

1 **Attacking Power Abuse as a Socio-Political Activismin Frank Ogodo**
2 **Ogbeche's Harvest of Corruption**
3
4

5 **Abstract:**

6 Nigeria, like its other counterparts, appears not spared fromleadership failure with contested
7 political leaders. These leaders do not hesitate to utilize their power to get into dirty affairs in the
8 public sphere.This paper aims; at examining the depiction of power abuse in Frank Ogodo
9 Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption* (1997). The current paper draws on the underpinning of the
10 qualitative method, and adopts the postcolonial criticism while it demonstrates how the
11 playwright's cultural and social background informs his characters.The results reveal how
12 characters like Chief-Ade-Amaka, the protagonist of the play, use theirposition of power to
13 indulge into corrupt practices, drug-trafficking and other social malpractices which the writer
14 castigates through a vivid realism and humour.

15 **Keywords:****social criticism, African Drama, Postcolonialism, malgovernance.**

16
17 **Introduction:**

18 African countries, either individually or within regional and continental organizations,
19 have been struggling to get away from imperial yokeunder the leadership of Africans themselves
20 since the proclamation of their respective‘independences’. However, the stagnation of many
21 countries in their efforts to achieve the desired socio-political goals,might stem from the fact that
22 “the post-independence political rulers became dictators or advanced neo-colonialism” (Shigali,
23 2016:p.45) because of the misuse of power.Power abuse can be mainly explained by the leaders’
24 proclivity towards socio-political malpractice which manifests itself in “featuring
25 presidentialism, clientelism, the use of state resources, and the centralisationof power” (Wyk,
26 2007: p.12). It is noteworthy that the leaders’ questionable behaviourpartly explicates the harsh
27 living conditionsin which many people languish.

28 To address this issue of malgovernance, many African writers do not hesitate to use
29 literature as a platform from which theycall people’s attention on the seemingly hidden facts
30 about the economic stagnation of the continent. In this regard, Anaso andNwabudike(2014)
31 rightly avers that “the (African) writer uses his art as a discursive mode to analyse the nature,
32 operations, and consequences of political crisis in the society” (p.49).They continue to ponder
33 the role of the writerwhom they view as a ‘sage’, ‘visioner’, or ‘elder’ who brings back the

34 community on the right path whenever things start to go astray. In their writings, the African
35 dramatists not only depict the different forms of leadership and its features, but also denounce the
36 mismanagement of power especially in the civilian and the military regimes. Frank Ogodo
37 Ogbeche constitutes one of these playwrights. His *Harvest of Corruption*, published in 1997,
38 portrays and interrogates the issue of power abuse through his main character Chief-Ade-Amaka,
39 the “Honourable Minister” and other less prominent characters. In an effort to explore the
40 aforementioned issue, the research attempts to critically raise the following questions: (i) how do
41 African playwrights portray the issue of power abuse in their respective societies? (ii) How does
42 Frank Ogodo Ogbeche depict power abuse in *Harvest of Corruption* (1997)? (iii) What is the
43 playwright’s take on the problem?

44 **1. Methodology and Theoretical Framework**

45 The current research follows the underpinnings of qualitative method because the nature
46 of the data collected and analysed is not numerical. According to Ugwu and Eze Val (2023), “to
47 better understand ideas, opinions, or experiences, qualitative research involves gathering and
48 analysing non-numerical data (such as text, video or audio). It [the qualitative method] can be
49 used to uncover intricate details about a situation to spark fresh research concepts” (p.20). This
50 method suits the nature of this research and appears helpful to achieve the objectives of the
51 paper.

52 In addition, the paper draws its insights from postcolonial theory also known as
53 Postcolonialism. This theory arguably started in the late 1970s with the publication of Edward
54 Said’s *Orientalism* in 1978. For Christ Baldick (2001):

55 Postcolonial theory considers vexed cultural-political questions of national and ethnic
56 identity, 'otherness', race, imperialism, and language, during and after the colonial periods. It
57 draws upon POSTSTRUCTURALIST theories such as those of DECONSTRUCTION in
58 order to unravel the complex relations between imperial 'centre' and colonial 'periphery',
59 often in ways that have been criticized for being excessively abstruse. (p.200)

60
61 The stalwarts of postcolonial criticism include Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri C. Spivak,
62 Frantz Fanon, and others. Through their various theoretical thoughts, they attempt to demonstrate
63 the exploitative and dominative nature of the relationship between the colonized and the
64 colonizer, a relationship which is not based onequal terms. For instance, Fanon (1961) estimates
65 that the colonized will continue to suffer until when colonialism and its ideologies are
66 completely unrooted. Similarly, Wa Thiong'o, in his *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of*
67 *Language in African Literature* (1986), reflects on how colonial languages and imperialism
68 continue to haunt the mind of the colonized by perpetuating the fallacious and stereotypical
69 images of Europe being superior to the colonized places. Notwithstanding, this literary theory
70 has been subjected to criticism because of "concentrating too much on culture at the expense of a
71 genuinely radical critique of the materialities of power and inequality in a post-colonial age"
72 (Peter Childs and Roger Fowler, 2006: p.164). This is why Peter Childs and Roger Fowler
73 (2006) defend that "Postcolonialism tends to obfuscate the urgent political, economic and social
74 crises that have been brought about and intensified during and after colonialism" (p.184). While
75 European colonial processes cannot be the sole source of African political turmoil, postcolonial
76 theorists invite the readers to contemplate how many socio-political mayhems, in the places with
77 the history of colonialism, stem from the formerly colonized people's domination and
78 exploitation by their colonizers. In a similar vein, Mulinge and Lesedeti (1998) argue that "the
79 practices of post-colonial Africa's political and bureaucratic elites are merely an extension of
80 such colonial policies and practices which have served to entrench it" (p.15).

81 Accordingly, in an effort to better explicate the postcolonial theory, Cuddon (2013) observes

82 that:

83 Postcolonialism (covering the terms 'postcolonial studies', 'postcolonial theory' and
84 'postcolonial literature') is an interdisciplinary academic field devoted to the study of European
85 colonialism and its impact on the society, culture, history and politics of the formerly colonized
86 regions such as the African continent, the Caribbean, the Middle East, South-Asia and the
87 Pacific. [...] Postcolonial critics are concerned with the impact of colonialism generally,
88 including its relationship with issues such as gender and class [...] (p.550-551).

90 Taking into consideration the rationale upon which postcolonial theory emphasises, this paper
91 proposes to analyse the issue of power abuse in *Harvest of Corruption*; an issue that the play
92 underscores and which appears one of the socio-political preoccupations that bedevil the post-
93 independent Africa. In addition, the exploration of Ogbeche's (1997) thematic concern in
94 *Harvest of Corruption* reinforces the claims made by the proponents of postcolonial theory since
95 the issues it raises are germane to the postcolonial condition in which political leadership
96 remains a by-product of colonial influences within the bigger picture of the contested neo-
97 colonialism. However, many works have discussed power abuse the way African writers try to
98 curve the phenomenon.

99 **2. A Glance on Power Abuse in African Literature:**

100 Power abuse constitutes a well-known political practice which manifests itself in various
101 forms in the different systems of governance in many places in the world including Africa. Power
102 abuse or abuse of power, as viewed by Auchter, Katz and Graham (1981), is "the misuse of a
103 position of power to take unjust advantage of individuals, organizations, or governments"
104 (<https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/crime-and-abuse-of-power-offenses-and-offenders-beyond-reach-law>?). Additionally, Watson (2015) defines power abuse "as [any]
105 action that flagrantly transgresses the bounds of constitutional or statutory authorization, or in
106 welfare-economic terms as action that produces welfare losses –either because officials have ill-
107 formed beliefs or because they work with self-interested motivations" (p.675). These definitions
108 perfectly corroborate Haboubacar's (2019) definition who considers that "power abuse is the
109 misuse of power or (the use of privilege a leader or a person has) for one's own advantage" (p.3).
110 Indeed, power abuse hampers and tempers with political, social and economic development of a
111 nation because many people "play a rigged game" (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2008). In the
112 African context, this phenomenon becomes ubiquitous and gains ground in almost every aspect of
113 life since "the departure of the colonial masters" (Alaby & Mohammedzadeth, 2018,
114 p.46). Generally speaking, power abuse includes corruption, favouritism, bribery, disregard for
115 the institutionalized laws, drug-trafficking and other malpractices.

117 While many voices are heard in the fight against wrongfully done political acts, African
118 literature has proven itself to be a weapon for the artists, particularly, when it comes to denounce
119 power abuse and to sensitize people on the issue. The apparent involvement of the African
120 literary production in this regard has made some critics like Kehinde (2008) to consider African

121 writers as “mostly committed artists” who “have always focused attention on the nagging
122 problem of elusive viable political leadership in their individual nations, a problem which has
123 also been debated for some time in a range of academic disciplines”(p.333). This observation
124 comes from the fact that many men and women from other disciplines such as sociology,
125 political science and other domains have undertaken various research on power abuse. This is
126 due to their, unrelenting effort to achieve true independence and societal well-being. For
127 instance,Pat Utomi clarifies that“the independence struggle produced men who were willing to
128 sacrifice for the common good. In the transition from colonial rule, as they moved from the
129 outhouse to the Government reserved areas, the emergent leaders of Africa saw the tyranny of
130 colonial agents as their model of leadership” (Utomi qtd in Wani, 2014,p.14). Additionally, Wani
131 (2014) demonstrates that “(the) misuse of power, fraud, chicanery and embezzlement of funds
132 are systematically perpetrated by the leaders of government and their unions” (p.20).In their
133 struggle for the promotion of good governance, Ibrahim and Cheri (2013) have also sorted out
134 the problems that weaken the institutions in the third world. For them, “[...]most of the third
135 world countries have seen their freedom heroes turn into dictators, while plunder of natural
136 resources, politics of exclusion and deprivation to turn the balance of power continue to
137 dominates the public sphere” (p.59). Talking about the embarrassing nature of some African
138 leaders,Wyk (2007) adds that perspectives on political leadership in Africa vary from the
139 ‘criminalisation’ of the State to political leadership as ‘dispensing patrimony,’‘the recycling’ of
140 elites and the use of State power and resources to consolidate political and economic power
141 (p.3).

142 In the domain of creative writings, for instance, in novels and plays, Kehinde (2008)
143 pinpoints, African writers“have always found the informing vision of their creativity bound by
144 the socio-political experiences of the nation[s] (such as power abuse), which their works both
145 reflect and refract” (p.334). He continues to assert that, in the novels, for example, Chinua
146 Achebe has made a scathing depiction of power abuse in *No Longer at Ease*, *A Man of the*
147 *People* and *Anthills of the Savannah*with military dictators, corrupt politicians and technocrats
148 which lead to political disappointments.*No Longer at Ease*, for instance, portrays the
149 administrative corruption through his main character Obi Okwonko, a very committed civil
150 servant who eventually succumbs to corrupt practices due to the social demands that his salary
151 cannot satisfy. Similarly, in *A Man of the People*, the political banditry is depicted through the

152 protagonist Chief Nanga, a reckless politician. Nanga uses his position to engage in the political
153 race without taking into account his people's existential needs. Then, Achebe's *Anthills of the*
154 *Savannah* chronicles military dictatorship with the despotic rule of Sam in a fictitious country
155 called Kangan. Additionally, Ayi Kwei Armah critically comments about political corruption in
156 his country, Ghana, just few years after its independence through the characters of the Man, Oyo,
157 Koomson and Teacher in his *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. Many critics would concur
158 with Wosu(2024) when he observes that Armah's fiction attacks "the moral degeneracy of the
159 modern woman" along with "corruption, greed, exploitation, and acquisition of material
160 wealth..."(p.138). These writers have, in one way or the other, casted a thoughtful comment on
161 the issue of political corruption in Africa, a problem that they want to see solved with any further
162 delay.

163 Similar representation of power abuse appears in African drama. Many playwrights focus
164 on the issue of power abuse as one of their thematic concerns in their theatrical outputs. This is
165 noticeable through the plays produced by African stalwart dramatists such as Wole Soyinka,
166 Femi Osofisan, and Ngugi Wa Thiongo, to cite a few. Soyinka, for instance, has produced a
167 critical depiction of "regimes based on terror and the fomenting of small and large bloodbaths to
168 consolidate and perpetuate tyrannical military and civilian autocracies" (Jeyifo, 2004, p.90). For
169 instance, in what Jeyifo (2004) calls his "power plays" (p.93) such as *Madmen and Specialists*,
170 and *Kongi's Harvest*, the theme of power abuse is artistically handled. In these plays, Soyinka
171 succeeds in creating very strong characters enacting the role of power-drunk dictators that
172 embody the nature of Africa's military leaders. In addition, as Okafor (1996) asserts, Femi
173 Osofisan criticizes "the breakdown of the social system that oppresses and alienates the under-
174 privileged" (p.127), that is, power abuse in various aspects of life through his plays like
175 *Morountodun*, and *No More the Wasted Breed*. In a related development, in *I Will Marry When I*
176 *Want*, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Miri, Ejechi (2024) explains, "unfurl the processes
177 through which the "natives" (so-called) in Africa conceded large portions of the most important
178 factor of their agrarian economy, land, to the reprehensible logic of development canvassed by
179 neo-imperialists and their educated African Allies" (p.199).

180 The above scholarships insightfully underpin how the rulers and their acolytes
181 abuse power for their own whimsical enterprise. These works represent the eye-witness of the
182 huge contributions of the African writers to fight against social injustice perpetrated by those in

183 power throughout the continent. As a consequence, it could be safely said that African writers are
184 against “the abuses of power and corruption [that] have become so common for decades [in
185 Africa]” (Al-Moghales&Hezam 2015, p.1544). Drawing on the aforementioned insights, the next
186 section of the paperanalysesthe theme of power abuse in Frank Ogodo Ogbeche’s *Harvest of*
187 *Corruption*(1997) in an effort to reveal how the playwright has artistically contributed to fight
188 the practice just like his senior dramatists since it remains a topical African reality.

189 **3. Political Activism in African Drama: An Attack on Power Abuse in Frank** 190 **Ogodo Ogbeche’s *Harvest of Corruption***

191 The phenomenon of power abuse continues to be of utmost concern in African political
192 governance for various reasons. One could argue that this problemresults from ineffective and
193 unfair management of power by those who hold it, especially in the administration. This is due to
194 the fact that in some democratic societies, as defended by Achebe (2012) in his book *There Was*
195 *a Country*, “public servants helped themselves freely to the nation’s wealth. Elections were
196 blatantly rigged. The subsequent national census was outrageously stage-managed; judges and
197 magistrates were manipulated by the politicians in power. The politicians themselves were
198 pawns of foreign business interest” (p.18). Achebe refers to an anonymous country which
199 symbolizes many African countries experiencing the mayhem that he alludes to. Accordingly,
200 Ebueke & Arinze-Umobi (2017) blatantly regret that Nigeria remains a country blighted by
201 corruption, religious and ethnic unrest, a morbid situation occasioned by greed [for power and
202 wealth acquisition] (p.18). Many African countries like Nigeria suffer ineffective political
203 leadership and this situation is captured in literary productions such as Ogbeche’s play, *Harvest*
204 *of Corruption*.

205 The play vividlydepictpower abuse in the Nigerian public administration under the
206 leadership of greedy individualswith such a clarity and tone to distinguish itself from other plays
207 dealing with similar subject matter. To begin with, Frank Ogodo Ogbeche depicts corruption as
208 the most dangerous elements of power abuse in this play. It is important to note that corruption
209 remains one of the factors that hinder socio-economic and political development of any country.
210 While the issue appears a worldwide concern, it reveals itself more flagrant in many African
211 countries. Myint (2000) defines corruption as “the use of public office for private gain, or in
212 other words, [the] use of official position, rank or status by an office bearer for his own personal
213 benefit” (p.35). Moreover, Tarkpeher and Ikechukwu (2021) equate corruption to “any attempt

214 by an individual to violate the rules of an organization or nation with the aim of having a
215 personal gain" (p.1). It is noteworthy that most of the corrupt activities are undertaken for
216 personal gains. In a bid to demonstrate the existence of this practice in Africa and
217 elsewhere, Onyenweaku (2024) maintains that "corruption is a pervasive socio-political and moral
218 phenomenon that ravages human societies" (p.9). Many African writers do not hesitate to
219 criticize the issue in their artistic productions.

220 In *Harvest of Corruption*, the playwright uses his craftsmanship to denounce this odious
221 practice in his country, Nigeria, by using some prominent characters which include the
222 commissioner, and Justice Odili. These dramatic personae help the protagonist, the honourable
223 minister Chief Ade-Amaka to use his position of power to abuse people.

224 The Commissioner, for instance, engages himself in this forfeiture to protect the accused,
225 Chief Ade-Amaka, at the police office when some information about the financial scandal are
226 reported. Instead of directly charging Chief Ade-Amaka, the Commissioner lets him go because
227 he promises to give him a huge amount of money to cover up the case as explained in the
228 conversation below:

229 CHIEF ADE-AMAKA: Commissioner, I am sorry, I have lost my manners. You see, I could
230 not greet you properly. (*Stretching his hands for a shake*). Good day and
231 how's the family? Is there any trouble?

232 COMMISSIONER: (*taking the outstretched hands*). Not quite Chief. I am just contemplating
233 on the frequent reports coming in from the Ministries and you see, Chief,
234 your Ministry is getting some negative and disturbing publicity lately.
235 (*Shifting on his seat*). I am worried considering our relationship. Nobody
236 loves negative publicity you know? (*Looking uneasy, picks up his packet of*
237 *St. Moris and a lighter. He lights a stick and inhales it letting out a cloud of*
238 *smoke*) Chief, I do hope you will soft-pedal and begin to keep your hands
239 and nose clean?

240 CHIEF ADE-AMAKA: (*Looking relaxed*) Commissioner, I have always told you not to
241 bother yourself unnecessarily about these things. Here take this (*he opens*
242 *his portfolio and brings out bundles of naira notes and places it on the*
243 *table. The Commissioner grabs it with the agility of lightening and puts it*
244 *into his drawer*). That should be able to soothe your nerves, Commissioner
245 and if you need more, do let me know. That is for your fuel, I will send
246 something into your account as usual. Just do your best to cover me up
247 okay? So long as you do your bit, money cannot be your problem...
248 (Ogbeche 1997, p.18-19).

249
250 As far as the case of Justice Odili is concerned, he is the one who usually protects Chief Ade-
251 Amaka from any judicial threat owing to the huge amount of money he receives from him. This
252 also testifies the fraudulent relationship that civil servants undertake among themselves to

253 perpetuate obnoxious practices such as corruption in the office. The exchanges between Justice
254 Odili and the Honourable minister can serve as a witness of their connivance:

255 CHIEF ADE-AMAKA: My Lord! As usual. I am here to pay my respect and homage,
256 because in you [sic] case it is the spoon that must always go to the pot. Has
257 it any choice, poor spoon!

258 JUSTICE ODILI: (*Laughs loudly*). I see! In that case you are most welcome. But Chief you
259 are not a common man. All the same what I can offer you? I mean what
260 drink? Please sit down (*gesturing to a seat in front of him*).

261 CHIEF ADE-AMAKA: (*Takes the seat*). My Lord, if there is whisky in the house, I shall
262 prefer Whisky tonight. I think the cold weather calls for that. (*Justice Odili*
263 *rises and moves to the cabinet and brings out a bottle of Whisky and two*
264 *glasses. He places them on the table and pours himself a shot. Chief does*
265 *the same and both of them proceed to drinking from their glasses*). (*Sips his*
266 *drink*) My Lord I have come with a little kola for you. I know that you will
267 like what I have brought for you. It is in my car. You can call your boys to
268 go to the boot to collect them. Meanwhile, here is a little cash for your fuel
269 (*he opens his portfolio and brings out bundles of naira notes and hands*
270 *them over to Justice Odili who receives it with a show of gratitude*). My
271 Lord, more will come so long as you continue to protect me. This is to tell
272 you that I am not only a great man but a grateful man as well, to good
273 people like you.

274

275 The conversations highlight how the two civil servants connive with Chief Ade-Amaka and use
276 their positions to engage in corrupt activities. In a similar vein, Chief Ade-Amaka, the
277 commissioner and justice Odili are all corrupt officials who neglect people's welfare and cater
278 for their own interest. In fact, The Commissioner and Odili are supposed to fight against all
279 illegal practices through their respective positions as law-makers for the betterment of the
280 country. Unfortunately, having the "vulture mentality", they are such rogue persons whose aim is
281 only to let the crimes unpunished and to fill their pockets and bank accounts with money. This
282 claim concurs with Ezeugwu and Daviv-Ojukwu (2022) who insist that the problem of Nigeria's
283 political system "is the phenomenon of corrupt leadership with its antecedent insatiable quest for
284 material accumulation..." (p.102).

285 Moreover, by corrupting both the commissioner and justice Odili, Chief Ade-Amaka has
286 completely put the law under his control. Those who are supposed to dictate the law and make it
287 enforced, indulge in accepting bribe from the rascals such as Chief Ade-Amaka. This attitude
288 explains the main reason why the judiciary system appears weak in the face of the politicians
289 in many African countries. This is because, the politicians' crimes are let unpunished; and this
290 encourages them to perpetrate more scandals provoking hardships in the society. Sadly, this
291 behaviour has become ubiquitous in most of postcolonial places.

292 Similarly, the clerk of the Ministry of External Relations, Ayo naively accepts to take
293 bribe from the detective inspector, Inaku in order to divulge the reality concerning the scandal
294 that happened in their Ministry. This demonstrates how the canker affect the Nigerian
295 administration from head to toe. It explains many other irresponsible practices that blocks the
296 well-function of this vital domain in the African continent. To get things done many would
297 turn to corrupt (unlawful) practices. To instantiate the aforementioned claim, Frank Ogodo
298 Ogbeche put into exergue the following passage:

299 DETECTIVE INSPECTOR INAKU: (*Ignoring his question*). Are you aware of the one point
300 two billion naira embezzlement scandal going on in your Ministry?

301 AYO: No Sir (*Pretending*). I am not aware and please who are you? May I know you?

302 DETECTIVE INSPECTOR INAKU: Yes, but do not be afraid, I shall make your day for you
303 if you cooperate. What is your salary per month as a Clerical Assistant?

304 AYO: (*Begins to rub his forehead and looking sideways*). My monthly salary is two
305 thousand five hundred naira take home.

306 DETECTIVE INSPECTOR INAKU: Okay! Do not worry, I shall give you two thousand
307 naira right now if you will give me the information I need.

308 (*The Clerk looks greedily at the inspector. He shakes his head indicating willingness*).

309 AYO: I shall tell you anything you need (*aside to himself*), after all, the bastard has
310 cheated us enough. He collects everything and eats alone. He has to die
311 alone if this means exposing his secrets. These big men never think that we
312 the junior officers have our own problems to solve too. They think we do
313 not need money other than our monthly salary.

314 DETECTIVE INSPECTOR INAKU: That's my boy. I shall give you my address and you
315 will get all the relevant documents and vouchers relating to the amount in
316 question and photocopy them for me. Meanwhile, here is one thousand naira
317 and I shall pay you the remaining when you bring all the papers I need. Be a
318 good boy okay!

319 AYO: (*He takes the money and the address*). Thank you. You should expect me tomorrow
320 evening unfailingly. Bye! (*He disappears*) (Ogbeche 1997, p.26-28).

321 In the conversation above, Inaku's intention of bribing Ayo is not for personal gain but for the
322 purpose of finding out the truth concerning the scandal that happened in the Ministry. As
323 opposed to Inaku, Ayo has accepted the bribe from the detective for his own interest. In addition,
324 it could be said that through Ayo's character, the clerks are not well-paid. This could be the
325 reason why they are easily influenced by the corrupt activities which may help in improving their
326 living conditions. In a bid to castigate corruption in Nigeria, Adepeimbe's aptly deduces that
327 "every institution in Nigeria is corrupt" (qtd in Onyenweaku, 2024, p.9) which is due to the fact
328 that the persons who are supposed to repress the canker are deeply involved.

329 Apart from the central theme of corruption that pervades Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's
330 *Harvest of Corruption*, drug-trafficking constitutes another form of power abuse developed in

332 theplay. This fraudulent activity can be considered as a by-product of the persistence of
333 corruption. Viewing that crimes are let unpunished due to corruption, recalcitrant persons
334 churned by excessive desire to amass wealth by getting involved in drug-trafficking. This
335 obnoxious activity is undertaken in many places by the personalities on power because they put
336 the laws under their control without taking into account the consequences that may befall their
337 communities. In this respect, Esheya (2014) bemoans that:

338 The danger in our ever-rising materialism and flamboyance is that it encourages crime and
339 erodes our social values. The rise in embezzlement of public funds, bribery, drug-trafficking
340 and internet fraud is a sign that more people desperately want to get their own wealth, show
341 it off and be seen to have "arrived" (p.499).

342
343 In *Harvest of Corruption*, the main character Chief Ade-Amaka uses his position of the Minister
344 of External Relations to engage himself in the traffic of cocaine, an obnoxious practice that
345 dangerously harms the country socially and economically. To achieve his aim, he takes
346 advantage of the young girl, Aloho's innocence to drag her in the dirty job in the name of his
347 Ministry. Fortunately, the girl is arrested by the custom brigade and summoned to justice. The
348 following passage sheds light on this point:

349 CUSTOM OFFICER: Madam, your bag please. (*Innocently Aloho hands over the briefcase*
350 *to him. He opens it with his mouth wide in disbelief*). Madam, what is this?
351 (*Pointing to the raps neatly stacked inside*).

352 ALOHO: What is what? I don't understand. (*Showing irritation*).

353 CUSTOM OFFICER: I mean these raps. What are they and what are you doing with them?

354 ALOHO: (*Looking surprised at the officer's infuriated face*). I don't understand what you
355 are talking about. This briefcase is for my boss and I am to deliver it to
356 somebody in USA, that's all, how do you expect me to know?

357 CUSTOM OFFICER: Madam, stop pretending. They are substances, which I am suspecting
358 to be cocaine and you will be in real trouble with the law if I am proved
359 right at the end by the appropriate authority. Have you ever heard of the
360 Jacassa Drug Law Enforcement Agency JDLEA? You will go for a chat
361 with them and explain how you come about these substances. Let's go! (*He*
362 *makes to drag Aloho along with him*).

363 ALOHO: (*visibly agitated*) Cocaine? Me, carrying cocaine? No! Officer that's not true.
364 Please, I want to call my boss. Please give me time to think, I am really
365 confused. I did not bargain for this at all (*sobbing*).

366 CUSTOM OFFICER: Young woman, do not worry. You will have enough time to call
367 whoever you want later. Just be patient. Follow me or do you want me to
368 call the police?

369 ALOHO: Police! No! Why? I shall come with you (*follows*) (Ogbeche 1997, p.47-49).

370

371 One can explain that Chief Ade-Amaka has involved this innocent girl, Aloho, in his dirty affairs
372 of drug-trafficking without informing her about the true nature of the job for which she is
373 recruited in the Ministry. This testifies how many innocent young persons are hired or recruited

374 under the name of a given institution to fulfil the desire of the monstrous chiefs like Ade-Amaka.
375 This also sheds light on the degree to which these ill-infested maggot leaders politicize the
376 administration and manipulate the judiciary institution. This act confirms once again how leaders
377 use their power to satisfy their ludicrous agencies even if the interest of the country will be
378 threatened. This assertion finds credence in Isheya (2014) when he concludes that, “In Nigeria
379 of today, the society’s moral fibre is so weak, the public space is infected with high level of
380 corruption and law enforcement is so compromised, these conditions have turned out to be fertile
381 grounds for crime” (p.497).

382 Finally, sexual immorality appears critically developed in Ogbeche’s *Harvest of*
383 *Corruption* because it equally pictures out the abuse of power in the Nigerian administration. It is
384 noteworthy that many personalities in Africa in general use their position to exploit girls by
385 promising them a given job for recruitment or for a promotion in the services. This phenomenon
386 jeopardizes many girls’ and women’ life. Those who do not succumb, are often seen suffering or
387 losing their jobs. To illustrate this view, Bolayi (2010) declares that “some men see women as
388 sexual objects and even force them to have sexual intercourse to get jobs whilst other women are
389 exploited sexually for job promotions” (p.2). The theme of sexual immorality is skilfully handled
390 in *Harvest of Corruption* using the characters Chief Ade-Amaka, Ochuole, Madam Hoha and
391 Aloho.

392 In this dramatic production, being the boss in the Ministry, Chief Ade-Amaka involves
393 himself in sexual affairs with his female co-workers in connivance with Madame Hoha who
394 procures him her Akpara Hotel. As a result of such immoral practice, he impregnates the innocent
395 Aloho. The pregnancy causes her death in spite of all the efforts she has made to abort it. From the
396 foregoing, it is important to note that the Chiefs like Ade-Amaka not only abuse their power
397 through embezzlement, corruption, and drug-dealing, but also exploit their female subordinates
398 in the office sexually. This behaviour constitutes a serious threat to people’s well-being in
399 society. The issue of sexual immorality is further highlighted in the discussion between Aloho
400 and her friend Ogeyi:

401 OGEYI: Calm down, Aloho, the world has not ended, you can still pick the pieces. You can!
402 Please pull yourself together and stop acting like a baby.

403 ALOHO: Ogeyi, you may not understand my position. I was even lured into having affairs
404 with the Chief. Ever since my detention, I have been feeling funny and I am sure I
405 am pregnant. I think I have started the harvest of corruption, which you mentioned
406 before, and I have the feeling that I am going to reap it in hundred folds. Can you
407 understand my predicament now?

408 OGEYI: Preg... what? (*She stands up and facing her on the bed*). Aloho! Are you so daft?
409 After all my warning to you. Is this greed or what? What happens to your religious
410 practices and beliefs? You must be crazy. Just under three months in Jabu and you
411 have ruined yourself like this. Aloho why? (*Sympathetically*). Just why? (*She*
412 *begins to sobs along with Aloho*). So what are you going to do now? (Ogbeche
413 1997, p.59).

414
415 It is necessary to note that Aloho has completely ruined her life because Chief Ade-Amaka has
416 trapped her in his immoral claws. Therefore, she becomes the victim of the mafia perpetrated by
417 Ochuole, Ade-Amaka's sugar girl and his acolytes in all the atrocities he causes throughout the
418 play.

419 In sum, the theme of power abuse in the office has been handled tactfully by Ogbeche
420 in *Harvest of Corruption* through the main character Chief Ade-Amaka in various forms. To
421 insist on the pertinence of the play, Oshienebo (1997) explains that:

422 Frank Ogodo's *Harvest of Corruption* explores this background [power abuse] in a conscious
423 effort to mirror the contemporary Nigerian society. The play focuses essentially on sexual
424 immorality, bribery, large scale embezzlement in official quarters, drug trafficking and
425 smuggling involving placed personalities who are supposed to be custodians of our traditional
426 norms, policy makers, and law enforcement officers. (p. ix)

427 There is no wonder that the playwright's depiction of this issue appears as a lament and a plea in
428 which he calls his fellow Africans' attention to how the problem jeopardizes many people's
429 lives. Unsurprisingly, the abuse of office constitutes one of the preoccupations in many
430 Africans' daily life; a practice which explains the betrayal of people's trust by the public officials.

431 Conclusion:

432 The present paper has explored the issue of power abuse in Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's
433 *Harvest of Corruption*. The study draws on postcolonial theoretical framework to demonstrate
434 that the topic under study is a by-product of colonial influence. The critical analysis of the topic
435 has helped discuss various ways through which power abuse manifests itself. In the play, the
436 protagonist has used his position to engage in corruption in tandem with other corrupt civil
437 servants, drug-trafficking with the protection of the judiciary boards and sexual affairs with his
438 employees. Chief Ade-Amaka gets involved in all these satanic practices just to quench his
439 egoistic desire.

440 In order to fight the phenomenon of power abuse in Africa, strict punishment should be
441 implemented against any actor found guilty of the practice. Moreover, the citizens should be
442 resilient in the face of bad leaders who encourage social vices capable of hampering the people's
443 life. These citizens should take their responsibility for harbouring patriotic deeds. Finally, to

444 curve the problem, strong laws should be passed and energetically enforced. This could ascertain
445 a culture which would condemn the phenomenon.

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