

Discourse of the Acts of Violations of Human Rights in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*.

Discours sur les actes de violations des droits humains dans L'hibiscus pourpre de Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

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Abstract

The paper aimed to study how Adichie dramatized issues of human rights violations in her novel in order to make her voice heard and advocate for the restoration of human dignity through 52 statements modeling 8 types of violated rights, including gender-related rights, children's rights, labor rights, the rights to freedom of expression and the press, the right to life, a fair and speedy trial, social protection, and religion. Additionally, 29 acts of violations affecting 38 articles codified in 10 international legal instruments such as the UDHR (1988), CEDAW (1979), DEVAW (1993), CRC (1989), ILO wage protection (1949), ICESCR (1966), ILO occupational health and safety (1949), and ICESCR (1966). These findings call for collective work and the engagement of actors ranging from the family to the state headquarters to help fight evil.

Keywords: Literature, discourse, act of violation, human rights, violation of human rights.

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Résumé

L'article visait à étudier la manière dont Adichie a dramatisé les questions de violations des droits humains dans son roman afin de faire entendre sa voix et de plaider pour la restauration de la dignité humaine à travers 52 énoncés modélisant 8 types de droits violés, y compris les droits liés au genre, les droits de l'enfant, les droits du travail, les droits à la liberté d'expression et de la presse, le droit à la vie, un procès équitable et rapide, la protection sociale et la religion. De plus, 29 actes des violations portant atteinte à 38 articles codifiés dans 10 instruments juridiques internationaux tel que DUDH (1988), CEDAW (1979), DEVAW (1993), CRC (1989), la OIT protection des salaires (1949), PIDESC (1966), OIT- santé et la sécurité au travail (1949) et le PIDESC (1966). Ces résultats appellent à un travail collectif, un engagement des acteurs allant de la famille jusqu'au siège de l'État pour aider à combattre le mal.

Mots-clés : *Littérature, discours, acte de violation, droits de l'homme, violation des droits de l'homme.*

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Introduction

Literature has historically served as a critical instrument for shaping and reflecting on human society. Building on De Bonald, Wellek (1973:95) writes “literature functions as an expression of society.” Similarly, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o says that literature embodies a community’s intellectual and imaginative struggles, reflecting tensions central to its social existence. Literature not only mirrors society but also participates in its transformation. In Africa, literature has consistently functioned as a socially committed art form to help address human existence pressing issues.

Folktales, proverbs, and songs were used to critique wrongdoing and promote communal ethics, while written literature became a tool to resist colonial oppression, expose injustices, and advocate societal reform. Modern African literature is perceived as a media for communication and advocacy for human rights owing victims’ bodies.

One of current issues Adichie raises is human rights, which are moral entitlements and legal claims that every individual possesses simply by virtue of being human. They are tied to humanity and cannot be restricted to privileged groups. The term 'human rights' has to do with human existence and the inherent natural rights he/she is entitled to. Human rights are defined as those inherent rights recognized to each individual or group of people by the fact of being simply human being(s); they include civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. They are universal because they are entitled to human beings irrespective of religion, gender, race, or social class; and they are indivisible because they are interdependent and interrelated due to their cross-cutting character.

Violence “refers to a passionate and uncontrolled force. It is an act of excessive force frequently resulting in the violation of norms, rights or rules. The meaning of violence is often conflated with that of ‘violation’, meaning ‘infringement (Vittorio, 2018) and include “ an extreme form of aggression, such as assault, rape or murder” (American Psychological Association, n.d. cited in Sherry, 2017:7). All violence is violation

The acts of violation or violence include tortures, restriction of liberties, extrajudicial and political imprisonment, widespread of state of terror, violent house raid and destruction of property, attack on civilian peaceful marching , forced external and internal movement of people leading to displace from their natural milieus, attacks against hospital, banks, churches, destroying water pipes, mass killing, raping , repression, , frustration and denigrating statements, **kidnapping ,detention**, killing of human rights defender, forced labor, indecent wages and unequal pay, lack of safe and healthy working conditions by non-state agents (Armed groups, NGOs).

The paper identifies statements discursively modeling the acts of violation , types of rights violated, and types of infringed articles codified in international legal instruments as deduced from the novel and adopts multiple approach to count for discourse-comprehension supported by feminism and Human Rights -Based Approaches

The paper adopts multiple approach theoretical frameworks to count for discourse-comprehension supported by feminism and Human

Rights -Based Approaches . The discourse Comprehension helps examine how 4 literary angles conjugate in the process rendering *Purple Hibiscus* an arsenal denouncing and alerting about the way power abuse affects human rights violation. The consideration of the 4 literary angle calls for the application of formalism , psychological , psychoanalytical, linguistic, pragmatic, reader-response, Marxism , sociological approached to the analysis of literary work.

Presentation of Acts of violation , types of violated rights and the infringed international legal instruments in *Purple Hibiscus*

In *Purple Hibiscus*, twenty-nine acts of violation are discursively described in 52 stretches of languages. These acts violated 8 types of rights: gender-based rights, Child Rights, labor right, freedom of speech and press rights, right to life , right to fair and timely hearing , right to social protection and religious rights consecrated by 38 Articles from 10 International legal instruments.

Acts of violation of Gender-based Rights

Gender-based rights' violation refers to the violation of rights and freedoms that individuals should enjoy irrespective of their gender, ensuring equality and protection. It includes domestic abuse, sexual assault, and harmful traditions.

Seven gender-based acts of violation could be deduced from *Purple Hibiscus*.

Act.1 *“There is blood on the floor, Jaja said. “I’ll get the brush from the bathroom” (p.32). It shows domestic violence in the form of physical and mental torture that Eugene exerted on his wife, Beatrice. It resulted in miscarriage after she was beaten to death that she fell in unconsciousness. Such act of violence is prosecuted by the Article 5 of CEDAW (1979) that “requires all states to eliminate gender-based violence including domestic violence” and the Art.5 of the UDHR (1948) that “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”.*

Act.2 *“There was a lot of blood on the floor, on the walls, on her wrapper after Eugene threw heavy table on her belly” (p.33). Throwing willingly a*

heavy table on the womb of a pregnant woman is a cruel gender based domestic violence also prosecuted by the Article 5 of the CEDAW(1979) that “requires all states to eliminate gender-based violence including domestic violence such as physical , sexual and psychological assaults in the family ” and the Article 2(a) of the Declaration on the Elimination of violence against women (DEVW,1993) and the Article 5 of the UDHR (1948) that “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”.

Act.3 *“Where would I go if I leave Eugene’s house? Tell me, where would I go?” She did not wait for Auntie Ifeoma to respond. Do you know how many mothers pushed their daughters at him? Do you know how many asked him to impregnate them, even, and not to bother paying a bride price”*(p.83). Here, Beatrice is accommodating unconsciously the socially constructed stigma targeting women and presenting them as weak, fragile and emotional creatures. These implied acts of gender-based stereotypes trigger discrimination prosecuted by the Article 5 of Declaration on the Elimination of violence against women (DEVW,1993) that “ All states are required to eliminate gender stereotypes and practices that perpetuate violence”

Act.4 *“You know after you came and I had miscarriages; the villagers started to whisper. The members of Ummuna even sent people to your father to urge him to have children with someone else. So many people had willing daughters, and many of them were university graduates, too.”*(p21). Beatrice is explaining to her daughter, Kambili, how her father’s community members pressurized him to go for a second wife to beget children after Beatrice spent two years in marriage without giving birth. Beatrice is directly accused to be barren, not Eugene while no single medical test was done. It is discriminatory. This community’s position breaks and infringes once again the Article 16(2) of the UDHR and 16(1)(b) of CEDAW.

Act.5 *“Because a man of his stature cannot have just two children?”* (p.83) according to Eugene’s family “ummuna”, meanwhile she miscarried several times due to her husband’s brutality. It is discriminatory against women as if a man has the capacity to have children without a woman. Such act of gender stereotyped humiliation and discrimination against women is prosecuted by the Article 5(a) of CEDAW (1979) that calls for

the elimination of harmful gender stereotypes and cultural norms that degrade women.

Act.6 *"But you are a woman. You do not count."* (p. 83) as Papa Nnukwu is addressing to his daughter, Aunt Ifeoma, saying that Eugene could do better than herself. It is another type of gender-based discrimination that infringes women's rights codified in UDHR and CEDAW legal bound frames. His view on women denotes merely stereotype and lack of women consideration

Act.7 *"See the boy that will inherit his father's riches! If we did not have the same blood in our veins, I would sell you my daughter"* (p.99). A woman saw Jaja and expressed her eagerness to have her daughter getting married to a son of a wealthy man like Eugene. In her mind, she can impose her daughter to get married to any man provided that the pretended candidate has money. Also, the verb "to sell" here shows that the woman considers her daughter as a mere commodity because of the social imposed cultural norms that denigrate women. It is a violation of the Article 16(1) (b) and Article 5 (a) of CEDAW which states that "women and men must have the same rights to freely choose a spouse and enter into marriage only with free and full consent" and Article 5 (a) of CEDAW that "calls for the elimination of harmful cultural practices and stereotypes that place women in subordinate roles".

Acts of violation of child rights

Child rights encompass the fundamental entitlements and protections afforded to children to ensure their well-being, development, and protection from harm. Violation of child rights is therefore about all acts that infringe on a child's well-being, his/her development or any other behavior that harms his/her protection.

Gokce (2016) justifies why children should be protected as he says:
"I believe the future of our world, which is the children, depends on every one of us. Each of us should take responsibility to make things better for each other."

Seven Acts of violation of child rights could be deducted in PHS.

Act.1 *"...the burning on my feet was climbing up, in swift courses of excruciating pain, to my head and lips and eyes. Papa was holding me*

with one wide hand, pouring the water carefully with the other. I did not know that the sobbing voice— “I’m sorry! I’m sorry! —was mine until the water stopped... Papa put the kettle down, wiped at his eyes... the skin of my feet would peel off if I tried to step out of the tub” (p.201). This shows what happened to Kambili when her father poured hot water throughout her naked body simply because she ate food during the fasting day. Actually, she had to take Panadol that could help her sustain her pain caused by menstrual period as her mother advised. Such an act is mere infringement of child rights to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse as stipulated in Art.5 of the UDHR and Art.19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989).

Act.2 *“Papa flung his heavy missal across the room. It landed on Jaja’s shoulder.”* (p.6). Eugene attacks the physical integrity of his son, Jaja, an act that attacks the child right to protection from violence as recommended and signed in the UDHR (Art.5) and UNCRC (Art.19) legal bound frames.

Act. 3 *“Kambili Achike?” Mother Lucy and the rest of the school had turned to stare at me. I cleared my throat, willed the words to come. I knew them, thought them. But they would not come. The sweat was warm and wet under my arms. “Kambili”. Finally, stuttering, I said “I pledge to Nigeria, my Country/To be faithful, loyal and honest....” Chinwe just wants you to talk to her first, “Ezinne whispered. “You know, she started calling you backyard snob because you don’t talk to anybody. She said just because your father owns a newspaper and all that* (p.51).

Kambili and her peers are traumatized by teacher Lucy in the classroom. The phrase “Kambili Achike?” recapitulates Mother Lucy’s mood as she addresses Kambili. She cannot speak with a lovely tone to make her feel comfortable while responding to her question. It is also a kind of interpellation that if Kambili fails she might get serious punishment which does not spare body coercion prosecuted by Article 19 (1) &39 of the UNCRC that stipulate: “States parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect of maltreatment,”

Act.4 *“Kambili”. Finally, stuttering, I said “I pledge to Nigeria, my Country/To be faithful, loyal and honest...”* (p.51). It shows the way fear blocks Kambili from speaking audibly. The colonial educational system in which she studies is oppressive and exerts terror among pupils which infringes

children's right to good education and development consecrated by the Art.28 &29 of the UNCRC.

Act.5 "We always spoke with a purpose, never for the sake of speaking, said Kambili" (p.16).). It is uttered by Kambili to describe her fear and lack of freedom to express her thoughts and feelings guaranteed in Article 12 of the UNCRC.

Act.6 *"I could move more body parts than I told the doctor... Even the hot pain in my head had lessened. But I told the doctor it was as bad as before and I screamed when he tried to feel my side. I did not want to leave the hospital. I did not want to go home"* (p.221). After her recovery, Kambili preferred staying in the hospital rather than returning to her family which is considered a poisonous environment harmful to a child development. She is scared ; she misses peace. It is an infringement of her right to security of person including the psychological security and freedom from fear or oppressive conditions as stated in Art.3 of the UDHR and Art. 19(1) of the UNCRC stipulating that "Education of the children shall be directed to.... the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of peace, tolerance and equality"

Act.7 *"We could not visit Papa-Nnukwu, we could not even talk about him."* (p.67) disclaims a violation act against children right to family life consecrated in Article 9&16 of the UNCRC. By isolating Kambili and Jaja from their extended family, Eugene violates their "right to family connection "(ChatGP).

Acts of Violation of Labor Rights

Labor rights include fair wages, safe working conditions, the right to organize and bargain collectively, and protection against discrimination all comprise labor rights. In Nigeria, concerns about the violation of labor rights persist (Nwokpoku et al., 2018).

Nine Acts of violation of labor rights could be deduced in PHS.

Act.1 *"[...] Some people left their cars in the station because they did not have enough fuel to drive back home. If you could see the mosquitoes that bit me that night, eh, the bumps on my skin were as big as cashew nuts."* "Oh" Mama shook her head sympathetically" (p.77). Ifeoma shows how life became tough due to the Nigerian military government failure to pay public workers' salaries who, consequently, could not meet their needs such as buying oil for their cars. Such an act violates the Article 12 of

ILO Protection of wages Convention (1949) according to which “ states must pay wages regularly and without justification of delay”. Even hygienic working conditions in the university were not met by the government as read in the conditional phrase “if you could see the mosquitoes that bit me that night, eh, the bumps on my skin were as big as cashew nuts” which implies the violation of Article 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966) that recognizes the right to every one to just and favorable conditions of work , including fair wages.

Act.2 *“An earthworm was slithering in the bathtub, near the drain, when I went in to take a bath in the morning. The purplish-brown body contrasted with the whiteness of the tub. The pipes were old... and every rainy season, earthworms made their way into the bathtub. Aunty Ifeoma had written the works department about the pipes, but, of course, it would take ages before anybody did anything about them”* (p.237). It also shows the dilapidated infrastructures in which Nsuka University professors are accommodated where they have no water and electricity as it is the case for Aunty Ifeoma’s house where family members cannot use washrooms due to water shortage on campus. Such working condition violates labor right to safe and hygienic workplaces consecrated in Article 16 of ILO Occupational safety and health Convention (1981) (N° 187) according to which “ governments must assure that workplaces are safe and meet hygiene standards to protect worker’s health”.

Act.3 *“Aunty Ifeoma had written about the works of the department, about the pipes, but, of course, it would take ages before anybody did anything about them”* (p.237). These narrators complain show the breach of right to just and fair working condition by the Nigerian government regarding the preoccupying issue related to healthy working condition of workers which violates again Article 16 of ILO Occupational safety and health Convention (1981) (N° 187).

Act.4 *“Ask that girl to bring more bottled juice”* (p.106). Eugene addresses Sisi , the house worker in a humiliating and discriminative manner because of her social class and female gender. He uses derogatory verbal term belittling and dehumanizing Sisi as a maid. He deliberately refuses to address her by her name. He relegates her to the demeaning status of "that girl that deduces the infringement of labor right related Article 2(2) of International Covenant on Economic , Social and Cultural Rights

(ICESCR, 1966) that prohibits discrimination based on social class , sex , origin or any other status.

Act.5 *“People are dying in the teaching hospital because Doctors are on strike. They have not been paid in months.”* (p.208). Auntie Ifeoma is complaining against the Nigerian governments denial to pay health professionals whose strike led to a high rate of patient’s death cases in hospitals which is a violation of Article 23 of the UDHR and Article 6 & 8 of the (ICESCR, 1966) that postulates : “Everyone, without discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work”.

Act.6 *“They have not paid our salaries for months. How are we expected to survive?”* (p.144). It showcases the infringement of the right to equal pay for equal jobs prosecuted by Article 7(a)(i) of ICESCR that “recognizes the right of everyone to fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value” . The Use of the 2nd person plural “we” in the phrase “How are we expected to survive?” and the possessive adjective “our” in the phrase “They have not paid our salaries for months” indicate a collective claim of all workers in general and the University teachers in particular.

Act.7 *“How are things generally at the university, though?” . “We just called off yet another strike, even though no lecturer has been paid for the last two months. They tell us the federal government has no money.”* (p.77). It is another speech act illustrating the violation of the right to equal pay for equal Job as depicted in Adichie’s narrative to question the postcolonial African workers’ condition which also violates Article 7(a)(i) of ICESCR (1966).

Act.8 *“Papa had fired the gardener last month for laughing too loudly* (p.33). It is an act of violation of the right of workers. The fact of firing from job irrespective of administrative measures and procedures consecrated in Articles 4& 7of ILO Termination of Employment Convention (1982) (N*158) consecutively according to which “ An employer cannot terminate worker’s contract without valid reason related to their conduct, capacity, or operational needs” and “ the worker has right to defend themselves before dismissal”

Act.9 *“Papa sucked the gardener last week.... he said he didn’t sweep well”*(p.27). Eugene did not provide enough cleaning material and did not offer the victim space for expressing herself before sacking her out her job which also violates Articles 4& 7of ILO Termination of Employment Convention (1982) (N*158).

Acts of violation of freedom of speech and the press.

The right to freedom of speech and the press is a fundamental human right that protects individuals' and journalists' freedom to express their opinions, thoughts, and ideas without censorship or restraint.

Twelve acts of violation of the right to freedom of speech and the press could be deducted in PHS. These violations are perpetrated by the family and government apparatuses.

Act.1 *“Mama was going to say something, but then she stopped, her hand flew to her mouth, and she hurried into her room”* (p.27). Beatrice is suffocated by her husband's dictatorship. She has no right to speak her mind because the patriarchal community in which she lives considers it a misconduct. It is a violation of her right to freedom of speech guaranteed by the Article 19 of both the UDHR and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that stipulates that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Act.2 *“Let me stay in the car, biko....” I feel vomit in my throat [...] I'll come with. It's not really that bad”* (p. 29). Eugene silenced Beatrice who expressed her pain as they were on their way to visit Father Benedict after mass. Eugene has even insisted that she must show Father Benedict that she is okay. It is another violation of Article 19 of both the UDHR and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that stipulates that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Act.3 *“I asked if you were sure you wanted to stay in the car”* (p.29). Eugene knows that her wife is suffering, and he does not want to listen to her as if visiting father Benedict was urgent than his wife's health situation. Denying listening to her and imposing her something harmful to her health violates Article 19 of both the UDHR and ICCPR that stipulates that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Act.4 *“You don't look well.”. I'm fine Father. It is only my allergies because of the weather.”* (p.30). It shows clearly the way Beatrice cannot even voice up to express the pain she is feeling. She must pretend she is feeling well just to please her husband's request and tyranny. As an act of violation, her right of freedom of expression also consecrated by Article 19 of both the UDHR and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

(ICCPR) that stipulates that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Act.5 “*Mama said nothing. She simply slipped out of the room.*.(p.29)” Beatrice could not react when Eugene threw a missile on her. When she allowed Kambili to eat little food in order to take Panadol due to her paining menstrual period during a fasting day. The fact that Beatrice could not argue indicates the violation of her freedom to express herself prosecuted by the Article 19 of both the UDHR and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that stipulates that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. She had just to enter her sleeping room because that is the way she was brought up in cultural norms which prohibited a woman from expressing her protest against dehumanization, which is , at once, a severe form of domestic violence and gender-based oppression whose main purpose is to silence and control women.

Act.6 “*She spoke the way a bird might in a whisper, in little bursts*” (p.20). This elliptic simile compares Beatrice’s way of speaking to that of a whispering bird due to the accumulation of trauma caused by domestic violence exerted on her by her husband, Eugene. Such a Cultural norm violates 19 of both the UDHR and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that stipulates that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Act.7 “*The silence was heavy, suffocating. It hung over us like the humid air before storm*” (p.16). It shows the will to communicate one’s mind and feeling but she could not. She is completely silenced by her father’s autocracy, and which violates Article 19 of both the UDHR and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that stipulates that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Act.8 “*Ifeoma was told she would have to leave. Not because she wasn’t good at her job, but because she spoke the truth*” (p.218).). She was the representative of Nsukka university teachers’ syndicate who were agitating for better payment from the government, but the latter sucked her from the university for having been the voice of the marginalized. Here, the government’s acts violate two rights of workers including the freedom of speech and the right to one’s salary consecrated consecutively by the Article 19 of the UDHR and the ILO Convention No.158-Termination of Employment Convention (1982) and

- Act.9** “*They said I am a troublemaker because I spoke out at the staff meeting*” (p.146). Ifeoma is threatened to be dismissed from her teaching position at the University of Nsuka because of speaking out to claim her right. The act of threatening her is a double violation of the right to freedom of speech guaranteed by Article 19 of the UDHR and ICCPR but also that of being paid equal pay for equal work consecrated by Article 23 (2) of the UDHR and Article 7 (a) (i) of ICESCR.
- Act.10** “*They said they might be fired. They said your name is on it*” (p.227). It shows that Ifeoma is the most targeted victim of the government decision because she is the spokeswoman of the marginalized workers. The objective of the government is to stop her from expressing her opinion which violates the Article 19 of both the UDHR and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that stipulates that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- Act.11** “*They closed the standard again ... they said it was for spreading falsehood* (p.39). The Nigerian government infringes freedom of press right by closing Eugene journal, The standard. Banning journalism is the governmental strategy to suppress the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds consecrated in the Article 19(2) of ICCPR(1966), and the UN Human Rights Council Resolution of 21/12/2012 that “affirms that freedom of expression applies online and offline, and journalists must be protected from threats and repression.”
- St.12** “*They took Ade Coker. He was arrested last night.*” (p.42). These are acts of intimidation . They violate freedom of press consecrated in the Article 19(2) of ICCPR(1966), and the UN Human Rights Council Resolution of 21/12/2012 that “affirms that freedom of expression applies online and offline, and journalists must be protected from threats and repression.”

Acts of violations of the right to life

The right to life is a fundamental human right that protects individuals from being arbitrarily deprived of their lives. It acknowledges that life is a fundamental aspect of human existence and is worthy of protection. Governments and other entities are obligated to take measures to protect individuals from arbitrary deprivation

Five acts of violation of the right to life could be pointed out in PHS. Out of the 4 killing cases suppressing right to life, 2 are committed

by Eugene representing family nexus power and the other 2 by the Nigerian soldiers ordered by the head of state representing the political power in the narrative.

Act.1 *“Papa died yesterday”* (p.287), Kambili said. Her speech sounds like a celebration of the death of her father. This death which was plotted by both Sisi the cook and his wife, Beatrice who put poison in his food. This conspiracy is a violation of his right to life consecrated in the Article 11(1) of the UDHR and Article 14(2) ICCPR that stipulate: “Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall have the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law...”.

Act.2 *“There was so much blood on the floor, on the walls, on her wrapper [papa had thrown his missal at her]”* (p.33). It implies the condition that preceded the death of the child from his /her mother’s womb after Eugene threw a heavy table on her belly. It is an act violating the Article 6 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) which affirms that the child, before as well as after birth, needs special protection.

Act.3 *“She had a miscarriage. The third one.”* (p.34). It is a violation of child right to life consecrated by the Article 3 of the UDHR that “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person”

Act.4 *“Nwakiti Ogechi, a first -year student, was killed by a stray bullet during a peaceful protest. The police claimed it was an accident”* (p.199). The journalist Ade Coker denounced Nwakiti Ogechi’s murder after she was shot dead by the Nigerian government during a protest. It is a serious infringement of the right to life prosecuted by Article 11(1) of the UDHR and Article 14(2) of the ICCPR.

Act.5 *“Ade Coker opened the package, and the bomb exploded. He died instantly.”* (p.208). It shows the way Ade Coker was murdered by the Nigerian government officials after they send him a package that was containing a bomb that killed him after explosion. It is an act violating the right to life consecrated by the Article 6 of ICCPR that “no one shall be arbitrarily deprive of life” and the Article 19 that protects the freedom of expression.

Acts of violations of the Right to fair and timely hearing

The right to fair hearing is a fundamental human right that ensures that individuals are given a fair and impartial opportunity to present their case before a competent and independent court. It is a cornerstone of

justice and a crucial element in the protection of human rights and contributes to the protection of individuals from arbitrary actions by the state or other entities.

Two acts of violation of the right to fair hearing could be pointed in PHS

Act.1 *“Jaja has been in prison for almost three years now, and the trial has been constantly postponed. Jaja’s official status, all this time, has been Awaiting Trial”*(p. 293). It shows lack of fair and timely hearing of which Jaja is victim. He has been kept in prison for a case for which he was responsible and then stayed in prison without fair investigation into his case that denotes injustice and state dysfunction. He was falsely accused to have killed his father and yet the latter was murdered by his mother, Beatrice. This injustice is an act that violates Article 10 of the UDHR and Article 14(3)(c) of the ICCPR.

Act.2 *“Sometimes, I look at him and cry, and he shrugs and tells me that Oladipupo, the chief of his cell, have a system of hierarchy in the cells—has been awaiting trial for eight years. (p. 303-304).”* Oladipupo is also the 2nd victim of injustice in terms of fair and timely hearing as he had been awaiting trial for 8 years which is similarly punished by Article 10 of UDHR and Article 14(3) (c) of the ICCPR.

Acts of violation of rights to social protection

The right to social protection is a fundamental human right that emphasizes the need for individuals to have access to social security measures and support systems, particularly during vulnerable times such as unemployment, sickness, disability, maternity, old age, or lack of livelihood. Social protection is a key component of a just and equitable society, aiming to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their socio-economic status, can live a dignified life. It encompasses various forms of assistance, including social insurance, social assistance, and labor market policies.

Three Acts of violation of the right to social protection are in PHS.

St.1*“I laughed because Nsukka’s untarred roads coat cars with dust in the harmattan and with sticky mud in the rain season. Because the tarred roads spring potholes like surprise presents and the air smell of hills and history and sunlight scatters the sand and turns it into gold dust. Because*

Nsukka could free something deep inside your belly that would rise up to your throat and come out as freedom song. (p.207). The bad road conditions affect human life conditions that violates their social protection consecrated by Article 22& 25 of the UDHR international legal frame.

Act.2“*What was the riot about? Jaja asked. Light and water, Obiora said, and I looked at him. There were no light and no water for a month”, Aunt Ifeoma added. The students said they could not study and asked if exams could be rescheduled, but they were refused*” (p.131). It is a sharp criticism against the Nigerian government for having failed to secure water and electricity to their people which are basic needs in the modern era, and which denounces the violation of people’s right to social protection protected by the Article 22& 25 of the UDHR

Act.3“*Aunty, there’s no water to flush the toilet. “Yes”. Our water only runs in the morning, Odi eggwu. So, we don’t’ flush when we urinate, only when there is something to flush. Or sometimes, when the water does not run for a few days, we just close the lid until everybody has gone and then we flush with one bucked*” (p.121) . It shows the precarity of sanitary condition for both students and government workers. Failing to provide electricity prevents students from preparing adequately their exams, which is an infringement of their right to education because the right to social protection consecrated by the Article 25 of UDHR which recognizes the “right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being (food, housing, medical care and social services)” that have to be met by the government.

Acts of violation of Religious Rights

Religious rights encompass the freedom to practice, worship, and express one's faith without discrimination or coercion. Although Christianity and Islam are the two major religions in Nigeria as relics of colonialism, there also exist other religions, such as diverse forms of traditional religions, one of which Papa Nnukwu adheres and belongs to.

In PHS, religious right violations are manifested through the conflict between colonial influences, traditional beliefs, and individual autonomy. The clash between indigenous, cultural values and Western imposition is vividly portrayed in the novel.

Seven acts of violating religious rights could be pointed out in PHS.

Act.1 *“He is a heathen! [...] He refuses to turn away from the devil.”* (p.68).

Eugene declaration shows his religious extremism and discriminative character against whoever is not of catholic faith. The phrase “he is a heathen” is discriminative against the African traditional faith which violates the Article 18 of the UDHR (1948), Article 18(1) ICCPR (1966) and the Article 8 of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (1981) stipulating that “everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion”.

Act.2 *“You may greet him, but you will not eat or drink in his house.”* (p.68).

Eugene is telling his kids do not eat or drink in his father’s house because of his religious belief that he extends to his own children. Actually, the children wanted to go and visit their grandfather in Abba. And before going, Jaja asked his father about the conduct of discipline once in their grandfather’s house. Their father said, “but you will not eat or drink in his house”. Refusing them to eat or drink in grandfather’s house is a sign of religious discrimination and social distancing that violates Article 18 that protects freedom of religion or belief, including the right to change religion and Article 2&26 of ICCPR (1966) that prohibit religious discrimination and endure equal protection under law.

Act.3 *“Has the devil built a tent in my house?” he turned to Mama. “You sit there*

and watch her desecrate the Eucharistic fast, maka nnidi?” (p.102). It shows Eugene’s tyranny and imposition. His daughter, Kambili, is sick and is forced to fast ignoring her right to choose a religious belief. His own people are referred to as devils which violates Article 14 of Convention for the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) that protects the child’s freedom of religion, including the protection from religious coercion.

Act.4 *“He cannot sleep in my house. He is a pagan.”* (p70), Eugene’s talk to

his own father. He lacks religious tolerance which pushes him into the violation of his father’s right to religious choice recognized by the Article 18 of ICCPR (1966) that protects freedom of religion or belief

Act.5 *“What is Anikwenwa doing in my house? What is a worshiper of idols*

doing in my house? Leave my house! Do you know that I am in your father’s age group, Igbo, the old man asked” (p.71). It is another case of religious discrimination which violate Anikwenwa’s right to choose his own religion recognized by the Article 18 of ICCPR (1966). Anikwenwa is an old man from Abba who is a traditionalist. He was chanced by Eugene

simply because he set his feet in his compound and yet he was not of t Christian faith. For Eugene, whoever is not of catholic faith is an idol.

Act.6 “We are not allowed to come here after we’ve greeted him” Jaja said. What kind of non-sense is that, eh?”. (p.81). Eugene does not want his children to keep faith in their grandfather’s religion. In the phrase “What kind of non-sense is that, eh?”. (p.81), Ifeoma is telling Jaja and Kambili that their father has exaggerated. Such religious discrimination against his own father is a violation prosecuted by Article 18 of ICCPR (1966).

Table 1. Synopsis view of violated acts frequency, types or act of violation, and violated articles codified in international legal instruments in Purple Hibiscus

Rights violated		Frequency of rights violated	Types Acts of Violation	International articles violated
1	Gender-based rights	7	1.Domestic violence: mental and physical torture of Beatrice (p.32,33)	1. Art.5 of CEDAW (1979) 2. Art.5 of UDHR (1948)
			2.Throwing consciously a heavy table on the womb of a pregnant woman(p.83)	1.Art.5 CEDAW (1979) 2.Art.2(a) Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVW,1993) 3.Art.5 of UDH(1948)
			3.Gender-based Stereotyped stigma of Beatrice by ‘Ummuna(family)’ over her lack of child’ (p.83,21)	1.Art.5 of DEVW (1993) 2.Art.16(1) CEDAW(1979) 3.Art.16(2) UDHR(1948)
			4. Considering girls as commodities	1.Art.5(a) &16(1) of CEDAW(1979)
2	Child Rights	7	1.Pouring hot water on the naked body of Kambili by her father as punishment (p.201)	1.Art.5 of UDHR (1948) 2.Art.19 UNCRC (1989)
			2.Attacking the physical integrity of	1.Art.5, 19, 28 &29 of UNCRC

Rights violated		Frequency of rights violated	Types Acts of Violation	International articles violated
			Jaja by his father Eugene (p.6)	
			3. Traumatizing Kambili and peers in the classroom by teacher Lucy (p.51)	1.Art.19(1) &39 UNCRC
			4. Oppressing and causing terror to the child Kambili by her father Eugene(p.221)	1.Art.3 of UDHR (1948) 2.Art.19 of UNCRC
			5.Denying children to access their family (p.67)	1.Art.9&10 UNCRC
3	Labor Rights	9	1. Government failure to pay public workers' salaries and maintain them in less hygienic condition(p.72,77)	1.Art.12 ILO Protection of wages Convention 1949) 2.Art.7 of ICESCR (1966)
			2. Professors and students are accommodated in dilapidated infrastructures (p.237)	1.Art.16 of ILO Occupational and health Convention (1981) (N*187)
			3.Racial discrimination against a child :accusing Dike to have hacked the school computer because he is a black child (p351)	2.Art. 2(1) of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC,1989)
			4.Humiliation and discrimination of house workers (Sisi) by Eugene based on her social class and gender (p.106)	Art.2(2) ICESCR (1966)
			5.Deaths of patients because medical staff were on strike (p208)	Art. 23 of UDHR (1948) Art.6&8 of ICESCR (1966)/

Rights violated		Frequency of rights violated	Types Acts of Violation	International articles violated
4	Right to freedom of speech and press	12	6. Not paying workers equal work for equal salary (p144 & 77)	Art.7 (a)(i) ICESCR (1966)
			7. Firing illegally workers (p.27)	Art.4&7 ILO Termination of Employment Convention (1982) (N*158)
			1. Suffocating silence imposed on Beatrice by Eugene (p.27) 2. silencing Beatrice from expressing and voice against her body pain inflicted on her (p.16,29, 30)	.Art.Art.19 of UDHR (1948) Art.19 of ICCPR (1966)
			3. Intimidating and silencing Ifeoma and other workers from claiming their salaries (p.218) 4. Circulating the list of protestors to be submitted to the government for firing them from job(p227)	Art.Art.19 of UDHR (1948) Art.19 of ICCPR (1966) Art. 19 UDHR (1948) ILO Termination of Employment Convention (1982) (N*158)
			5. Threatening Ifeoma to get her dismissed from her teaching position because of voicing against public workers exploitation by the government (p.146,227)	1. Art.19 of UDHR (1948) 2. Art. 7 (a)(i) & 19 ICESCR (1966) 3. Art.23 (2) of UDHR(1948)
			6. Banning the Standard journal and arresting the journalist Ade coke (p.39,42)	1. Art. 19(2) ICCPR(1966) 2. UN Human Right Council Resolution 21 /12/2012
5	Right to life	5	1. Killing of Eugene plotted by his family members due to his	1. Art.11(1) UDHR (1948) 2. Art.14(2) ICCPR (1966)

Rights violated		Frequency of rights violated	Types Acts of Violation	International articles violated
			tyranny(P.287,p33, 199)	
			2.Killing of 3 unborn children in the womb of Beatrice by because of domestic violence (p.208)	3.Preamble and Art.6 of UNCRC (1989) Art.6 ICCPR (1966)
6	Right to fair and timely hearing	2	1. Lack of timely hearing and illegal imprisonment of Jaja and Odilapupo.(p.293,303,304)	1.Art. 10 of UDHR (1948) 2.Art.14(3)(c)(c) of ICCPR (1966)
7	Right to social protection	3	1.Government failure to amend roads that cause people to become sick (p.207) 2.Government failure to secure water and electricity to Citizens (p.131)	Art.22&25 UDHR (1948).
8	Religious rights	7	1.Religious extremism and discrimination pushing Eugene to ill-treat his daughter because of cutting down fasting and yet she was sick (p68). 2. Religious tyranny and imposition of Catholicism (p.102)	1.Art.18 of UDHR (1948) 2.Art.18(1) , 2, & 26 of ICCPR (1966) Art.14 of UNCRC (1989)
			3. lack of religious tolerance (p.70,71,80)	Art.18 of ICCPR (1966)

Rights violated	Frequency of rights violated	Types Acts of Violation	International articles violated
Total : 8 types of rights violated	Total : 52 stretches of the discourse of HRvs	Total of violation acts= 29	In total 38 articles of 10 violated International legal instruments were deduced from the Novel :UDHR of 1948 (Art.5,16,3,23,19,11,10,22,25,18), CEDAW(Art.5&16), DEVW(Art.2&5), UNCRC(Art.19,28,29,39,2,14,9,10),ILO Protection of wages Convention (Art.12), ILO Occupational and health Convention (Art.16), ILO Termination of Employment Convention (Art.4&7), ICESCR (Art.7,2,6,8,19), UN Human Right Council Resolution of 21/12/2012 and ICCPR(Art.14,6,14,18,).

Conclusion

The paper intended to study the way Adichie dramatized human rights violations issues in her novel to launch advocacy for the restoration of human dignity. Specific objectives consisted of identifying statements or propositions discursively modeling acts of violation, types of violated rights and types of infringed international legal instruments in the narrative. Multiple approach theoretical framework was adopted to count for discourse-comprehension approach supported by feminism and Human Rights -Based Approaches.

The analysis showed 8 types of violations of rights including gender-based rights, Child Rights, labor right, freedom of speech and press rights, right to life, right to fair and timely hearing, right to social protection and religious rights. These rights violated were consecrated by 38 Articles from 10 International legal instruments including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR,1988), Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women

(CEDAW,1979), Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEW, 1993), United Nations Convention for the Right of Child (UNCRC, 1989,), International Labor Organization -Protection of wages Convention (1949), : International Covenant for Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966), International Labor Organization-Occupational and health Convention (1949) and International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR,1966). The discursive mobilization of this international legal instrument appears to be Adichie's commitment to the engaged role of literature by playing interface for the implementation of International Human Rights Law for a complete restoration of human dignity .

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