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**TOPIC: THE TENDENCIES OF NEPOTISM IN
NIGERIA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM.**

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**THE TENDENCIES OF NEPOTISM IN
NIGERIA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM.**

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty, to the entire Okpara family and to all Pharmacy students.

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I want to acknowledge the efforts of my lecturer for her understanding and time and also to the typist for a fast and accurate work.

PREFACE

This work which was sourced for tirelessly and then compiled for easy comprehension talks of the ‘Tendencies of nepotism in our political system’. Chapter 1 which is the introduction looks at the meaning of nepotism and also its origin. Chapter 2 then goes on to talk of the causes such as the effect of weak economy while chapter 3 talks on its imminent consequences and effects. Chapter 4 gives some solutions to these problem and then concluded.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Nepotism in Africa's political system and in Nigeria specifically has been on the increase. This has now put doubts on the mind of people on the credibility and standard in our political system. It cannot be argued that nepotism has brought so much decay into Nigeria's political system and even in other systems of the country such as education, employment, etc. Nepotism has tarnished the image of Nigeria in the global political scene. Nepotism in the polity has brought in many vices into it viz: physical assault, kidnap, assassinations, thuggery, political godfatherism, etc.

There is no doubt that if it is not adequately tackled and stopped it will threaten politics in Nigeria and therefore solutions need to be procured.

1.2 DEFINITION OF NEPOTISM

Nepotism refers to the act of favouring relatives because of their relationship rather than because of their abilities as opined by (Nelton 1998:72).

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary nepotism means giving unfair advantages to your own family if you are in position of power, especially by giving them jobs.

1.3 ORIGIN OF NEPOTISM

The word nepotism is derived most immediately from the French nepotism and the Italian nepotism. These in turn have their origin in the Latin word 'nepote,' meaning nephew. The use of the word is passed down from fragmentary information that Roman emperors and generals appointed their nephews to high positions in

the empire. In the 14th through 17th centuries “nepotism” was used to describe the documented practice of French nobility naming their “nephews” as prelates and to high office, and of many Popes doing the same.

Nepotism on the political scene was not unheard of but it was not until the election of Andrew Jackson that the practice was seen as rampant on the American political landscape.

CHAPTER 2

CAUSES OF NEPOTISM IN NIGERIA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM

The causes of nepotism in Nigeria's political system include the following factors:

2.1 EFFECT OF WEAK ECONOMY

Since the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 and the naira devalued the Nigerian economy has been nose-diving never to go up. The naira fell having its effect on the economy making exchange rate higher. This effect amounted to increased nepotism in the country's political system. Individuals who are high-ranked in the government be it federal, state or local or even in government agencies or parastatals now grant people from their town or local government jobs, housing and other favours not minding the others. This is a case where only those that know people in authority are favoured.

The struggling economy has done more harm to the people. The effect of the economy has thrown away competence, skill and experience into the gutter. Officials employ people from their hometowns or even relatives to come to do jobs or give contracts to friends without checking their track record. To this effect, Nigeria's political system has suffered a setback.

It is also pertinent to note that it is because of nepotism in the political system that quacks were employed into very crucial sectors of the economy leading to a vicious circle of dwindling economy.

Inflation in Nigeria can be attributed to high import consumption, unfavourable balance of payment difficulties, low domestic productivity. It also increases the cost of development projects and creates an unfavourable environment for social and political stability.

2.2 SOCIAL CLASS AND STRATIFICATION

Social stratification is a concept associated with the study of the unequal distribution of goods and services, right and obligations, power and prestige and the consequences of the social inequality to the entire society according to (Littlejohn, 1972:9).

Social class is the demarcation between people in the society. It is a concept which involves a society being grouped because of status into different levels. There is no doubt to the fact that this has brought nepotism on the political system. The society is divided into the so-called “big man” and “small men”. These big men tend to run over the affairs in the country and in politics in particular because of their influence of wealth and power. They are the one that belong to political parties and occupy positions in other segments of politics to the detriment of the lower societal class. This set of people can't have access to politics and cannot vie for positions because they are not influential and do not have wealth to support them.

Political party posts are being shared among top ranked people. Party posts are being zoned to geo-political zones or given to states without looking at their competence thereby driving Nigeria's political system into disarray.

2.3 TREND OF RICH GETTING RICHER

The weak economy of the country has given rise to other side effects which include the trend of rich getting richer. The economy is in such a way that only people in high positions get access or reap benefits from the act of nepotism. Because of this, the rich continue getting richer, bringing also other wealthy men into these same act. So according to (Ade 2005:8) it is a vicious circle with each person doing the act, so that they can be in charge or control affairs of a place. There is no doubt that this trend of rich getting richer is one of the causes of nepotism in our political system as opined by (Ade 2005:32) and if not adequately tackled will deal ruthlessly with Nigeria's political system.

CHAPTER 3
CONSEQUENCES OF NEPOTISM IN NIGERIA'S
POLITICAL SYSTEM.

The consequences or effects of nepotism in Nigeria's political system include the following:

3.1 BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

Nepotism in the polity has brought bribery and corruption. There is no doubt about that Huge sums of money are being exchanged in order to get favours from the government or parastatals under them. For instance, the national honours has been bastardized and stereotyped such that all former heads of state and their deputies get awarded the GCFR and GCON respectively regardless of how they got into office or their performance in office. Even individuals that is the "big men" do so in order to get honours and merit awards in which they neither merited nor worked hard for.

The nation's political system is stuck in this unfortunate scenario where virtually all those in the commanding heights of our national life are beneficiaries of the illegal seizure of power over the years. Those who were serving officers of the armed forces and police got catapulted into high political offices or executive heads of government parastatals such as Nigerian Railways, Ports Authority, Marketing boards, Federal and State ministries among others. •

3.2 POLITICAL THUGGERY AND FIGHTING

Nepotism in Nigeria's political system has brought in so many ills, political thuggery and fighting being one of them. Political thuggery and fighting stemmed out from the fact that people seek to get power through force and intimidation. Political thuggery has led to intra and inter party conflicts, looting, assassinations, etc. Assassinations has been on the front burner for long because of thuggery. Assassination of governors, politicians, top individuals,

chief executives of companies were recorded in the last dispensation. In the past years, it seems that reasons and dialogue had broken down while the final option has taken over. Politics is all about conflicts and its resolution.

Assassinations of top-flight Nigerians like Chief Bola Ige; former Minister of Justice, Chief Funsho Williams, PDP governorship candidate in 2003 polls, Chief Aminasoari Dikibo; former national vice-chairman South-South of PDP and many others have been condemned by the public. Their killers have not been apprehended talk more taken to the court for trials. This effect of nepotism has sent wrong signals all over about the country's political system.

3.3 INCREASED SOCIAL VICES AND MARGINALIZATION

Nepotism in Nigeria's political system has given rise to all forms of social vices viz: armed robbery, cultism, gangsterism, kidnapping to mention but a few. The social vices emanated from the lower class having no access to jobs, education, fair trial in court cases if they do not know people in authority. Robbery, kidnap and cultism are now the order of the day as a last resort to liberate themselves.

Marginalization takes place also. A set of people, ethnic, community are being marginalized even with the existing huge resources because they do not have a voice in government to speak for them. Take the people of the South-South for example, they do not have some basic amenities if not all though the bulk of Nigeria's income come from the states in the region. In a bid to liberate themselves the youth are now engaged in arms struggle.

Cultism, kidnap, violent attacks on oil companies and installations are now the order of the day. Youth restiveness is now high in the area leading into economic downfall.

To this effect, if these consequences are not adequately tackled the tendencies of nepotism in our political system would be high on the negative side as opined by (Nwakanma 2004:9).

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CHAPTER 4

SOLUTIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 SOLUTIONS TO NEPOTISM IN NIGERIA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM.

Some preferred solutions to nepotism in Nigeria's political system may include the following:

1. An anti-graft agency such as EFCC should be given enough constitutional empowerment to regulate the corrupt giving of awards and screen the recipients so that our body polity is not infested with wrong role models.
2. Politics should not be made a game for the rich but should allow people from all works of life to be involved so that the political system would be free of godfathers.

3. Public awareness and enlightenment on the debilitating effect of nepotism in our political system should be emphasized.
4. Ethnic politics by politicians should be frowned at and totally discouraged in order not to breed marginalization and its attendant effect on politics and society at large.
5. Politics should not be seen as a door die affair but should try to bring all hands on deck of those who are competent irrespective of tribe, region, gender, etc to move the national forward.

4.2 CONCLUSION

It can be seen from the onset that nepotism in our political system should not be mentioned or even practiced. Our political system is one which needs competent and efficient hands but not giving positions to family members or friends who are neither

competent or have an idea of how the country should be governed. From the consequences or effects of nepotism in our polity, it can be seen that the effects are gruesome, frustrating and demoralizing. So in essence, nepotism in every facet of our lives should be discouraged and condemned. Nigeria must therefore learn its political agenda and implement it without nepotism having also a sense of direction for the greater good of all its citizens. •

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