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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ATTACKING POWER ABUSE AS A SOCIO-POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN FRANK OGO DO OGBECHE'S HARVEST OF CORRUPTION

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Abstract

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

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Introduction:-

African countries, either individually or within regional and continental organizations, have been struggling to get away from imperial yoke under the leadership of Africans themselves since the proclamation of their respective 'independences'. However, the stagnation of many countries in their efforts to achieve the desired socio-political goals, might stem from the fact that "the post-independence political rulers became dictators or advanced neo-colonialism" (Shigali, 2016:p.45) because of the misuse of power. Power abuse can be mainly explained by the leaders' proclivity towards socio-political malpractice which manifests itself in "featuring presidentialism, clientelism, the use of state resources, and the centralisation of power" (Wyk, 2007: p.12). It is noteworthy that the leaders' questionable behaviour partly explicates the harsh living conditions in which many people languish.

To address this issue of malgovernance, many African writers do not hesitate to use literature as a platform from which they call people's attention on the seemingly hidden facts about the economic stagnation of the continent. In this regard, Anaso and Nwabudike (2014) rightly avers that "the (African) writer uses his art as a discursive mode to analyse the nature, operations, and consequences of political crisis in the society" (p.49). They continue to ponder the role of the writer whom they view as a 'sage', 'visioner', or 'elder' who brings back the community on the right path whenever things start to go astray. In their writings, the African dramatists not only depict the different forms of leadership and its features, but also denounce the mismanagement of power especially in the civilian and the military regimes. Frank Ogo do Ogbecche constitutes one of these playwrights. His *Harvest of Corruption*, published in 1997, portrays and interrogates the issue of power abuse through his main character Chief-Ade-Amaka, the "Honourable Minister" and other less prominent characters. In an effort to explore the aforementioned issue, the research attempts to critically raise the following questions: (i) how do African playwrights portray the issue of power abuse in their

respective societies? (ii) How does Frank Ogbodo Ogbache depict power abuse in *Harvest of Corruption* (1997)? (iii) What is the playwright's take on the problem?

Methodology and Theoretical Framework:-

The current research follows the underpinnings of qualitative method because the nature of the data collected and analysed is not numerical. According to Ugwu and Eze Val (2023), "to better understand ideas, opinions, or experiences, qualitative research involves gathering and analysing non-numerical data (such as text, video or audio). It [the qualitative method] can be used to uncover intricate details about a situation to spark fresh research concepts" (p.20). This method suits the nature of this research and appears helpful to achieve the objectives of the paper. In addition, the paper draws its insights from postcolonial theory also known as Postcolonialism. This theory arguably started in the late 1970s with the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978. For Christ Baldick (2001):

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

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

A Glance on Power Abuse in African Literature:

Power abuse constitutes a well-known political practice which manifests itself in various forms in the different systems of governance in many places in the world including Africa. Power abuse or abuse of power, as viewed by Auchter, Katz and Graham (1981), is "the misuse of a position of power to take unjust advantage of individuals, organizations, or governments" (<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] action that flagrantly transgresses the bounds of constitutional or statutory authorization, or in welfare-economic terms as action that produces welfare losses –either because officials have ill-formed beliefs or because they work with self-interested motivations" (p.675). These definitions perfectly corroborate Haboubacar's (2019) definition who considers that "power abuse is the misuse of power or (the use of privilege a leader or a person has) for one's own advantage" (p.3). Indeed, power abuse hampers and tempers with political, social and economic development of a nation because many people "play a rigged game" (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2008). In the African context, this phenomenon becomes ubiquitous and gains ground in almost every aspect of life since "the departure of the colonial masters" (Alaby & Mohammedzadeh, 2018, p.46). Generally speaking, power abuse includes corruption, favouritism, bribery, disregard for the institutionalized laws, drug-trafficking and other malpractices.

While many voices are heard in the fight against wrongfully done political acts, African literature has proven itself to be a weapon for the artists, particularly, when it comes to denounce power abuse and to sensitize people on the issue. The apparent involvement of the African literary production in this regard has made some critics like Kehinde (2008) to consider African writers as "mostly committed artists" who "have always focused attention on the nagging problem of elusive viable political leadership in their individual nations, a problem which has also been debated for some time in a range of academic disciplines" (p.333). This observation comes from the fact that many men and women from other disciplines such as sociology, political science and other domains have undertaken various research on power abuse. This is due to their, unrelenting effort to achieve true independence and societal well-being. For instance, Pat Utomi clarifies that "the independence struggle produced men who were willing to sacrifice for the common good. In the transition from colonial rule, as they moved from the outhouse to the Government reserved areas, the emergent leaders of Africa saw the tyranny of colonial agents as their model of leadership" (Utomi qtd in Wani, 2014, p.14). Additionally, Wani (2014) demonstrates that "(the) misuse of power, fraud, chicanery and embezzlement of funds are systematically perpetrated by the leaders of government and their unions"

(p.20). In their struggle for the promotion of good governance, Ibrahim and Cheri (2013) have also sorted out the problems that weaken the institutions in the third world. For them, “[...]most of the third world countries have seen their freedom heroes turn into dictators, while plunder of natural resources, politics of exclusion and deprivation to turn the balance of power continue to dominates the public sphere” (p.59). Talking about the embarrassing nature of some African leaders, Wyk (2007) adds that perspectives on political leadership in Africa vary from the ‘criminalisation’ of the State to political leadership as ‘dispensing patrimony,’ ‘the recycling’ of elites and the use of State power and resources to consolidate political and economic power (p.3).

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

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

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

The above scholarships insightfully underpin how the rulers and their acolytes abuse power for their own whimsical enterprise. These works represent the eye-witness of the huge contributions of the African writers to fight against social injustice perpetrated by those in power throughout the continent. As a consequence, it could be safely said that African writers are against “the abuses of power and corruption [that] have become so common for decades [in Africa]” (Al-Moghales & Hezam 2015, p.1544). Drawing on the aforementioned insights, the next section of the paper analyses the theme of power abuse in Frank Ogodo Ogbeche’s *Harvest of Corruption* (1997) in an effort to reveal how the playwright has artistically contributed to fight the practice just like his senior dramatists since it remains a topical African reality.

Political Activism in African Drama: An Attack on Power Abuse in Frank Ogodo Ogbeche’s *Harvest of Corruption*
The phenomenon of power abuse continues to be of utmost concern in African political governance for various reasons. One could argue that this problem results from ineffective and unfair management of power by those who hold it, especially in the administration. This is due to the fact that in some democratic societies, as defended by Achebe (2012) in his book *There Was a Country*, “public servants helped themselves freely to the nation’s wealth.

Elections were blatantly rigged. The subsequent national census was outrageously stage-managed; judges and magistrates were manipulated by the politicians in power. The politicians themselves were pawns of foreign business interest” (p.18). Achebe refers to an anonymous country which symbolizes many African countries experiencing the mayhem that he alludes to. Accordingly, Ebueke & Arinze-Umobi (2017) blatantly regret that Nigeria remains a country blighted by corruption, religious and ethnic unrest, a morbid situation occasioned by greed [for power and wealth acquisition] (p.18). Many African countries like Nigeria suffer ineffective political leadership and this situation is captured in literary productions such as Ogbeche’s play, *Harvest of Corruption*.

The play vividly depicts power abuse in the Nigerian public administration under the leadership of greedy individuals with such a clarity and tone to distinguish itself from other plays dealing with similar subject matter. To begin with, Frank Ogodo Ogbeche depicts corruption as the most dangerous elements of power abuse in this play. It is important to note that corruption remains one of the factors that hinder socio-economic and political development of any country. While the issue appears a worldwide concern, it reveals itself more flagrant in many African countries. Myint (2000) defines corruption as “the use of public office for private gain, or in other words, [the] use of official position, rank or status by an office bearer for his own personal benefit” (p.35). Moreover, Tarkpeher and Ikechukwu (2021) equate corruption to “any attempt by an individual to violate the rules of an organization or nation with the aim of having a personal gain” (p.1). It is noteworthy that most of the corrupt activities are undertaken for personal gains. In a bid to demonstrate the existence of this practice in Africa and elsewhere, Onyenweaku (2024) maintains that “corruption is a pervasive socio-political and moral phenomenon that ravages human societies” (p.9). Many African writers do not hesitate to criticize the issue in their artistic productions.

In *Harvest of Corruption*, the playwright uses his craftsmanship to denounce this odious practice in his country, Nigeria, by using some prominent characters which include the commissioner, and Justice Odili. These dramatic personae help the protagonist, the honourable minister Chief Ade-Amaka, to use his position of power to abuse people. The Commissioner, for instance, engages himself in this forfeiture to protect the accused, Chief Ade-Amaka, at the police office when some information about the financial scandal is reported. Instead of directly charging Chief Ade-Amaka, the Commissioner lets him go because he promises to give him a huge amount of money to cover up the case as explained in the conversation below:

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

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

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

As far as the case of Justice Odili is concerned, he is the one who usually protects Chief Ade-Amaka from any judicial threat owing to the huge amount of money he receives from him. This also testifies the fraudulent relationship that civil servants undertake among themselves to perpetuate obnoxious practices such as corruption in the office. The exchanges between Justice Odili and the Honourable minister can serve as a witness of their connivance:

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

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

CHIEF ADE-AMAKA: (Takes the seat). My Lord, if there is whisky in the house, I shall prefer Whisky tonight. I think the cold weather calls for that. (Justice Odili rises and moves to the cabinet and brings out a bottle of Whisky

and two glasses. He places them on the table and pours himself a shot. Chief does the same and both of them proceed to drinking from their glasses). (Sips his drink) My Lord I have come with a little kola for you. I know that you will like what I have brought for you. It is in my car. You can call your boys to go to the boot to collect them. Meanwhile, here is a little cash for your fuel (he opens his portfolio and brings out bundles of naira notes and hands them over to Justice Odili who receives it with a show of gratitude). My Lord, more will come so long as you continue to protect me. This is to tell you that I am not only a great man but a grateful man as well, to good people like you.

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

Moreover, by corrupting both the commissioner and justice Odili, Chief Ade-Amaka has completely put the law under his control. Those who are supposed to dictate the law and make it enforced, indulge in accepting bribe from the rascals such as Chief Ade-Amaka. This attitude explains the main reason why the judiciary system appears weak in the face of the politicians in many African countries. This is because, the politicians' crimes are let unpunished; and this encourages them to perpetrate more scandals provoking hardships in the society. Sadly, this behaviour has become ubiquitous in most of postcolonial places. Similarly, the clerk of the Ministry of External Relations, Ayo naively accepts to take bribe from the detective inspector, Inaku in order to divulge the reality concerning the scandal that happened in their Ministry. This demonstrates how the canker affects the Nigerian administration from head to toe. It explains many other irresponsible practices that block the well-function of this vital domain in the African continent. To get things done many would turn to corrupt (unlawful) practices. To instantiate the aforementioned claim, Frank Ogodo Ogbeche put into exergue the following passage:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Apart from the central theme of corruption that pervades Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption*, drug-trafficking constitutes another form of power abuse developed in the play. This fraudulent activity can be considered as a by-product of the persistence of corruption. Viewing that crimes are let unpunished due to corruption, recalcitrant persons churned by excessive desire to amass wealth by getting involved in drug-trafficking. This obnoxious activity is undertaken in many places by the personalities on power because they put the laws under their control without taking into account the consequences that may befall their communities. In this respect, Esheya (2014) bemoans that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

One can explain that Chief Ade-Amaka has involved this innocent girl, Aloho, in his dirty affairs of drug-trafficking without informing her about the true nature of the job for which she is recruited in the Ministry. This testifies how many innocent young persons are hired or recruited under the name of a given institution to fulfil the desire of the monstrous chiefs like Ade-Amaka. This also sheds light on the degree to which these ill-infested maggot leader politicize the administration and manipulate the judiciary institution. This act confirms once again how leaders use their power to satisfy their ludicrous agencies even if the interest of the country will be threatened. This assertion finds credence in Esheya (2014) when he concludes that, "In Nigeria of today, the society's moral fibre is so weak, the public space is infected with high level of corruption and law enforcement is so compromised, these conditions have turned out to be fertile grounds for crime" (p.497).

Finally, sexual immorality appears critically developed in Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption* because it equally pictures out the abuse of power in the Nigerian administration. It is noteworthy that many personalities in Africa in general use their position to exploit girls by promising them a given job for recruitment or for a promotion in the services. This phenomenon jeopardizes many girls' and women's life. Those who do not succumb, are often seen suffering or losing their jobs. To illustrate this view, Bolayi (2010) declares that "some men see women as sexual objects and even force them to have sexual intercourse to get jobs whilst other women are exploited sexually for job promotions" (p.2). The theme of sexual immorality is skilfully handled in *Harvest of Corruption* using the characters Chief Ade-Amaka, Ochuole, Madam Hoha and Aloho. In this dramatic production, being the boss in the Ministry, Chief Ade-Amaka involves himself in sexual affairs with his female co-workers in connivance with Madame Hoha who procures him her Akpara Hotel. As a result of such immoral practice, he impregnates the innocent Aloho. The pregnancy causes her death in spite of all the efforts she has made to abort it. From the foregoing, it is important to note that the Chiefs like Ade-Amaka not only abuse their power through embezzlement, corruption, and

drug-dealing, but also exploit their female subordinates in the office sexually. This behaviour constitutes a serious threat to people's well-being in society. The issue of sexual immorality is further highlighted in the discussion between Aloho and her friend Ogeyi:

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

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

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

It is necessary to note that Aloho has completely ruined her life because Chief Ade-Amaka has trapped her in his immoral claws. Therefore, she becomes the victim of the mafia perpetrated by Ochuole, Ade-Amaka's sugar girl and his acolytes in all the atrocities he causes throughout the play. In sum, the theme of power abuse in the office has been handled tactfully by Ogbeche in *Harvest of Corruption* through the main character Chief Ade-Amaka in various forms. To insist on the pertinence of the play, Oshienebo (1997) explains that: Frank Ogodo's *Harvest of Corruption* explores this background [power abuse] in a conscious effort to mirror the contemporary Nigerian society. The play focuses essentially on sexual immorality, bribery, large scale embezzlement in official quarters, drug trafficking and smuggling involving placed personalities who are supposed to be custodians of our traditional norms, policy makers, and law enforcement officers. (p.ix) There is no wonder that the playwright's depiction of this issue appears as a lament and a plea in which he calls his fellow Africans' attention to how the problem jeopardizes many people's lives. Unsurprisingly, the abuse of office constitutes one of the preoccupations in many Africans' daily life; a practice which explains the betrayal of people's trust by the public officials.

Conclusion:-

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

In order to fight the phenomenon of power abuse in Africa, strict punishment should be implemented against any actor found guilty of the practice. Moreover, the citizens should be resilient in the face of bad leaders who encourage social vices capable of hampering the people's life. These citizens should take their responsibility for harbouring patriotic deeds. Finally, to curb the problem, strong laws should be passed and energetically enforced. This could ascertain a culture which would condemn the phenomenon.

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