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THE NEXUS BETWEEN GODFATHERISM AND IMPOSITION OF CANDIDATES IN EDO STATE NIGERIA: PROBLEMS AND WAY FORWARD

BY

DR. ALABI ABDULLAHI
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE,
KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY MALATE
alabiabdullahi@kwasu.edu.ng
08062075797

ALABI PAUL OLUWOLE
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE,
OYO STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION LANLATE
alabipauloluwole@gmail.com
08030661530

DR. SALAHU MOSHOOD OLAYINKA
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE,
KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY MALATE
moshoodsalahu@gmail.com
07039089596

Abstract

The roles of godfathers in the political parties before, during and after parties internal democracy cannot be over mentioned. Godfathers imposed their preferred candidates (godsons) over the general will of the party. The imposition of candidates by godfathers in the political parties always cause trouble, tensions and civil unrest and lead to bad governance. The study examines the nexus between godfatherism and imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria: Problems and Way forward. The target area of the study includes State Party Executive of All Progressive Congress (APC) and (PDP), Local Government Executive APC and PDP, Electorates APC and PDP, INEC, Academias and Civil Society. The study adopted analytical and descriptive research types. The objective of the study is to evaluate the effects of imposition of candidates/surrogates on infrastructural developments in Edo State Nigeria. Findings revealed that, godsons' preference for political survival above administration has a detrimental effect on good governance. It also revealed that political parties' financial limitations encourage corruption, erode internal democracy. Therefore, the study recommended that (i) introduction of merit-based appointments and performance-based governance (ii) develop long-term strategies for sustainable infrastructure development in Edo State Nigeria.

Key words: Edo State, godfatherism, imposition of candidates, internal democracy and Nigeria.

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Introduction

Democracy, as a moral and legitimate means of governing a nation, has spread to many parts of the globe but it's yet to take root, in Nigeria. The roles of godfathers in the political parties before, during and after parties internal democracy cannot be over mentioned. Godfathers imposed their preferred candidates (godsons) over the general will of the party. The imposition of candidates by godfathers in the political parties always cause trouble, tensions and civil unrest and lead to bad governance. That was the reason why Slothuus & Bisgaard (2021) vividly explained and analysed how political parties shape public opinion in the real World.

Democracy that cut across the nooks and crannies of the world has been jeopardized by the godfatherism in Africa and most especially in Nigeria. The unfriendly and hostile relationship between the godfathers and godsons always lead to low level, un even and unjust distribution of resources such as good roads and quality of water supply. Godfatherism and internal democracy cause troubles and bring cracks to the tenets of democracy and subjected the dividend of democracy to nothing but exercise in futility. Godfatherism is a means through which the leadership of the political parties is imposing the surrogate candidates into political positions for the purpose of serving interest on their behalf.

In Nigeria politics, the candidates (godsons) for any political office are nominated by the godfathers and the godfathers maneuver and manipulated the whole process of primary and convention to favour his preferred candidates (godsons). The campaign committee set up to conduct primary and convention has been hijacked by the godfathers and godsons who finance the whole process of the primaries, convention and congresses with a strong calculation of investing into politics and ready to get dividends and interest at all cost. The central organisation which determines party position and policies such as National Executive Committee (NEC), National Working Committee (NWC) and Board of Trustees (BOT) is usually influence by the godfathers to favour his preferred candidates and party's candidate serve as party's leader in theory because there is always defacto godfathers who control the party affairs. Godsons who dare to cross the boundary lines of the godfathers for any reason will face the impeachment process through the members of state assembly. Essentially, this made Lotshwao (2009) argued that internal party democracy in African National Congress is a threat to the consolidation of democracy in South Africa.

Looking at the politics of Edo State since 2014, is was full of up and down, left to the right and right to the left as a result of godfatherism. Godfatherism is problematic in Edo State politics to the extent that there were rift, tensions and rancours between the godfathers and godsons and this has seriously affected state infrastructural development. Godfatherism lead to defection form party to another, civil unrest, crises among party members, litigation and counter litigation in the competent court of law because both the godfathers and godsons could not manage their differences. That was the reason why Ameh,. Anande, & Nnam (2025) opined that political godfatherism as a catalyst for corruption and impunity in Nigeria. However, the state has been witnessing different types of policies and counter policies as a result of godfatherism and this had advert effect on infrastructural development.
Notable stakeholders in term of godfatherism when politicking is order of the day since 2014 in Edo State include Adams Oshiomhole, Godwin Obaseki and Phillip Shaibu. It is obvious that when the relationship was good enough, the godfathers (Adams Oshiomhole) and godsons (Godwin Obaseki and Philip Shaibu) were in the same party All Progressive Congress (APC) but when they could not manage their difference in term of relationship godsons (Godwin Obaseki and Philip Shaibu) defected to People's Democratic Party (PDP). Likewise, when this scenario happened Godwin Obaseki became godfather and Philip Shaibu

became godson. Invariably when the duo could manage their differences in term of relationship Philip Shaibu defected back to All Progressive Congress (APC) because Godwin Obaseki tried all possible means to impeached Philip Shaibu as deputy governor but the court most especially highest court of the land declared the impeached process of Phillip Shaibu as illegal and thereby reinstated though he has left the PDP.

Essentially, relationship between the godfathers and godsons could be in term of financial buoyant and capacity, technical knowhow in term of politicking and ability to mobilise grass root support for a green horn in politics to take a position of authority in the state. During this travail, there were litigation and counter litigation between and among the stakeholders in Edo State most especially before, during and after internal democracy such as congresses, primaries and convention. It apparent, that when the relationship between the godfathers, godson, stakeholders and other gladiators is not good infrastructural development such as construction of good roads, provision of quality water and other amenities will become a thing of dream instead of reality.

Definitions of terms

Democracy: Galsworthy (2018) argued that the measure of a democracy is the measure of the freedom of its humblest citizens. To what level has been citizens can be regarded as humblest in a democratic state? Theoretically, democracy is founded on the dignity of man but in practice democracy revolves around the dignity of selected people such as godfathers, godsons, stakeholders and gladiators. For example in Nigeria, 25 million out of 220 million population voted during the last general election and less than 9million people voted for the winner to be emerged. To what level has been 8,794,726 out of 200 million people in Nigeria can be regarded as general population? Rulers are elected through competitive elections and in more expansive definition democracy guarantees civil liberties and human rights in addition to competitive elections according to Dahl, Shapiro & Cheibub (2003).

Elections: Bawn & Cohen (2012) proposed a theory of political parties in which interest groups and activists are the key actors and coalitions of groups develop common agendas and screen candidates for party nominations based on loyalty to their agendas. Their proposition towards nomination was bias in the sense that in a political party there are other groups apart from interest groups and activists they mentioned. We have traders, artisans, educated elites, civil servants, literates, illiteracy, retirees, hooligans and others in the political party. When nomination is the order of the day these groups supposed to be taken into consideration but to Bawn & Cohen (2012) they considered only two groups. Most of the screening exercise in a political party did not follow due process. Their screening exercise to nominate candidates for any post is full of mal practices and revolve around how game of politics take place and how much of politicking.

Another objection to the views of Bawn & Cohen (2012) on nomination was that why does the coalition group reserve the power to develop and determine common agendas and screen candidates for nomination? Who determined their size and powers? What criterion is used to form the coalition? These and many more need better clarification and can be regarded as a gap to be filled in the literature. Again, according to Bawn & Cohen (2012) coalition groups often screen candidates based on loyalty to their agendas. This is questionable in the sense that what is the yardstick to measure the loyalty to the agendas? What agendas apart from the agendas for winning an election and control the government? Are there any other agendas that reserve for the coalition groups? What happens to the disloyal members?

Godfatherism

Ameh, Anande, & Nnam (2025) debated that political godfatherism has emerged as a dominant force shaping Nigeria's political landscape, fostering a culture of corruption, impunity and elite dominance. They argued that absence of judicial independence, weak anti corruption enforcement and non transparent political financial has enabled political godfathers to evade justice while shielding corrupt politicians from accountability. Political godfathers are above the law in Nigeria because they can do and undo during internal democracy of political parties and general elections.

Similarly, Dele, Wakil, & Ikpi (2022) argued that politics of godfatherism has negative impact on the socio economic and political development of the nation by confining power in the hands of the few elites at the expense of the masses. They opined that the actions and inaction of godfathers has caused inter party and intra party defections, decamping and conflicts among the party members. Essentially, godfatherism in Nigeria politics always lead to defection of party members from political party to another party and conflicts of different types cut across nooks and crannies of wards executive, local executive, states executive and national executive of the party.

Infrastructural development: Fletcher, Miotti & Swaminathan (2017) debated that urban planners face challenges in water infrastructure development decision due to short term variation in water availability and demand, living term uncertainty in climate and population growth and differing perspectives on the value of water. There are different challenges facing by the urban planner during the water infrastructure and these challenges ranging from political, environment, poverty and illiteracy. Their submission is outdated because different continent faces different challenges during water infrastructure development. Also, different country with different challenges if at all the government embarks on water infrastructure development and different state faces a different challenge if at all the state embarks on water infrastructure development.

Amorcocho Daza, Cabrales & Stantos (2019) opined that reliable and safe access to drinking water is necessary to ensure economic and social sustainable development of human continents. They believed the task requires a multi critical decision analysis (MCDA) methodology to select alternatives for new water supply infrastructures. They argued that these alternatives requirement significant financial resources and are established for a long life span. They developed MCDA methodology to support decision making in the context of building new water supply infrastructure. Their MCDA methodology integrates a hierarchy of non-economic benefits and the expected costs into a global index. Essentially, multi-faceted analysis and approach is requiring from private and public sectors in other to tackle and solve the problem of water supply. Public Private Partnership (PPP) is highly needed if there will be a kind of economic and social sustainable development in the life of the citizens in the state.

Internal Democracy: Lotshwao (2009) sees internal democracy within the political parties as a threat to consolidate democratic state. If the internal democracy of political party does not follow due process of all the tenets of democracy it can be regarded and subjected as threat to consolidate democratic state but if there is genuine internal democracy among the political parties definitely it will consolidate a democratic state.

Political parties

Political parties shape citizens opinion despite long standing interest in the flow of influence between partisan elites and citizens Slothuus & Bisgaard (2021). It is obvious that in

democracy, various policies of political parties are shaping the interest of the citizen. Nonnemacher (2025) argued that transnational brand such as the party family libel assigned to a party are a valuable tool for parties to use to distinguish themselves in turn, voters can more accurately position parties on the left spectrum when party embraces the ideological profile of the rest of its party family. He opined that ideological alignment of party and party family shapes the accuracy of a voter's perception of the party's positions. Basically, in United States of America, ideological alignment of a party with the family of, Kennedy, Bush, Clinton and Obama always has influence and shape voter's perception on the day of voting or election but in Nigeria the story is different because the so called politicians in Nigeria are full of corrupt practices and they cannot showcase their family during an elections if they do, they will not be voted for.

Rule of law: In the words of Adanmids (2024), he sees popular sovereignty plays a central role in both the democratic and the populist ideology. He discussed that the democracy's version of qualified sovereignty is accepted as mutually constitute with the rule of law while the populism version of absolute sovereignty is seen as incompatible with the rule of law. Therefore, he sees the ambiguity in the rule of law when it allows a populism to flourish.

Basically, rule of law is a limit of government, a limit to the power of legislature, power of the executive and power of the judiciary. Rule of law as a limit of government can be well understand in theoretical manner and when it comes to practicability, rule of law turns to another thing entirely. The executive arm of government will try as much as possible to influence, intervene and manipulate the law of the society. In the same vein, in practice among the regime and government the constitutional provision that serve sa guide to the full implementation of the rule of law will be misinterpreted, manipulated and modified to favour a course of action from the legislature, executive and judiciary especially in the developing countries. Therefore, what is the essence of the rule of law when the constitutions and laws cannot be put into practice by the three arms of government in developing countries.

Theoretical Review

Power Theory

The first perspective relates to the actual understanding of the terminology itself What is power? While the second perspective relates to the basis of research and this includes the study of Elite Group. Who ruled? Who exercises power? Who distributes resources? Who manages resources? Basically, according to Power theory, why the rulers have wide range of power over the other. In the words of Max Weber, he sees power as the choice of a man or number of men to realize their own will in a communal action or even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action and that power is visible and located. Power is about opportunity and will. Power assumes that the exertion of power takes place within a formal content. Power has meaning and implication only when there is an exertion of it. Exertion of power makes it visible and location and hence provide basis for its empirical and investigation.

Weber sees power to be visible and located. Who rules or governs? Who exercises and exerts power? Who wields power within the jurisdiction of study? Power is hierarchical and centralised according to the sociologically oriented school of thought. Power is pyramodical and distributed among major segments of society according to Political Scientists.

Basically, the knowledge and understanding of the power theory will help the study to navigate all what revolves around godfatherism and imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria. The theory will illuminate and reveal the important of power among groups of

people in the society and most especially in the arena of politics and how the godfathers and godsons pursue power at all cost at the expense of vast majority. The pursue of power by the godfathers and godsons in Edo States end up in conflicts, civil unrest, disunity, defections, disharmony and different litigation in the competent courts of law.

Statement of the problem

It has however been argued that various policies of the parties are shaping citizens opinion despite long standing interest in the flow of influence between partisan elites and citizens Slothuus & Bisgaard (2021) and this may be due to the fact that godfather, godsons, stakeholders, gladiators and political party leaders always championing the course of getting who get what when and how according to Lasswell.

It has been debated that absence of strategies of political parties influence party decisions on candidates and Nonnemacher (2025) argued that transnational brand can influence how domestic political parties are perceived and this may be due to the fact that there are gladiators, stakeholders and hierarchy of power that can determine what happen and what come to pass in the political parties.

Research Objectives

The general aim of the study is to examine the nexus between godfatherism and imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria while, the specific objectives are to*:*

i. evaluate the effects of imposition of candidates/surrogates on infrastructural developments in Edo State Nigeria.
ii. analyse the extent to which godfatherism denies peaceful co-existence, rule of law and propel injustice amongst the party members in the Edo State Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study developed the following questions to answer

i. How impositions of candidates/surrogates do affected infrastructural developments in Edo State Nigeria?
ii. Does godfatherism denies peaceful co-existence, rule of law and propels injustice amongst the party members in Edo State Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

H0 Godfatherism has no significant relationship between infrastructural development in Edo State Nigeria.

Methodology

Research designs for the study were analytical and descriptive research types. Primary sources that used were questionnaire, structured interview and focus group discussion while secondary source were journals, text books and internets. The study population included State Party Executive of All Progressive Congress (APC)) forty five (45); State Party Executive of People's Democratic Party (PDP) forty two (42); Local Government Executive APC thirty (30); Local Government Executive PDP thirty (30); Electorates APC thirty (30); Electorates PDP thirty (30); INEC ten (10); Academias sixteen (16), Civil Society fifteen (15) making a total population of two hundred and forty eight (248). Out of the population, the study randomly samples State Party Executive of All Progressive Congress (APC)) eighteen (18); State Party executive of People's Democratic Party (PDP) seventeen (17); Local Government Executive APC twelve (12); Local Government Executive PDP twelve (12);

Electorates twelve APC (12); Electorates twelve PDP (12); INEC five (05); Academias eight (08), Civil Society six (6) making a total of one hundred and two (102). Questionnaires were distributed to the selected samples and retrieved by the researcher using all avenues at his disposal. The avenues used to retrieve the questionnaires included physical contact and through on line engagements.

Respondents for the selected interview for the study included party chairmen of All Progressive Congress (APC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) four (4), party secretaries of All Progressive Congress (APC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) four (4), senatorial leaders of All Progressive Congress (APC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) three (3), religious leaders three (3) and traditional rulers three (3) making a total of seventeen (17). While the respondents selected for the focus group discussion for the study included old and educated male and female ten (10), old and uneducated male and female ten (10), youth and educated male and female ten (10), and youth and uneducated male and female ten (10) making a total of forty (40).

Five research questions were raised to guide the study and questionnaires were distributed to answer the research questions. Instrument the study relied upon was questionnaire on the nexus between godfatherism and imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria: Problems and Way forward. (TNBGAICIESNPWQ) and it was used to collate data from the respondents. The face and content validity test of the instrument was determined by Seniors Political Scientists and Statisticians in Kwara State University Malete.

Data in this research was presented in tables. A five-point Likert scale was used in the following manner: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Undecided (UD), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The responses on a five-point scale were measured at 3.0 levels. Items of research questions with a mean response of 3.0 and above were accepted while any item with a mean response below 3.0 was rejected. The descriptive and inferential statistics on the collected data provide information such as frequency and simple percentage. In the analysis of data presentation, a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 2.0 was utilized for the data analysis.

Empirical Analysis

One hundred and two (102) questionnaires were administered across Edo State Nigeria. Out of these, eight (8) respondents could not be reached, while ninety four (94) questionnaires were successfully retrieved. Among the retrieved questionnaires, ninety (90) were duly completed without errors, whereas 4 were returned but incorrectly filled.

Hence: the response rate is presented below:

$$\frac{Nr \times 100}{Ns-(a-b)}$$

Nr = Number returned, Ns = Number sampled, a = Respondents that could not be reached
b = Wrongly filled questionnaire.

Percentage of responses $\frac{94\times100}{102 - (8-4)} = 96\%$

The percentage of respondents is ninety six percentages (96%) as calculated above.

The effects of imposition of candidates / surrogates affected infrastructural development in Edo State Nigeria

Table 1 hereby provides a breakdown of the percentage decisions of responses on how imposition of candidates / surrogates affected infrastructural development in Edo State Nigeria?

SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), **SD** (Strongly Disagreed), D (Disagreed) and N (Neutral)

S/N	Statements	SA	A	SD	D	N	Total	Aggregate Response
1	There is the transfer of public funds by godsons to godfathers, stakeholders and relevant gladiators for personal use.	49 54.4%	21 23.3%	11 12.2%	6 6.8%	3 3.3%	90 100%	Strongly Agreed
2	There is always conflict and civil unrest between the godfather and godson and this seriously affected infrastructural projects in the state.	17 19%	45 50%	13 14.4%	11 12.2%	4 4.4%	90 100%	Agreed
3	Relevant stakeholders in the playing of politics do not abide by the rule of the game during the internal democracy.	18 20%	38 42.2%	21 23.3%	6 6.7%	7 7.8%	90 100%	Agreed
4	Technical knowhow of politicking of godfathers couple with financial buoyant of greenhorn in politics (godsons) always limit the capacity of political parties during internal democracy.	15 16.7%	45 50%	19 21.1%	6 6.6%	5 5.6%	90 100%	Agreed

n= 90

Source: Survey data collected from the Fieldwork, 2025

Analysing the extent by which godfatherism denies peaceful co-existence, rule of law and propel injustice amongst the party members in Edo State Nigeria

Table 2 hereby provides a breakdown of the percentage decisions of responses on the extent by which godfatherism denies peaceful co-existence, rule of law and propels injustice amongst the party members in Edo State Nigeria.

SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed), D (Disagreed) and N (Neutral)

S/N	Statements	SA	A	SD	D	N	Total	Aggregate Response
5	Godfatherism is problematic before, during and after internal democracy and its always end up to uneven distribution of infrastructure in Edo State Nigeria.	20 22.2%	40 44.4%	12 13.3%	10 11.1%	8 9%	90 100%	Agreed
6	Party executives and delegates were dictated for during the primaries and this negates their freedom of choice.	27 30%	46 51.1%	11 12.3%	4 4.4%	2 2.2%	90 100%	Agreed
7	Electoral mal practices are order of the day during the general elections which always championed by godfathers and godsons.	19 21.1%	41 45.6%	10 11.1%	13 14.4%	7 7.8%	90 100%	Agreed
8	Security officials and INEC officials always danced to the dictates and controls of godfathers, godsons and the power from the center during party primaries.	22 24.4%	30 33.3%	18 20%	14 15.6%	6 6.7%	90 100%	Agreed

n= 90

Source: Survey data collected from the Fieldwork, 2025

Discussion of findings

The first objective is on the effects of imposition of candidates / surrogates affected infrastructural development in Edo State Nigeria. The result further support the claim that political party's financial limitations encourage corruption, erode internal democracy and have negative impact on infrastructural development and governance in Edo State Nigeria more than 77.7% of respondents in Edo State responded that godfathers put their own interests ahead of significant political beliefs. Issues including postponed infrastructure projects, ineffective government and the preference for political control over the general welfare were mentioned by respondent $8_{Ed.}$

On whether there is the transfer of public funds by godsons to godfathers, stakeholders and relevant gladiators for personal use. Data collected revealed that, 49 (54.4%) + 21 (23.3%) = 70 (77.7%) agreed, while 11 (12.2%) + 6 (6.8%) +3 (3.3%) = 20 (22.3%) disagreed/. These results demonstrate that political godfathers put their own political interests ahead of the formulation and application of groundbreaking political principles. That was the reason why Ameh,. Anande, & Nnam (2025) debated that political godfatherism has emerged as a

dominant force shaping Nigeria's political landscape, fostering a culture of corruption, impunity and elite dominance. The procedures include diverting public funds to finance the congresses and primaries. On whether technical knowhow of politicking of godfathers couple with financial buoyant of greenhorn in politics (godsons) always limit the capacity of political parties during internal democracy. Data collected revealed that, 15 (16.7%) + 45 (50%) = 60 (66.7%) agreed, while 19 (21.1%) + 6 (6.6%) + 5 (5.6%) = 30 (33.3%) disagreed. Respondent 9_{ED} emphasised that, there should be a kind of enlightenment to the masses and the electorates on the negative impact of godfatherism. People should be ready at all costs to pick their candidates by themselves without any interference. (Field work Interview, 2025)
The second objective is on the extent to which godfatherism denies peaceful co-existence, rule of law and propel injustice amongst the party members in Edo State Nigeria. The result showed that in Edo State Nigeria, godfathersim seriously jeopardises political stability, democratic governance and election integrity. The finding emphasised the systemic problems caused by political godaftherism and is backed up by respondent interviews and quantitative results. Electoral mal practices such as vote buying, political violence and rigging were confirmed by 66.7% of respondents. During party primaries, 57.7% of respondents agreed that security officials and INEC officials always danced to the dictates and controls of godfathers, godsons and the power from the center during party primaries.

On whether godfatherism is problematic before, during and after internal democracy and its always end up to uneven distribution of infrastructure in Edo State Nigeria. Data collected revealed that 20 **(22.2%) + 40 (44.4%) = 60 (66.6%)** agreed, while **12 (13.3%) + 10 (11.1%) + 8 (9%) = 30 (33.4%)** disagreed. These results highlight the continued occurrence of political violence and electoral fraud, which impede Nigeria's democratic consolidation. Additionally, Sindre, (2016) argued that intra party democracy may essentially lead to rebel parties, political thuggery, election violence, limiting voter engagement and establishing a culture of impunity. On whether security officials and INEC officials always danced to the dictates and controls of godfathers, godsons and the power from the center during party primaries.. The quantitative data demonstrated that, **22 (24.4%) + 30 (33.3%) = 52 (57.7%)** agreed, while 18 **(20%) + 14 (15.6%) =32 (35.6%)** disagreed. According to these findings, it shows that political godfathers and their supporters have a substantial impact on the election process, which compromises democratic governance and electoral integrity. Similarly, Dele,. Wakil, & Ikpi (2022) emphasised that politics of godfatherism has negative impact on the socio economic and political development of the nation by confining power in the hands of the few elites at the expense of the masses.

Hypothesis Testing

This section presents the hypothesis testing results for the study using SPSS Version 20, are shown in this section. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis and correlation. The strength of evidence in support of a null hypothesis is measured by the p-value**.** If the p-value is less than the significance level (0.05)**,** the null hypothesis is rejected**.** If the p-value is greater than the significance level (0.05)**,** the null hypothesis is accepted**.**

H0: Godfatherism has no significant relationship with imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria.

Model Summary of Hypothesis

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.604a	.365	.363	.38947	2.117

Source: Survey data collected from the Fieldwork, 2025

a. Predictors: (Constant), AV_Godfatherism
b. Dependent Variable: AV Imposition of Candidates

ANOVAa

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig (p-value)
Regression	28.247	1	28.247	186.451	.000b
Residual	49.875	338	.148		

Total 78.122 339

a. Dependent Variable: AV_ Imposition of Candidates
b. Predictors: (Constant), AV_Godfatherism

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig (p-value)
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
1(Constant)	2.103	.087		24.178
AV_Godfatherism	.425	.031	.604	13.654

Source: Survey data collected from the Fieldwork, 2025

a. Dependent Variable: AV_ Imposition of Candidates

According to the null hypothesis, godfatherism and imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria do not significantly correlate. Nonetheless, the ANOVA findings indicate a p-value of.000 and an F-value of 186.451, both of which are below 0.05. Furthermore, the R-Square value of.365 suggests that godfatherism accounts for 36.5% of the variance in imposition of candidates. The null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected since the p-value is less than 0.05. This means that godfatherism has significant relationship imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria**.**

Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Decision
H_{01}: Godfatherism has no significant relationship with imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria	Rejected (Significant relationship found)

Source: Survey data collected from the Fieldwork, 2025

Conclusion

There is continuance occurrence of political violence and electoral fraud which impede Nigeria's democratic consolidation most especially in Edo State Nigeria. Political godfathers

and their supporters had impacted negatively on electoral process which compromises democratic governance and electoral integrity as could be seen from Respondent 8 $_{Ed,,}$ Respondent 2_{Ed} and Respondent 4_{Kd} and this jeorpardised political stability, democratic governance and election integrity. Respondents interviewed submitted that godfatherism is a deceptive system that restricts the ability of godsons to make autonomous policy decisions by forcing them to stay faithful to their sponsors. Godfatherism results in voter rights violations and disenfranchisement according to the findings in Edo State Nigeria.

Recommendations

An empirical analysis of the nexus between godfatherism and imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria clearly revealed problems emanated and posed by the godfathers, godsons, stakeholders and gladiators during the internal democracy. It is therefore, the study recommends the followings to ameliorate the power and influences of godfathers, godsons, stakeholders and gladiators in Edo State Nigeria.

- **Improve security to reduce election violence and political thuggery:** The government and the people of Edo State Nigeria should improve their security in other to reduce election violence and political thuggery. Edo State governments should partner the political parties, traditional rulers, religious organization and nongovernmental organization when initiating and formulating policies to reduce election violence and political thuggery.

- **Introduce merit-based appointments and performance-based governance:** Edo State Nigeria should have visionary and patriotic leaders couple with patriotic advisers and followers. This will give room for eradication of all form of imposition of candidates and thereby having merit based appointment and performance based governance in selection, appointment, nomination and election of the representatives into position of authority and leadership.

- **Develop long-term strategies for sustainable infrastructure development:** Instead of focusing on short term strategies for sustainable infrastructure development, Edo State Nigeria should concentrate more on long term strategies for sustainable infrastructure development. This will give room for long term planning towards infrastructure development. For example roads that want to be constructed to last for five years when putting long term strategies into consideration will be constructed and lasted for twenty years.

- **Public education and orientation:** National Orientation Agency (NOA) both at thje federal and state level should introduce public education, orientation and enlightenment as when due to open the eyes of masses, electorates and voters to the evil effects of godfatherism and imposition of candidates in Edo State Nigeria.

- **Severe penalty:** Severe penalty should be given to anyone who found guilty of electoral mal practices before, during and after internal democracy and other elections in Edo State Nigeria.

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