

## Politics of Settlement and Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria: Study of Abia State (1999 -2019)

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### Abstract

*Settlement politics, the proceeds of politics of godfatherism have been identified as one of the social phenomenon that rapes democracy and what it stands for in Nigeria. The article focuses on politics of settlement and sustainable democracy in Nigeria: study of Abia state (1999-2019).It aimed at finding the factors that aids politics of settlement and its effect on the society. The study employed the descriptive approach therefore; data were collected from secondary sources. The theoretical framework is based on the theory of Reciprocity andprebendalism.It was observed that systemic institutional failure, porous constitutional and legal framework, apathetic populace, power of incumbency, among others are factors that facilitate the menace of settlement politics. The study also show that its effect are: electoral malpractices, treasury looting and its attendant underdevelopment, insecurity and poor governance etc. The study therefore explains the dominant pattern of settlement of politics; and recommends the revamping of the public institutions as well as strengthens the legal framework for participatory democracy. Political mass education, popular participation in governance as means to ameliorate this societal evil and sustain the democratic structure.*

**Keywords:** Settlement politics, politics of godfatherism, democracy, prebendalism and under development

### 1. Introduction

Democracy denotes a set of ideals, institution and processes of governance that allows the broad mass of the people to choose their leaders and that guarantees them a broad range of civic right. (Enemuo, 2000:145). By set of ideals, that means there are pillars upon which democracy rest. Heater, (1964) noted that democracy is essentially a method of organizing society politically... it may be regarded as a form of government, a way of live, or an attitude of the mind. Enemuo (2000) further explain, "There is no universally accepted definition of democracy, scholars and statesmen have conceptualized difference perspectives and therefore emphasis different aspects of the process. Pennock,( 1979:7) explain democracy from the liberty as "Government by the people, where liberty, equality and fraternity are secured to the greatest possible degree and in which human capacities are developed to the utmost, by means including free and

full discussion of common problems and interests."Weale, (1999: 14) from the equality slide of democracy aver that " In a democracy important public decisions on questions of law and policy depend, directly or indirectly, upon public opinion formally expressed by citizens of the community, the vast bulk of whom have equal political rights."Abraham Lincoln succinctly captures the ideal expressed in equality "As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy"

Most African often perceives Nigeria as the 'giant of Africa', perhaps, because of its remarkable achievements in the continent in the past three decade. Today, the same country is looked upon as a 'cripple' giant, a veritable modern wasteland, a nation where corruption is extolled as a national culture, traditions; as a nation of business scam and fraudulent investment and contractual opportunities ...the situation became worse during Olusegun Obasanjo's Administration 1999-2007 when his government tactically opened the floodgate of elite corruption and positive accumulation, which subsequently brought the country to its knees (Ojukwu & Shopeju).

Much has been said and written about godfatherism in Nigeria, however most of the literature that exist on the subject often view it from the generic angle which has the propensity to mislead, This work therefore is focused on the merchandised perspective of the phenomenon- *politics of settlement* which is the standpoint that is liable to the negative effect on democracy and the society at large.

The work is divided into five segments. The first part deals with the introductory part; the second is on the theoretical framework; the third deal on review of related literature which considered the factors that aids the phenomenon as well as the effect of the menace on democracy and the society; the fourth on the dominant pattern of settlement politics then the summary, suggestions and concluding remarks.

## 2. Statement of Problem

Election of people to political office largely depended on candidate and party's popularity with the masses and manifestos. Politics took a new and terrible turn during the military dictatorship of Ibrahim Babangida. The self-acclaimed genius of satanic origin devastated the political class, and institutionalized corruption. Settlement syndrome became part and parse of politics. The godson of Ibrahim Babangida (SaniAbacha) finally unleashed terror on credible politicians. In an attempt to perpetuate himself in power, he assassinated credible Nigerian, who dear to challenge his reign of dictatorship and sent many, such as Professor Wole Soyinka, the first and the only pride of the black man Nobel laurel in literature, in the present age, to exile with a tag of death on his head. (Omorijo, Nnedum, Oludayo & Anyaegbulam, 2015)

Even the regime of Olusegun Obasanjo is not spared from the blame of enthroning godfatherism, which at this period has matured into politics of settlement by godfathers in the political space during the fourth republic. Ojukwu &Shopeju(2010) commented thus: "Gani Fewehinmi in 2007 stated that 'Obasanjo's eight years of administration was highly characterized by self-centered disposition, deception, creating a few rich individuals, so much wealth coming to the coffers of government out of which Nigerians

received aggravated poverty and economic pain'. He is a man whose words must be assimilated in reverse order; craftiness personified (The NEWS, 26 February, 2007)".

This work is set to explore this "Settlement syndrome" as insinuated by Omorijo *et al* (2015) above within the fourth republic. The effect on democracy and the society at large, as well as the factors that are responsible for the striving of the menace. Abia had had five military Administrators and four executive governors since creation. However, our emphasis is on the executive governors within the fourth republic, which started in 1999 till date. Our searchlight beams on the succession patterns of these governors, precisely the relationship (operational pattern) between the outgoing governors, the incumbent and how this impact on the state and the effect on democracy.

### **2.1. Objective of the Study**

The general objective of this paper is to examine what causes and fertilize the menace of settlement politics in Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

1. To ascertain the factors that facilitates the settlement politics in Nigeria.
2. To investigate the effects of settlement politic on democracy.
3. To probe into the dominant pattern of settlement politics.

### **2.2. Research Questions:**

1. What are the factors that facilitate politics of settlement in Nigeria?
2. What are the effects of politics of settlement on democracy?
3. What is the dominant pattern of politics of settlement?

## **3. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

The work is anchored on the reciprocity theory and prebendalism. Many, among the first studies on reciprocity, were built on the assumption of altruism, but it soon became clear that mere altruism could not provide an adequate explanation for anomalies, to fit laboratory evidence; they needed assumptions to be more sophisticated from the relational and motivational point of view. It is in this light that through the 1990s principles such as warm glow (Andreoni 1990), iniquity aversion (Fehr & Schimdt 1999), trust responsiveness (Pelligra 2005), team thinking (Sugden 1993; Bacharach 1999) and others were introduced (Bruni, Gilli & Pelligra, 2008).

The reciprocity principle is one of the basic laws of social psychology: It says that in many social situations we pay back what we received from others. Budiu, (2014) opined that: "A simple evolutionist explanation of reciprocity is that in a group of proto-humans it paid off to behave nicely and cooperate: those who obeyed this principle were probably less likely to get enemies and thus more likely to survive and pass on their genes. (This explanation is however not universally agreed upon by scientists, as it assumes that people behave consistently over time, that is, it assumes that one act of cooperation predicts further acts of cooperation.)" Reciprocity works in a variety of situations; businesses use it in advertising, marketing, and propaganda. For instance, it has been shown that a free sample encourages people to buy the corresponding product because they feel that they have to return the favor of being given something for free.

Reciprocity is a principle that you can also use to your advantage (but also to your users' advantage) in user-interface design. The bottom line is simple: give your users something before you ask for anything from them (Budiu, 2014). According to Bruni, Gilli & Pelligra (2008) "One of the first authors who formally incorporated the concept of reciprocity in a theoretical model was Rabin (1993). Using psychological game theory, developed by Gene Akerlof *et al* (1989), Rabin formalizes his key idea in the very first lines of his now classic work appeared in the American Economic Review: "People may care not only about their own well-being, but also about the well-being of others. Yet psychological evidence indicates that most altruistic behaviour is more complex: people do not seek uniformly to help other people; rather, they do so according to how generous these other people are being" (Rabin 1993, p. 1281).

According to this theory, it is not the case that agents are generous (or non-generous) vis-à-vis anyone, but instead they show a certain degree of conditionality and selectivity in their reciprocating action: Indeed, the same people who are altruistic to other altruistic people are also motivated to hurt those who hurt them" (Rabin 1993, p. 1281). People, thus, "react" in different ways to others behaviour depending on the intentions they attach to it. The same move can be read as helping or hurting depending on the alternatives available to the decision-maker when the choice is made. This is the reason the role of intentions is particularly important in Rabin's work and in the literature on reciprocity in general. In his equilibrium model, he proposes a simple set of equations representing the mechanism adopted by the agent as he tries to figure out other agent's intentions and to assess his degree of (un)kindness. The agent does not only consider the way in which the other has in fact acted, but also examines what he could have done and did not (the other feasible options). Rabin's theory of psychological games, both in the original and in the versions that were later extended to dynamic contexts, has undergone extensive development and has been subject of experimental applications. (Bruni, Gilli & Pelligra, 2008)

Bruni (2008) further explained that: "Rabin's theory was originally based on assumptions he describes as "stylized facts", that is, folk-psychological generalities observed in everyday situations. However, the methodological turning point for economic studies on reciprocity has been, in recent years, the abundant empirical results obtained through carefully designed laboratory experiments, which as mentioned above, have led to question the paradigm of rational egoism. Many other models incorporate the principle of reciprocity in the setting of voluntary contribution to public goods. In a "public good game" each person is endowed with a certain stock of money and she has to decide the amount of her stock she wants to contribute with to the public pot (the public good).

Every player, at the end of the game, will be rewarded with her own contribution and with part of the total contribution to the public pot, on condition that a minimum amount has been achieved for the realization of the public good. This game can also be interpreted as a prisoner's dilemma game with  $n$  players, where each player has noncooperation as her dominant strategy, necessarily resulting in a non-cooperative outcome. Experimental results have shown instead that very few players behave

according to standard economic theory, whilst many decide to contribute from the first round of the game.

If the game is one-shot then players tend to contribute on average with half of their initial endowment. In repeated games, though, a declining proportion of public contribution is observed after half of the rounds have been played, until the last round in which the amount contributed drops to zero. Some authors explain this behaviour with “learning”, assuming that players do not initially realize that non-cooperation is more profitable, but round after round they eventually understand that non-contribution is the unique rational strategy. Such an explanation, nevertheless, does not account for the fact that when the game is run again with the same subjects (so-called “re-start effect”), the level of contribution still tends to reach about half of one’s endowment (Gintis, 2000, p. 317).

Andreoni interprets this anomaly in the light of the category of reciprocity: the reciprocators planning to behave according to this rule start by contributing but, if free riders persist with their strategy, they can only punish them in one way, which is to say by not cooperating (not contributing). When the game is restarted, they hope that reciprocity will prevail and therefore they choose to contribute again: if, however, free riding occurs again, a punishment is delivered: “Social norms tend to be self-enforcing, punishing those who do not comply with them”. In other words, the Godfathers understands the principle of reciprocity so well that they first empower the godson with financial and other resources that brings them into political advantage, the godsons reciprocate with unrestraint access to the state treasury. Failure to do so spells doom for the mentee.

## **4. Conceptual Review**

### **4.1. Prebendalism**

It relates to official positions that are profitable for the incumbent, to the allocation of such positions, or to a system in which such allocation is prevalent. Alex (2007:28) opined “Following Max Weber, I defined the prebendary state as a regime where those who holds state power live off politics. In addition to their salaries, the rulers and officials of the state benefits from the perquisites of office, either in the form of bribes or outright appropriation of public monies from the various government agencies and state enterprises for private ends (Weber 1968 cited in Alex, 2007 )... under a prebendary regime, a fraction of the middle or dominant class controls the state by allying itself with a supreme ruler or dictator (godfather).

Riggs(2009) in the contemporary world prebendary income for officials can be found in all third world countries where public revenues are inadequate to cover salaries at a sufficiently high level to enable bureaucrats to sustain what they regard as a proper standard of living...however, in societies where traditional bureaucratic practices are well remembered and where a “formalistic” dichotomy between what is officially prescribed and what is actually practiced prevails, it is scarcely surprising if the real (prebendary) income of many, if not most public officials, should far exceed their formally prescribed salary levels.

The theory explains how the primordial public network works to sabotage the working of an ideal Weberian bureaucracy in the civic public thereby rendering the Nigerian political structure a site of mere struggle for power and "sharing rights" (Oni, 2017). In fact, the term includes in the Nigerian context, a serious abuse of public office, for example, unauthorized retirement of funds in the budget, deliberate over-padding of expenditure votes, fraudulent encashment of cheques, charging of private expenditure to the public treasury, outright refusal to answer audit queries on discrepancies in the record of public finances, non-remittance of funds collected on behalf of the government, over-invoicing of government purchases, diversion of funds from approved projects and contracts, cronyism, etc. (Oni, 2017).

Prebendalism examines the relationship between the pattern of party formation in Nigeria and a mode of social, political and economic behavior. Joseph (1887 cited in Oni, 2017) He demonstrates the centrality in the Nigerian polity of the struggle to control and exploit public office and argues that Nigerians usually view state power as an array of prebends, the appropriation of which provides access to the state treasury and to control over remunerative licenses and contracts. In addition, the deepening of ethnic, linguistic and regional identities frustrates the abiding desire for a democratic political system. By exploring the ways in which individuals at all social levels contribute to the maintenance of these practices, he provides an analysis of the impediments to constitutional democracy that is also relevant to the study of other nations.

Richard A Joseph, director of The Program of African Studies at Northwestern University, is usually credited with first using the term to describe patron-clientelism or neo-patrimonialism in Nigeria. Since then the term has commonly been used in scholarly literature and textbooks. According to Joseph (1996), by the theory of prebendalism, state offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by officeholders, who use them to generate material benefits for themselves and their constituents and kin groups... "As a result of that kind of patron-client or identity politics, Nigeria has regularly been one of the lowest ranked nations for political transparency by Transparency International in its corruption perception index. When political desperadoes who by themselves lack the will-power to wield into politics, they resort to patron - client relationship which often result to prebendalism. These political actors used their office to generate material benefit to themselves to the detriment of the citizenry thereby giving rise to politics of settlement.

## **5. Concept clarification:**

**5.1. Politics of Settlement:** Described a mercantile arrangement, which ensue from a relationship between the political godfather and his godson, in which the vulnerable godson is made to reciprocate a political overture by the mentor with flagrant access to the state resources. In its simple term, it depicts a situation where godfathers used godsons as surrogates to promote personal interest and maintain hold on the resources of the state.

5.2. **Political godfatherism:** Welsh (1979:10) argues, is a system 'in which the exercise of political control by a small number of persons is institutionalized in the structure of government and political activity'. The structure in Nigeria today ensures a typical political godfather to manipulate state officials, institutions and resources to the detriment of the common man. Godfathers are political gladiators who by reason of their wealth, position and opportunities manipulate the political space for their self-aggrandizement.

### 5.3. **Difference between Godfatherism and Settlement Politics**

It will be wrong to assume that settlement politics is synonymous to political godfatherism. Settlement politics rather proceeds from godfather and godson relationship. Not all godfatherism results into settlement politics. Past review shows that the concept of godfatherism is not a terrible one, it is as an institution of political king making through which certain political office holders of tenuous political clout come into power.

Adeoye (2009) holds that: Godfatherism, in its simple form is a term used to describe the relationship between a godfather and godson. A godfather is a kingmaker, boss, mentor, and principal, while godson is the beneficiary and recipient of the legacy of a godfather. A godfather is someone who has built unimaginable respect and follower (voters) in the community, and possessed a well –organised political platform, and general acceptance from electorate that could secure victory for candidates of his choice (Kolawole, 2004 cited in Majekodunmi & Awosika, 2013). Therefore, godfatherism is a topic of interest not only in sociology, politics and in religious institutions (Familusi, 2012), but in all areas of life.

A clear picture of biblical version of godfatherism is seen in the life of Moses and Joshua. Kolawole (2004 cited in Majekodunmi & Awosika, 2013). Through a divine instruction, a minister of Moses-Joshua emerged the leader of Israel after a long-year of political training and mentorship. The same situation repeated itself in the life of Elijah and Elisha (2King 2: 1-14). In the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria, the same scenario led to the emergence of Pastor E. Adeboye as the General overseer of the Church after a few years of training and mentorship under PaaAkindayomi, the founder of the church. Therefore, every notable leader, in all spheres of life, in all ages, considers succession an issue of priority, failure of which continuation of his legacies and the long-term programmes of development of the organization he represents may not transcend his generation. (Bruni, Gilli & Pelligra, 2008).

Bruni *et al*(2008) however regretted that Nigerian elites, either in the military or in politics, being 'a class in itself', (Wright 2006; Borland, 2008) have succeeded in manipulating the concept of godfatherism to their advantage and to the detriment of the nation with impunity". Though the elite is meant to play a central role in promoting and designing democracy as it is quite impossible to prosecute any democratic project in any society without the input of the elite, the Nigerian elite have continued to impede and frustrate the democratization trend. They see democracy or governance more as a means to an end, and have a tendency to 'pious material wooliness and self-centered

pedestrianism' (Achebe, 1983). This "manipulation" to the advantage or selfish interest of the political class is what gave rise to the concept of politics of settlement in Nigeria, the variable under study.

5.4. **Democracy:** Democracy denotes a set of ideals, institution and processes of governance that allows the broad mass of the people to choose their leaders and that guarantees them a broad range of civic right. (Enemuo, 2000:145). By set of ideals, that means there are pillars upon which democracy rest. Heater, (1964) noted that democracy is essentially a method of organizing society politically... may be regarded as a form of government, a way of live, or an attitude of the mind.

### 5.5. **Element of Democracy**

Held (1993 in Enemuo, 2005) provided what may be regard as a summation of the varied definitions of liberal democracy and a listing of its major elements. According to him, liberal democracy in its contemporary form includes a cluster of rules and institutions permitting the broader participation of the majority of citizens in the selection of representatives who alone can make political decisions'. In more specific terms, this cluster includes elected government: free and fair elections in which every citizen's vote has an equal weight; a suffrage which embraces all citizens irrespective of distinctions of race, religion, class, sex and so on; freedom of conscience, information and expression on all public matters broadly defined; the right of all adults to oppose their government and stand for office; and associational autonomy the right to form independent associations including social movements; interest groups and political parties. According to Democracy Reporting International the UN considered seven essential element of democracy thus:

In 2004, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that lays out seven 'essential elements' of democracy, including: • Separation and balance of power • Independence of the judiciary • A pluralistic system of political parties and organisations • Respect for the rule of law • Accountability and transparency • Free, independent and pluralistic media • Respect for human and political rights; e.g., freedoms of association and expression; the right to vote and to stand in elections (Meyers, 2011).

In a more concrete term, the variable that validates true democracy includes but not limited to free and fair election. Compliance to rule of law, Independence of the judiciary, Independence of the INEC, Existence of opposition party, Respect for peoples franchise, Popular participation, Periodic election, Separation of power and Check and balance etc.

Godek (2017) opined that, "The single most important element of democracy is popular sovereignty. The ability of the members of a political community to see their demands reflected in public policies generates trust and a sense of their political efficacy that are essential to the maintenance of democratic political institutions. These elements



of democracy will form the yardstick upon which we will measure the effect of settlement politics in Nigeria particularly, the Abia state experience.

### 5.6. Sustainable Democracy

Democratic sustainability or sustainable democracy focuses majorly on transition and consolidation. Okowa (2015) aver that, “to achieve sustainable democracy, we must understand that there is more to democracy than elections and voting. The fact that a nation chooses her leaders through the ballot box does not necessarily translate to democracy. There are certain tenets upon which any democracy can be nurtured and sustained. These are sovereignty of the people, majority rule and minority rights, the rule of law and good governance, respect for civil and political rights, mass literacy, economic prosperity, social development, free press, and an independent judiciary. Sustainable democracy is attainable when the conditions listed above are prevalent in the society”.

5.7. **Underdevelopment:** According to Jhingan (2013), it is rather difficult to give a precise criterion (definition) of underdevelopment. Underdevelopment can be defined in many ways: by the incidence of poverty, ignorance, or disease; by misdistribution of the national income; by administrative incompetence, by social disorganization.

## 6. Abia State in Perspective

Abia state is a state in South-Eastern Nigeria. The capital is Umuahia. Although the major commercial city is Aba, formally a British colonial government outpost. The state was created in 1991 from part of Imo state and its citizens are predominantly Igbo people (95% of the population). Abia is an acronym formed from the initial letters of four groups of people namely: Aba, Bende, Isiukwuato and Afikpo. These constituted the major groups in the state at its creation.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 1991, the federal military government under General Ibrahim Babangida carved out Abia from Imo state, bringing to thirty the number of states in Nigeria. Furthermore, in October 1996, the federal military Government under General sannu Abacha created six more state, bringing to thirty six the number of states in the federation, During this exercise, four Local government area (LGAs) namely, Onicha, Ohaozara , Afikpo North and Afikpo South, which occupy the North-eastern part of the state, were transferred to the (newly created) Ebonyi state. (NigeriaGalleria).

## 7. Factors That Aids Settlement Politics

We reiterate here that settlement politics involves a situation where godfathers used godsons as surrogates to promote personal interest and maintain hold on the resources of the state. This “evil” may not have been possible without some conditions inherent in the system that this politician explore to their advantages. In this section, we shall be looking at this factor.

- 7.1. **Institutional failures:** Democracy and indeed election involves many institutions. Such may include the electoral umpire (INEC in Nigerian case), the judiciary, the security Agents (Army, Police DSS Etc), the anti-graft agencies like EFCC, ICPC and indeed the three arms of government. Therefore, whenever there is compromise in these institutions, settlement politics can be entrenched in the system. Ojukwu and Shopeju (2010) agrees that: “the assumption is that elite corruption and all its characteristics thrive more in an environment where institutions are weak and government policies generate economic rents”. Familusi opined that: “The alliance between the government and godfathers has always influence the activities of INEC. Consequently, the general public has lost confidence in it; being a perceived appendage of the government”.
- 7.2. **Porous constitutional and legal frameworks:** the present constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria is foist on the people by the military government and existing electoral laws are porous. There are loopholes inherent in the constitution that have hindered the development of the democratization processes in Nigerian, even the Electoral laws are frost with inadequacies that have strangulate free and fair election in Nigeria, thereby breeding the environment for settlement politics. The National Assembly who seems to be enjoying the dropout from the leakages does not muster enough political will to amend these laws. According to Moghalu (2019), “without electoral reform, which includes electronic voting, our democracy will remain weak” electronic voting is hope to curb the incidence of manipulation of the system.
- 7.3. **Apolitical masses:** The more a man who belongs to the broad working masses is nonpolitical, the more susceptible he is to the ideology of political reaction. This explains why these political bourgeoisies are exploiting the populace because many do not care what is happening at the political domain rather choose to suffer the challenges posed by maladministration.
- 7.4. **Poverty level:** The World Poverty Clock as the country has ranked Nigeria with the poorest people in the world. (Sahara Reporters August 19, 2019). The kind of politics that strives in Nigeria is what is known as stomach infrastructure. Many politicians gives hand out to the electorates and manipulates the election to actualize their selfish ends because of the level of poverty and hunger in the land.
- 7.5. **Power of Incumbency:** We discover a pattern that most godfathers particular in Abia state use the advantage of incumbency to garner support for their surrogate godson using both the state apparatus and resources to achieve the devilish end of Settlement from their successors.
- 7.6. **Greed, selfish interest and aggrandizement:** Notableamongthe factors that breeds the evil omen of settlement politics is greediness on the part of this political

merchant. Many of them believe that politics in Nigeria is the shortest route to wealth. Their selfish nature even when they may have acquired the wealth will propel them to enhance their playing lord in the political scene just for personal aggrandizement. The antics of godfathers impact negatively on electoral process. In fact, godfatherism is one of the major factors responsible for electoral frauds in Nigeria. (Familusi, 2012).

## 8. Effects of Politics of Settlement on Sustainable Democracy

The effect of settlement politics on democracy cannot be overemphasized. In fact, it is malfeasance. We shall discuss the effect of settlement politics on democracy under political, economic and social effects.

8.1. **Political:** Often times, the myriads of political upheaval experience in the polity are traceable to the activities and interest of godfathers in Nigeria. Ayoade (2006:83) cited by Omonijo et al., (2013) posits that, "The godfather is not in the business of philanthropy...The godfather gives support to install the godson oftentimes by devious anti-democratic means... They are merchants of fear. They dispense violence freely and fully on those who stand in their way. In this, they play the additional role of Warlord. They establish, train and maintain a standing personal "army" which they ostensibly supplement with a sprinkling of the official police detachment. In order to effect electoral change, they bribe election officials to deliver the winning election figures. They also bribe the police and other security agents to look the other way when they traffic in ballot boxes and sack opponents strongholds". Omoregbe (1998) noted that the political scene has been taken over by treasury looters and those who want to attain power at all cost. Electoral malpractices of all kinds and shades; imposition and the foist of incompetent stooge on the people, who cannot deliver; oppression and suppression of opposition and the total annihilation of dissent voices are few of the political effects of settlement politics. In fact, their stock in trade is manipulation and violence.

8.2. **Economical:** The moment the godson is *installed* by the godfather, he is expected to be making *returns* on their *investment*. Omorijo, *et al* (2015) collaborated this fact thus: "The godson, having taken office, returns the gesture hundredfold to the point that the godfather becomes an "intractable parasite" on government. The initial support given by the godfather then becomes an investment with a colossal rate of returns" The godsons as a *de jure* governor cannot deliver the dividend of democracy owing to the varied interest he must settle and service. Consequently many months or even years of unpaid salaries of workers in the state, decay in infrastructural facilities and deplorable roads; hardship and hunger become the norm all through the tenure. It clearly undermines the process of development in an underdeveloped society like Nigeria. It is therefore a well-known fact that no meaningful development can be achieved in an atmosphere of wars of attrition, crisis and people who are perpetually and diametrically opposed to one another (Edigin, 2010).

8.3. **Social:**The spate of insecurity in Nigeria cannot be totally divorced from the electoral and political violence. Given the above, Ikokwu and Epia, (2003) link the phenomenon of godfatherism in Nigerian politics with youth delinquency. According to Unanka (2008:45-46) “by November 2004, Awka, the Anambra state capital in Nigeria was declared as a “city where anarchy reigned” (Sunday Vanguard, 14/11/04). This followed a series of political violence unleashed in the state by supporter of Chief Chris Uba (The “political godfather” in Anambra state) against Governor Chris Ngige and his administration”. In other words, godfathers protégé crises in Nigeria do not only portray great danger to our democratic experiments, but also on the very essence and validity of our existence as a nation (Edigin, 2010). In the course of conflict between the godson and godfather, Nigeria has recorded unnecessary breakdown of law and order, which should have been avoided if the problem of godfatherism (by extension politics of settlement) had not been instituted. Whenever the nation witnesses such breakdown of law and order, some hooligans usually exploit the opportunity to unleashed terror on citizens. Thuggery, arson, kidnapping, and arm robbery becomes the order of the day.

The importance of firmly established institution for sustainable development cannot be overemphasized. Ifeanyi (2015) reiterate “Good governance requires the development and strengthening of independent state institutions like the security agencies, a functional legislature (allowed to express itself), and a viable and independent judiciary. Every effort must be made to ensure that these institutions function properly and optimally with or without the human actor. Human beings come and go but institutions remain. When these institutions are firmly established and devoid of political control and manipulation, they guarantee the regularity of human conduct and people can predict how the system will respond in a given situation.

## 9. Dominant Pattern of Settlement Politics

According to Mbamara, (2004) godfatherism is the invasion of the political candidate by discarnate powerful sponsor, tending to complete possession for the purpose of selfish gratification. Going by this author, it is a political slave trade or political sponsorship based on political manipulation with several evil agenda. With Abia State, in view we shall examine the trait of pattern of settlement politics.

**List of Governor\Administrators of Abia State from 1991to Date**

NAME	TITLE	TOOK OFFICE	LEFT OFFICE	PARTY	NOTE
Frank Ajobena	Military administrator	August 28, 1991	January 1992	None	
Ogbonnayaa Onu	Executive Governor	January, 1992	November 1993	NRC	
Chinyere Ike Nwosu	Military Administrator	December 9, 1993	September 14, 1994	None	
Temi Ejoor	Military Administrator	September 14, 1994	August 22, 1996	None	
Moses Fasanya	Military Administrator	August 22, 1996	August 1998	None	
Anthony Obi	Military Administrator	August 1998	May 29, 1999	None	
Orji Uzo Kalu	Executive Governor	May 29, 1999	May 29, 2007	PDP, PPA	Elected on PDP platform, switched to Progressive Peoples Party Alliance(PPA)
Theodore A. Orji	Executive Governor	May 29, 2007	May 29, 2015	PPA, (APGA), PDP	Elected on the platform of PPA, move to APGA at a point. Settle in PDP
Okezie Ikpeazu	Executive Governor	May 29, 2015	Incumbent	PDP	

Source: Wikipedia (Retrieved from: en.m.wikipedia.org)

From the table above, Abia state had had four (4) executive governors in the state. However, the study covered the fourth republic that started in 1999 till date which saw three executive governors with the incumbent. The observable pattern of the settlement politics in Abia state goes in this form.

- 1) **Power of Incumbency:** We discover a pattern that most godfathers, particularly in Abia state, use the advantage of incumbency to garner support for their surrogate godson using both the state apparatus and resources to achieve the devilish end of Settlement from their successors. Unlike in other clime where the godfathers may be moneybags that can sponsor the governor, in Abia state the godfathers are usually the incumbent governors. Orji uzor Kalu use this means to sponsor T. A. Orji and campaign for him and he won the election from prison. Then, T. A. Orji sponsored Okezie Ikpeazu into power in 2015 in fulfilment to his word to the Ngwa extraction of the state. Chief T A was quoted as saying; “none of the governors who ruled Abia agreed that an Ukwa-Ngwa man should be governor. I made that possible in the spirit of equity. I had done my job and that was to make sure an Ukwa-Ngwa man became

the governor and it happened”. (Vanguard January 6, 2019).

- 2) **Vulnerable Godson:** at the point of anointing and selection, the Godson is usually at such disadvantaged position that they are ready to enter into contract or settlement agreement that favours the godfather. The godson, having taken office, returns the gesture hundredfold to the extent that the godfather becomes an “intractable parasite” on government. (Omorijo, et al, 2015)
  
- 3) **Transactional rather than transformational arrangement:** As we observed earlier, some godfathers go for godson in order to consolidate their achievements since they are transformational leaders and may want their legacies to continue. But observation shows that the godfathers here enter into transactional merchandise with their godson. T. A. Orji in his campaign for second tenure told the world that he has been under bondage because of heavy settlement to his political mentor. While T.A. orji has been accused of non-performance of the present administration. Ajegbu accused Ikpeazu for “Total lack of performance; not meeting the minimum expectation; not being able to identify that Senator Theodore Orji has been the major challenge of Abia in the past 20 years. Others include not being able to understand that the interest of the state is far above that of a family and not rebuilding Aba and the economy of the state” (Ugochukwu & Eric vanguard January 6, 2019).
  
- 4) **Hinged on equity:**the incumbent usually play the settlement politics to reflect what may be termed equity. They always choose their godson from the senatorial district that has not produce the governor of the state in order to baptize their activity with the spirit of equity and fairness. The table below give credence to this fact.

**LIST OF EXECUTIVE GOVERNORS AND THEIR SENETORIAL DISTRICT.**

Name	Years of administration	Senatorial district
Orji Uzur kalu	(1999-2007) 8 years	Abia North
Theodore A. Orji	(2007-2015) 8 years	Abia central
Okezie Victor Ikpeazu	(2015-date) 5 years counting	Abia south

Source; authors compilation. (2020)

- 5) **Manipulation:** the stock in trade of these political merchants is manipulation. Omorijo, *et al* (2015) buttresses this point thus: “Without manipulations, the godfathers will not be able to realize the money he spent in ensuring victory for the godson during the electioneering campaign”. And this is made possible by the institutional failure and the effects of corruption in the system.
  
- 6) **Anti-democratic means:** Ayodele (2006:83) posit that: “The godfather gives support to install the godson oftentimes by devious anti-democratic means” democracy has its processes. An abuse of any of these processes is anti-democracy.

Therefore, the manipulation of the process in order to deliver their godson is effort in anti-democracy.

### 10. Summary, Suggestion and Concluding

This work explores settlement politics in Nigeria and sustainable democracy: Abia state experience (1999 -2019). The main thrust of settlement politics is self-interest over and above the general interest of the masses. In effect, it brings about under development in a state. This is evident by the incidence of poverty, ignorance, or disease; by misdistribution of the national income; by administrative incompetence, by social disorganization. Poor infrastructural development becomes the norm in this kind of politics. This paper agrees with Gambo (2006) and summaries the effect of settlement politics on democracy, which cannot be explained in isolation of Godfatherism, thus: "Overbearing influence of an individual in electoral process makes the voter's role in the electoral process irrelevant and negates the idea of people having input in their governance"

This makes nonsense of any claim to a democratic government as godfathers have in the most brazen, manner hijacked the political machinery at all levels. It means then that what is called election in Nigeria is nothing but the expression of the narrowly defined will of a few dishonest individuals who feel that they have the power to manipulate the entire electoral process in favour of their anointed sons". The paper, therefore, suggests that the people should stand up against godfatherism, with its attendance effect of politics of settlement that impoverish the state. The institutions of the state like the INEC, law enforcement agents, and judiciary should be patriotic in the discharge of their duty as well as embrace the anti-corruption crusade of the Buhari administration and show example. The citizens should become more political active rather than remain passive in the affair of governance. This will help deliver the dividend of democracy in the state. The paper concludes that the manipulation of democratic process for selfish interest must be jettison and credibility, integrity, honesty and accountability and merit should be enthroned

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