

**POLITICAL GODFATHERISM, RECKLESSNESS AND ABANDONMENT OF THE ELECTORATES IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**ABSTRACT**

*"Take or leave it", the archetypal of godfather in Nigeria is more than the "ruthless" Mario Puzo's kingpins in the Italian Mafia setting. The Nigerian political sphere has been characterized with thuggery, ballot snatching, politically motivated murder or homicide. This is because Nigerian election is seen as a "do or die affair". Nigerian politicians are seen as among the richest politicians in the world. A Nigerian senator earns N13.5 million monthly aside other allowances and running costs. The political leaders, in their bid to get into one political position or the other at all cost, have devised most crooked means, through which they capture power. These include the massive recruitment of thugs and other numerous field campaigners and spy-like watchers. They have also resorted to glamorous promises to the people or their constituencies. Unfortunately, once they get into their various offices, they not only forget the promises made to the people, but abandon the thugs and other field workers they have used. These abandoned thugs, then resort to armed robbery, kidnapping, killing them or maiming them or abducting their relations for huge ransoms, which has constituted serious threat to both national security and development in the country.*

**Keywords: Godfatherism, Electoral violence and thuggery, Political abandonment syndrome, Vote buying, political corruption, Insecurity and armed criminality, Do-or-die electoral culture, National security and development challenges.**

**INTRODUCTION**

Democracy in Nigeria has assumed the form pre-bendalism (Joseph, 1987; Adebani and Obadare, 2019). Within this context state power is treated as a congress of office which can be competed for, appropriated and then administered for the benefit of individual occupants and their support group (Joseph, 1987; Adebayo, 2020). The official public purpose of the office then because a secondary concern (Joseph, 1987; Ezeani, 2021). Godfatherism is not new in Nigerian politics (Albert, 2005; Olaniyi, 2020). Godfathers have the slogan of "Machiavelli" that "the ends justify the means" (Machiavelli, 1532/1998; Adeyemi, 2020). They are the power individuals who determine who, what, when and how things operate and are usually in the corridors of power (Albert, 2005; Arowolo, 2019). Many godfathers in the present day Nigeria operates like the Mafia by displaying similar violent scheming and aggressive politicizing coupled with manipulating devices of having their way by any means (Albert, 2005; Olowu, 2018).

The godfather's role is sponsoring and bankrolling of bills' involves two parties (godfather and godson) whose relationship is symbiotic in nature (Albert, 2005; Adeyemi, 2020). Both parties need each other to survive and achieve their aim (Arowolo, 2019). A Godfather could refer to a person who sponsors or provides care or support for a person or project, in same token; it could be used to describe a person directing an illegal and criminal organization (Albert, 2005; Olaniyi, 2020). Nigeria politics, since independence has remained a plethora of cupidity, greed and arrogance, which have attained their apogee from 1999 to today (Ade, 2008; Adebayo, 2020). There is no doubt that a deep reflection or clinical appraisal of the mood and season of the Nigerian body politics will clearly bring to the fore and increasing circumgyration in self and greed (Ade, 2008; Ezeani, 2021). The tragedy of contemporary Nigeria is that the politicians have often delude themselves that once in power and enclosed in the maximum security walls of official quartets, surrounded by artillery of security out fits and personnel's, they are secured amidst the nagging insecurities of present day

Nigeria (Ade; 2008:7; Okafor, 2022), To them (the politicians) their interests are superior to and different iron, labored day and night to ensure their victory or success (Arowolo, 2019).

However prior to their assumption of office these political elites had put on the image of harmless doves and recurrently assured their followers that once they are there they will leave no stone unturned to change the living conditions of the people (Adebayo, 2020; Olaniyi, 2020). They had even promised some of the followers appointment into good offices and others financial empowerment (Adeyemi, 2020). Still in their bid to get into power at all cost, these political leaders have devised most crooked means (Olowu, 2018). These include massive recruitment of thugs, which are also armed with dangerous weapons, other numerous field campaigner and spy-like watchers (Okafor, 2022). Unfortunately, once they get into their various offices they not only forget the promises made to the people, but also abandon the majority of the thugs and other field workers they had used to climb to the top, still deluding themselves that they are safe or secured (Albert, 2005; Arowolo, 2019). What an illusion?

It is indisputable that such act is a very high security risk, that will pose a threat to peaceful coexistence and meaningful development strides and gamut (Okafor, 2022). This paper is, therefore, focused on this precarious scenario in Nigerian politics and its effects on the society especially national security and development (Ezeani, 2021). The method adopted is the content analysis method (Adebayo, 2020). This study is based on the John Dollard (1939) theory of frustration aggression, which and has been modified by Leonard Berkowitz (1962) and Aubrey Yates (1962) (Dollard et al., 1939; Berkowitz, 1962; Yates, 1962). This theory which identifies aggression as a product of the difference between what people deserve and what they actually get, the difference between "expected need satisfaction" and "actual need satisfaction" (Davies Quoted in Faleti, 2006: 47; Gurr, 1970), appears to be the most common explanation for violent behavior. The focus of this paper has been considered under the following subheadings: (i) Definition of terms, (ii) Different faces of abandonment in Nigeria politics; effects of abandonment: (iv) Way forward; and (v) conclusion (Ezeani, 2021).

### **Definition of Terms**

Five outstanding concepts need to be clearly defined here (Ezeani, 2021). These are the godfatherism, recklessness, politics of abandonment, national security and development (Arowolo, 2019; Adeyemi, 2020).

### **Concept of Godfatherism**

A Godfather could refer to a person who sponsors or provides care of support for person or project (Albert, 2005; Olaniyi, 2020). In the same token it could be used to describe a person directing an illegal and criminal organization (Albert, 2005).

### **Recklessness**

It is the dangerous behavior that shows that you are not thinking about the risks and possible results of your actions (Oxford, 2018; Okafor, 2022).

### **Politics of Abandonment**

Simply put, it means desertion of promises made to persons or groups, co or regions or society in general while seeking their support for a particular position of power (Arowolo, 2019; Adeyemi, 2020). It is the total neglect of persons or group of people used to acquire political power (Ezeani, 2021).

### **National Security**

As indicated in an earlier study, "national security means the assurance of protection of lives, properties and national integrity. It is the state of confidence in the respect of others in the society

or polity for once life, properties and fundamental human rights as provided for in the laws of the land as well as hazarded free environment" (Ugbeyavwighren. 2008; Nwanegbo and Odigbo, 2013).

### **Development**

Development here means a process rather than a goal, closely related to the concepts of change, progress and evolution (Todaro and Smith, 2020). It is viewed beyond the state of economic and technological advancement, as the assumed basic index for measuring national development (Todaro and Smith, 2020). Hence the conception of development in this context, is along the of line the people well being (Segynola, 2003). That is to what extent the economic and socio-cultural needs of the people have been adequately met and their social freedom guaranteed (Todaro and Smith, 2020).

Thus development is viewed;

*As increasing the availability and widening the distribution of basic life-sustaining goods and services such as food, education, shelter, health and protection, it is raising levels of living through higher incomes, employment of more people, bettered educational institutions and facilities and improved accessibility of people to goods and services thus improving the esteem of individuals and nations ...freeing the people from servitude and continuous dependence on other individuals and nations (Segynola, 2003: 256; Todaro and Smith, 2020).*

### **Different Facts of Abandonment in Nigerian Politics**

The word godfatherism is a current issue affecting political system and party arena w started since the country returned to a democratic state and has a negative reflection on society of a proper candidate is not chosen to represent the citizens such a society will lack dividends of democracy and neglect why they vote because most of the candidates who represent them are imposed by some elite in society a concept, which is applicable to People's Democratic Party (PDP) and at the end the neglect the interests of the citizen they want to represent and f for their parochial interest (Albert, 2005; Olaniyi, 2020; Arowolo, 2019). Nigerian politics determine the candidate that are eligible to contest in an election and to in particular sit let take for example since emergence of democratic state in 1999 (PDF example) and since 2015 "APC" has been power and Lagos state as a case study of Governor Ambode and Jagaban "APC" Bola Tinubu (Olowu, 2018; Adebayo, 2020). Politics of abandonment has manifested in various modes or dimensions in the polit landscape of Nigeria (Ezeani, 2021). It ranges from the horizontal abandonment or neglect of the less privilege politically privileged ethnic nationalities (mostly the minority groups) by the most politic majority groups (mostly the majority groups) to the vertical abandonment or exclusion of majority group members by the few privileged members from the spoils of group achievement efforts (Egwu, 2006; Okafor, 2022). There is no doubts that these are rooted in the glaring "drift of the political elite, spinelessness of the wielders of power and their well hidden long le of further oppressing ruled "(Akinsola. 2008: 15; Ezeani, 2021). The prevailing scenario in the Nigerian democratic experiment is frost with gr commitment or effort to win or acquire political positions for few members of the moment the 1 elected or appointed members assume their various offices it is treasury looting, it is private family poverty alleviation (Ezeani, 2021; Adebayo, 2020). The group spirit is abandoned for personal gains alone (The Nation, J 23, 2008: 24-25; Olowu, 2018). In other words, the patterns of politics in Nigeria has been that of what Mesquita, el al (2001) have referred to as the "winning coalition" working relentlessly to ensured victory for few of its members, but once the victory for secured the "winning coalition" abandoned for the filling of personal stomach, personal accounts and satiation of personal ego (Mesquita et al., 2001; Adeyemi, 2020). Horizontally, the minority ethnic groups in Nigeria have consistently been hoodwinked i believing in the possible gains of total commitment to the group or party projects (Egwu, 2006; Okafor, 2022). Bui having v and sworn-in, these same minority groups that have exhibited 100 percent commitment to the course of the

group or party, are always the first to be excluded from appointment into strategic positions, molested and totally deprived all forms of development projects (Ezeani, 2021; Arowolo, 2019). For instance, in the 1999 presidential election the people of the South-South geopolitical zone massively supported the People Democratic Party project and voted for President Olusegun Obasanjo accordingly (Adebayo, 2020). But sooner had he been sworn in than he (Obasanjo) turned around "to harass, intimidate, and immiserate the people of the Niger Delta in order to provide a leeway for oil-rent accumulation proceed unhindered (Epelle, 2003:44; Watts, 2008). The President's marginalization of the people of the South-East geo-political zone has aroused the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State Biafra (MASSOB) (Okafor, 2022). He (The President) turned to his people of the South-West, who refused support his presidential ambition, and appointed them into most strategic positions to the detriment of the people that massively voted him into power (Olowu, 2018).

Another horizontal face of abandonment is the classical development of some areas to the total neglect of some other areas (Watts, 2008; Okafor, 2022). Despite the fact that the Niger Delta State minority States have contributed to the economy of the country, the Federal Government, that is controlled by the majority groups (especially the Hausa Fulani), has continued to disrespect and neglect the region (Watts, 2008; Ezeani, 2021). The revenue accruing from the huge oil deposit in the region has been siphoned into private accounts and the remainder used to develop cities and roads in the North-West and North-Central geo-political zones to the total neglect of the Niger Delta (Watts, 2008; Adebayo, 2020). In the Niger Delta there are no good roads, no hospitals, no schools, no electricity and in fact, nothing ("General Boy loaf, Henry Okah's deputy, in Saturday Vanguard. July 26, 2008: 10; Okafor, 2022). in the words "General Boy loaf"

*The problem Nigeria has is with the majority groups, especially the Hausas, they run the affairs of the country as if it is their private estate. They oppress, suppress, intimidate and do anything to kill the aspirations culture, languages and dreams of the minorities, especially the Niger Delta (Ibid: 9; Watts, 2008)*

This is the crux of the Niger Delta conflict that is almost crippling the economy of this country of Africa (Watts, 2008; Okafor, 2022). No doubt, decades of deprivation have pushed citizens into anger, hopelessness, cynicism and violence Vanguard, August 28, 2006: 48; Gurr, 1970). The initial feeling in the South-South was that the alliance of the Nigerian state with the various multinational companies to exploit and export the huge deposits of crude oil in the region would be blessing to the region, in the form of massive development programmes and provision of basic social amenities (Watts, 2008). And when it became obvious that as a result of "their minority status in the country in which the construction of statepower is understood to be predicated on the interests of the ethnic majorities", the people made series of demands on the Nigerian State (Egwu, 2006: 422-423) unfortunately government has treated these demands and the accompanying protests with characteristic insouciance, which has been the reason 'd' etre of chain of violent reactions (Gurr, 1970; Faleti, 2006). There is also the glaring abandonment of promises of provision of basic social amenities and improvement in the wellbeing or living standard of the people (Adebayo, 2020; Ezeani, 2021). For instance, there is no Government in Nigeria, since independence, that has not promised good roads for the people, whether at the local government level or at the state level or at the Federal level (Igbikiowubo, 2008: 33; Okafor, 2022). Every tier of government has the responsibility for planning, construction and maintenance of roads in their jurisdiction (Igbikiowubo, 2008: 33). And every year very huge amount of amount budgeted for roads construction and maintenance, yet Nigerian roads have continued to decay (Adebayo, 2020). In fact, Nigerian roads are in their worst conditions, with potholes, broken and wash pavements, fallen bridges, deep gullies, etc, along most Nigerian roads (Okafor, 2022). No geo-political zone is exempted from this sordid state of roads (Ezeani, 2021). In 2007 when President Umar Musa YarAdua assumed office he promised speedy

Improvement in the power sector within few months (Adebayo, 2020). But over one year in office, electricity supply has further gone worse (Okafor, 2022). Water supply is near zero percent in almost all major cities and rural areas in the country (Ezeani, 2021). Yet huge amount of money is budgeted every year for water supply by all tiers of government in the country (Adebayo, 2020). Bore holes are sunk and overhead tanks erected everywhere you go in the country yet no water (Okafor, 2022). They are left dried, abandoned (Ezeani, 2021). The railway sector is not left out of this abandonment syndrome (Adebayo, 2020). The Nigerian industrial sector has not been spared in this abandonment syndrome (Ezeani, 2021). Ranging from the Ajaokuta steel Company, the Delta Steel company, the various steel rolling mills in Oshogbo and Jos to cement industries, sugar factories, glass industries, paper mills and so many other industries, have been abandoned or producing at less than 25 percent capacity (Okafor, 2022). Yet billions of dollars are being stolen from the various treasuries monthly into personal accounts (Adebayo, 2020). The amount of money that is enough not only to put these industries on stream, but also expand them and establish new ones (Ezeani, 2021). In a country where Unemployment level has skyrocketed; this face of abandonment is most reckless (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

Vertically, there is the abandonment of team or group or clique projects, goals and Aspirations (Nkemdili, 2001: 122-123; Mesquita et al., 2001). In every political formation in this country, there are various cliques or groups with common focus, programmes and aspirations that have been identified and spelt out from the beginning (Nkemdili, 2001). The focus of these groups within a political party is on the possible enhancement of chances of their members into gaining positions of influence within the circles of government attracting attention of government to their common plight, or the existential reality of the members "(Nkemdili, 2001: 122-123). The current dominance of cliques in political formations this country has been precipitated by the prevailing scenario of "political campaigning for vote tend to rely, not so much on the strength of their political ideas, arguments and programmes primarily on their ethnic or tribal, religious and social affliction and connections(Iwara, 2004:)" (Ezeani, 2021).

Usually, at the inception of the group, common goals or objectives are identified a group for various party tickets available in the constituency within which the group operates (Arowolo, 2019). The appointment of other members of the group into various key positions as well as provides "contra" money bags" of the group (Adeyemi, 2020). What mostly give them the opportunity of being selected is the educational qualification and commitment to the group (Ezeani, 2021). Thus most of the candidates so select and their success at the polls wholly depend on the wealthy ones in the group, in most financial responsibilities (Adebayo, 2020). This is what has given rise to godfatherism in Nigerian politics (Albert, 2005; Olaniyi, 2020). It is also therefore expected or agreed upon that once the selected members of the group gets into their various offices they will adequately settle these group leaders who have financed almost every activity the group (Adeyemi, 2020).

After selecting them, the group will then mobilize supporters and work assiduously day and night for the success of selected members of the party primaries (Arowolo, 2019). Having won the party-ticket this clique will form the caucus group that will team up with the party executive and other party leaders to work for the victory of the party at the polls (Ezeani, 2021). Of course the victory of the party is victory of the clique or group (Mesquita et al., 2001). It is in the struggle for party tickets and party's victory at the polls that various thugs and other ardent field workers are recruited and armed with both logistic supports and weapons for the arduous tasks ahead (Olowu, 2018; Okafor, 2022). In the execution of the group mandate directives these thugs and other field workers are usually very daring, taking all the risks to ensure the victory of their group (Adebayo, 2020). Majority of these thugs are also drug addicts, who have grossly abuse the use of drugs across the country (UNODC, 2021). According to Ona Fkhouin, the President of the Association (Security and Safety Operators of Nigeria (ASSON).

Psycho-active drugs alter the structure and function of the including mood, perception or consciousness,...increasingly, Nigeria is becoming a net consumer of hard drugs. Cocaine and

amphetamines are being, mixed with local gin nicknamed shake and monkey tail (Quoted in Umahl, 2008:7; UNODC, 2021).

Having consumed these hard drugs, these thugs become more hardened, merciless: without any human feeling or sympathy and deadly (Okafor, 2022). They eliminate all that should be eliminated to secure the victory for their group or candidate (Olowu, 2018).

Unfortunately, once the selected group members get elected and sworn in they not only turn their back on the group and all the agreements reached in the group before their elections but also turn themselves to masters or lords of the group, They select and surround themselves with only few of the thugs or sycophants and forget or neglect other group members that have made them what they are, They become so arrogant and arbitrarily exercise their duties. What an irony (Arowolo, 2019; Ezeani, 2021).

### **iii) Effects of Abandonment**

These various instances of abandonment in Nigerian politics have greatly affected the lives of the individuals involved and the society in general (Ezeani, 2021; Okafor, 2022). The politics of abandonment has given rise to politics of identity or what Egwu (2006:421) refers to as the struggle for self-determination (Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020; Arowolo, 2019). The continued neglect of the minority ethnic nationalities has pushed them into aggression and violence, "to resist perceived act of injustice exclusion and oppression.,, as a result such expressions as 'political marginalization, resource control and national conference have become common in the political landscape (Eghagha, 2004: 151; Adeyemi, 2020). These violent reactions can be located in psycho-cultural conflict theory, which emphasizes that Social conflicts that take long to resolve become a possibility when of their basic (materials) and psychological (non-materials) need on the basis of their identity (Faleti, 2006:50; Okafor, 2022). There is no doubt that this is the crux of the protracted Niger Delta conflict (Olowu, 2018; Ezeani, 2021).

The failure of political leaders to fulfill promises and agreements made by political office seekers after they have been sworn in has devastating effects on both the individual and the corruption which has made access to political power the easiest and surest route to bidding farewell to poverty, had created much hope and expectations in the group members and made them do everything possible, including thuggery and other political violent prone activities, to ensure victory for their candidates (Adebayo, 2020; Ikelegbe, 2005). But when these hopes and expectations are dashed they create in (the individual a feeling of having been humiliated, oppressed, victimized and reduced in status (feeling of inferiority) which wear away a person's dignity, self-esteem and even the effective function of the brain and lead the individuals to resort to vengeance and aggression (Adeyemi, 2020; Okafor, 2022). This is one of major causes of the spate of political killings, kidnapping of parents, children or other relations of politicians across the country (Ezeani, 2021; Arowolo, 2019). The instances or cases are so numerous. Just last month (July, 2008) alone unknown gunmen opened fire on the convoy of the Abia State Governor, Theodore Orji, at Ngwaiyiekwe on the Port Harcourt - Abia Expressway. The assailants' attempted to kidnap the Governor and his deputy, comrade Chris Akomas. Also on Sunday, July 20, 2008 unknown gunmen abducted the father of the Secretary to the Delta State Government (SSG), Chief Arthur Okowa, in his residence and taken to an unknown destination. The list can go on and on (Olowu, 2018; Ezeani, 2021).

This has also thrown many states and local government areas into unprecedented chaos what threw Anambra, Oyo, Plateau, Kogi and many other states across the country into anarchy (Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020; Adeyemi, 2020). Ibrahim Nasir Mantu, for example, who represented Plateau central senatorial District in the Senate from 1999 to 2007, not only refused to be a "team player", but also used "federalism" to slam a State of Emergency Rule on the state in 2004" (Akomalafe and Ayuba, 2008:20; Adebayo, 2020). Chris Ngige's abandonment of group interests and the agreement he entered into with his group properties between 2003 and 2005. The story in

Oyo, Kogi, Ekiti and many more states was not different, unprecedented mayhem on the populace and in security everywhere (Ezeani, 2021; Okafor, 2022).

Besides, the activities of the abandoned thugs who were supplied sophisticated arms and ammunition, have posed great threat to the security of lives and properties (Arowolo, 2019; Adeyemi, 2020). They have turned toads and streets in cities and villages, terrorizing innocent citizens day and night (Okafor, 2022; Ezeani, 2021). Today assassination, robbery, ritual, killings and other forms of criminality and lawlessness are now business (Olowu, 2018; Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020). The situation is better described in the words of Emewu (2008:4) that every passing day brings fresh stories of crisis of security of the individual. The trader in his shop plays with security fire. The worker in his office is a risk. The banker goes out every day with special prayers for his safety. The bullion van driver is already sure that he made wrong job choice because anything can happen, as a Nigerian would say. The uniformed officer is at the butt of hoodlums' bloodletting. Even the water ways have become death traps, as hoodlums and pirates would not spare commuters and traders on them. Hostage taking for ransom has come to stay, as it has become a money-spinner (Ezeani, 2021; Okafor, 2022). The situation has become more worrisome with the police authorities crying it loud that they are handicapped or helpless. Security scares everywhere every time no hiding place and no secure time (Adeyemi, 2020). According to Umahi (2008:7) Robbers who are really challenged now exhibit uncommon audacity robbing, killing, destroying and raping female travelers in broad day light on the roads and street has been occasioned by the superiority of the arms given to them by the politicians during the elections (Arowolo, 2019). According to the Enugu state commissioner of police, Mr. Bashiru Azeez, "some of them have already cut some of the guns to size so that they can easily be concealed in the pockets." (Quoted in Umahi, Ibid).

This dangerous level of insecurity in the country has deprived the requisite peaceful atmosphere that is "a necessary" pre-condition for the pursuit of development in its broadest conception (Adetula, 2006:384; Okafor, 2022). The result is more jobless youths, who may be tempted to join the bandwagon of armed bandits (Ezeani, 2021; Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020).

The horrible states of Nigeria roads has retarded development and economic growth greatly (Adebayo, 2020; Olowu, 2018). It is discouraging investments and hinders the expansion and full capacity production on places, large scale production is hindered and expansion hampered (Okafor, 2022). Bad road networks also increases the cost of production and the prices of products (Adeyemi, 2020). Poor roads increase the cost of transportation of raw materials to site (Arowolo, 2019). This increased cost of production is transferred to the consumers in the form of higher prices which in turn reduces the purchasing power of the consumer and his standard of living (Adebayo, 2020). Also, the poor road network, with potholes, deep gullies and broken bridges everywhere, has provided opportunities for hoodlums to perpetuate their atrocities along roads (Ezeani, 2021). According to a public affairs analyst and a lawyer Chukwuanugo Ejikuye it is at those bad spots that robbers choose to operate because vehicles are forced to slow down totally (Umahi, 2008:7).

The abandonment of the power sector by every successive administration, with each paying lip-service to the problems of epileptic power supply, is posing a serious danger in the industrial sector and threatening the realization of the vision 2020 (Adebayo, 2020; Okafor, 2022). According to Abiona Bubarinde, Dunlop Nigeria Plc image maker, the evident decay of manufacturing infrastructure, particularly the epileptic power and gas supply situation, imposes additional burden on costs amounting to about 40 percent, which put locally produced tyres at a disadvantage. The whole situation certainly confers undue advantage on importation rather than manufacturing. Thus we are forced to scale down local manufacturing operations due to the very harsh business environment (Ayorinde, 2008:23). The Vice-Chairman of the National eGovernment Strategies (NeGSE), OluAgunloye, has estimated the required electricity generation increase for the realization of the vision 2020 to be 50, 000 megawatts by 2015. According to him only such level of electricity would boost production and the economy" (Vanguard, June 24, 2008:8). But with the worsening

power situation in the country, "as power generation which was about 2,500 megawatts by May last year, recently plunged below 1000 megawatts" (Ayorinde, Op cit: 24), what hope has this country for vision2020 (Ezeani, 2021; Adeyemi, 2020).

#### **(iv)The way forward**

It is absurd that in this era of global economic crunch, when every nation- state is struggling for development and economic growth, Nigerian leaders are toying with insecurity and instability (Adebayo, 2020; Okafor, 2022). This, no doubt, is because the leaders are not too concerned with development and growth of the country, but only selfish gains (Adeyemi, 2020; Ezeani, 2021). The politicians are more invested in personal wealth and met in the greatness of the country (Arowolo, 2019; Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020). Politicians who have always deluded themselves that they can run after wealth and also look for greatness (Olowu, 2018). But the two cannot go together," you cannot run after wealth and also look for greatness particularly when you want to get the wealth from the treasury, it is not possible..." (Akinjinde in The Nation, July 23, 2008:04-25). Therefore, the first very important way forward is massive orientation of the political class, in particular, and the general public on the dire need to seek national greatness rather than egotism, Nigerian politicians should be made to understand that (Ezeani, 2021; Okafor, 2022)

There are battles greater than filling the stomach or satiating the ego, battles greater than pandering to the whims of kiths or the dictates of party. That battle is to have a society worthy in name and character. A society one will be proud to be associated with, whose history will be filled with the quotable quotes of greats and not babbles of hollow men... (Akinsola, 2008; 15; Adeyemi, 2020).

They should be made to understand that having the whole world in personal pockets means nothing, but what really matters is what one is able to achieve for the people and the country (Adebayo, 2020; Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020). That the greatest achievement and relevance can only be achieved through total dedication to the greatness of your people and the country: the personal sacrifice one is able to put in far the people and the country (Ezeani, 2021; Okafor, 2022). That is the only thing that immortalizes one's name in gold, for the whole world to see, just like Nelson Mandela of South, Africa (Olowu, 2018). According to Chief Richard O.A Akinjinde, "Mandela is the greatest human being living today "(The Nation, July 23, 2008:24 - 25).

The political class should be exposed to the achievements of Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and others like Ghandi, Nehru, George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln who ruled their various countries with the spirit of selflessness and dedicated their lives totally to the greatness of their people (Okafor, 2022; Adeyemi, 2020). For instance, Lee Kuan Yew transformed Singapore from a third world country to the first world within a generation (Adebayo, 2020; Olowu, 2018).

To this end, the national orientation agency (NOA) should be reorganized and provided with more logistics required for effective coverage of the nooks and crannies of the country (Ezeani, 2021; Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020). Their areas of focus should be expanded to include more commitment to the sensitization of the political class on the need for national focus in every of their activities (Adeyemi, 2020; Okafor, 2022). National workshops/conferences should be organized on a regular basis for political office holders (Arowolo, 2019). In such fora, the focus should be on national outlook, greatness, sincerity, accountability, transparency and commitment to promises as well as the dangers selfishness and greed (Ezeani, 2021; Adebayo, 2020).

As a follow-up, the national policy on education should be revisited, with a view to repackaging the entire education curriculum, from the primary school to the tertiary level, to include compulsory courses or subjects on national values and selfless service to the people and country (Adeyemi, 2020; Okafor, 2022). in these courses, emphasis should be on the need to leave legacy of ingenuity for posterity and the danger of acquiring too much in the name of wealth (Ezeani, 2021). The goal should be to re- orient Nigerians towards national development and greatness (Adebayo, 2020). Also, the role of the families and communities in this onerous task should be identified in the national education policy (Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020). This is where both the education ministries and

the national orientation agency should collaborate to start the "National focus education from family and community levels (Okafor, 2022). This could be achieved through renewed emphasis on the cultural values that are people or communal oriented (Olowu, 2018).

However, these will not work except they are backed up with aggressiveness in on contract fast, on enforcement of such initiatives (Ezeani, 2021; Adeyemi, 2020). The attitude of government to act fast only importations or when it suits their own selfish interest should change, to acting measures to palliate the conditions of the people (Adebayo, 2020; Okafor, 2022). Sincerity of purpose and commitment should be the watch words, if the abandonment syndrome must stop (Arowolo, 2019). Another important way forward, is the genuine commitment of government to the ongoing electoral reform (Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020; Adeyemi, 2020). The reform should be given all the immediate and necessary attention needed to make it possible before the year 2011 (Okafor, 2022). The electoral laws should be reformed to give overwhelming power of selection and election of all political office holders to the people (Adebayo, 2020). All avenues for the manipulation of party primaries and general elections by individuals or group or even political parties should be closed permanently (Ezeani, 2021). Stiff electoral laws should be put in place against all forms of thuggery and falsification of results (Arowolo, 2019). Again, these reforms should be aggressively enforced (Okafor, 2022).

Therefore, the law enforcement agencies should rise up to their responsibility enforcing all electoral laws in accordance with their spirit and letters (Adeyemi, 2020; Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020). The responsibility to protect the lives and properties as well as the electoral rights of the people must not be compromised under any guise (Ezeani, 2021). Any law enforcement agent found collaborating or aiding electoral fraud be summarily dealt with according to the Urns and ethics of the profession (Okafor, 2022).

Finally, the affairs of the country must be run with all transparency, accountability a play (Adebayo, 2020; Olowu, 2018). All forms of marginalization should urgently be ameliorated, so that ever) ethnic nat will have sense of belonging (Ezeani, 2021; Ikeanyibe and Nwankwo, 2020). True federal structures should be put in place to give ever political zone equal opportunity for self actualization and meaningful contribution to the course (Adeyemi, 2020; Okafor, 2022). The earlier this is done the better for this country (Arowolo, 2019). As this will end all separatist agi and bring more peace, security and stability for more rapid development and economic grow (Ezeani, 2021; Adebayo, 2020).

## **CONCLUSION**

Godfatherism is detrimental to society as it contributes significantly to political instability. It is sustained by an "inability thesis" within Nigerian politics, where political aspirants (godsons) perceive themselves as incapable of winning elections independently and therefore submit themselves to powerful political patrons (godfathers) to secure electoral success. In this arrangement, godfatherism becomes a structural impediment to genuine democracy, undermining democratic principles and standing in opposition to the liberty, welfare, and political rights of citizens. This study has established that the prevailing insecurity in the country is closely linked to the politics of abandonment. In contemporary Nigeria, even political actors and their families are no longer insulated from threats to life and property. The persistence of abandonment and exclusionary politics is largely sustained by ignorance and the mistaken belief among political elites that armed thugs and coercive influence can silence societal resistance. However, this assumption is increasingly invalid, as many of the same armed groups initially mobilized by politicians have since been abandoned, leaving them disillusioned, frustrated, and driven by anger over exclusion from the anticipated rewards of political patronage. Where expectations are raised but not fulfilled especially after individuals have made significant sacrifices based on political promises the resulting sense of betrayal often produces retaliatory tendencies. Those who feel excluded tend to identify and confront the political actors they hold responsible for their marginalization and unmet expectations.

Consequently, sustainable peace and security can only exist in a political environment characterized by fairness, sincerity, accountability, and responsible leadership. In turn, peace and security remain essential preconditions for meaningful national development and economic growth.

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