

Impact of Crime on Nigerian Politics; A Theoretical Study on the Seven (7) Nature of the Nigerian Politics

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Abstract

Politics is the activity that involves the governance of a society and also the process of acquiring and maintaining power. Sadly, Nigerian politics is plagued by crime and criminal activities. Crime as a social problem has existed since time immemorial and has hindered the smooth running of society. This crime influences how politicians acquire, keep, and deal with power. This study tries to unravel the seven (7) natures of Nigerian politics and its impacts on society. These natures have done the Nigerian society no good, both politically and economically. This paper, which is theoretical in nature, adopts descriptive analysis to examine the issue of crime in Nigerian politics. It draws its arguments or sources from secondary data, which includes journals, internet sources, and textbooks. Discussion and seven recommendations were proffered at the end of the study.

Keywords: *Crime, Politics, Nature, Impacts, Society*

INTRODUCTION

Historically, crime has been one of the social problems affecting the existence of mankind. During early society, crime was seen as a taboo or a sin punishable by God, dieties, or society itself. According to Atanu (2019), "crime is one of the continuous problems that bedevilled the existence of mankind. Since the early days, crime has been a disturbing threat to mankind's personality, property, and lawful authority. Today, in the modern complex world, the situation is highly disturbing." Crime has also been woven into the political fabric of many societies, and by so doing, it has undermined the democratic institutions of the society. According to reports by the UN Office for Drug Control (UNODC), over the past decades, transitional criminal networks have infiltrated West African polities up to the highest circles. By means of coercion and corruption, criminal elements are realising enormous profits while gaining influence over body politics on both the local and national level. Crime in Nigerian politics is a problem that is multi-dimensional and capable of undermining its cooperate existence as well as efforts towards sustainable development (Mayowa, 2014).

The nature of Nigerian politics rests on seven pillars, which are "politics of the do or die affair," political corruption, "God fatherism", tribalism/religious bigotry, "gag of the judiciary," "failed manifesto," and "vote buying." This seven nature or political problem has held the nation back from achieving its potential. The Nigerian political scene has been characterised by different types of criminal activities that are orchestrated by politicians for the purpose of winning elections. (Mayowa, 2014). The presidential candidate of the Labour Party in the 2023 general election, Mr. Peter Obi, in a programme tagged navigating the corridors of power, the church and the politics, he described the Nigerian politics as a situation whereby lunatics have taken over the asylum. The politics of the do-or-die affair implies the use of coercion by corrupt and desperate politicians to seize power or subvert the mandate of the people. During election and campaign season, there are wide cases of assassination, voter suppression, snatching of ballot boxes, and attacks on polling units. Political violence has become part and parcel of the Nigerian political journey (Alfa& Otaida, 2012). According to Etannibi (2013), "transition to liberal democracy started over the past three decades and has not been consolidated but rather stagnant at the level of periodic rites of fraudulent elections".

Political corruption remains one of the problems that has bedevilled the Nigerian political system. Adamaaghasi (2023) defined corruption as "the deliberate use of illegal tactics to advance personal interests at the expense of the public good in order to amass wealth, power, and influence." The 1998 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranked Nigeria as the fifth most corrupt nation out of 85 countries listed in the rating. Political corruption is a cancer that has eaten deeply into the fabric of the Nigerian polity. The global perception of graft in Nigeria is that it is generally acknowledged that corrupt practices are endemic and systematic in both the private and public sectors in Nigeria (Philips & Akpokighe, 2014). This high level of corruption in the Nigerian politics has enormous effects on Nigerian society at large. Corruption has substantially impeded the nation's economic progress and damaged democracy and good governance by undermining political campaigns and administrative procedures. (Adamaghasi, 2023). Appointment to public offices is no longer dependent on competence but rather on "whom you know." Lack of transparency and accountability by politicians are also crimes in Nigerian politics.

The culture of "God-fatherism" is deeply rooted in the DNA of the Nigerian politics. These godfathers are either political or economic giants who control the affairs of the state through their chosen "Godson" for their own selfish interests. According to Igbini and Okolie (2020), godfathers are "powerful individuals in society who determine 'who, what, when, and how' in the corridors of power. The present-day godfatherism is a primordial tradition taken to a criminal extent. (Olawale, 2005) The political godfathers in Nigeria build an array of loyalists around them and use their influence, which is often tied to monetary considerations, to manipulate the rest of society. (Igbini & Okolie 2020). God-fatherism has undermined democracy in Nigeria as many godsons are brought into power against the will of the people, and these godsons are only focused on satisfying the will of their godfathers. Failure to do so would lead to an outburst of war between godfathers and their godsons. For example, Igbini & Okolie (2020) cited the outburst of war between Chris Uba (god-father) and Chris Ngige (god-son); "Their loyalists embarked on a battle of 'iron' and 'steel', the state became a war zone, innocent lives were lost, houses were set ablaze, and Anambra state became ungovernable for weeks.

"The politics of tribalism and religious bigotry". Tribalism and religious fanaticism is a slow poison that gradually eats up the unity of a society. In Nigerian politics, tribalism and religious affiliation come before competence, and it is important to note that tribal and religious tensions are being stirred up by dubious politicians as tools to deceive the gullible. According to Mayowa (2014), "The nation's incessant appeals to ethnicity have obviously showcased the evil inherent in the politicization of ethnicity." Furthermore, Mayowa noted that "the virus of ethnicity has been one of the most definitive causes of social crises, injustices, inequality, and religio-political instability in Nigeria." In the 2023 election, Nigerian society witnessed a high tension of tribal and religious sentiments; citizens were divided along ethnic and religious lines. According to reports by Yiaga Africa, "During the presidential and governorship elections, citizens were denied the right to vote in some states, especially Lagos and Kano State. Voters were profiled based on political affiliation or ethnic identity and were denied the opportunity to access polling units to vote".

Gagging of the judiciary is another crime in Nigerian politics. It is important to note that "competent and independent judiciary are in many ways central to democracy (Leonard, 2009). The judiciary is the third arm of government, which guarantees stability and the smooth running of democracy and governance, but unfortunately, the glorious days of justice Oputa, Justice Nnaemeka Agu, Justices Aniagolu etc are being missed. As a result of the judiciary being perceived to be used by the executive to upturn victories and consolidate fraudulent elections, According to Otteh (2004) and Nwabueze (1992), as cited in Enweremadu (2011), "one of the key challenges was the lack of independence arising from the judiciary being tied to the apron strings of the executive arm of government, which by a variety of means, including the process of selecting judges (appointment, promotion, and conditions of service) and the deft use of pliable judges to execute unpopular agendas, made the judiciary more or less government rubber stamp." Also, after the 2023 election in Nigeria, various alarms were raised as regards using the judicial body to truncate the democratic process. For instance, "The former vice president and presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar, raised alarm over the alleged plots by the ruling party to compromise Nigeria's judicial process and undermine the country's democracy. (Premium Times newspaper).

Failed manifestos and vote buying are well-known aspects of Nigerian politics. To most Nigerian politicians, manifestos are sweet words of deceit used to entice the electorate and not a blueprint for governance. This pattern has held the country stanganat for years, as each campaign season is filled with unkempt promises. Lastly, in Nigerian politics, the menace of vote-buying is being employed by corrupt politicians to win elections. Citizens sell their right to vote for the next four years for 'peanuts' in exchange. These politicians capitalise on the poverty rate in the country and offer the electorate peanuts in order to get their votes. In summary, this study seeks to unravel the impact of crime in Nigerian politics and proffer its possible solutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

***. THE CONCEPT OF CRIME.**

Crime is a negative externality with enormous social costs (Lochner & Moretti, 2004). It is well known that crime has no universally accepted definition; it is a reflection of the values of a society over a given period of time. According to Atanu, "an act may be a crime in one society but not in another." Activities like prostitution, adultery, and homosexuality between two consenting adults have been wholly or partially removed from some states criminal laws in America but are still considered crimes in places like Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, etc. The constant changes in time, also change the perception of society on crime" (Atanu, 2019). For instance, during precolonial history in Nigeria, the birth of twins was considered a crime or taboo in society, but it is no longer a crime or taboo in contemporary Nigeria society. Therefore, crime is subject to the influence of time and society.

Crime can be defined as an offence that deserves community condemnation, usually through a fine or imprisonment (Law Handbook, 2017). For the purpose of this study, crime is defined as an action or omission, directly or indirectly, that is repugnant to the criminal laws of the state at a given period of time and also tends to hinder the progress and smooth running of society. Crime is often thought of as a moral threat and injurious to society; it affects the personalities of individuals and their property and lessens trust among members of society (Atanu, 2019). Crimes are also often classified according to criminal intent or the degree of seriousness, for example, felony and misdemeanour (Uzodimma & defuna, 2019).

Crime is a cancer which kills the moral longevity of any society. If crime isn't properly tackled, it spreads fast until the moral and ethical strength of a society is weakened and decayed. The worst stage of crime is when members of society are either unperturbed or see it as the way of life. Despite the fact that crime is inevitable in a society, various controlling and preventive measures have been taken and are still being taken to reduce the menace, with the introduction of modern scientific and technical methods in crime prevention and control proving to be effective (Atanu, 2019). In summary, a crime is an act that is against the criminal laws of society and also harmful to the smooth running of society.

NATURE OF THE NIGERIAN POLITICS

As earlier stated, the nature of the Nigerian politics rests on seven pillars, which include 'politics of do-or-die affair' 'political corruption,' godfatherism, 'politics of tribalism and religious bigotry,' gagging of the judiciary,' failed manifesto' and 'vote buying'. These seven pillars have hindered the growth and smooth running of society.

*** POLITICS OF DO OR DIE AFFAIR.**

Politics is the set of activities that relate to influencing the actions and policies of the government or getting and keeping power (Morris, 1991). It is a well-known fact that one of the natures of Nigerian politics is a do-or-die affair; this has led to or brought about political violence, voters suppression, fraudulent elections, snatching of ballot boxes, etc. According to Mayowa (2014), "political violence is being sponsored and perpetrated by the politicians." These politicians use any means necessary to ensure that their ego and selfish interests are achieved. Igbini and Okolie (2020), noted that; "many godfathers in the present day Nigeria operate like Mafia by displaying violent schemes and aggressive 'politicking' coupled with manipulating devices to have their way by any means possible. They rely on Machiavelli's slogan, "The end justifies the means". The 2023 presidential election in Nigeria witnessed an unfortunate incident of electoral violence, with allegations pointing towards involvement from the ruling political class (Ibrahim, 2023; Vanguard, 2023). The Nigerian political scene has been characterised by different types of criminal activities that are orchestrated by politicians for the purpose of winning elections (Mayowa, 2014). Political violence has led to the assassination of opponents, intimidation of voters and snatching of ballot boxes. Election seasons in Nigeria is known to be very tensed as Politicians releases their beasts to achieve their aims.

Furthermore, in the issue of voter suppression and fraudulent elections, Yiaga Africa reported that "voter suppression was employed as a tactical strategy to influence electoral outcomes by discouraging or preventing specific groups of people from voting. Yiaga Africa observed the deliberate attempt to deny eligible voters the opportunity to register or vote during the election with the view of diluting their voting strength or power as a group." In further reports by Yiaga Africa, "Inconsistencies and significant manipulation of results collation process. The state-level presidential results for Imo and Rivers were inconsistent with the Yiaga Africa WTV projection for both states because the results were altered at the collation level. These politicians achieve their aim through their hired thugs and corrupt electoral officers who subvert the mandate of the people for their pockets. Hired thugs either snatch ballot boxes from opponents strongholds or intimidate voters at the polling units. They go to the extent of coercing voters into choosing whom they should vote for. Taking few examples, according to reports by The African Reports; "Voter in oniru area of Lagos told The African Reports that thugs threatened all those who were not willing to vote for the All progressive Congress (APC) to return home immediately. The African Reports had earlier reported that there was looming electoral violence in Lagos as thugs loyal to the APC had before the day of election warned all those who where not planning on voting for the APC to stay at home, viral videos shows thugs welding sticks, shouting that those who are not planning on voting the APC should sit at home. In an Instagram live video by Chioma Akpotha a veteran actress, she said; "I had to run out, they destroyed the side mirrors of my car... they brought out knife and wanted to stab me, what happened to the free and fair election they promised us? Nothing is free and fair. You are intimidating people. Additionally, Traditional rulers who are known supporters of the ruling party also imposes midnight curfew to perform 'Oro' rights, slaughtering animals and placing heads of goats in calabash, strategically placed near voting centres ostensibly to scare voters".

As earlier noted, electoral officers are used to subvert the mandate of the people. According to reports by Yiaga Africa, "a case of bribery was reported in polling units 06 ward 05 Isoko North, Delta State, where INEC officials received a cash gift from the APC party agents in the polling units."

***. POLITICAL CORRUPTION**

Political corruption is a phenomenon that has bedevilled the Nigerian political system and the existence of Nigerian society. This issue of political corruption has dealt a great blow to the development of Nigerian society since the inception of military rule. The term "corruption" has various definitions by different scholars. Adamaghasi (2023) noted that "fraud, embezzlement, and bribery are only a few of the many actions that are included in the broad definition of corruption; it is one of several unsolvable societal pathologies wrecking havoc on Nigerian society, whose repercussions and implications defy clear-cut boundaries." Oviasuyi et al. (2021) defined corruption as any anti-social action by a person or group that results in unfair or fraudulent gain for the offender while being at odds with the established legal standard and moral ethics of the country. Political corruption is a cancer that has eaten deep into the political system and society as a whole. Political corruption involves the embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds, bribery, electoral malpractice, a lack of transparency and accountability, etc. from public office holders.

The efforts of the federal government to establish anti-corruption agencies to combat corruption are not working as expected in the country because of a lack of commitment or political will to enforce anti-corruption laws (Bello-imam, 2005; Awopeju, 2020). Various anti-corruption agencies and governments had promised to tackle the menace of corruption; for example, the Obasanjo government promised to tackle corruption, and the Buhari's-led government promised zero tolerance for corruption, yet the expected outcome hasn't been forthcoming. According to Audu (2008), as cited in Lawrence (2020), "the menace of corruption has scored and flourished despite the rhetoric to fight corruption in the fourth republic and has continued to be the bane of democratic stability and survival in Nigeria since 1999." Lawrence (2020), in his explanation of the above, noted that the implication of this sad development is that neither the military juntas nor the flowing agbada politicians are saints or angels, as the successive military and civilian leaders in the country at one time or another in the history of Nigeria presided over corrupt administration in the country.

Corrupt politicians amass great wealth from the commonwealth of the nation sends it into an offshore account, no transparency or accountability of public funds. Electoral malpractice and corruption cases end up resulting in a natural death. The fight against corruption has been delusional, selective, and a political manhunt of the opposition party. Cases of corruption end up fading away with a defection to the ruling party. For instance, the former chairman of the APC, Senator Adams Oshomole, outrightly stated, "Once you join the APC, your sins are forgiven (Punchng.com). Political corruption is an enemy to the development of society because the money meant for the development of the state goes into the coffers of one man, it also leads to the moral decay of the society, thereby making the society porous to anti-social vices.

*. POLITICS OF GOD-FATHERISM

One cannot speak about the nature of Nigerian politics without mentioning the politics of God-fatherism. God-fatherism is a socio-political and economic hijack or siege of society by a few politicians and economic gladiators who control the affairs of the state for their selfish interests and are in charge of ordaining and removing a king. These godfathers don't only ordain the king but also his cabinet and other key sectors of the administration to aid in the easy removal of a rebellious godson and consolidate power through their political structures.

The concept of God-fatherism has been operationalized by many scholars based on their own views and understandings. Former governor Chimaroke Nnamani (2003), as cited in Adeoya (2009), Igbini & Okolie (2020), affirms that "God-fathers is an impervious guardian figure who provided the lifeline and direction to the god-son, perceived to live a life of subservience and protection of the oracular, personality located in the large material frame of opulence, affluence, and decisiveness, that is, if not ruthless... Strictly, the godfather is simply a self-seeking individual out there to use the government for his own purposes." Scott (1972), as cited in Igbini & Okolie, defined "god-fatherism as a special case of dyadic (two persons) ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (patron or god-father) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits or both for a person of lower status (clients or godson) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services to the patron or god-father."

God-fatherism, in one form or another, has its history in Nigerian society. According to Abner (1971), Polly (1966) and Pally (2004), as cited in Attah, Audu, and Haruna (2014), "They used the term 'Magida' (Master of the House) in their works to refer to those who provided brokerage service to Hausa traders in transit in different parts of West Africa. In Yoruba society, the godfather is referred to as 'Baba kekere' (the small great father), 'Baba isale' (the father of the underground world), or 'Baba Nigbejo' (a great helper in times of trouble)". Furthermore, Dickson (2003) also noted that the responsibility of the godfather is grounded in the sociology of traditional Igbo society. He further showed evidence of the popular relationship between 'Nnam ukwu' (my master) and 'Odibo' (the servant) in the traditional concept. In explanation of the above, Igbini & Okolie stated that in Igbo society, a young person is entrusted to a more mature and experienced person for training in social, economic, and moral adulthood. The role played by this man in this kind of relationship is akin to that of a godfather.

God-fatherism in Nigerian politics is a contest between elitism and democracy (Igbini & Okolie, 2020). Olawale (2005) noted that present-day god-fatherism is a primordia tradition taken to a criminal extent. These godfathers use their political structures to suppress democracy and hold on to power. Former Governor Wike in an interview with Arise TV stated that: "I will not allow anyone to hijack my political structures, which I have spent years, if not decades, building. All of us have political structures, and if you take away my political structures, am I not irrelevant?" Furthermore, the same governor, Wike, encouraged former governor Ambode to resist his godfather to promote the interests of the state. However, there have been various cases of clashes between godfathers and their godsons when interests no longer align. It is vital to note that Nigerian

politicians are 'associates of friends, and in Nigerian politics there's always a clash of interest and not ideology, when interests do not align, there's an outburst of war because the average Nigerian politician seeks economic interests and social relevance.

In summary, god-fatherism is of no good to any society; it kills democracy and brings incompetent leaders who are only in power to fulfil the wishes of their masters. For this reason, god-fathers go to a large extent to get what they want at the expense of the overall good of the society. A god-son may end up finishing their tenure of office without paying up their debts to their god-fathers until another king is ordained.

***.THE POLITICS OF TRIBALISM AND RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY**

Tribalism and religious bigotry are deeply rooted in the soul of Nigerian society. From the birth of Nigeria till date, tribalism and religious bigotry have been the major issues hindering the nation's development, bringing disunity and crisis, etc. For instance, the Kano riot, civil war, boko-haram insurgency, riots in the north, etc. Political tribalism is the manipulation of ethnic identity, whereby it is transformed into a kind of nationality in which leaders play on a community's fear of losing out to other ethnic groups in the competition for power and resources to mobilise support (Oxford Reference). While Religious bigotry can simply be defined as a lack of tolerance and parochialism towards the religious beliefs of other people.

Nnoli (1978) submitted that; "conflict as an aspect of ethnicity is more pronounced in societies where the inter-ethnic competition for scarce resources is the rule, particular when in equality is accepted as a given and wealth is greatly esteemed." "The issue of ethnic configuration has further Polarized the country along ethnic lines and this is generating tension among the ethnic groups in the country (Mayowa, 2014). Tribalism/religious bigotry is a political game being stirred up by the Nigerian politicians in which the gullible fall for it. The politicians uses this as tools to consolidate their political power and set the masses against each other. According to Corrigan & Tyler (2016); "Religious bigotry, like all structural bigotry, is exercised in order to hold power, groups perceived as competitors for the resources claimed by the religion are assessed as impure, dangerous and an imminent threat to the very existence of the religious community. "For instance, in the build-up to the 2023 general election, opposition party and religious groups condemned the APC same faith ticket, the opposition party used it to campaign against the APC.

As earlier noted, tribal and religious tensions are being stirred up by politicians for their selfish political game. For example, the former vice president and presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar, during his interactive session with the Arewa joint committee in Kaduna State, told them not to support an Igbo or Yoruba candidate. According to him (Atiku), this is what the north needs. It doesn't need an igbo or Yoruba candidate, I stand before you as a pan-Nigerian of Northern origin (Punch ng.com). Secondly, we saw in the case of Bayo Onanuga, the media director to the president, who clearly stated, "Let 2023 be the last time of Igbo interference in Lagos politics." "Let there be no repeat in 2027; Lagos is Yoruba land; mind your business (Daily post 2023). Sadly to note that this was the same Bayo Onanuga when he was a journalist, after a tour to memorial genocide in Kigali Rwanda he said; "I recommend it as a must

go place to ethnic champions, pastor and Imam, harbouring hatred about their fellow human beings and non adherent of their faith. I hope they would take away as I did, that all human beings don't in most cases have a choice about who they are in this world. Our ethnic identity is determined to us by our maker. So why then do we hate a person who is not a member of our ethnic groups, why should a Christian hate a Muslim and vice versa? Let all humanity live in love". What changed his views after joining politics? Furthermore, one can't ignore the statement made by former minister and governor of Kaduna State, Nasir El Rufai, who was quoted as saying, "The victory of Bola Ahmed Tinubu has silenced the Christian association of Nigeria, adding that he would sustain an Islamic-dominated government for 20 years and unending not only in Kaduna State but also in Nigeria at large. He told his audience that in the course of the electioneering campaign, when they tried to ask questions on why the same faith Muslim-Muslim tickets, he deceived them by saying that it was not for Islamic dominance, but in reality, both the tickets, both nationally and at the state level, were for Islamic dominance (Punch newspaper). In addition, when politicians are scared on losing out on power they play the card of tribalism, for example, in an outburst of war between Wike (god-father) and his godson Simi fubara, the ethnic card was introduced. Wike, in an interview, berated the governor, Simi, for raising ethnic politics in the state.

In the Nigerian political system tribalism or religion comes before competence and character. According to Edwin (2014); "Nepotism has become part of the unwanted culture we display everyday especially when dispensing political patronage in the present day Nigeria". The dissolution of region in to state and the creation of the National Youth Service Corps after the civil war hasn't solved the issue of tribalism which bedeviled the nation and was one of the immediate cause of the civil/Biafran war (1967-1970). In conclusion, it is necessary for the masses to wash off the clothes of tribalism and religious bigotry to bring about a much healthier political system where competence of a candidate is the focal point.

*. **GAGGING OF JUDICIARY**

The judiciary is the third arm of government, which is in charge of the interpretation of laws and also administers justice in the name of the state. It is important to note that the judiciary is the bedrock of democracy. The stability and quality of a democratic constitution are often determined by the degree of importance a society attaches to the judiciary and the powers it gives it (Mbanefo, 1975). According to Enweremadu (2011) in his explanation of the above citation, "This can be measured in several ways. The first is whether the judiciary is independent, that is, if it is not beholden to any special interest or to either of the other two arms of government (executive and legislative)." Whenever the judiciary becomes partial or politicised, it signifies the death of democracy in that society.

However, the judiciary arm hasn't lived up to its expectations for the sustainability of democracy in Nigeria, as the judiciary is perceived to be controlled by politicians, most especially the executive arm. Davies (1990) noted that "the judiciary became an anti-democratic institution, that is to say, contrary to its democracy-enhancing role, it became a potent tool for undermining democracy and fostering authoritarian rule." For instance, Senator Bulkachuwa, in his address to the 9th Assembly, was quoted as saying, "My wife Zainab extended help to some of my colleagues

during her time as the president of the Court of Appeal. I look at faces in this chamber who have come to me and sought my help when my wife was the president of the appeals court." He went further to say after being interjected by the president of the senate (9th Assembly). Well, Mr. Chairman, to round up, since that's what you want me to do, I would do that. I must thank, particularly, my wife, whose freedom and independence I encroached upon while she was in office. She has been very tolerant and has accepted my encroachment and extended her help to my colleague (Channels Television).

In the aftermath of the 2023 general election, there was a lack of trust in the judiciary to deliver a credible judgement because many viewed the judiciary as being controlled by the ruling party. The vice presidential candidate of the Labour Party, Datti Ahmed Baba, and the gubernatorial candidate of the PDP in Kogi State, Dino Melaye, were two of the prominent people to express their lack of trust in the judiciary. Melaye was quoted as saying, "Judiciary is no longer the last hope of the ordinary people; it is now a department under the All Progressive Congress. Why should any responsible person go to the tribunal when the APC has captured the judiciary? I have lost complete confidence in the judiciary (Sahara report).

Beyond it's (judiciary) inability to mediate conflicts, the neglect and politicisation of the judiciary transformed this important institution in several other negative ways (Enweremadu, 2011). Olurode (1990) noted that; "During the second republic petitions emanating from the two general election held during the period flooded the courts and election tribunal." But rather than do justice to these petitions the courts appeared bent on ensuring the status quo and not disturbing the balance of political power among various contender (Unobe,1990).

"ALL EYES ON THE JUDICIARY" was the popular slogan on every lips during the post-election in 2023. However, there were clearly inconsistencies in the court's judgement. The North Central Citizens Council (NCCC), along with other concerned individuals and groups, has raised serious concern regarding the inconsistencies and contradictions in judicial decisions." For instance, in the case of Peter Obi v. INEC, the Supreme Court reaffirmed that the issue of nomination was a pre-election matter. However, the opposite was ruled in the case of Abba v. APC. Although the Supreme Court rectified the errors in judgement made by the Appeal courts, (aside that of the legislative candidates who couldn't by law go to the supreme court and had to bare the errors or miscarriage of justice by the Appeal courts). However, we had seen various controversial decisions made by the Supreme Court in the past. For example, the supreme court removal of Ihedioha and the enthronement of Uzodimma received condemnation even among justices who warned against the repercussions that precedence set for Nigeria's democracy. "One of the judges of the apex court, Centus Nweze, had said the decision of the supreme court on the IMO election was wrong and would continue to hunt our (Nigeria's) electoral jurisprudence for a long time to come" (leadership.ng). Also, the chairman of the editorial board of THIS DAY NEWSPAPER, Mr. Segun Adeniyi, stated in his assessment of the Supreme Court judgement in IMO State that "taken together, there are far too many grounds for inconsistencies and loopholes on which lawyers and the general public now question both the integrity and indeed the professional competence of the Supreme court. It is a sad day for the nation if the apex court displays traits that undermine confidence in the quality of justices available to the people. It is even more tragic when the slant

of the decision tempts the public to suspect that these respected men and women may have succumbed to partisan pressure".

In conclusion the siege of the judiciary is a siege on democracy, when the judiciary are not independent, they would become a tools in the hands of executive and politicians. When there are no Checks and balances then the democracy of any nation has lost its footing. If the executive arm is incharge of appointing and dismissal of the judicial head, they would be forever tied to the apron of the executive and won't be capable of upholding democracy.

***. FAILED MANIFESTO**

A manifesto is simply the blueprint of governance that a candidate or political party presents to the electorate to seek their votes. However, most Nigerian politicians see manifestos as sweet words of deceit used to entice the electorate. In Nigerian political history, various manifestos have been published that gave hope to the citizens, only for these hopes to be dashed at the end. In 1999, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) came up with "COVENANT WITH THE PEOPLE OF NIGERIA." In 2007, "SEVEN POINT AGENDA," APC in 2015 campaigned with "CHANGE," and in 2019 was "NEXT LEVEL." Etc. However, we have seen these various manifestos and agreements being renegeed by political parties and her candidate.

In 1999, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) issued a 'covenant with the people of Nigeria' and declared, We shall remain strongly committed to: (1) democracy and good governance; (2) freedom, human rights, and human dignity; (3) justice, equity, and the rule of law; (4) integrity and transparency in the conduct of public affairs. (5) sustainable development: through sound education, basic healthcare, abundant food production, rapid industrial growth, good housing, full employment, improved infrastructure, efficient transport, regular power supply, and basic services. For 16 years, the PDP failed to honour its covenant with Nigerians (Leadership.ng).

After 16 years of failed manifestos by the people's democratic party, the All Progressive Congress came with "reassuring hope" to the people in what was called "change." They promised to tackle corruption, insecurity, unemployment, waste of public funds, etc., which had bedevilled the PDP administration for 16 years. However, from various reports, Cable.ng "extracted 73 key promises made by the APC in its much-plauded "CHANGE" campaign, and the analysis showed that they failed woefully in fulfilling them." The unemployment rate increased to 33% during the APC administration, and insecurity worsened: boko-haram in the north, agitation in the south-east, killings in the south-west, the menace of Fulani herdsmen, etc. According to reports, 133 million Nigerians are living in multi-dimensional poverty; the naira crashed in the international market, etc. President Buhari promised to ban government officials from going abroad for medical treatment. However, as of May 2018, he had gone to the United Kingdom five times for treatment. The fight against corruption was more of a political manhunt.

Since the return to democracy in 1999, each campaign season has been flooded with enticing and promising manifestos, which are not being kept. In 2023, the Labour Party issued "Our Pacts with Nigerians," the PDP issued "My Covenant with Nigerians," and the APC issued "Renewed

Hope." The All Progressive Congress won the election, and the electorates are hopeful to see these promises kept.

***. VOTE BUYING**

Vote buying is a common feature of Nigerian politics. Vote buying is an act whereby citizens sell their vote for 'peanut'. This inducement may either be in monetary form or in the form of valuable goods. Prior to the 2023 general election in Nigeria, one of the reasons for the naira redesign and scarcity was to tackle the menace of vote buying; however, all efforts were in vain as there were numerous cases of vote buying across the country. According to reports by Yiaga Africa as observed on the election day, "the reduction of cash in circulation did not eliminate vote buying as politicians retored to other forms of inducements, politicians and campaign agents collecting banking details for digital transfers." On election day, February 25, Yiaga Africa observers reported situations that were identified as likely voter inducements. There were reports of party agents handling out wrappers, food items, beverages, and, in some instances, alcoholic drinks to voters in exchange for votes. Vote buying climaxed during the March 18 governorship and state assembly elections as the politicians became even more daring and devised more dastardly means to induce voters; Yiaga Africa received 44 reports of vote buying through cash inducements and the distribution of food items."

It is sad to note that on every election day, some citizens sell out their natural privilege of electing a good leader for the next four years. These politicians capitalise on the poverty of these individuals to take their rights, just like the porridge of Jacob. Lastly, vote buying and selling is also a result of citizens who believe that their votes won't count because of electoral fraud being witnessed in the country.

EFFECTS OF CRIME ON THE NIGERIAN POLITICS

Crime has dealt a heavy blow to the Nigerian political system and also to Nigerian society at large. A progressive society starts with the leaders, and whenever the institution of governance is corrupt, it affects the entire society. Firstly, political violence negates peaceful coexistence, law, and order; in addition to security concerns, it militates against the consolidation of democracy and social coexistence (Aver, Nnorom, & Targba, 2013). This, in turn, impacts the social and economic well-being of the nation and creates imbalances in social relations (Howell, 2004). Also, political violence leads to voters apathy, according to reports by The African Reports; The Lagos gubernatorial election on march 18 was marred by violence and voters intimidation, leading to low turnout.

Secondly, political corruption erodes and corrodes the meaning, mechanism, and very essence of democracy (Mayowa, 2014). Corruption in the social fabric of society can be the most damaging of all; it can undermine people's trust in the political system, in its institutions, and in its leadership; it can lead to fraud and general apathy among disillusioned members of the public, resulting in a week of civil society (Transparency International, 2014).

Thirdly, the politics of God-fatherism have far-reaching negative effects on the nation's democracy. According to Igbini and Okolie (2020), "the philosophical basis and fundamental ethos of democracy are being swept under the rug, making the Nigerian electorate lose faith in the electoral process and the government." Also, whenever there is an outburst of war between the godfathers and their godsons, the administration of the state becomes stagnant, and there is usually a loss of lives and property as both the godfathers and their godsons unleash their beasts.

Fourthly, politics of tribalism and religious bigotry have dealt a heavier blow to Nigerian society. It has put a knife on the things that have held us together, produced incompetent leaders, etc. The issue of ethnic configuration has further polarised the country along ethnic lines, and this is generating tension among the ethnic groups in the country (Mayowa, 2014).

Fifthly, "the gagging of the judiciary." The stronghold of democracy and rule of law is a competent and free judicial system that can check the excesses of the executive and legislative arms to prevent recklessness and authoritarianism. However, whenever the judiciary is tied to the apron of the executives, they become political tools in the hands of corrupt politicians to kill the ethics of democracy in society. Sixthly, "failed manifesto." When politicians fail to keep their promises to the electorate in each campaign season, it leads to voter apathy. Failure of politicians to work in line with the blue print of governance (manifesto) would lead to a stagnant society. Lastly, vote-buying is a menace to the Nigerian political system; it has brought corrupt and incompetent politicians into the hems of power just for a plate of Jacob's porridge. When vote-buying becomes the norm, it will affect honest politicians who want good governance for the people but do not have the funds to purchase votes. Politicians who win elections through vote-buying do not represent the will of the people.

In summary, Nigeria is a blessed nation but is being bedevilled by corrupt and purposeless leaders that have ruined the nation's development and crumbled various social institutions in the country. This selfish politician eats the cake and pours down the crumbs to the masses; they loot the common wealth of the nation and store or invest the loot abroad rather than using it for the development of the nation. The Abacha loot, for instance, is still being recovered; this money would have done more good for society. Therefore, it is essential that everyone in society rise up against crime in the political system for a progressive nation.

A REVIEW OF RELEVANT THEORY

RADICAL CRIME THEORY

Radical crime theory is based on a variant of Marxism called "instrumental Marxism." This theory evolved in the 1960s, following Marxist principles. Radical criminologists brought an ideological bent to criminology, shifting focus away from individual responsibility in crime and towards society-wider issues. Radical crime theory states that society "functions" in the general interest of the ruling class. A radical criminologist considers crime to be an instrument of the ruling class. Laws are put into place by the elite and are then used to serve their personal interests at the peril of the lower class. These laws regulate opposition to the elite and keep them in power. Radical

crime theory posits that the current criminal justice system seeks only to serve the interests of the ruling class and thus penetrate inequalities in society.

Radical theorists believe the theory is the foundation for the socialist revolution because it assists in developing class consciousness that challenges the ruling class (Quinney, 1978). Political mobilisation and actions within the underclass are necessary to reduce crime rates (Colvin & Pauly). However, Early critics of radical theory have cited the lack of evidence to support the theory (Sparks, 1980). Critics have also stated that radical theory does not meet the criteria for a general theory of crime but that some tenets of the Marxist philosophy could build upon existing theories (Ferrajoli & Zolo, 1985). Though radical theorists have contributed to our understanding of the relationship between political and economic injustices and crime, theorists are left to grapple with the challenges that these critiques present (Moore & Morris, 2011).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper adopts a descriptive research design to analyse the impact of crime in Nigerian politics. The paper is theoretical in nature; it draws its sources from secondary data, which includes journals, newspaper publications, textbooks, and internet sources.

DISCUSSION.

Crime has always been in existence since the early days and has posed a great problem to the existence of mankind. Nigeria is a blessed nation both in terms of human and natural resources. However, the true potential of this great nation has been greatly hindered due to the impact of crime in Nigerian politics. Crime has stunted political and economic development in Nigeria. These "associates of friends" (politicians) rule society for their personal interests, and whenever their interests don't align, there's an outburst of war. They see politics as a do-or-die affair. This has birthed political violence, intimidation of voters, opponents, and electoral officers, snatching of ballot boxes, and voter suppression. These are tools used by politicians to achieve their aims and satisfy their egos.

In aspects of political corruption, these politicians steal the common wealth of the nation to an offshore account. During campaign seasons, they bring out 'Peanuts' from their loot to share to the people, buy thugs and bribe corrupt electoral officers to carry out anti-democratic assignments. Cases of politicians being tried for embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds end up fading out; the fight against corruption seems more like a political manhunt; a switch to the ruling party may end corruption cases. After their tenure in office, they anoint a godson to take over. These godsons are faced with an unending debt to their godfathers. It is important to note that these godsons come into power through anti-democratic means, and their most important objective is to fulfil the will of their godfathers. And in cases where the godsons fail to do that, there is usually an outburst of war, and by every means necessary, the godfathers see to it that the godson is dethroned.

Tribalism and religiosity are political instruments used by politicians to seek votes from their tribemen or deceive the gullible. For instance, tribalism was used in the Lagos gubernatorial

election in 2023. The gubernatorial candidate of the Labour Party was termed an Igbo man or the Igbo candidate; it was alleged that citizens believed to be from the Igbo extraction were denied access to the polling units. These politicians divide the nation along religious and ethnic lines in order to get what they want. It is worth repeating that when the judiciary is captured, democracy is captured. The executive and politicians at large try to capture the judiciary and use it for their own interests.

As earlier noted, many Nigerian politicians see manifestos as sweet words of deceit and not a blueprint for governance. Nigerian history is filled with so many unfulfilled manifestos. During campaigns, politicians give hope to the citizens, only to dash those hopes after being sworn into office. Vote-buying is a menace that has brought incompetent and corrupt leaders into power. These politicians capitalise on the poverty of the electorate to take away their natural privilege to vote or exercise their political will. In conclusion, this great nation suffers due to the presence of crime and criminal activities within the political system.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper examined the impact of crime on Nigerian politics. It points out the seven pillars or nature of Nigerian politics, which include 'politics of do-or-die-affair', 'political corruption,' 'Godfatherism, "tribalism and religious bigotry, "gag of the judiciary" failed manifesto' and 'vote buying.'

RECOMMENDATION

This paper therefore proffers Seven (7) recommendations to help fight against crime in the Nigerian politics.

1. The citizens with whom power resides should rise up and take over their country by holding these politicians accountable to them.
2. There is need for electoral reform.
3. Citizens should unite irrespective of tribe and religion. The competence of a political candidate should be the key.
4. The independence of the judiciary is vital to the sustainability of democracy. According to Section 158(1), 'The judicial council shall not be subject to the discretion or control of any other authority or person (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Also, the immunity clause should be removed, as it goes against the rule of law.
5. The electorate should hold the politicians accountable to their promises.
6. Youth should desist from being used by politicians as a tool for political violence in the country.

7. The media needs to play a vital role in ensuring good governance in society. They shouldn't play the role of sycophancy.

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