EXAMINATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS AND NON-VIOLENT CHANGE IN NIGERIA FROM 1999 TO DATE

Okonye, Anthonia H.[1], & Mohammed Ayuba Oche Phd[2]

[1]Department of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution,
Faculty of Social Sciences, National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja

[2]Institute of Governance and Development Studies,
Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nasarawa State-Nigeria

Abstract

This study examined civil rights movements and nonviolent change in Nigeria from 1999 to date. Civil rights movements in Nigeria have been indispensable actors in the democratization process especially since the return to civil rule in I999. They have helped in the sustenance and deepening of democratic governance in Nigeria. The study adopted qualitative method of data collection and analysis using interdisciplinary approach to historical research due to the nature of the study. Furthermore, the structural-functionalism theory was adopted as the theoretical framework of this study. The study reviewed extant literature on the emergence of civil right movements, major civil rights groups, including the role of religious organizations in civil right matters in Nigeria. The study finds out that in spite of the success civil rights movement have made in Nigeria since 1999, there are tons of problems that are confronting the organizations. The major problems of the human rights groups are that of factionalism, absence of internal democracy in some human rights organizations and struggle for financial spoils particularly when foreign funding is involved. Some of the factionalism is, however, due to objective reasons, such as differences in perception, and difficulties in communication. The study further finds out that corruption and bribery is a great canker worm that has eaten deep into the social fabrics of Nigeria. The cancerous nature of corruption makes it difficult for any part of the polity to be immune from it. Although, there are fewer cases of corruption in the third sector in Nigeria, there are reports of mismanagement of funds meant for development by students and labor unions in contemporary Nigeria.

Keyword: *Nigeria, Non-Violence, Civil Society, Democracy, Change, Social Movement.*

Introduction

The history of the 20th century is full of civil rights movements and non-violent change which demonstrate that nonviolent resistance against unjust power systems, dictators or external occupation is likely to generate further violence (as seen, for example, in the Russian and Chinese revolutions and de-colonisation wars in Africa and Asia). Some of these are widely known (e.g. Gandhi's struggles in India, Nelson Mandela's efforts in South Africa, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s civil rights campaign in the United States of America as well as the NADECO campaigns for the return to civil rule in Nigeria), while many others are still largely ignored by the wider public and research community (Dudouet, 2008).

According to UNESCO (2000), the power of non-violent resistance does seem weak and inefficient in the face of acute power asymmetries, it has proven to be a very strategic tool in the

hand of marginalised communities to redress structural imbalance and claim rights to justice or self-determination. A question which has not been analysed extensively so far, which this article seeks to address, is in which context and under which conditions civil rights movements and nonviolent change can contribute to successful and sustainable non-conflict political transformation processes in Nigeria since 1999.

Civil rights organizations have globally become active non-state agents of democratic governance saddled with the multifaceted responsibilities of providing social welfare, economic empowerment, humanitarian services, political participation, human capital development and economic activities (Keane 1989, Ikelegbe 2013:2). Abah and Adihikon (2017:20) are of the opinion that Civil rights have become important agents for engendering good democratic governance through the promotion of accountability, transparency, rule of law, curtailment of human rights abuses, and capitalist exploitation. Civil rights organizations are seen as the cumulus of voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, and autonomous associations different from the state, business and family and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules that is open to the public. Civil rights Nigeria is not recent phenomenon that characterized the recent ascendancy of neoliberal democratic institution.

According to Ikelegbe, civil society provides the oil that lubricates the relationship between the government, polity and the people. He observed that emerging democracies especially in Africa and Nigeria cannot be consolidated or sustained without a virile and vibrant civil society (Ikelegbe 2007). Democracy is about effective and efficient representation and delivery of the dividends of good governance to the masses (Diamond 1992, Aiyede 2003). Civil rights organizations not only in Nigeria sine qua non to democratic governance, which explicitly is about providing social security, expanding and advocating for economic opportunities, rule of law, freedom of press, nipping in the bud ethno- religious violence, provision of basic infrastructural facilities, guarantee of oppositions, and a regular free and fair election. However, because the state represents the interest of the ruling class, whose interest is to perpetually control the apparatus of state power and machinery of government at all cost, the interest of the people especially in emerging democracy in Nigeria tends to be disregarded (Bayart 1980, Ikelegbe 2007, Hearn 2001). This is manifest in the rising profiles of poverty, dictatorship, human rights abuses, hunger, insecurity, endemic corruption and bribery, environmental degradation, diseases, illiteracy, gender violence and underdevelopment.

This paper is therefore, an attempt to examine civil rights and nonviolent change of government in Nigeria's fourth republic from historical perspective. What we set to achieve is to assess the extent to which civil rights in Africa's most populous country-Nigeria, has been able to stimulate the entrenchment of good governance since the return to democratic rule in I999. The paper notes that although, civil rights movements played immense role in agitation for military exit in Nigerian politics, they have not done enough to nurture the democracy since I999 in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

Civil Rights/Civil Society

Civil rights as a social science term has be explained in different perspectives. In the classical era, the term civil society was used to described a struggle by African Americans in the mid-1950s to late 1960s to achieve civil rights equal to those of whites, including equal opportunity in employment, housing, and education, as well as the right to vote, right of equal access to public facilities, and the right to be free from racial discrimination.

According to Abah and Adihikon (2017) civil society is not the same thing as society. Civil society can be seen as a set of institutions, organization and behavior situated between the state, business world and family. These include non-governmental organization, private voluntary organization, people's organizations, civic organization, community-based organization, cultural, gender, religious, and social organizations. However, this study conceives civil right as organized efforts targeted towards achieving a goal for national interest in a given area or location.

Nonviolence

It comes from the belief that hurting people, animals or the environment is unnecessary to achieve an outcome and refers to a general philosophy of abstention from violence (Woods:1992). This may be based on moral, religious or spiritual principles, or it may be for purely strategic or pragmatic reasons. The term "nonviolence" is often linked with or used as a synonym for peace, and despite being frequently equated with passivity and pacifism; this is rejected by nonviolent advocates and activists (Abah & Adihikon, 2017). Nonviolence refers specifically to the absence of violence and is always the choice to do no harm or the least harm, and passivity is the choice to do nothing. Nonviolence also has "active" or "activist" elements, in that believers generally accept the need for nonviolence as a means to achieve political and social change (Woods: 1992). However, this study conceived non-violence as any action that promote civil rights via advocacy for a group of individuals or state.

Social Movement

According to Igbo and Anugwom as cited in Eze (2015:49) social movement is "a group of people acting with some level of continuity to either promote or resist a change in their society or the social group of which they are members". In other words, it is a goal-oriented group of individuals who seek to promote their ideology (belief) and also to protect the interests of their members. Eze (2015) noted that social movement is ideologically inclined either to promote or resist certain change or belief or behaviour. Social movements are usually revolutionary in nature because they are ideologically intoxicated and are ready to do anything in order to achieve their aims of existence. Unlike mob groups which may have little or no reason for their spontaneous act, all social movements have direction and purpose. This study has adopted the conception of social movement as presented by Eze (2015).

Democracy

Democracy is a buzz word that lacks a generally acceptable definition globally; this even partly, explains why some autocratic regimes have branded themselves to be democratic (Abah and Adihikon, 2017). Democracy is in fact, the most promiscuous word in world affairs and public discourse. According to a former American president, Abraham Lincoln (1863),

democracy is defined as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. Democracy is about the sovereignty of the people, effective representation of the people, accountability, and rule of law, free and fair periodic elections, and provisions of basic infrastructure, social security, and transparency in management of common wealth.

Methodology

Ex-post-facto research design was adopted for this study. Research design "is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions through which the problem of the study could be addressed. Furthermore, qualitative method was used for data collection. Qualitative method mainly depends on secondary source of information like historical documents, books, magazines, journals, etc. However, it is the nature of problem under study that will define the appropriate method of data collection. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive method.

Theoretical framework

The study adopted Structural Functionalism as framework of analysis. Structural Functionalism is a sociological theory that explains why society functions the way it does by emphasizing on the relationships between the various social institutions that make up society (e.g., government, civil society groups, law, education, religion). This theory is basically the brain-child of Almond and Howell (1966) which they construed as "the observable activities which make up a system". As functions deal with the consequences involving objectives as well as processes of patterns of action. According to Ntete-Nua (2004:143) functions deal with the consequences of action while structures refer to those arrangements, which perform functions and roles. That is to say, in a socio-political setting like Nigeria, where there is work (function) to be performed, there must be structure (capable hands) to perform the function. Structural functionalism explains the interconnectedness and relationship in a political system which needs the active cooperation of the two to fix the system, which in this context means the integration of resources by Government and CSOs in assuring non-violent changes in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the stability and good governance expected in Nigeria is a function of synergy and unity of purpose between the Nigeria Government and the CSOs which are the two most important structures in every political and social system. The structural-functional approach is a perspective in sociology that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. It asserts that our lives are guided by social structures, which are relatively stable patterns of social behavior. Social structures give shape to our lives - for example, in families, the community, civil society, and through religious organizations. Each social structure has social functions, or consequences for the operation of society as a whole. Education, for example, has several important functions in a society, such as socialization, learning.

Functionalism also states that society is like an organism, made up of different parts that work together. Thus one of the key ideas in Structural Functionalism is that society is made-up of groups or institutions, which are cohesive, share common norms, and have a definitive culture. Another key characteristic of Structural Functionalism is that it views society as constantly striving to be at a state of equilibrium, which suggests there is an inherent drive within human societie

s to cohere or stick together. This is known as the cohesion issue. Societies strive toward equilibr ium, not through dictatorial mandate by the leaders of society but rather because the social struct ure of societies encourages equilibrium.

Assumptions: there are a number of key assumptions in Structural Functionalist theory. One of these, that society strives toward equilibrium. Another assumption is that institutions are distinct and should be studied individually. Structural Functionalists look at institutions individua lly as though they are divorced from other institutions. This is a mistake, as institutions are interli nked in society and those employing a structural functionalist approach should be taken into cons ideration the network of relationships that exist between these institutions.

This theory owes that civil right movement is a functional role that serve to influence gov ernment into meeting the needs of the civil society. Civil society movement allows for the machi neries of the state to adhere to its constitutional roles in the society. Finally, Structural Functional ism does much to explain why certain aspects of society continue as they always have, despite so me phenomena being clearly less beneficial for society as a whole. However, Structural Function alism falls short in explaining opposition to social institutions and social structure by those being oppressed.

The Emergence of Civil Rights Movements in Nigeria: A Historical Overview

According to Abah and Adihikon, (2017), there is acute paucity of literature, especially quantitative and statistical data on the growth and development of civil society organization in Nigeria since independence. However, in this study, attempt is made to identify and chronicle the major activities, success, challenges, and continuities in civil rights organizations development in various political phases of Nigerian history. As a result of this, we briefly reflected on civil rights organizations during the military and civilian administrations in Nigeria and focused more on how civilian regimes in this current republic (1999 to date).

According to Rodney, European colonialism was a watershed in the annals of African history. It provided vent that gave fillip to the growth of social consciousness among Africans which in turn culminated to the formation of associational groups that served as watchdog to the colonial government (Abah & Adihikon, 2017). The nationalist movement and decolonization period is regarded as the initial golden age of civil society with the granting of independence to Nigeria by Great Britain on the 1st October 1960, the emergent political leaders attempted, as expected of any democratic state, to deepen the growth and development of democratic culture by providing a virile space for the existence of civil society organizations but the efforts of the post-independent leaders were scuttled by Military intervention in Nigerian politics in 1966 (Aiyede 2003).

Thus, from 1966 to 1979, Nigeria was under successive military regimes that were highly dictatorial and anti-civil society (Abdul 2001). Although very few existed during this era, they were very vocal and confrontational despite military intimidation. With support from international civil society organizations, many local civil society organizations in Nigeria began to agitate for the return to civilian rule (Ikelegbe 2001). Members of civil society groups organized mass campaigns and encouraged strike actions. With their support, the then military

head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo, returned Nigeria to a democratic government following the election of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in late 1979. Sahagari's administration also known as the Second Republic (1979-1983) was characterized by the resurgence and proliferation of civil society organizations (CSO). In spite of the success of democratization processes in Nigeria during President Shehu Shagari's administration, the military in a coup d'état led by General Muhammad Buhari, again struck on the 31st December 1983 thereby terminating the second republic.

Buhari hurriedly banned all political parties and associations including public gatherings, jailed some politicians and human activists and stymied press freedom. Unfortunately, Buhari regime only lasted for less than three years as General Ibrahim B. Babangida toppled him in 1985.General Ibrahim Babangida's regime marked a turning in the history of civil rights movement in Nigeria (Abah & Adihikon, 2017). In 1990 following increased commitments and public pronouncements of General Babangida to organize election and return the nation to civil rule which he later annulled the result of the election.

According to Ikelegbe (2007), the exit of the military did not bring the desired succor that civil rights groups had clammoured for. This was because he refused to hand over power to the presumed winner of the June 12 1993 presidential election but instead for a kangaroo Interim National Government (ING) headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan. The formation of an ING angered many prodemocracy groups and many went to court to challenge the legitimacy of the ING. This led to the ruling of a federal high court in Lagos that declared the Shonekan Led ING as illegal and declared that the mandate of Abiola should be validated.

Unfortunately, this never came to fruition as Genaral Sani Abacha, the only military member of, and secretary to the ING usurped power from chief Ernest Shonekan after three months and returned the country to another era of horrendous military dictatorship characterized with hallucination of civil society organizations, arrests, imprisonment and hanging of human rights and prodemocracy activists (Ikelegbe 2007).

During the military regime of late General Sani Abacha, in Nigeria, (1993-1998), the National Democratic Coalition, (NADECO) was an amalgamation of principal civil society and prodemocracy groups that organized massive protests to defend the democratic transition program. The activities of civil rights groups remained prominent till when power was finally handed over to civil administration in 1999. Though, it did not mark the end of civil rights movement in Nigeria, instead it marked the beginning of new era which we can call an era of democratization and nonviolent change of power.

The Activities of Major Civil Rights Groups and their Non-violent Approach

Within the large array of pro-democracy/human rights groups, some have stood out as the most i mportant organizations in the struggle against militarism in Nigeria. This section will give a brief outline of the personalities, characteristics and programmes of some major groups and alliances:

The Civil Liberties Organization (CLO)

The Civil Liberties Organization according to Abah and Adihikon, (2017), is possibly the most successful human rights organization in Nigeria. It is active in the fields of civil rights adv

ocacy, legal aid, penal reform, human rights education, human rights monitoring and documentat ion, legal and police reforms, environmental rights and political activism. The CLO has campaig ned against the denial and erosion of personal liberties and against oppressive military legislation, and has mobilized against the extension of military rule. It has also been a watchdog of the Baba ngida and Abacha transition projects, pointing out inconsistencies, and exposing the shenanigans of the politicians. It has tirelessly campaigned against 'executive recklessness' through the courts, and has held many conferences to draw attention to particular problems (Harbeson: 1993).

The Constitutional Rights Project (CRP)

The CRP was formed in 1990 by Clement Nwankwo, one of the founders of CLO. The pa rting of ways was occasioned by what a CLO official described as disagreements over 'constituti onal' matters (Abdul 2001). It is organizationally limited to Lagos, and engages only in limited p olitical activism. It has, however, effectively intervened in the courts and the media to challenge particular government decisions, legislation, or to defend the rights of particular individuals. Its well-researched publications include, Guide to Human Rights Litigation in Nigeria; Human Righ ts Practices in the Nigerian Police; The Church, and Human Rights; and the Constitutional Right s Journal.

The Movement for National Reformation (MNR)

The MNR was formed in December 1992 with Chief Anthony Enahoro as chairman, Maz i Mokwugo Okoye as vice-chairman and Dr Olu Onagoruwa as interim secretary. According to Abah and Adihikon, (2017), it called for the restructuring of Nigeria into eight federations which will constitute the union of Nigeria. The significant thing about the MNR is the consistent positi on and pronouncements of its leader, Enahoro, who released a one-year alternative transition age nda, challenging Abacha to put that proposal and the regime's 3-year programme to a referendu m (Harbeson: 1993).

The National Democratic Coalition of Nigeria (NADECO)

NADECO was formed in May 1994, when it became clear that Abacha was going to rene ge on his promise of convening a constitutional conference 'with sovereign powers'. Abacha's n ational conference was only to make recommendations to the junta; one-third of its members wer e nominated and the rest were to be elected in poorly defined constituencies, without voters' lists and without enabling legislation (Abah and Adihikon, 2017). NADECO is comprised of a wide array of old and established politicians, retired senior military officers, political organizations an d some pro-democracy organizations. Its membership included a host of retired military top-bras s: Ebitu Ukiwe, David Jemibewon, Adeyinka Adebayo, and Theophilus Danjuma.

The Afenifere is a pan-Yoruba politico-cultural organization. With its roots deep in the A ction Group and Unity Party of Nigeria, it is the organization of the Yoruba elite, and was led by the respected octogenarian, Chief Ajasin. Other leaders of NADECO include Chief Enahoro, Rea r Admiral Ndubuisi Kanu (rtd), Olu Falae, C.G. Onoh, Mohammed Arzika, Olu Lulu-Briggs, Bol a Ige, Beko Ransome-Kuti, Yohanna Madaki, Cornelius Adebayo, Abraham Adesanya, Wahab Dosunmu, Uma Eleazu, Segun Osoba and Chukwuemeka Ezeife (Harbeson: 1993).

NADECO declared that it stood for the restoration of democracy and true federalism. It a sserted that the military dictatorships of Babangida and Abacha have had terrible consequences f or the country. It described the Abacha political transition as insincere, and poorly managed. It, t herefore, called for the validation of the June 12 election, the formation of a broad-based national government led by Abiola, and the convening of a sovereign national conference with the object ive of achieving true federalism and political stability (Abah and Adihikon, 2017).

Activities of Civil Rights Movement in Fourth Republic and Non-violent Change: Successes and Challenges

Nigeria's present democratization, which culminated in the country's fourth republic on May 29, 1999, started amidst great hope and expectations (Yagboyaju, 2011). Despite the common pessimism held by many people that fourth republic will suffer the same fate first, second and third suffered; in the general election on April 21, 2007, Umaru Yar'Adua of the PDP was elected President and Obasanjo handed over power to him on May 29, 2007. Following the death of Umaru Yar'Adua on May 5, 2010 and the pocket of power tussle that followed it, Goodluck Jonathan became the third president and later won the election the following year through non-violence means. When political gladiators were warming up for 2015 general elections, many local and foreign political analysts predicted that it will not only be violent but also the end of the corporate existence of Nigeria as a nation-state. The outcome of the election surprised many people as the candidate of All Progressive Candidates Muhammadu Buhari won the general elections on March 28, 2015. On May 29, 2015 power was peaceful and ceremoniously handed over to him.

In fourth republic the activities of civil rights groups have continued to remain non-violent towards their demand for civil and endurable society. Primarily, the role of civil society in democratic governance as highlighted by scholars revolve round advocacy, civic engagement, sensitization, election monitoring, media watch, budget tracking, provision of socio-economic services, legislative advocacy, promotion of inter and intra ethnic peace, among others (Diamond 1999, Mercy 2012, Fadakinte 2013). This section identifies some civil rights groups in the fourth republic and their roles and also examines their non-violent advocacy towards peaceful change of government since 1999. The following are some of the notable present civil rights groups in Nigeria:

Action Aid Nigeria

Action Aid is a global movement of people working together to further human rights for all and defeat poverty. The group priorities works with the poor and excluded, promoting values and commitment in civil society, institutions and governments with the aim of achieving structur al changes to eradicate injustices and poverty in the world. Action Aid Nigeria is a member of A ction Aid global federation. We maintain a strong relationship of interdependence and mutual ac countability within the international federation while ensuring a strong balance between self-rule and shared-rule. Registered in Nigeria, in 1999 as a Country Programme of Action Aid Internatio nal. The movement have transformed into an autonomous national organisation with a strong nati onal governance structure (https://nigeria.actionaid.org).

Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC)

Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) Association registered No CAC/IT/NO/ 43397. The M uslim Rights Concern (MURIC) was formed in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1993 in response to various hu man rights abuses committed against Muslims in Nigeria and elsewhere around the world. It is a n Allah-given rights organization. In our little way and within our limited resources, we project, promote and protect the rights of Muslims. MURIC is a human rights organization which promot es, protects and projects the rights of Muslims. This group condemns terrorism and all acts of vio lence. Its motto is 'Dialogue, Not Violence'. The organization has employed peaceful different m eans to resolve socio-political and religious conflict.

The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP)

The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) is a Nigerian non-profit pr omoting socio-economic rights, transparency and accountability in Nigeria. A longstanding grant ee and partner of the Foundation, it uses public education, research, advocacy, public petition an d public interest litigation to mobilize citizens' involvement in rights protection and promotion, c all out corruption in private and public sectors and hold service providers, government and regul ators to account (Harbeson: 1993).

Established in 2004, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) promo tes human rights, transparency, and accountability in governance, using training, advocacy, resea rch, and strategic litigation. It is one of Nigeria's foremost accountability organizations and a lon g-time grantee of the Foundation. With this award, SERAP is strengthening its anti-corruption an d accountability work by continuing to document corruption cases by state and non-state actors (www.serap-nigeria.org).

Democracy and Development (CDD)

According to Abah and Adihikon, (2017), since 1999, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) has played immense roles in civic engagements, research and documentations. Also, it has organized seminars and symposium for elected representatives, political parties and members of the public on several issues bordering on democracy and development. The staff of CDD also joined other civil society organizations in the December 2012 fuel subsidy snafu protests in Nigeria.

Save Nigeria Group

The Save Nigeria Group founded by Pastor Tunde Bakare of Latter Rain Church has helped to demand for strict adherence to constitutionalism in Nigeria. For instance, following the protracted illness and subsequent death of President Umaru Musa Ya'adua in 2009, the group through public demonstration in Lagos agitated for the immediate confirmation of the then Vice President, Goodluck Jonathan to be confirmed as acting president following the inability of the sick president to perform his duties. Similarly in 2012, the Save Nigerian Group demonstrated openly against the removal fuel subsidy in Nigeria.

Other civil rights groups include: Occupy Nigeria Group (ONG), Citizens for Good Governance (CGG), Arise for Change (AFC), Women Arise for Change Initiatives (WACI), Ideological Revival Movement, etc.

Common Methods Employed by Civil Rights Movements in Nigeria since 1999 Towards No n-violent Change

Nonviolent action generally comprises: Acts of protest and persuasion, non-cooperation a nd nonviolent, and intervention Nonviolent acts of protest and persuasion are symbolic actions p erformed by a group of people to show their support or disapproval of something. The goal of thi s kind of action is to bring public awareness to an issue, persuade or influence a particular group of people, or to facilitate future nonviolent action. The message can be directed toward the public, opponents, or people affected by the issue. Methods of protest and persuasion include speeches, public communications, petitions, symbolic acts, art, processions (marches), and other public ass emblies. On the other hand, non-cooperation involves the purposeful withholding of cooperation or the unwillingness to initiate in cooperation with an opponent. Compared with protest and nonc ooperation, non-violent intervention is a more direct method of non-violent action. Nonviolent in tervention can be used defensive (Abdul 2001).

Hence, Strategies or Methods includes:

1. Advocacy
2. Lobbying
3. Ultimatum or threat of strike
4. Work to rule
5. Protest or demonstration

Success and Challenges

There is no doubt that civil rights movements in Nigeria especially in this current republic has contributed much in instituting a fragile democracy in Nigeria. Civil rights movements in Nigeria have also helped in stabilizing democracy in Nigeria. In the areas of elections, civil rights groups have helped to promote and advocate for a free fair and credible elections in Nigeria since 1999. In the build up to the April 2015 elections in Nigeria, the civil society sector was involved in all the stages of preparations, voting and collations, declarations of election results. According to Ikechukwu (2016), A situation Room, a coalition of 60 local civil society organizations were involved in the minute-by-minute observation and monitoring and analysis of trends and events of the 2015 Presidential election.

Hence, despite the success civil rights movement have made in Nigeria since 1999, there are tons of problems that are confronting the organizations. The major problem of the human rights groups is that of factionalism. This is traceable to a number of factors. A primary cause is the absence of internal democracy in some human rights organizations. Leaders often behave as charismatic 'chiefs' whose motives and logic are so evidently obvious that there is no need to go through the rigours of following laid down procedure (Abah and Adihikon, 2017). Another cause is the struggle for financial spoils, particularly when foreign funding is involved. Some of the factionalism is, however, due to objective reasons, such as differences in perception, and difficulties in communication.

Another problem is bribery and corruption. Corruption and bribery is a great canker wor m that has eaten deep into the social fabrics of Nigeria. The cancerous nature of corruption make

s it difficult for any part of the Nigeria polity to be immune from it. Although, there are fewer ca ses of corruption in the third sector in Nigeria, there are reports of mismanagement of funds mea nt for development by students and labor unions in contemporary Nigeria. For instance, the Nige ria Labor congress in Nigeria since March 2015 has been embroiled in corruption and crisis leadi ng to break ups and parallel leadership of the union (Abdul 2001).

The present civil rights groups in Nigeria unlike that of 1980s can be highly influenced b y financial inducement by politicians. In other words, they are not immune from corrupt system i n Nigeria. The nefarious system of sharp practices has affected the body. Hence, with financial in ducements from the politicians, these civil society groups get embroiled in crisis over sharing of booty thereby creating division and leadership crisis. Strengthening these civil society groups in l ight of this quagmire is through re-orientation and financial support from donor agencies and pro per media monitoring of the activities of CSO in Nigeria.

Other challenges include harassment, intimidation, denial of permission for rally or proce ssion, arrest and detention. These acts of unprovoked arrest and detention of CSO leaders have d erailed their non-violent approach. This is because in some cases lives were lost and properties w orth millions of naira were damaged. Though, these problems notwithstanding, it is my view that most of the human rights and civil rights organizations have played a very positive role in check ing the excesses of militarism in Nigeria

Conclusion/ Recommendations

The concluded that in spite the success civil rights movement have made in Nigeria since 1999, there are tons of problems that are confronting the organizations. Which include the absence of internal democracy in some human rights organizations, Leaders often behave as charismatic 'chiefs' whose motives and logic are so evidently obvious that there is no need to go through the rigours of following laid down procedure. Another cause is the struggle for financial spoils, particularly when foreign funding is involved. Some of the factionalism is, however, due to objective reasons, such as differences in perception, and difficulties in communication. It further concluded that corruption and bribery is a great canker worm that has eaten deep into the social fabrics of Nigeria. The cancerous nature of corruption makes it difficult for any part of the polity to be immune from it. Although, there are fewer cases of corruption in the third sector in Nigeria, there are reports of mismanagement of funds meant for development by students and labor unions in contemporary Nigeria.

Consequently, this study recommends that leads of civil rights organizations should ensure that all democratic principles are adhered to enable the organizations meet their goals and serve the general public effectively based on the mandate set by the founders and sponsors of the organizations. Members should focus attentions on building the organization to be internally and structurally strong rather than making charismatic leaders who flaunt the rules of the organizations. It further recommends that transparency and accountability should be the watch-words and hallmark of members of every civil right organization in Nigeria. Leadership of the civil right organizations should be prevented from acting alone especially as it regards fund and other resource management.

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