



THE IMPACT OF GODFATHERISM ON NIGERIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The idea of "godfatherism", which refers to a system of political influence and patronage used by influential people, frequently at the expense of democratic values, is deeply ingrained in Nigerian politics. This phenomenon is now a key component in comprehending the nation's political dynamics because elected officials could put their godfathers' interests ahead of the people's interests. This creates a gulf between the governed and the government, undermining democratic processes. Subsequently, the current study delves into the impact of *Godfatherism* on Nigerian political system. Residents of Igabi metropolis in Kaduna state made up the study's population. The sample size was established by selecting 130 respondents in total from the population figure. This study employed Taro Yamane's formula and survey research design was adopted for this study. Based on the responses of respondents the finding shows that increasing awareness and education about the dangers of godfatherism among citizens, particularly the youth, can empower them to challenge the status quo and demand accountability from their leaders. In addition, 13 respondents disagree that implementing robust accountability frameworks that hold political leaders accountable for their actions is vital. This study recommends raising citizens' knowledge and educating them about the perils of godfatherism, especially among young people, might give them the confidence to question the status quo and hold their leaders accountable. Programs for civic education ought to be incorporated into community projects and the school curriculum.

Keywords: *godfatherism, politics, Nigeria, civic education, awareness.*

Introduction

The idea of "godfatherism", which refers to a system of political influence and patronage used by influential people, frequently at the expense of democratic values, is deeply ingrained in Nigerian politics. This phenomenon is now a key component in comprehending the nation's political dynamics and economic development. The influence these political godfathers have over elected officials, influencing their choices and policies to be at odds with the interests of their constituents, is a common manifestation of godfatherism (Ojo, 2018). Because elected officials could put their godfathers' interests ahead of the people's, this creates a gulf between the governed and the government, undermining democratic processes.

Godfatherism in Nigeria has its roots in the colonial era, when colonial officials who gave preference to local leaders greatly impacted power relations (Adetula, 2021). Over the years, this practice has changed, especially after independence, when powerful politicians have used their connections and resources to control the political landscape. Such domination has far-reaching consequences that impact both economic growth and political stability. Economic policies can become skewed, resulting in resource misallocation and stunted growth, when political decisions are made based on personal interests rather than the common good (Adeniran, 2020).

Furthermore, godfatherism helps to solidify corruption in the political system. To reward their donors, politicians who owe their positions to influential godfathers may resort to unscrupulous tactics, which feeds a vicious cycle of corruption that impedes economic advancement (Oluoch, 2019). Corruption can take many different forms, including bribery, favoritism in government contracts, and misappropriation of public funds. These practices all have a negative impact on the economy by discouraging foreign investment and lowering public confidence in government institutions (Ezeani, 2020).

Furthermore, Nigeria's democratic institutions face serious difficulties when godfatherism and governance collide. Because they may feel more accountable to their sponsors than to their constituents, elected officials frequently lack accountability because of the overwhelming influence of godfathers (Adebayo, 2020). Voter indifference and disengagement from civic duties can result from this lack of accountability, which can erode public confidence in democratic processes (Bassey, 2020).

Furthermore, when governance and godfatherism clash, Nigeria's democratic institutions suffer significant challenges. Due to the strong influence of godfathers, elected officials may lack responsibility because they may feel more accountable to their sponsors than to their

constituents (Adegboye, 2018). This lack of accountability can lead to voter disinterest and disengagement from civic responsibilities, which can undermine public trust in democratic processes (Darka, 2019). This undermines the legitimacy of democratic governance and jeopardizes the stability and longevity of Nigeria's political system.

The effects of godfatherism are pervasive in Nigerian society and extend beyond politics and the economy. The reliance on godfathers creates an environment where loyalty is prioritized over merit, which stifles innovation and effective governance (Nwankwo, 2019). Young politicians and aspiring leaders may feel under pressure to back powerful individuals rather than creating their own vision for the country, which could stifle the development of new ideas and political diversity (Aluko, 2020).

Positive change is possible despite these obstacles. Young people's growing involvement in political activism and discourse has the potential to upend long-standing power structures. Nigeria's political landscape is changing because of young people's growing advocacy for their rights and demands for responsibility from their leaders (Jega, 2018). By encouraging a political culture that prioritizes honesty and public service over influence and favoritism, this youth-led movement has the potential to revolutionize Nigerian politics.

The interaction of power, corruption, and accountability characterizes the complex effects of godfatherism on the Nigerian political system. Notwithstanding the considerable obstacles this phenomenon presents, there is hope for revolutionary change through heightened public participation and support for democratic changes. To address the effects of godfatherism and promote a political climate that puts the wellbeing of Nigerians first, this study aims to comprehend its subtleties.

Literature Review

A common occurrence in Nigerian politics is godfatherism, which is defined by a hierarchical relationship between a less significant politician or candidate (the godson) and a dominant political person (the godfather) (Obasanjo, 2020). This relationship frequently involves a quid pro quo arrangement in which the godfather offers resources, money, and political support in return for the godson's allegiance and compliance (Afolabi, 2019). Due to its potential to compromise electoral integrity and encourage a culture of patronage over meritocracy, this dynamic has significant ramifications for Nigeria's democratic processes (Ijeoma, 2021). Godfatherism is common in Nigerian politics, which frequently leads to the consolidation of

power within a small number of people, restricting the chances for new political entrants and sustaining a cycle of inefficiency and corruption (Ogunbiyi, 2021).

The practice of giving people favors, advantages, or privileges in return for political support is known as political patronage (Bello, 2021). Political patronage in Nigeria takes the form of appointments, contracts, and resource distribution that are impacted by personal relationships rather than official processes (Asake, 2021). Frequently at the price of openness and accountability, this system encourages allegiance and reliance among political supporters and people (Igbokwe, 2019). Political patronage can therefore seriously skew governance procedures, resulting in the misallocation of public funds and impeding economic growth (Rasak et al., 2021). Beyond politics, this system has an impact on societal norms and expectations surrounding civic engagement and public service (Oviasuyi, 2022).

Corruption is a complex problem that includes the misuse of authority for personal benefit (Transparency International, 2022). Bribery, embezzlement, and favoritism are just a few of the ways corruption manifests itself in Nigeria; it is frequently made worse by the country's high rate of godfatherism and political patronage (Afolabi, 2019). Public faith in government institutions is eroded by corruption, which also makes public service delivery inefficient (Idowu, 2018). Research shows that corruption in Nigeria has detrimental effects on the country's economy, such as a decline in foreign investment, a rise in poverty, and slowed economic expansion (Aminu, 2018). Additionally, corruption lowers the general standard of administration and maintains socioeconomic injustices (Okereke, 2018).

The term "democratic accountability" describes the procedures by which institutional frameworks and the people hold elected officials accountable for their choices and actions (Johnson, 2020). Accountability measures including free and fair elections, judicial independence, and a thriving civil society support governance and transparency in a robust democracy (Onubi, 2019). However, because the influence of strong godfathers frequently limits the independence of elected officials, godfatherism presents serious obstacles to democratic accountability in Nigeria (Kperogi, 2021). Because political leaders put their godfathers' interests ahead of their citizens' wants, this goes against the fundamentals of democratic governance (Osakede et al., 2018). Consequently, the absence of accountability can lead to widespread corruption and disenchantment among the public.

According to Ojo (2018), godfatherism has a big impact on Nigerian politics, frequently influencing election results and the course of political parties. Selecting candidates is usually under the control of strong godfathers, who decide who is eligible to run for office and what

policies they support (Richard, 2020). Internal party democracy may be suppressed by this control, which would result in political organizations being less transparent and accountable (Ezeani, 2020). Furthermore, at the expense of their constituents, political candidates feel compelled to return their godfathers' loyalty and political favors, perpetuating a cycle of dependency (Osayi, 2020). This further alienates the electorate and makes the political landscape marked by a lack of real representation and engagement from elected officials.

The connection between godfatherism and corruption is particularly evident in Nigeria, where corrupt practices are often encouraged by political patronage systems (Oluoch, 2019). Godfathers frequently demand loyalty from their political protégés, which can lead to unethical actions and dishonest business dealings (Ezeani, 2020). Godfather-client relationships, for instance, usually entail the expectation of awarding contracts to supporters or of tampering with public funds for one's own gain (Adeniran, 2020). Because of this corrupt culture, citizens' increasing dissatisfaction with their institutions and leaders has a significant impact on public trust and governance (Ojo, 2018). Research indicates that corruption has seriously hampered Nigeria's economic development, leading to widespread inequality and poverty (Adeniran, 2020).

Godfatherism has social repercussions in Nigeria that transcend beyond politics and the economy, influencing cultural norms and conduct (Jega, 2018). As a result of a political system that values loyalty above merit, the normalization of corruption and favoritism can undermine public confidence in institutions and reduce civic involvement (Johnson, 2020). Furthermore, instead of encouraging self-advocacy or group action, people who depend on their godfathers for access to opportunities and resources may continue to live in a culture of dependency among constituents (Igbokwe, 2019). As a result, societal cohesiveness is weakened, and an atmosphere of unfairness and inequality is perpetuated. According to Adebayo (2020), the outcome is a society in which citizens are frequently passive participants in governance rather than active participants in the democratic process.

Growing awareness of godfatherism's detrimental effects in recent years has sparked a surge in activism and calls for political change in Nigeria (Oluoch, 2019). Young Nigerians are now able to question established power structures and demand responsibility from their leaders thanks to the growth of social media and technology (Bassey, 2020). The potential for group action against political tyranny and corruption is highlighted by movements like #EndSARS (Ezeani, 2020). Furthermore, by encouraging transparency in the selection of candidates and campaign funding, current electoral changes seek to lessen the power of godfathers (Igbokwe,

2019). The pervasiveness of godfatherism in Nigerian politics creates persistent problems that call for consistent efforts from the electorate, government institutions, and civil society, even though these tendencies point to a move towards greater accountability and democracy.

The social sciences, especially political science and sociology, are the origins of patron-client theory. It depicts a dyadic relationship in which a client contributes resources, safety, or support to a patron in exchange for services, loyalty, or political support. The work of academics like Edward Eisenstadt and his research on patron-client networks in Latin America helped popularize this notion in the middle of the 20th century (Eisenstadt, 1973).

Eisenstadt's study focused on how these connections influenced social structures and political conduct in developing countries. He maintained that in situations when formal institutions were lacking, patron-client relationships were essential to comprehending political stability and instability (Eisenstadt, 1973). Other academics eventually improved the idea by examining how these connections worked in diverse historical and cultural contexts, such as the Middle East, Asia, and Africa (Khan, 2019).

In the study of political systems with informal networks and interpersonal ties, patron-client theory gained popularity, especially in environments with weak formal political institutions (Van de Walle, 2001). It provides a prism through which to view the dynamics of social structure, governance, and power, particularly in emerging nations. Patron-client theory illustrates how people negotiate intricate sociopolitical environments by highlighting the relationship component of political participation.

Patron-client theory is widely used, especially when examining political behavior and governance in situations when conventional institutions could be inadequate or ineffectual. It has been used to explain several phenomena, such as state-society relations, electoral politics, and corruption. The patron-client paradigm clarifies how informal networks, and human relationships can affect governance, policy choices, and resource distribution in political contexts (López & Ramirez, 2020).

For example, to rally support from voters, candidates frequently rely on patron-client ties in electoral politics. In return for their constituents' votes and allegiance, politicians may offer tangible advantages like jobs or financial support (Khan, 2019). This dynamic produces a political culture in which reciprocity and personal connections take precedence over official electoral procedures, frequently resulting in a clientelist regime.

Furthermore, the way political parties operate can be significantly impacted by patron-client relationships. Political parties are, frequently, networks of patronage that link leaders and their

followers rather than just being ideological organizations (Hicken, 2011). Because clients may feel compelled to help their patrons to preserve access to resources and protection, this connection encourages loyalty and reliance.

Patron-client theory has implications for comprehending social structure and economic behavior in addition to political systems. It clarifies how informal networks can support social mobility, resource distribution, and economic transactions in settings where formal institutions might be absent or inefficient (Granovetter, 1985). In these situations, people frequently turn on their personal connections to get through difficult financial times, which solidifies the patron-client dynamic in social systems.

Patron-client theory provides a useful framework for examining the dynamics of political patronage and its consequences for governance in the context of the study on the influence of godfatherism on Nigeria's political and economic development. In Nigeria, godfatherism can be interpreted as an example of patron-client relationships, in which influential political leaders (patrons) give resources and support to prospective politicians (clients) in return for their allegiance and obedience (Ojo, 2018).

Godfatherism's intrinsic patron-client relationship has important ramifications for Nigerian democracy and government. For example, to get political positions, prospective politicians frequently turn to well-known godfathers, creating a scenario where personal loyalty trumps meritocracy and democratic responsibility (Ezeani, 2020). A slowdown in political innovation and growth may arise from this dependence on godfathers, which can also impede the rise of new political leaders and suppress political competition.

Furthermore, godfatherism's patron-client ties contribute to the political system's corrupt and ineffective culture. Politicians who owe their jobs to influential godfathers could put their patrons' interests ahead of their voters' needs, which could result in a misallocation of funds and a failure to respond to public requests (Igbokwe, 2019). To keep their jobs and win over their patrons, clients are forced to participate in corrupt activities, which feeds the cycle of patronage and reliance (Adetula, 2021).

The socioeconomic effects of godfatherism in Nigeria are also explained by the patron-client theory. People frequently must negotiate patron-client relationships to obtain resources and support for their economic activities because political power and economic prospects are intertwined (Oluoch, 2019). Because access to opportunities is now dependent on political allegiances rather than merit-based standards, this emphasis on personal connections might impede economic competitiveness and innovation.

Finally, the complexity of godfatherism and its effects on Nigeria's political and economic development can be critically understood via the lens of patron-client theory. Through emphasizing the relationship between patrons and clients, this theory sheds light on the difficulties associated with economic development, accountability, and governance in an environment characterized by deeply ingrained power structures. It is crucial to address the effects of patron-client relationships to advance democratic governance and sustainably expand Nigeria's economy.

Ojo, J. (2020). *The Dynamics of Godfatherism in Nigeria: A Critical Assessment*. The population of this study, which used a qualitative research approach, included young people and political elites from Lagos State. Purposive sampling was used to pick 50 respondents for the sample. In-depth interviews were used to gather data, and theme analysis was used for analysis. The results showed that godfatherism has a big impact on political choices and frequently results in corruption and nepotism. The study recommended changes to electoral procedures to improve openness and concluded that lessening the role of godfathers is crucial to promoting democratic governance.

Ezeani, E. (2021). *Godfatherism and Political Accountability in Nigeria: Implications for Democratic Governance*. This study combined surveys and qualitative interviews using a mixed-methods approach. Stratified sampling was used to choose 200 respondents from the population, which was made up of Enugu State citizens and political office holders. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were employed in data analysis, whereas structured questionnaires and interviews were used in data collecting. Stronger legal frameworks to restrict the role of political godfathers were suggested by the study, which found that godfatherism compromises political accountability.

Adeleke, I. (2019). *The Effects of Godfatherism on Electoral Participation in Nigeria*. The results of this quantitative study, which used a cross-sectional survey design to target voters in Oyo State, indicated that godfatherism has a negative impact on electoral participation, especially among young people. A sample of 300 respondents was selected through simple random sampling, and the data was analyzed using inferential statistics. The study concluded that supporting independent candidates could lessen the influence of godfathers and urged policymakers to support grassroots political engagement.

Adetula, V. (2022). *Godfatherism and Corruption in Nigerian Politics: A Study of the Lagos State Experience*. This study used a case study design with an emphasis on the political climate of Lagos State. A sample of 150 people was chosen via purposive sampling, and the population

consisted of citizens, government servants, and political actors. Focus groups and interviews were used to collect the data, which was then subjected to qualitative content analysis. By encouraging clientelism and patronage networks, the study discovered that godfatherism promotes corruption. It concluded that destroying these networks and strengthening institutional integrity are necessary to fight corruption.

Ogunyemi, A. (2021). *Understanding Godfatherism and Its Impact on Governance in Nigeria: A Sociological Perspective*. Political analysts and civil society organizations made up the population of this qualitative study, which used phenomenological technique. Snowball sampling was used to obtain a sample of thirty people. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data, which were then subjected to thematic analysis. The results showed that godfatherism skews policymaking and governance. The research recommended the creation of monitoring organizations to ensure electoral integrity and stated that civil society must promote political reforms.

Okafor, C. (2021). *Godfatherism and Youth Political Engagement in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects*. This study targeted youth organizations throughout Nigeria with a descriptive survey design. A systematic sampling technique was used to choose a sample of 500 responders. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data which were gathered via online surveys. Results indicated that apathy is caused by godfatherism, which discourages young people from getting involved in politics. The study recommended programs to encourage adolescent participation in decision-making processes and concluded that empowering kids through leadership training might improve political engagement.

Nwankwo, K. (2022). *The Interplay Between Godfatherism and Political Violence in Nigeria*. This qualitative study focused on instances of political violence in Anambra State utilizing a case study methodology. Purposive sampling was used to choose a sample of 60 people from the population, which comprised victims and political activists. Interviews and focus groups were used to gather data, which were then thematically examined. The results showed that godfatherism and political violence were strongly correlated, creating a vicious cycle of fear and intimidation. The study recommended conflict resolution programs and concluded that tackling godfatherism is essential for lowering political violence.

Afolabi, A. (2023). *Political Godfathers and the Quest for Good Governance in Nigeria: An Empirical Study*. This study focused on Abuja's government officials and political appointees using a correlational research design. Stratified random sampling was used to choose a sample of 200 responders. Structured questionnaires were used to gather data, and correlation analysis

was used to examine the results. The findings showed that political godfathers had a detrimental effect on measures of good governance. The study recommended regulatory measures to encourage openness and concluded that lowering godfather influence is crucial for improving quality of governance.

Ekanem, S. (2022). *Godfatherism and its Effects on Public Policy in Nigeria: An Empirical Investigation*. This quantitative study used a survey approach aimed at Cross River State's civil officials and policymakers. Simple random selection was used to choose a sample of 150 responders. Questionnaires were used to gather data, and regression analysis was used for analysis. The results showed that godfatherism has a big impact on how public policies are made, frequently tilting them in favor of elite interests. The study recommended the creation of public consultation mechanisms and concluded that transparency measures are necessary in policymaking.

Dibia, R. (2021). *Analyzing the Impact of Godfatherism on Local Governance in Nigeria: A Case Study of Imo State*. Imo State community residents and local government representatives were the focus of this case study investigation. Stratified sampling was used to choose a sample of 100 responders. Interviews and focus groups were used to gather data, which was then subjected to content analysis. According to research, godfatherism erodes local government by fostering inefficiency and corruption. The study recommended capacity-building initiatives for local leaders and concluded that minimizing godfather influence requires stronger local government mechanisms.

Method

The survey research design was used for this investigation. The study's goals influenced design selection. This research approach offers a rapid, effective, and precise way to evaluate data on a population of interest. It intends to study impact of godfatherism on Nigerian political system. The study will be conducted in Kaduna, Nigeria.

Residents of Igabi metropolis in Kaduna state made up the study's population. The sample size was established by selecting 130 respondents in total from the population figure. The researcher chose the Igabi metropolis due to its close vicinity.

The researcher used Taro Yamane's formula to determine the sample size of the population.

Taro Yamane's formula is given as.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where N = Population of study (140)

n = Sample size (?)

e = Level of significance at 5% (0.05)

1 = Constant

$$\therefore n = \frac{140}{1 + 140 (0.05)^2} = \frac{140}{1 + 140(0.0025)} = \frac{140}{1 + 0.35}$$

$$n = \frac{140}{1.35} = \underline{\underline{103}}$$

The sample size therefore is 103 respondents.

This study's data came from both primary and secondary sources. To gather information about the influence of godfatherism on the Nigerian political system, a structured questionnaire was used as the major source of data. Scholarly papers, journals, and textbooks served as secondary sources for data gathering.

The acquired data will be examined using frequency tables, percentages, and mean score analysis. The developed hypothesis was tested using SPSS (statistical program for social sciences) and the nonparametric statistical test (Chi-square). After administering a questionnaire, the results will be coded, tabulated, and examined using SPSS statistical software in accordance with the hypothesis and research questions. Independence will be tested using the chi square approach to efficiently assess the data gathered for accuracy and ease of maintenance. The chi square is provided as

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (o-e)^2}{e}$$

Where X^2 = chi square

o = observed frequency

e = expected frequency

Level of confidence / degree of freedom

When employing the chi – square test, a certain level of confidence or margin of error must be assumed. Moreover, the degree of freedom in the table must be determined in simple variable, row and column distribution, degree of freedom is: $df = (r-1) (c-1)$

Where df = degree of freedom

r = number of rows

c = number of columns.

In determining the critical chi _ square value, the value of confidence is assumed to be at 95% or 0.95. A margin of 5% or 0.05 is allowed for judgment error.

Results and Discussion

The topic of this chapter is the presentation and analysis of the questionnaire data. Simple percentages were employed to assess the respondents' demographic data, and the chi square test was used to test the research hypothesis. The collected data was presented in the order that they were arranged in the research questions.

Analysis of Demographic Data of Respondents

Table 1: Gender of Respondents

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	60	60.0	60.0
Female	43	43.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table1 above shows the gender distribution of the respondents used for this study. Out of the total number of 103 respondents, 60respondents which represent 60.0percent of the population are male. 43 which represent 43.0 percent of the population are female.

Table 2 shows the age grade of the respondents used for this study. Out of the total number of 103 respondents, 14 respondents which represent 14.0 percent of the population are between 20-30 years. 12 respondents which represent 12.0 percent of the population are between 31-40 years. 24 respondents which represent 24.0 percent of the population are between 41-50 years. 22 respondents which represent 22.0 percent of the population are between 51-60 years. 31 respondents which represent 31.0 percent of the population are above 60 years.

Table 2: Age range of Respondents

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-30years	14	14.0	14.0
31-40years	12	12.0	26.0
41-50years	24	24.0	50.0
51-60years	22	22.0	72.0
above 60years	31	31.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 3: Educational Background of Respondents

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
FSLC	18	18.0	18.0
WASSCE/GCE/NECO	24	24.0	42.0
OND/HND/BSC	38	38.0	80.0
MSC/PGD/PHD	13	13.0	93.0
OTHERS	10	10.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 3 above shows the educational background of the respondents used for this study. Out of the total number of 103 respondents, 18 respondents which represent 18.0 percent of the population are FSLC holders. 24, which represent 24.0 percent of the population are SSCE/GCE/WASSCE holders. 38, which represent 38.0 percent of the population are OND/HND/BSC holders. 13 which represent 13.0percent of the population are MSC/PGD/PHD holders. 10, which represent 10.0 percent of the population had other type of educational qualifications.

Table 4: Marital Status

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Single	35	35.0	35.0
Married	50	50.0	85.0
Divorced	10	10.0	95.0
Widowed	8	8.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 4 above shows the marital status of the respondents used for this study. 35, which represent 35.0percent of the population are single. 50 which represent 50.0percent of the population are married. 10, which represent 10.0percent of the population are divorced. 8 which represent 8.0percent of the population are widowed.

Analysis of Psychographic Data

Table 5: Reforming the electoral process to enhance transparency and reduce the influence of godfathers is crucial

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	29	29.0	29.0
Agree	40	40.0	69.0
Undecided	12	12.0	81.0
Disagree	12	12.0	93.0
Strongly disagree	10	10.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 5 shows the responses of respondents if reforming the electoral process to enhance transparency and reduce the influence of godfathers is crucial. 29 respondents representing

29.0 percent strongly agreed that reforming the electoral process to enhance transparency and reduce the influence of godfathers is crucial. 40 respondents representing 40.0 percent agreed that reforming the electoral process to enhance transparency and reduce the influence of godfathers is crucial. 12 respondents representing 12.0 percent were undecided. 12 respondents representing 12.0 percent disagreed that reforming the electoral process to enhance transparency and reduce the influence of godfathers is crucial. 10 respondents representing 10.0percent strongly disagreed that reforming the electoral process to enhance transparency and reduce the influence of godfathers is crucial.

Table 6: Increasing awareness and education about the dangers of godfatherism among citizens, particularly the youth, can empower them to challenge the status quo and demand accountability from their leaders

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	32	32.0	32.0
Agree	38	38.0	70.0
Undecided	15	15.0	85.0
Disagree	8	8.0	93.0
Strongly disagree	10	10.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 6 shows the responses of respondents if Increasing awareness and education about the dangers of godfatherism among citizens, particularly the youth, can empower them to challenge the status quo and demand accountability from their leaders. 32 respondents representing 32.0 percent strongly agreed that Increasing awareness and education about the dangers of godfatherism among citizens, particularly the youth, can empower them to challenge the status quo and demand accountability from their leaders. 38 respondents representing 38.0 percent agreed that Increasing awareness and education about the dangers of godfatherism among citizens, particularly the youth, can empower them to challenge the status quo and demand accountability from their leaders. 15 respondents representing 15.0 percent were undecided. 8

respondents representing 8.0 percent disagreed that Increasing awareness and education about the dangers of godfatherism among citizens, particularly the youth, can empower them to challenge the status quo and demand accountability from their leaders. 10 respondents representing 10.0 percent strongly disagreed that Increasing awareness and education about the dangers of godfatherism among citizens, particularly the youth, can empower them to challenge the status quo and demand accountability from their leaders.

Table 7: Facilitating greater political participation at the grassroots level can help diminish the power of political godfathers

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	12	12.0	12.0
Agree	14	14.0	26.0
Undecided	8	8.0	34.0
Disagree	38	38.0	72.0
Strongly disagree	31	31.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 7 shows the responses of respondents if facilitating greater political participation at the grassroots level can help diminish the power of political godfathers. 12 of the respondents, representing 12.0 percent, strongly agree that facilitating greater political participation at the grassroots level can help diminish the power of political godfathers. 14 of the respondents representing 14.0 percent agree that facilitating greater political participation at the grassroots level can help diminish the power of political godfathers. 8 of them, representing 8.0 percent, were undecided. 38 of the respondents representing 38.0 percent disagree that facilitating greater political participation at the grassroots level can help diminish the power of political godfathers. 31 of the respondents representing 31.0 percent strongly disagree that facilitating greater political participation at the grassroots level can help diminish the power of political godfathers.

Table 8: Implementing robust accountability frameworks that hold political leaders accountable for their actions is vital

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	51	51.0	51.0
Agree	27	27.0	78.0
Undecided	12	12.0	90.0
Disagree	13	13.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 8 shows the responses of respondents if implementing robust accountability frameworks that hold political leaders accountable for their actions is vital. 51 of the respondents representing 51.0 percent strongly agree that implementing robust accountability frameworks that hold political leaders accountable for their actions is vital. 27 of the respondents representing 27.0 percent agree that implementing robust accountability frameworks that hold political leaders accountable for their actions is vital. 12 of them, representing 12.0 percent, were undecided. 13 of the respondents representing 13.0 percent disagree that implementing robust accountability frameworks that hold political leaders accountable for their actions is vital.

Table 9: Promoting economic policies that prioritize meritocracy and equitable resource distribution can reduce dependency on political godfathers for economic advancement

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	24	24.0	24.0
Agree	35	35.0	59.0
Undecided	12	12.0	71.0
Disagree	18	18.0	89.0
Strongly disagree	14	14.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 9 shows the responses of respondents if promoting economic policies that prioritize meritocracy and equitable resource distribution can reduce dependency on political godfathers for economic advancement. 24 of the respondents representing 24.0 percent strongly agree that promoting economic policies that prioritize meritocracy and equitable resource distribution can reduce dependency on political godfathers for economic advancement. 35 of the respondents representing 35.0 percent agree that promoting economic policies that prioritize meritocracy and equitable resource distribution can reduce dependency on political godfathers for economic advancement. 12 of the respondents representing 12.0 percent were undecided. 18 of the respondents representing 18.0 percent disagree that promoting economic policies that prioritize meritocracy and equitable resource distribution can reduce dependency on political godfathers for economic advancement. 14 of the respondents representing 14.0 percent strongly disagree that promoting economic policies that prioritize meritocracy and equitable resource distribution can reduce dependency on political godfathers for economic advancement.

Table 10: Addressing the systemic issues associated with godfatherism, Nigeria can foster a political culture that values integrity, transparency, and inclusive growth, ultimately leading to enhanced political stability and economic development

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	62	62.0	62.0
Agree	33	33.0	95.0
Disagree	5	5.0	100.0
Strongly disagree	3	3.0	103.0
Total	103	103.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 10 show the responses of respondents if addressing the systemic issues associated with godfatherism, Nigeria can foster a political culture that values integrity, transparency, and inclusive growth, ultimately leading to enhanced political stability and economic development. 62 of the respondents representing 62.0percent strongly agree that addressing the systemic issues associated with godfatherism, Nigeria can foster a political culture that values integrity, transparency, and inclusive growth, ultimately leading to enhanced political stability and

economic development. 33 of the respondents representing 33.0 percent agree that addressing the systemic issues associated with godfatherism, Nigeria can foster a political culture that values integrity, transparency, and inclusive growth, ultimately leading to enhanced political stability and economic development. 5 of the respondents representing 5.0 percent disagree that Addressing the systemic issues associated with godfatherism, Nigeria can foster a political culture that values integrity, transparency, and inclusive growth, ultimately leading to enhanced political stability and economic development. 3 of the respondents representing 3.0 percent strongly disagree that Addressing the systemic issues associated with godfatherism, Nigeria can foster a political culture that values integrity, transparency, and inclusive growth, ultimately leading to enhanced political stability and economic development.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The impact of godfatherism on the Nigerian political system was investigated in this study, which also highlighted the widespread influence of political godfathers on economic development, governance, and policymaking. Godfatherism has serious ramifications for democracy, accountability, and economic development since it is defined by the power that powerful political actors wield over elected politicians and the political system. According to the research study, godfatherism restricts marginalized people's access to political involvement, erodes democratic processes, and feeds corruption. According to research, godfatherism encourages a patronage system that puts allegiance ahead of skill, which results in ineffective governing practices. Furthermore, the study found a clear link between godfatherism and the decline in public confidence in political institutions, which in turn contributes to citizens' disengagement and political indifference. Overall, the study emphasizes how urgently Nigerian democratic governance must be improved through changes that remove the role of godfathers.

It is impossible to overestimate the influence of godfatherism on the Nigerian political system. The nation's democratic values are seriously threatened by the issue. Godfatherism erodes the values of accountability and openness that are necessary for efficient governance by promoting corruption and a clientelist mentality. The study emphasizes how godfatherism has a negative impact on political participation, especially for young people and underrepresented groups who are frequently left out of a system controlled by wealthy elites. Nigeria must face the facts of godfatherism and put policies in place to curtail its influence if it is to see significant political change and economic progress. This entails fortifying institutions, encouraging political

responsibility, and cultivating a welcoming political atmosphere that stimulates public engagement.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to mitigate the impact of godfatherism on Nigerian political and system:

1. **Strengthening Electoral Institutions:** It is imperative that the electoral process be changed to increase openness and lessen the power of godfathers. Independent electoral commissioners that are immune to political pressure can do this, guaranteeing free and fair elections.
2. **Promoting Political Education:** Raising citizens' knowledge and educating them about the perils of godfatherism, especially among young people, might give them the confidence to question the status quo and hold their leaders accountable. Programs for civic education ought to be incorporated into community projects and the school curriculum.
3. **Encouraging Grassroots Participation:** The influence of political godfathers can be lessened by encouraging increased grassroots political engagement. Supporting independent candidates and neighborhood movements that put the needs of the community ahead of those of the elite is one way to do this.
4. **Enhancing Accountability Mechanisms:** It is essential to put in place strong accountability frameworks that make political leaders answerable for their deeds. This entails putting systems in place to keep an eye on political contributions and implementing more stringent campaign finance laws.

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