

**CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN AFRICA:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GHANA AND NIGERIA.**

By

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Abstract

Following the transition of most African states to democracy in the 1990s, civil society was widely regarded as essential to facilitate these transient democracies into consolidation. This thesis sets out to deconstruct the role of civil society in the democratic consolidation process of Ghana and Nigeria. To do so the thesis engages two theoretical perspectives on civil society and democratic consolidation, the liberal perspectives and the radical perspectives. Based on these two theoretical perspectives, the study argues that civil society is contributing to Ghana's democratic consolidation process in the field of public policy, holding the state accountable, promoting citizen education and participation, as well as monitoring elections and strengthening state institutions. However, civil society in Nigeria has been unable to contribute as much in this direction because of factors ranging from its contradictory relationship with the state, ethno-religious and regional cleavages as well as undemocratic tendencies of most CSOs in the country. Consequently, the study identifies the imperative for further studies into theorizing civil society in a manner that transcends the assumption of anti-state or pro-state to include contextual and power relations, as well as deepening civil society's internal democracies and enhancing their autonomy.

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List of Acronyms

CDD	Center for Democratic Development
CICOL	Civil Society Coalition on Land
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
GNA	Ghana News Agency
IDEG	Institute for Democratic Governance
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs
ISODEC	Integrated Social Development Center
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
UN	United Nations
WiLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Africa, a continent long wrecked by protracted periods of colonialism and subsequent military regimes finally begun to witness its democratic renaissance in the 1990s following the third wave of global democratization (Diamond and Plattner, 1999). While several factors may have contributed to this democratic transition, civil society has been largely singled out in most cases as being instrumental in the transition from authoritarian regimes to democracy. Indeed, this is so in the case of Ghana and Nigeria (CIVICUS 2007, Gyima-Boadi 2004). However, the euphoria generated by the transition to electoral democracies and the high expectations for consolidation proved to be short lived (Diamond and Plattner 1999). For, the numerous problems bedeviling the continent including poverty, weak political institutions, corruption, and ethnic and religious cleavages all but portrayed a bleak picture on the prospects of democratic consolidation contrary to what was envisaged (ibid, Gyima-Boadi 2004).

It is against this background that civil society organizations, based on the significant role they played in facilitating the transition from autocratic to democratic rule, were and/are still being deemed, especially by liberal democratic theories as a springboard to facilitate these transient democracies into consolidation (Diamond 1997, Gyima-Boadi 2004). Thus, the likelihood that a political opening can evolve into a consolidated democracy appears to depend on the existence of a vibrant civil society (Encarnacion 2003:1).

1.2 Research Problem

Ghana and Nigeria, like their other African counterparts, witnessed transition from a military dictatorship to democratic regimes in the 1990s and have embarked upon the path towards consolidation. However, there appears to be significant differences between the two countries in their level and depth of democratic consolidation. Whereas Ghana has made important strides towards consolidation, Nigeria appears to be sluggish in its consolidation

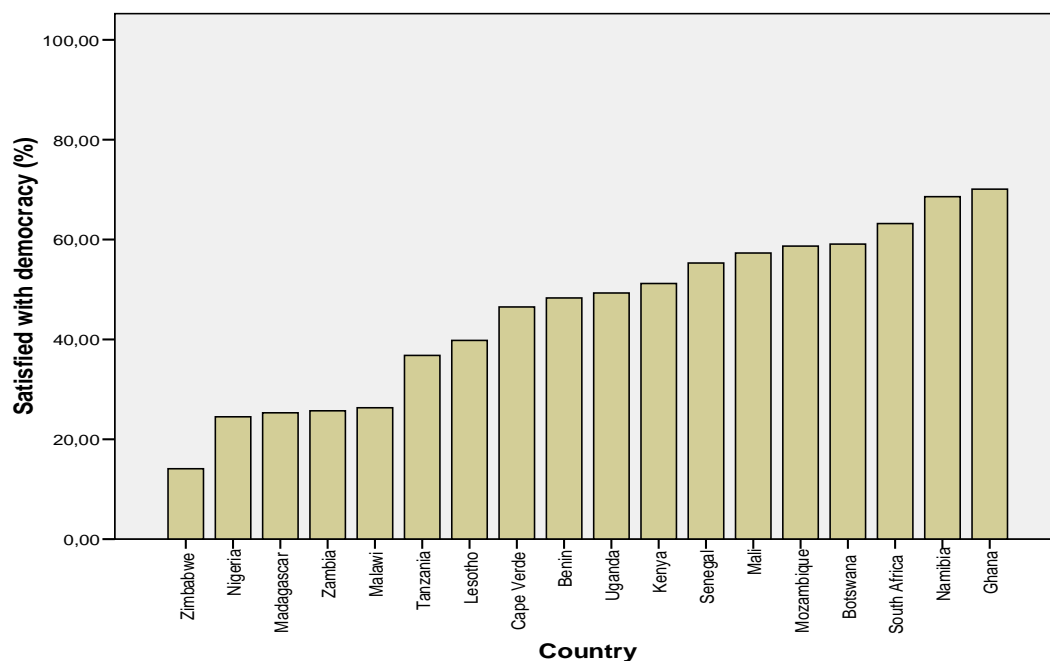
process despite the fact that the two countries share a lot of similarities. These similarities include the fact that they are both ethnically and religiously diverse ex- British colonies (Omeiza 2009). Their post independence politics have also been subjected to military interventions; Ghana in 1966, 1972, 1978, 1979, 1981 and Nigeria in January 1966, July 1966, 1975, 1983, 1985 and 1993 (Boafo-Arthur 2008). Both countries also rely on natural resources for their economic development. Both countries are also presidential regimes with multiparty democracies (Oladipupuo 2011). More significantly for this study, civil society played a crucial role in their transition from authoritarianism to electoral democracies (Gyima-Boadi 2004, CIVICUS 2007).

Notwithstanding their similarities, the two countries differ considerably in democratic consolidation. Whereas Ghana has held four successive, competitive, credible elections and witnessed the alternation of power between political parties (Abdulai 2009), Nigeria's only credible election came in April 2011 following the election of President Goodluck Jonathan. Besides, Ghanaians have generally accepted democracy as the only legitimate way to rule and have demonstrated a complete confidence in the electoral system. Overall, Ghana has advanced significantly in deepening its democracy over the years and this has been largely attributed to the presence of a vibrant civil society (Afrimap et al. 2007).

In contrast, Nigeria has seemingly found it a difficult task consolidating its democracy. Several arguments including fragile political party system, weak electoral institutions, and corruption have been advanced as factors hindering the consolidation process (Dode 2010, Oladipupo 2011). Imade (2001) however attributes the situation to the relative inability of civil society to effectively influence the consolidation process.

Whatever may account for the differences in the democratic consolidation between the two countries, there seem to be a consensus that Ghana's democratic consolidation process is ahead of Nigeria and Nigerians are unsatisfied about their situation. A survey by Skanning (2008) confirms this view. That is, whereas Ghanaians are the most satisfied with their democracy, Nigerians are among the least satisfied as shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Levels of Satisfaction with Democracy in Sub-Saharan African Countries



Source: Skanning (2008:13)

It is in the light of this puzzle that a research into the role of civil society in democratic consolidation in the two countries is relevant at this moment to ascertain how and to what extent CSOs are influencing their democratic consolidation process.

1.3 Research Objective and Questions

1.3.1 Research Objective

The main objective of the research is to understand the influence of CSOs in the democratic consolidation process in Africa's emerging democracies and why some democracies are relatively unconsolidated despite the presence of active civil society.

1.3.2 Main Research Question

Given that civil society is construed as critical to democratic consolidation process, the main question of this thesis is how do civil society organizations in Ghana and Nigeria contribute to democratic consolidation?

1.3.3 Sub Research Questions

1. What role do civil society organizations in Ghana and Nigeria play in promoting democratic consolidation?
2. What accounts for the difference in civil society influence on democratic consolidation in the two countries?

1.4 Relevance and Justification

The notion of democratic consolidation has emerged over the years as critical to democratic sustenance. In the midst of this, civil society has been identified as one of the key actors capable of facilitating democratic consolidation process particularly in emerging democracies. Hence, donor organizations and governments tend to invest significant amount of resources in civil society strengthening particularly in developing countries with the goal of helping them consolidate their democracies (Monga 2009). However, despite this attention to civil society, some democracies like Nigeria seem to be lagging in their consolidation process even though others like Ghana have made modest gains. The question therefore is: what is civil society in the two countries doing that is impacting differently on their respective democratic consolidation processes? It is in the light of this question that a comparative study on the role of civil society in democratic consolidation is relevant at this time to ascertain how they are shaping democratic consolidation process. The outcome of this study shall also be relevant to academics, policy makers, and development institutions given that a large number of Africa's democracies are relatively unconsolidated and measures are being explored to facilitate their consolidation.

1.5 Research Methodology and Design

1.5.1 Research Methodology

The thesis employs a methodology that draws its conceptual and theoretical frameworks from existing literature on civil society, democratic consolidation, and liberal and radical accounts on the relationship between civil society and democratic consolidation. The liberal perspective has been employed to explain civil society and democratic consolidation in Ghana while the radical perspective is invoked to deconstruct civil society in Nigeria and their influence on the country's democratic consolidation process. This dichotomy has been employed because the liberal perspective explains civil society with the underlying assumptions of autonomy, anti-state and internally democratic civil society. However, it is unable to account for power relations in different contexts. It is on this basis that the study also employed the radical perspective to account for the relationship between civil society and the state in Nigeria viz-a-viz democratic consolidation.

To achieve this, the study essentially relied on qualitative methods to obtain and analyze the data gathered. It utilized primary sources such as questionnaire administered through email, organizational reports, research monologues, newspaper articles and relevant website reviews. Secondary data was also gathered through literature reviews, journals, and books. The study employed document and content analysis as key instruments to analyze the information gathered.

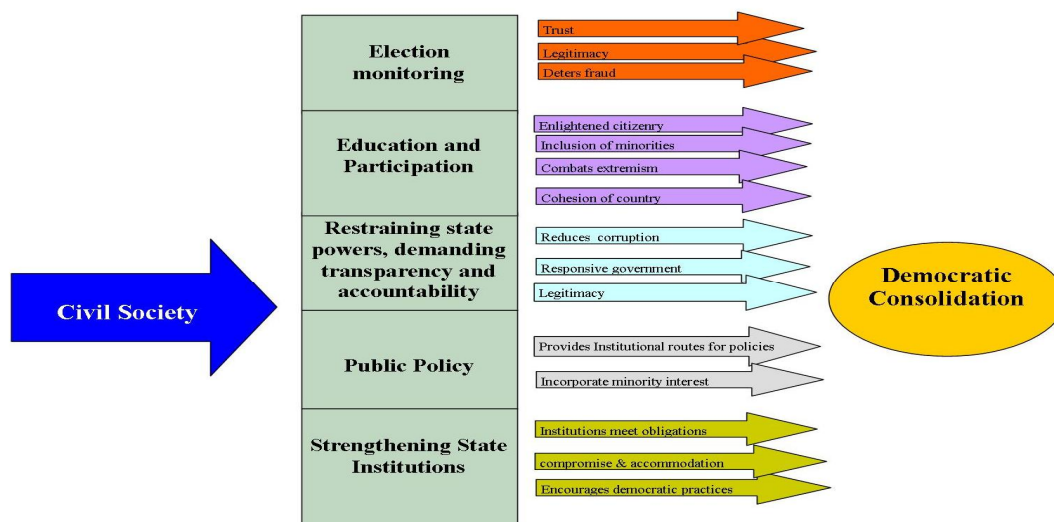
1.5.2 Research Design

The research is a comparative case study of two West Africa Countries- Ghana and Nigeria. The two countries share a lot of similarities but differ in their democratic consolidation. By employing the comparative analysis, the study has been able to critically and holistically deconstruct the dynamics of civil society organizations across the different contexts and their role in democratic consolidation. To achieve this, the study reviewed a number of CSOs across the two countries based on issues relevant to democratic consolidation. Attempts were made to

select organizations based on a functional equivalence across the two countries. Overall, 20 CSOs, 10 from each country were targeted for the email questionnaire. However, 13 CSOs, 7 from Ghana and 6 from Nigeria responded. Nonetheless, the study considered the response as representative since in each case the response was more than 50 percent. Besides this, extensive website reviews of the organizations, coupled with secondary information complemented the data obtained through the questionnaire. In reviewing the organizations' websites, the study took into consideration the individual organizations' visions, goals, programmes, core functions and target. Information obtained on this was very crucial in assessing CSOs strategies and the nature of their engagement with state institutions and the society at large.

To establish the influence of civil society on democratic consolidation, the study constructed a framework based on specific roles of civil society identified as critical to democratic consolidation. This includes election monitoring, promoting citizen education and participation, restraining of state powers as well as influence on public policies and strengthening of state institutions. These channels are argued, especially by liberal democratic scholars and renowned international institutions (See Diamond 1997 and 1994, Gyima-Boadi 2004, United Nations 2005 and World Movement for Democracy-website), as the most effective ways through which civil society can influence democratic development process as indicated in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Framework for assessing civil society contribution to democratic consolidation.



Source: United Nations 2005; US Center for Civic Education 1995; World Movement for Democracy, website; Bunbongkarn 2001, Doowon 2006.

1.6 Research Limitation

An important constraint to the research was the limited timeframe within which to conduct the study. This could not permit self administration of the questionnaires and hence the use of email as an alternative. Besides, the study encountered non-responses to the questionnaires from some organizations, which could not permit the analysis of information based on functional equivalence of the targeted CSOs across the two countries. However, by employing website analysis and the use of secondary sources, the study was able to make up for the lack of responses from some of the organizations. Furthermore, inadequate existing statistical data on the thesis topic in the two countries also posed as a limitation. For example, the absence of data and figures on the increasing trend of CSOs in the 1980s and 90s in the two countries meant that the study had to rely on narrative account on civil society activism in its evolution process. Nonetheless, the quality of the study has not been affected since every effort was made to operate within the constraints to produce an excellent thesis.

1.7 Thesis Organization

The thesis is organized into five chapters as below.

Following this chapter is chapter two which discusses the theoretical and conceptual frameworks focusing on liberal and radical perspectives on civil society. The chapter argues that while the liberal exposition has privileged civil society in democratic consolidation, this view can be problematic in some contexts as it does not take into consideration power relations and the inherent undemocratic tendencies of some CSOs. Chapter three examines the evolution of civil society in Ghana and Nigeria. It contends that the manner in which civil society has evolved in the two polities tends to affect their contemporary influence on democratic consolidation. Chapter four focuses on deconstructing civil society's contribution to democratic consolidation in the two countries viz-a-viz the theoretical framework. It argues that civil society in Nigeria is not contributing to democratic consolidation as much as its Ghanaian counterparts because of factors such as state cooptation, ethno-religious and regional cleavages as well as inherent undemocratic tendencies. Chapter five concludes the thesis and lays forth the imperative for further studies into some of its findings.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter deconstructs the liberal and radical perspectives on civil society and its relationship to democratic consolidation. It argues that the liberal view on civil society and democratic consolidation is idealistic and tends to overlook the potential for civil society's cooptation and undemocratic tendencies.

2.2 Deconstructing Civil Society

Despite being polysemous civil society has gained prominence over the years particularly following the anti-communist dissent in Eastern Europe and the onset of the third wave of the global democratization process (Monga 2009, Rosenblum and Post 2002). Over the past decades, the concept has been construed and analyzed in relation to its antiauthoritarian tendencies and the mobilization of forces for democratic action as well as the consolidation of democratic institutions (Bibic and Graziano 1994). But what exactly is civil society?

Sullivan (1999) contends that civil society is the realm of institutions which although larger than the family are smaller than the state. Barber (1999:9) expatiating on Sullivan's definition, maintains that civil society is the sandwich between the extremes of big government and the wholly commercial markets which acts as the terrain for bridging the public and private and helps to democratize or relegitimize governments. Hence, civil society in this view constitutes a third sector and serves as the free domain where democratic attitudes and behaviors are nurtured and habituated. Diamond (1997) offers a more detail conceptualization of civil society when he stresses that civil society constitutes the

Realm of organized social life that is open, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, autonomous from the state..... It involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interest, passions, preferences, ideas, to exchange information, to achieve collective goals, to make demands on the state, to improve the structure and functioning of the state and to hold state officials accountable (Diamond 1997:6).

Drawing on Putnam's civic community, Bratton (1994:2-3) observes that civil society mirrors the sphere of social interaction between the state and household, manifested in norms of community co-operation, voluntary associations and networks of public communication. Consequently, civil society generates trust, tolerance, reciprocity and inclusion which reduces transaction cost associated with collective action and provides the basis for plural and diverse associations. The civic norms and networks of communication also foster the development of social capital which facilitates collective action and democratic development (ibid).

While the foregoing discussion presents perspectives on civil society as revolving around the liberal conventional view, other perspectives see civil society in a more heterodox exposition. In particular, the Gramscian exposition sees civil society and its relationship with the state to reflect issues of power and hegemony which the dominant groups exercise either actively or passively throughout society (Gramsci 1978, cited in Tar 2009). Therefore, civil society cannot be divorced from the state. This view however stands in a relationship of tension to the liberal perspectives which concur that civil society must be analyzed in significant or partial opposition to the state (Masterson 2007).

Similarly, Mamdani (1996) dwelling on the Gramscian perspective sees civil society and the state as inextricably linked hence the construction of civil society as a realm of resistance to the dominance of the state may be problematic. For, it is not simply that the 'state dominates' and 'civil society resists' but rather an interplay of power relations. This therefore implies that civil society needs to be analyzed by looking also at the processes of incorporation and not just resistance (Mohan 2002:8).

While acknowledging the diverse perspectives on civil society, this study adopts the liberal views in order to deconstruct the role CSOs play in democratic consolidation. This implies that civil society is understood in this thesis to include NGOs, think tanks, community based organizations, faith-based organizations, ethnic associations, advocacy groups, social movements, and NGO coalitions. This perspective is adopted because it reflects the orthodoxy and also

permits deeper analysis of how civil society can influence democratic consolidation and the limits of such perspective in different contexts. Notwithstanding, the radical account is also invoked as critique to the mainstream view and to deconstruct civil society in Nigeria.

2.3 Conceptualizing Democratic Consolidation

Democratic consolidation is another phenomenon that is subject to different elucidations. Diamond (1997) argues that democratic consolidation represents a state whereby institutions, rules and constraints of democracy become the sole legitimate means for the acquisition and exercise of political power.

Linz and Stepan (1999:5) on their part argue that in a consolidated democracy, ‘democracy becomes the only game in town’ and offer a framework encompassing behavioral, attitudinal and constitutional means of determining democratic consolidation. Behaviorally, there are no significant socio-economic, political, institutional or national actors trying to achieve their aims through unconstitutional means, violence or in an attempt to secede from the state. Attitudinally, they contend that consolidation is achieved when a strong public opinion privileges democratic procedures and institutions as the only appropriate means of governing. Constitutionally, in consolidated democracies, both government and non state actors and social forces in the state become subjected to and abide by laws, procedures and sanctioned institutions for conflict resolution. Hence, although there may be severe problems of governance, and widespread dissatisfaction of the ruling government, the public and the elites uphold the belief and commitment to constitutional means as the only legitimate way to change a government.

However, Huntington (1991) on his part postulates a ‘two-turnover’ thesis as an indicator of democratic consolidation. He contends that democracy becomes consolidated when an entrenched electoral regime delivers free, fair and competitive election by which the party that wins power at the initial elections during the transition phase, loses in subsequent elections and

hands over power to the winning party, and when the winning party also in turn hands over power peacefully to another party at subsequent elections.

While the above expositions are by no means exhaustive, this study considers Huntington's 'two turn over' thesis, Linz and Stepan's 'only game in town' and Diamond's widespread legitimation of democracy as basis for the conceptualization of democratic consolidation since these are variables of which indicators for cross case comparison are available for the two countries under investigation.

2.4 Civil Society and Democratic Consolidation; Exploring the Causal Link

2.4.1 The Liberal Perspective

Inspired by de Tocqueville and Putnam's works, the liberal perspective privileges the virtues of civil society in democratic consolidation. Guided by this conviction, Diamond (1997:5) contends that

A healthy liberal democracy requires a public that is organized for democracy, socialized to its norms and values and committed not just to its myriad narrow interest but to a larger, common, civic ends. Such a civic public is only possible with a vibrant civil society.

Similarly, Hadenius and Ugglä (1996:1628) contend that

An active civil society is a necessary condition for the development of a democratic system of governance.... only the free practice of democracy found in the civil sphere can promote the development of the democratic popular culture that makes the rule by the people a feasible option.

The question however is, how does civil society contribute to democratic consolidation? What is the causal mechanism by which this can be ascertained?

Encarnation (2003) based on de Tocqueville contends that civil society functions to socialize citizens in democratic norms and to scrutinize state actions. The socializing role which CSOs perform enables them to strengthen democratic foundations through deepening citizenship.

Arguably, the most comprehensive discussion on the relationship between civil society and democratic consolidation is enumerated by Diamond (1997, 1994) upon which this thesis

draws extensively to substantiate its argument. Diamond maintains in these works that civil society plays numerous crucial functions that are vital to democratic consolidation and proceeded to discuss these functions as below.

Firstly, civil society provides the basis for limiting and containing the powers of the state. Under democratic governments, CSOs perform monitoring functions that expose the abuses of state powers. Because new democracies often lack the legal means of containing corruption, CSOs become essential in pressing for institutional reforms and strengthening state institutions to enhance their effectiveness and deal with this canker. They also help to monitor budgets and public expenditure to ensure transparency and accountability (ibid, Gyima-Boadi 2004). Civil society also supplements the functions of political parties by stimulating citizens' participation in governance. They promote an appreciation of obligations and rights of democratic citizenship. Besides, CSOs also serve as domains for the development of democratic values and norms such as tolerance and respect for opposing views.

Furthermore, CSOs create channels other than political parties for articulating citizens' interest. This is crucial for providing voice and representation to minority social groups in the polity while enhancing the legitimacy of democratic regimes (Diamond 1997, 1994). CSOs also help to democratize government by providing opportunities for participation and influencing public policy (ibid). Moreover, many CSOs monitor elections to deter frauds and this enhances public confidence in the electoral processes and improves its credibility and legitimacy (ibid, Gyima-Boadi 2004).

Another role of civil society in democratic consolidation is the fact that CSOs disseminate information and empower citizens to collectively pursue and defend their interest (Diamond 1997, 1994). Also, CSOs mobilize new information and understanding necessary for the success of economic reforms. Such economic reforms like privatization require that citizens are well informed about the pros and cons of the policies. The presence of CSOs such as think tanks can help overcome the information barrier by supplying the public with the necessary information

(ibid). Moreover, religious and human rights oriented CSOs can provide services and develop techniques of conflict mediation and resolution through their capacity building activities. Skills acquired through such trainings can help CSOs act as neutral arbiters and to diffuse ethnic, religious and political tensions (ibid).

However, the functions of CSOs in relation to democratic consolidation as discussed above are contingent upon the assumptions that civil society is 'pluralistic, autonomous, resourceful, institutionalized and internally democratic' (Diamond 1997:71).

While civil society contributes to democratic consolidation, a consolidated democratic state may also contribute to the development of civil society. Thus, the role of the state in this regards is indispensable in providing the political opportunity structures and institutional safe guards (Dawuni, 2010). In democratic states, the presence of institutions and opened institutional structures creates avenues for civil society engagement with policy makers. Also, a democratic state which embraces liberal norms and principles tolerates the emergence of different forms of CSOs and encourages their participation in policy making (ibid).

2.4.2 Radical Perspectives

Despite the seeming optimism on civil society and democratic consolidation, other analysts are less convinced about this deterministic relationship. Monga (2009) argues that the mainstream view on civil societies' potentials glosses over the dark side of most CSOs. He contends that while it may be true that CSOs can function to promote democracy, it is also true that CSOs can function to undermine democratic norms. Indeed, some authoritarian regimes, he argues, have in the past succeeded in establishing CSOs and employed them to subvert democratic rules and procedures. Thus, although CSOs may promote positive social capital to facilitate democratic consolidation, some CSOs may also create negative social capital which can undermine democratic consolidation. Also, CSOs may engage in power struggles or being hijacked by groups and individuals motivated for political power.

Furthermore, Encarnation (2003) contends that, CSOs may undermine representative institutions, institutionalize antisystem, radicalize demands against the state or encourage opportunistic and personalistic leadership which acts against democratic norms. Moreover, Ehrenberg (1999) maintains that the fact that CSOs can be created, supported, or manipulated by the state implies that it will be a fallacy to conceptualize civil society outside the state. This somewhat underscores the Gramscian account on civil society.

This thesis therefore hypothesizes in light of the foregoing theoretical discussions that the democratic consolidation process in Ghana is being significantly influenced by civil society in a variety of ways including public policy fields, election monitoring, strengthening of state institutions, demanding transparency and accountability from the state, and the promotion of citizen education and participation; whereas in the case of Nigeria, civil society has been relatively unable to influence its democratic consolidation process because of factors such as state co-optation, exercise of hegemony by the dominant ruling class, the presence of ethno-religious and regional cleavages and the inherent undemocratic tendencies of some CSOs. A detail discussion on this is offered in chapter four.

2.5 Conclusion

The concepts and theoretical accounts discussed above are useful to answer the research questions. While the liberal account on civil society will enable an analysis of how civil society promote democratic consolidation in Ghana, the radical account will enable a deconstruction of how civil society and the state interact in Nigeria and the consequence of this on the country's democratic consolidation process. This dichotomy is useful to answer the research question more critically. The next chapter examines the development trajectory of civil society in the two countries.

Chapter 3 Evolution of Civil Society in Ghana and Nigeria

3.1 Introduction

This chapter draws on the historical configuration of civil society and its contemporary manifestation in Ghana and Nigeria as a precursor to understanding its role on democratic consolidation in the two countries. The chapter begins by examining the trajectory of civil society in Ghana and then proceeds to examine that of Nigeria and concludes with a synthesis of emerging issues for civil society in the two countries viz-a-viz democratic consolidation.

3.2 Civil society in Ghana

The evolution of civil society in Ghana pre-dates colonialism. However, civil society in the country acquired more visibility following independence and the subsequent degeneration into military dictatorship. The Convention People's Party (CPP) government that took over after independence saw civil society activities as threat to its one party regime and sought to either crash or incorporate these organizations by arresting and imprisoning its leading figures, locking up their offices or appointing some of its members into government. Successive military regimes also adopted this ambivalent attitude towards CSOs in the country (Darkwa et al. 2006).

The rise of neo liberalism in the 1980s resulted in a concomitant rise in civil society activism in Ghana. In particular, the introduction of structural adjustment programme (SAP) and the resulting hardships imposed by the reforms somewhat re-energized the hitherto uncoordinated CSOs, whose agitation for democratic opening was rather sporadic and inconsistent (Boafo-Arthur 2008). Although, the then military ruler Flight Lieutenant Rawlings initially regarded civil society activism, particularly prodemocracy organizations as a potential threat to the regime and sought to suppress these organizations through arresting and imprisoning its members and establishing parallel CSOs such as the 31st December Women's Movement, it subsequently recognized civil society particularly NGOs as a partner in development to fill the service delivery gap (Hutchful 2002). This shift in regime attitude

provided the impetus for CSOs to coalesce into a loose alliance known as Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ) to demand democratic reforms (Aidoo 2006). The agitations and strong campaigns mounted by these organizations eventually culminated in the transition to democratic rule in 1992 (ibid, Gyima-Boadi 2004).

Following Ghana's transition to democracy, CSOs such as ISODEC have moved on to advocacy around social and economic rights, a factor reinforced by the 1992 constitution which provides the legitimate basis for civil society advocacy (Darkwa et al. 2006). The repeal of the criminal libel and sedition laws in 2001 removed an important obstacle to civil society operations in Ghana and has also resulted in a significant increase in the number and activities of CSOs. Indeed, by 2010, the number of registered CSOs in Ghana had reached approximately 3,800 (USAID 2010).

Thus, Mboge and Doe (2004) in a comparative review of eight New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) countries - South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Algeria, Uganda, and Senegal found that only Ghana and South Africa have the most favorable conditions for the presence and operations of civil society organizations - a factor which partly accounts for Ghana's thriving democracy.

3.3 Civil Society in Nigeria

Like Ghana, the evolution of civil society in Nigeria pre-dates colonialism. However, post independence Nigeria inherited a structure of civil society significantly shaped by social differentiation and reproduced inequalities (Tar 2009:98). In tracing the evolution of civil society in Nigeria, Imade (2001) identifies two critical junctures of civil society development after independence. These include the anti-Babangida and Abacha eras and the era of state mobilization. The despotic military regimes of Generals Babangida and Abacha in the 1980s and 1990s and the introduction of SAP at the same period re-engineered civil society activism in Nigeria in response to the economic hardships and the state's repressive actions (CIVICUS 2007,

Imade 2001). Besides, the state also made repeated attempts of intrusion into civic life and actualized this by pursuing social mobilization at ‘both the elite and mass levels’ (Imade 2001:13). This was evidenced in the government’s establishment of a National Directorate of Social Mobilization and Political Education whose aim was to ensure public mobilization in state policies (Imade 2001, LeVan 2011).

However, civil society development in Nigeria has been an intermittent episode, disappearing once the assumed mission is accomplished and reemerging when there are new threats. Yet, a common pattern that has persisted in the development trajectory of civil society in the country has been the enormous influence of the state exerted through ‘co-optation, manipulation and oppression since independence in 1960’ (Imade 2001: 14).

Despite this uneven trajectory, CIVICUS (2007) maintains that civil society in Nigeria was very instrumental in facilitating the country’s democratic transition through mobilizing citizens against unpopular regime policies, providing welfare services, performing watchdog roles, and agitating for the opening and expansion of political space, which was vital for the country’s eventual return to civil rule. While civil society may have played a crucial role in facilitating the country’s democratic transition, it remains a puzzle as to why such same roles are seemingly not being replicated after transition. A hunch on this is provided by Tar who contends that

The advent of military rule since the 1960s threw down a plethora of challenges to the organization of civil society: it graduated from being anti-statist in the 1960s to complacent (while also assertive) in the era of oil boom (1970s), a victim of repression (1980s) and a force vulnerable to cooptation (1990s). In essence, it is evident that the character of civil society was influenced, in no small measure, by state politics and societal realities (Tar 2009:125).

3.4 Conclusion

While civil society organizations in the two countries have encountered state repression, co-optation and manipulation en route to their development, there seem to be differences in their relationship with the state after transition to democratic rule. The accounts above demonstrate that after democratic transition, Ghanaian civil society has seemingly enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with the state, whereas the Nigerian counterpart continues to struggle for space. As

shown above, whereas the Ghanaian military government in the 1980s was arguably compelled by neo liberal policies to recognize civil society as a partner in development, its counterpart in Nigeria maintained an uncompromising attitude towards civil society or sought to manipulate the civil society landscape. Suffice it to say that the relationship between the state and civil society in the past, especially in the 1980s and 1990s continue to manifest in civil society-state relationship today in both countries and this is what may be underpinning their level on influence on democratic consolidation. The next chapter therefore examines how CSOs in both countries influence their democratic consolidation process.

Chapter 4 Deconstructing Civil Society's Contribution to Democratic Consolidation; a Comparative Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter dwells on the liberal and radical perspectives on civil society to deconstruct the role of CSOs in the democratic consolidation process of Ghana and Nigeria. It conveys the discussion along the issues of election monitoring; citizens' education and participation; restraining of state powers and promoting transparency and accountability; public policy influence, and civil society relationship with state institutions. While these may not be exhaustive of the influence of CSOs on democratic consolidation process, they nonetheless represent issues on which policy and academic discourses are couched. These issues are discussed below.

4.2 Election monitoring

It has been argued that civil society is very crucial for democratic consolidation because CSOs monitor elections to ensure their credibility and by so doing enhance the legitimacy of the emerging government (Gyima-Boadi 2004, Diamond 1997). Be that as it may, it is pertinent to examine civil society in the two countries to ascertain how they contribute in this direction and the factors underlying it.

In Ghana, civil society contributes to democratic consolidation through election monitoring. For example, in the 2004 general elections, the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) - a network of about 28 CSOs trained and deployed 7400 volunteers to polling stations and collation centers in the 230 constituencies across the 10 regions of Ghana (CODEO website)¹. The significance of these domestic election observers is that they observe elections prior to and post elections. Their observation task is broadened to include monitoring media coverage for incumbent and opposition parties, conducts of campaigns, party primaries,

¹ CDD hosts the secretariat of CODEO and publishes its information on its website.

monitoring of voter's registers, and reporting incidences of violence (CDD/CODEO website, Arthur 2010). Also, the IEA runs an elaborate election monitoring programme on five key issues. These include media coverage, political party campaigns, electoral processes, Election Day's activities and results declaration process all aimed at ensuring transparency and credibility of elections (IEA website). Additionally, CSOs such as CODEO and CDD have been employing double voter tally system in collaboration with the media which has enhanced the transparency and legitimacy of electoral outcomes (CDD/CODEO website). To this extent, it can be argued that the critical role of the CSOs in election monitoring partly accounts for the successful two turn-over elections that Ghana has witnessed by far.

Like Ghana, Nigeria's CSOs are playing a crucial role in election monitoring. In regards of this, a group comprising 170 CSOs joined together in 1998 to form a Transition Monitoring Group (TMG). Since its establishment, TMG has been observing elections in Nigeria. For example, in the 2003 elections, TMG deployed 1000 election observers to monitor the election in about 120,000 polling stations across Nigeria (TMG Website, Tar 2009).

However, while CSO election observers in Ghana seem to enjoy a cordial relationship with state institutions, particularly the Electoral Commission, TMG and its members are confronted with antagonistic state institutions especially the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). In its operations, TMG has had to deal with suspicion from INEC and some political parties. TMG often undergo a frustrating screening and auditing exercise before being accredited to observe elections. For example, while TMG was informed it would be allowed to participate in the 2007 elections, INEC insisted that it would only accredit CSOs at the State level. However, when TMG directed its members to go to INEC State offices for accreditation, the organizations reported that INEC's State officials were not on duty and States whose officials were on duty indicated they did not have such directive to issue TMG members with observation barges to monitor the elections (TMG 2007:1).

Furthermore, some political parties regard the TMG with suspicion of nursing political ambitions or latently campaigning for other parties. Indeed, a study by Tar (2009:185) seems to confirm this suspicion when he establishes that some members and affiliates of the TMG such as the Democratic Alternative, the Joint Committee for Democracy, and the National Conscience have metamorphosed into political parties while several of its activists such as Gani Fawehinmi, Olisa Agbakoba and Arthur Nwankwo have either openly joined political parties or have become government appointees. Also, besides competition among members for resources, internal wrangling, and leadership squabbles among TMG and other CSOs have tended to fuel associational fractionalization rather than social solidarity (LeVan 2011, Tar 2009).

Given the foregoing situation, it appears that the notion of trust, autonomy and cooperation as manifested in the liberal exposition of civil society has given way to suspicion, incorporation and conflict. Consequently, TMG and its member organizations may be monitoring elections in Nigeria but their real contribution to democratic consolidation in the country may be marginal. This seems to underscore the radical perspective's skepticism about civil society's potential for democratic consolidation although the case of Ghana has seemingly illuminated the liberal exposition.

4.3 Promoting citizens participation and education

Civil society functions to socialize citizens in democratic norms and it is only the free practice of democracy found in civil society that a popular democratic culture can be feasible (Diamond 1997:5, Hadenius and Uggla 1996:1628). This conviction underscores the importance of civil society in educating the public on civic culture and promoting popular participation. But to what extent does this reflect civil society in the two countries?

CSOs in Ghana have been conducting public education on relevant issues and equipping citizens with knowledge and capacity for active participation in national development (Darkwa et al. 2006). A critical issue on which CSOs in Ghana appear to be fairing well is voter education

and participation in governance. For example, CSOs such as CDD, IEA and the Christian Council of Ghana have established effective liaisons with state institutions such as the National Commission for Civic Education, the Electoral Commission, and political parties to design and conduct civic and voter education programmes geared towards promoting active citizenship and ensuring peaceful elections and post elections. Also, the IEA in collaboration with other stakeholders initiated a civic education programme targeting 50 constituencies, sensitizing them on issues critical to democratic development such as rights and responsibilities of the voter, political party manifestoes, ensuring free and fair elections as well as the contemporary socio-economic and political situation of Ghana (IEA website).

Furthermore, in order to inform citizens well enough to make their electoral decisions, the IEA since 2000 has instituted a presidential and vice presidential debate series in Ghana. By this programme, presidential and vice presidential candidates of political parties debate one another on their parties' manifestoes, their visions and policies and programmes on specific national issues, which are broadcast live on television and radio stations (IEA website). A similar initiative is run by the IEA and CDD at constituency levels known as Town Hall Meetings for aspiring members of parliament to debate one another before the public on their policies at the grass root levels (IEA website, Arthur 2010). Thus, through such effective stakeholder co-operation brokered by CSOs, Ghana has been thriving in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility devoid of ethnic, religious, regional and electoral conflicts (Afrimap et al. 2007).

Additionally, CSOs are also strengthening grass root groups and communities' capacity on diverse issues to enhance their participation in national development. Table one below depicts some of the CSOs working in this direction.

Table 1: CSOs in Ghana strengthening citizens and stakeholders capacity for national development

CSO	Function	Target
CDD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educating the public about their rights and responsibilities - Promoting peace and conflict management - Research and publication on democracy and governance - Strengthening capacity of state institutions and other CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General public - State institutions - Non –state actors.
SEND Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitizing the grass root for involvement in national policies - Monitoring government policies and programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grass root - Policy makers
CODEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observing and monitoring elections - Sensitizing public on electoral processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General public - Electoral Commission
CICOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitizing communities and building their capacity on land policies - Demanding transparency and accountability of duty bearers in natural resource management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rural communities - Policy makers - Duty bearers
IEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting policy analysis and education - Creating platforms for public dialogue - Sensitizing public on electoral matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General public - State institutions - CSOs
WiLDAF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training and capacity assistance to local groups and communities - Capacity strengthening for state institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women in rural communities - Actors in the justice sector - Members of parliament
IDEG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting participation of non state actors in governance, economic growth and poverty reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non state actors - Policy makers
ISODEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building capacity of grass root groups - Promoting accountable use of public goods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy makers - Duty bearers - Grass root

Source: organizations' websites

Like Ghana, CSOs abound in Nigeria working to promote citizen education and participation. The TMG for instance is also engaged in voter education while the Social and Economic Rights Action Center (SERAC) works on educating citizens on their economic and

social rights. However, unlike Ghana, most of these CSOs are riddled with ethnic, religious and regional cleavages and tend to promote parochial interest instead of broad based participation and education. Table 2 below shows some of the ethno- religious and regionally oriented CSOs and some of the CSOs targeting the society.

Table 2: Selected CSOs in Nigeria and their motivation

Orientation	CSO	Core function	Target
Ethnic, religious and regionally motivated CSOs	Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People	- Seeking self determination of the Ogoni people	Ogoni People
	Arewa Consultative Forum	- Safeguarding the interest of Northern Nigerians	All Northern Nigerians
	Ijaw Youth Council	- Seeking self government for Ijaw People	Ijaw people
	Egbe Afenifere	- Regional autonomy - Federal restructuring - Sovereign national conference	Yoruba People in Southern Nigeria
	Ohaneze Ndigbo	- Pursuing regional autonomy	Igbo people in south-east Nigeria
Pro - Democracy	CLEEN Foundation	- Promoting public safety, security and accessible justice	society
	Civil Rights Congress	- Sensitizing people to protect and defend their civil and political rights	society
	Transition Monitoring Group	- Promoting the development and practice of democratic values - Monitoring elections - Providing civic education	society
	Electoral Reform Network	- Institutional reforms - Electoral justice - Promoting civic education	Society
	Social and Economic Rights Action center	- Raising awareness and promoting economic, social and cultural rights	Society

Source: organizations' websites, Ikelegbe (2001)

Table 2 above depicts a civil society landscape characterized by both ethno-religious and regionally oriented CSOs and CSOs targeting the society. Unfortunately, the former seem to have acquired more visibility under democratic rule owing in part to their mass grass root mobilization (Ikelegbe 2001). However, these CSOs have taken up arms against one another and against the state rather than cooperating to promote civil interest and they are being supported covertly or

overtly by political elites in their pursuit of regional or ethnic autonomy and secession from the federal state (Tar 2009, Ikelegbe 2001 and Ayede 2003). The degeneration of civil society into such cleavages leaves in its wake fear and violent intergroup, interethnic, and interreligious confrontations which largely accounts for the periodic anarchy and instability being experienced in Nigeria (Ikelegbe 2001, Aiyede 2003).

Aside the ethnically and regionally driven CSOs, the more pro-democracy CSOs seem to have been unable to escape from the ingrained regional, religious and ethnic orientations. In some cases key figures in these CSOs are members of the more violent associations (Aiyede 2003). Thus, the polarization of civil society along such cleavages tend to limit the extent to which CSOs can serve as neutral actors, penetrate the society and promote education without being accused of possessing hidden agendas.

In an environment where a majority of civil society activities is characterized by undemocratic practices, parochial interest, and centrifugal tendencies, no meaningful civic education can take place let alone stimulating broader participation of citizens in national development. Rather, what seems to be emerging is that CSOs in Nigeria are becoming arenas of conflict and intolerance, underlying the quest for ethnic and regional hegemony – a fact which reinforces the critical perspective on civil society.

4.4 Restraining state powers and demanding transparency and accountability

One of the prime tenets of civil society in promoting democratic consolidation lies in the fact that CSOs are considered as having the tendency to limit state powers and demanding transparency and accountability (Diamond 1997, Gyima-Boadi 2004). So how do civil society in Ghana and Nigeria interplay with the state and what is the consequence of this on democratic consolidation?

In Ghana, one of the areas CSOs are contributing to democratic consolidation is by holding the government and state institutions in check and demanding transparency and accountability of government actions. CSOs such as CDD, SEND Ghana, IEA, CICOL and a multitude of others continue to monitor government actions by instituting platforms, issuing press statements, memos, and communiqués addressing specific issues of concern. For example, the CDD has launched a quarterly bulletin called *Democracy Watch* where it gives an overview of the state of Ghana's democracy and undemocratic tendencies of the state observed during the quarter (CDD website). Similarly, the IEA has also launched a *Legislative Alert* series which monitors and reports on legislative and policy issues undertaken by government (IEA website). Furthermore, Ghanaian CSOs have continued to be watchdogs on important national issues such as the national budget. In relation to this, ISODEC has instituted a routine public forum for CSOs to debate and track the national budget and government expenditure and has established a Center for Budget Advocacy to facilitate this watchdog role (ISODEC website). To this extent, ISODEC and several CSOs working in this regard have continued to champion the advocacy for fiscal discipline and checking corruption in Ghana (Gyima-Boadi 2004). Similarly, SEND Ghana in 2002 instituted a Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC)² Watch to monitor the government's use of HIPC funds throughout the country to ensure transparency and accountability (SEND website). Besides, as part of the constitution review process currently on-going, the CDD and IEA in collaboration with other CSOs have established a review committee and constitutional coalition respectively to make inputs and monitor the national review process (IEA website, CDD website).

In contrast to Ghana, the CSO landscape in Nigeria has developed out of a mixture of associations comprising CSOs created to protect the interest of the state and its ruling class on the one hand, and anti-state on the other with a couple of CSOs in between the two divide. It has therefore been easier for the state to co-opt the pro-state CSOs while repressing the anti-state

² HIPC is an IMF and World Bank debt relief and low-interest loan initiative which reduces or cancels external debt of poor countries.

CSOs, thus undermining their potentials to keep the government in check (Tar 2009:104). Unlike their Ghanaian counterparts, CSOs in Nigeria are visibly absent in the national budgeting process (Ikelegbe 2001, Essia and Yearoo 2009). Besides, although some politicians have continued to engage in open corrupt practices CSOs appear not to confront this issue with zest, thus, deepening suspicion of civil society as being allies of the state (Ibeanu 2006, Aiyede 2003). Also, despite the persistence of human rights abuses, civil society appears reticent or only makes feeble gestures on this issue that is nowhere comparable to their vociferous position in the transition struggle. The politics of civil society in Nigeria therefore appears to be oscillating between cooptation and insurgency rather than civil society restraining the state (Ibeanu 2006). Additionally, because most of these CSOs are characterized by the founder- owner syndrome, they tend to lack internal democratic structures themselves in order to challenge the state (Aiyede 2003).

Nonetheless, this conclusion may not be generalized for all CSOs in Nigeria since some of them are known to have joined the efforts to stop former president Obasanjo from seeking a third term in office against the constitution (Tar 2009). However, the predominance of seemingly pro-state and undemocratic CSOs as indicated earlier may be undermining the overall potential of civil society to keep the government in check - a fact that disputes the liberal exposition and reinforces the alternative conceptualization.

4.5 Public policy fields

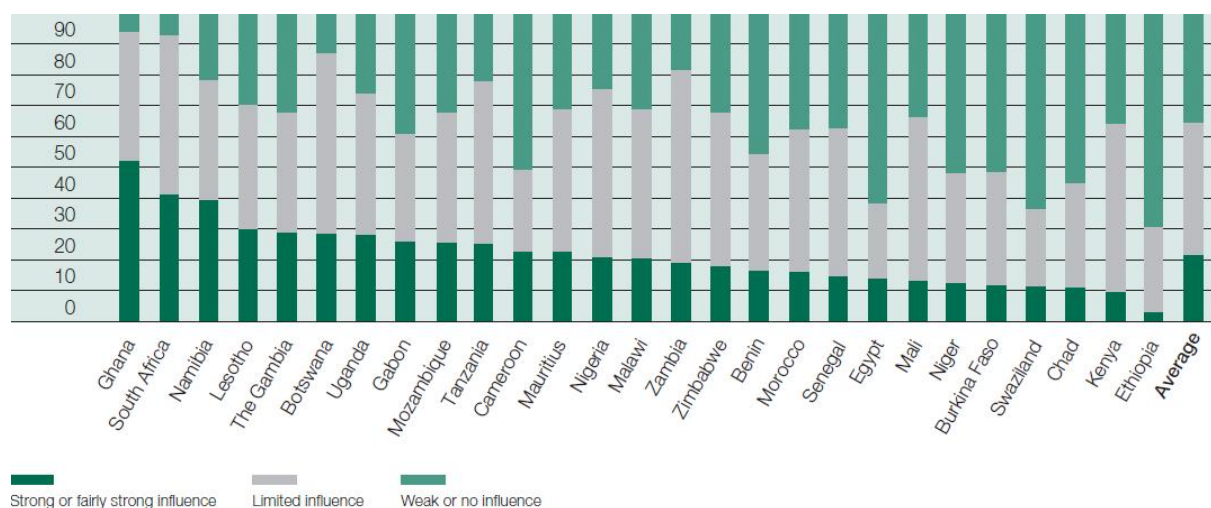
It has been argued that civil society plays a critical role in democratic consolidation by influencing public policies and providing information necessary for policy reforms. By so doing, CSOs serve as institutional route for incorporating minorities' issues into public policies (Diamond 1994, Encarnation 2003, World Movement for Democracy, website). It is therefore imperative to examine the civil society terrain in the two countries to ascertain to what extent CSOs are influencing public policy process.

Due to their real ability to mobilize, CSOs in Ghana are influencing government policy formulation processes through their collective power (Afrimap et al. 2007). For Instance, the Growth and Poverty Forum, a network of CSOs worked assiduously to influence the design, and have continued to monitor the implementation of Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (ibid). Similarly, CICOL has been engaging the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources and parliament in shaping the national land reform process. Through this, CICOL has been able to advocate for the revision of the Ghana Lands Commission's Act and a revision of the Ghana Land Administration project and continue to influence its implementation process to incorporate the land use rights and interest of the poor (GNA 2009). Other instances of CSOs influence on public policy in Ghana include leading the initiation and campaigning for the passage of the Domestic Violence Act in 2007, the Disability Act in 2006, and the Right to Information bill and NGO bill currently before parliament (Dawuni 2010). Additionally, ISODEC has consistently been critical of the government's privatization policy in the water sector. Taking a position of the pro-poor and voiceless in the society, ISODEC has engaged policy makers through various means to bring to government attention the negative consequences of privatizing water on the poor (ISODEC website). SEND Ghana is also continuing to monitor the Ghana School Feeding Programme, the National Health Insurance Scheme, and the implementation of the MDGs and using its findings to inform national dialogue on these programmes (SEND website).

In the case of Nigeria, although numerous CSOs exist it appears that the influence of civil society on public policy has been limited. For instance, CSOs have been unable to influence the national budget neither have they been able to play a leading role in debate on issues of national interest such as constitutional review, Sharia law, the prevalence of ethno-religious tensions, and human rights abuses (Aiyede 2003, Essia and Yearoo 2009). While some CSOs such as SERAC work to influence policies, they lament over the absence of an enabling environment. The frustrating procedures TMG goes through to be accredited for election observation seemingly illuminates this. For example, the Electoral Reform Network indicated in response to question

2.3 of the questionnaire that *‘the environment is restrictive in the sense that government’s engagement of civil society is mere formality rather than open and genuine drive to seek inputs of civil groups into their policies’*. This kind of environment has a profound implication on the extent to which CSOs can influence public policies. The seemingly high influence of CSOs in Ghana on public policy and the correspondingly low influence of its Nigerian counterparts have reinforced the findings of ECA (2005) Africa governance report on the influence of CSOs on public policy in Africa as indicated in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Experts opinion on the influence of CSOs on government policies and programmes



Source: ECA (2005:133)

4.6 Strengthening State Institutions

CSOs contribute to democratic consolidation by strengthening democratic foundations and institutions (Encarnation 2003). A discussion in this light is therefore warranted to ascertain how this perspective pertains in Ghana and Nigeria.

CSOs are contributing to Ghana’s democratic consolidation through building the capacity of state institutions to meet their obligations. They have been able to design training programs and seminars targeting key state institutions and providing them with technical capacity and information (Dawuni 2010). The CDD, IEA, IDEG and WiLDAF have continued to play crucial

roles in this regards. For instance, WiLDAF has consistently provided the judicial service of Ghana with capacity development on gender issues to improve its consciousness on gender (ibid, WiLDAF website). Also, the IEA has targeted leaders of parliament and members of select committees for capacity building aimed at helping them assess and debate proposed constitutional amendments (IEA website). Similarly, CDD has since 2002 instituted a programme for strengthening the technical capacity of five parliamentary select committees namely, the Judiciary, Constitutional and legal Affairs, Subsidiary Legislation, Government Assurance, and Local Government and Decentralization Committees to enact legislations and procedures in line with Ghana's 1992 constitution (ECA 2005:216). Also, CSOs have played a crucial role in strengthening Ghana's Electoral Commission and working together with the commission to initiate electoral innovations over the years, which has helped to deepen the credibility and trust in the commission. For example, CDD continues to conduct workshops with the electoral commission to review electoral processes and make inputs for improvement in subsequent elections (CDD website). Furthermore, CSOs such as ABANTU for Development have conducted a series of trainings on governance issues for female members of parliament to enhance their participation in the legislature (Dawuni 2010). Additionally, CSOs have secured channels to attend legislative deliberations and parliamentary vetting sessions of ministers' designate. Through such channels, CSOs have provided important ideas on drafting legislations while sharing information on individuals suspected of possessing characters unbecoming for public office (ibid).

Similar to Ghana, CSOs exist in Nigeria who attempt to strengthen state institutions to function effectively. CSOs such as CLEEN Foundation have over the years worked to improve the police capacity to discharge their official duties including policing elections (CLEEN 2010). Also, the TMG is making efforts at working with INEC to ensure credible elections. However, state institutions such as INEC continue to view CSOs like TMG with suspicion of being funded by donors to antagonize and undermine their credibility (Vanguard 2010). Thus, whereas

Government-CSO relations in Ghana seem to be characterized by cordiality, cooperation and reciprocity, there seem to be suspicion and antagonism characterizing CSO-state relations in Nigeria (TMG 2007).

It thus appears that the prodemocracy CSOs in Nigeria are yet to work out an appropriate formula for their engagement with state institutions (Aiyede 2003, Ibeanu 2006). Besides, the lack of internal democracy, coupled with the ethnic and political affiliations of most CSOs, and competition for donor funds, have seemingly bred a relationship of suspicion, with state institutions dubious about the real agenda of most CSOs let alone cooperate with them for capacity strengthening initiatives- a fact which buttresses the radical perspective.

4.7 Conclusion

Despite the presence of active civil society in Ghana and Nigeria, their contribution and influence on democratic consolidation seem to differ significantly, with the result being Nigeria lagging behind Ghana. Factors accounting for this range from civil society's contradictory relationship with the state, to ethno-religious and regional cleavages, and undemocratic tendencies of most CSOs in Nigeria as opposed to the conducive civil society-state relationship in Ghana which is seemingly characterized by cooperation and reciprocity. The next chapter concludes the thesis.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

This chapter wraps up the discussions geared towards answering the research question how do civil society in Ghana and Nigeria contribute to democratic consolidation. It claims that even though there is active presence of civil society in Ghana and Nigeria, this has not translated into an even influence on democratic consolidation in the two countries.

The paper sets out to deconstruct the role of civil society in democratic consolidation in the two countries. To do so the paper engaged two theoretical perspectives on civil society and democratic development: the liberal perspectives and the radical perspectives. Whereas the liberal perspective, drawing mainly from Tocquevillean and Putnam's theories generally espouse civil society as the bedrock for democratic consolidation, the radical perspective, building on Gramsci, advises caution and points to the imperative of understanding the civil society relations with the state especially its dominant classes before making a generalization based on assumed anti- state, autonomous and democratic civil society.

Invoking these two theoretical perspectives, the paper has established that consistent with the liberal views, CSOs in Ghana are contributing to the country's democratic consolidation process in the field of public policy, holding the state accountable, promoting citizen education and participation, as well as election monitoring and strengthening of critical state institutions. While making this claim, the paper has noted the presence of an enabling environment, mutual co-operation between civil society and state institutions, financial autonomy of CSOs fostered by donor funding, and the active influence of donor organizations by insisting on civil society participation in policies, as factors facilitating the seemingly positive influence of civil society on democratic consolidation in Ghana.

In the case of Nigeria, the liberal perspective on civil society is seemingly defective in explaining the paradox of an active civil society and yet the sluggish democratic consolidation process of the country. It is to cover for this void that the study employed the radical perspectives on civil society to aid in the critical analysis. Consequently, the study has established

that the relative inability of civil society to accelerate democratic consolidation in Nigeria can be attributed to their contradictory relationship with the state, swinging between cooptation and insurgence (Ibeanu 2006), the presence of ethno-religious and regional cleavages and the inherent undemocratic tendencies being portrayed especially by the most vocal CSOs in the country.

The findings of this study have academic and policy implications and point to the imperative for further research on specific issues. On the academic front, the study while illuminating on the conventional view that burgeoning civil society constitutes the foundation upon which democratic consolidation is best solidified has also challenged this view as evidenced in the cases of Ghana and Nigeria respectively. This calls for the need for further research to appropriately theorize civil society in a manner that transcends the assumption of anti-state or pro-state to include contextual and power relations. Clearly, civil society may have a crucial role in deepening democracy and good governance, but this role may not be realized if theories are built on western construction of civil society without localizing the context on which civil society interacts with other actors such as the state and society in general.

Following from the above, the findings of the study also somewhat caution the rush of neoliberal institutions to circumvent the state (Monga 2009) in preference for civil society. As the case of Ghana demonstrates, this may work where the state provides an enabling environment and civil society itself is inherently democratic. The case of Nigeria largely demonstrates a relationship of co-optation, suspicion and antagonism, as well as inherent undemocratic tendencies of civil society. Therefore, civil society may play its role of aiding democratic consolidation if measures are taken to deepen the internal democracies of CSOs, build a relationship of trust between CSOs and the state and grass roots, as well as make CSOs financially autonomous from both the state and donors. How this can be achieved requires further research particularly in the case of Nigeria, where entrenched ethnic and regional cleavages seem to pervade every aspect of societal life.

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Appendix I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. General Background

1.1 Name and location of organization.....

1.2 Position of responding officer

1. Executive director

☐

2. Program coordinator

☐

3. Project manager/officer

☐

4. Other,

☐

Please specify:.....

1.3 Please state you organization's vision/mission:

.....
.....

1.4 Please which of the following best describes your sector of work/activity focus?
Please tick as many as applicable

1. Governance and democracy

☐

2. Poverty reduction

☐

3. Media relations

☐

4. Trade unions

☐

5. Conflict resolution

☐

6. Other, please specify

☐

2. Relationship with government/state institutions

2.1 Please how will you describe your relationship with government/state institutions?

1. Cordial

☐

2. Somewhat cordial

☐

3. Hostile

☐

2.2 How will you assess the regulatory environment within which you operate?

1. Enabling

☐

2. Restrictive

☐

2.3 Please explain your choice for 2.2 above:

.....

2.4 Do government institutions consult your organization in policy decisions?

1. Yes

☐

2. No

☐

2.5 If yes to 2.4, how often?

1. Once a year

☐

2. Twice a year

☐

3. Thrice or more a year

☐

2.6 What policy fields are you consulted by government?

1. Governance

☐
☐

- 2. Economic affairs ☐
- 3. Social development ☐
- 4. Other, please specify ☐

2.7 Do you receive any support from government?

- 1. Yes ☐
- 2. No ☐

2.8 If yes to 2.7, please indicate what form of support

- 1. Financial ☐
- 2. Technical ☐
- 3. Other, please specify ☐

3 Target

3.1. Please indicate who is the primary target of your work

- 1. Government/state institutions ☐
- 2. Political parties ☐
- 3. General public ☐
- 4. Business sector ☐
- 5. Minorities ☐
- 6. Other please specify ☐

3.2 Please how will you describe your relationship with your target?

1. Co-operative
2. Uncooperative
3. Other, please specify.....

☐
☐
☐

3.3 Please tick below your geographical scope of work

1. International
2. National
3. Regional
4. Other,
Please specify

☐
☐
☐
☐

3.4 Please which of the following areas do your work concentrates?

1. Urban
2. Rural
3. Both

☐
☐
☐

4 Contribution to Democracy

4.1 Please indicate below your most significant contribution to democratic development in your country

1. Election monitoring
2. Advocacy for transparency and accountability
3. Human rights campaigns
4. Capacity building for state institutions
5. Leadership skills for citizens
6. Public education
7. Conflict resolution
8. Other, please specify

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

4.2 Please indicate which of the following constitute challenges to your democracy promotion effort?

1. Unsupportive policy environment
2. Inadequate funds

☐
☐

3. Insufficient technical capacity

☐

4. Other please indicate

☐

5 Internal Issues

5.1 How does one become a member in your organization?

1. Voluntary participation
2. Formal recruitment
3. Other, please specify

☐☐☐

5.2 How is leadership in your organization determined?

1. Election
2. Appointment
3. Other, please specify

☐☐☐

5.3 How often is leadership change in your organization?

1. Regular intervals
2. Rarely
3. Never

☐☐☐

Please, kindly attach reports that you think can be helpful to this research in your return email. If you have other comments please feel free to add them.

Thank you very much for your time and God bless you!