

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

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## 1.0 Introduction

The present research aims at studying *Issues of Identity and Culture in the Novels of Chinua Achebe*. African Literature in English reflects various perspectives of local color and belongingness through multiracial, multicultural and multiethnic veracity. Chinua Achebe's novels exhibit individual dilemma in the quest of identity and various facets of cultural diversity, it is necessary to have a look at the need of harmonious coexistence of the issues of identity and culture having various viewpoints and outlooks. The following elements are considered in the present study.

- 1) African English Fiction reflects different layers of society as an amalgamation of individual and social struggle in the form of issues of identity and culture.
- 2) Individual and social issues promote the value of tolerance, harmonious coexistence, and discrimination in cultural aspects.
- 3) Responsible factors for identity formation and issues of identity in the novels of Chinua Achebe
- 4) Characteristics of Igbo identity and culture in the context of identity crisis and cultural change.
- 5) Social issues pertaining to the social patterns and unexpected changes among Igbo people, which are reflected in the novels of Chinua Achebe.
- 6) Local colour and the narratives of difference and belongings in the light of the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe

## 1.1 Background of Post-Colonial Literature in English

In a broad sense, postcolonial literature is "affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (Ashcroft et al, 1989: 2). Indian post-colonial Literature includes novels, poetry, and drama, which were written both during and after the British Rule, and reflected the influences of colonialism along with the issues pertaining to counteract, which is resulted in the form of alienation by restoring a connection between indigenous people and places through description, narration, and dramatization. The colonized countries such as Nigeria, Jamaica, Pakistan, Canada, Australia and Singapore have the significant features in the post-colonial literature, which reflected the indigenous cultures subjected to the colonial power about suppression and conventions of the colonizers.

In the context, Post-Colonial literature asserts the indigenous cultures to restore the cultural practices and traditions. The writers in the post-colonial period justified

the location of the culture of their countries. The major preoccupation of the post-colonial writing is to revise the historical social norms in the perspectives to justify the actions of the society. The postcolonial writers mainly emphasized the indigenous people, places, and their practices to get rid on the stereotypes, inaccuracies and general influences in the spheres of education, social, legal and political settings. They articulated the modes of creative expressions through the folk-songs, tales, proverbs and pidgin structures; In short, a postcolonial study has the potential to assemble new communities, who are supposed to follow the consequences of domination and subordination during the colonial power.

### **1.1.1. Perspectives of Postcolonial Literature.**

The term ‘post-colonial’ is resonant with all the ambiguity and complexity of the many different cultural experiences. The prefix ‘*post-*’ in ‘post- colonial’ refers to a historical relation, to a period after colonialism. But the term post-colonial bears the burden of chronological signification. The term ‘postcolonial’ designates independence and oppositional responses to colonialism more broadly than the hyphenated term ‘post-colonial’. Thus the term postcolonial refers to the response to the colonial: racial difference, identity crisis, issues of cultural difference, cultural identity, legal inequality, subaltern theme and all of the submerged or suppressed contradictions within the colonial social order itself. So the term postcolonial is more preferred to post-colonial.

The Post-colonial Literature implicates and explains the perspectives of the colonial process from the beginning of the colonial contact. All the post-colonial societies are subject in one way or another to overt or subtle of neocolonial domination and independence. The Post-Colonial Literature reflects the development of new elites with independent societies, often dominated by neo-colonial institutions: the development of internal classes based on racial, linguistic or religious discriminations: the unequal treatment of people in settler/invader societies. The Post-Colonial Literature involves discussion about experience of various kinds: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, ethnicity, place and responses to the colonial discourses of Europe such as history, philosophy and linguistics, and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being.

While drawing together a wide variety of theoretical and critical perspectives of post-colonial literature, 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. This happens when the bulk of the literary theory is seen to come out of the metropolitan centers, 'adding value' to the literary 'raw material' imported from the postcolonial societies. (Ashcroft & ed.al, Mitchell, 1992:2).The impacts of imperialism reflect in many different kinds of societies including those 'settler/invader' societies as the post-colonial literature engaged in decolonizing states and regions. Among the national leaders, it is Franz Fanon who is more important in postcolonial theory that it is strongly influenced by the dialectical and materialist traditions of Hegel and Marx. Franz Fanon looked into the psychopathology of colonialism. That is the analysis of the psychological effects of colonial domination and disempowerment on the natives. Understanding the psychopathological effects of colonialism, he looked specifically into the absolute sense of difference that characterized by colonial relations. In his *Black Skin, White Masks* (Franz Fanon, 1986) Fanon explored the racial difference in colonial and postcolonial societies. As a result, the native feels that wearing the white mask (culture) is the only way to deal with the psychological inadequacy. Fanon's most controversial contribution to postcolonial theory was his argument concerning '*revolutionary violence*' as the most effective mode of opposition to the violence of colonial expression. 'It is only by deploying the refining fire of violence decolonisation of the mind is possible'. According to Fanon 'violence is a form of self-assertion. Violence and the permanent dream to become the persecutor constitute the tools of the anti-colonial revolutionary'. Fanon rejected the Western conception of the nation as a "universal standpoint" that subsumes all particulars (i.e. individual human lives) in the fulfillment of its own abstract freedom. But he offered cultural nationalism, which is respecting native culture and literature, as a remedy to the nauseating colonized existence.

Edward Said exposes the Eurocentric universalism, which takes for granted both the superiority of what is Western and the inferiority of what is not. Said identifies the European tradition of Orientalism, which is the particular and long-standing way of identifying east as 'Others' and inferior to the west. The 'Orient'says Said, 'features in the western mind as a sort of surrogate and even undergrounds self' (Said, 1978:3). Natives were ruled in the part being represented in the census,

newspaper, anthropological studies and the law as a weak, willed, inferior, secondary, effeminate and unable to rule them. Orientalism, therefore, as a systematic discipline about the Orient functioned as a corporate institution for understanding and controlling the colonized people. Said says that Orient becomes the relationship of “power, of domination, of varying degree of a complex hegemony” (Said, 1978:5). In *Culture and Imperialism* (Said, 1993) Said states that postcolonial Independence involves the recovery of geographical territory and reclamation of the culture of the colonized countries. The following perspectives of postcolonial literature have been taken into consideration while studying issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe.

### **Race, ethnicity, indigeneity**

The post-colonial literature is considered as the source of the issues of cultural diversity, ethnic, racial and cultural difference and the power relations within them—consequently the study of various dimensions of neo-colonial dominance is the main focus of the study. The race continues to be the relevant aspect of the post-colonial literature for two reasons: First, because it is so central to the growing power of imperial discourse over the nineteenth century, and secondly it remains central and unavoidable fact of modern society as it is known as the dominant part of the social discrimination and the prejudice. While we may argue that race is a flawed and self-defeating category that traps its users in ‘its biological and essentialist meshes’ (Appiah, 1992), in practical terms it remains as a personal, social and cultural identity. Ethnicity symbolizes social and cultural markers of difference that provides a useful extension and helps us to analyze the race. On the other hand, Indigeneity, with its specific implication of the politics of the settler societies, has been separated from ethnicity because it focuses mainly on the series of issues pertaining identity, struggle and revival.

### **Environment**

As with the issues of identity and culture, a place has always been of great importance to post-colonial study as it is related with the language, naming, and narration. The destruction of the environment is one of the most damaging aspects of the Western Industrialization. The fact is that the post-colonial writers have reflected

the environment as the source of ‘civilizing’ benefits of modernity. Wolch and Emel point out;

“The roots of contemporary environmentalism may lie in colonial damage in both settler colonies and colonies of occupation, neo-colonialism, often in association with the colonial past, continues to produce classes of interests between ‘the West and the Rest’ in, for instance, areas of land and food scarcity, where the well being of humans and endangered animal species may be at odds” (Wolch & Emel, 1998:56).

The hierarchical distinction between humans and animals intrinsic to European humanism were frequently employed metaphorically in the creation of racialized hierarchies during the colonial period. The post-colonial environmentalism, therefore, deals with a number of deeply problematic issues and conflicting issues.

### **Globalization**

The globalization seems to be the natural extensions of interests of post-colonial studies. The issues of identity and culture are penetrated under the influence of global surroundings. The importance of globalization to post-colonial studies comes first from its demonstration of the structure of world power relations, which stands firm in the twentieth century as a legacy of the Western imperialism. Like globalization, Ashcroft says;

*“it may be more useful to see that imperialism is not simply a conscious and active ideology, but a combination of conscious ideological programmes and unconscious ‘rhizomic’ structures of unprogrammed connections and engagements”* (Ashcroft, 2001:50).

This interaction and circulation are precisely the way in which the global is produced.

### **Diaspora**

It has been considered as one of the aspects of post-colonial writings related to the issues of identity and culture. It is the phenomenon of the extraordinary an accelerating movement of people throughout the world. Diaspora does not seem at first to be the province of post-colonial studies until we examine the deep impact of

colonialism. The most extreme consequences of imperial dominance can be seen in the radial displacement of the people through slavery, indenture, and settlement. Diaspora refers to the vexed questions of identity, memory and home that such movement produces. The issue is not only one of the cultural engagements but also one of the cultural circulations. James Clifford says that “It is a new world order of mobility, of rootless histories, and the paradox of global culture” (Clifford, 1997:3). It is ‘at home’ with this motion rather than a particular place. Clifford’s book *Routes* (1997) examines the extent which practices of displacement “might be constitutive of cultural meanings rather than their simple transfer or extension” (Clifford, 1997:3).

### **The Sacred**

The debates regarding the traditional and sacred beliefs of colonized, indigenous and marginalized people have been increased in relation to post-colonial studies. Indeed, it would be true to say that the sacred remains the field of post-colonial studies in the most need of critical and scholarly attention. However, at the end of the twentieth century, debates about the sacred have become more urgent as the issues such as land rights and rights to sacred beliefs and practices begin to grow in importance. The sacred has followed the trajectory of other ‘denied knowledge’, as Bhabha puts it, “entering the dominant discourse and estranging ‘the basis of its authority- its rules of recognition’”(Bhabha, 1994:114). The sacred has been an empowering feature of post-colonial experience into two ways: on one hand indigenous concepts of the sacred have been able to interpolate dominant conceptions of cultural identity, and on other Western forms of the sacred have often been appropriated and transformed as a means of a local empowerment. Analysis of the sacred has been one of the most neglected, and may be one of the most rapidly expanding areas of the post-colonial studies.

#### **1.1.2. African Writers in Post-Colonialism.**

African Literature forms a pivotal segment of the 20<sup>th</sup> -century world literature. It represents the writings of African national livings on African soil reflecting the African native issues related to culture and identity. The significance of African Literature lies in its Africanness, which is retained in spite its cosmopolitan origin. This is a distinctive feature of African Literature when compared to the literature of the other parts of the world, Further the lack of a written medium is balanced by

Africa's rich heritage of oral literature. The African writers in the postcolonial period elucidated the colonial powers of Europe in terms of protest, conflict, anguish or neurosis.

The European novelists like Joseph Conrad and Joyce Cary in their novels, *Heart of Darkness* (1899) and *Misterb Johnson* (1939) respectively, have created an Africa that is often appalling and beyond redemption. Obviously, Europe felt no need to be more than condescending to Africa, which she first enslaved and later colonized. The African writer Chinua Achebe rightly says that "In their role she (Africa) had no need and made little effort to understand and appreciate Africa; indeed she easily convinced herself that there was nothing there to justify the effort" (Achebe, 1976). African writers used the English language as one of their legacies of colonialism to advantage. The writers from Nigeria have contributed a large to the opulence of African Literature.

Amos Tutuola's *The Palm Wine Drinkard*, (1952) was the first ever published novel. The novelist projects a hero in search of his dead palm-wine tapster, in the *Dead's town*. During this quest, he does on evil after another, till he reaches his goal through sheer perseverance. The novel is compared with *Pilgrim's Progress*. With the exception of Tutuola, Okara and Ekwensi, quite a few Nigerian writers like J.P. Clark, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Christopher Okigbo and T.M. Aluko were all trained in the universities. They may be termed as Africa's 'University Wits'. They didn't succeed only in bringing self-knowledge but also provided the needed inspiration in hastening the process of Independence all over Africa. Ekwensi, Achebe and Aluko with their all the time best novels, Clark and Soyinka contributed plays with great satires. Okigbo and Okara wrote deep, powerful and sensual poetry. The contribution of these writers can be considered into two stages. First, African values and predicament are expressed by Africans themselves, for the first time in a widely accessible medium. Secondly, African writing has the uncanny power of drawing certain patterns of their culture and heritage.

### **1.1.3. Characteristics of African Novels in Post-Colonial Period.**

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. The term 'African Literature' covers a huge range of languages, cultures, and colonial contexts.

It reflects the cultural traditions, colonial history, and inner conflicts of African people. In the twentieth century, European narratives of Alan Paton, Nadine Gordimer, and Doris Lessing had produced distorted images of African people and their culture, but the African novelists rejected the distorted images and made an attempt to provide a true portrayal of African indigenous population and European people through specific symbols and myths. There is the lack of critical works on African literature, subsequently it has no acute interpretations about African cultural traditions and customs, as it is believed that African literature emerged only in 50s years of the twentieth century.

Chinua Achebe of Nigeria penetrated an accurate observation of the African past and present through his novels. He 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 and problems.

### **The Sense of Negritude**

The first transnational literary movement in Africa was that of Negritude, which emerged in the 1930s, and is the most closely associated to restore pride in black African culture through the celebration of what is described as its sensual, emotional nature, as opposed to the dour rationalism of Europe. As the Martiniquan theorist, Frantz Fanon argues in '*Les Damnés de la Terre*' (Fanon 1961, trans. *The Wretched of the Earth*) his hugely influential analysis of decolonization, Negritude's decision to embrace African culture-however abstract and idealized-was a crucial step in developing a nationalist, anti-colonial consciousness.

### **Oral Traditions**

The key element in the process of celebrating African culture through the post-colonial literature was the literary adaptation of tales from oral tradition. In Anglophone Africa, the description of oral narrative style is reflected in Amos Tutuola's *The Palm Wine Drinkard* (1952), it is an interesting story of a hapless hero, who embarks on a quest in the land of the dead; deploying the oral motifs of circularity, repetition and exaggeration. The narratives of tales and oral tradition through the novels reveal the concrete ideas of the glorious past of the African people.

### **Theme of Nostalgia**

African writings in the 1950s and 1960s produced much autobiographical fiction. Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du pauvre* (1950, trans. *The Poor Man's Son*) and Camara Laye's *L'Enfant noir* (1953, trans. *The African Child*) are the two classic examples of somewhat nostalgic narratives recounting the experiences of African children, who enter the French colonial education system, undertaking a physical voyage from their villages to the city as the journey from the villages to the metropolitan centers, which is an emotional and spiritual. The darker side of the colonial education system is found in Cheikh Hamidou Kane's *L'Adventure ambiguë* (1961, trans. *Ambiguous Adventure*). Kane's tragic hero, Samba Diallo, is torn between the 'spirituality' of African culture and the 'rationality' of Europe. The same kind of spiritual and emotional journey is depicted for refusing to renounce the influence of Europe.

### **Tradition versus Colonial Impact**

Chinua Achebe's Novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) describes the perspectives on colonial education. One element of its narrative tells of the son growing apart his father's traditional culture when he is enrolled in the missionary school. This provides an instructive comparison between African traditions and colonial influence. However, Achebe's novels encompass the alienating educated young Africans from their parents. Kane and Achebe highlight the ambiguities produced by the colonial encounter, but there was a very strong vein of anti-colonial nationalist writing. Ngugi wa Thiong'o depicts the Kenyan struggle for nationhood in similarly realist style in his novels *Weep Not, Child* (1964) and *The River Between* (1965). For such writers, anti-colonial nationalism was a revolutionary process, bringing about the creation of new societies, and new types of African. They identified with Fanon's depiction of the postcolonial writer as an active participant in social, cultural and political transformation.

### **Satire, Ambiguity and Hybridity**

The post-colonial African novels become the dominant motifs of satire, ambiguity and hybridity from the 1970s onwards. There was also a profound move away from realist narratives to more fragmentary and experimental styles. The previous generation of writers had sought to develop narratives of resistance against

empire and to imagine a national consciousness for the emerging African nations. The generation in the 1970s rejects the linear, realist narrative styles of the nationalist generation, which are deemed to have employed simplistic binary oppositions between Africa and Europe in order to create a unified picture of the new African nations. Chinua Achebe's novel *No Longer at Ease* (1960) relates the story of an idealistic young Nigerian student, who returns from University of Britain and becomes the victim of corruption and disillusionment. The novels of Sembene-Voltaique (trans.) *Tribal Scars* 1962) and *Xala* (1973) and Ngugi- *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), *Devil on the Cross* (1982) also points out the crisis of settlement in post-independence. The complex portrayal of the theme of satire, ambiguity and hybridity are exhibited within the post-colonial African Nations.

### **Identity, Race and Culture**

The novelist like Chinua Achebe elucidates the issues of identity and culture in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) that relates the theme of the hero's fall, search for identity and the end of Igbo civilization. It continued in *No Longer at Ease* (1960) which represents the end of pure, idealistic democracy and the triumph of corruption. *Arrow of God* (1964) represents the downfall of Igbo religion, and the triumph of Christianity. *A Man of the People* (1966) is an example of the darker sides of political satire and impact on their culture and *Anthills of Savannah* (1987) is about cynicism driven by compassion and complex issues of identity and culture. The significance of the 'Local Color' is presented by the writers in the forms of culture and tradition. Wole Soyinka, the first African winner of Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986 explores, in grimly comic fashion, the sense of despair in *The Interpreter* (1965). Farah's exploration of the links between sexuality, gender and the nation in *L' Enfant de sable* (1985, trans. *The Sand Child*) is the story about a female child raised as a boy by her father, distraught at the fate.

### **Diaspora**

The global age made the writers to reveal the theme of the diaspora in African post-colonial literature. "The global movement of people, capital and information make it necessary to view North African culture within a global framework, rather than the expression of individual national identities" (Woodhull in John McLeod, 2007:71). Ben Okri's Booker Prize-winning novel *The Famished Road* (1991) is

about Independence of Nigeria and the blurs and boundaries between ‘magic’ and ‘modernity’ The exploration of the transcultural and transnational nature of the contemporary world is thus at the heart of many African novels.

On the whole, the African Novels in the Post-colonial period relate the balance considerations of the global and local. It makes an appeal to the pertaining issues of identity and culture in the context pressing needs to develop the understanding of ‘local’ issues in order to analyze the postcolonial African issues of identity and culture.

## **1.2 Factors Responsible for Existence of Post-Colonial Literature.**

The semantic basis of the term ‘post-colonial’ might seem to suggest a concern only with the national culture after the departure of the imperial power. Generally speaking, the term ‘colonial’ has been used for the period before independence and a term indicating a national writing. We use the term ‘Post-colonial, however, to recover all the cultures those affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression. It studies the effects of European imperial power before and after Independence. The literature of African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean countries, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island countries, and Sri Lanka is the post-colonial literature.

The study of factors responsible for the existence of the Post-colonial literature has always been densely political and cultural phenomenon, a practice in which language and literature have both been called into the service of a profound and embracing nationalism. A ‘privileging norm’ was enthroned at the heart of the formation of English Studies as a template for the denial of the value of the ‘peripheral’, the ‘marginal’, the ‘uncanonized’. Literature was made as central to the cultural enterprise of empire as the monarchy was to its political formation. The elements of periphery and margin threatened the exclusive claims of the centre, they were rapidly incorporated. As the post-colonial societies sought to establish their difference from Britain, the response of those who recognized this complicity between language, education, and cultural incorporation was to break the link between language and literary study.

### 1.2.1. Development of Post-colonial Literature

Post-colonial literature developed through several stages, which can be seen to correspond to stages both of national or regional consciousness and of the project of asserting difference from the imperial centre. In the first phase, the writers inevitably reflected primary identification with the colonial power and the second stage evolved the discourse of post-colonial experiences ‘under imperial license’ by ‘natives’ or ‘outcasts’ The institution of ‘literature’ in the colony is under the direct control of the imperial ruling class who alone license the acceptable form and permit the publication and distribution of the resulting work. The development of independent literature depended upon the abrogation of the constraining power and the appropriation of language and writing for new distinctive usages. Such an appropriation is clearly the most significant feature in the emergence of modern post-colonial literature.

### 1.2.2. Language

One of the major features of imperial oppression is control over language. The imperial education system installs a ‘standard’ version of metropolitan language as the norms of marginalizes all ‘variants’ as impurities. (Ashcroft Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen, Tiffin.1989:7) Campbell Praed in nineteenth century Australian novel *Policy and Passion* puts in, “To be colonial is to talk Australian slang; to be...everything that is abominable”(Praed,1881:154). The language becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which conceptions of ‘truth’, ‘order’, and ‘reality’ becomes established. Such power is rejected in the emergence of effective post-colonial voice. For this reason, the post-colonial writing emerged as a significant authority to describe their experiences.

### 1.2.3. Place and Displacement

The major feature of the post-colonial literature is the concern with place and displacement. The special post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being; the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place. A valid and active sense of self is eradicated by dislocation, resulting from migration, the experience of enslavement, transportation, or ‘voluntary’ removal from indentured labor. The dialectic of place and displacement is always a feature of post-colonial societies whether these have been created by the process of

settlement, intervention, or a mixture of a two. Beyond their historical and cultural differences, place, displacement, and a pervasive concern with the myths of identity and authenticity is a feature common to all post-colonial literature in English.

It is difficult to account the social and linguistic alienation as resulting from oppressive forms of colonization such as slavery or conquest. The usual categories of social alienation such as master/slave; free/bonded; ruler/ruled are the dominant aspects of post-colonial cultures. The significant shared discursive practice of alienation can be identified as the construction of 'place'. The imperialism results in a profound linguistic alienation are in cultures in which the pre-colonial culture is suppressed by military conquest or enslavement. So, for example, The Indian writer like Raja Rao or a Nigerian writer such as Chinua Achebe have needed to transform the language, to use it in a different way in its new context and so, as Achebe says, quoting James Baldwin, make it 'bear and burden' of their experience. (Achebe, 1975: 62) Although, Rao and Achebe wrote from their own place and so have not suffered a literal geographical displacement, they have to overcome an imposed gap resulting from the linguistic displacement of the pre-colonial language by English. It is therefore arguable that, even before the development of a conscious de-colonizing stance, the experience of a new a place, identifiably different in its physical characteristics, constrains, for instance, the new settlers to demand a language which allows them to express their sense of 'Otherness', landscape , flora and fauna, seasons, climatic conditions are formally distinguished from the place of origin as home/colony, Europe/New World, Europe/Antipodes, Metropolitan/ provincial, and so on.

#### **1.2.4. Nation and Region in post-colonial literature**

The first post-colonial society to develop a 'national' literature was the USA. The emergence of a distinctive American literature in the late eighteenth century raised inevitable questions about the relationship between literature and place, between literature and nationality, and particularly about the suitability of inherited literary forms. The idea about new kinds of literature was the part of optimistic progression to nationhood because it seemed that this was one of the most potent areas in which to express 'difference' from Britain. The American Revolution forced the question of separate nationality, and the economic and political successes of the emerging nation began to be taken granted. The self apprehension became the source

of important images of national identity. So the emergence of post-colonial literature became the fundamental source of post-colonial studies. The study of national traditions is the first and the most vital stage of the process of rejecting the claims of the centre to exclusivity. It is the beginning of what Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka characterized as the 'of process Self Apprehension' (Soyinka, 1976: xi).

The Geographical models which cross the boundaries of language, nationality, or race to generate the concept of a regional literature, such as West Indian or South Pacific literature. On the other hand, "African literature got a powerful appeal to writers and critics in the various African countries, they produced several regional and national studies which reflect the widespread political, economic, and cultural differences between modern African Countries" (Gurr and Clader, 1974). Some regional groupings got acceptance in the regions themselves than are others, and derived from collective identity which is evident in other ways in the African Literature. The West Indian literature developed to explore as a 'Caribbean' literature as the regional. Despite such variants on the national model, most of the English Literature outside Britain has been considered as individual, national enterprises forming and reflecting each country's culture.

#### **1.2.5. Comparison between Two or More Regions**

The Post-colonial literature could not emerge until the separate colonies were viewed in a framework centered on their own literary and cultural traditions. The Victorian Britain exulted in the disparateness of its empire, but in the enterprising that empire predominantly as a site of the exotic, of adventure and exploitation. The differences between colonies were subordinated to their difference from Britain. Three principal types of comparison have resulted, forming bases for a genuine post-colonial discourse. These are comparisons between countries of the white diaspora- the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand- comparisons between areas of the black diaspora, and thirdly, those which bridge these groupings, comparing, say, literature of the West Indies with that of Australia. The critics like Moore (1969), Ngugi (1972), Griffiths (1978) concentrate on similarities between writing with black diaspora, comparing the literature of African countries with those of the West Indian Nations and/or with black American Writing. The comparisons have been drawn between countries or regions across Black and White Diasporas. Such studies can deal

in greater detail with two or three areas, from important bridges for the discourse of post-colonialism, which deals with all areas, both Black and White.

### 1.2.6. Racial Discrimination

The Post-colonial Literature proceeds from the idea of race as a major feature of economic and political discrimination and draws together writers in African diaspora whatever their nationality-the African Americans, Afro-Caribbean, and the writers from African nations. The 'Black Writing' model became one of the significant aspects of the post-colonial literature. It overlooks the very great cultural difference between literatures, which are produced by a Black majority population of an independent nation. The Black writing described the race discrimination and curiously reflected European prejudice, it stressed integration and wholeness over analysis and dissection; it operated by distinctive rhythmic and temporal principles and the concept of Negritude claimed a distinctive African view of time-space relationships, ethics, metaphysics, and an aesthetics which separated itself from the supposedly 'universal' values of European taste and style. Wole Soyinka rightly observes in his analysis of Negritude in the book, *Myth, Literature and the African World* (1976);

“Negritude, having laid its cornerstone on a European intellectual tradition, however bravely it tried to reverse its concepts ( leaving its tenets untouched), was a foundling deserving to be drawn into, nay, even considered a case for benign adoption by European ideological interests” (Soyinka,1976:134).

The identity of Negritude is the most influential in its derivative form in the Afro-American Black Consciousness Movement. Black writers emerged as the new hegemonic categories like 'Commonwealth Literature', writers and it has forced the writers from the colonized white countries to consider their own attitudes to race and their often ambiguous positions as both colonized and colonizers. The issues of identity and culture penetrated through the 'Black Writing' which became exciting and adventurous, but it has sometimes run the risk of adopting, in Said's terms, “a double kind of possessive exclusivism..... the sense of being an exclusive insider by virtue of experience”( Said,1985:106).

### 1.2.7. Hybridity and Syncretism

In the post-colonial literature the concepts of hybridity and syncretism are linked directly as the revaluation of patterns of identification. Homi Bhabha's development of term 'hybridity' in his seminal *The Location of Culture* (1994) distinguishes the extensive reinterpretations and refunctionalizations. The similar concept 'syncretism' designates a "confluence of cultures whose inherently contradictory forces are kept in playful balance" (Ashcroft et al., 1989:33-37). Bhabha rightly puts:

"Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal ( that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the 'pure' and original identity of authority) Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. it displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. For the colonial hybrid is the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire, making its objects at once disciplinary" (Bhabha, 1994:112).

The hybridity in post-colonial studies made the readers aware about the issues of identity and hybridization of culture as well as the invasion of imperial power in the native culture. On the basis of the difference between 'race' and 'culture' the post-colonial literature reflected constant struggle of the colonized people to free themselves from a past, which stressed ancestry, and destructive progress.

On the whole, the various perspectives are discussed in post-colonial literature to intersect at a number of points. However, the issues of identity and culture are extremely important in all them as the most important ordering concept of reality. In the same way, the poles of governor-governed, ruler-ruled, etc. are described and the power of dominance seems as the main regulator of human societies is recognized and challenged. In short, we come across with the 'double vision' imposed by the historical difference between pre-colonial and post-colonial perceptions.

### **1.3 Issues of Identity and Culture in Post-Colonial Literature.**

Post-colonial Literature deals with the distortion of culture by the influences of the colonization, the post-colonial writers proclaim their experiences to deal about the realities and articulated their past in relation to the changes of individual and social identities. They exposed the appropriate images, scenes, traditions of the colonized countries along with their problems and complexities in the form of otherness after Independence. It has included dilemma, chaos, belongingness, religious crisis, and dichotomies regarding the issues of identity, discrimination of race, political powers, and black consciousness to overcome on the colonial impact.

In the context, the post-colonial writers acquainted the readers about the haunting problems into the texture of resistance. It carried out the ideas of human freedom, liberty, identity, individuality after getting set to free from the clutches of the colonial power. The sense of hybridity is explored with importance of the 'local colours' to execute the identity either at individual or social level. The concepts of national identity got the prominence to convey the cultural traditions of the colonized people. In the context, the issues of identity and culture are reflected in the post-colonial Literature.

#### **1.3.1. Post-Colonial Identity in African Literature.**

The term 'African Literature' covers a huge range of languages, cultures and colonial contexts to chart the connection with the issues of identity. In addressing the colonial legacy, it is important to bear in mind that African literature emerged solely in the postcolonial period as a response to the tyranny of colonialism as we can say it is a kind of 'colonial encounter' with Europe. African culture and its adaption of European parameters foster an idea of the identity issues during the post-colonial period. The invention of self is an important index in the formation of identity. 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. There are certain traditional African concepts of identity in the post-colonial African Literature, which are by no means simplistic in their explorations.

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. Identity is established ‘relation to a series of differences’ and that is “converts differences to otherness in order to be; in order to secure its own self-certainty”( Connolly,2002:64).

In Anglophone Africa, the best example of revealing the issues of identity is Amos Tutuola’s *The Palm Wine Drinkard* (1952). It is the story of the helpless hero, who embarks on a quest in the land of the dead: deploying the oral motifs of circularity, repetition and exaggeration. The quest of identity remains constant throughout the story of the novel. The same kind of identity issues are found in the work Cheikh Hamidou Kane’s *L’ Adventure ambiguë* (1961,trans. *Ambiguous Adventure*) tragic hero, Samba Diallo, is torn between the ‘spirituality’ of African culture and the ‘rationality’ of Europe. It represents consistent struggle and search for identity of the hero throughout the novel. Chinua Achebe’s novel ‘*Things Fall Apart*’ (1958) highlights the ambiguities produced by the colonial encounter and identity issues related to the invasion, pacification and disruption created by the colonies. Thiang’o Ngugi reflects the struggle and nationhood in the novel *Weep Not, Child* (1964) and *The River Between* (1965).

Achebe’s novel *No Longer at Ease* (1960) relates the story of a young Nigerian student, who returns from University of Britain and becomes mired in corruption and disillusionment. The work of Sembene- *Voltaïque* (trans. *Tribal Scars* 1962) and *Xala*(1973) and Ngugi in *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) *Devil on the Cross* (1982) chart the problems besetting post-independence Senegal and Kenya respectively from a Marxists-inflected standpoint.Woly Soyinka, the first African winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986,in his poetry, plays and novels (such as *The Interpreters*,1965) explores the sense of despair at the corruption and repression at the heart of many post-independence regimes. Armah’s novels, in particular, *The Beautiful ones are yet Born* (1968) exposes the dirt, decay and disease at metaphors for the failure to transform the oppressive social conditions inherited in the colonial area. Mia Couto’s novel *A varaqnda do frangipani* (1996, trans. *Under the Frangipani*) is a highly imaginative and complex tale of the legacy of the thirty years of violence in Mozambique, the war against the Portuguese. It leads to an exploration of the ambiguities of guilt, heroism and identity in the aftermath of war.

Nuruddin Farah in the novels *Maps* (1986), *Gifts* (1993) and *Secrets* (1998) explores the fault line of Somalian national identity, which saw the slide from war

with Ethiopia to a disastrous civil war, which effectively destroyed the entire state infrastructure. The post-colonial period ushered in the era of mass migration from the former colonies to the former colonial centres, and writing about the experience of the migration becomes the central theme in some of the novels in African literature. They also presented the issues of identity these writers identified social, cultural and political transformation and the issues of identity in Postcolonial African Literature.

### **1.3.2. Culture in the Post-Colonial Period in African Literature.**

The germ of culture, Matthew Arnold says, lies in the love of perfection. According to him, it consists in the;

“...harmonious expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over development of any one power at the expense of the rest” (Arnold, 1931: 48).

In any society, harmonious development of human nature is possible only for a limited period. The wheel of the time is never steady and every epoch of development is followed by an era of decline. Similarly the civilization has its own changing pattern, its own interludes and catastrophe. It may prosper today, but its pattern will change, will have to change tomorrow, to suit the changing needs and the conditions. However, in all societies there are certain basic values which constitute its culture and these need to be perpetuated, because loss of culture would mean loss of identity for the society and, culture is reflected in the quest for perfection in any society.

African Literature in the post-colonial period is often hinted by bloody civil wars, military rule, dictatorship, ethnic conflict and genocide. Such issues are always related to the culture of African life. African culture and people of Africa dislocated during the colonial period. The post-colonial African literature reveals the friction within the individual and the friction between the individual the way both account for transformation that the culture undergoes. As war is said to be a bigger evil that wipes away all minor evils, it is with the impact of the colonial encounter, which eradicated the evils, rooted in the African culture. It is undeniable that the ‘encounter’ has been traumatic. The post-colonial literature reveals Africa to undergo a complete renewal, As Bu-Buakei Jabbi rightly says;

“Culture, like life itself, is a dynamic or continuing process: and its quality often depends upon a people’s responses to evolutionary pressures from within or to stresses generated from outside through friction with new sets of values and institutional structure”(Jabbi, 1979:135).

African cultures are remarkable for their mixing of cultural influences, traditions and indigenous European languages. The category ‘African literature’ includes oral and written literature in indigenous languages such as *Kikuyu*, *Hausa*, *Sotho*, *Xhosa*, *Somali* and *Swahili*, alongside that African literature in Arabic, French, Portuguese, Afrikaans and English perhaps more familiar to those outside Africa. Literature in English is the focus, but it cannot be understood without deeper recognition of the larger cultural hierarchies and social pressures that pervade African locations. Mullaney says;

“A vibrant oral tradition of storytelling is central to African cultures’, and thus the study of African literatures demands ‘an attention to the range of ways in which this orality’ (or orature) shapes literary expression” (Mullaney, 2010: 15).

Orature is critical to the history of the African novel in English. While the first accredited Nigerian novel in English, Amos Tutuola’s *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* (1952), is only some fifty years old, the written word has nevertheless been in Nigeria for at least a thousand years reflecting the ‘diversity of cultural traffic in the region prior to European incursion’ (Griswold, 2000). In order to encompass the nature of African cultures *before* and after colonization foregrounds how writers and storytellers, like the *griots* (poets, praise singers) of West Africa and their audiences, juggle multiple ways of being in the world where Islam, the Christian religions and animist beliefs collide and coexist. Just such a figuration of the African as the product of ‘the crossroads of cultures’ (Achebe, 2006: 143) and belief systems is prevalent in the work of Nigerian writers like Chinua Achebe, Christopher Okigbo, Mabel Segun, Flora Nwapa, Wole Soyinka, and Ben Okri. Retaining a keen sense of how ‘Africa’ has been produced historically helps us to understand the conditions under which African social formations are renewed and reshaped Post-Independence.

The issues of culture during the Independence era shaped the terrain of African literatures in formative ways. The work of the most recognized African writers in English – Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and Ngugi – trace the challenges facing Africans tackling the measure of colonial invasion and pacification into culture and the questions of how to decolonize, reform and revivify a national culture. African Literature in the post-Independence period set about the task of documenting the varied legacies of colonialism, mapping the coordinates of postcolonial African identities and debating the kinds of cultural values. Wole Soyinka's charts his childhood education in colonial Nigeria in the book *Ake* (1981). It motivates the interrogation of African and European intercultural exchange in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977) and Dambudzo Marechera's *The Black Insider* (1990). It is deeply woven into literary representations of colonial and postcolonial incarceration.

Thiang O' Ngugi's first novel *Devil on the Cross* (1982) out of a Kenyan prison, Ken Saro-Wiwa's letters protesting his imprisonment for defending the Ogoni peoples, the myriad testimonies detailing South Africa's Apartheid complex like Joyce Sikakane's *A Window on Soweto* (1977) or Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom* (1995). Equally penetrate the varied fates of the 'African' in the world. These African literary writers interpret the global as well as internal cultural hierarchies in the constitution of Africanness.

The cultural issues with the village and its structures in re-defining African womanhood and exploring the often eclipsed role of women in African societies is a key point of departure in the work of early Post-Independence writers like Bessie Head, Ama Ata Aidoo, Flora Nwapa, Nawal El-Saadawi, Grace Ogot, Mariama Bâ, Buchi Emecheta and Tsitsi Dangarembga. The interrogation of women's lives in African culture is continued by newer writers like Promise Okekwe, Pettina Gappah and Sefi Atta. It has also constituted an important subject for African men, in Nuruddin Farah's *From a Crooked Rib* (1970) and in the films of the Senegalese director, Ousmane Sembene, from *Black Girl* (1966) through *Faat Kine* (2000) and *Moolaade* (2004), for example, interrogating how women's lives are shaped in African cultures, men and women conduct a vigorous debate with African and Western models of womanhood, particularly motherhood. Such interventions occur in social contexts in which women are consistently the subject of ideological and physical contest.

## 1.4 Chinua Achebe: Life and Work

### 1.4.1. Life and Education.

Chinua Achebe christened Albert Chinualomugu Achebe by his Igbo Christian parents, Isaiah Okafor Achebe, a Christian churchman, and Janet N. Achebe was born in Eastern Nigeria on November 16, 1930, in Ogidi. His parents traveled Eastern Nigeria as evangelists before settling in Ogidi, Isaiah's ancestral Igbo village, five years after Chinua Achebe's birth. Growing up in Ogidi, Achebe had contact with both Christian and Igbo religious beliefs and customs. Albert C. Achebe attended a primary school in Ogidi run by a Christian Missionary Society before he was chosen to attend Government College at Umuohia, where he studied from 1944 to 1947. The school was said to be one of the best in West Africa and Achebe went there on merit. He entered University College in Ibadan in 1948 and left after receiving a B.A. from London University in 1953. He had studied literature, history and theology at the University. Albert Chinualomugu Achebe dropped the “tribute to Victorian England” (*Albert* was Queen Victoria’s Prince Consort’s first name) and shortened his first name to its present form, “Chinua”.

After college, Chinua Achebe taught school for a year and then packed up to go and work for the Nigeria Broadcasting Company, (NBC) Lagos, as talks producer. NBC sent him to study broadcasting at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in London in 1956. After his return from England in 1957, Achebe went back to work for NBC, where he was promoted to Director of External Broadcasting in 1961. He was traveled through East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania) on a Rockefeller fellowship in 1960-61 when new kinds of change were already blowing across Africa; Nigeria itself had become an Independent nation in 1960. He went to Brazil, North America and Britain on a UNESCO fellowship in 1963. He was married in 1961.

The massacre of Igbos in Northern Nigeria and their persecution in other area forced Achebe to leave Lagos and take his family back to Eastern Nigeria in 1966. When eastern Nigeria seceded from the federation and declared itself as Biafra, a separate republic, Achebe became an official spokesman for the Biafran cause and was sent on several political missions to Europe and North America. After the long and bitter Biafran struggle had ended in 1970 with the re-accession to Nigeria of the break-way province, Achebe worked for a while at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, but from 1972 until 1977 he mostly lived and worked in universities in the U.S. and Britain.

He returned to Nigeria in 1977, he was made Emeritus Professor at Nsukka in 1985 and frequently went abroad to teach at institutions like the University of Massachusetts and the University of Connecticut in the U.S. he got various honours from all over the world, such as more than twenty-five honorary doctorates from universities in Britain, the U.S.A., Canada and Nigeria. He received Nigeria's highest award for intellectual achievement, the *Nigerian National Merit Award* in 1987. He lived in U.S.A. and taught at Bard College in New York.

Achebe was awarded the *Man Booker International Prize* in June 2007 and was awarded *The Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize* for \$300,000, one of the richest prizes for the arts in 2010. Fondly called the "grandfather of Nigerian literature", Achebe died after a short illness on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013 in Boston, United States.

#### **1.4.2. Literary Career**

Chinua Achebe, an Igbo writer in English, is one of the Africa's most acclaimed authors and the pioneer in the portrayal of African life from the African perspectives. His first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), relates the story of traditional Igbo life at the time of the arrival of missionaries and colonial government in Nigeria. The second and sequel novel *No Longer at Ease* (1960) portrays a newly appointed civil servant, recently returned from university study in England, who is unable to sustain the moral values; he believes to be correct in the face of the obligations and temptations of his new position. The third novel *Arrow of God* (1964), set in the 1920s in a village under British administration, the principal character, the chief priest of the village, whose son becomes a zealous Christian, turns his resentment at the position, he is placed in by the white man against his own people. *A Man of the People* (1966) and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) deal with corruption and other political of postcolonial African life.

Apart from novels, Chinua's short story books *The Sacrificial Egg and Other Stories*, (1962) reflects the invasion of missionaries in Nigerian lives and the pacification of the Igbo people. *Girls at War and the other stories* (1973) represents the impact of colonialism on the Igbo Tribe. The political book *The Trouble with Nigeria* (1983) is concerned with the question of leadership and the widespread corruption.

The collection of Essays in *Hopes and Impediments* (1988) acquits the readers about the stubborn preconceptions of Africa. In his Famous Essay 'An image

of Africa', (1988) he talks of the Racism about Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). His another book of essays *Home and Exile* (2000) is about the moving account of an exceptional life which captures the sense of threat and loss that the Africans experienced when their Empire was invaded. *The Education of a British-Protected Child* (2009) gives us a vivid portrait of growing up in colonial Nigeria and inhabiting its "middle ground," recalling both his happy memories of reading novels in secondary school and the harsher truths of colonial rule. *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra* (2012) is a long-awaited account of coming of age during the defining experience of his life: the Nigerian Civil War, also known as the Biafran War of 1967-1970. It became infamous around the world for its impact on the Biafrans, who were starved to death by the Nigerian government in one of the twentieth century's greatest humanitarian disasters.

Achebe's collections of poetry *Beware, Soul-Brother* (1971) and *Christmas In Biafra* (1973) are written mostly in the time of unsettled history and the painful experience of war and conflict amply inform it. But he was also able to lift the focus and imagine regeneration and progress from all that devastation, finding compassion in the invocatory tradition of Igbo oral practices.

The books for children *Chike and the River* (1966) is the story of a Nigerian boy called Chike who leaves his village, Umuofia, to go and stay with his uncle in the big city of Onistha. *How the Leopard Got His Claws* (1972) *The Flute* (1975) *The Drum* (1978) are the story books about Igbo culture and African life.

### **1.4.3. Social Contribution.**

Chinua Achebe is considered to be the most influential African writer of his generation. 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.

After graduating with Bachelor of Arts degree in 1953, Achebe joined the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation as a producer of radio talks. He went to London to attend the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Staff School in 1956. After returning to Nigeria, Achebe joined the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). As founder and director of the Voice of Nigeria in 1961, Achebe aimed at developing

more national identity and unity through radio programs that highlighted Nigerian affairs and culture. Like many other African writers, Achebe believes that artistic and literary works must deal primarily with the problems of society. He has said that "art is, and always was, at the service of man" rather than an end in itself, accountable to no one. He believes that "any good story, any good novel, should have a message, should have a purpose."

We come across the theme of complexities of the Igbo society before and after the arrival of the Europeans. 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. Against Achebe's theme of Igbo cultural complexity is his theme of the clash of cultures. For Achebe, the Africans' misperceptions of themselves and of Europeans need realignment as much as do the misperceptions of Africans by the West. Writing as an African who had been "Europeanized," *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is an act of atonement with the past, the ritual return and homage of a prodigal son. He encourages other Africans, especially ones with Western educations, to realize that they may misperceive their native culture related to the theme of cultural clash is the issue of how much the flexibility or the rigidity of the characters (and by implication, of the British and Igbo) contribute to their destiny.

At the societal level, the Igbos' lack of a unifying self-image and centralized leadership as well as their weakness in the treatment of some of their own people and the inevitable fate of becoming victim to colonization by a power eager to exploit its resources. In addition to the three themes discussed in his writings, the thoughtful reader will probably be able to identify other themes in the novel: for example, the universality of human motives and emotions across cultures and time, and the need for balance between individual needs and community needs.

Achebe maintained an active teaching career. he was appointed to a three-year visiting professorship at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1972 and one-year visiting professorship at the University of Connecticut in 1975. With matters sufficiently calm in Nigeria, he returned as professor of English at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1976 with which he had been affiliated since 1966. He became professor of literature at Bard College, Annandale, New York in 1990,

Achebe received many awards from academic and cultural institutions around the world. He won the Margaret Wong Memorial Prize for *Things Fall Apart* (1958) in 1959. The following year, after the publication of its sequel, *No Longer at Ease* (1960), he was awarded the Nigerian National Trophy for Literature. His book of poetry, *Christmas in Biafra*, (1972) written during the Nigerian civil war, won the first Commonwealth Poetry Prize. More than twenty universities in Great Britain, Canada, Nigeria, and the United States have awarded Achebe honorary degrees.

#### **1.4.4. Place of Chinua Achebe in African Literature.**

Chinua Achebe is known as the father of Modern African Literature. 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 groundbreaking first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) contested many colonialist prejudices concerning African civilization. It depicted life in an Igbo village at a period of transition, culminating by the arrival of British missionaries at the turn of the twentieth century and explored the various responses of the villages to the challenges of change. Achebe's subsequent writing extended and expanded his central themes, in works such as *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964) and *A Man of the People* (1966), while in 1987 he cast a critical eye over Post-Independence Nigeria in *Anthills of the Savannah*. Achebe criticized Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness* (1899) in an essay titled '*Conrad's Darkness*' (1972) caused considerable debate and made the ground fertile to discuss important questions of the complicity of the literary culture with political and racial politics. The suffering of the Nigerian Civil War in *Girls at War* (1972) and in *Beware Soul Brother* (1973), and the corrupt authoritarianism that has characterized Nigeria's Second Republic in *Anthills in the Savannah* (1987). Indeed, the title of his commentary, *The Trouble with Nigeria* (1983) identifies a concern that has been central to all of his work.

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. In '*The Role of a Writer in a New Nation*' (1964), Achebe states that his first priority is to inform the world that

"African peoples did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans; that their societies were not mindless . . . , that they had poetry and, above all, they had dignity"(Achebe,1964). However, Achebe does not idealize the pre-colonial past, for he knows that it cannot survive unaltered in a modern world; instead, he encourages his readers to explore continuities with the past that can coexist with modern society.

## **1.5 Novels of Chinua Achebe**

### **1.5.1. Reviews of the Novels of Chinua Achebe**

*Things Fall Apart* (1958),

Achebe's first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), as the title suggests, exposes the anarchic tendencies in the Igbo society, which has the "great cultural past to boast of, like any other civilization of the world i.e. Chinese, Indian or Egyptian"(Rao,2003:10). If we take a closer look at the above mentioned culture, it is evident that at some point of time, after having touched the zenith, it was eclipsed by the inexorable forces of anarchy, at least for some time, which inevitably meant a change, a flux, a replacement of old values by a set of new norms and emergence of a new order. The novel portrays an image of an African society, reconstituted as a living entity and in its historic circumstance: an image of a coherent social structure forming the institutional fabric of a universe of meanings and values. Because the image of Africa was quite unprecedented in literature, it also carried considerable ideological weight in the specific context of the novel's writing and reception.

The comprehensive scope of Achebe's depiction of a particularized African community engaged in its own social processes, carried out entirely on its own terms, with all the internal tensions entailed, challenged the simplified representation that the West offered itself of Africa as a formless area of life, as "an area of darkness" devoid of human significance. The novel testifies to an aesthetic project which consists in fashioning a new language appropriate to its setting, serving, therefore, to give life and substance to the narrative content and thus to enforce the novelist's initial gesture of cultural reclamation. As a consequence, the manner of presentation became integral to the narrative development to a degree that must be considered unusual in the normal run of novelistic writing. As Emmanuel Obiechina has remarked;

"...the integrative technique in which background and atmosphere are interlaced with the action of the narrative must be regarded as Achebe's greatest achievement"(Obiechina, 1975:142).

*Things Fall Apart* (1958) does not merely embody a willed recall of cultural memory but develops also as an exploration of the specificities of life within the universe of experience it unveils, an exploration that amounts ultimately to a reassessment of its nature and presiding ethos. In other words, Achebe brings to his task of historical recollection a moral intelligence. The moral issues in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) seem to hinge upon how far Okonkwo can be considered representative of his society, how far he can be held to be its embodiment. For William Walsh, the centrality of Okonkwo to the issue is clear, as he says, "because of the way in which the fundamental predicament of the society is lived through his life" (Walsh, 1970:52).

Okonkwo's personal attitude and social conduct as we encounter them in the novel amount in fact to an idiosyncratic interpretation of social rules and lead irresistibly to a state of moral irresponsibility, despite his apparent conformity to norms. His self-absorption is of such a magnitude as to test the limits of the dominant ideology and thus to reveal its points of weakness. It is this paradox of his situation that is dramatized by his exile, which can be read as a symbolic expression of the necessity to rein in his passionate individuality by its exclusion from the social sphere. The same unreflective commitment to the communal ethos in his killing of Ikemefuna is manifested in his cutting down of the court messenger. Okonkwo's blinding passion leads him to a final act of egoism that finally marks him with a tragic solitude, rendered tersely in the line in which we finally glimpse him: "He wiped his machete on the sand and went away" (TFA:145).

*Things Fall Apart* (1958) has a broader scope than is suggested by the materialist and utilitarian preoccupations of nationalism. It involves what the Manuel has called "an idealizing capacity" as a defining property of the utopian imagination (Manuel, 1979:5).The novel looks forward self-consciously to the formation of a new Westernized elite and the emergence of a new national identity enabled by literacy and predicated on an ideology of modernization. The nationalist project that in the general consensus would devolve upon the Westernized elite finds a discreet echo

within Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) giving it a thematic resonance that extends its range into the field of utopia.

***No Longer at Ease* (1960)**

Chinua Achebe attempts to chart the contemporary Igbo society in the novel *No Longer at Ease* (1960) which has suffered a loss of values due to its enslavement at first, and colonization later, by the European imperialist powers. *No Longer at Ease* (1960) is about the realistic picture of the Igbo life, which was published in the year of Nigeria's Independence. It was awarded the Nigerian National Trophy for Literature. The novel distinguishes the fact that "though set in Nigeria and concerned with Negro rather than white problems, is refreshingly free from rancor or hysteria" (Eko, 1975:16).

The novel opens and closes at the bribery trial of Obi Okonkwo, a young civil servant in the colonial Nigerian government and the grandson of the Okonkwo of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. The novel provides a retrospective look at Obi's progress from the remote village of Umuofia to an English university and then to a position with the Nigerian Civil Service in Lagos, where he finally succumbs to the prevalent practice of bribery and is caught. Like a diminished version of his grandfather, Obi is crushed by cultural forces beyond his control, but the pettiness and ineptitude of his crime make him a paradoxical tragicomic hero. His innocence makes him a criminal; his coveted education does not provide him with wisdom; the support of his clansmen increases his sense of loneliness.

Achebe uses one novel to balance another; thus, the naively idealistic Obi Okonkwo of *No Longer at Ease* (1960) is a tragicomic version of his grandfather, Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*(1958). The idealistic Obi self-righteously resists the corruption of government service, alienating himself from his fellow civil servants and the clansmen, who funded his education, but when his proud need to maintain an expensive lifestyle leads him to accept a bribe, his amateurish attempt results in his arrest. According to Killam;

"The core of the novel' 'is the moral dilemma in which Obi finds himself. The education that Obi receives and his exposure and training give him the moral awareness of a modern educated young man, but he lacks the courage to sustain and practice it"( Killam,1969:50).

Obi Okonkwo, the central character in *No Longer at Ease* (1960) is a typical educated Nigerian young man, who, to begin with, wanted to cleanse Nigeria of its evils. He was a brilliant student, whose kith and kin pool in their hard earned money to send him to England for further studies in accordance with the usual practice. In return, they expect him to bring honour and prosperity to their village. But much to his consternation, Obi notices right from the time he lands in Nigeria that his country is no longer the "Nigeria of his dreams" but it has already advanced in corrupt practices such as bribe-taking. Though his intentions are ideally good, Obi fails to carry them out in his life because of the negative change in values. When Obi first arrives in Nigeria from England after a long time, he is given a warm reception by the Umuofian Progressive Union. He doesn't respond to the people in a good traditional way and he forgets how to act in his homeland: he wears a short sleeved shirt and sees nothing wrong with it. The narrator says;

“Everybody was properly dressed in Agbada or European suit who appeared in his shirt sleeves because of the heat. That was Obi's mistake number one...Everybody expected a young man from England to be impressively turned out” (NLAE: 28).

*No Longer at Ease* (1960) reflects the personal dilemma that modern tribal societies face as a result of rapid Westernization and the central character epitomizes the death of native cultures. Obi naively tries to maintain the idea of his own integrity as a detribalized, rational, thoroughly modern man, but his reintegration into Nigeria is a failure because he is unable to assimilate successfully any of the competing cultures he passes through. He finds it impossible to mediate the conflicting duties that are thrust upon him, and his steady progress in the novel is toward despair and withdrawal.

### ***Arrow of God* (1964)**

*Arrow of God* (1964) is described as the sequel novel to *Things Fall Apart* (1958). It made the Achebe to win the coveted *Jack Campbell New Statesman Award*. It reveals the impact of colonialism on African society. Achebe relates to the three key players who disrupt the indigenous society of Umuaro. First, there is a Priest-

king, who is invested with a tremendous power to be exercised in the interest of his people. Second, there is the colonial administrator Winterbottom, servant of the Brittanic majesty, who acts as a broker between the imperial will and the welfare of his people. Finally, there is the Christian missionary enterprise that works as a middle ground between the priest of the Igbo society and the colonial administration.

The novel is set in rural Nigeria during the 1920s in a southern part of the country, where the Igbo people reside. The novel begins with a war between two neighboring regions of rural Igboland: Umuaro and Okperi. Though, we don't know the boundaries of Okperi, we do know that Umuaro is made up of six villages. These six villages are linked by their worship of a common god, Ulu. The six villages Umuachala, Umunneora, Umuagu, Umuezeani, Umugwugwa and Umaisiuzo took the name of Umuaro, and the priest of Ulu, Ezeulu, becomes their chief priest. He plays the role of an emissary of a god and seems to be the mediator between people and their god. Achebe depicts that the 'U' is the common in the six villages but there was no unity among them. They lived as a different people, and each worshipped its own deity. Their lives were not secured as the hired soldiers of Abame used to strike in the dead of the night, set fire to the houses carry men, women, and children into slavery. Ezeulu thinks that he has immense power over the year, over the crops and therefore over the people. He is described as 'half spirit' and 'half human'.

“Ezeulu is a man of ambition; he wants to be king, priest, diviner, all. His father, they said, was like that too. But Umuaro showed him that Igbo people knew no kings, the time has come to tell his son also” (AOG: 27).

Ezeulu becomes a 'tool' or an 'arrow' in the bow of his God with no pose in his hands. Captain Winterbottom, a typical colonial officer, sends messengers to Umuaro to fetish Ezeulu as it was planned to give warrant of office to Ezeulu in the presence of the *ndichie* or elders of his clan. Ummuaro becomes more and more an alien silence- the kind of silence which burnt a man's inside like the blue, quiet, razor-edge flame of burning palm nut shells. The missionaries take the advantage of the situation asked them to sacrifice the yams to their 'God' in the Church. Barthold comments;

“The meaning of sacrifice is reduced to something like an individual business transaction, a “payment” for survival, and Christianity is thus portrayed as a “social organization... demanding payment for the symbols of membership” (Barthold, 1981:148).

As a result, *Arrow of God* (1964) proves that no man, however great, is greater than his people. They had taken sides with Umuaro and its leaders against their headstrong and ambitious priest. It gives the people a liberty to accept the ‘new religion and the ‘new god’. Achebe tries to show the connectivity in between illiteracy and ignorance. The Igbo people were simple and illiterate, but ignorant as well. They were captivated by the change- the change in culture, religion, beliefs but it costs a very much to them in the form of new faith in Christianity.

#### *A Man of the People* (1966)

Achebe attempts to delineate issues in *A Man of the People* (1966) grappling with the postcolonial realities. He ridicules the corrupt leaders of Nigeria. It is about the silly and ignorant villagers, who were dancing themselves lame, waiting to blow off their gunpowder in honour of the minister M. A. Nanga, he who had moved the country down the slopes of inflation. The villagers accept the corrupt politician as the normal and sensible being who did not spit out the juicy morsel that good fortune had placed in his mouth Odili Samalu comes to the capital to take a strategic post in the civil service. As we find “Achebe skillfully moves from the political to the personal” (Singh, 2006:148). Mr. Nanga, a man of fifty, having a son and a wife, wrenched Odili’s girlfriend Elsie from his hand and led her to bed under Odili’s very eyes. Elsie’s rape by Nanga exemplifies the poor status of women in Africa; African society portrays women in general as foolish, weak, dependent, frivolous, and seductive. It tends to cultivate “men’s prerogatives to the allegiance and subservience of women, and legitimize men to exercise their power over women to sustain the latter’s subordination and marginality” (Hussein, 2005: 60).

The novel is a literary work of a great power, in which we find the writer as a witness of the contemporary political situation in Nigeria. As an interpreter of the culture of his society and as the critic of the life around him, he deals with the fundamental theme of African culture. It depicts the continuing process of disintegration, which started with the colonial regime, and mirrors the forth confusion,

and chaos of society, which witness a total breakdown of values. It conveys the message to the immoral leaders that their rule would be short-lived if they do not change their attitude towards the people. Leaders are actually ‘men’ who are supposed to work for the society. If the leaders do not fulfill their responsibility, they are destined to be discarded by the people who supported them earlier.

### **Anthills of the Savannah (1987)**

The title of the novel comes from the proverb about “anthills surviving to tell the new grass of the Savannah about last year’s bushfires”; it denotes an idea about the usefulness of the narrative tradition in bearing the seeds of future renewal. Achebe exposes the readers to the much wider theatre of experience in Nigerian and global politics and culture. He considers the civil war in Biafran war, as one of the reasons, which virtually changed the history of Nigeria. It tells the story of three schoolmates, Ikem, Chris, and Sam, who became figures in the new regime in the fictional West African Land of Kangan.

The novel is set in an imagery African state, Kangan (A fictive name for Nigeria). Chris, the commissioner of Information, is the part of the military government of the dictator, Sam, His Excellency who believes that sufficient rebellion lies in ‘silently rebuffing’ the leadership. On the other hand, Ikem, a crusading newspaper editor, evinces a sense of melancholy and cautious hope. Chris’s fiancée, Beatrice also plays a pivotal role as an equal partner with males in the quest for change and new social order. Achebe addresses the course; unbridled power often takes and demonstrates how the pursuit of self-interest comes at tremendous cost to the community as a whole. The novel encompasses the aspirations of the youth, who wish to see the rapid changes in the society. They do realize later that it’s their own culture and tradition, which can lead to reforms, and form a new social order.

### **1.5.2. Significance of the Study**

In Commonwealth Literature, there are various facets of colonial impact, but in this thesis, the study is focused on the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe, who is known as the father of modern African Literature. He popularizes issues of identity and culture and made them familiar to the world through his novels. There are five novels introduced in the present research as under:

- *Things Fall Apart (1958)*
- *No Longer at Ease (1960)*
- *Arrow of God (1964)*
- *A Man of the People (1966)*
- *Anthills of the Savannah (1987)*

The present study encompasses the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe and will be helpful to postgraduate and undergraduate students to know the different layers along with local colors of African society and useful to study Modern African Literature in English. Readers can make use of this thesis independently with full advantages to know different perspectives of belongingness through multiracial, multicultural and multiethnic veracity of African Literature. The thesis is intended to serve as a stepping stone for further study to awaken a genuine interest in African literature and to enable students to enjoy literature with a greater understanding of its varied genre, the quest of identity, and various facets of the cultural diversity of African People.

The present study will give the readers a firm distinct impression of the quality of this great novelist Chinua Achebe. The readers will also understand the theme of pacification, disintegration and disruption among Igbo tribe. The research will be helpful to literature-lovers as well as common readers to know identity and culture through various aspects such as race, religion, rites, rituals, gender, customs traditions and ethics influenced by the colonies along with the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe. The study of social, cultural and political aspects of Nigerian people in African Literature in the light of the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe are helpful and useful to study African Literature. From this point of view, the subject of this proposal is a very necessary and significant.

### **1.6 Aims and Objectives of Research.**

1. The study evaluates the issues of identity and responsible factors for identity formation and identity crisis in the novels of Chinua Achebe in general and in particular.
2. The study elucidates the characteristics of Igbo identity and culture in the context of identity crisis and cultural change.

3. The study focuses on the exploration of social issues pertaining to the social patterns and unexpected changes among Igbo people which are reflected in the novels of Chinua Achebe.
4. The study evaluates local colour and the narratives of difference and belongings in the light of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe.
5. The study encompasses the layers of identity and culture that regulate social action symbolically in the form of religion and ethnicity among Igbo people which are exposed by Chinua Achebe.

### **1.7 Pedagogical Significance of the Study**

Chinua Achebe as a prominent writer of Modern African Literature fosters his reputation as the father of Modern African Literature. He had been the part of the teaching profession. He was appointed to a three-year visiting professorship at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1972 and for one-year visiting professorship at the University of Connecticut in 1975. He returned as professor of English at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1976 with which he had been affiliated since 1966. He became the professor of literature at Bard College, Annandale, New York in 1990. Some of his novels, poems and short stories are the parts of the syllabi of different universities. *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is a part of the prescribed syllabi at the undergraduate level in some of the renowned Indian Universities, such as the University of North Bengal, University of Delhi, University of Calicut, S.R.T.M. University, Nanded, Govt. V.Y.T.P.G. Autonomous College, Durg (C.G.) University Of Delhi, Delhi, Kanpur University, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, University of Calcutta, Presidency University and at the post-graduate level in the universities such as Goa University, Aliah University Kolkata, Chaudhary Charan Singh University Meerut, Osmania University, University of North Bengal, Kurukshetra University Kurukshetra Hariyana, Shivaji University Kolhapur Maharashtra, Veer Narmad South Gujarat University Surat Gujarat, Alagappa University, Karaikudi Tamilnadu, Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University Maharashtra, K.S.K.V. Kachchh University, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University Agra Gujrat University, University of Kota, University of Rajasthan Jaipur, Vidyasagar University and Singhanian University.

*No Longer At Ease* (1960) is a part of prescribed syllabi at postgraduate level in the University of Burdwan and *Refugee, Mother and Child* (1971) is prescribed in

Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, and St. Joseph's College (Autonomous) Tiruchirappalli at post graduate level and in University of Calicut, S. R. T. M. University, Nanded, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar at undergraduate level. *Chinua Achebe: The Novelist as Teacher* is prescribed in the Bhartiya University, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu at the post graduate level and in Thiruvalluvar University at the undergraduate level. *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) is prescribed at the undergraduate level in Christ University, Bangalore and Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

*Chinua Achebe: "Colonialist Criticism"* is prescribed in Dibrugarh University, Assam, and North Lakhimpur College (Autonomous), New Delhi. The short story *Marriage Is A Private Affair* (1952) is prescribed in Maulana Azad National Urdu University at the post graduate level and in the Kristu Jayanti College (Autonomous) at the undergraduate level. In such a way, the present study will give the readers a firm distinct impression of the quality of this great novelist Chinua Achebe. The readers will also understand the theme of pacification, disintegration and disruption among Igbo tribe.

The research will be helpful to literature-lovers as well as common readers to know identity and culture through various aspects such as race, religion, rites, rituals, gender, customs traditions and ethics influenced by the colonies along with the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe. The study of social, cultural and political aspects of Nigerian people in African Literature in the light of the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe are helpful and useful to study African Literature. This research study may play a great role in their investigations of various themes and ideas in his writings. This research tries to be a reliable and authentic resource pedagogically.

### **1.8 Justification for Research.**

Chinua Achebe's novels explore the issues of gender, race, ethnicity, tradition, invasion, pacification and social pattern of Igbo people in Nigeria. 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. This makes the study socially important as it deals with the problems which are universal. 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 firm impression is given about the theme of pacification, envision and disruption through the novels by Chinua Achebe. Therefore, there is a need to study the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe in this research.

### **1.9 Social Significance of the Study.**

In Postcolonial Literature, there are various facets of colonial impact, but in this thesis, the study focuses on the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe, who is known as the father of modern African Literature. He popularizes issues of identity and culture and made them familiar to the world through his novels. There are five novels introduced in the present research as under:

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The present study encompasses the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe and will be helpful to postgraduate and undergraduate students to know the different layers along with local colors of African society and useful to study Modern African Literature in English. Readers can make use of this thesis independently with full advantages to know different perspectives of belongingness through multiracial, multicultural and multiethnic veracity of African Literature. The thesis is intended to serve as a stepping stone for further study to awaken a genuine interest in African literature and to enable students to enjoy literature with a greater understanding of its varied genre, the quest of identity, and various facets of the cultural diversity of African People. From this point of view, this research is very necessary and significant.

### **1.10 Scope and Limitations of the study**

In Commonwealth Literature, there are various major writers such as V.S. Naipual, Manohar Malgonkar, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, Asif Currimbhoy, Yasmine Gunaratne, Bharati Mukherjee, Chinua

Achebe, Peggy Payne, Bapsi Sidhwa, Tehmina Durrani, Nadine Gordimer, Patrick White, and Taslima Nasrin. The researcher has chosen only one novelist to study for this work. Though, Chinua Achebe is known as Nigerian novelist, poet professor and critic, the research has not included all his writings. Only the novels of Chinua Achebe are considered for the present study. The primary as well as secondary sources are available for the study. The study of the work of the novelist of this period is done considering the issues of identity and culture.

**A) The scope of the novelist during Colonial and Post-Colonial period**

Chinua Achebe focuses on the effects of Western customs and values of traditional African society. His novels deal with the core part of the issues of identity and culture. In many ways, Chinua Achebe's novels are defined modern African literature, and it is not possible to underestimate the importance to understand the value of African culture. There are major writers like Peter Abrahams, Thiong'o Ngugi, Nkosi Lewis, Daniel Olorunfemi Fagunwa Wole Soyinka etc. in African Literature The researcher has chosen Chinua Achebe and his novels for the analysis and interpretation.

**B) Period of the Study:-**

Chinua Achebe's first novel describes the arrival of European colonizers and missionaries in the late 1800s and rest of the novels describe the struggles of the African people to free themselves from European political influences during Nigeria's tumultuous political period of the late 1960s and early 1990s, hence the colonial and post-colonial periods represented by Chinua Achebe are taken into consideration for the present study.

**C) Limitations:-**

1. The novels are analyzed and interpreted from different perspectives, but in the present study, an attempt is made to restrict the interpretation within the limit of promotion and violation of the principles of Nigerian Igbo society and African culture.
2. All the principles regarding social struggle or individual dilemma are not promoted from the novels selected for the research study.
3. Though, there are many dimensions of the term 'Identity and Culture' in the present study, they are considered and interpreted from the global point of view but there are limits as no any issue of identity and culture is discussed from

Asian Countries or any other than the characters represented from the novels of Chinua Achebe.

4. The research study is focused on only the novels of Chinua Achebe for analysis and interpretation.

### **1.11 Research Methodology**

The present study is descriptive and analytical in nature. It aims to find out the representative work of the novelist. The present study covers a close exploration of the novels of Chinua Achebe. They are examined and analyzed in the light of the visible and invisible impact of identity and culture related with gender, race, ethnicity, tradition, invasion, pacification and social pattern of Igbo people in Nigeria. However, some of the significant extracts or examples from the novels are selected for the application of the principles of the issues of identity and culture. While using this type of examination certain secondary sources have been taken into account. The study is based on selective sampling. In the course of study, certain secondary sources are taken into account. The research is completed by applying following methods.

- a. Collection and through analysis of primary and secondary data.
- b. Collection and through analysis of research articles, related journals and papers based on Chinua Achebe's novels.
- c. Research visits to various libraries for the collection of primary and secondary data.
- d. The use of webliography or internet sources in relation to Chinua Achebe's works.

Thus, the textual method and analytical method of study are used as the methodology for this research.

### **1.12 Hypothesis**

The issues of identity and culture are inevitable aspects of Commonwealth Literature in English. The research study points out the issues of identity and culture in the novels of Chinua Achebe as he represents the group of Commonwealth Writers in a true sense.

### **1.13 Summary**

In this chapter, the research topic is discussed in relation to its various terms. It has discussed the term 'postcolonial literature' and its relation with the post-colonial African 'identity' and 'culture' reflected in the novels of Chinua Achebe. By taking

into consideration the issues of identity and culture are the major resonant issues before and after the Independence of Nigeria. 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. While stating the scope and limitation of the study it is made clear that the issues of identity and culture have universal appeal, but the issues are related to only Nigerian people in the novels of Chinua Achebe, therefore it is limited to Nigerian people only. This research must have some social and pedagogical importance. Achebe explored the issues of gender, race, ethnicity, tradition, invasion, pacification and social pattern of Igbo people in Nigeria. This makes the study socially important as it deals with the problems which are universal. 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 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. This study will help the research students as an authentic source.

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