Shonekan as his successor on August 27, 1993 when he stepped down as head of the military regime. However, within 3 months of the handover, General Sani Abacha seized control of the government while Babangida was on a visit to Egypt. He lives on a very exquisite mansion in his home state (Niger-State) in the Northern part of the country.

Abacha Administration

The death of the General Sani Abacha revealed the global nature of graft. Fresh investigations of bribes paid

to government officials to ease the award of a gas plant construction in Nigeria revealed the global level of official graft in the country. The investigations led to the freezing of accounts containing about \$100 million United State dollars. In 2000, two years after his death, a Swiss banking commission report indicated Swiss banks for failing to follow Compliance process in allowing family and friends of Abacha access to accounts and depositing amounts totaling \$600 million US dollars into the accounts. The same year, a total of more than \$1 billion dollars were found in various accounts throughout Europe. Subsequent administrations still date have also been accused of corrupt practices, ranging from embezzlement of public funds, budget implementation, ethnicity etc. Some public institutions have also been seen as corrupt, they include: Nigerian Police, Political parties, National and State Assemblies, local and Municipal Governments. Federal and State Executive

Councils, Traffic Police and Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) etc. Having seen the perversity of corruption in Nigeria, let us now look into the part civil society organizations play in the pervasity of corruption in the country, because it is one of the driving forces of civil society organization in Nigeria.

Effectively Engaging Civil Society Organizations (CSOS) In the Fight against Corruption in Nigeria

The concept of civil society evokes divergent responses; but generally it refers to the sum total of those organizations and networks which lie outside the formal state apparatus. It includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- ❖ Social groups such as those representing women, children, the youth, the elderly and people with disability and special needs.
- ❖ Professional groups such as association of artist engineers, health practitioners, social workers, media, teachers, sports associations, legal practitioners, social scientists, academia, business organizations, national chamber or commerce, workers, employers, industry and agricultural, as well as other private sector groups;
- ❖ Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Community-cultural, student, sports and other informal organizations.

By this definition, it is obvious that civil society is not synonymous with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) when the expression “Non-governmental organizations” is used in a restricted sense of non-profit organizations founded for specific purposes. In Nigeria,

civil society organizations 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. It is also important to note that civil society can be 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. Nigeria's anti-corruption obligations under international law makes us understand that 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 organizations in the fight against corruption.

The UNCAC in article 5 provides as follows: 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, also in Article 13, provides for the engagement of civil society in the anti-corruption programme.

The Challenges of Engaging Civil Society in the Fight against Corruption

One of the challenges of effective engagement of civil society in the fight against corruption is how to ensure the participation of the broad civil society as opposed to just NGOs or a coalition of NGOs. Fighting corruption is fast becoming a big business in Nigeria, especially among the NGOs, but trade unions and professional bodies have some obvious advantages over the NGOs in the area of fighting corruption. Most of their members are gainfully employed. Among the so-called anti-corruption NGOs, fighting corruption is some people's job. At times fighting corruption and making a living may be in conflict. Civil society coalitions against corruption should therefore embrace the traditional watchdog groups. There are some professional groups that can play significant roles in the fight against corruption. These groups include lawyers' and accountants' associations. The broad civil society which should be engaged in the fight against corruption should include these groups. A coalition of NGOs can

hardly take the place of the broad civil society in the fight against corruption.

Another challenge to effective civil society engagement in the anti-corruption fight is the lack of access to information law in Nigeria. Corruption thrives in obscurity. Wherever a government has neither a dynamic pro-active information policy nor a proper access to information law that is actually implemented and operational, the lack of information about government activity and decisions making can easily hide corrupt manipulation of such decisions. Therefore transparency and access to information are essential ingredients of any effort to reduce corruption in the society. The media which is one of the institutional pillars of the National Integrity System cannot operate effectively or discharge their constitutional responsibilities without access to information law. Section 22 of the 1999 constitution provides as follows: 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 of the people.

Civil society organization participation in the anti-corruption war is a *condicio sine qua non* for the success of the war. There are traditional watchdog organizations in Nigeria which can meaningfully participate in the fight against corruption. The emergence of NGOs in Nigeria can also assist the anti-corruption fight. Nigeria as we have seen is under obligation in international law to engage CSOs in the fight against corruption.

The challenges to the effective engagement of CSOs in the fight against corruption in Nigeria include the need to engage the broad spectrum of civil society instead of just NGOs. Another challenge is that some CSOs are also ridden with corruption.

This makes it imperative for a code of conduct for civil society organizations engaged in the anti-corruption fight. Furthermore, the high crime rate in the Nigerian society makes fighting corruption a very risky undertaking. It is imperative that these challenges be addressed if civil society organizations can be meaningful engaged in the fight against corruption. The absence of legal restriction on formation and engagement in civil society organizations activities is one of the prospects for effective civil society organizations engagement in the fight against corruption. The continuation of democratic governance in Nigeria with the concomitant open space for the operation of civil society organization needs to be mentioned.

In conclusion, civil society organization, play very emphatic role in the fight against corruption, ranging from peaceful protest against corrupt practices, hence their effort must be met with effective government

support in terms of legalizing civil society activities that will not go against the constitution or harm the peaceful existence of the country.

3.2 The Scourge of Poverty and Unemployment

Poverty in Nigeria remains significant despite high economic growth, it first started sometime during the British empire. Nigeria has one of the worlds highest economic growth rates (averaging 7.4% over the last decade), a well developed economy and plenty of natural resources such as oil. However, it retains a high level of poverty, with 63% living on below \$1 daily, implying a decline in equity. There have been attempts at poverty alleviation, most notably with the following programmes:

- ❖ 1972: National Accelerated Food Production Programme and the Nigerian Agriculture and Co-operative Bank.

- ❖ 1976: Operation Feed the Nation: to teach the rural farmers how to use modern farming tools.
- ❖ 1979: Green Revolution Programme: to reduce food importation and increase local food production.
- ❖ 1986: Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI).
- ❖ 1993: Family Support Programme and the Family Economic Advancement Programme.
- ❖ 2001: National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP): to replace the failed Poverty Alleviation Programme.

However, these programs have largely failed to overcome the three reasons for this persistent poverty: income inequality, ethnic conflict and political instability.

- ❖ **Income Inequality**

Income inequality worsened from 0.43 to 0.49 between 2004 and 2009. This is corrected with

differential access to infrastructure and amenities. In particular, there are more rural poor than urban poor. This results from the composition of Nigeria's economy, especially the energy (oil) and agriculture sectors. Oil exports contribute significantly to government revenues and about 15% of GDP, despite employing only a fraction of the population. Agriculture however, contributes to about 45% of GDP and employs close to 90% of the rural population. This incongruence is compounded by the fact that oil revenue is poorly distributed among the population, with higher government spending urban areas than rurally. High unemployment rate renders personal incomes even more divergent. Moreover, the process of oil extraction has resulted in significant pollution which further harms the agricultural sector.

❖ **Ethnic Conflict and Civil Unrest**

Nigeria has historically experienced much ethnic conflict. With the return to civilian rule in 1999, militants

from religious and ethnic groups have become markedly more violent. While this unrest has its roots in poverty and economic competition, its economic and human damages further escalate the problem of poverty (such as increasing the mortality rate. For instance, ethnic unrest and the displeasure of local communities with oil companies has contributed to the conflict over the trade in the Niger Delta, which threatens the productivity of oil trade. Civil unrest might also have contributed to the adoption of populist policy measures which work in the short-run, but impede poverty alleviation efforts.

❖ **Political Instability and Corruption**

Nigeria's large population and historic ethnic instability has led to the adoption of a federal government. The resultant fiscal decentralization provides Nigeria's state and local governments' considerable autonomy, including control over 50% of government revenues, as well as responsibility for

providing public services. The lack of a stringent regulatory and monitoring system, however, has allowed for rampant corruption. This has hindered post poverty alleviation and will continue to do so, since resources which could pay for public goods or be directed towards investment (and so create employment and other opportunities for citizens) are being misappropriated.

In Nigeria, youth unemployment is soaring high despite that the governments have provided laudable programmes to curb the growing concern of joblessness among the teeming population in the country in recent times. President Goodluck Jonathan recently launched youth enterprise with new innovation in Nigeria to reduce the high density of unemployment of graduates from the nation's universities. In the 60s and 70s, unemployment was not pronounced because the government then were proactively providing for graduates churning out from the universities for full job security with no qualms.

Unemployment and underemployment is seriously confronting the Nigerian youth in all ramifications. The increase in population of Nigeria is one of the challenging factors, facing the labour market which the government on its part failed to provide full employment to its citizenry. The increasing in government spendings and inflation have prevented political and economic development in the country. Youth unemployment should be blamed on both the private and public sectors of the country. The governments have abysmally failed to provide for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled people at all levels. Unemployment is defined as a state of people living in absolute joblessness which ranges fall between the ages of 20-40 while under employment refers to people who are gainfully employed but not financially rewarding to authenticate their qualifications. Many Nigerians today are underemployed despite their intimidating credentials being possessed in high flying

institutions in the world together with economic recession and inconsistent policies in the country. Our micro finance and commercial banks are not helping matters to lend money to young entrepreneurs who intend to do their private businesses with no dependence on the government.

The so-called oil marketers have created job employment to Nigerians which the National Assembly described a cabals. The micro and macro objectives of creating jobs for Nigerians youths are still in hitherto which the government have not done any credible programmes to effect change on the Nigerian youth. During the 2011 presidential campaign when Goodluck Jonathan launched out his books to enable Nigerian youth to read but the youths of Nigeria are ready to further their education to the highest level but job security is the major stake to the vision. Time without number when politicians have promised youths of instant

employment yet nothing has been done to reduce the situation at present. In the labour market, unemployment is growing at geometrical progression due to inability of this job agency to identify qualified persons to work. It is of record that only graduates with first class degrees are employed while those with second class and third class degrees are not given opportunity to work. Some job offers are given to those who live in highbrow areas of the country. For instance in Lagos, those that are living in ghetto areas like Ajegunle and Mushin are not given opportunity to work even they are qualified because their CVS are traced to slum communities. The governments not helping matters to create jobs for the teeming youth population churning out of the nations universities on yearly basis. Our university system is not training human capital development of job creators rather than job seekers with no entrepreneurial skills to

be self employed. Our universities are only introducing entrepreneurial courses without putting them in practice.

Despite many civil society organizations are being created by individuals to alleviate poverty in the country, the poverty index is unqualifiable and unquestionable. The parameters to create jobs by government and private sectors are skirmishing to the extent that crime rate is alarming to the detriment of the Nigerian economy. Unemployment is a world problem which some advanced countries have tried in the provision of jobs for their citizens in one way or the other. Recently, the Kwara State Government Alhaji Abdulfatal Ahmed gave automatic employment to 1400 youth to join the Kwara civil service which many Kwara indigenes applauded him for such governmental gesture. Even Delta State Governor Dr. Emmanuel Uduagha also used Democracy day to enlighten Delta Youths to diversify their mindset to other cooperative employment rather than oil and gas

and banking industry. Other state governors in the country are not left out in providing employment to her youths. Everybody seems to be preaching entrepreneurship methodology towards the Nigerian youth but the banking industry is not ready to lend out money to young people to start their own businesses.

Bribery and corruption has crept into government which job provision is no longer primary assignment rather secondary one.

No day passes by without seeing youths in various places searching for jobs through internet vacant jobs and others. Most job vacancies on the daily newspapers and magazines are mere fake which are not existing while sometimes with incorrect websites, emails and contact phone numbers. The job desperation by our teeming youths in Nigeria transpired into high levels of crime such as pen robbery, cyber crime, prostitution, illegal oil wells and bunkery, fraudulent activities and others. The

population of Nigerian youth are growing astronomically while those graduating from various higher institutions of learning are innumerable. The macro objectives and econometrics of creating jobs in Nigeria in spite of creation of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Unemployment, Frustration and crime are economic order of the day.

Different administrations with different economic genders which vision 2020 is still in the pipeline. How many Nigerians are gainfully employed? The system has not really provided for unskilled workers. In the developed and advanced countries, unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers have their stakes in government but in Nigeria only those with University or Polytechnic certificate holders are given opportunities to work and nothing else. Even some polytechnic graduates are underpaid and marginalized in the labour market.

The system of 6-3-3-4 education policy needed to be fully considered as regard to those who have school leaving certificates and junior and senior secondary school certificates are given full employment in the public and private sectors.

Youth empowerment programmes should regularly be created by successful politicians and business tycoons. Most graduates find it difficult to write a simple sentence or aptitude test which invariably prevent them from getting suitable jobs in the labour market. Even the power of man knows man has deeply crept into the democratic process of the country over the years. It has been recorded in recent times that President Goodluck Jonathan has the largest special advisers among the African countries which jobs have been politically created to Nigerians? Overtly qualified people are not given opportunity to work as far such people do not have prominent people in corridors of power in the system.

Unemployment is soaring high because some people that are employed in the formal sector are not qualified to work to the extent that some organizations employ people who do not have knowledge of the business.

How can a physical education or geography graduate be employed as a banker or site engineer supervisor if the country is not really glorifying corruption. The university system is mere a camouflage to deprive qualified people not to get jobs for their livelihoods. The fact remains that only those that can bribe their ways through sex and any gratification can get suitable jobs in Nigeria. We still have good Nigerians that graduated with first class or second class upper without indulging in cesspool of corruption and were given automatic employment in the formal sector. Agitating for young graduates to go into agriculture is a welcome development if the various stakeholders in the

business are ready to give out loans to facilitate mechanized farming in Nigeria.

The issue of job contracts is quite alarming to the extent that the Nigerian government is adamant of the unpalatable trend across the country coupled with the epileptic power supply and other social problems. It is said that a graduate that is given opportunity to work by these so-called registered job agencies are only interested in partnering with the organizations to deduct mostly salary of the client and also in charge of effect promotion. The Indians in Nigeria have succeeded in enslaving Nigerians in the name of seeking for employment in their organizations. As far as the country is concerned no organization who do not pass through these agencies. It is observed that most of these job agencies are run by top employers of labour in this country. Even the government is not bothered about the casualization of workers while the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) is adamant. Most of

these job agencies conduct aptitude test and unnecessary screening exercises and collect fees from these job seekers in order to secure jobs for them.

The job desperation due to family pressure and others have led youths astray without considering its implications. The minister of Youth Development Alhaji Bolaji Abdulahi recently organized a youth forum to help youth realize their goals in life. This was a good move to kick – start a youth programme in the country if the government is really sincere to the core. If China as a country can discover its goal then Nigeria can likewise do the same. In every home in China, all their citizens are electronic producers while Nigeria is the highest consumer of imported goods and services despite the country being the 6th largest oil and gas producer in the world. Even as universities continue to create entrepreneurship courses, yet unemployment is nothing to write home about. Nigeria is yet to have a driving

economic force despite the high numbers of technocrats and economists in the country which cannot create jobs for its teeming population. Youth creativeness and entrepreneurial skills needed to be encouraged by established private organizations and government institutions. A new ministry like Niger-Delta Ministry can be created as a national focus where all unskilled and skilled person can be gainfully employed or trained. Since no organization can directly employ its workers from the higher institutions without undergoing the organization training to acclimatize with its operation. The menace of Boko Haram can stop if secured jobs are provided to the youths by the government.

The Northern elites seem not to be interested on providing jobs for its people rather sponsor violence on the region. For government to engage or embark on privatization and commercialization of government owned property indicate the total failure of leadership in the

country. The disabled people must be employed in government and private institutions to reduce nuisance and unemployment in the country. Lastly, our universities need to be restricted in order to be agents of direct employment to public and private sectors. President Goodluck Jonathan needs to fix infrastructural development across the country while tribalism, nepotism and bureaucracy must be separated from job employment so that qualified persons could be given instant employment in the country.

3.3 The Prevalence of Human Rights Violation in Nigeria

Although human rights violations in Nigeria have been common place under military rule, 1993 was a particularly challenging year for Nigerian human rights

groups. Former President General Ibrahim Babangida annulled the results for a presidential election which would have brought the country back to civilian rule and installed an interim government. In mid-November, Defence Minister General Sani Abacha forced the Interim government to resign, effectively staging the seventh coup d'état since Nigerian's independence. The regime banned all political meetings and associations. No timetable was set for the return to civilian rule. Throughout this crises, the human rights community has banded together under a coalition called the campaign for Democracy (CD). Riots erupted in Lagos in early July 1993 and the regime detained hundreds of protesters for a month CD called for additional strikes and demonstrations. Human rights abuses during this time were widespread including ethnically based attacks, killings of demonstrators, detentions of activists and journalists and interference with freedom of expression and association. The Nigerian

press, known for being outspoken, came under even more fire from the government authorities during the political crisis. The government closed down several magazine houses.

Abuses by members of the police and security forces remain a persistent human rights problem. There are frequent cases of harassment and extra judicial killings by law enforcement officers. Abysmal prison conditions have also been highlighted by the human rights community. Abuses were also taking place against the Ogoni people, a minority group inhabiting the oil producing region of Rivers State. They have protested the destruction of their land and culture by multinational oil companies and Nigerian military forces. As a result, hundreds of Ogonis have been killed in attacks believed to be sanctioned by government authorities. Nigeria has a diverse and large human rights community which has made its presence felt through the nation, particularly

with the creation of the CD. Many human rights activists and organizations in Nigeria had faced ongoing harassment during the precious Babangida regime. These attacks escalated after Babangija's decision in November 1992 to postpone the transition to civilian rule. The government arrested and harassed a number of human rights activities. The offices of some of the more outspoken human rights organizations have been subjected to forcible police entry and the seizure of materials. The political crisis resulted in a number of human rights organizations having to divert staff and resources towards the creation of the coalition Campaign for Democracy (CD); as a result, other projects were postponed. In the case of the committee for the defense of human rights, the organizations staff, offices and resources were completely engulfed by CD. The Human right organizations have adopted various approaches to their work and the government has been less likely to

interfere with those that are not publicly critical of the government or whose mandate is purely human rights education work.

There are a number of advocacy and awareness groups, such as the civil liberties organization (CLO), the Constitutional Rights Project (CRP) the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR) and the Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, which mount campaigns and conduct fact finding and documentation work; despite the strong resistant produce materials and hold conferences and seminars to raise awareness. These include the National Institute for Advanced Legal Studies (NIALS), Human Rights Africa and the Legal Research and resource Development Centre. In addition, there are organizations bringing together groups with common interests, such as Women in Nigeria, the Ogoni People's Organization and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, which address human rights issues. The most

serious human rights problems during the past few years, 2011 to date were the abuses committed by the militant sect known as Boko Haram, which was responsible for killings, bombings and other attacks throughout the country, resulting in numerous deaths, injuries and the widespread destruction of property; abuses committed by the security services with impunity, including killings, beatings, arbitrary detention and destruction of property and societal violence, including ethnic, regional and religious violence. Other serious human rights problems included sporadic abridgment of citizen's right to change their government, due to some election fraud and other irregularities; politically motivated and extrajudicial killings by security forces, including summary executions; security force torture, rape and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of prisoners, detainees and criminal suspects; harsh and life threatening prison and detention center conditions;

arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged pretrial detention, denial of fair public trial, executive influence on the judiciary and judicial corruption; infringements on citizens privacy rights; restrictions on freedom of speech, press, assembly, religion and movement; official corruption; violence and discrimination against women; child abuse; female genital mutilation ..., the killing of children suspected of “witchcraft”; child sexual exploitation; ethnic, regional and religious discrimination; trafficking in persons for the purpose of prostitution and forced labour discrimination against persons with disabilities; discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identify; vigilante killings; forced and bounded labour and child labor. All these fall into human rights violation and constantly occur in the Nigerian societies.

Some twelve Northern States have adopted some form of Sharia into their criminal statutes: Bauchi,

Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara. The Sharia criminal laws apply to those who voluntarily consent to the jurisdiction of the Sharia Courts and to all Muslims. It provides harsh sentences for, among other crimes. Alcohol consumption, infidelity, same – sex sexual activity and theft, including amputation, lasting, stoning and long prison terms. Some Christian pastors in Nigeria were reported in 2009 of being involved in the torturing and killing of children accused of “witchcraft”. In the decade ending in 2009, over 1,000 children were murdered as “witches”. Those pastors, in an effort to distinguish themselves from the competition were accused of decrying witchcraft in an effort to establish their “credentials”. These and many more are cases of human rights violation or rather seen as the prevalence of human rights violation in Nigeria, which civil society

organizations have seen as a driving force in their activities.

In a nutshell, human rights violation, the scourge of poverty, unemployment and corruption are the motivating forces of civil society organizations. This means that the existence, establishment, goals and objectives of civil society organizations in Nigeria are driven by the above factors, hence the need for the activities of civil society organizations in Nigeria to be given support and encouragement.

Chapter Four: Civil Liberties Organization and Socio-Political Development in Nigeria

4.1 Civil Liberties Organizations and the War Against Corruption in Nigeria

Having seen the pervasivity of corruption in Nigeria in the previous chapter, it is now therefore imperative that we see the role civil liberties organizations play in the face of a corruption filled society like Nigeria; but not without first giving a brief look at the history, mandate structure and programme of the civil liberties organization. The civil liberties organization (CLO) was founded by a group of young lawyers led by Olisa Agbakoba (SAN), it was founded in 1987 and soon grew into the most active human rights group in Nigeria. The civil liberties organization is a non-governmental organization, set up for the defence and expansion of human rights and civil liberties.

The civil liberties organization is a membership organization with sixteen (16) state branches outside Lagos. It has a staff of 23 and is headed by a national

adversary council and a board of Governors. The organization is divided into the following project areas. Litigation; police and prison; women's right, national expansion (membership); Annual report; Campaign and empowerment (lectures, community development, involvement, liberty magazine; environmental action (in oil producing areas); documentation and research; resource center, African monitoring group; ethics in government.

The civil liberties organization investigates human rights abuses and campaigns through litigation, publications and communication with the government on behalf of people whose rights have been abused. The civil liberties organization publishes a quarterly magazine entitled; liberty and a journal of Human Rights law and practice. Its prison project has produced two major reports on prison condition and a number of smaller publications. It has also published a number of reports

on police brutality, military decreases, government impunity, the death penalty and annual reports on the human rights situation in Nigeria. Its legal aid project has represented over 4.000 indigent victims of human rights abuses. The organization also undertakes human rights education, through its empowerment project, conducting clinics and seminars on rights issues.

The organization is extremely active in lobbying the government through dialogue and public censure and launching campaigns to end specific government abuses. In the course of their fight for the human race, the civil liberties organizations are also ready and willing to work with both the government, private and public sector, as well as all interested stakeholders in the fight against poverty and unemployment, not forgetting their fight both personally as an organization and coalition with the civil society organizations to fight corruption to a stand still. With the last statement above, lets see the involvement of

civil liberties organization in the war against corruption in Nigeria.

The Civil Liberties Organization and the War against Corruption

In the previous chapter of this work, we saw the pervasivity of corruption and the fight against it by civil society organization of which the civil liberties organization played a very vital role, because the fight against corruption in Nigeria is broad and all encompassing. It stretches to so many sectors, ranging from; the health sector, political sector, education, industry, public, traditional and religious sectors respectively, hence the need for collective effort in the combat against the killer deed that has eaten deep down into the fabrics of Nigeria's socio-political development.

Following the heat-up of the polity between 1980-1999, ranging from military coup, annulment of election

and corrupt practices in Nigeria, the later stretching down to the 60s and 70s, the war against corruption was seen as one that could only be fought and won by joint effort of civil society organization.

Furthermore, when the country was caught in the throes of military dictatorship, consequent abuse of human rights and embezzlement of public funds, several associations sprang up around the issue. In the heat of the struggle, there were mergers, alliances and co-operation pacts, both formal and informal. The happenings around that time has concretized into distinct but broad based civil rights organizations like the civil liberties organizations – CLO, Campaign for Democracy - CD, Committee for the Defense of Human Rights 0 CDHR etc.

With the exit of the military in 1999, focus marginally shifted from democracy and civil rights to good governance and deepening the democratic space. In

these discussions, corruption was identified as the major impediment. The civil liberties organization began to incorporate anti-corruption components into their agenda.

The Obasanjo led government declared anti-corruption as the fulcrum of its agenda and proceeded to pass the corrupt practices and other related offences commission – the ICPC- was established. These events stimulate activities in several sectors. Sectoral anti-corruption units sprang up in several government ministries, parastatals and the organized private sector.

The government oversight Agencies were re-invigorated. However, it was noted that there was no coordination of these sectoral efforts and energies were being dissipated in several directions. This was particularly highlighted by the absence of a national Action plan on corruption. This position was

compounded by the mutual distrust between the civil society and government.

In 2001, the civil liberties organization entered into a coalition after series of strategic meetings. The agreed mission of the coalition was to “re-established the culture of transparency, accountability, integrity and respect for human dignity in order to attain good governance and social justice” and the vision “A NIGERIAN SOCIETY WITH ZERO – TOLERANCE FOR CORRUPTION”. In addition further modalities for the coalition was agreed on as follows:

- Formulation and adoption of memorandum of understanding binding all members.
- Adoption of a code of ethics for members, among other things

Upon its inception, the zero corruption coalition – ZCC held consultations to examine the legal framework

on anti-corruption in Nigeria and strategize on ways of improving same. The civilian government upon inception presented “The corrupt practices and other related offences Act’ to the National Assembly and it was passed with minimal delay. It was however identified that this legislation lacked two vital provisions necessary for a vibrant anti-corruption regimen i.e. provision for the protection of “whistle – blowers and Access to information”. The coalition promptly took up the challenge of drafting and presenting a “whistle blowers bill” to the National Assembly. Another coalition, the freedom of information coalition, which the civil liberties organizations was also involved on, was already working on securing the passage of a “Freedom of Information Act”. The bill was drafted and finalized after series of workshops and interactive sessions with stake-holders and is ready for presentation before the National Assembly. A big anti-corruption move you must say by

the civil liberties organization and the zero corruption coalition.

Furthermore, the coalition has been engaging in advocacy, to stimulate the populace against corruption. Zero corruption coalition provides information on the scope and consequences of corruption in the country with the aim of stimulating zero – tolerance for corruption. This is accomplished through the following media.

- ❖ Disseminating of Advocacy materials e.g. leaflets and posters etc.
- ❖ Providing resource for other NGOs, CBOs and Government oversight agencies.
- ❖ The zero–corruption list-serve. This is an information disseminating and interactive e-group moderated by the ZCC. Through this media, global, regional and national initiatives, information, events and happenings in the area of anti-corruption are

collated and disseminated to interested persons from both within and outside the country. The list also provides a feedback mechanism through which information and reactions are passed to relevant government agencies.

Most recently, the civil liberties organization have continued to stamp their authority and stand on the fight against corruption. They continue to use the media to voice out their anger against corrupt policies, action and activities of political office holders. On the 18th of April, 2012, on PM news, the civil liberties organizations – CLO blamed James Ibori's escape from justice in Nigeria on the nation's judiciary. The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the former Delta State Governor was on Tuesday Jailed 13 years by a British court for corruption and money laundering, while in Nigeria, he was given a clean bill on corruption by a Nigerian court. "We cannot

continue to run a country where the rich get away with crimes against humanity”. This is no opportunity for the judiciary to re-check itself and mend its broken walls”. That was the spokesman for the save Nigeria Group – SNG; Mr. Yinka Odumakin. Joining other civil society organizations in Nigeria to speak against the escape of judgment by Chief James Iborin in a Nigerian court and eventual conviction by a British court for corruption, the civil liberties organization through its Lagos State chairman Mr. Ehi Omokhuale told the News Agency of Nigeria – NAN, that “Ibori’s conviction was a big slap on Nigeria’s image and its justice system”. “There are so many Ibori’s running free in Nigeria and their freedom is a threat to our democracy”. “For the crime of impoverishing his people, Ibori deserved a life sentence or death, rather than a mere 13 years’, the civil liberties organization chairman said.

Also speaking on a report by the United States, rating Nigeria 139th corruption free zones, Executive Director of the Civil Liberties Organization, Comrade Ibuchukwu Ezike said, Nigerians had been pauperised by both the federal and state governments officials and their legislators through corruption, pointing out that there was nothing new in what the Americans were saying. Ezike lamented that corruption had eaten deep into the fabrics of the society, adding that the People's Democratic Party, PDP led administration had entrenched corruption in the society.

4.2 Civil Liberties Organization and Poverty Alleviation Programme in Nigeria

Though the activities and objectives of the civil liberties organization in Nigeria mainly rest on the fight

against the abuse of human rights and subsequently the fight against corruption, it would be backwardly informed to say that the civil liberties organization as a group is only limited to the above mentioned cause.

Change they say is the only constant thing in life, hence the civil liberties organization has because of the dynamic nature of Nigerian democratic dispensation, widened its horizons so as to accommodate the constantly worrisome cases of poverty and unemployment, the former being the case study here.

In Nigeria, democracy is taken to be synonymous with regime or administration which is headed by civilian politicians but whether or not the affairs of the state are managed, solely to further the interests of members of a self seeking cabal is unimportant. Against the background of this distorted view of democratic governance, it is often said that since 1960, Nigeria has practiced democracy for over 50 years. Thus it is said

that Nigeria has had the first, second, third (aborted), fourth and now the fifth republic. In spite of the noise and propaganda by government's spokes persons on the achievements of democracy during president Obasanjo's regime 1999 – 2007, even a casual observer of events and happening in Nigeria could agree that for the political office holders under him, it is business as usual. In concordance with conventional practice the civilian administrations from 1999 till date have always made promises and pledge to Nigerians.

The promises were always that; official corruption, infrastructural decay, poverty, inflation, insecurity, unemployment etc would be seriously tackled.

The World Bank Atlas (2009) and (2011) reported that Nigeria live in a world where 1.2 billion people live on less than one dollar a day, 10 million children under the age of five die each year mostly from preventable

disease and 113 million primary school age children do not attend school.

Awomede (2005:22), said that “shortly after they were inaugurated in 2003, members of the national assembly legislated for themselves N3.5 million for each senator and N2.5 million for each house of representative members, as furniture allowance. This and many more are ways in which public corrupt officials embezzle monies meant for national development and poverty alleviation and or eradication. Hence the battle became fiercer, to save the teeming helpless Nigerians from people who do not wish their progress and who do not care about their poor status. Through the intervention and continued call for poverty reduction by the civil liberties organization and other civil society organizations, the government started paying more attention to the issue of poverty hence the introduction of the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP). The programme

was in January 2001 phased out and was replaced with the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP).

The main objectives of NAPEP include the following:

- To provide a national poverty reduction framework that lays emphasis on appropriate and sustainable institutional arrangement.
- To provide technology acquisition and development particularly for agriculture and industry.
- To provide capacity building for existing skills acquisition and training centers.
- To provide agricultural and industrial extension services to rural areas.
- To provide integrated scheme for youth empowerment development of infrastructures, provisions of social welfare services and exploitation of natural resources.

- To provide institutional development for marketing agricultural and industrial products.
- To provide a pro-active and affirmative actions deliberately targeted at women, youth, farmers, and the disabled etc.

The Civil Liberties Organization is a non-profit organization and hence their activities are financed by members and well meaning Nigerians, including little support from the international communities. Therefore, they cannot solely finance poverty eradication or reduction programmes, so they only organize seminar, conferences, and lecturers to teach the people how to be self employed and hence reduce poverty. They also serve as the mouth piece of the people, calling the attention of the Government and stakeholders to areas of need and poverty eradication. They remind the government that

poverty reduction or alleviation is their duty and should therefore face it rather than run from it.

4.3 Civil Liberties Organization and Human Rights Protection in Nigeria

Protection of Human Rights and Kicking against the abuse of Human rights is a specialization of the civil liberties organization, as their formation, drive, goals and objectives are human right oriented. We learnt from the beginning of this chapter that the civil liberties organization publishes an annual magazine and report called “Liberty magazine”, with which they bring to limelight, cases of human rights abuse to the whole world to see. The civil liberties organization is not a military organization and lacks the constitutional power to punish offenders of human rights abuse; rather they drag those offenders to court and sometimes legally represent those who do not have the financial capacity to hire a lawyer, especially those whose rights were trampled on.

In the protection of human rights in Nigeria, the civil liberties organizations publish this “liberty magazine” to avoid a repeat of such cases of abuse and at the same time draw the attention of both federal and state governments to those areas and hence demand an immediate response to curb and or stop the reoccurrence of such cases. For the purpose of this work, we shall make use of one of their reports made by the civil liberties organization to show their commitment to the cause of human rights protection.

It is a civil liberties organization (CLO) special report human rights update on Nigeria between 1993-1998. From direct threats of hostility to actual consummation of same, the Gen Sani Abacha regime has clearly acquired the image of a regime that harbours, a most insignificant if any tolerance at all for the opposition. The list of political detainees lengthens virtually daily even as relations of those government considers as rebels suffer

untold harassment, sometimes culminating in detention that stretches for weeks and even months. Mrs. Ladi Olorunjo was arrested and detained twice for no reason other than the fact that she is married to Dapo Olorunyomi; Deputy Editor – in – chief of Independent Communication (Publishers of the News and Tempo) who was currently in exile. Activists in exile were in fact, as many as those in detention, each of them having to escape into safety after series of unmistakable threats to their lives, even after some of them had been detained for several months. Pa Anthony Enahoro and Chief Cornelius Adebayo, both leaders of the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) were in 1995 detained for more than eight days without any charge.

Before they were picked up, Chief Frank, Kokori, former Secretary General of NUPENG had been and was still there. Although the lakes of Chiefs Enahoro and Adebayo had to forcibly abandon the comfort of their

homes, others like Pa, Alfred Rewane and Alhaji Kudirat Abiola (Wife of Detained Bashorun Abiola, winner of the June 12 presidential election) were not lucky. They were hacked to death by those suspected to be government agents. Till date, the Nigerian police has not come up with any discovery on the death of these two prominent Nigerians. Other cases as reported by civil liberties organizations, include:

i. Yar'Adua's Death and Prison Conditions:

The death on Monday December 8, 1997 of the former number two citizens of Nigeria, Retired Major Genera Shabu Musa Yar'Adua, has further confirmed reports by Human rights activists, former prisoners and even the prison authorities about the deplorable situation of Nigeria prison system. Recounts Chioma Ubani, Head of Human Rights Education Project of the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) detained between July 1995 and October 1996; Yar'Adua has arrested by a 16-man team

of uniformed and plain – clothed security agents on the trumped charge of being involved in the alleged 1995 coup. It was the beginning of his journey to the end. Yar'Adua died after he had slumped twice on Sunday December, 7 and December 8, 1997. Following the alarming degeneracy that his health suffered in those two days. Yar'Adua was rushed to the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH) Enugu 4.30pm on December 8, 1997 in a convoy of Military police vehicles. He reportedly died before the hospital team could attend to him. The Guardian further reported that a doctor at UNTH who pleaded anonymity said the late Yar'Adua had intermittedly taken ill for about one year before his death. Ebonyi state administrator, Commander Walter Feghabor was said to have informed the Federal Government on December 1 that Yar'Adua needed medical attention. was not clear if any step was taken by

the Government to provided adequate treatment for Yar'Adua.

The Civil Liberty Organizations asks “How many more” must die behind bars or in chains because the military dictators of this country refused to do the right thing?

Other Political Detainees Obasanjo

Gen. Olusagun Obasanjo, reportedly slumped into Coma after hearing the story of Yar'Adua's death. According to PM News edition of December 12 1997, Gen. Obasanjo was so devastated that he fainted immediately the news was broken to him and even slumped to Coma. The paper further reported that the presidency was immediately notified and has since dispatched a medical team to Yola Prisons where Obasanjo was being held.

MKO Abiola

Relations of the detained winner of the June 12, 1993 Presidential Election, Bashorun MKO Abiola on Wednesday December 10, 1997 raised alarm on the fate of the detained politician. In a statement signed by Adebisi, Abiola's wife, the family claimed they were shocked by Gen. Yar'Adua's death, adding that it is a source of "genuine fears about Abiola's condition as the family and his personal physician Dr. Ore Falomo were not allowed access to Abiola, to ascertain his health status.

Ogaga Ifowodo

He is civil liberties organization (CLO) project officer in charge of annual project. Ogaga was arrested at Seme Border town on November 7, when he was returning from the commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), which held in Scotland in October 1997. He was kept at 15 Awolowo Road Ikoyi Office of the State Security Service (SSS) for about two weeks. He was then

moved to another detention facility called inter-center. The duo of Abdul Oroh and Chima Ubani – Executive Director and Head of Human Rights Education Project of Civil Liberties Organization (CLO) respectively – spent nine months there. Since his incarceration, Ogaga has been denied access to his Lawyers, doctors and relations who have all made efforts to visit him.

All these and many more were cases of human rights abuse, which the civil liberties organizations were bent on stopping through these publications. Most recently, cases of human rights violation and abuse by the federal, state and local government and its agencies have been met by serious criticism by the civil liberties organization. As previously stated, the civil liberties organization legal aid project has represented over 4,000 victims of human rights abuse, including those held in prisons for long period of time without trial. Child

trafficking and other human rights abuse has been a primary project of the civil liberties organization.

Moreover, the civil liberties organization organizes seminars, retreat and conferences, to educate the masses on the need to fight for human right protection, they also recruit and train lawyers on the course of the liberation of the human race from human rights violation and abuse. The protection of human rights violation has been the focus of the civil liberties organization from its establishment in 1987 till date and hence needs the support of both public and private sector, government at all levels, stakeholders on human rights and the general public to continue in this just fight to liberate the masses from human rights violation.

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

Civil society organization and socio-political development is like a match made in heaven. With the drop in socio-political development in Nigeria blamed on corruption, poverty, unemployment, human rights violation and most recently terrorism. To a lay man, socio-political development simply means building positive outcomes and reducing negative outcome in a society. To a layman for a society to be termed socially developed, issues like; poverty, crime, cultism, robbery, school disengagement, poor health sector, environmental degradation etc. must be at a minimal level, while the opposite of the above mentioned should be on the increase, to boost societal harmony and peaceful co-existence. On the other hand, political development means the development of the political apparatus and agencies of a society to enable good governance, peaceful succession and political stability. A combined

development of the two is termed socio-political development hence the civil society organization has taken it upon themselves, to ensure this is achieved. A lot of civil society organization fight tooth and nail to ensure a combined socio-political development in Nigeria.

With corruption, poverty, unemployment human rights abuse, terrorism etc having eaten deep into the fabrics of Nigerian socio-political sphere, there are lots of work to do, as the civil society organizations, who have taken it upon themselves are facing great challenges to achieving this enormous project. Hence, this research work, tends to expose the various problems facing civil society organization in the face of achieving this goals. This research work started with the introduction of the topic, going ahead to define socio-political development, civil society organization. To further make the work more comprehensive, some civil society organizations and functions were mentioned, further moving to the

problems of achieving socio-political development in Nigeria, having mentioned poverty, unemployment and human rights abuse pervasity and then rounding up the work with the efforts civil society organizations have made in the fight against the forces undermining socio – political development in Nigeria, using our appraisal, the civil liberties organization.

The work recommend among other things: reformation of our valuing system; social transformation; leadership training for proper orientation of the ruling class and the improvement of awareness and enlightenment for socio-political development in the way it will address the issue of poverty, corruption, human rights violation, terrorism, unemployment, as they are the set backs of socio-political development in Nigeria.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research work, the researcher can rightly assert that attention be drawn to

the devastating damage corruption; Human rights violation poverty, unemployment, terrorism etc. has done to Nigeria especially or paying particular attention to the area of socio-political development. Civil society organizations, involving the civil liberties and other civil society organizations are putting everything they have in place to fight corruption, poverty, human rights violation, unemployment and other social vices as identified by this research work as the backbone of socio-political underdevelopment in Nigeria.

On the issue of poverty, Yusu (2000:198), says that over 45% of Nigerians live below the poverty line, while two third (2/3) of this group are extremely poor. He also indicated that poverty in the country will rise by two third (2/3) and almost half of the population will be below poverty line by year 2010. Most recently, the figure has risen, placing Nigeria among the country with citizens below poverty line, far away from other countries

of the world in 2012. On the part of corruption, reports have shown that over the past five (5) years, the issue of corruption has been on the increase as virtually all government officials leaving office has been accused of money laundering and embezzlement of public fund unemployment, terrorism and other social vices have contributed in so many ways to the socio-political underdevelopment in Nigeria.

Moreover, the issue of underdevelopment, according to Rodney (1972) is as a result of an unequal interaction between two societies. The more these unequal relationships last, the more the backwardness of the less privileged ones. Therefore, corruption practices, human rights abuse, poverty and unemployment have all fingers pointing to them as the cause of socio-political development in Nigeria. There is an unequal interactive base between the government and masses, more like there is an obvious lacuna between the government and

the people hence the adverse effect on socio-political development. Be that as it may, the civil society organizations in the country are trying so hard to bridge the gap between the two. The problem being lack of fund and effective support from the masses and stakeholders involved in socio-political development of Nigeria.

Hence, making corruption, poverty, human rights violation, unemployment and terrorism history is the surest way of making the problems of Nigeria a history and therefore ensuring a positive jump in socio-political development.

5.3 Recommendations

This research work, having found out the problems associated with socio political development, through the

activities of civil society organizations, which civil liberties organization is part of, and their fight against those problems, which include, poverty corruption, unemployment, human rights abuse etc. The researcher therefore gives the following recommendations which will help eradicate all these problems in our country Nigeria.

They include:

1. The government should be aware of its responsibility to the people who voted them into power and remember also to be accountable to them. So therefore to curb corruption, the government should setup an independent judiciary which will be responsible for trying and penalizing offenders of corrupt practices, the body should be placed above every citizen of the country and should be independent. The activities of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is a good one, but should be

complimented with a similar independent body that should be involved in the trial and prosecution of offenders.

2. The mass media have over the years been a strong part of the fight against corruption, poverty, unemployment and human rights violation; hence I recommend that the mass media be given an increased role in the Nigerian polity. Despite the signing of the freedom of information bill into law, the government and its agencies has to an extent continued to put the mass media in the dark in the wake of making important decisions and policies. Most of the policies, meetings and decisions that are very crucial are done recently on closed doors, which is not helping matters. If the government seeks to be transparent, then all meetings and policy making should be done in the presence of the

mass media as seen in other developed countries of the world, except on issues bothering on notional security or other delicate issues.

3. Increased participation of the civil society organization will do more good than harm to Nigerian's socio-political development, to ensure proper flow of socio-political development, the researcher suggest that civil society organization founders and or representatives should be included in the legislature in both the national and state assemblies. Their membership should be based on elections organized by themselves (civil society organizations) and done in a way that all bothering issues such as; women rights, child abuse, human trafficking, child mortality, human rights abuse, unlawful detention and other causes be duly represented in both the federal and state houses of assembly, so that

they can take part in the country's decision making process, to avoid unnecessary strikes, protests and civil unrest as the people's views must have been presented by the various civil society organizations representing their interest.

4. The issue of poverty must be duly looked into; hence the researcher suggests a greater interest of government be drawn to the issue of poverty in the country. Government at all level should be concerned on this issue and hence, should invest heavily on agriculture and individualization, which would further create job opportunity and hence reduce poverty in the country. Government should also put every Nigerian graduate and undergraduate on a payroll, to ensure the reduction of the poverty level of the country. This can be achieved, if the enormous incomes

generated from crude oil sells are effectively utilized.

5. The researcher further suggests that the issue of human rights abuse and violations should be **attached** with a heavier punishment, to scare people away from the act, because I believe that if the issue of child abuse and other human rights violation are given proper punishment and prosecution, there will be a drastic reduction in the act as the people feel the punishment involved in the act is not enough to stop them from the act.
6. Effective support should be given to civil society organizations in the fight for increased socio-political development, the masses should be aware that the fight is for them; hence all hands must be on desk to ensure the achievement of the goals and objective of the various civil society

organizations across the country. Hence, the masses should endeavour to attend seminars, retreats and conferences organized by civil society organization to enlighten them on the need for socio-political development through the fight against corruption, poverty, human rights violation and unemployment

7. The family and religious organizations are not left out in this fight; hence I recommend that the family being the start point of child's development should ensure that the right orientations are impacted on their children, so that they can grow from it. Furthermore, religious organizations should ensure their preaching and teachings should be aimed as fostering socio-political development. They should teach against corruption, human rights abuse, and draw the

attention of the government and its agencies to the issues of poverty, unemployment etc.

If these recommendations are noted and taken into due considerations, then Nigeria will be celebrating a new leaf turned in terms of socio-political development and the various civil society organizations will have less work to do or better still engage in some other activities rather than the aforementioned problems of socio-political development in Nigeria.

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