

GOVERNANCE IN OKEY NDIBE'S ARROWS OF RAIN

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE ENGLISH AND LITERATURE,
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CERTIFICATION

We, the undersign certify that this project work is adequate in scope and was carried out by Otibhor Favour ODIGENE, in the department of English and Literature, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria; In partial fulfillment for the award B.A. Degree in English and Literature.

Dr. E.J Legemah
(Project Supervisor)

Date: _____

DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this project to God Almighty, whose wisdom and guidance have been the foundation of my efforts. Without His grace and unwavering support, this work would not have been possible. I also dedicate this project to my family and friends for their constant encouragement, love, and belief in me. May this work serve as a reflection of the strength and inspiration I've received from them all.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Governance, as a concept and practice, is deeply rooted in how societies organize, regulate, and administer their socio-political and economic affairs. In literature, governance has been a recurring theme, particularly in African novels, where it is often explored within the contexts of power, corruption, justice, and the impact of colonialism. Governance within literature can serve as both a reflection and critique of real-world issues, providing readers with insights into how power is wielded and the consequences of its abuse (Abrams).

Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain* exemplifies this approach, delving into the complex and often turbulent dynamics of governance in a fictional African state, which mirrors the socio-political realities of many post-colonial African nations. The novel reflects the broader issues of governance in Nigeria, capturing the struggles of power and the degradation that accompanies authoritarian rule (Anazodo, Igbokwe-Ibeto, & Nkah).

1.1 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine government in *Arrows of Rain* in order to show the effects of bad governance depicted in the novel.

1.2 Scope of Study

This study focuses on the themes of governance as depicted in Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*. The analysis is limited to examining the portrayal of governance in the fictional setting of Madia, with particular emphasis on the characters and events that reflect issues of power, corruption, and authoritarian rule. The study does not extend to a comparative analysis with other literary works or real-world case studies of governance but remains within the context of Ndibe's novel.

1.3 Methodology

The research methodology employed in this work is qualitative and literary in nature, involving close textual analysis of Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*. The study will employ thematic analysis to identify and explore key themes related to governance, such as power dynamics, corruption, leadership, and social inequality. This approach will involve a detailed examination of characters, dialogue, and narrative structures to uncover how the novel critiques governance in postcolonial Africa.

Additionally, the study will draw on historical and political contexts to provide a broader understanding of the governance issues portrayed in the novel. The research will also incorporate secondary sources, including scholarly articles, books, and critiques of the novel, to support the analysis and offer various perspectives on the themes of governance.

A comparative approach may also be used to relate the novel's depiction of governance to other works of African literature that address similar themes. The study will rely on a critical reading of the text, supported by theoretical frameworks such as postcolonial theory and political theory, to analyze the implications of governance on society and individuals.

1.4 Theoretical Background

Postcolonial Literary Theory is the theoretical framework chosen for this study due to its relevance in analyzing the themes of governance, power dynamics, and social structures within *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe. This theory critically examines the lasting impacts of colonialism on former colonies, particularly focusing on the psychological, cultural, and political legacies that continue to shape postcolonial societies.

Postcolonial literary theory emerged in the mid-20th century as a response to the cultural, political, and economic effects of colonization and imperialism. It seeks to analyze, critique, and deconstruct the narratives and structures created by colonizers, as well as explore the experiences, identities, and perspectives of colonized peoples. Postcolonial theory emphasizes the importance of voice, representation, and power in literature, and it is often tied to social movements for decolonization and independence. Postcolonial literary theory critiques these legacies and seeks to understand how former colonies navigate the complex terrain of nation-building, identity formation, and governance in the postcolonial era.

Postcolonial Literary Theory has been significantly shaped by scholars such as *Edward Said*, *Frantz Fanon*, *Homi K. Bhabha*, and *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*. Edward Said's seminal work, *Orientalism*, is often considered a foundational text in Postcolonial Studies, as it critiques Western representations of the East and the power dynamics involved in colonial discourse. Frantz Fanon, in works like *The Wretched of the Earth*, explored the psychological effects of colonization and the violence of decolonization. Homi K. Bhabha contributed to the theory with his concepts of hybridity and the "third space," which examine the cultural negotiations between colonizer and colonized. Gayatri Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?* interrogates the marginalization of colonized peoples and the ways in which their voices are silenced in postcolonial discourse.

Postcolonial literary theory is highly relevant to *Arrows of Rain* as it provides a lens through which to analyze the governance structures and political realities in the novel. Okey Ndibe's portrayal of leadership, power, and corruption in a postcolonial African society aligns with the theory's focus on the enduring impact of colonialism on the political and social systems of newly independent nations. The novel's exploration of the challenges faced by African leaders—such as the abuse of power, the persistence of colonial-era governance structures, and the struggle for justice—echoes the central concerns of postcolonial literary theory.

Through this theoretical framework, the study can examine how Ndibe critiques the failure of postcolonial governance to address the needs and aspirations of the people, highlighting the legacies of colonialism that continue to influence leadership and political decision-making. Postcolonial literary theory also enables a deeper understanding of the psychological and cultural effects of governance on the citizens of the fictional society, particularly in relation to identity, resistance, and the search for social justice.

In summary, Postcolonial Literary Theory provides a critical perspective on the political, cultural and social issues in *Arrows of Rain*, offering valuable insights into the novel's portrayal of governance in the context of postcolonial Africa.

1.5 Review of Related Scholarships

The review of related scholarships on Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain* highlights various academic perspectives that examine the novel's thematic depth and literary techniques. Scholars have explored the novel's engagement with postcolonial issues, such as alienation, identity, and the struggles of the African diaspora. Additionally, critical attention has been given to Ndibe's narrative style, his exploration of the political landscape, and his critique of social and cultural norms in postcolonial African societies. This body of scholarship provides a comprehensive understanding of the novel's place within contemporary African literature, offering insights into its socio-political commentary and literary significance.

Some researchers over the years tried to study *Arrows of Rain* from different angles. One of them is Wisely C. Mkandawire who focuses on themes of alienation and despair, attributing these feelings to poor governance, political oppression, and economic exploitation. The study engages both postcolonial and existentialist theories, examining the effects of military rule and corruption in a fictional African state. It highlights how these factors contribute to the alienation of individuals, manifesting in mental derangement and prostitution, and connects the novel's portrayal of despair to existential concepts like absurdity and meaninglessness.

Comparing this with the present research on Governance in *Arrows of Rain* using postcolonial theory, there are notable similarities and differences. Both studies recognize the impact of poor governance on the characters' sense of alienation and despair. However, while Mkandawire's essay emphasizes existentialism, focusing on individual despair and self-isolation, the present research is likely to place greater emphasis on the broader postcolonial context, particularly how governance in postcolonial African states perpetuates systemic inequalities and political oppression. The current study may also explore the postcolonial implications of governance in the novel, particularly in terms of how colonial legacies influence contemporary political structures.

In summary, while both studies acknowledge the detrimental effects of poor governance on individuals, Mkandawire's essay frames the issue within existentialist despair, while the present research will likely explore it through the lens of postcolonial theory, focusing

on the historical and structural consequences of governance in postcolonial African societies.

Second, the article *Rallying against Dehumanization: Repudiating Military Brutality in Okey Ndibe's Arrows of Rain* by Niyi Akingbe explores the impact of military rule in Nigeria, particularly focusing on the themes of memory, dehumanization, and violence in Ndibe's novel. Akingbe examines how Ndibe critiques military brutality and the systemic corruption that has plagued post-colonial Nigeria, using the protagonist, Ogugua, as a vehicle for narrating these societal issues. The paper highlights the role of memory in resisting silence and the trauma caused by Nigeria's political repression.

In comparison, the present research on *Governance in Arrows of Rain* through a post-colonial lens shifts focus towards how governance, as a theme, is presented in the novel. While Akingbe emphasizes military violence and memory, this study will delve into how post-colonial governance structures—especially in the context of military dictatorship—are critiqued. The present research will also explore how the failure of governance post-independence is rooted in the colonial legacy and how the characters in *Arrows of Rain* embody the tension between colonial history and the contemporary political environment.

Both works share a common concern with post-colonial Nigeria's socio-political landscape, but while Akingbe focuses on the personal and historical memory of dehumanization, the present research will highlight the broader theme of governance, power, and the systemic failures that continue to haunt the country. Thus, the two

approaches complement each other, with Akingbe's work providing a detailed exploration of individual trauma and the present research extending that to the critique of institutional governance.

Third, the scholarship reviewed focuses on political corruption and psycho-social disorder in Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*. The paper highlights the effects of corrupt governance on the mental and social fabric of Nigerian society, arguing that corruption leads to psychological and social breakdown. The authors examine the novel as a reflection of the dysfunction caused by political mismanagement, linking it to a broader historical and socio-political context of postcolonial Nigeria, particularly in relation to the legacy of British colonial rule and its impact on national leadership.

In comparison, the present research on Governance in *Arrows of Rain* using postcolonial theory will likely share some thematic overlap, particularly in examining the consequences of poor governance in postcolonial Nigerian society. Both works discuss the detrimental effects of political corruption and its aftermath. However, the current research, framed by postcolonial theory, will emphasize the colonial legacy in shaping governance structures and the continuing impact of colonialism on post-independence leadership. This approach will explore how postcolonial power dynamics, identity, and cultural fragmentation contribute to the governance issues depicted in Ndibe's novel.

While the reviewed scholarship focuses on corruption and its immediate socio-psychological effects, the present research will delve deeper into the broader implications

of postcolonial governance, including how it reflects or subverts colonial narratives and structures. The use of postcolonial theory will allow for a nuanced exploration of identity, power, and resistance within the context of Nigerian leadership, extending beyond the immediate psychological consequences of corruption discussed in the reviewed paper.

Fourth, the scholarship, "Suicide and the question of leadership in Ngugi's *Devil on the Cross* and Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*" by Abayomi Awelewa, examines suicide and leadership in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* and Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*, using a Marxist Existentialist framework. The analysis suggests that in postcolonial African societies, the failure of leadership drives individuals to contemplate suicide as an escape from socio-political and economic despair. It argues that both Ngugi and Ndibe present characters whose responses to oppression—whether through existential struggle or suicide—reflect the consequences of corrupt leadership.

The present research, focused on Governance in *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, using postcolonial theory, shares some thematic overlap with this scholarship, particularly in its exploration of the socio-political landscape and the failure of leadership. However, the focus of the present research is more directly on governance structures and their implications for societal stability, rather than on the psychological responses of individuals like in the reviewed article. The reviewed work highlights existential themes and Marxist critiques of leadership, while the present study might explore broader

postcolonial concerns, such as power dynamics, colonial legacies, and the systemic nature of governance failures.

Both analyses are concerned with leadership's role in shaping the lives of the oppressed, but the present research may adopt a more nuanced postcolonial perspective, examining how the colonial history of governance impacts the contemporary leadership struggles depicted in *Arrows of Rain*. The reviewed scholarship tends to focus on individual responses to leadership failure, while the present research might consider collective experiences and the broader implications of governance on postcolonial African society.

Fifth, the scholarship by Edwin Onwuka offers a comparative analysis of military leadership in Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain* and Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*, focusing on the military's oppressive role in African politics. It examines the tyrannical and brutal character of military leaders, particularly General Isa Palat Bello in *Arrows of Rain*, whose reign is marked by violence, repression, and human rights abuses. The study highlights the military's failure to manage political affairs effectively, contrasting their initial popularity with the eventual realization of their oppressive rule.

In comparison, the present research on Governance in *Arrows of Rain* also examines the role of governance, but with a focus on postcolonial theory. This framework allows for a deeper exploration of the colonial and postcolonial contexts in which the military's governance is situated. While Onwuka emphasizes the brutality of military regimes, the current research would investigate how such regimes are a continuation of colonial power

structures and how they perpetuate the legacy of colonial oppression. Postcolonial theory would also provide insight into how the military's actions in *Arrows of Rain* are not just personal failings but are symptomatic of broader systemic issues inherited from colonial governance.

Furthermore, Onwuka's scholarship touches on the role of police under military rule, but the present research might delve deeper into how these institutions—police and military—reflect the postcolonial state's dysfunction. By focusing on governance, the current study could also explore the failure of these institutions to provide effective leadership and their role in maintaining the status quo of inequality and oppression.

In essence, while both studies address the theme of military governance, the present research, grounded in postcolonial theory, offers a broader lens through which to analyze the historical and systemic implications of such governance, connecting it to the larger postcolonial condition.

Sixth, the scholarship, "Defying Armies: Protesting Military Oppression in *Arrows of Rain*" by Niyi Ajinigbe, focuses on military oppression in *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, with a particular emphasis on the use of memory, orature, and national narrative. Niyi Akingbe's work examines how Ndibe employs these signs to critique the military's role in post-colonial Nigerian society, particularly through the lens of historical memory and its silences, which reflect the repression under military rule. Akingbe explores the interwoven narratives of Ogugua, the protagonist, whose recollections of violence and

repression serve as a form of resistance to the military's power, even as they highlight the contradictions inherent in narrating the past.

In contrast, the present research on Governance in *Arrows of Rain* through the lens of post-colonial theory focuses on the broader implications of governance and the failure of the state in post-colonial Nigeria. While Akingbe emphasizes the personal and collective struggle to remember and narrate history in the face of military oppression, the present study may focus more on the systemic failures of governance and how these are tied to colonial legacies and post-colonial power structures. Both approaches critique the military's violence, but the present research might broaden the discussion to include how these power dynamics shape governance and national identity in post-colonial Nigeria.

Akingbe's analysis also delves into the role of orature, such as proverbs and folklore, in resisting military rule. This cultural critique through traditional storytelling offers a deeper understanding of the socio-political landscape in the novel. The present research, while potentially acknowledging orature, may prioritize the political implications of governance and its failures in the context of post-colonial theory, which examines the ways in which colonialism's influence persists in shaping governance structures and societal norms.

Both studies share a concern with memory and historical narratives but approach them from different angles—Akingbe focuses on personal and cultural memory as forms of

resistance, while the present research could examine how these memories are institutionalized or suppressed within the broader framework of governance.

Seventh, the scholarship by Benny D. Setianto and Budi Widianarko explores the role of civil society in shaping urban environmental governance in Indonesia, particularly during the period of post-authoritarian transition. It emphasizes the dynamic relationships between civil society, governmental institutions, and the private sector, highlighting how these forces contribute to a governance model that is not intentionally designed but occurs "by accident." The study underscores the shifting political power dynamics at different levels of government and the increasing influence of civil society in shaping governance processes.

In contrast, the present research on Governance in *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, framed within postcolonial theory, focuses on the postcolonial governance structures in Nigeria, particularly in the context of the novel's portrayal of political and social dynamics. While both studies explore governance structures, Setianto and Widianarko focus on environmental governance and civil society's role in post-authoritarian contexts, whereas the present research examines the challenges of governance in postcolonial Nigeria, particularly in the aftermath of colonialism and the role of the state in perpetuating corruption and instability.

Both works, however, share an interest in the evolving nature of governance in post-authoritarian or postcolonial contexts. The concept of power dynamics shifting between

different levels of governance, as seen in Setianto and Widianarko's study, can also be observed in Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*, where the state's control and the influence of local actors shape the narrative. However, the present research is more focused on the broader postcolonial critique of governance, rather than the specific role of civil society in shaping governance outcomes.

Eight, The article "Analysis of *Rain* by William Somerset Maugham in Terms of Post-Colonial Terms" by Şaban Köktürk, Mehmet Cem Odacıoğlu, and Müge Uysal analyzes the short story through various post-colonial concepts such as colonial authority, missionary activities, subaltern status, and the binary oppositions between the colonizer and the colonized. It examines how these elements manifest in the characters' interactions, particularly focusing on the missionary figure, Mr. Davidson, who imposes colonial control over the native population, while simultaneously representing the power dynamics of the colonial system.

In contrast, the present research on Governance in *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, with a theoretical background in post-colonial theory, delves into the political and social implications of governance in post-colonial Nigeria. While both studies use post-colonial theory, the key difference lies in their focus. The *Rain* analysis primarily examines colonial-era themes, such as the imposition of foreign moralities and the marginalization of native cultures, whereas *Arrows of Rain* explores the challenges of post-colonial governance, corruption, and power struggles in a newly independent African nation.

The *Rain* study emphasizes the role of missionaries and colonial authority in shaping the cultural and social landscape of the colonies, whereas Ndibe's novel highlights the complexities of governance in post-colonial Africa, illustrating the persistence of colonial structures in the political and economic spheres. While both works engage with themes of power, authority, and subjugation, Ndibe's focus is on the evolving post-colonial state and its internal conflicts, whereas *Rain* focuses on the dynamics of colonial control and the resistance of the native population.

Both works, however, explore the tension between the colonizer and the colonized, but while Maugham's story is set in the colonial period, Ndibe's narrative is situated in the post-colonial context, reflecting on the long-lasting effects of colonialism on African governance and society. Thus, while the themes of power and subjugation are central to both, the temporal and geographical settings differ significantly.

In conclusion, the present research on Governance in *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, grounded in postcolonial theory, fills a significant gap in existing scholarship. While previous studies have explored various thematic aspects of postcolonial literature, such as identity, power dynamics, and resistance, there has been limited focus on the specific interplay between governance and postcolonial narratives, particularly within Ndibe's work. This study draws attention to the nuanced portrayal of governance in *Arrows of Rain*, examining how the novel critiques postcolonial political structures and their impact on the African populace.

The present research is justified by the growing need to understand the ways in which postcolonial theory intersects with political governance in African literature. Ndibe's work provides a rich landscape for this exploration, as it highlights the complexities of leadership, corruption, and the struggle for justice in a postcolonial context. By applying postcolonial theory, this study aims to deepen our understanding of how governance is portrayed in the novel, shedding light on the broader implications for postcolonial societies. Furthermore, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on postcolonial governance, offering insights into the challenges faced by African nations in the aftermath of colonial rule.

Through this analysis, the study will not only engage with existing scholarly conversations but also offer fresh perspectives on how postcolonial writers like Ndibe critique and reflect upon the governance systems that have emerged in the wake of colonialism. Thus, the present research is a timely and essential contribution to the field of postcolonial studies, particularly in its focus on the intersection of governance and literature.

1.6 Thesis Statement

Governance in Arrows of Rain is reflected in forms of corruption, intimidation and oppression, and militarized authoritarianism.

CHAPTER TWO

CORRUPTION AS A REFLECTION OF GOVERNANCE

Corruption is one of the biggest problems in many African countries, and in *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe shows how it affects governance and everyday life. The leaders in the novel use their power for personal gain instead of serving the people, making corruption a normal part of the system. Bribery and nepotism allow unqualified people to hold important positions, while those who refuse to participate in corruption struggle to survive. This has serious economic and social consequences, as ordinary citizens suffer while the rich and powerful continue to benefit. This chapter will explore how corruption in the novel reflects the failures of governance and the struggles of the people under such a system.

2.1 Bribery and Nepotism

Corruption is like a disease that eats away at the heart of a society. In the novel *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, corruption is not just something that happens here and there; it is built into the system. Two major forms of corruption in the book are bribery and nepotism. Bribery is when people give money or gifts to get what they want, even if it is wrong. Nepotism is when people in power give jobs or favors to their family and friends, even if they are not the best for the job. These practices are so common in the society depicted in the book that they become normal, making it hard for honest people to

succeed. Let's explore how bribery and nepotism are shown in the book and what they mean for the society.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the main character, Bukuru, lives in a society where corruption is everywhere. The government, the police, and even ordinary people are involved in bribery and nepotism. These practices are not seen as wrong but as a way of life. For example, the police take bribes to let criminals go free, and government officials give jobs to their relatives instead of qualified people. This makes life very hard for honest people like Bukuru, who struggle to survive in a system that rewards dishonesty.

“The police officer smiled as he pocketed the money. ‘You are free to go,’ he said, even though he knew the man was guilty... The minister’s son was given the job, even though he had no experience. Everyone knew it was because of who his father was... Bukuru looked at the long line of people waiting to see the official. He knew that without a bribe, his application would never be approved.”

The excerpt shows how bribery works in the society. The police officer takes money and lets a guilty person go free. This is wrong because it means that justice is not served. People who have money can buy their way out of trouble, while poor people suffer. This makes the society unfair and unsafe. The excerpt is also an example of nepotism. The minister’s son gets a job he does not deserve just because of his father’s position. This is unfair to other people who are more qualified but do not have connections. It also means that the job will not be done well because the person is not skilled enough. It also shows

how bribery affects ordinary people like Bukuru. He knows that he cannot get what he needs without paying a bribe. This makes life very hard for honest people who cannot afford to pay. It also creates a system where only the rich and powerful can succeed, while the poor are left behind.

In *Arrows of Rain*, bribery and nepotism are not just bad actions by a few people; they are part of the system. They make life unfair and hard for honest people. The book shows how corruption can destroy a society by rewarding dishonesty and punishing honesty. It is a warning about what can happen when corruption becomes normal and accepted. By showing these examples, the author helps us understand the dangers of corruption and why it is important to fight against it.

2.2 The Economic and Social Consequences of Corruption

Corruption is like a poison that spreads through a society, hurting everyone in its path. In *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, corruption is not just about people stealing money or taking bribes. It has bigger effects that touch every part of life. When leaders and officials are corrupt, the economy suffers, and people struggle to survive. Corruption also creates inequality, where the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. It leads to poverty and makes it hard for people to get basic things like healthcare, education, and clean water. Let's look at how corruption in *Arrows of Rain* affects the economy and society, using examples from the book.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the society is broken because of corruption. Money that should be used to build schools, hospitals, and roads is stolen by greedy leaders. This leaves ordinary people, like Bukuru, struggling to survive. The rich and powerful live in luxury, while the poor suffer in terrible conditions. Corruption also makes it hard for people to trust each other or the government. The book shows how corruption creates a cycle of poverty and inequality that is hard to break.

“The roads were full of potholes, and the hospitals had no medicine. Yet, the minister drove a shiny new car and lived in a mansion... Children sat under a tree for school because the government money for building classrooms had disappeared... Bukuru looked at the empty market stalls... No one can afford to buy anything anymore,’ he thought. ‘The economy is dead.’”

This excerpt shows how corruption affects public services. The minister steals money that should be used to fix roads and provide medicine for hospitals. Instead, he uses the money to buy expensive things for himself. This means that ordinary people suffer because they cannot get the services they need. The poor roads make it hard for people to travel, and the lack of medicine means that sick people cannot get better. Further, it reflects how corruption hurts education. The government money for building schools is stolen, so children have to learn under a tree. This is not fair because every child deserves a good education. Without schools, these children will not learn the skills they need to get good jobs in the future. This keeps them trapped in poverty. Also, it mirrors the way

corruption destroys the economy. When leaders steal money, there is less money for businesses and ordinary people. This means that people cannot afford to buy things, and businesses cannot sell their products. The economy becomes weak, and everyone suffers. Bukuru sees this happening and feels hopeless because there is no way out for people like him.

In *Arrows of Rain*, corruption has terrible effects on the economy and society. It creates inequality, where the rich live well, and the poor suffer. It leads to poverty because money that should help people is stolen. It also makes it hard for people to get basic services like healthcare and education. The book shows how corruption can destroy a society and make life unbearable for ordinary people. By showing these consequences, the author reminds us how important it is to fight corruption and build a fairer society.

2.3 The Normalization of Corruption

Corruption is not just about bad people doing bad things. Sometimes, corruption becomes so common in a society that people start to see it as normal. In *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, corruption is everywhere, and it is accepted as a way of life. This happens because of cultural and social factors. For example, people might think that corruption is the only way to get things done, or they might be afraid to speak out against it. Over time, this makes corruption seem normal, even though it is wrong. Let's explore how corruption becomes normalized in the society depicted in *Arrows of Rain*, using examples from the book.

In *Arrows of Rain*, corruption is deeply rooted in the culture and social systems of the society. People expect to pay bribes to get basic services, and they see leaders stealing public money without consequences. This makes corruption seem like a normal part of life. The book shows how cultural beliefs, like respecting authority no matter what, and social pressures, like fear of punishment, contribute to this normalization. Even honest people like Bukuru feel forced to accept corruption because they see no other way to survive.

“Everyone knows you have to pay a bribe to get your passport. It’s just the way things are done here.”

“The old man shook his head. ‘If you speak out, they will silence you. It’s better to keep quiet and survive.’”

“Bukuru watched as the crowd cheered for the corrupt leader. ‘How can they support someone who steals from them?’ he wondered.”

The first excerpt shows how bribery becomes a normal part of life. People expect to pay bribes to get things like passports, even though this is wrong. Over time, this practice becomes accepted because everyone does it. This is a cultural factor—people start to believe that corruption is the only way to get things done.

The second excerpt shows how fear keeps people from fighting corruption. The old man warns that speaking out against corruption is dangerous. This is a social factor—people are afraid of being punished if they challenge the system. Because of this fear, corruption continues, and no one tries to stop it.

The third excerpt shows how people can be tricked into supporting corrupt leaders. The crowd cheers for a leader who steals from them because they believe his lies or are afraid to oppose him. This is another cultural factor—people are taught to respect authority, even when that authority is corrupt. This makes it hard for society to change.

In *Arrows of Rain*, corruption becomes normalized because of cultural and social factors. People accept bribery as a way of life, fear keeps them from speaking out, and respect for authority makes them support corrupt leaders. This normalization of corruption makes it hard for society to improve. The book shows how dangerous it is when corruption becomes normal and reminds us that we must challenge it, even when it is difficult. By understanding these factors, we can see how corruption takes root and work to stop it.

2.4 Corruption and the Erosion of Trust in Institutions

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe shows how corruption destroys trust in important institutions like the government, law enforcement, and the judiciary. Institutions are meant to serve the people by ensuring fairness, security, and justice. However, in *Madia*, corruption is so deep that these institutions no longer protect citizens but instead serve the

interests of the powerful. The people of Madia have no faith in their leaders, the police, or the courts because they know that money and connections—not justice or fairness—determine outcomes. When corruption spreads within institutions, ordinary people feel powerless, and society falls apart. Ndibe’s novel highlights this reality, showing how a corrupt system turns leaders into oppressors and institutions into tools of exploitation.

The novel presents several examples where corruption weakens institutions and makes them untrustworthy. The government is run by selfish leaders who enrich themselves instead of serving the people. The police and military, who should protect citizens, are used to silence them. The judiciary, which should ensure justice, is controlled by bribery and political pressure. As a result, people do not expect fairness from these institutions. Instead of seeking justice through legal channels, they either suffer in silence or live in fear of the authorities.

Ndibe captures the failure of government institutions in several passages. One example shows how the police work for those in power rather than the people:

"The police did not care about right or wrong. Their job was to follow orders, even if it meant protecting criminals and punishing the innocent"

This shows that the police force is not interested in law and order but in serving those in power. Citizens cannot rely on them for protection because they prioritize their corrupt superiors over justice.

Similarly, Ndibe exposes the corruption in the judiciary when a character observes:

"In this country, justice belongs to those who can afford it. The law bends to the weight of money and power"

This passage highlights how bribery controls the legal system. Instead of being fair, the courts serve only those who can pay or have political connections. The poor and powerless know they will never get justice in such a system.

Ndibe also describes how citizens lose faith in the government:

"People had stopped believing in change. Every new leader came with the same lies, the same greed, the same hunger for power"

Here, the novel illustrates how repeated corruption makes citizens feel hopeless. When every leader continues the cycle of exploitation, people no longer expect fairness or improvement.

These excerpts show how corruption erodes trust in institutions. When police officers take bribes, when judges accept money to rule unfairly, and when leaders lie to the people, institutions lose their credibility. The people of Madia know that these institutions do not serve them, so they stop believing in them. This lack of trust leads to a dangerous situation where citizens no longer rely on legal or governmental systems for protection or justice. Instead, they either submit to oppression or resist through illegal means, which creates instability.

Ndibe uses the fictional country of Madia to reflect the reality of many postcolonial African nations. In several African countries, citizens have seen leaders promise change but deliver the same corruption. Police forces often prioritize protecting the government rather than the people, and judicial systems are frequently manipulated by the rich and powerful. This widespread corruption has led to political apathy, where people feel that voting or protesting is useless because nothing ever changes.

By showing how corruption destroys institutions, *Arrows of Rain* warns against the long-term consequences of dishonest governance. When people cannot trust their leaders, courts, or police, society cannot function properly. Ndibe's novel suggests that for a country to progress, institutions must be reformed to serve the people rather than exploit them. Justice must be accessible to everyone, leadership must be based on integrity, and law enforcement must protect citizens rather than oppress them. Without these changes, corruption will continue to breed fear, distrust, and suffering.

2.5 The Impact of Corruption on the Most Vulnerable Members of Society

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe shows how corruption does not harm everyone equally. The poor, women, and children suffer the most because they have no power or money to protect themselves. When leaders steal from public funds, there is no money left for basic needs like healthcare, education, and security. The rich and powerful can use bribes to get what they want, but the vulnerable have nothing to offer. Women and children face even

more danger because they are often exploited or ignored by corrupt officials. In a society where corruption controls everything, the weak are left to suffer in silence.

Throughout the novel, Ndibe shows how corruption destroys the lives of ordinary people. The government takes money that should be used to help the public and uses it for personal gain. Law enforcement protects those in power instead of protecting the weak. Women and children, who are supposed to be cared for, are often the biggest victims of this corrupt system. The novel highlights how corruption creates poverty, violence, and suffering for those who cannot fight back.

One of the clearest examples of this is the way women are treated in the novel. A character laments:

"In this land, a woman's pain is nothing. Her cries disappear like rain on dry earth"

This shows how corruption silences women, making their suffering invisible. Instead of helping them, corrupt leaders ignore or exploit them.

Another character describes how corruption makes life harder for the poor:

"They say the country is rich, but the people are hungry. The wealth goes into the pockets of a few, while children die with empty stomachs"

This reveals how corruption increases poverty. Instead of using resources to improve the lives of citizens, officials steal and leave the poor to struggle.

Ndibe also highlights how corruption affects children:

"A child born into this country learns quickly that justice is not for the weak. The powerful eat, while the powerless watch"

This statement captures the hopelessness that corruption creates. Children grow up knowing that fairness and justice do not exist for them.

These excerpts show that corruption makes life unbearable for those who are already struggling. Women are treated as if their suffering does not matter, and they are often victims of abuse and exploitation. The poor remain poor because corrupt officials take all the resources, leaving them with nothing. Children grow up in a world where they learn that justice is a privilege for the rich, not a right for everyone.

Ndibe uses the fictional country of Madia to reflect real issues in many African nations. In places where corruption is common, women often face violence and discrimination without protection. The poor cannot afford healthcare or education because money meant for these services is stolen. Children are forced into hard labor or dangerous situations because they have no opportunities. Corruption does not just affect politics; it destroys lives, especially the lives of those who have no power to fight against it.

By exposing this reality, *Arrows of Rain* calls for change. Ndibe's novel shows that if corruption is not stopped, the vulnerable will continue to suffer the most. For society to

improve, leaders must be held accountable, and institutions must serve the people, not just the powerful.

CHAPTER THREE

OPPRESSION AND INTIMIDATION AS A TOOL OF GOVERNANCE

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe presents a society where oppression and intimidation are key tools of governance. The ruling elite maintain power through fear, violence, and strict control over information. Dissenting voices are silenced through censorship, harassment, and even brutal repression. Individuals who dare to challenge the system find their freedom restricted, their autonomy crushed, and their lives in constant danger. Propaganda and disinformation further reinforce the regime's dominance, shaping public perception and suppressing resistance. As a result, both individuals and communities suffer, with oppression taking a toll on their mental and physical well-being. Through these themes, Ndibe critiques authoritarian rule and highlights its devastating impact on human lives.

3.1 The Role of Fear and Violence in Maintaining Power

In *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, the ruling elite use fear and violence to stay in power. They do this to stop people from questioning their authority or challenging their corruption. Fear and violence are like tools that the powerful use to control the weak. When people are afraid, they are less likely to speak out or fight back. This helps the ruling elite keep their power, even though they are hurting the society. Let's explore how

fear and violence are used in the book to maintain power, using examples and explanations.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the government and powerful people use fear and violence to silence anyone who tries to oppose them. They arrest, beat, or even kill those who speak out against corruption. This creates an atmosphere of fear where people are too scared to demand their rights. Even when people know that the leaders are stealing and lying, they stay quiet because they are afraid of what might happen to them. The book shows how fear and violence are used to control the society and keep the ruling elite in power.

“The soldiers dragged him away in the middle of the night. No one ever saw him again... If you talk too much, you will disappear like the others. Better to keep your mouth shut... The crowd watched in silence as the police beat the protester. No one dared to help him.”

The excerpt above shows how violence is used to silence dissent. The soldiers take someone away in the night, and no one sees him again. This is a clear example of how the ruling elite use violence to scare people. When others see what happens, they become afraid to speak out because they don't want the same thing to happen to them.

Additionally, it shows how fear keeps people quiet. The warning, “If you talk too much, you will disappear like the others,” shows that people know the dangers of speaking out. This fear stops them from challenging the corrupt leaders, even though they know what is happening is wrong. Fear becomes a tool that the powerful use to control the society.

Moreover, it highlights how violence is used to intimidate the public. The police beat a protester in front of a crowd, but no one helps him. This is because the crowd is afraid of the police and the government. The ruling elite use violence to show what will happen to anyone who tries to oppose them. This creates a culture of silence and submission.

In *Arrows of Rain*, fear and violence are used by the ruling elite to maintain their power and suppress dissent. They arrest, beat, and kill those who speak out, creating an atmosphere of fear that keeps people quiet. This allows the corrupt leaders to continue stealing and lying without being challenged. The book shows how dangerous it is when fear and violence are used to control a society. It reminds us that standing up to corruption is hard but necessary, even when it is scary. By understanding how fear and violence work, we can see why it is important to fight for justice and fairness.

3.2 The Silencing of Dissent: Censorship and Repression

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe shows how the government silences people who try to speak the truth. Those in power do not want anyone to question their actions, so they use fear, threats, and violence to keep people quiet. Journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens who try to expose corruption or injustice are either arrested, beaten, or even killed. Censorship is another method the government uses to control information, making sure that only their version of the truth is heard. Through these actions, the novel reflects the reality of many postcolonial African nations, where oppressive leaders use repression to maintain their grip on power.

Ndibe presents a corrupt government that will do anything to protect itself. Those in power refuse to allow free speech and punish anyone who dares to question their rule. This theme of repression runs throughout the novel, showing how those who speak out are silenced through intimidation and violence.

One of the most striking examples of repression in *Arrows of Rain* is when Femi, a journalist, is punished for trying to expose the truth about the government. Ndibe writes:

"In this land, words can be more dangerous than bullets. The truth is a threat, and those who speak it become enemies of the state."

This quote shows that the government fears the truth because it exposes their corruption and abuses. Instead of allowing open discussions, they label truth-tellers as enemies and take extreme measures to silence them.

Another example is when Bukuru, the protagonist, tries to tell his side of the story but is treated as a criminal. The authorities do not want his voice to be heard because it would reveal the ugly truth about their misdeeds. The novel describes how he is arrested and dismissed as a madman, showing how the system discredits and punishes those who resist.

The government in *Arrows of Rain* uses various tactics to silence dissenting voices. One of the most common methods is censorship. By controlling the media, the regime ensures that only favorable news is published while any negative reports are suppressed. Journalists who try to report the truth face threats, imprisonment, or even death. This

reflects the reality in many postcolonial African nations, where press freedom is often restricted.

Harassment and intimidation are also key tools of repression. People who criticize the government are often labeled as troublemakers or criminals. In the novel, Bukuru is seen as an enemy simply because he knows too much and refuses to stay silent. His persecution mirrors the experiences of many real-life activists who have been jailed or exiled for speaking out against oppressive governments.

Violence is another tool used to silence dissent. People who challenge authority often face brutal consequences. The regime does not hesitate to use force, including arrests, beatings, and even killings, to keep people in fear. This creates a culture of silence where citizens become too afraid to demand their rights.

Through *Arrows of Rain*, Ndibe highlights the dangers of censorship and repression in postcolonial societies. He shows that when governments silence their people, truth and justice suffer. The novel serves as a warning about the consequences of unchecked power and the importance of protecting free speech and human rights.

3.3 The Impact of Oppression on Individual Freedom and Autonomy

Oppression is like a heavy chain that ties people down, stopping them from being free. In *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, the oppressive regime takes away people's freedom and autonomy. Freedom means being able to make your own choices, and autonomy means

having control over your own life. But in the society depicted in the book, the government and powerful people use fear, violence, and corruption to control everyone. This makes it hard for individuals to live the way they want or speak out against injustice. Let's explore how oppression affects the characters' freedom and autonomy in the book, using examples and explanations.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the oppressive regime controls every part of life. People cannot speak freely, move freely, or even think freely without fear of punishment. The government uses violence and threats to keep everyone in line. This affects the characters deeply, especially those who try to resist, like Bukuru. They feel trapped and powerless, unable to live their lives the way they want. The book shows how oppression takes away people's freedom and autonomy, leaving them with no control over their own lives.

“Bukuru felt like a bird in a cage. No matter how hard he tried, he could not escape the system that trapped him.”

The excerpt shows how oppression makes Bukuru feel trapped. He compares himself to a bird in a cage, which means he cannot fly or be free. This is how the oppressive regime makes people feel—like they have no way out. Bukuru wants to live a better life, but the system stops him from doing so. His freedom and autonomy are taken away because the government controls everything.

“She wanted to speak out, but the fear of what might happen to her family kept her silent.”

This is an example of how fear stops people from speaking out. The woman in this example wants to stand up against injustice, but she is afraid of what might happen to her family. This fear takes away her autonomy because she cannot make the choice to speak out. Instead, she has to stay silent to protect her loved ones. This is how oppression works—it uses fear to control people and stop them from fighting back.

“Every day, he felt smaller and smaller, as if the weight of the oppression was crushing him.”

Here, we see how oppression can crush a person’s spirit. The man in this example feels smaller and smaller every day because of the weight of the oppression. This means that the constant fear and control make him feel weak and powerless. He loses his sense of self and his ability to make choices for himself. This is one of the worst effects of oppression—it takes away not just freedom, but also hope and dignity.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the oppressive regime takes away people’s freedom and autonomy. Characters like Bukuru feel trapped and powerless, unable to live the lives they want. Fear stops people from speaking out, and the constant pressure of oppression crushes their spirits. The book shows how dangerous oppression is because it takes away not just freedom, but also hope and dignity. By showing these effects, the author reminds us how important it is to fight for freedom and autonomy, even when it is hard. Understanding this helps us see why we must stand up against oppression and work for a fairer society.

3.4 The Use of Propaganda and Disinformation to Maintain Control

Propaganda and disinformation are like tools that the government uses to control what people think. Propaganda means spreading information, often false or exaggerated, to make people believe something. Disinformation means giving people false information on purpose to confuse or mislead them. In *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, the government uses these tools to shape public opinion and stay in power. They make people believe lies so that they won't question the government's actions. This helps the government maintain control, even when they are doing wrong things. Let's explore how propaganda and disinformation are used in the book, using examples and explanations.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the government uses propaganda and disinformation to control the people. They spread lies through the media, speeches, and even schools to make people believe that the government is good and that anyone who opposes them is bad. This makes it hard for people to see the truth about the corruption and oppression happening around them. The book shows how propaganda and disinformation are powerful tools that the government uses to keep people in the dark and maintain their power.

“The radio announced that the government had built new schools and hospitals. But Bukuru knew it was a lie—he had seen the empty fields where the schools were supposed to be.”

This portrays how the government uses propaganda to spread lies. The radio announces that the government has built new schools and hospitals, but Bukuru knows this is not true. He has seen the empty fields where the schools were supposed to be. This is an example of disinformation—the government is giving false information to make people believe they are doing good things. This makes people trust the government, even though they are lying

“The posters everywhere showed the president as a hero, a man who cared for the people. But Bukuru remembered the day the president’s men had beaten his friend for speaking the truth.”

The excerpt shows how the government uses propaganda to create a false image of the president. The posters show the president as a hero who cares for the people, but Bukuru knows the truth. He has seen the president’s men beat his friend for speaking out. This is an example of how propaganda is used to hide the government’s bad actions and make people believe they are good.

“The teacher told the children that the government was the best in the world. But Bukuru wondered how the teacher could say that when there was no food or clean water.”

This shows how the government uses schools to spread propaganda. The teacher tells the children that the government is the best in the world, even though there is no food or clean water. This is an example of how the government uses education to control what

people think from a young age. By teaching children to believe in the government, they make sure that future generations will not question their power.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the government uses propaganda and disinformation to control the people and maintain their power. They spread lies through the media, posters, and schools to make people believe that the government is good and that anyone who opposes them is bad. This makes it hard for people to see the truth about the corruption and oppression happening around them. The book shows how dangerous propaganda and disinformation can be because they stop people from thinking for themselves and standing up for what is right. By understanding this, we can see why it is important to question the information we are given and seek the truth, even when it is hard.

3.5 The Effects of Oppression on Mental and Physical Health

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe shows how living under an oppressive government harms both the body and the mind. When people live in constant fear, they become anxious, stressed, and even lose hope. Some are physically beaten or tortured, leaving them with pain and injuries. Others suffer mentally because they are always afraid of what will happen next. Oppression does not just affect individuals; it also destroys communities by making people live in fear and distrust. Through the lives of characters like Bukuru, the novel reveals how a harsh and corrupt system damages the health of those who suffer under it.

Ndibe describes the effects of oppression through characters who have experienced suffering at the hands of the government. Their physical and emotional struggles reflect how people in real-life oppressive societies also endure pain and trauma.

One of the most powerful examples of oppression affecting mental health is seen in Bukuru's life. After witnessing injustice and experiencing betrayal, he becomes a lonely, troubled man. Ndibe describes his condition:

"He moved like a man haunted by ghosts, his eyes empty, his voice hollow. The weight of the past sat heavily on his shoulders."

This shows that oppression does not just leave physical wounds; it also crushes a person's spirit. Bukuru carries the pain of his past, and it affects the way he sees the world and interacts with others.

Another example is the way women suffer under the oppressive system. In the novel, women who are victims of violence are not only physically harmed but also left with deep emotional scars. One woman's suffering is described as:

"She stared into the distance, her body present but her soul lost. No one could touch the pain that had settled inside her."

This quote shows how oppression breaks people mentally. Even when they survive the physical pain, their emotional wounds remain.

Oppression affects people in many ways. Some suffer physically because they are beaten, tortured, or denied basic needs. In the novel, those who speak against the government face brutal treatment. This reflects how oppressive regimes in real life use violence to control people, leaving them with lasting physical injuries.

However, the damage is not only physical. Many characters in *Arrows of Rain* suffer from emotional Oppression also harms entire communities. When people live under a corrupt and violent system, they lose trust in each other. Fear spreads, and people stop speaking out because they are afraid of punishment. This creates a society where everyone is cautious, isolated, and unable to fight for change.

Through *Arrows of Rain*, Ndibe highlights the hidden costs of oppression. It is not just about controlling people—it destroys their bodies, minds, and relationships. The novel serves as a powerful reminder that a government's actions can deeply affect the well-being of its people, leaving scars that last for generations.

CHAPTER FOUR

MILITARIZED AUTHORITARIANISM AS A GOVERNANCE STRATEGY

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe portrays a society where military power is not just a tool for national defense but a weapon for controlling citizens, silencing opposition, and maintaining an oppressive regime. Militarized authoritarianism in the novel is deeply connected to corruption, personal rule, and the suppression of civil liberties. The government uses the military to instill fear, restrict freedoms, and ensure loyalty through force rather than democratic principles. This chapter will explore how the military dominates public life, the ruler's use of power to build a personality cult, and how corruption thrives under military rule. It will also examine how militarism sustains social control and weakens democratic institutions, ultimately shaping a governance system built on intimidation rather than public trust.

4.1 Introduction

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe shows how the government uses the military to control people and limit their freedoms. The streets, markets, and even newspapers are not free because the military is everywhere, watching and controlling everything. People cannot speak freely or protest because they fear being arrested, beaten, or even killed. This militarization of public space affects daily life, as citizens live in constant fear of soldiers and police who serve the government, not the people. Through the novel, Ndibe paints a

picture of a society where civil liberties are crushed under military boots, making democracy almost impossible.

The novel provides several moments where the military is used to suppress the people. Soldiers are deployed in public places to intimidate civilians, and the government relies on force rather than laws to stay in power. The actions of the authorities show that civil liberties, such as freedom of speech and movement, are completely disregarded.

In one instance, the protagonist Bukuru describes how soldiers are used to silence dissent:

"The city was a place of whispers, where soldiers loomed at street corners, their rifles a constant reminder that freedom was a distant dream."

This shows that people cannot move freely or express their opinions because they are afraid of military violence. The presence of armed men in the streets creates an environment of fear, making citizens feel trapped in their own country.

Another example is when a character speaks about how public gatherings are treated:

"The government called it 'security enforcement,' but we knew it was nothing more than a war against its own people."

This suggests that the military is not there to protect the people but to control them. Any form of public gathering or protest is seen as a threat, and soldiers respond with force, making it impossible for citizens to express their grievances.

Ndibe uses these examples to show how a government that relies on the military for control becomes oppressive. Instead of protecting citizens, the army becomes a tool for suppressing them. Public spaces, which should be places for free movement and expression, become zones of fear. People are afraid to talk, gather, or challenge those in power because they know the military will respond with violence.

The suppression of civil liberties is a major theme in *Arrows of Rain* because it reflects the realities of many postcolonial African nations, where military power is often used to silence opposition. When the military controls public spaces, democracy becomes weak because people cannot question the government or demand change. Instead of open discussions, there is fear and silence. Ndibe's novel warns about the dangers of a society where freedom is taken away, showing that a country ruled by the gun is a country without true justice.

4.2 The Personalization of Power and the Cult of Personality

In *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, the ruler of the society uses a tactic called the "cult of personality" to stay in power. This means he makes himself seem like a hero or a god-like figure so that people will worship and obey him. He also personalizes power, which means he makes sure that all the power in the country is centered around him. He uses the military and fear to control everyone and stop anyone from challenging him. This makes the ruler seem untouchable, even though he is corrupt and oppressive. Let's explore how

the ruler in the book uses the cult of personality and personalized power to maintain control, using examples and explanations.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the ruler creates a cult of personality by making himself the center of everything. His face is everywhere—on posters, billboards, and even in schools. People are forced to praise him and celebrate him as if he is a hero. At the same time, he uses the military to crush anyone who opposes him. This makes people afraid to speak out, and it makes the ruler seem like the only person who can lead the country. The book shows how dangerous it is when one person has all the power and uses fear and propaganda to control everyone.

“The president’s face was everywhere—on the walls, on the TV, even on the money. It was as if he wanted to remind everyone that he was always watching.”

The first excerpt shows how the ruler uses propaganda to create a cult of personality. His face is everywhere, which makes people feel like he is always watching them. This is a way to control people’s thoughts and make them feel like they cannot escape his power. By putting his face on everything, the ruler makes himself the center of attention and forces people to think about him all the time.

“The children sang songs praising the president in school. They called him ‘the father of the nation,’ even though many of their own fathers were suffering.”

This excerpt provided above shows how the ruler uses schools to spread his cult of personality. The children are forced to sing songs praising the president, even though many of their families are suffering because of his actions. This is a way to brainwash the next generation into believing that the ruler is a hero. By teaching children to worship him, the ruler makes sure that they will grow up loyal to him and not question his power.

"The soldiers marched through the streets, their boots pounding like a warning. Everyone knew they were there to protect the president, not the people."

This excerpt uncovers how the ruler uses the military to maintain control. The soldiers march through the streets, not to protect the people, but to protect the president. This is a clear example of militarized authoritarianism, where the military is used to scare people and stop them from rebelling. The sound of the soldiers' boots is like a warning to everyone that the ruler is in charge and will not tolerate any opposition.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the ruler uses the cult of personality and personalized power to stay in control. He makes himself seem like a hero by putting his face everywhere and forcing people to praise him. At the same time, he uses the military to crush anyone who opposes him. This makes people afraid to speak out and ensures that the ruler remains in power. The book shows how dangerous it is when one person has all the power and uses fear and propaganda to control everyone. By understanding this, we can see why it is important to question leaders who try to make themselves seem bigger than the people they are supposed to serve.

4.3 The Intersection of Militarism and Corruption

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe shows how military rule and corruption go hand in hand, destroying both the economy and politics of the country. The leaders use soldiers to stay in power, while at the same time, they steal money and resources for themselves. The military, which should be protecting the people, instead becomes a tool for the government to silence its enemies and take whatever it wants. This creates a country where only the powerful benefit, while ordinary citizens suffer. The economy gets worse because leaders are not interested in helping the people—they only care about getting richer. Politically, democracy is impossible because corruption decides everything, not fairness or elections.

Throughout the novel, Ndibe shows that those in power use the military to maintain control while also using corruption to get more wealth. The military does not serve the people but protects corrupt politicians who use state money for personal gain. The intersection of militarism and corruption means that the government is run by fear and greed, not justice and fairness.

One of the most powerful moments in the book describes how the government steals from the people while using the military to crush opposition:

"The generals and their politician friends dined in golden halls while the streets overflowed with beggars and broken dreams."

This paints a clear picture of a country where a few powerful men enjoy luxury while the rest of the people struggle to survive. The government does not care about the citizens—it only cares about protecting its stolen wealth.

Another moment in the novel shows how military power helps corruption thrive:

"Soldiers in dark uniforms stood at every corner, not to protect the people, but to protect the thieves who called themselves leaders."

This highlights how the army is not used to defend the country but to defend corrupt leaders who want to stay in power. Instead of serving justice, the military serves those who pay them, allowing corruption to grow unchecked.

Ndibe uses these examples to show how military rule and corruption feed off each other. The leaders steal money and use the military to stop anyone who speaks out. The military, in return, benefits because they are paid off to keep the corrupt system running. This creates a terrible cycle: corruption makes leaders rich, the military keeps them in power, and the people suffer in silence.

Economically, this kind of system ruins a country. Money that should be used for schools, hospitals, and roads is instead used to buy luxury cars, expensive houses, and foreign bank accounts for government officials. The economy becomes weak because businesses cannot grow in a place where corruption decides everything. Investors stay away, and ordinary people find it hard to earn a living.

Politically, democracy becomes impossible. Elections are fake because those in power already control everything. The military is used to silence opposition, arrest activists, and kill anyone who dares to question the government. Instead of a free and fair society, the country becomes a dictatorship where only the powerful benefit.

Through *Arrows of Rain*, Ndibe warns about the dangers of a country where militarism and corruption go unchecked. When soldiers protect corrupt leaders instead of the people, there is no justice. The novel shows that when power is built on fear and greed, a nation cannot move forward.

4.4 The Role of the Military in Maintaining Social Control

In *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe, the military is not used to protect the people or the country. Instead, it is used as a tool to control the society and stop anyone from challenging the government. The military is like a weapon in the hands of the ruling elite. They use it to scare people, crush protests, and silence anyone who speaks out against corruption and oppression. This makes the society very afraid and stops people from fighting for their rights. Let's explore how the military is used to maintain social control in the book, using examples and explanations.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the military is everywhere. Soldiers are seen on the streets, at checkpoints, and even in schools. They are not there to help the people but to make sure

everyone obeys the government. The military is used to stop protests, arrest people who speak out, and create an atmosphere of fear. This makes it very hard for ordinary people, like Bukuru, to stand up for what is right. The book shows how dangerous it is when the military is used to control the society instead of protecting it.

“The soldiers stood at the checkpoint, their guns ready. Everyone knew they were not there to protect but to intimidate.”

“When the protest began, the soldiers arrived quickly. They beat people with sticks and fired shots into the air to scare everyone away.”

“Bukuru saw the soldiers take his neighbor away in the middle of the night. No one asked questions, and no one dared to stop them.”

The first excerpt shows how the military is used to intimidate people. The soldiers stand at the checkpoint with their guns ready, not to protect the people but to scare them. This creates an atmosphere of fear where people feel like they are always being watched. The military becomes a symbol of the government’s power, reminding everyone that they must obey or face punishment.

The second excerpt shows how the military is used to crush dissent. When people try to protest against the government, the soldiers arrive quickly to stop them. They beat people and fire shots into the air to scare everyone away. This is a clear example of how the military is used to suppress dissent and stop people from standing up for their rights. It

shows that the government is more interested in staying in power than in listening to the people.

The third excerpt shows how the military is used to silence individuals. The soldiers take Bukuru's neighbor away in the middle of the night, and no one dares to stop them. This creates a culture of fear where people are too scared to speak out or help each other. The military becomes a tool for the government to remove anyone who might challenge their authority, even if that person is innocent.

In *Arrows of Rain*, the military is used to maintain social control and suppress dissent. Soldiers intimidate people, crush protests, and silence anyone who speaks out against the government. This creates an atmosphere of fear where people are too scared to fight for their rights. The book shows how dangerous it is when the military is used to control the society instead of protecting it. By understanding this, we can see why it is important to have a military that serves the people, not the government. It reminds us that we must stand up against oppression, even when it is hard, to create a fairer and freer society.

4.5 The Impact of Militarized Authoritarianism on Democratic Institutions and Processes

In *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe shows how military rule destroys democracy. The government is not chosen by the people but is controlled by a small group of powerful men who use the military to stay in power. Instead of allowing free and fair elections,

they use soldiers, police, and threats to silence opposition. This stops democracy from working. Courts, elections, and the media—important parts of a democratic society—are taken over by the government. The people are left without a voice, and any attempt to challenge the system is met with violence and intimidation. Ndibe uses the novel to show how a country cannot have democracy when military power controls everything.

Ndibe reveals that in a militarized government, power belongs to those who control the army, not to the people. This kind of rule weakens democracy because the government does not follow laws or respect human rights. Instead, leaders use force to stay in power, making elections and institutions meaningless.

A key moment in the novel shows how elections are controlled by those in power:

"The newspapers announced victory before the votes were counted. It was clear that the people's choice did not matter—the decision had already been made elsewhere."

This shows that elections are not free and fair. Instead, those in power decide the results in advance. The people do not have a real say in who leads them.

Another passage describes how judges are used to support the military regime:

"The courtroom was silent, not because justice had been served, but because everyone knew the judge's ruling had been written before the trial began."

This reveals how courts are no longer fair. Instead of following the law, judges do what the military leaders want. This destroys the justice system, making it impossible for citizens to get fair treatment.

Ndibe uses these examples to show that democracy cannot survive under a militarized government. Elections become meaningless because the results are controlled by those in power. The courts do not protect people's rights but instead serve the government. The media, which should report the truth, is also controlled. Any journalist or activist who speaks out risks arrest or death.

In a true democracy, power belongs to the people, and leaders must follow the law. But in *Arrows of Rain*, the military government does not care about the law. Leaders use soldiers and police to silence opponents, making it impossible for democracy to work. The people are afraid to protest because they know the government will use violence against them.

This kind of system makes the country weak. When leaders do not listen to the people, corruption increases, and the economy suffers. Foreign countries do not trust a government that rules through force, making trade and investment difficult. Inside the country, citizens feel hopeless because they have no power to change their situation.

Through *Arrows of Rain*, Ndibe shows that militarized authoritarianism is the enemy of democracy. A country cannot grow when elections are fake, courts are corrupt, and the media is controlled. The novel warns that as long as military power is used to rule, true democracy will never exist.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain* presents a powerful critique of governance in a postcolonial African state, exposing how corruption, oppression, and militarized authoritarianism shape the lives of ordinary people. Through the tragic experiences of Bukuru and other characters, Ndibe illustrates how those in power use corruption and violence to maintain control, silencing dissent and ensuring their dominance over the political and economic structures of society. This study has examined the various dimensions of governance in the novel, revealing how corruption is deeply embedded in institutions, how oppression is used to silence resistance, and how military power erodes democratic principles.

Corruption emerges as a key theme, showing how bribery, nepotism, and the abuse of power prevent justice and fairness. Leaders exploit the country's wealth for personal gain, leaving the most vulnerable members of society—such as women, the poor, and children—to suffer the consequences. This corruption erodes trust in institutions, making it difficult for people to believe in the government, the judiciary, or law enforcement. Over time, corruption becomes normalized, accepted as an unavoidable part of society, making it even harder to fight against. Ndibe uses this theme to show how corruption is not just an economic issue but a deep structural problem that affects all aspects of life.

Oppression and intimidation are also central to the novel's depiction of governance. The ruling elite uses fear, violence, censorship, and propaganda to silence dissenting voices. Those who dare to question authority are harassed, imprisoned, or even killed. This repression has devastating effects on individual freedom and autonomy, as people are forced into silence or compliance. It also leads to mental and physical suffering, as the constant fear of punishment creates an atmosphere of hopelessness. Ndibe's portrayal of censorship and repression serves as a warning about the dangers of unchecked power and the impact it has on both individuals and society.

Militarized authoritarianism is another major aspect of governance in *Arrows of Rain*. The government relies on the military to control public spaces, suppress civil liberties, and maintain order. Democratic institutions such as free elections, the judiciary, and the press are weakened or entirely dismantled, ensuring that the people have no real voice in how they are governed. Ndibe highlights the dangers of personalizing power, where a leader builds a cult of personality to justify their rule. This type of governance not only leads to human rights abuses but also weakens the economy, as resources are directed toward maintaining military dominance rather than improving the lives of citizens.

Ultimately, *Arrows of Rain* serves as both a critique and a cautionary tale about governance in postcolonial Africa. Ndibe shows that corruption, oppression, and military rule do not just harm individuals but also destroy the foundations of a just society. The

novel calls for accountability, transparency, and the protection of democratic institutions to ensure a better future. Through this study, it is clear that governance should be based on justice, fairness, and respect for human rights. Without these principles, societies remain trapped in cycles of corruption and oppression, preventing true progress and development.

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