

INTERROGATING GODFATHERS – ELECTORAL CORRUPTION NEXUS AS A CHALLENGE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN FOURTH REPUBLIC NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

In all modern democracies, election is not only an instrument for selecting political officeholders but also a vital platform for ensuring government legitimacy, accountability and mobilization of the citizenry for political participation. However, elections in Nigeria since independence have been **bedeviled** by electoral corruption characterized by such vices as election rigging, snatching of electoral materials, result falsification, political intimidation and assassination before, during and after elections. This situation has often brought unpopular governments to power, with resultant legitimacy crisis, breakdown of law and order and general threat to security. The paper, in explaining the adverse effects of electoral fraud and violence on sustainable development and national security, identified political godfathers as the main orchestrators, masterminds and beneficiaries of electoral corruption in Nigeria. Through the application of the descriptive method of data analysis, the study investigates how godfathers, in a bid to achieve their inordinate political and pecuniary interests, flout all known electoral laws, subvert democratic institutions and governance and as a result threaten national development and security. The paper therefore concludes that, to effectively address the undemocratic practice of electoral corruption, which is a threat to sustainable development and national security, there is need for the strengthening of the legal framework and democratic structures in Nigeria.

Keywords: Godfathers, Electoral Corruption, Electoral Violence, National Security, Sustainable Development, Fourth Republic.

INTRODUCTION

Electoral corruption, characterized by fraud and violence, has been a weighty albatross in Nigeria's repeated attempts at sustainable democratic governance and a strong threat to the country's national security (Inokoba & Kumokou, 2011). According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the electoral process in the country faces many administrative, attitudinal and political problems that have consistently **challenged** credible, open and democratic elections in Nigeria (Nwanuforo, 2009).

The present republic in Nigeria has also had its fair share of fraudulent and failed elections. Although there has been smooth transition from one government to another since the inception of the Fourth Republic, all administrations were birthed through fraudulent and violent electoral engineering. Even the 2015 General Elections that were adjudged as relatively credible were not devoid of those ugly vices that tainted the credibility and integrity of previous elections, such as election rigging, snatching of electoral materials, result falsification, political intimidation and violence prior to, during and after elections (Inokoba & Kumokor, 2011). This situation has often brought unpopular governments to power, with resultant legitimacy and governance crisis, political violence and instability and general threat to security.

This paper has two objectives: The first is to establish the linkage of electoral corruption (or electoral fraud) to the issues of sustainable development (SD) and national security. The paper argues that electoral fraud and violence are serious threats to national development and security. Secondly, in an attempt to explain the adverse effects of electoral corruption on national security, the paper identifies political godfathers as the main orchestrators, masterminds and beneficiaries of electoral corruption in Nigeria. Through the descriptive method of analysis of data derived from secondary sources, the paper investigates how the godfathers, in a bid to achieve their inordinate, political and pecuniary interests, flout all known electoral laws, subvert democratic institutions and processes as well as threaten the realization of the goals of SD and national security. To achieve the slated purpose, the paper is divided into the following sections: introduction, followed by conceptual review. The third section presents evidence of godfatherism in Fourth-Republic Nigeria, while the fourth part examines the impact of godfatherism on elections, SD and national security. The paper ends with closing remarks.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

This section will attempt a brief conceptual review of the central variables of the research; these are godfathers, electoral corruption, national security and sustainable development. Scholarship on these core concepts of the study will be reviewed to unveil their conceptual meanings and their relationship with one another.

The independent variable in this paper is the concept of godfathers. Godfathers can be found in different spheres of society but our focus here is on godfathers in the political realm. Generally, a political godfather is someone who has built

unimaginable respect and followers (voters) in the community and possesses a well-organized political platform that could secure victory for candidates of his choice (Ugwu, Izeke & Obasi, 2012). A political godfather is also similarly seen as one having the abilities and capabilities to manipulate the electoral process and swing victory to his chosen client (or godson). In other words, according to Jibrin Ibrahim, "this is the category of wealthy, influential and powerful individuals (Nigerians) who have the power to personally determine who gets nominated and who wins (an election) in a state" (cited in Albert, 2005).

From the above conceptualizations of the idea of political godfathers, we can conveniently refer to them as political merchants, kingmakers, bosses, mentors and principals (Adeoye, 2009), that have considerable capacity to unilaterally determine who gets the party ticket to run for an election and who eventually runs in the electoral contest (Inokoba & Nwobueze, 2015). In an attempt to achieve their desired electoral outcomes, Nigerian godfathers have ingloriously shown that they can go to any length, including flouting all the known laws that govern electoral competition. These individuals are principally governed by the Machiavellian political principle of "the end justifies the means". It is in the light of this that Chimaoroke Nnamani, a former Governor of Enugu State conceived a godfather as "simply a self-seeking individual whose goal is to use the government for his own purpose" (cited in Wenibowei, 2011). These undemocratic individuals perceive the government as an institution that can be hijacked to serve personal political interest as well as to enrich oneself.

That godfathers are not altruistic individuals and that they are only driven by self-interest of controlling and using the structures and processes of governance for their own purpose are seen in the description of godfather given by Chimaroke Nnamani, a former Governor of Enugu State. Out of the ugly experience he had with his godfather, Senator Jim Nwobodo, he defined a godfather as follows:

... an impervious guardian figure who provided the lifeline and direction to the godson (godsons), perceived to live a life of total submission, subservience and protection of the oracular personality located in the large, material frame of opulence, affluence and decisiveness, that is, if not ruthless, strictly, the godfather is simply a self-seeking individual out there to use the government for his own purposes (cited in Albert, 2005).

It is therefore less surprising that today's political godfather is regarded as a "proprietor", a "political entrepreneur", and a "capitalist" businessman who invests his resources with the intent of making profit. Nnamani (2004) puts this succinctly:

The godfather is a sole proprietorship, is a merchant who wants to acquire the state as his commercial fiefdom. The godfather has no hint of interest beyond profiteering or beyond personal material gains which the process must afford him (Wenibowei, 2011).

Invariably, politics of godfathers involves the "anointing" of a godson who is expected to win an election by using (or relying on) the influence, wealth, political structure and connections of the godfather. The godson reciprocates by loyalty, regular consultations and diversion of public resources to the private coffers of the godfather. It is these unlawful and undemocratic activities and conduct of political godfathers in the polity that is generally referred to as godfatherism; it is synonymous with neo-patrimonialism or patron-client politics (Sklar, Onwudiwe & Kew, 2006).

From all indications, we can conveniently assert that the relationship between the godfather and godson in Nigerian politics is strictly or mainly transactional and instrumental in nature. The godfathers' main goal is to use their clients (the godsons) to attain selfish goals (that is, to control the state's machinery and resources), while the godsons also need the assistance of the godfathers to achieve their political ambition. The relationship between the two thus has little or nothing to do with the interest of the larger society which the two of them claim to represent (Albert, 2005). It is also a symbiotic relationship because it is mutually beneficial to both parties.

Godfatherism is also a power-based relationship which is often skewed in favour of the godfather, whose superordinate influence and affluence enable him to lord it over his godson. In party politics, godfathers determine who gets nominated to contest elections and who wins in a state. The power and influence of godfathers go beyond the nomination of candidates for elections and determining who wins. **Observations** have clearly shown that the role of the godfathers tend to become more apparent and even more pervasive after the elections. As **Chukwuma** (2008), cited in Wenibowei (2011), remarks, the godfathers have the power to dictate, "who gets what, when and how in the distribution of scarce resources after the elections have been contested and won."

The relationship between the godfather and his godson is mainly contractual in nature; sometimes this contract is written and even sealed spiritually with an oath (sometimes taken at a shrine) (Oke, 2010). Another feature of patron-client politics is that it is a very complicated, conflictual and transient relationship. Like bandits in the criminal world, the godfather and the godson are united by their desire to illegally capture political power but soon part way when it comes to sharing the loot (that is, political positions and state resources) (Inokoba & Nwobueze, 2015).

It is therefore less surprising that godfatherism is viewed by most political commentators and scholars as a major albatross to smooth and fruitful democratization of Nigeria's Fourth Republic (Albeit, 2005; Togbolo, 2008; ; Oke, 2010; Inokoba & Nwobueze, 2015). It is the major instigator and incubator of electoral fraud and violence (which we refer to as electoral corruption). According to UNDP (1997), cited in Togbolo (2008), godfatherism is one of the most important factors responsible for electoral corruption in Nigeria, which leads to misgovernance, subversion of democracy, political corruption, political dictatorship and governmental instability, among others.

Godfatherism cannot be separated from electoral fraud and violence. Political godfathers (patrons) and their godsons (clients) are the principal perpetrators as well as beneficiaries of warped and corrupt electoral processes tainted with

violence (Inokoba & Nwobueze, 2015). This unethical practice of desperate godfathers and godsons hinder political stability, compromises security and peace, as it torpedoes the consolidation of democracy in **Nigeria**. It is a situation whereby the political strongmen hijack the fundamental rights of the citizens to decide whom their political leaders should be as well as policy direction of such governments.

Electoral corruption (or fraud) is an unethical and undemocratic practice by which the rules and regulations governing the conduct of elections are manipulated and subverted by individuals (especially the powerful and influential) to favour specific interests or persons. Olarinmoye (2008) describes the political act as a direct subversion of the electoral process by individuals who are greedy for personal enrichment that electoral success guarantees in Nigeria. In a political system where electoral corruption thrives, elections are habitually subverted and compromised by illegal use of money, misuse of the coercive instrument of the state, physical force and government patronage, deployed through the intermediary of "perverse brokers" (that is political godfathers).

Electoral corruption encompasses of all forms of electoral malpractices, irregularities and rigging, which have underlying criminal intents and purposes. It involves criminal and illegal electoral acts, which unduly sway electoral victory to the desired but unpopulour direction (Inokoba & Kumokou, 2011). Electoral misdemeanour and fraud could take the form of stuffing of ballot boxes, manipulation of voters register, buying of voters' cards by politicians, special treatment of voters and election officials, underage voting, disappearance or destruction of ballot boxes, distortion of results, intimidation of political opponents by law enforcement agents and thugs as well as election-related violence, killing and arson (Inokoba & Kumokor, 2011).

The most dangerous manifestation of godfather-orchestrated electoral corruption is the violence that accompanies all elections and which, even after the elections, is continuously dispensed on perceived political opponents, citizens and recalcitrant and uncooperative godsons. The fact that elections in Nigeria are all marred in violence, blood and arson is not surprising to any critical observer. The state, in Africa, is the central instrument for economic and political empowerment of the dominant class. It is the central apparatus through which economic resources (values) are distributed and redistributed (Ake, 1995; Wenibowei, 2011). This goes to explain the intense and lawless struggle to control the apparatus of the state by members of the political class. In the bid to capture and have control of this vital structure in **the** society, godfathers often adopt varying unethical and illegal strategies to outsmart their rivals. This is why electoral corruption has become a recurring decimal in the democratization process of Fourth-Republic Nigeria.

According to Wenibowei (2011), the struggle between and among members of the political class for the purpose of controlling state power accounts for some of the worst instances of pre-election, election and post-election violence experienced in the Nigerian Fourth Republic. Godfather-instigated violence characterizes party primaries, congresses, conventions, rallies and campaigns. The Fourth Republic has also witnessed a lot of inter- and intra-party clashes, assassinations and kidnapping of children, women and high-profile politicians. As cases in the Fourth Republic have shown, the spate of uncontrollable political violence does not cease with the end of elections; it continuous all through

the life of the godfather-sponsored and godfather- installed regime. This is especially so as a result of the incongruence of interest between the godfathers and godsons and the attendant conflictual relationship between the two (Weinbowei, 2011; Animasawun, 2013). This conflictual and violent relation between the godfathers and their godsons is potent threat to national security for many reasons. First, it compromises the ability of the government to carry out their primary responsibility to the citizenry, which is the protection of lives and property. Second, the unabating political violence between godfathers and godsons compromises the rule of law and makes it impossible for the **government** to deliver good governance(including sustainable development) to the people. And thirdly, the **proliferation and misuse of small arms and weapons** among political thugs of the parties is a major challenge to the state's monopoly of the instrument of coercion as recognized by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. **The excessive accumulation and misuse of small arms has not only hindered the consolidation of the rule of law, but undoubtedly a significant obstacle to the post-civil war transformation of Nigeria, and hence to its sustainable development.**

Providing national security for the lives and property within a sovereign state is a vital social contract between the masses, the government, and the state. According to Ani (2010), the state is legally bound to offer protection against possible loss, harm or total destruction of human and material resources that promotes human capital development in its sovereign environment.

Traditionally (or conventionally), national security is perceived as all the activities of the state aimed to protect herself from **both internal and** external threat. At the national level, according to Ani (2010), the state needs to manipulate every human and material resource within it towards the adequate protection of its power posture from internal attacks on the state and its citizens which can undermine human capital development and the perception of government as well as the loss of **government** legitimacy. Inherently, this view of security places so much emphasis on the military threats to security and concentrates on the various forms of military response in the management of such threats (Imobighe, 1999).

Scholars have argued that this militaristic perception of national security is grossly inadequate and incompatible with emerging realities, because it is not an all-inclusive paradigm for political analysis. In agreement with this position, the paper in its analysis, will go beyond purely military considerations to incorporate a lot of non-military elements that could give the concept a more holistic and comprehensive view.

Alternative Security Theory propounded by Booth (1991) serves as the theoretical anchor for this study. This theoretical platform is a multidimensional way of perceiving the numerous challenges and threats to national security within a state. Under the alternative security theoretical model, national security is seen as a collection of plans, actions and institutions built by the state in order to protect it from both internal and external attacks. This also entails the act of promoting the core values of the state, which include the protection of lives and property of the citizenry and creating a favourable environment for the attainment of good life. Thus, in this study, the concept of national security is used in a fairly broad sense to reflect the freedom from or elimination of threat to the physical existence of the Nigerian

state, and also its ability for self-protection and development, as well as the enhancement of the general well-being of all its citizens (Imobighe, 1999). In this sense, apart from protection from internal and external aggression and survival of the Nigerian state, national security is seen to have positive impact on the living condition of Nigerians and to provide them with the right and sustainable **peaceful** atmosphere for their **protection and empowerment**.

We can, therefore, conclude that national security embodies the sovereignty of the state, the inviolability of its territorial boundaries and the rights to individual and collective self-defence against internal and external threats. According to Dike (1966), cited in Ladan-Baki (2014), the state is only secured when the aggregate of people organised under it have a consciousness of belonging to a common sovereign political community; enjoy equal political freedom, human rights, and economic opportunities; and when the state itself is able to ensure independence in its development and foreign policies. Igbodalo (2012) avers that the promotion of human security has become the central focus of national security and the new development paradigm because arms and ammunition building does not bring about peace, security and political stability. Addressing the socio-economic scourges of poverty, hunger, unemployment and disease through good (responsible and responsive) governance and sustainable development programmes holds the key to an enduring national security. Thus, a country that invests heavily on human security may not have to spend much of its resources in fighting crimes like kidnapping, human trafficking, armed robbery, youth restiveness, and political violence.

From the foregoing broader conceptualization of national security, it is obvious that no country can meaningfully ensure the security of its citizens if it fails to calibrate the irreducible indices of sustainable development into its national security calculations. This is in line with the position of McNamara (1968) and Mijah (2006); both viewed security as being equal to development. Development here suggest quantitative and qualitative improvements in people's standard of living over time to such an extent that the levels of inequality, unemployment and poverty are tremendously reduced (also see Coker & George-Genyi, 2014). In similar vein, Todaro and Smith (2009) defines development as the process of improving the quality of all human lives, which focuses on three important elements: raising people's level of living, creating conditions conducive to the growth of people's self-esteem, and increasing people's freedom and rights. Apparently, there can hardly be "security amidst starvation, peace-building without poverty alleviation and no true freedom built on the foundation of injustice" (Fayeye, 2012).

The further attempts to make development and security more human focused, has led to a paradigm shift in defining development and the way it is approached. The paradigm shift resulted in the adoption of Sustainable Development (SD), a concept which was highlighted in the Brunt Land Report of 1987 and at the Stockholm Conference of 1972 (UNECA, 2012). The shift was borne out of the global link between environment problems and socio-economic concerns, and also as a result of the fact that earlier conceptions and approaches to development appear to focus largely on economic and physical wealth despite the multi-dimensional and complex nature of development (Bellu, 2011).

The Brunt Land Report defines SD as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of

the future generations to meet their own needs". In similar vein, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2001) also defined SD as the development path along which the maximization of human well-being for today's generation does not lead to the decline in the well-being of the future generation. These definitions suggest the needs of the future and current generations in tandem, and it is rooted in the well-being and welfare of the people (see Ahenkan & Osei-Kojo, 2014).

Beyond the institutional definitions of SD, there are varieties of competing definitions and conceptualizations of the term among scholars of diverse perspectives, experiences, and circumstances. However, in spite of these divergent views of SD and as well as specific policies and practical options for achieving it, there is more agreement on some of its core principles such as: meeting basic human necessities fairly and efficiently; preserving options for both present and future generations to meet their needs; promoting community well-being through broad participation and active citizenship; maintaining the diversity and productivity of nature; managing and utilizing resources with prudence and precaution; linking various aspects of sustainability (i.e. economic, ecology, political and social); ensuring accountability for all ; avoiding or at least minimizing waste having a long term view; maintaining a holistic perspective; fostering cooperation and shared responsibility (Ukaga, 2010).

Apparently, it is obvious that SD goes beyond mere 'natural environment'. SD encompasses the economic, social, cultural and political environments. What this means is that for the society to survive there should be balances in the use of the resources of the different environments. For instance, economic resources are scarce, hence must be judiciously expended in governance now, so that there would be a continuous flow for the future. This argument could be extended to the aspect of political leadership in the sense that effort should be made at mentoring future leaders, as well as inculcating needful leadership values in them. Definitely the undemocratic phenomenon of godfatherism and their role in electoral corruption does not in any way help in enthroning sustainable and democratic political leadership in Nigeria. This is where the four central variables connect: The paper's main assumption is that godfathers are the major masterminds and beneficiaries of electoral corruption. This consequently leads to **faulty** and unethical leadership and governance which compromises **SD as well** as national security in Nigeria.

AN OVERVIEW OF GODFATHERISM IN FOURTH-REPUBLIC NIGERIA

The purpose of this section is to present a brief overview of the undemocratic phenomenon of godfatherism in the Fourth Republic with focus on some states known for prominent and spectacular cases of patron-client politics. Godfatherism is not peculiar to Nigeria's Fourth Republic. It has only taken a new character under the Fourth Republic, mainly as a result of the encouragement and support given to this phenomenon by President Olusegun Obasanjo. This phenomenon got so prominent and widespread under the watch of Obasanjo's presidency. Godfathers assumed different names: gangsters, mafia and political criminals and outlaws. Prominent among the many cases of this pervasive political phenomenon include: Ali Modu **Sheriff vs Kachallah** (Borno State); Olusola Saraki vs Lawal (Kwara State); Emeka Offor vs Mbadinuju (Anambra State); Chris Uba vs Ngige (Anambra State);

Abubakar Rimi vs Kwankwaso (Kano State); Lamidi Adedibu vs Ladoja (Oyo State); Jim Nwobodo vs Nnamani (Enugu); and the consortium of Tony Anenih and Samuel Ogbemudia vs Igbinedion (Edo State)(Adeoye, 2009; Edigin, 2010; Ugwu, Uzueke & Obasi, 2012). However, for our purpose, we will only focus on prominent cases of godfatherism in Barno, Kwara, Oyo and Anambra States.

Borno State

One of the first cases of godfather-protégé conflicts **that came** to the public domain in the present political dispensation was the tussle between Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, the godfather, and his godson, Governor Mala Kachallah of Borno State. Ali Modu Sheriff popularly, known as "SAS", was one of the few political godfathers who dared to contest for elective office. While he was gunning for one of the senatorial seats in Borno State, he also facilitated the selection and election of the governor (Alhaji Kachallah) and several state lawmakers. And it is well-documented that Alhaji Kachallah would not have become Borno State Governor without the financial resources, political influence and structures of Ali Modu Sheriff (Albert, 2005; Edigin, 2010). According to Albert (2005), Kachallah chose SAS as his godfather because he was wealthy and influential in the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), both at local and national levels. Sheriff was a major financier of ANPP and his opinion mattered a lot to the party on all issues. As such, Sheriff had all Kachallah needed, and the two of them entered into a patron-client relationship. However, while Kachallah achieved his political ambition of becoming the Governor of Borno State, SAS hardly got what he wanted, that is, "profit" from his investment.

The conflict between Governor Kachallah and Sheriff started immediately the results of the 1999 gubernatorial election were announced (Albert, 2005). Their first major disagreement and quarrel was over the list of commissioners and political advisers; Governor Kachallah rejected a situation where SAS would have to dictate everything. As a result, the political atmosphere of Borno State became so heated that the last military administrator of Borno State noted before handing over to Kachallah that there were already plans to impeach him. As predicted, Kachallah's problems became more complex immediately he took over power (Albert, 2005).

To deal with a disloyal and renegade political son, Sheriff adopted a multi-pronged strategy which included: filling Kachallah's cabinet with his die hard supporters known in Borno State as "Barna Mafia"; employing members of the State House of Assembly to impeach Governor Kachallah and using the same legislature to discredit Kachallah so much that it would be impossible for him to be given a second term in office in 2003; **and instigating** the ANPP leadership in the state against Kachallah. And to make the state ungovernable, Sheriff made use of violent thugs, known as the "ECOMOG", to **foment** trouble. As a response, supporters of Kachallah also formed their own "ECOMOG"; thus turning Borno into a violent and lawless state. Several lives were lost and property damaged in the process (Albert, 2005).

The game plan of Sheriff was to make Governor Kachallah irrelevant in the scheme of things in the state and to ensure that he failed to pick the party's gubernatorial ticket in 2003. Eventually, Kachallah, out of frustration, decamped to Alliance for Democracy (AD) in a bid to actualize his dream for a second tenure as Governor of Borno State. He contested the 2003 gubernatorial election against Sheriff who dropped his senatorial ticket; Sheriff won the election. Such were the conspiracies and bad politics that trailed Sheriff's path to becoming Governor of **Borno State**.

Kwara State

Patron-client politics in Kwara State is worth investigating because it is home to one of the nationally acclaimed figures or what others refer to as "institution" of godfatherism in Nigeria, the person of late Dr. Olusola Saraki. Dr. Saraki's dominance of Kwara State politics goes as far back as to the Second Republic. So it was only expected that, with the commencement of the Fourth Republic, he will continue to play this role.

Late Dr. Olusola Saraki was a politician who was not only revered but also seen as a demi-god by many aspiring politicians in Kwara State and beyond; this was as a result of the enormous financial muscle he commanded as well as the spread and depth of his political influence and structure. As such, it was not surprising that, with the inception of the present political dispensation, Alhaji Mohammed Lawal had to depend on Saraki's financial and political resources to achieve his political dream of becoming the Governor of Kwara State. Saraki also bankrolled the political ambitions of several politicians both within and outside the state (Edigin, 2010).

As expected, the quarrel and conflicts between Saraki and his godson started immediately Lawal assumed office as the Governor of Kwara State. It was reported that Lawal refused to reciprocate the good gesture of Dr. Saraki and also acted in ways contrary to what was expected as a loyal "godson" (Edigin, 2010: 181). That Saraki was in firm control of Kwara politics is reflected in this declaration: "I (Saraki) am keeping the second term with me, Lawal's conduct will determine whether he will get it or not" (cited in Edigin, 2010:181). And because Governor Lawal failed to meet up the expectations of the godfather of Kwara politics, Saraki could no longer trust him with the state stewardship and therefore replaced him with his biological son, **Dr. Bukola Olusola Saraki Jr.**, who eventually became the governor in 2003. Characteristically, the transition from Lawal to Saraki Jr. was marred by so much conspiracies and an orgy of violence, destruction and death, as the godfather and godson fought fiercely for the soul and control of the state. Eventually, the result of the election which enthroned Saraki Jr. as Governor of Kwara State confirmed Saraki's rating as the kingmaker of Kwara State.

Oyo State

The Fourth Republic politics in Oyo State cannot in any meaningful way be discussed without giving a good account of the role played by the godfather of Oyo politics (or Amala Politics), late Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu. Adedibu's influence and control of politics in Oyo State spanned beyond the present political dispensation; he had been involved

as far back as the First Republic. That Chief Adedibu was the kingmaker of Oyo politics is illustrated by the fact that he was able to install different governors in Oyo State; he initially sponsored and supported Alhaji Lam Adesina in 1999. And when Adesina broke ranks with his benefactor by refusing to honour his financial pledge to Adedibu, he was denied a second term of office in 2003, in which governorship power was handed over to Rashidi Ladoja by Adedibu (Ugwu, Izueke, & Obasi, 2012).

After installing Ladoja as Governor of Oyo State in 2003, it did not take long before trouble between Ladoja and Adedibu emerged. Adedibu claimed that he invested financial resources in "installing" the governor, with an agreement that the governor will be a lame chief executive, taking orders from him and **subjecting public** resources to his whims. It was also reported that Adedibu submitted 11 names for appointment as commissioners, out of the thirteen (13) positions for the state (Uwgu, Izueke & Obasi, 2012) Ladoja refused to play according to his godfather's prescribed rules of the game. This culminated in the mayhem witnessed in Ibadan after the 2003 elections till January 2006. In this widely publicized crisis, many lives were lost and property destroyed.

The animosity between Adedibu and Ladoja, apart from polarizing the Oyo State House of Assembly, was also put into display during the electioneering campaign for the March 2004 local government election. Ladoja was eventually extra-judicially impeached in 2006 by the state legislature that Adedibu allegedly coaxed to boot the governor out of office (Edigin, 2010). This paved the way for the enthronement of his deputy, Alao-Akala, another willing godson, who was eager to serve the godfather better; and Akala did serve the godfather faithfully, until the death of Adedibu on June 11, 2008 (Ugwu, Izueke & Obasi, 2012).

The status quo remained until December 7, 2006, when the Supreme Court ruled that Ladoja's removal was illegal and he was reinstated after eleven months out of office. His return to office was fiercely resisted by **Akala** and the remnants of the Adedibu camp; this led to another breakdown of law and order in Ibadan for some days, leaving many innocent citizens dead and several others injured. Thus, even in death, Adedibu continued to maintain his **stronghold** on Oyo politics.

Anambra State

Anambra State is known to have experienced the most spectacular, celebrated, controversial and bizarre godfather-godson conflicts in Fourth-Republic Nigeria. Apart from the conspiracies, violence, bloodletting, arson and looting that accompany such acrimonious godfather-godson disagreements, for the **first** time in the inglorious history of godfatherism in Nigeria, a sitting elected governor was kidnapped and forced to resign. Another peculiar character of the Anambra politics is that, unlike the states of Oyo, Kwara and Borno, where there is one dominant political patron, its political turf had several political strongmen competing for control of the policies of the state. Consequently, the Anambra political environment became violently conflictual and unpredictable.

The political tussle in Anambra State actually started in 1999, with Governor Mbadinuju and his godfather, Chief Emeka Offor. Mbadinuju became governor through the sponsorship, political machinery and connections of his political godfather, Chief Emeka Offor (Ugwu, Izueke & Obasi, 2012). Trouble started between them as a result of disagreement over the sharing of political appointments and **financial** resources of the state. Consequently, throughout his tenure as governor, Mbadinuju expended more energy and time struggling to free the resources of the state from the predatory grips of his godfather, so much so that critical issues of governance were ignored. The conflict between the governor and his estranged godfather got so pronounced that it crippled the machinery of governance: workers' salaries were not paid for several months; public sector businesses were closed down as a result of workers' strike; public schools remained closed for up to one academic session; the government was unable to provide basic socio-economic amenities and infrastructure for the people; and the government was unable to provide adequate security for the people. In the course of the Offor-Mbadinuju conflict, lawlessness, violence and extra-judicial killing became the order of the day in the state (Edigin, 2010: 181)

Like other godfather-godson political wars, in the Anambra episode, the principal actors had diametrically opposed objectives: while the Offor camp worked assiduously to deprive the governor of a second term in office, the Governor Mbadinuju team did everything possible to ensure that he picked a second tenure gubernatorial ticket of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state. In course of this intense and violent political battle for the determination of the 2003 governorship election in Anambra State, both the political godfather and godson lost out: while Mbadinuju was frustrated out of PDP to join Alliance for Democracy (AD) by his godfather's decision to sponsor two other gubernatorial candidates; both parties lost the 2003 Anambra governorship election to Dr. Chris Ngige - the gubernatorial candidate of the new godfather of Anambra politics - Chief Chris Uba (Albert, 2005).

It was reported that the exhaustive war of attrition between Governor Mbadinuju and his godfather, Sir Emeka Offor, created the opportunity for the emergency of Chris Uba as the godfather of Anambra State (Albert, 2005:91). Uba was in Mbadinuju's camp-against **Emeka Offor until** December 2002, when it became obvious the the two of them had become political liabilities and that both would not get the PDP nomination ticket for 2003 election. Uba decided to raise his own candidate for the governorship position (Albert, 2005 :91). This was how Dr. **Chris** Ngige came into the scheme of things in Anambra politics.

It was also widely reported that, after getting the PDP governorship nomination ticket for his godson, Uba, through an oath-taking exercise at the Okija Shrine with his godson, had to bargain hard with him. Part of the agreement reached with Ngige was that Uba would get seven out of the ten commissioner slots in the state if N gige won the election and that Uba would identify the juicy ministries to be manned by his commissioners (Albert, 2005).

Ngige later won the election and became the Executive Governor of Anambra. Uba, to publicly demonstrate that he was responsible for the installation of Ngige as Governor and the majority of other politicians in the state who

succeeded in being "**ejected**" to other elective positions, grandiloquently declared:

I am the greatest of all godfathers in Nigeria. Because this is the **first** time one single individual has single-handedly put in position every politician in a state. The state governor and his deputy; the 3 senators to represent the state at the National Assembly; 10 out of 11 members of Federal House of Representatives; and 29 State House of Assembly members (cited in Albert, 2005:92).

Uba also declared that he had the power to remove any of them who did not perform up to his expectation anytime he likes.

The conflict between Ngige and Uba evolved when the latter started making efforts to take over Anambra State from the governor. Immediately Ngige won the election, his godfather insisted on nominating **all** the commissioners, special advisers, personal assistants and advisers, and so on. In addition, he demanded Governor **Ngige** to direct the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to pay him from the Federation Account, 10 million monthly for 87 months totaling 870 million. Uba also asked for a cheque of N3 billion from Governor Ngige as his election expenses (Albert, 2005; Wenibowei, 2011). The uncooperative attitude of Governor Ngige and his refusal to govern the state according to the rules of the game as prescribed by his godfather made Uba to decide to make the state ungovernable and he hatched a plan to sack the governor. This was followed by widespread violence, looting, bloodshed, violent demonstration against the administration, gubernatorial abduction and judicial ambushes, among others. The end result was the removal of **Ngige** from office by a court on the 16th March, 2006. The tussle between Ngige and Uba cost the state heavy human casualties and destruction of public property (Edigin, 2010:184).

As reported by Albert (2005), the attempted 'coup' against Ngige took place on 10 July, 2003. It was facilitated by an AIG of Police, Raphael Ige, who led over fifty policemen to Anambra State Government House and arrested the Governor. Ige claimed to be acting on orders from above, indicating the kidnap of the Governor was orchestrated by Uba with the support and approval of authorities in "Aso Rock". While Ngige was still in abduction in an undisclosed location, he was surreptitiously and illegally removed by the State House of Assembly and his deputy, Chief Chris Ude, was immediately sworn-in as Acting Governor. Governor Ngige, however, later came out of where he was abducted to claim that the purported resignation letter that was used to remove him from office was actually a post-dated document he was forced to sign at the Okija Shrine even before he became the governor (Albert, 2005).

The second phase of violence in Anambra State between the supporters of Uba and Governor Ngige took place on 10 November, 2004. This spate of violence, which **lasted three** days, consumed many lives and property in its path in Awka and Onitsha. The **property** destroyed included the Government House (that was bombed), the State House of Assembly Complex, the Judiciary Complex, Women Development Complex, Ikenga Hotels, **Government** Lodge, Onitsha ABS Radio, Awka and ABS Television at Onitsha (Albert, 2005).

The fact that this spate of violence could take place for three days without the Federal Government ordering the security agencies to intervene readily indicated the kind of influence that Uba wielded under the Obasanjo's presidency. The Federal Government maintained an attitude of indifference to this unfortunate incident. In fact, the PDP, which the two political gladiators belong to, saw this serious issue as a mere family quarrel. It was reported that the President described Chris Uba as a respectable and faithful member of the ruling party (Edigin, 2010). This incident, coupled with the fact that Uba could commit the treasonable act of kidnapping an elected governor, and was not made to face the sanctions of the law clearly indicated that Uba was not just a money bag, but also a very powerful person that was connected to the powers that be at the Federal Capital.

From the aforementioned cases of godfatherism across different states in Nigeria, we have been able to validate one of the main propositions of the paper: godfathers, in collaboration with their godsons, are the main orchestrators, masterminds and beneficiaries of electoral corruption. The above cases show that political godfathers are not altruistic individuals; they are political business persons that are driven mainly by their pecuniary interest and their insatiable desire to grab more power to themselves. In other words, they do not venture into politics with the mindset of serving the public or creating a peaceful atmosphere for active participation of the citizens in the electoral process. These political patrons see the electorate as dispensable political pawns. They either use their vast wealth to bribe the voters to vote for their preferred candidates or employ their foot soldiers to intimidate, harm and even kill the electorate and their political opponents.

Other illegal schemes devised by the godfathers to insure that they install their political godsons in power include bribing or intimidation of electoral officials, snatching of electoral materials, result falsification or manipulation, and bribing of security personnel. As evident in the above cases, godfather-instigated electoral corruption has often enthroned unpopular government with resultant legitimacy and governance crisis, political instability, violence and general threat to SD and security.

The Nexus of Godfatherism and Electoral Corruption and Its Impact on Sustainable Development and National Security in Nigeria

The ugly phenomenon of political godfatherism poses serious danger to a fledgling democracy and its national security. This political menace has led to the incursion of the military into the politics of Nigeria, as witnessed in the First Republic (1966), and the Second Republic political crisis in 1983. Thus, the focus of this section of the paper is to examine how the synergy between godfatherism and electoral corruption now poses direct and indirect threats to national security of the Nigerian State. We shall now present our analysis according to the following broad sub-headings:

Breeds Electoral Corruption and Cripples Participatory Democracy: One of the indispensable tenets of participatory democracy is that it guarantees the right of the people to freely and periodically elect those that will govern them. However, like in the previous republics, conducting free, fair and credible elections has been a major challenge to the democratization process in Fourth-Republic Nigeria; this is largely as a result of the unethical and lawless conduct of Nigerian politicians (especially the godfathers) and their corruptive impact on the electoral process and institutions (Inokoba & Kumokor, 2011).

Godfatherism encourages electoral fraud and cripples participatory democracy through unlawful and undemocratic electoral schemes and devices. Political patrons, in an attempt to achieve their personal ambitions, capture and monopolize the political space through massive commercialization and monetization of the electoral processes, thereby encumbering scrupulous Nigerians from taking part in the electoral process. Through well-orchestrated processes of buying up political offices and bribing electoral officials, security personnel and prospective voters, godfathers have turned politics in Nigeria's Fourth Republic into a capital-intensive business venture which can only be undertaken by the rich and mighty in society. Apparently, to a large extent, one that is financially weak or who is not fronted by a powerful and influential individual cannot contest and win election in Nigeria (Adeoye, 2009). Like in the Anambra scenario, Uba bought 22 out of the 24 seats in the Anambra State House of Assembly, and virtually all the state's seats at the National Assembly. Also, the three elected senators for the state did not campaign; neither did they print posters nor contest the elections. They were hand-picked and imposed on the people by Uba (Adeoye, 2009). It is basically for this reason that, after successfully installing this preferred candidates (their godsons), godfathers can publicly ascribe such electoral victories to their influence and power. The Chris Uba's public declaration that he was responsible for the institution of Ngige as governor and majority of other successful politicians is a good example.

As a result of the massive funds they pump into the projects of installing their godsons, the Fourth-Republic godfathers are known to have devised and orchestrated other illegal and fraudulent electoral schemes, such as: disappearance or destruction of electoral materials; manipulation and distortion of election results; encouragement of under-aged voting; intimidation of voters and political opponents by law enforcement agents and thugs; and election-related violence, arson and killing (Inokoba & Kurnokor 2011). And because the political turf is littered with various competing godfathers who are not just pursuing their diametrically opposed political interests but who also perceive winning elections as the ultimate end of democracy, electoral violence becomes inevitable in the electoral process.

Political godfathers, like other Nigerian politicians, see politics as a zero-sum-game, where the winner takes all and the loser loses everything. This corroborates Ake's postulation that:

(sic) ... The winner in the competition for power wins everything: the losers lose everything. Nothing can be worse than losing, nothing can be better than winning. Thus, everyone seek power by every means, legal, or otherwise, and those who control the state power, try to keep it by every means. Politics of which does not know legitimacy or legality only expediency (Ake, 1995).

It is therefore less surprising that the game of politics in Nigeria has become a "do-or-die" affair. It is an expected outcome because the godfather who has expended money in the election would not accommodate failure as such will adopt every means and avenues to ensure success. He may recruit and employ unemployed youths as thugs to rig and or cause chaos before, during and after elections to ensure the success of his favoured candidates(s). It is this understanding of politics by the political class that has made the electoral process in Nigeria prone to manipulations and susceptible to violence (Wenibowei, 2011).

It was only natural and expected that in states where there are contending godfathers, the political space becomes heated and tension-soaked, as the opponents strive to outwit one another in the power struggle. During the period under review (especially 1999 -2011), most elections into political offices were constantly secured by those who held the monopoly of weapon and thuggery, as violence, rather than the electorate, determined who occupied what position (Arowolo & Aluko, 2012). Invariably, electoral corruption orchestrated by political godfathers has turned elections in Nigeria to warfare, where it is a sin to lose. This dominant pattern of election and electioneering characterized by inter- and intra-party clashes, assassinations, kidnapping and arson, threatens to tear the nation apart and put its tenuous peace at great risk.

This kind of elitist, corrupt, violent and exclusive politics does not augur well for the development and sustenance of democracy in Nigeria. The Fourth-Republic experience has shown that the godfathers and the other political elite have not fully come to terms with the referent of elections for democratic sustenance and national security. The elite have failed to play by the rules of competitive electoral politics which prioritizes politics of tolerance, **accommodation**, bargaining and compromise. And democracy is all about the interest of all and should not only focus on the narrow interests of the privileged few in society. The connection between godfatherism and electoral corruption becomes more worrisome when the intention of the powerful elite is to exploit the state

Weakens and Constrains Democratic Governance: As illustrated by the case studies, governments that are installed through the scheming, economic resources and political influences of godfathers are characterized by brazen political corruption and mediocrity, widespread impunity among public officials, prevalence of the rule of men

instead of the rule of law; and ineffective governance that is not responsive to the needs of the people. More than sixteen years of democracy has been years of massive, scandalous and reckless looting of the public treasury by the political elite at the local, state and federal tiers of government (Inokoba & Kumokor, 2011). What is more worrisome is the magnitude and degree of its manifestation in the Fourth Republic. There is no doubting the contributions of the culture of institutionalized corruption to the ailing condition of **Nigeria's** democracy. According to Oko (2008:31), nothing enfeebles democracy more than corruption. It distorts governance, provides perverse incentives for dysfunctional behaviour, and ultimately diminishes the quality of life by diverting funds for social services into private pockets.

The contributions of the ugly phenomenon of godfatherism to brazen political corruption in Nigeria cannot be ignored. It is an acknowledged fact that patron-client politics is built and sustained by corruption (Albert, 2005; Edigin, 2010; Inokoba & Kumokou, 2011;). Godfathers are political gatekeepers: they dictate who participates in politics and under what conditions. The godfathers of the Fourth Republic are not philanthropists; they always put their money where their mouths are. Chris Uba was also quoted to have declared that in Anambra State "politics is played as a business deal. And as a businessman and not a philanthropist, I single-handedly sponsored all the elected office holders in the state" (cited in Wenibowei, 2011:119). Obviously, in return for sponsorship, he expects profit. A Nigerian political godfather is not altruistic; he has no interest in the development of democracy and society. Personal aggrandizement is the guiding principle for the present breed of godfathers in Nigeria; as such, they understand nothing else other than the maximization of profit and any other leverage.

The political perception and conduct of political patrons promote political corruption and mediocrity. The incumbent godson is at pains to satisfy the desires of the godfather among other competing demands on the scarce resources of the government; and the interest of the larger number is severely undermined in the process. Godfathers in present political dispensation are notoriously known for demanding for returns to their investment in the election of their godsons; this is in the form of massive monetary returns as well as taking control of the personnel of the government. For instance, Chris Uba demanded from Ngige the appointment of all the commissioners and other personal aids to the governor and also demanded reimbursement of **₦3billion**, being the total cost of his investment in installing Ngige as governor of the state (Wenibowei, 2011). Ngige's failure to meet these demands led to his kidnap and his subsequent removal from office.

Similarly, in Oyo State, Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu placed similar demands on Ladoja his godson and governor of the state. Like Ngige, Ladoja failed and he got the wrath of his godfather. In a Tell report, Adedibu was quoted as saying:

He (Oladoja) won't give me my money he owes me. The man will not just give me a duplicate key to the treasury, despite, all my investment in the project ... He was collecting N 65million as security vote every month ... He was to give me N15million of that every month. He reneged. Later it was reduced to **₦10 million**. Yet he did not give

me ... Second, he is too stubborn concerning my choice of commissioner, chairmen of government parastatals and board members (cited in Animasawun, 2013:139).

The refusal of the godson to accede to the demands of his godfather may lead to power tussle between the two. The consequences are violence, chaos and failed governance. The lawlessness, violence and undemocratic conduct of godfathers and their adverse effects on governance in the country's socio-economic development and security also have an international dimension; they affect how other nations see **Nigeria**. In this contemporary era of globalization and advanced ICT, issues that seem local (or national) always end up resonating globally. And since no country can meet all the needs of its citizens on its own, international image becomes imperative. As an underdeveloped social formation, Nigeria will always need international assistance, especially in the area of FDI. Unstable political environment, governance failure, institutionalized corruption, violence and insecurity instigated by godfatherism are definitely a disincentive to such foreign capital investment. The lawless and violent activities of godfathers are a serious threat to the economic well-being of Nigeria. Apart from promoting brazen corruption, godfatherism is also known to have encouraged illegality and abuse of constitutional processes and procedures. In every instance of godfather-godson quarrels and wars over the control of the resources and structures of the state, the first victim of such conflicts are constitutional and judicial procedures and institutions. During the course of such lawless and normless battles between godfathers and their proteges, all known constitutional and legislative processes and procedures are suspended. Little wonder that godfatherism in Fourth-Republic Nigeria is associated with a spate of illegal **impeachments**, misuse of security forces, abuse of judicial processes, abduction of an elected governor, and several other illegalities.

Furthermore, godfatherism is also distractive to effective and good governance. This is so because, in the course of the intense struggle for supremacy between the godfathers and proteges, significant resources and valuable time are devoted to the attainment of the private interests and goals of the contending parties instead of governance. The job of governance is suspended as long as the battle persists. These explain the sorry situations of states under the stranglehold of desperate godfathers. The travails of Lucky Igbinedion of Edo State, Mbadinuju of Anambra State, Ladoja of Oyo State, and several other cases illustrate the damage godfatherism could bring to governance.

Political corruption, ineffective leadership and governance crisis have all impacted negatively on Nigeria's democratic stability and her economic development. The majority of Nigerian elected office-holders are products of godfather-engineered electoral corruption; they got their party tickets through political godfathers and mandate through election rigging. Corruption is used to acquire and sustain political mandate in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, leading to grievous consequences of mass poverty, infrastructural decay, skyrocketing unemployment, governance crisis and insecurity.

Hinders Sustainable Development: The undemocratic syndrome of godfatherism through the imposition of unpopular and unqualified personnel in public offices has immensely hindered Nigeria's ability to attain the lofty goals of SD for Nigerians. The general dismal performance and the inability of the present political dispensation just like the previous ones, to achieve

SD in Nigeria is attributed to corruption (Ogege, 2014; Nkwede, 2014; Udu, Nkwede & Ezekwe, 2015). According to the views of Ogege (2014; 228) what corruption does is to create legitimacy gap in a democratic dispensation. Especially godfathers orchestrated electoral corruption make it impossible for election results to reflect the genuine wishes and mandate of the people. This ushers in **scrupulous** and irresponsible governance at all levels, that is, governments that lack credibility, legitimacy and public confidence. This has two implications SD in Nigeria. Firstly, it creates capacity gap. Since political power is gotten through corrupt means, inexperienced, untrained, unprepared and unethical leaders who are not responsible to the plight of the people, dominate the political arena. Such leaders **put in institutions** and agencies that are incapable of effectively utilizing the commonwealth or public resources to provide essential services (health care, affordable quality education, pipe-borne water, security, employment opportunities, etc.) and other necessities that the people of Nigeria, especially the poor require to realize their full **potential**. The continuous absence of these essential services **has** made SD to be elusive in Nigeria despite its huge resources (Ogege, 2014:228).

The second implication of the legitimacy gap for SD is that it creates security gap. The inability of the Nigerian political leaders (mainly installed by godfathers) to allocate resources for the material well-being of its citizens inevitably leads to frustrated expectations and makes the people prone to violent crimes and conflicts. This of course explains the upsurge of insecurity in Fourth Republic Nigeria. The state of insecurity in different parts of the country is now a major challenge to SD. Firstly, it discourages productive investment and its benefits especially in the sphere of job creation. Secondly, the funds that would have been used to induce economic sustainability is directed to security; such as the recently approved US\$1 billion to fight Boko Haram insurgency in the North Eastern Nigeria.

Finally, godfathers instigated corruption breaks the foundation of SD as public funds shared between the godfathers and their godsons has plunged the Nigerian populace into harsh economic misery. According to World Bank Report, about 80 percent of Nigeria's oil and gas revenues accrues to just one percent of the country's population while 99 percent of the population takes the remaining paltry 20 percent (see Ogege, 2014: 228). It is therefore less surprising that as much as 74 percent of the population is living on less than one dollar per day. Again, in its Human Development Report, the UNDP put Nigeria Human Development Index (HDI) at 0.453; this is even lower than the average HDI of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) of 0.515 (UNDP 2008, cited in Ogege, 2014). Nigeria is currently rated as one of the poorest nations in the globe with devastating youth unemployment, with over 10 million youths that are willing to work but cannot find work (NBS, 2009; cited in Ukwede 2014). What is apparent is that after 18 years of uninterrupted civilian dispensation, the massive looting of the public treasury by godfathers and their godsons has made it impossible for Nigeria to achieve the critical indicators of SD such as youth employment, health care services, pipe-borne water, electricity and affordable quality education.

Orchestrates Political Criminality, Violence and Instability: It is an acknowledged fact among scholars and citizens of affected states that political godfatherism breeds political criminality, violence and lawlessness (Albert, 2005; **Edigin, 2010; Animasawun, 2013; Inokoba & Nwobueze, 2015**). The phenomenon thrives in high-power intrigues, conspiracy and back-stabbing. All known cases of this undemocratic and illegal relationship in the Fourth Republic have shown all these attributes.

There are two major forms of conflict and violence associated with godfatherism in Nigeria. The first is the struggle and tussle for political supremacy between or among competing godfathers. A good example of this is the Edo experience, where the 1999 consortium of godfathers broke into two irreconcilable camps in the run-off to the 2003 governorship election in the state, with Governor Lucky Igbinedion and his father, Chief Igbinedion, in one camp and Tony Anenih and Samuel Ogbemudia making the opposite camp. The second type of conflict associated with political godfatherism is the godfather-godson quarrel and violent tussle for the control of the **financial** resources and structures of governance in the state. This is the commonest form of political conflict. This form of political conflict arises whenever there is incongruence of interest between the godfather and the godson. In this situation, the elected godson refuses to give in to the monetary and political demands of his godfather as **agreed before** the elections. As a result, the godfather is forced to take extra measures, including expending additional resources to ensure the ouster of his ungrateful and disloyal godson from office. In order to achieve his aim, the godfather may resort to creating chaos, recruitment and employment of his private army (political thugs), as well as violent demonstration and protests against the concerned administration. It may also include assassinations, kidnapping and arson. This situation manifested in Borno State, Edo State, Oyo State, Kwara State, Anambra State and all states that were dominated by patron-client politics (Wenibowei, 2011).

That the Fourth-Republic Nigerian style patron-client politics is a formidable threat to the country's young democracy and national security as seen in the uncontrollable and widespread violence in the affected states. In the battle for political supremacy between the godfathers and their proteges, both private and government property worth of billions of naira are often destroyed. Also there has been wanton loss of lives through assassinations and violence precipitated by godfather politics. In counting the extent of damage done to Anambra State as a result of the onslaught of violence by Uba private army, Governor Ngige observed that "everything we inherited from the former East Central State and old Anambra State were destroyed in two to three days of violence" (cited in Albert, 2005:95). Apparently, violent godfather and godson tussle is a disincentive for socio-economic development; as long as it persists, economic activities are halted and public **infrastructure** are destroyed. Patron-client political violence has also led to the militarization of the Nigerian political space through its promotion of thuggery, gangsterism and the proliferation of **arms** and ammunition. As demonstrated by several cases of violent confrontations between godfathers and godsons, in the present political dispensation, this form of politics is lawless, normless and only driven by the logic of self-interest and **survival**. The fact that it is a lawless political war is seen in the willingness of the political gladiators to use the resources at their disposal to attain their political objectives. These include the recruitment and arming of unemployed youths as members of their private armies. It is these foot soldiers or what we refer to as death squads that the godfathers and their proteges employ to cause chaos and wanton destruction of lives and property. In the violent battle between Sheriff and Governor Kachallah of Borno State, these foot soldiers were referred to as the "ECOMOG squads"; while in the Anambra imbroglio, the squad that Governor Mbadinuju employed against the armies of his godfather, Offor, was referred to as the "Bakassi Boys" (Adeoye, 2009:270).

It is therefore less surprising that most instances of patron-client battle for supremacy in this republic have led to a state

of lawlessness and anarchy, The chaotic situation generated by the politics of godfatherism always leads to uncontrollable breakdown of law and order. This situation is allowed to take place because, in most instances, security agencies are compromised and overwhelmed by the financial muscle and the closeness of the principal characters to the powers at the federal level. This was witnessed in Anambra state, where Governor Ngige was abducted by a team of the Nigeria Police and thugs of his political godfather, Chris Uba. This was followed by his purported resignation which left a power vacuum that eventually left the state in chaos and lawlessness.

From the foregoing discussion of the impact of the political godfatherism in Fourth- Republic Nigeria, we can assert that the phenomenon hinders and compromises participatory democracy; promotes brazen corruption and mediocrity; perpetrates misgovernance, poverty and constrained SD ; and ultimately threatens national security because it is characterized by criminal politics that breeds lawlessness and chaos.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the case studies and analysis above, we can conveniently assert that godfatherism is a major albatross to the fruitful democratization of Nigeria's Fourth Republic and a potent threat to the peace and security of the nation. This pattern of politics is seen as a major instigator of electoral fraud and violence as well as governmental instability in the present political dispensation. We were able to validate our proposition that political godfathers and proteges are the principal perpetrators and beneficiaries of warped and corrupt electoral processes.

Based on the experiences of the Fourth Republic, the governments put in place by the influence and skimming of political godfathers, such as late Olusola Saraki, late Lamidi Adelibu, and Chris Uba, are known to be lawless, ruthless, unstable, wasteful, corrupt, unaccountable, irresponsible and unresponsive to the needs of the governed. Such governments are known to have experienced widespread violence, insecurity and chaos that now frustrate the attainment of the lofty goals of SD as well as threaten the security of the Nigerian state. Until the nation is able to put in place a credible and effective legal framework to strengthen the institutions of governance that will have the capacity to check and curtail the unlawful activities of the powerful political elite, Nigeria will continue to face crisis of democratic governance, SD and security.

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