Corruption and Leadership Crises in Nigerian Educational Sector: A Cursory Look at Julie Okoh's *Who Can Fight the Gods?*

By

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Abstract

This work interrogates the seething corruption and leadership crises that characterised the Nigerian educational sectors in recent times. In fact, it can be argued that corruption and the associated leadership gaps significantly hinder the academic progress of Nigeria. Inadequate leadership in various educational institutions has reduced the quality of service delivery, such as teaching and learning, thus leading to corrupt practices in the educational sector. It is based on the above assertion that this paper is set to investigate and thus unravel the factors that contribute to corruption and leadership crises in Julie Okoh's *Who Can Fight the Gods?* In carrying out this study, data were sourced from primary and secondary methods of data collection. The primary sources include but are not limited to oral interviews and the researcher's personal experiences, while the secondary data were sourced from scholarly journals, textbooks, magazines and the internet, amongst others. The work explored conflict theory as a pathway in realising the aim and objectives of the study. In conclusion, the work reveals that anti-graft agencies should be established in educational institutions in Nigeria to monitor and curb the excesses and thus sanction the offenders.

Keywords: Corruption, Education, Investigation, Leadership and Crises.

Introduction

Leadership gaps and its corrupt practices in the Nigerian educational sectors demand urgent attention and remedy in ensuring social stability in the Nigerian

society. This is because leadership crises and other sundry social problems have constituted a bane in the wheel of academic progress and management of human and material resources in most of the educational sectors in Nigeria. The management and efficient accountability in the day-to-day administration of the university system in Nigeria is characterised by crisis due to greed and corrupt practices that have gripped the system in recent times. In the Nigerian tertiary institutions (universities, etc.), the appointment of the pro-chancellors and vice-chancellors, amongst other key principal officers, is mostly done by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. One would agree with me that the intention of either nominating or appointing the above-mentioned officers is to ensure efficient management, accountability and smooth running of the university system. Put differently, however, inordinate ambitions occasioned by excessive greed and corruption have lured them into mismanaging the human and material resources of the university education. This ineffective leadership and its attendant crisis have contributed to low performance and productivity in most of Nigeria's higher institutions. It is on the above concern that Julie Okoh, in her creative and dramatic exploit, delves into the examination, evaluation and analysis of leadership questions in her drama titled 'Who *can fight the Gods?*' This is because the 'Gods' who are supposed to show leadership prowess in the smooth running and effective administration of the university system have indulged in leadership incongruities, thus reducing the financial resources of the university to a mere 'cash cow' for their personal aggrandisements. It is on this note that this paper is poised to investigate the immediate and remote factors that contribute to leadership gaps, corruption and crisis in the university system, especially in the Nigerian nation, with deliberate focus on examining Julie Okoh's *Who can fight the Gods?* as a reference point.

Synopsis of Julie Okoh's*Who Can Fight the Gods?*

The play highlights the chaotic nature of some Nigerian university environments where hawking/ sales of goods and services, church service and lectures take place at the same time at the convocation arena. While the hawkers are busy selling their products in the arena, the Catholic Church members are at loggerheads with Dr. Lecturer over who has the right to occupy the arena on a Sunday morning. The play further reveals corrupt practices, intimidation and harassment in the university system where imposition of Visitors and other personnel on the people

reign supreme. After the arrest and detention of Dr. Lecturer, the play ends as the First and Second Mass Servers remove their facemasks and reveal their identities to the audience.

Conflict Theory: A Brief Review

It's no doubt to state in clear terms that man's insatiable quest for wealth and power are mechanisms of dominance in human society which will always lead to conflict either internally or physically. It is on this premise that the study explores Karl Marx's conflict theory as a pivot of analysis of the topic in question. It is claim that "Karl Marx was a revolutionary, sociologist, historian, and economist. He co-wrote The Communist Manifesto (with Friedrich Engels), and he was the author of Das Kapital, which together formed the basis of Marxism. Marx was born in Prussia in 1818 and lived in Paris, Brussels, London, and elsewhere in Europe." (www.google.com)

> Conflict Theory assumes that social interaction leads to conflict, and that conflict is an inevitable part of family relationships. Conflict, however, can be beneficial, especially when it spurs useful changes and resolutions of issues. The goal is not to completely prevent conflict, but to prevent conflicts from escalating to the point where members of the group are permanently harmed or feel that remaining in the group is against their self-interest. In the context of the family unit, unresolved conflict can lead to divorce, splitting of extended families into factions, and breaking off of communication between family members. Conflict emerges over struggles for power, influence, and resources. According to conflict theory, limited resources leads to conflict. (www.google.com)

One of the characteristics of Marxist conflict theory is the ability to delineate the class distinguish along the lines of the bourgeois' and proletarians in the industrial society. It is opined that:

> According to some school of thought, "conflict theory is a sociopolitical theory that is heavily associated with Karl Marx. It seeks to explain political and economic events in terms of an ongoing struggle over finite resources. In struggle, Marx

> emphasizes the antagonistic relationship between social classes, in particular the relationship between the owners of capital – whom Marx calls the "bourgeoisie". (Hayes, 2024, p.?).

It is evidence that human's society cannot be denied of conflict as it is a necessary tonic that spurs the growth and development of society. It is on the above assertion that conflict theory is chosen in the evaluation, discussion and analysis of inherent issues of leadership, corruption and conflict in Julie Okoh's *Who can fight the Gods?*

Towards Thematic Evaluation in *Who Can Fight the Gods?*

Official Corruption: The play revolves around the phenomenon of official corruption that ravages society nowadays. It is a statement of fact to state that corrupt practices have taken centre stage in some public institutions in Nigeria. The wanton, corrupt nature of some administrators and others alike has deterred the socio-economic advancement of the nation. This, in return, has created moral gaps and a low level of knowledge, especially in the university system. In the Preface III, in *Who Can Fight the Gods?* Udoidem (2002, p. xii) asserts that:

> The text takes issue with the university environment where the best minds were supposed to be trained not only in learning but also in virtue, which is nowhere to be found. All that is there is corruption. The various levels of corruption are highlighted in the play, not as something to be perpetrated but as evil to be rejected if the Nigerian university system and the Nigerian society at large are to be redeemed from its present degenerate state.

The foregoing assertion is a true reflection of what happened in the play where a few persons in administration embezzle funds meant for the development of the university. Those involved in the official corruption in the play are the Dean of Student Affairs, the Visitor to the University, the Contractors, and the Director of Maintenance, amongst others. On his part, the Dean of Student Affairs collects illegal rents from the hawkers without remitting money to the administration. He says, "Ah-ah! What's wrong with that? Where else should one seek benefits if not from one's place of work? Everybody does it… Are the lawyers and magistrates not doing the same thing? What everybody is doing cannot be wrong" (Okoh,

1999, pp. 32-33). The mentality of the Dean that one should benefit from where he or she works is a wrong indicator that has lured criminal-minded persons into heinous crimes.

The issue of official corruption is also demonstrated in the activities of the Director of Maintenance, who was awarded the contract of procuring a brand new generator for the university but ended up supplying a reconditioned (secondhand) generator to the institution. The generator did not serve the purpose for which it was bought, thus plunging the university community into darkness. This manifests when Dr. Lecturer accuses the THIRD CWO that her husband, the Director of Maintenance, was responsible for the hardship caused to the university in the recent past. Hear this:

> DR. LECTURER: The university approved one million naira for the purchase of a brand new generator. Quick! Quick! All the accounting machinery was put into action. There was no bottleneck anywhere. Within one week, the money was out, and your husband signed for it. But do you know the actual cost of that generator? Ask him when you get home.
> THIRD CWO: Meaning what?...
> DR. LECTURER: Meaning there was fraud. Embezzlement of public funds! The main reason why this university, after so many years, is still at its crawling stage at a time it should be walking with vigor. Yes, Madam, I am talking about immorality (Okoh, 1999, p. 46).

The corrupt practices discussed in the play are mostly attributed to the powerful and respected members of the university community. It is expected that the visitor to the university should ensure the frugal management of the institution's financial resources, but ironically, he entangles himself in the financial recklessness of the institution. The unnecessary spending and looting of the university's treasury by the visitors who assume the position of supreme demigods become a source of worry to the day-to-day running of the administration of the institution. It is on this note that the Chief Administrator advises the Visitor to cut down his expenses; hence, the university has provided most of his needs on campus.

On the contrary, the refusal of the Chief Administrator to do the biddings of the Visitor (the supreme demigod) attracted some sort of hardship and unfavorable condition of service to him. This is because the visitor and other powerful persons instigated the students to protest against the chief administrator. In the end, he resigned from office and traveled abroad for safety.

This unmerited brutality, oppression, and outright intimidation by the privileged few is what the playwright questions in contemporary Nigerian society. This corrupt behavior in the university system is a propelling force that lures the playwright to satire; thus, it seeks from society a capable hand that can fight the gods. Udoidem says, "The title of the text could be read on the one hand as an invitation to fight the demigods of the Nigerian society, and on the other hand, it could be read as a voice of frustration in the face of the unfathomable godfathers of corruption in the Nigerian society" (Preface III in Okoh's *Who Can Fight the Gods*, p. xii).

Supremacy of the gods: The gods in this context are the powerful individuals (demigods) who control and detect the activities in the society. They are therefore regarded as the untouchables. The play represents the Nigerian situation whereby a few powerful individuals loot and control the financial resources of the nation. Deducing from the play's narratives, 'the gods' are virtually noticeable in every institution, especially in the universities in Nigeria. The rhetorical question is, who can fight the gods? is a deliberate emphasis on the supremacy of the gods. Regretting how he cannot fight the gods, Dr. Lecturer informs that they are connected in the society. He further says, "The enemies are in battalions. They are very powerful. I am alone. Besides, my strength has dwindled (Okoh, 1999, p. 80). Again, the play reveals that no matter the offenses the gods commit, they are not indicted in any form. The involvement of the Director of Maintenance in the generator scandal spurs Dr. Lecturer to conduct a private investigation and promises to submit his report to the university council. Knowing that he would be implicated, the director advised Dr. Lecturer to drop his report while boasting that:

> What do you think will come out of it? At most, a panel will be set up to investigate the matter. It will drag on and on until everybody

> forgets about it. If they manage to complete an investigation, the obviously guilty ones are declared guiltless (Okoh, 1999, p. 54).

The questionable attitudes of the 'demigods' in subjecting the university administration to "a business center" instead of a center for academic excellence is the crux of satire in the play. The issue of 'godfatherism' or 'cabalism' has slowly and progressively reduced the moral values and ethical principles governing university education in society. It is therefore in the thinking of the playwright that the dismantling of the 'gods' in the university system will bring about the much-needed fairness, equity, and social justice in the citadel of learning in particular and the society in general.

Official Duty/Religious Worship: The ownership of the right to use the convocation arena on Sunday by the Catholic Church and Dr. Lecturer, who is slated to conduct his examination in the same venue, forms the crux of the debate in the play. The dramatic action begins when the Catholic Church members converge at the convocation arena on Sunday morning to conduct church mass, and Dr. Lecturer comes with his examination materials to administer an examination to his students. However, before the arrival of Dr. Lecturer, members of the Catholic Church are already preparing for the church mass in the arena. Immediately after the lecturer enters the arena, he asks to know the mission of those seated at the venue. Hear him:

> DR. LECTURER: Who are you?
> SACRISTAN: Sir, I am the Chaplaincy's Sacristan. These are the mass servers. Over there are members of the Catholic Women Organization.
> DR. LECTURER: So?
> SACRISTAN: As you can see, this is our altar. We are going to have mass here at 8.30am. The priest will soon arrive.
> DR. LECTURER: I am having an examination here at 8.00am. As you can see, my students are already here.
> SACRISTAN: Sir, these are not your students. They are members of the university Catholic community. They have come, not to take your exam, but to worship God (Okoh, 1999, p. 20).

The above argument intensifies in a manner that both the students and congregation lay claim and counterclaims to the ownership of the right to occupy the convocation arena at that point in time. Here, the THIRD CWO rains insults on the personality of Dr. Lecturer that made him inform her that he is at the venue to perform his official duty. Dr. Lecturer says, "Hear her again, insulting me! Of all people, you in administration should know how important it is for students to take their examination in order to graduate. But here you come to insult me while I am doing my official duty" (p. 25).

Dr. Lecturer sees his 'official duty' to serve humanity as paramount to other activities in the university. Put differently, the church congregation is of the opinion that what matters in life are their relationships with God. Revealing this assertion, the Sacristan says, "to fortify our belief in the one true God, creator of all beings" (p. 26). The intent of satire in the play is to investigate through ridicule the need for church activities to be held in the convocation arena instead of conventional church buildings. Also, the play satirizes the attitude of some lecturers who conduct an examination on Sunday in the convocation arena. The sharp disagreement between the Rev. Father and Dr. Lecturer on grounds of morality is reconciled when eventually the two of them join forces together to fight corrupt practice in the university. Hear this:

> DR. LECTURER: You mean you don't consider me your enemy? They said that I am an enemy of the people.
> REV. FATHER: Of how many people? You have a far greater number of friends than enemies. That article you wrote entitled *"Modernity and Moral Decadence in Ugoland: A Case Study"* has earned you a worldwide reputation. Your name is mentioned daily in high circles with great admiration. Your findings can apply to any society in the world… You are a man of noble cut, with great intelligence, culture, tenacity, and great capacity for work (Okoh, 1999, p. 79).

Corruption and Leadership Crises in Julie Okoh's *Who Can Fight the Gods?*

It is no doubt to state that the target of social criticism is to ridicule socio-political anomalies that hinder the development of human society. This is because issues of leadership questions, looting of public funds, imposition of misfits to juicy public

offices, lack of social amenities, and disregard to constituted authorities are amongst the realities that lure push for investigation. It is noted that *"The major reason for her socio-economic development stagnation is leadership crisis and corruption. Since independence, Nigerian government is replete of clueless, parochial, uninspiring, attitudinal debauchery and selfish leaders" (*Bankole, I. O., & Olaniyi, D. E., 2021, p. 24).

In *Who Can Fight the Gods?*Okoh ridicules the negative influences that deter progress in the university system in particular and the Nigerian nation in general. It is evident in the play that lack of worship centers and non-adherence to examination timetables, among others, constitute a threat to the smooth running of the institution. It is on this note that the play criticizes the inability of the government to provide adequate worship centers for religious worshipers on campus. In the absence of this, the convocation arena becomes the ready alternative center for both examination and church mass. The play reveals that the Catholic Church congregation has seated in preparation for the church mass before the arrival of Dr. Lecturer, who also chooses to use the convocation arena to conduct his examination on Sunday that invariably coincides with the church mass. The conflict arises because of who has the right to use the venue. According to the sacristan and the Rev. Father, they are officially slated to worship at the convocation arena on Sunday, but the lecturer resists by not allowing them to carry on with the mass. This point of conflict on who has the right to occupy the convocation arena at that point in time is laughable; thus, the satire.

Furthermore, the play ridicules the moral ineptitude of some key principal officers in the university whose interests are to embezzle the funds earmarked for the development of the institution. The play exposes the Director of Maintenance, whose responsibility is to provide quality service delivery concerning electricity supply, involved in supplying the university with a bad generator as against the need to install a brand new generator for the university community. This attitude is condemnable as it negates the ethical and moral principles in a civilized environment. However, Dr. Lecturer, who represents the interest of ASUU in the play, criticizes the questionable character of the Director of Maintenance. Lamenting on the low infrastructural development in the university, he says, "Embezzlement of public funds! The main reason why this university, after so

many years, is still at its crawling stage at a time it should be walking with vigor" (Okoh, 1999, p. 46). The corrupt practices are disturbing factors in the wheel of progres in the educational sector. It is said that "corruption is a widespread plague that contributes to occurrences like embezzlement of funds, bribery, nepotism, and favouritism being commonplace. The allowance for these unethical practices has caused damage to the reputation of university education in Nigeria, which has caused many to move abroad for their studies. It has brought about various consequences such as faulty infrastructure, outdated curricula and lack of digital inclusivity" (www.researchgate.net).

Even when a panel of inquiry is constituted to investigate the financial scandal of the director, nothing eventually comes out of it. Reacting to the threat issued by Dr. Lecturer to submit his report concerning the financial impropriety against the Director of Maintenance, the Director categorically tells him that:

> What do you think will come out of it? At most, a panel will be set up to investigate the matter. It will drag on and on until everybody forgets about it. If they manage to complete an investigation, the obviously guilty ones are declared guiltless. How many of such panels have you heard about? Ten? Twenty? Mere routine! That's all. Waste of time. It's a question of personality, ethnicity, and connections (Okoh, 1999, pp. 53-54).

Furthermore, the satirical barbs of the play target the overbearing attitude of some military heads of state who do not mean well for the educational advancement of the nation. The military focuses their attention on the art of warfare as against the liberal arts and sciences that advance the course of humanity. According to the prologue of *Who Can Fight the Gods?* (Okoh, 1999):

> From their zenith position
> Of power, they came to realize
> That the best training a nation
> Could plan for her citizen
> Is in the art of warfare (p. 5).

These retrogressive activities of military government constitute a gap in the search for knowledge in an educational institution. Men and women of integrity whose

primary duty is to push for the educational, economic, and socio-political developments of the institution should run the university system. Regrettably, the reverse is the case. In the prologue to the play, the playwright laments:

> Five percent was given to education.
> At times, one percent
> Depending on their caprice
> In each of the universities
> Is installed a council of demigods
> Headed by a supreme demigod
> All handpicked by the
> Commanders-in-Chief themselves
> To act on their behalf
> In overseeing the activities
> Of the actual administrators
> In the varsities… (Okoh, 1999, pp. 5-6).

The above quotation represents a typical socio-political problem that bedevils university education in Nigeria. The influence of the "handpicked" favorites of the Commander-in-Chief hinders the actual administrators from carrying on their mandate effectively. This is because the imposed visitors to the university determine what happens in the system. A situation where the visitor misappropriates, or rather, loots the university's treasury is ridiculous and condemnable. This is evident when the visitor tells the chief administrator to pay the overbloated hotel bills and other reckless expenses at the detriment of the university. Reacting to the attitude of the Visitor (supreme demigods), the Narrator informs that:

> Although there is for him on campus
> A huge, beautiful mansion
> Any time he comes to visit,
> He loves to stay in a hotel in town.
> Surrounded by his advisers,
> Chambermen, footmen,
> Praise singers and mistresses,
> All at the university's expense (Okoh, 1999, p. 70).

Beside the excessive material wants that characterized the university system in Nigeria, the issue of religiosity remains yet another factor that the play exposes. In Nigeria, religious crises have deepened the security and ethnic questions. Notwithstanding the numerous religious beliefs in the country, criminalities and their attendant consequences spur the satiric investigation of many playwrights. In *Who Can Fight the Gods*, Okoh lambasts the high level of crime in the society despite the fact that there are many religious beliefs. This is made manifest in the character of Second CWO thus:

> Churches, mosques, and shrines abound everywhere. Yet the more religion is spreading, the more the rate of crime is accelerating in this country. The prisons are filled up with the innocent, whereas the criminals are out there misinterpreting the Bible and the Koran for their own benefits. I say the situation in this country is hopelessly hopeless. And I'm scared! (Okoh, 1999, p. 9).

It is in the interest of the playwright to criticize religious hypocrisy in society, especially in the university system. It is a statement of fact that every university in the country has churches and mosques; it even accommodates the traditional worshipers. However, some of the religious worshippers engage in crimes as against the expected sacrosanct. This behavior is what encourages the satirical attacks of the playwright towards ridiculing seeking social change in society.

It is expected that to achieve a harmonious, cordial existence in an institution, people should be encouraged to obey the constituted authorities. In the university system, adherence to laid-down principles governing staff and students' conduct is a panacea to peace and social cohesion in the institution. However, if the above is disobeyed, it leads to social disharmony and anarchy. In this connection, Dr. Lecturer refuses to adhere to the directives given by the university authority, thus causing disaffection in the system. According to the play, an examination at the university ends on Saturday, but Dr. Lecturer decides to give his students an examination on Sunday, thus clashing with the Catholic Church congregation in the convocation arena. As Dr. Lecturer insists on administering an examination to his students, Third CWO tells him that "but no examination was officially scheduled here for today, Sunday.". In the same manner, the Dean of Student Affairs reminds him, "Examinations were officially over yesterday, Saturday" (pp.

25-29). The above statements remind Dr. Lecturer that he has no business conducting an examination in the convocation arena on Sunday, thus flouting the Senate order. These unethical and morally poor attitudes of Dr. Lecturer spur Rev. Father to admonish him thus:

> May I remind you that you are flouting Senate regulation forbidding lectures on Sunday? Lawlessness and indiscipline make the system ungovernable. If we are to make progress, everyone must learn to be disciplined and abide by constituted laws (Pp. 33-34).

In a bid to criticize the debased attitude of some persons in society, the playwright employs the technique of irony in the character of Dr. Lecturer, an ASUU activist and self-acclaimed moralist. In this situation, the playwright laughs at the hypocritical nature of human beings. In the play, Dr. Lecturer maintains the status of a righteous person but disrespects the constituted laws. The play reveals that Dr. Lecturer frowns at examination malpractices and thus assumes sacrosanct moral questions. He says, "Never will I do such a thing. These students are cheats. Even these old teachers, too, who are supposed to be molders of character. I wonder what they teach their pupils in their schools these days" (p. 22). It is, however, ironic to note that people do not practice what they teach, thus wearing "masks" to cover up their negative tendencies. It is in the best interest of the play to ridicule this human folly in society in order to engender sanity.

Interrogating Character and Characterization in *Who Can Fight the Gods?*

In the course of undergoing a critical analysis of the characters in the play, the work focuses its analysis on a few characters such as Narrator, Supreme god, Chief Administrator, Director of Maintenance, Dean of Student Affairs and Doctor Lecturer in unraveling their contributions to the development of the plot of the play. This is because the remaining characters are foil or auxiliary to the above-mentioned characters, thus, the selection in analysis.

Narrator: In most Brechtian dramas, the use of a Narrator is necessary. This is because he or she helps to re-enact the dramatic action of the play in form of storytelling. Storytelling technique in drama bears the characteristics of epic play; thus begins with prologue and ends at the epilogue. In the prologue of the play,

the Narrator prepares the minds of the audience to watch the unfolding drama. He says:

> Come on everybody? Think
> About the past and the Future
> Or just listen to my Story
> About money, Power and
> Struggle in the Universities
> In the great kingdom of Ojiso (Okoh, 1999, p. 6)

Going by the above statement, the Narrator has succeeded in telling the audience about what they are, expected to see in the play. However, as the dramatic action progresses, he intermittently comes on stage to narrate the story to the audience. As a storyteller, the Narrator helps to reveal what happens to some characters in the play. It is, through the Narrator that the audience noticed the torture that the Chief Administrator suffered in the hands of the Visitor and the students.

In addition, in the end of the play, the Narrator reassures the audience about their safety in the theatre. He says, "Sit down everybody. Do not be afraid. This is a theatre. You are well protected inside these walls. Let them go and settle their scores in the society. But tell me, you over there! What do you think about the Doctor and the situation in this country and in the Universities in particular?" (Okoh, 1999, p. 85). In the play, the Narrator played the role of an informant, adviser, storyteller and above all, an actor. He contributed to the advancement of the plot of the play as he constantly offered dramatic interludes in the play.

Supreme God: He is the Visitor to the University who was, appointed by the Commander in Chief of the federation. He is a corrupt politician who embezzled the funds of the University. Even when accommodation is available for the Visitor (Supreme god) and his entourage to stay on campus, he chooses to stay in the hotel just to lavish the University's funds. Hear this:

> He loves to stay, in hotel in town,
> Surrounded by his advisers,
> Chamber men, footmen,
> Praise singers and mistresses
> All at the university's expense. (Okoh, 1999, p. 70)

The Supreme god is among the corrupt personalities in the University whose interest is to loot the institution's treasury. He is a wicked man in the play who instigates the students against the Chief Administrator. However, his role in advancing the play's dramatic plot cannot be overstated.

Chief Administrator: He is a good man who has the interest of the University at heart. He believes that funds of the University should not be, spent on irrelevant things. This is demonstrated when he refuses to do the biddings of the Visitor (demigod) who ensures that he pays his hotel bills for him and his entourage. According to the Narrator, he had warned his friend-the Chief Administrator (Mr. Radical) to be careful with the 'gods' on campus but he refused to listen to him and dares them. Narrator says:

> My friend, a foolish man indeed
> Just could not tolerate
> This practice any more
> "This has to stop. It must be stopped"
> He said to me repeatedly.
> "Beware of the wrath of the gods",
> I warned him sincerely.
> Still, Mr. Radical paid no heed.
> So, one day, he was summoned
> Before the supreme demigod (Okoh, 1999, p. 70)

The Chief Administrator is a brilliant scholar and a thoroughgoing social sophisticate who believes in due process and the rule of law. The Narrator calls him "a very brilliant fellow! The kind, rare to find. He went through schools with scholarships" (Okoh, 1999, p. 69). However, the die-hard determination to fight the gods on the University Campus without minding the consequences makes the Chief Administrator looks stupid in the eyes of the Narrator. He calls him "a very foolish man indeed" (p. 68). Again, the testimonial statement of the Narrator came to fruition when the Chief Administrator received the wraths of the gods. The 'gods' instigated the students to violently protest against him and consequently destroyed his property on campus.

Director of Maintenance: He is one of the principle officers in the university in the great kingdom of Ojiso. He is a criminal whose interest is to embezzle the funds of the University. According to the play's narrative, the Director of Maintenance was, commissioned to purchase a brand new Generator at the cost of One Million Naira but rather bought a reconditioned Generator at the sum of Four Hundred Thousand Naira and thus refuses to refund the balance of the money to the University. When Dr. Lecturer threatens to submit his private report about the generator scandal to the council, the Director tells him that it is a waste of time to report the matter to the council, while boasting that the matter will die a natural death. The Director of Maintenance is a man with morally drained attitude. Even as he does not care for the welfare of the University community, he also does not pay proper attention to his family, thus losing his son to cult related killing. Dr. Lecturer tells him that "Sir! They've shot your son!" (Okoh, 1999, p. 61) This reality is because of not equipping the university system with social and educational infrastructure that will encourage quality teaching and learning. The Director of Maintenance is amongst the 'gods' in the University that loot the treasury of the institution. This singular act portrays him as a wicked and corrupt officer of the university who do not mean well for the institution. It is also evident in the play, that he is the husband of Third CWO who does not share his secrets with his wife. More importantly, the Director compromised his conscience. This is, revealed thus:

> THIRD CWO: Oh Damian! Did you hear that? Your father had to compromise. Can you ever forgive him?
> REV. FATHER: Compromise against his conscience? That's unethical! (Okoh, 1999, p. 65)

The Director does not have good moral value and thus engages in illicit activities with other influential members of the university to loot the funds of the institution. While revealing to Dr. Lecturer the unnecessary expenses the university waste on irrelevant protocol every year, he confesses that he used the balance from the purchase of the Generator to settle some powerful people. He says, "The goods must be appeased" (p. 54).

Dean Student Affairs: He is one of the principal officers in the university, who serves as a link between the student union government and the University administration. He is the person that approved the use of the convocation arena for the Catholic Church. Even as Dr. Lecturer refuses the Church congregation to use the arena, it is the Dean that they called his attention to intervene on the matter. This is, revealed when the First CWO says," let's go to the Dean of Student Affairs to settle this matter once and for all" (Okoh, 1999, p. 25). It is at this instance, that the Dean tells Dr. Lecturer "Examinations were officially over yesterday, Saturday". Despite the efforts of the Dean in settling the differences between the Church members and Dr. Lecturer, his corrupt practices in the University dragged his image to the mud. To buttress the alleged corruption against him, Dr. Lecturer tells him "How can the University develop when you believe that it is there for you to exploit for your own personal benefit?" Responding to the allegation, the Dean says" Ah-ah! What's wrong with that? Where also should one seek for benefits if not from one's place of work? Everybody does it (p. 32).

The Dean of Student Affairs is a man of excessive ambition whose interest is to acquire wealth at the detriment of others. He is of the opinion that material wealth is the basis of man's survival in the society; anything else according him is immaterial. He avers, "This is the age of materialism. Anything immaterial is of no value today" (p.36). Similarly, the Dean boastfully tells Dr. Lecturer "to be rich is devilishly interesting. It's tremendously fascinating. It's supremely enjoyable! To succeed in life one must have wealth, at all cost. Yet, it is absolutely necessary" (p. 36). He worked in connivance with other corrupt principal officers that looted the University funds.

Doctor Lecturer: He is one of the radical Lecturers in the University who believes that things must be do properly with, regards to due process and rule of law in the University. In addition, he is one of those that believes that examination can take place any day and anywhere in the university facilities. This is why he slated his examination to hold on Sunday at the convocation arena. It is therefore at this instance, that he refuses the Catholic Church to hold their mass at the same time and venue in the University. Dr. Lecturer fights against injustice and corruption in the University. When he realizes that the Director of maintenance supplied bad generator to the University, he carried out private investigation and consequently

found out that the Director of Maintenance embezzled the University's funds. It was through his investigation, that it came to the public knowledge that the bad Generator was purchase at the rate of Four Hundred Thousand Naira as against the actual approval of the Sum of One Million Naira. Hear this:

> DR. LECTURER**:** The generator was actually discarded by one company in the new industrial layout. A spare-part dealer bought it as scrap for next to nothing. After reconditioning it, he sold it to the university. Do you know for how much?
>
> THE DIRECTOR**:** You tell me.
>
> DR. LECTURER**:** Four hundred thousand naira…My question is where is the remaining money? (Okoh, 1999, p. 52)

The playwright portrays Dr. Lecturer as an ASUU activist who fights for the betterment of the University in particular and the society in general. He tells the Director of Maintenance "Sir, the buildings in this university are all dilapidated. There are no books in the library, no chalk in the classrooms, no constant supply of electricity or even common water for staff and students, yet you want me to believe that you spend the hard to get money on those who are already bloated with excessive fats? (p. 55). While reiterating the position of ASUU in the university system, he lashes the Director thus "Yet when ASUU complains, you shout": ASUU has come again. ASUU, the idealists! Ban ASUU! Kill ASUU! (p. 55)

The character of Dr. Lecturer helps in the development of the dramatic plot in the play. It is through his quest for justice that some hidden activities committed by some principal officers in the university were exposed. He unearths the reckless expenses the Director, the Deans and others did in the University. He also discourages examination malpractices in the university system as he tells the people "These students are cheats… Invigilators… they even collaborate with the students". "Everything prearranged for a fee. I supervise my examinations by myself" (p. 22). He is a man of honour and respect who despite of intimidation by those in power maintains his quest to rid the University of corrupt practices. Again, he has the attitude of forgiving those that disagreed with him. In the end,

he reconciled his differences with the Rev. Father over the use of the arena on Sunday. Their interaction is, stated below:

> DR. LECTURER**:** You mean you don't consider me your enemy?
>
> REV. FATHER**:** You are a man of noble cut, with great intelligence, culture, tenacity and great capacity for work. To some, you may appear somewhat confused and sometimes over demonstrative of rage. But beneath this surface you are lucid, Frank and altruistic. Oh yes, you are very sensitive to the plight of others. However, a kind of moral exactness makes you rather wearisome to those around you (Okoh, 1999, pp. 80-81).

Despite his kind nature in the service of humanity, Dr. Lecturer faces unwarranted intimidation and arrest by his perceived enemies in the University. This is sequel to his fight against corruption and oppression in the system. As the Officers of the State Security Service (SSS) arrest him, he sings thus:

> Why do you stand
> In the way of others
> Fighting to bring sanity
> To the system.
>
> Why do you stand
> In the way of others
> Fighting to save poor folks
> From jail and grave. (Okoh, 1999, p. 83)

The above statement justifies the socio-political reality that characterizes the Nigeria nation. Many people have faced politically motivated arrest and brutality; and consequently died because of fighting for justice and equity for the betterment of the society. This tyrannical attitude in the society has caused unprecedented suppression of 'progressive' voices and thus led others into exile in foreign countries for safety. In most of Nigerian universities, the Vice Chancellors and Pro-

Chancellors assume the position of demigods and thus govern with brute force and outright victimization to any staff and students that criticise their bad conduct in administration. The military-like attitude that engenders corrupt practices in the educational system in Nigeria is what constitutes satire in the play.

Conclusion

In every institutional organization, quality, purposeful and effective leadership styles are necessary ingredients of success, social cohesion, peace and development of such establishment. This is why it is expected of those in leadership position to as a matter of fact provide selfless services devoid of any form of corrupt practices or unnecessary materialistic tendencies. It is on this note that people of integrity are expected to be appointed as pro-chancellors and vice-chancellors amongst other principal officers in the university system as it is shown in the dramatic work of Julie Okoh, titled: *Who can fight the Gods?* Unfortunately, however, in ordinate ambitions in their corrupt natures have thrown the management of the institution into leadership crisis. These principal officers as it is dramatized in the play mentioned above are so powerful that no body dears to question their corrupt behaviour as every attempt to fight or query them will not yield fruitful results thus the rhetorical question – *Who can fight the Gods?* The play establishes the fact that some leaders in the Nigerian educational/institutions are so powerful, influential and autocratic that it becomes difficult for anybody to question, fight and query their ineffective and corrupt leadership attitude that negate peaceful, growth and development in the university system.

Recommendations:

This work studied issues of corruption and leadership crisis in the Nigerian educational sector with detailed emphasis on Julie Okoh's *Who can fight the Gods?* Having carefully examined the situations and factors that contribute to leadership crisis in the play, the researcher puts forward the following recommendations thus:

- The government should appoint persons of reputable character devoid of corrupt tendencies to man the university administration in Nigeria.

- The work is of the opinion that the appointment or nomination of pro-chancellors and vice-chancellors should be done on merit, not as a means of settling the political loyalists and friends.
- It is the kind recommendation of this paper that anti-craft agencies such as Independence Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC), Economic Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) National Drugs Law Agency (NDLA) amongst others should work in synergy with the university administration to monitor, arrest and prosecute offenders.
- It is yet another recommendation of the paper that the Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QAQC) unit of the university system should be proactive in their duty in order to supervise the quality of equipment and physical infrastructure of the university.
- To avoid clash of duty, lecture timetables and classrooms, the university should provide sufficient classrooms/lecture theatre equipped with desks to ease learning difficulties by the students.
- The paper is of the view that religious activities should not take place in the classrooms/lecture theatres or the university arenas. Therefore, the university should provide a place of worship for all and sundry.
- It is revealed that most Christian worshippers do their church activities on Sundays. Therefore, the paper recommends that lectures or examinations should not be encouraged to slat on Sundays to avoid clash of interests both the students and lecturers.
- The procurement unit/department of the university should carefully monitor and supervise the purchase of equipment – generators and other sundry infrastructure of the university to avoid supply and usage of substandard equipment that will be detrimental university environment.

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