<u>Abstract</u>

The Post-Colonial Literature is considered as the source of the issues of cultural diversity, ethnic, racial and cultural difference and power relations. Subsequently, the study of various dimensions of neo-colonial dominance is the main focus of the study. The issues of identity and culture are considered to be the relevant aspects of the post-colonial literature for two reasons: First, because they are so central to the growing power of imperial discourse over the nineteenth century, and secondly they remain central and unavoidable facts of the modern society as known as the dominant parts of the social discrimination and prejudice.

Africa has a unique cultural heritage with a distinct past. African Literature often makes assumptions about the existence of the unified 'African' culture, but closer inspection reveals a far more complex and a problematic picture. It reflects the cultural traditions, colonial history, and inner conflicts of African people. While drawing together a wide variety of theoretical and critical perspectives of post-colonial literature in English, the present study aims at exploring perpetuate unequal economic and cultural relations with the struggle of the people concerned with race, religion, invasion and pacification in the form of the issues of identity and culture.

Chinua Achebe (1930-2013), an Igbo writer in English, is one of the Africa's most acclaimed authors and the pioneers in the portrayal of African life from the African perspectives. His writings introduced readers throughout the world to the creative use of language and form, as well as to factual inside accounts of modern African life and history. Not only through his literary contributions but also through his championing of bold objectives for Nigeria and Africa, Achebe has helped to reshape the perception of African history, culture, and place in the world affairs through his novels. We come across the theme of complexities of the Igbo society before and after the arrival of the Europeans from his literary work. To support this theme, he includes detailed descriptions of the justice codes and the trial process, the social and family rituals, the marriage customs, food production and preparation processes, the process of shared leadership for the community, religious beliefs and practices, and the opportunities for virtually every man to climb the clan's ladder of success through his own efforts. Achebe's theme of Igbo cultural complexity is the theme of the clash of cultures which poses the identity issues.

As a corrective to European literature's stereotypical portraits of Africans as an unvarying, primitive force, Achebe strives to communicate the human complexity of Nigerian existence, to establish the independence of African literature, and to demonstrate

the value of traditional Igbo culture. However, Achebe does not idealize the pre-colonial past that cannot survive unaltered in a modern world; instead, he encourages his readers to explore continuities with the past that can coexist with modern society.

He grew up amid the Igbo cultural practices of his people and the influence of Christianity and the church. He began to write while a student at University College, Ibadan, fuelled by a passion for a literature as well as a sense of dissatisfaction with the ways in which African locations were often represented in the existing literature in English. His novels *Things Fall Apart* (1958) *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966) and *Anthills of the Savannah* explore the colonialist prejudices concerning African civilization. They also depict the Igbo people at a period of transition, culminating by the arrival of British missionaries at the turn of the twentieth century. He casts a critical eye over Post-Independence Nigeria through the latter two novels. He has reflected the life of Igbo people with all its pains, pleasures, and puzzles. While describing the real picture of African people, he accepts the fact that if Africa has to progress, it will have to overcome many hurdles to be known as the nation of integrated people and the source of cultural treasure.

Chapter I- - Introduction

In this chapter, the research topic is discussed in relation to its various terms of the issues of identity and culture. It throws light on the term 'postcolonial literature' and its relation with the post-colonial African 'identity' and 'culture', which are reflected in the novels of Chinua Achebe. The chapter deals with the importance of the study of the novels of Chinua Achebe as the vein of the true representation of the invasion of a foreign culture and the slow but sure death of the native culture of the Igbos. They deal with a large extent on the loss of personal identity and the destruction of Igbo culture.

The aims and objectives of the research are noted in relation to research problem selected. In the further section, the methodologies of data collection, textual analysis and use of modern technical devices for collection of data are discussed. It is followed by the justification for the research in the novels of Chinua Achebe. It has been tried to justify the research with suitable and supportive information by stating the scope and limitation of the study. The chapter analyses the issues of gender, race, ethnicity, tradition, invasion, pacification and social pattern of Igbo people in Nigeria through the novels of Chinua Achebe. By the study of the novels of Achebe, the reader is led through a few decades of Nigerian history where colonization led to the arrival of an alien culture that, as has been discussed, led to the destruction and death of the native culture and paved the way for the

regeneration of a new one. The fact that the themes of the novels of Achebe may have the universal application that set out to study his people, yet the Igbo experience has parallels in native cultures around the world. The numerous researches, in relation to the writings of Chinua Achebe, are done and will be undertaken by researchers in future. The chapter also points out the pedagogical implications of the research study.

Chapter II-- Issues of Identity and Culture in *Things Fall Apart*

The chapter analyzesthe issues of identity and culture in relation to the conflicts between the Igbo people and missionaries pertaining to a great transition in Nigeria after colonialism. Achebe intensifies to mirror a sense of identity of the Igbo people with their past and pride in it. It is also intended to make the rest of the world to know about Africa's rich culture and heritage. The novel puts across, in convincing and authentic fictional terms, that the African societies had a great culture of their own. The issues of identity and culture are successfully portrayed to uphold the systematic process of destruction wrought upon the Igbo identity by the colonial power and alien culture of them.

It is an evident from the close exploration of the issues of identity and culture in *Things fall Apart* (1958) that the identity can be invented because it is not fixed, but fluid, as well as the culture of any society, has its own changing social patterns and it changes as per the changing need and conditions. If any society or person does not accept the changes, the issues of identity and culture cause the disintegration, disruption and pacification.

Chapter III- -Issues of Identity and Culture in *No Longer at Ease*

No Longer at Ease (1960) is a blend of the African culture and the influence of western ideology. This chapter explores the decline of the social values in Nigeria at the threshold of the Independence. The issues of identity of the Nigerian Igbo people are visible throughout the novel. People of Umuofia tried to keep themselves united with the changing scenario by the formation of Umuofia Progressive Union in Lagos. It monitored the values of the Igbo tradition, but to some extent the failure of them due to the crisis in ideology and the issues of culture sacked their goals with some unwanted creed in the social malaise.

The chapter throws light on the clash between traditional culture and Christianity that made the people alienated from their society. The traditional caste system made the fertile ground for getting people separated from each other in the modern Lagos. Obi's materialistic approach to fulfil the needs traps him into bribery. He loses his kinship, relations with society, and dislocated from culture. He becomes no longer at ease after his disconnection with the Nigerian village. The complexity in the religious codes, ethical values and hybridity in culture is focused on the issues of identity and culture. Finally, it has been argued that the

society with a blend of two diversified cultures, ethical values, social patterns, customs and religious order faces the issues of identity and culture. It is evident from the novel that the issues of identity and culture are visionary among the Nigerian people.

.**Chapter IV -Issues of Identity and Culture in** *Arrow of God*

The chapter charts the issues of Nigerian Igbo identity and culture in *Arrow of God* (1964).The internal tribal conflicts make the fertile ground for the disintegration of the tribe. The political and religious powers mirror the discourse of their ethnicity. Ezeulu, the central character of the novel tries to hold the community unified by his thoughtful decisions, but the social aggression is seen to challenge the traditional religious ethos. It is evident from the novel that the change in the cultural patterns sows the seed in the minds of the people by the power relations. The missionaries succeed to fall them apart by the influence of the religion, trade, education and justice. Ezeulu simply becomes an 'arrow' or the 'tool' of the religious power of the Igbo people for nothingness at the end when the natives were divided into two groups. One of them, the followers of the missionaries and the second becomes passive due to the 'pride' of Ezeulu, who deliberately delays the *New Yam Festival* to prove himself as the most powerful man in the clan. The missionaries divide them on the ground of the conflicts between Ezeulu and Nwaka regarding the war of Umuaro with Okperi.

The chapter mirrors the issues of African Igbo society. The issues of their individual and social identity subsist in various dimensions of conflict: religious, patriarchal and cultural, as well as traditional. In each of these dimensions revolve around issues of identity and culture. The Igbo people express themselves in spiritual communal ethos by which the individual and social identity are found deeply rooted in a spiritual sense of the kinship that do not keep them vibrant with the changing pace after arrival of the missionaries. The chapter points out the issues of Igbo cultural patterns as they consider the changes are meant for to fall them apart from their values. The transmission of the cultural patterns due to imperialism is pointed out as the disruption of their identity.

Chapter V- - Issues of Identity and Culture in *A Man of the People*

The chapter is focused on the identity issues of the people in Nigeria after first Independence through the novel *A Man of the People* (1966). It has been elucidated that the falling apart from the ethnic group-oriented identity, the people in Nigeria were in the search of the harmonious co-existence of their culture. The roots of the alienated identity are visible in the conflicts between the elite class of people and the natives. The urge for getting self-supported in the social context makes the people to follow the corrupt political system. The

polygamy of the authorities is one of the reasons that they couldn't cope with the changes brought by the colonizers.

The issues of culture are portrayed in a great disruption of the traditional values of the society. The moral issues reflected in the novel are prominently about the dislocation of their traditional values. People believed in the change brought by the corrupt political powers. The customs, traditions, rites, rituals of the Igbo people are almost replaced by the new cultural patterns. The dilemma of the people to get the hold on the political situations creates confusion among the people, subsequently the culture issues led to the chaos and anarchy. The emancipation of women is shown as a kind of farce, which doesn't allow them to decide their prospectus. They are portrayed in general as foolish, weak, dependent, frivolous, and seductive. The division among the people on the social issues makes a sense of their disintegration even after Independence.

Chapter VI- - Issues of Identity and Culture in *Anthills of Savannah*

The chapter elucidates the identity issues of the people in Nigeria in the postcolonial period through the fictitious state of Kangan that is portrayed in *Anthills of Savannah* (1987). The identity issues of the people in Nigeria are reflected through the two groups of society. The elite class and the masses are projected to reveal their identity in the form of privileged and underprivileged. The intellectuals like Ikem, Chris and Beatrice attempt to build a nation with an ideal democracy. Sam, His Excellency, being a leader of the nation fails to create a rapport with the masses due to Westernized influence on him. The sufferings of Abazon people for not supporting the government during the election lead subsequent challenges. The polygamy of the leaders is one of the reasons that make the stoppage to make an ideal democratic country.

The chapter reflects the issues of nationhood with divisions of the oppressed and the elite classes of the society from the perspectives of gender identity. It implies to the socio-political entity exposed by the male dominance and their urge for the opportunities in the pursuits of the power relations. In relation to the ideological, social and economic suppression of women, the root of the cultural change reflects the realities of postcolonial Nigeria.

It is evident from this chapter that the issues of culture, which were expected to rectify modern civilization in Nigeria during the 1980s. It has been observed that the reciprocal relationship between the traditional and modern culture is the part of harmonious coexistence of social identity. The characters in the novel are exposed with the struggle of them with the cultural heritage. When it comes to the point to discuss the alienation of the

people during the colonial period and its continuity in the postcolonial period, it poses the questions of cultural identity from the social levels to individuality. The ending of the novel reunites the people on the basis of challenging the polygamy of the authorities by execution of social power. Achebe observes that the British people made the culture of Nigeria disrupted by making them divided as the rulers, western influenced intellectuals and the peasants like Abazons. The sacrifice of Ikem and Chris to make the people to realise about their sufferings is the source of a new hope for the people to come out of the polygamy of the corrupt political leaders.

Chapter VII -- Conclusion

The chapter delineates theconcepts of 'identity' and 'culture' along with the implications of them in the literary works. It has also focused its academic relevance by elucidating the pedagogical implications. The chapter takes a cursory look on issues of identity and culture at present in Nigeria in relation to the issues depicted by Chinua Achebe in his novels. Identity is a dynamic and a continuing changing process: it is not static and it continues to be modified and finally becomes generally accepted with the times. The issues of identity are related within the framework of culture which has different facets on the parts of the individual and social identity.

The affirmation of one's identity, individual, group or national expectedly, includes an establishment of value for, recognition and acceptance of it. The affirmation or rejection of the cultural values effects on the sense of self both at personal and social levels in relation with the identity. On this ground, the issues of identity and culture need to be supported with a great deal of harmonious co-existence in the rapid age of globalization to keep the social norms vibrant with the changing pace. Achebe gives this message through his novelsto explore continuities with the past that can coexist with modern society. That is highlighted in the present research study. In the final part of the chapter major findings of the undertaken research have been focused along with the further avenues for the research from Chinua Achebe's literary work.

ZAGADE SANJAY HARIBHAU   **DR. RAJESH S. LATANE**

(Research Student)   (Research Guide)

Principal, Arts and Commerce College

Chakan, Tal- Khed, Dist- Pune.