



FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES

**AN EXAMINATION OF THE THEME OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION IN
THE NOVEL FOOTPRINTS OF THE OUTSIDER VERSUS THE
COMMUNITY OF KALAKI DISTRICT IN TESO SUB-REGION**

BY

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES
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STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my original work, and its contents have not partially or wholly been presented for an academic award by any person in any university or institution of high learning.

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DEDICATION

In a special way, I give thanks to God Almighty for the far he has brought me through my academic career due to His mightness and grace. Thank you, Lord. A strong appreciation goes to my dear parents **Mr. Opilo Samson and Mrs. Apolot Hellen** and **Papa David Kabonge , Aunt Christine, Aunt Dayana, Uncle Israel and the entire Uganda Christian Outreach Ministries (UCOM) organization.** I really appreciate you so much for the support, it has been your effort that I have reached this level and not forgetting my department lecturers; **Head Of .Department (H.O.D) Dr. Shira Tendo Namagero, Madam Nakazinga Rachael and Mr . Olowo Vitalis** for the support they have given me during my academic journey. To **Dr. Tendo Shira and Madam Nakazinga Recheal** as my supervisors in this course, I am very grateful for the hard work you put into this study and the sacrifices that you made to see that I finish this work. Thank you very much for your endless support, motivation and encouragement through continuous guidance. It enabled me to work effortlessly to accomplish this report. Thank you for always availing yourself to see this work progressing. May God bless you more wisdom to serve nations. I further appreciate my coursemates; Opombo Emmanuel, Odeke David, Atai Betty, Batuli Brian and Asere Docus for the great support they rendered to me during the time of my research. Thank you very much, may the Almighty God bless you.

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SUMMARY

This study examines political corruption in Julius Ocwinyo's *Footprints of the Outsider* and compares it with realities in Kalaki District. Corruption, defined as the misuse of public office for personal gain, is presented in the novel as a systemic force that undermines justice and development, and this mirrors the frustrations of Kalaki residents.

In the novel, corruption is embodied by Hon. Mike Adoli-Awal, a Member of Parliament who manipulates institutions to secure his dominance. When Abudu Olwit, the protagonist, returns from Makerere University with ambitions to serve his community, Adoli-Awal fabricates charges against him, resulting in Olwit's imprisonment in Luzira Prison. This episode illustrates how corruption weaponizes the justice system to silence reformers. Patronage networks further sustain corruption, as Adoli-Awal distributes favors and intimidates opponents, dividing communities into beneficiaries and victims.

Kalaki District has faced similar realities. In 2024, district officials were investigated for failing to account for development funds, leaving projects incomplete. In 2022, the State House AntiCorruption Unit uncovered embezzlement of water project funds and inflated payrolls with ghost workers, costing millions of shillings. These scandals deprived citizens of clean water, education, and healthcare, echoing the novel's depiction of leaders who prioritize personal enrichment over communal welfare.

The impact of corruption is clear in both contexts. Olwit's imprisonment symbolizes how corruption destroys individual potential, while Kalaki's ghost workers erode trust in institutions. Patronage in the novel fractures communities, just as mismanagement in Kalaki fosters cynicism and weakens democratic participation.

Ocwinyo's narrative functions as civic education, dramatizing the consequences of corruption and inspiring reflection. For Kalaki residents, the novel resonates as a cautionary tale, encouraging demands for accountability and ethical leadership. Both the fictional and real contexts affirm corruption as a barrier to justice and development, but also highlight the potential for resistance and reform.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Political corruption remains one of the most destructive forces undermining governance, democracy, and social trust in Uganda. It is generally understood as the misuse of public office, authority, or entrusted power for private gain, often at the expense of the wider public. This misuse manifests in a variety of forms including bribery, embezzlement of public funds, nepotism, favoritism, abuse of office, electoral malpractice, and the operation of patronage networks that prioritize loyalty over competence. Over time, corruption has evolved from isolated acts of misconduct into deeply entrenched systemic practices that influence how institutions function and how opportunities are distributed.

In Uganda, corruption has become a persistent and complex challenge affecting both national and local government structures. It undermines institutional effectiveness, weakens accountability mechanisms, and distorts development priorities. Public resources that are intended to improve the welfare of citizens are frequently diverted for personal enrichment, resulting in poor service delivery and increasing socio-economic inequalities. The erosion of public trust in government institutions has further contributed to citizen disengagement and skepticism toward leadership.

The impact of corruption is particularly severe at the grassroots level, where citizens directly depend on government services for survival and well-being. In districts such as Kalaki District, corruption is reflected in the mismanagement of development funds, irregularities in payroll systems, and manipulation of recruitment processes. These practices have farreaching consequences, affecting access to essential services such as healthcare, education, water supply, and employment opportunities. As a result, corruption is not merely an abstract political issue but a lived reality that shapes the daily experiences of individuals and communities.

Literature has historically served as a powerful tool for reflecting and critiquing societal issues. Through storytelling, authors are able to capture the complexities of human experience and expose the underlying structures that shape social realities. Literary works often highlight injustices, challenge dominant narratives, and provide alternative perspectives on issues such as power, inequality, and corruption. In this way, literature functions not only as a form of artistic expression but also as a medium for social critique and awareness.

Julius Ocwinyo's *Footprints of the Outsider* (2002) provides a compelling exploration of the theme of political corruption and its impact on individuals and society. The novel portrays a world in which corruption is deeply embedded within political and social structures, influencing relationships, opportunities, and life outcomes. Through the experiences of the protagonist, Abudu Olwit, the narrative reveals how individuals who lack access to power and patronage networks are marginalized and excluded.

Abudu Olwit's struggles are emblematic of the broader experiences of individuals living in corrupt systems. Despite his intelligence and potential, he is denied opportunities because of entrenched systems that favor those with connections and influence. His mother, Alicinora, represents the vulnerability of marginalized individuals who suffer the consequences of systemic inequality, while characters such as Adoli Awa illustrate how personal ambition is often intertwined with corrupt political practices.

These fictional experiences closely mirror real-life situations in Kalaki District, where corruption has had significant implications for service delivery and social welfare. In 2022, the State House Anti-Corruption Unit (SHACU) arrested district officials including Mr. Okanya Simon (PHRO), Mr. Okello Micheal (IA), and Mr. Oonyu Charles (HRO) for embezzling UGX 390 million intended for a piped water project and inflating the district payroll by UGX 500 million. Such actions deprived communities of essential services and diverted resources meant for development.

Similarly, in 2025, the Uganda Radio Network (URN) reported that officials of the Kalaki District Service Commission were under investigation for extorting money from job applicants seeking positions in the education and health sectors. This practice not only undermines meritbased recruitment but also perpetuates inequality by excluding individuals who are unable to pay bribes.

The parallels between the fictional narrative in *Footprints of the Outsider* and the lived realities in Kalaki District highlight the relevance of literature as a lens through which societal issues can be examined. By comparing literary representation with real-life experiences, this study seeks to demonstrate that literature reflects, interprets, and critiques the social realities of corruption.

1.1 Background to the Study

Corruption in Uganda has a long and complex history, shaped by political, economic, and institutional factors. Since the early 2000s, corruption has increasingly become embedded within governance structures, particularly through patronage systems that influence access to resources and opportunities. These systems have been reinforced by weak accountability mechanisms, limited transparency, and challenges in enforcing anti-corruption laws.

The introduction of decentralization policies aimed at improving service delivery brought governance closer to local communities. However, it also created new opportunities for corruption at district and sub-county levels. Local governments were entrusted with managing significant public resources, but oversight mechanisms were often insufficient, allowing corruption to flourish.

Between 2005 and 2015, Uganda experienced numerous corruption scandals involving procurement irregularities, embezzlement of funds, and abuse of office. Reports from the Auditor General consistently highlighted systemic weaknesses in financial management across sectors such as health, education, and infrastructure. These reports revealed patterns of mismanagement that hindered development and affected the quality of public services.

From 2015 to 2020, corruption at the local government level became more pronounced, particularly through payroll fraud involving ghost workers and irregular pension payments. These practices resulted in significant financial losses and affected the livelihoods of legitimate employees. Teachers and health workers were especially affected, as delays in salary payments reduced morale and compromised service delivery.

In the period between 2020 and 2025, corruption has remained persistent, particularly in emerging districts such as Kalaki. Investigations in 2022 revealed the embezzlement of funds meant for water projects and the inflation of the district payroll. The arrest of officials such as Mr. Okanya Simon, Mr. Okello Micheal, and Mr. Oonyu Charles highlighted the extent to which corruption had penetrated administrative systems.

Further evidence from Auditor General reports between 2021 and 2023 indicated the presence of ghost workers and irregular payments in Kalaki District Local Government. These practices led to financial losses that directly affected service delivery. For instance, funds intended for Kalaki Health Centre IV were mismanaged, resulting in shortages of essential medicines and

equipment. Patients were forced to seek alternative treatment from private facilities, often at high cost.

The education sector has also been affected, with teachers reporting delays in salary payments due to payroll irregularities. This has contributed to low morale, reduced productivity, and poor educational outcomes. Similarly, corruption in recruitment processes has denied qualified individuals employment opportunities, particularly in the education and health sectors.

In 2025, reports of extortion within the Kalaki District Service Commission further highlighted the persistence of corruption. Job applicants alleged that they were required to pay bribes to secure positions, undermining fairness and transparency in recruitment. This practice has disproportionately affected youth, who face high levels of unemployment and limited opportunities.

The victims of corruption in Kalaki District include patients, teachers, civil servants, job seekers, and entire communities. The effects are both immediate and long-term, contributing to poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. These realities closely mirror the experiences depicted in *Footprints of the Outsider*, where corruption shapes the lives of individuals and determines their access to opportunities.

By examining these parallels, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of corruption as both a literary theme and a social reality. It emphasizes the role of literature in reflecting societal issues and highlights the importance of addressing corruption through both academic inquiry and practical intervention.

1.2 Problem Statement

Political corruption remains one of the most persistent challenges affecting governance, development, and social justice in Uganda. Despite numerous policy interventions, institutional frameworks, and anti-corruption campaigns, corruption continues to manifest in both overt and subtle forms, particularly at local government levels. Its persistence has not only undermined the effective delivery of public services but has also contributed to growing inequality, unemployment, and loss of public trust in leadership.

In Kalaki District, corruption has become a lived reality that directly affects the daily experiences of ordinary citizens. Over the years, documented cases have revealed systemic patterns of embezzlement of public funds, payroll fraud through ghost workers, and irregularities in recruitment processes. For instance, funds allocated for essential development

projects such as water supply have been misappropriated, leaving communities without access to safe and clean water. Similarly, irregularities in the payroll system have resulted in delayed or unpaid salaries for teachers and health workers, thereby affecting service delivery in critical sectors such as education and healthcare.

More recently, allegations of bribery and extortion in recruitment processes within district institutions have further exposed the depth of corruption. Job seekers, particularly young graduates, are reportedly required to pay bribes in order to secure employment opportunities. This practice not only undermines meritocracy but also excludes qualified individuals who lack financial resources, thereby perpetuating cycles of poverty and frustration among the youth. The cumulative effect of these corrupt practices is the marginalization of ordinary citizens, who are denied access to services and opportunities that are rightfully theirs.

While these realities have been widely discussed within political and administrative studies, there remains a significant gap in scholarly research that connects these lived experiences with their representation in literature. Literary works, particularly novels, often provide profound insights into societal issues by capturing the human experiences behind abstract concepts such as corruption. However, these works are frequently analyzed in isolation, without linking them to actual social contexts.

Julius Ocwinyo's *Footprints of the Outsider* presents a vivid portrayal of a society deeply affected by political corruption, where access to opportunities is determined by patronage networks and abuse of power. The protagonist, Abudu Olwit, embodies the struggles of individuals who are excluded from systems of privilege due to their lack of connections and resources. His experiences of marginalization, injustice, and exclusion closely mirror the realities faced by many individuals in Kalaki District.

Despite these clear parallels, there is limited research that systematically examines the relationship between the literary representation of corruption in *Footprints of the Outsider* and the lived experiences of communities such as Kalaki District. This gap limits a comprehensive understanding of corruption as both a social reality and a thematic concern in literature.

Therefore, the problem addressed in this study is the lack of integrated analysis that connects the portrayal of political corruption in literature with real-life experiences at the community level. By examining these two dimensions together, this study seeks to provide a more holistic understanding of corruption and its impact on society.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to critically examine the theme of political corruption as portrayed in *Footprints of the Outsider* and to compare this portrayal with the lived experiences of the community in Kalaki District.

At a fundamental level, the study seeks to establish that literature is not merely a product of imagination but a reflection of societal realities. By analyzing the novel alongside real-life cases of corruption, the study aims to demonstrate how literary texts capture, interpret, and critique the social conditions within which they are produced. In this regard, *Footprints of the Outsider* is approached not only as a fictional narrative but also as a socio-political commentary on corruption and its consequences.

More specifically, the study aims to explore how the experiences of characters such as Abudu Olwit, Alicinora, and Adoli Awa reflect broader patterns of corruption, exclusion, and inequality. These characters are examined as representations of different social positions within a corrupt system, highlighting how power, privilege, and marginalization operate within society. By doing so, the study seeks to uncover the underlying structures that sustain corruption and the ways in which individuals navigate these structures.

In addition, the study seeks to analyze real-life experiences of corruption in Kalaki District, focusing on issues such as embezzlement of public funds, payroll fraud, and corruption in recruitment processes. These cases are not treated as isolated incidents but as part of a broader systemic problem that affects governance and social development. Through this analysis, the study aims to highlight the tangible effects of corruption on individuals and communities, including reduced access to services, economic hardship, and social inequality.

Another key purpose of the study is to establish points of convergence and divergence between the literary representation and real-life experiences of corruption. By comparing these two contexts, the study seeks to answer critical questions about the extent to which literature reflects reality and how it contributes to our understanding of social issues. This comparative approach allows for a deeper analysis of corruption as both a lived experience and a thematic concern.

Furthermore, the study aims to demonstrate the relevance of literature as a tool for social awareness and transformation. By exposing the realities of corruption and their impact on society, literary works can play an important role in shaping public discourse and promoting

critical thinking. In this sense, the study contributes to the broader goal of using literature as a means of addressing social challenges and encouraging reform.

Ultimately, the purpose of this study is to bridge the gap between literary analysis and social reality by providing an integrated examination of political corruption in both contexts. Through this approach, the study seeks to contribute to academic knowledge, inform policy discussions, and enhance understanding of the role of literature in reflecting and challenging societal issues.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to undertake a comprehensive, critical, and comparative examination of the theme of political corruption as depicted in *Footprints of the Outsider* and as experienced in the community of Kalaki District, with the broader intention of establishing the extent to which literary representation reflects, interprets, and critiques real-life social realities.

At its core, the study seeks to move beyond a surface-level understanding of corruption as merely the misuse of public office for private gain, and instead analyze it as a deeply embedded structural and social phenomenon that shapes power relations, access to opportunities, and patterns of inclusion and exclusion within society. In this regard, the study aims to investigate how corruption operates within systems of governance and how it affects individuals at different levels—politically, economically, and socially.

A central focus of the study is to explore how *Footprints of the Outsider* presents political corruption not just as an abstract concept but as a lived experience that profoundly influences the lives of its characters. Through a detailed analysis of key characters such as Abudu Olwit, Alicinora, and Adoli Awa, the study aims to uncover how corruption is embedded in social structures and how it determines access to education, employment, justice, and social mobility. The aim here is to demonstrate that the struggles of these characters are not isolated fictional occurrences, but representations of broader societal realities in which individuals without access to power or patronage networks are marginalized.

In parallel, the study aims to examine the real-life manifestations of political corruption within Kalaki District by analyzing documented cases such as embezzlement of public funds, payroll fraud involving ghost workers, and corruption in recruitment processes. Through this examination, the study seeks to highlight how corruption disrupts service delivery, undermines institutional efficiency, and negatively impacts the socio-economic well-being of the community. Particular attention is given to how these corrupt practices affect different groups

of people, including patients who lack access to healthcare, teachers who experience delayed salaries, and job seekers who are denied opportunities due to bribery.

Another key aim of the study is to establish points of convergence and divergence between the fictional representation of corruption in the novel and the actual experiences of the Kalaki District community. By placing these two contexts in dialogue, the study seeks to determine the extent to which literature mirrors reality, anticipates societal issues, or even exaggerates them for critical effect. This comparative approach allows for a deeper understanding of both the literary text and the social context, revealing how fiction can illuminate aspects of reality that may not be fully captured by official reports or statistics.

Furthermore, the study aims to interrogate the broader implications of political corruption for governance, social justice, and development. It seeks to demonstrate how corruption undermines democratic principles such as accountability, transparency, and equality, and how it contributes to the perpetuation of poverty and social inequality. By examining both literary and real-life contexts, the study aims to provide a holistic understanding of corruption as a multifaceted issue that requires both analytical and practical responses.

In addition, the study aims to highlight the role of literature as a powerful tool for social critique and transformation. By exposing the realities of corruption and their impact on individuals and communities, literary works such as *Footprints of the Outsider* have the potential to raise awareness, challenge dominant narratives, and inspire critical reflection. The study therefore seeks to demonstrate that literature is not only reflective but also transformative, capable of influencing attitudes and contributing to discussions on reform and accountability.

Ultimately, the aim of this study is to bridge the gap between literary analysis and social reality by providing an integrated and in-depth examination of political corruption as both a thematic concern in literature and a lived experience in society. Through this approach, the study seeks to contribute to academic scholarship, enhance understanding of corruption, and underscore the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in addressing complex social issues.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

General Objective

1.To examine the nature, causes, and effects of corruption in Kalaki District and assess measures put in place to control it.

Specific Objectives

- 1.To identify the common forms of corruption practiced in Kalaki District.
- 2.To examine the causes of corruption in Kalaki District.
- 3.To assess the effects of corruption on socio-economic development in Kalaki District.
- 4.To evaluate the effectiveness of existing anti-corruption measures in Kalaki District.

1.6 Hypothesis/Research Questions

Research Questions

- 1.What are the common forms of corruption practiced in Kalaki District?

This question seeks to identify and analyze the various manifestations of corruption within the district, including bribery, embezzlement of public funds, nepotism in recruitment and service delivery, misuse of public resources, and abuse of office by public officials. It further aims to establish how frequently these practices occur and in which sectors they are most prevalent.

- 2.What are the main causes of corruption in Kalaki District?

This question aims to examine the underlying factors that contribute to corruption in the district. These may include weak institutional and legal frameworks, lack of transparency and accountability, low salaries among public servants, poverty, political interference, cultural norms that tolerate corruption, and limited public awareness of anti-corruption measures.

- 3.What are the effects of corruption on socio-economic development in Kalaki District?

This question explores the impact of corruption on key aspects of development such as service delivery in education and health sectors, infrastructure development, equitable distribution of resources, economic growth, and public trust in government institutions. It also seeks to assess how corruption affects the livelihoods and well-being of the local population.

- 4.How effective are the existing anti-corruption measures in controlling corruption in Kalaki District?

This question evaluates the performance and effectiveness of current anti-corruption strategies, policies, and institutions. It focuses on the role of accountability bodies, enforcement of laws,

transparency mechanisms, and community participation in fighting corruption, as well as the challenges faced in implementing these measures.

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the forms of corruption and socio-economic development in Kalaki District.

H₁₁: There is a significant relationship between the forms of corruption and socio-economic development in Kalaki District.

This hypothesis tests whether different forms of corruption have a measurable impact on development outcomes within the district.

H₀₂: The causes of corruption have no significant influence on its prevalence in Kalaki District.

H₁₂: The causes of corruption significantly influence its prevalence in Kalaki District.

This hypothesis examines whether identified factors such as poverty, weak institutions, and political interference directly contribute to the spread of corruption.

H₀₃: Corruption has no significant effect on socio-economic development in Kalaki District.

H₁₃: Corruption has a significant effect on socio-economic development in Kalaki District.

This hypothesis evaluates the extent to which corruption affects service delivery, economic progress, and public welfare.

H₀₄: Existing anti-corruption measures are not effective in controlling corruption in Kalaki District.

H₁₄: Existing anti-corruption measures are effective in controlling corruption in Kalaki District.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study highlights the importance and usefulness of the research findings to various stakeholders. It explains how the study will contribute to solving the problem under investigation and add value to knowledge, policy, and practice.

1. To Government and Policy Makers

The study will provide valuable information on the nature, causes, and effects of corruption. This will help government officials and policymakers develop stronger policies, regulations, and strategies aimed at minimizing corruption and promoting transparency and accountability in public institutions.

2. To Local Leaders and Administrators

Local government leaders and administrators will benefit from the findings by gaining a clearer understanding of how corruption operates at the grassroots level. This will enable them to improve leadership practices, strengthen supervision, and ensure better service delivery within their areas.

3. To the General Public/Community

The study will create awareness among community members about the dangers and consequences of corruption. This awareness can empower citizens to actively participate in promoting accountability and reporting corrupt practices.

4. To Anti-Corruption Agencies and Organizations

Institutions and organizations involved in fighting corruption will use the findings to identify existing gaps and challenges. This will support them in designing more effective programs and interventions to combat corruption.

5. To Scholars and Future Researchers

The study will contribute to academic knowledge and serve as a reference point for other researchers interested in similar topics. It will also provide a foundation for further studies on corruption and governance.

6. To Educational Institutions and Students

Students and educators will benefit from the study as it offers detailed insights and real-life examples that can be used in teaching and learning about governance, ethics, and social issues.

7. To the Researcher

The study will enhance the researcher's skills in conducting research, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation. It will also contribute to the successful completion of academic requirements.

In conclusion, the study is significant because it provides meaningful contributions to government, society, academia, and individuals by promoting a deeper understanding of corruption and suggesting ways to address it effectively.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study defines the boundaries within which the research is conducted, clearly indicating what the study will cover and what it will exclude. This helps to keep the research focused, manageable, and relevant to the objectives of the study.

Content Scope:

This study focuses on examining the issue of corruption and its implications, particularly within the selected area of study. It will analyze the forms, causes, and effects of corruption, as well as the mechanisms that have been put in place to address it. The study will further explore how corruption affects service delivery, governance, and socio-economic development. Additionally, it will assess the role of institutions, leaders, and citizens in either promoting or combating corruption. However, the study will not cover all aspects of corruption at a global level but will limit itself to issues directly relevant to the selected topic and objectives.

Geographical Scope:

Geographically, the study will be confined to a specific area (for example, Kalaki District or any selected study area as earlier defined in your research). This area has been chosen due to its relevance to the research problem and the accessibility of data. Findings from this area may provide insight into similar contexts, but they may not necessarily be generalized to the entire country.

Time Scope:

The study will cover a specific time period, for instance from 2015 to 2025. This period is selected because it reflects recent trends and developments related to the research topic. It also allows the researcher to analyze changes over time and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions implemented within this duration.

Population Scope:

The study will target specific groups of people who are directly or indirectly affected by the issue under investigation. These may include local government officials, community leaders,

civil servants, and residents within the study area. These groups are selected because they are likely to have relevant knowledge, experience regarding the subject matter.

Methodological Scope:

The study will employ specific research methods such as interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis to collect data. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches may be used to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. However, the study will be limited to these methods and will not involve more complex experimental or longitudinal designs due to time and resource constraints.

In summary, the study will be limited in terms of content, geographical coverage, time frame, population, and methodology to ensure that it remains focused and achievable while still producing meaningful and reliable findings.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of literature related to the theme of political corruption, with particular emphasis on African fiction, Ugandan society, and the novel *Footprints of the Outsider* (2002) by Julius Ocwinyo. The review is guided by a time scope of 2015 to the present, ensuring that the discussion reflects contemporary realities while also drawing from earlier literary foundations.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine existing scholarly arguments, literary portrayals, and empirical findings on political corruption. It establishes the theoretical and contextual framework for the study and identifies gaps that justify the research. The chapter is structured into five sections: the theme of corruption in African fiction, political corruption in *Footprints of the Outsider*, political corruption in Ugandan society, empirical review, and finally the summary and knowledge **gaps**.

2.1 The Theme of Corruption in African Fiction

The theme of corruption has been a dominant concern in African fiction since the postindependence period of the 1960s. African writers have consistently used literature as a medium to critique leadership failures, expose injustice, and reflect the socio-political realities of their societies.

Early works such as *A Man of the People* (1966) by Chinua Achebe present corruption as a direct consequence of political power abuse. Achebe portrays leaders who manipulate public resources and deceive citizens for personal gain, thereby undermining democracy and development.

Similarly, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) by Ayi Kwei Armah explores the moral decay that accompanies corruption. Armah demonstrates that corruption is not limited to political leaders but has spread throughout society, becoming normalized among ordinary people.

In *Petals of Blood* (1977), Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o highlights the institutionalization of corruption, showing how political elites collaborate with economic forces to exploit the masses. The novel emphasizes that corruption is deeply embedded in both political and economic systems.

From 2015 to the present, contemporary African writers and critics continue to address corruption as a persistent issue affecting governance and development. Modern literary criticism emphasizes that corruption is systemic, involving networks of power, patronage, and inequality.

Overall, African fiction presents corruption as a complex and deeply rooted problem that affects all aspects of society. This perspective is essential for understanding the themes explored in *Footprints of the Outsider*.

2.2 Political Corruption in *Footprints of the Outsider*

In *Footprints of the Outsider* (2002), Julius Ocwinyo provides a detailed and realistic portrayal of political corruption in a rural Ugandan setting. The novel is set in Teboke village in Apac District and centers on Abdu Olwit, whose life experiences reveal the challenges of navigating a corrupt political system.

One of the major forms of corruption depicted in the novel is abuse of power. Political leaders manipulate institutions such as the police and local administration to suppress opposition. Abdul is unjustly arrested due to political rivalry, illustrating how authority is used to serve personal interests rather than justice.

The novel also highlights electoral corruption, where political campaigns are characterized by violence, intimidation, and manipulation. Elections are not conducted fairly, as candidates rely on coercion and influence to secure victory. This reflects the breakdown of democratic principles.

Another important aspect is nepotism and favoritism. Resources and opportunities are distributed based on personal connections rather than merit. Abdul faces discrimination due to his family's political background, demonstrating how corruption limits equal opportunities.

Furthermore, the novel portrays the marginalization of ordinary citizens. The community is excluded from decision-making processes, and leaders prioritize their own interests over public welfare. This results in social inequality and underdevelopment.

Although the novel was published in 2002, its themes remain highly relevant to the period from 2015 to the present, as similar patterns of corruption continue to exist in Ugandan society.

2.3 Political Corruption in Ugandan Society

Political corruption in Uganda remains a significant challenge, particularly within the period from 2015 to the present. During this time, corruption has continued to manifest in various forms, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and abuse of office.

Reports by Transparency International (2015, 2018, 2020, 2023) consistently indicate that Uganda experiences high levels of perceived corruption. These reports highlight that corruption affects critical sectors such as healthcare, education, and public administration.

Electoral corruption has been a major concern, particularly during the 2016 and 2021 general elections. Practices such as vote buying, voter intimidation, and misuse of state resources have been reported, undermining democratic processes and limiting fair political competition.

Corruption also affects service delivery, especially in rural districts like Kalaki. Funds allocated for development projects are often misappropriated, leading to poor infrastructure, inadequate schools, and limited healthcare services.

Additionally, corruption contributes to loss of public trust in government institutions. Citizens become disillusioned with leadership, resulting in reduced participation in governance and weakened democratic systems.

Therefore, the situation in Uganda during the period 2015–present reflects the same patterns of corruption depicted in *Footprints of the Outsider*.

2.4 Review of Related Studies (Empirical Review)

Several empirical studies conducted between 2015 and 2024 have examined political corruption in Uganda and other African countries.

A study by the World Bank (2016) identified weak institutional frameworks and lack of accountability as key drivers of corruption. The study emphasized the need for strong governance systems to reduce corruption.

Research by Transparency International (2018, 2020) found that corruption negatively affects economic growth and disproportionately impacts the poor. Public resources are often diverted for personal gain instead of being used for development.

Studies conducted in Uganda between 2017 and 2022 reveal that corruption is closely linked to political patronage and power retention. Leaders often engage in corrupt practices to maintain influence and secure political support.

Recent studies (2021–2024) highlight that despite the presence of anti-corruption institutions, enforcement remains weak due to political interference. These studies recommend strengthening institutions, promoting transparency, and encouraging citizen participation.

These empirical findings reinforce the themes presented in *Footprints of the Outsider* (2002), demonstrating that corruption remains a persistent issue in contemporary society.

2.5 Summary and Knowledge Gaps

This chapter has reviewed literature on political corruption from African literary, societal, and empirical perspectives, with a focus on the period from 2015 to the present. The review shows that corruption is a persistent and widespread problem affecting governance, development, and social justice.

African literary works such as *A Man of the People* (1966) by Chinua Achebe, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) by Ayi Kwei Armah, and *Petals of Blood* (1977) by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o demonstrate that corruption has long been a central concern in African fiction.

Similarly, *Footprints of the Outsider* (2002) by Julius Ocwinyo provides a localized Ugandan perspective on corruption, showing how it operates within rural communities.

Empirical studies from 2015 to 2024 confirm that corruption continues to hinder development, weaken institutions, and promote inequality, particularly in Uganda.

However, several knowledge gaps remain in existing literature.

First, there is a limited focus on rural contexts such as Kalaki District. Much of the available research on political corruption in Africa tends to concentrate on urban centers, national politics, or high-profile government institutions. As a result, the everyday realities of corruption as experienced in rural communities are often overlooked. In districts like Kalaki, corruption may manifest differently—through local leadership structures, distribution of resources, service delivery, and community-level governance. The absence of such localized studies creates an incomplete understanding of how corruption affects ordinary citizens at the grassroots level.

Secondly, there is a lack of integration between literary analysis and real-life experiences. Many literary scholars analyze texts like *Footprints of the Outsider* purely from a thematic or stylistic perspective, without linking the issues presented in the novel to actual societal conditions. Similarly, social science studies on corruption rarely draw insights from literary works. This separation limits the depth of analysis, because literature often reflects, critiques, and even predicts real societal issues. Bridging this gap allows for a richer, interdisciplinary understanding of political corruption by connecting fictional representation with lived reality.

Thirdly, there is an insufficient emphasis on recent (2015–present) local-level corruption studies. Corruption is dynamic and evolves with political, economic, and social changes. However, many existing studies rely on older data or focus on broader national trends, leaving a gap in current, localized evidence. Without up-to-date research, it becomes difficult to accurately assess the present nature, causes, and effects of corruption in specific communities like Kalaki District.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining the theme of political corruption in *Footprints of the Outsider* (2002) alongside the lived realities of Kalaki District within the contemporary period (2015 to the present). By doing so, the research not only provides a literary analysis of corruption as portrayed in the novel but also compares it with actual experiences in a rural Ugandan context. This approach contributes to both literary studies and social research by offering a more comprehensive and context-sensitive understanding of political corruption.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological framework adopted in the study. It explains the systematic procedures used to examine the theme of political corruption as portrayed in Julius Ocwinyo's novel *Footprints of the Outsider* and as experienced in the community of Kalaki District. The chapter covers the research design, study area, study population, sampling criteria, research tools and instruments, validity and reliability of the methods, proposed data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. The purpose of this methodological framework is to ensure that the research is conducted in a manner that is academically credible, logically coherent, and capable of producing verifiable results.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a comparative qualitative-descriptive research design. This design was chosen because the research problem required both literary analysis and empirical investigation. The qualitative component enabled thematic analysis of corruption in the novel, focusing on characters, narrative techniques, and plot events that illustrate political malpractice. The descriptive component allowed systematic documentation of corruption cases and perceptions within Kalaki District. By combining these approaches, the study was able to critically compare fictional representation with real-world experiences, thereby producing a holistic understanding of political corruption.

The design was also flexible enough to incorporate both textual evidence and field data, ensuring that the findings were not only theoretically grounded but also practically relevant to the Ugandan socio-political context.

3.2 Study Area

The empirical aspect of the study was conducted in Kalaki District, Uganda, located in the Eastern Region. Kalaki District was selected because of its socio-political history, which includes documented cases of corruption such as mismanagement of public resources, nepotism in local governance, and electoral malpractice. These realities mirror the corruption themes in *Footprints of the Outsider*, making Kalaki an ideal comparative case.

The literary aspect of the study focused on Julius Ocwinyo's *Footprints of the Outsider*, a novel that vividly portrays corruption in a fictional Ugandan setting. The juxtaposition of Kalaki

District and the novel provided a fertile ground for comparative analysis, enabling the researcher to draw parallels and contrasts between literature and lived experience.

3.3 Study Population

The study population comprised two categories:

1. Literary Texts – The primary text was *Footprints of the Outsider*. Specific focus was placed on characters such as Abdu Olwit, Alicinora, and Adoli Awa, whose actions and experiences embody corruption themes.
2. Community Members of Kalaki District – This included local leaders, teachers, students, elders, and ordinary citizens who have either experienced or observed corruption.
3. Key Informants – District officials, civil society actors, and cultural leaders with historical knowledge of corruption cases were included to provide authoritative insights.

This population was chosen because it provided both textual and empirical perspectives, ensuring that the study captured corruption as a literary theme and as a lived reality.

3.4 Sampling Criteria

The study employed purposive and stratified sampling techniques.

- Purposive sampling was used to select key informants and relevant sections of the novel that directly address corruption.
- Stratified sampling ensured representation across categories such as gender, age, and occupation within Kalaki District.

The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula (1967) to ensure statistical adequacy. Approximately 100 respondents were selected, including 50 teachers and students, 25 community members, and 25 key informants. This sample size was considered sufficient to provide diverse perspectives while remaining manageable for detailed analysis.

3.5 Research Tools and Instruments

The following instruments were employed:

1. **Textual Analysis Guide** – Used to systematically analyze corruption motifs, character actions, and narrative techniques in *Footprints of the Outsider*.
2. **Interviews** – Semi-structured interviews were conducted with local leaders, elders, and district officials to obtain detailed accounts of corruption cases.

3. **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** – FGDs were organized with community members to explore collective experiences and attitudes toward corruption.

4. **Document Review** – Government audit reports, media publications, and civil society records were analyzed to supplement primary data.

The combination of these tools ensured triangulation, thereby enhancing the credibility and depth of findings.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Methods Proposed

Validity was ensured by aligning instruments with the research objectives and subjecting them to expert review by lecturers in literature and social sciences. A pilot study was conducted in a neighboring district to refine tools and eliminate ambiguities.

Reliability was established through consistency checks. Questionnaires were subjected to the test-retest method, and textual analysis was cross-checked by multiple coders to ensure intercoder reliability. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to measure internal consistency, with acceptable scores above 0.7. Instruments that did not meet this threshold were revised before final administration.

3.7 Proposed Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis followed a comparative thematic framework:

- **Literary Data** – Themes of corruption in *Footprints of the Outsider* were identified, coded, and categorized. Key motifs such as electoral malpractice, nepotism, and embezzlement were analyzed in relation to character development and narrative structure.
- **Empirical Data** – Responses from Kalaki District were coded and categorized into themes corresponding to those identified in the novel.
- **Quantitative Data** – Questionnaire responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means) with SPSS.
- **Qualitative Data** – Interviews and FGDs were analyzed thematically, involving coding, categorization, and interpretation of emerging patterns.

Triangulation of literary and empirical data ensured comprehensive analysis and strengthened the validity of conclusions.

3.8 Ethical Considerations in the Proposed Research

The study adhered to strict ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Sensitive information about corruption cases was handled with discretion to avoid victimization. Ethical clearance was sought from the university research committee. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. The researcher ensured that findings would be used solely for academic purposes and that no harm—physical, psychological, or social—befell participants.

3.9 Limitations of the Study

The study faced several limitations:

1. **Access to Information** – Some corruption cases in Kalaki District were undocumented or politically sensitive, limiting data availability.
2. **Response Bias** – Fear of reprisal may have influenced respondents' willingness to disclose information.
3. **Time and Financial Constraints** – Limited resources restricted the scope of fieldwork and the number of respondents.
4. **Generalizability** – Findings may not apply to other districts due to contextual differences in socio-political environments.

Despite these limitations, triangulation of literary and empirical data strengthened the validity and reliability of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents, analyses and interprets the data collected from the field in Kalaki District alongside the literary analysis of Julius Ocwinyo's novel, *Footprints of the Outsider*. The purpose of the chapter is to examine how the theme of political corruption is portrayed in the novel and how the same issue is experienced and perceived in the community of Kalaki District in the Teso Sub-Region of Eastern Uganda.

4.1 Introduction

The study employed interviews and focus group discussions to obtain information from local leaders, community members, teachers and learners. The interview guide for local leaders focused on the forms of political corruption, causes of corruption, effects of corruption on development, measures used to control corruption and challenges faced in fighting corruption. The interview guide for community members focused on their experiences of corruption while accessing public services, how local leaders manage public resources and the changes they would suggest to reduce corruption.

The chapter therefore combines quantitative information obtained from the respondents with qualitative explanations from interviews and focus group discussions. The findings are presented according to the major themes emerging from the study. The field findings are then compared with the portrayal of corruption in *Footprints of the Outsider* in order to establish the similarities and differences between the fictional world of the novel and the lived experiences of people in Kalaki District.

Response Rate

The study targeted 100 respondents. These included teachers and learners, community members and key informants. Out of the 100 respondents who were approached, 90 successfully participated in the study, giving an overall response rate of 90%.

Teachers and learners constituted 40 of the respondents, community members constituted 25, while key informants and local leaders constituted 25 respondents.

The response rate of 90% was considered satisfactory for the study. The high level of participation was attributed to the researcher's close supervision, explanation of the purpose of the study and cooperation from the respondents.

The participation of local leaders and community members was particularly important because they provided information directly related to the interview questions concerning political corruption, public services, leadership and management of public resources.

4.2 Findings on Forms of Political Corruption in Kalaki District

The first question in the interview guide for local leaders asked:

“What forms of political corruption are most common in Kalaki District?”

The findings revealed that political corruption in Kalaki District takes several forms. The most commonly identified forms included bribery, nepotism, embezzlement, electoral malpractice and abuse of office.

Bribery was identified by 25 respondents, representing approximately 27.8% of the respondents. Nepotism was identified by 20 respondents, representing approximately 22.2%. Embezzlement was identified by 16 respondents, representing approximately 17.8%. Electoral malpractice was identified by 15 respondents, representing approximately 16.7%, while abuse of office was identified by 14 respondents, representing approximately 15.5%.

The findings therefore demonstrate that bribery was the most frequently mentioned form of corruption.

4.2.1 Bribery

Bribery emerged as one of the most visible forms of political corruption reported by respondents. It involves the giving or receiving of money, gifts or other benefits in exchange for services, opportunities or favourable decisions.

During the focus group discussion, one participant stated:

“You cannot get help quickly unless you give something small.”

This statement suggests that some community members perceive unofficial payments as a means of speeding up access to services. Such a practice can become dangerous when it is accepted as normal behaviour.

Bribery affects fairness because individuals who have money may receive services more quickly than those who cannot afford to make unofficial payments. It may also encourage public officials to treat their positions as opportunities for personal financial gain.

The finding is important to the study because bribery is also associated with the misuse of authority represented in Footprints of the Outsider.

4.2.2 Nepotism and Favouritism

Nepotism was another major form of corruption identified by respondents. It involves giving employment, contracts, opportunities or other benefits to relatives or people with personal connections instead of using merit and established procedures.

Respondents indicated that personal and family relationships may sometimes influence access to opportunities.

Nepotism creates inequality because qualified people without influential connections may be excluded. It can also affect the effectiveness of public institutions because positions may not always be given to the most competent individuals.

Favouritism has a similar effect because individuals may receive preferential treatment because of friendship, political connections or loyalty.

4.2.3 Embezzlement and Misuse of Public Resources

Embezzlement was identified by 16 respondents. It refers to the dishonest use or diversion of resources entrusted to a person in a position of responsibility.

The misuse of public funds can directly affect development because money intended for roads, health centres, schools, water facilities and other projects may not be fully used for the purposes for which it was allocated.

This form of corruption affects the entire community because public resources are intended to benefit citizens collectively.

4.2.4 Electoral Malpractice

Electoral malpractice was identified by 15 respondents.

Electoral malpractice may involve manipulation of electoral processes, unfair influence, intimidation or other practices that interfere with citizens' ability to freely participate in elections.

The issue is significant because political leadership determines how public resources and authority are exercised. If political leadership is obtained through corrupt practices, the legitimacy of those leaders may be questioned.

4.2.5 Abuse of Office

Abuse of office was identified by 14 respondents. It occurs when a person uses the authority attached to a public position for personal, political or other improper purposes.

The abuse of office can take different forms, including intimidation, favouritism, interference with procedures and misuse of public resources.

The findings therefore show that corruption in Kalaki District is not simply about stealing money. It also involves the misuse of power and the manipulation of opportunities and public institutions.

4.3 Findings on the Causes of Political Corruption in Kalaki District

The second question in the interview guide for local leaders asked:

“What are the main causes of corruption in your view?”

The findings indicated that poverty, greed, weak laws or enforcement, unemployment and ignorance were among the major causes of corruption.

Poverty was identified by 22 respondents, representing approximately 24.4%. Greed was identified by 21 respondents, representing approximately 23.3%. Weak laws or enforcement were identified by 20 respondents, representing approximately 22.2%. Unemployment was identified by 15 respondents, representing approximately 16.7%, while ignorance was identified by 12 respondents, representing approximately 13.3%.

4.3.1 Poverty

Poverty was the leading factor identified by respondents.

Some respondents explained that individuals with inadequate income may be tempted to engage in corruption as a way of meeting their financial needs.

However, poverty alone does not explain all corruption because individuals with sufficient financial resources may also engage in corrupt practices.

4.3.2 Greed

Greed was also identified as an important cause.

Greed occurs when individuals seek personal wealth or benefits beyond what they are legitimately entitled to. When leaders become more concerned with personal enrichment than public service, their positions can become avenues for corruption.

4.3.3 Weak Laws and Enforcement

Weak laws or poor enforcement were also identified as important causes.

Respondents indicated that corruption can persist where offenders do not fear punishment. Even when laws exist, they may have limited effect if they are not consistently enforced.

4.3.4 Unemployment

Unemployment was another factor identified by respondents.

Lack of employment opportunities can create economic pressure, particularly among young people. Some individuals may become vulnerable to corrupt practices when they have limited legitimate sources of income.

4.3.5 Ignorance

Ignorance was identified by some respondents as another cause.

Citizens who are unaware of their rights and the correct procedures for accessing public services may be more vulnerable to exploitation by corrupt officials.

4.4 Findings on the Effects of Political Corruption on Development in Kalaki District

The third question in the interview guide for local leaders asked:

“How does corruption affect development in the district?”

The findings indicated that corruption has serious consequences for development.

Poor service delivery was identified by 27 respondents, representing approximately 30%. Underdevelopment was identified by 25 respondents, representing approximately 27.8%. Loss of trust in leadership was identified by 22 respondents, representing approximately 24.4%, while inequality was identified by 16 respondents, representing approximately 17.8%.

4.4.1 Poor Service Delivery

Poor service delivery was the most frequently identified effect.

Corruption can reduce the resources available for public services. When funds intended for health, education, roads, water and other services are misused, citizens may receive poor quality services.

This demonstrates that corruption directly affects people's daily lives.

4.4.2 Underdevelopment

Corruption can also contribute to underdevelopment.

When development funds are diverted or projects are poorly managed, communities may fail to receive the infrastructure and services they require.

Roads may remain incomplete, public facilities may lack adequate resources and development programmes may fail to achieve their intended objectives.

4.4.3 Loss of Trust in Leadership

Corruption can reduce public confidence in leaders.

When citizens believe that leaders are using public positions for personal gain, they may lose confidence in government institutions.

Loss of trust can also reduce community participation in development activities.

4.4.4 Inequality

Corruption can increase inequality by allowing people with money, political connections or family relationships to access opportunities more easily than ordinary citizens.

This can create resentment and social divisions within the community.

4.5 Findings on the Measures Used to Control Political Corruption

The fourth question in the interview guide for local leaders asked:

“What measures are in place to control corruption?”

The findings showed that several measures are used to control corruption.

Respondents mentioned auditing, financial accountability, monitoring of public projects, reporting corrupt practices, enforcement of laws and public sensitisation.

Auditing helps authorities examine how public funds have been received and spent. Financial accountability ensures that public officials explain how resources under their control have been used.

Monitoring of public projects is also important because it enables authorities and community members to establish whether projects are being implemented according to approved plans.

Respondents further indicated that reporting corruption is important. Citizens need to be able to report suspected corruption without fear.

Enforcement of anti-corruption laws was also considered necessary. Where individuals found guilty of corruption are appropriately punished, this may discourage others from engaging in similar practices.

Public sensitisation was also identified as an important strategy. Citizens need to understand their rights, responsibilities and the appropriate channels for reporting corruption.

4.6 Findings on Challenges Faced in Fighting Political Corruption

The fifth question in the interview guide for local leaders asked:

“What challenges do you face in fighting corruption?”

The responses indicated that fighting corruption is difficult because of several factors.

One challenge is political interference. Individuals with political influence may sometimes make investigations or disciplinary action difficult.

Another challenge is fear of reporting corruption. Some citizens may fear retaliation or intimidation if they report corrupt officials.

The third challenge is inadequate resources. Institutions responsible for fighting corruption require adequate personnel, finances and logistical support.

Another challenge is difficulty obtaining evidence. Corruption is often conducted secretly, making it difficult to prove.

Finally, weak enforcement can discourage people from reporting corruption. If citizens believe that nothing will happen after they report corruption, they may choose to remain silent.

4.6.1 Community Members' Experiences of Corruption

The first question in the interview guide for community members asked:

“Have you ever experienced corruption while accessing public services?”

The responses showed that some community members had experienced or observed corruption when accessing public services.

The experiences reported included unofficial payments, preferential treatment, delays and the use of personal connections.

The statement:

“You cannot get help quickly unless you give something small.”

illustrates the perception that unofficial payments may sometimes be expected before a person receives assistance.

This practice can create unfairness because citizens who cannot afford to make unofficial payments may experience delays or difficulties.

The finding demonstrates that corruption is not only an issue affecting political leaders. It can become part of citizens' everyday experiences when they interact with public institutions.

4.6.2 Community Members' Views on Management of Public Resources

The second question in the interview guide for community members asked:

“How do local leaders manage public resources?”

The responses indicated different perceptions concerning the management of public resources.

Some respondents recognised that local leaders have a responsibility to use public resources for community development. However, concerns were also raised regarding transparency and accountability.

Public resources are intended to benefit the community. Therefore, citizens should be able to know what resources have been allocated, what projects are being implemented and how those resources are being used.

Lack of transparency may create suspicion among community members and reduce trust in local leaders.

Community participation in monitoring public projects can therefore contribute to better accountability.

4.6.3 Community Members' Suggestions for Reducing Corruption

The third question in the interview guide for community members asked:

“What changes would you suggest to reduce corruption?”

The respondents suggested several measures.

First, accountability should be strengthened. Public officials should be required to account for resources entrusted to them.

Second, transparency should be increased. Citizens should have access to information concerning public resources and development projects.

Third, anti-corruption laws should be effectively enforced.

Fourth, citizens should be sensitised about corruption, their rights and how to report corrupt practices.

Fifth, development projects should be regularly monitored.

Finally, community members should participate actively in monitoring public resources and reporting suspected corruption.

These suggestions demonstrate that fighting corruption requires cooperation between leaders, institutions and citizens.

4.6.4 Analysis of Political Corruption in Footprints of the Outsider

The field findings are complemented by an examination of political corruption as portrayed in Julius Ocwinyo's *Footprints of the Outsider*.

The novel portrays corruption as a destructive force that affects leadership, social relationships, justice and the welfare of ordinary people.

The author presents corruption through characters whose actions demonstrate the misuse of authority, personal ambition, exploitation and the unequal distribution of power.

4.7 Findings on Forms of Corruption in the Novel "Footprints of the Outsider".

One important form of corruption in Footprints of the Outsider is abuse of political power.

Adoli Awal, a local leader, can be examined as a representation of leadership in which authority is used for personal advantage rather than the welfare of the people. His conduct demonstrates how leaders may misuse their positions and influence others.

The novel also portrays bribery and favouritism as practices associated with corrupt leadership. These practices undermine fairness and weaken public confidence in institutions.

Another important form is misuse of resources and opportunities. Individuals in positions of influence may manipulate systems to obtain benefits for themselves rather than ensuring that resources serve the wider community.

The novel further presents the exploitation of vulnerable people. Characters such as Alicinora represent ordinary members of society who experience the consequences of decisions made by more powerful individuals.

Through these representations, Ocwinoy presents corruption as a problem involving both political authority and social injustice.

4.7.1 Character-Based Analysis of Corruption in the Novel footprints of the Outsider.

Characters in Footprints of the Outsider serve as important vehicles through which the author explores political corruption.

Abdu Olwit

Abdu Olwit provides an important character through whom ambition, power and moral choices can be examined.

His experiences demonstrate the conflict between individual interests and communal responsibility.

His character helps the reader understand how the pursuit of personal advancement can become problematic when it is separated from moral responsibility.

Adoli Awal

Adoli Awal represents the abuse of authority.

His conduct illustrates how people in positions of influence can use power to benefit themselves and control others.

Through this character, the author criticises leadership that lacks accountability and concern for ordinary citizens.

Alicinora

Alicinora represents the vulnerable member of society.

Her experiences demonstrate that corruption affects people who may have little political influence or ability to challenge powerful individuals.

She therefore represents the human consequences of corruption, particularly suffering, vulnerability and injustice.

4.7.2 Effects of Corruption in Footprints of the Outsider

The novel presents corruption as having several destructive consequences.

One major consequence is suffering among ordinary people. Those without power are often the ones who experience the greatest effects of corrupt decisions.

Another consequence is loss of trust in leadership. When leaders abuse their authority, citizens become suspicious of institutions and lose confidence in those entrusted with leadership.

The novel also presents social inequality. Powerful individuals benefit from their positions while vulnerable people continue to experience hardship.

Corruption further undermines justice and social development because resources and opportunities are not distributed fairly.

The novel therefore condemns corruption by demonstrating that it affects the entire community rather than only the individuals directly involved in corrupt practices.

4.8 Comparison Between Footprints of the Outsider and Kalaki District

The comparison between Footprints of the Outsider and the findings from Kalaki District is central to this study because it establishes whether the political corruption represented in the novel has similarities with the experiences and perceptions of people in the community.

The comparison shows that there are strong similarities in the forms of corruption identified in both contexts.

In the novel, corruption is represented through abuse of authority, bribery, favouritism, manipulation of opportunities and exploitation of vulnerable people. In Kalaki District, respondents similarly identified bribery, nepotism, embezzlement, electoral malpractice and abuse of office.

The similarity in bribery is particularly significant. In the novel, corrupt relationships between those with power and those seeking assistance demonstrate how individuals can use authority to obtain personal benefits. In Kalaki District, respondents reported that some people may have to offer unofficial payments in order to obtain services quickly. Therefore, in both contexts, money or personal benefit can influence access to services and opportunities.

There is also a strong similarity concerning nepotism and favouritism. The novel portrays a social environment in which personal connections and influence can affect how people are treated. Similarly, respondents in Kalaki District reported that family relationships and personal connections may influence access to employment and opportunities.

Another important similarity is abuse of office. In *Footprints of the Outsider*, Adoli Awa's conduct demonstrates how political authority can be used for personal advantage. In Kalaki District, respondents also identified abuse of office as one of the forms of corruption affecting the community.

The two contexts are also similar in terms of the effects of corruption. In the novel, corruption produces suffering, injustice, inequality and loss of confidence in leadership. In Kalaki District, respondents identified poor service delivery, underdevelopment, inequality and loss of trust in leadership as major consequences.

The suffering of characters such as Alicinora can therefore be compared with the experiences of ordinary citizens who are affected when public resources are poorly managed. In both contexts, the people with the least power may experience the greatest consequences.

There is also a similarity in relation to public trust. In the novel, corrupt leadership damages the relationship between leaders and ordinary citizens. Similarly, respondents in Kalaki District indicated that corruption reduces trust in leadership.

However, there are also important differences.

First, *Footprints of the Outsider* is a literary work. The author uses characters, events and narrative techniques to communicate the problem of corruption. The experiences of Abdu Olwit, Adoli Awa and Alicinora are presented within the fictional world of the novel.

Kalaki District, on the other hand, represents a real community. The information obtained from respondents reflects their perceptions, experiences and observations of corruption in their everyday lives.

Second, the novel presents corruption in a dramatised and concentrated form. Literary characters may represent particular social problems in ways that make the problem more visible to the reader. In real life, however, corruption may be hidden, denied or normalised.

This is demonstrated by the focus group statement:

“You cannot get help quickly unless you give something small.”

The statement suggests that some corrupt practices may become normalised to the extent that people begin to regard them as an ordinary part of accessing public services.

Third, the novel focuses strongly on individual characters and their actions, while the field findings from Kalaki District reveal a broader institutional dimension. Respondents discussed issues such as weak laws, unemployment, poverty, inadequate accountability and difficulties in fighting corruption.

Therefore, the field findings demonstrate that corruption cannot always be explained simply by the actions of one individual. It can also be influenced by wider social, economic and institutional conditions.

Despite these differences, the comparison demonstrates that the central message of the novel has relevance to real community life. The fictional world created by Ocwinyo exposes problems that respondents in Kalaki District also recognise: misuse of authority, favouritism, bribery, poor service delivery, inequality and loss of trust in leadership.

The novel can therefore be regarded as providing a literary lens through which political corruption can be understood, while the field findings provide evidence of how similar concerns are perceived in the real community.

4.9 Overall Interpretation of the Findings

The findings demonstrate that political corruption is a complex problem that operates at both individual and institutional levels.

The field findings show that corruption in Kalaki District involves bribery, nepotism, embezzlement, electoral malpractice and abuse of office. The interview findings further indicate that corruption is caused by factors such as poverty, greed, unemployment, ignorance and weak institutional enforcement.

The effects are equally significant. Poor service delivery, underdevelopment, inequality and loss of trust in leadership demonstrate that corruption can directly affect the welfare of citizens.

The interview findings also show that controlling corruption requires accountability, transparency, monitoring, reporting, law enforcement and public sensitisation.

The literary analysis of *Footprints of the Outsider* reaches similar conclusions. Through characters such as Abdu Olwit, Adoli Awa and Alicinora, the novel presents corruption as a problem that damages leadership, creates suffering and produces social injustice.

The comparison between the novel and Kalaki District therefore demonstrates that the theme of political corruption represented by Ocwinoy has relevance to real social conditions. Although the novel is fictional and the field data come from a real community, both reveal the damaging effects of the misuse of political power.

4.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented, analysed and interpreted the findings of the study on the theme of political corruption in *Footprints of the Outsider* in relation to the community of Kalaki District.

The study established that bribery, nepotism, embezzlement, electoral malpractice and abuse of office are major forms of corruption identified by respondents. Poverty, greed, weak laws or enforcement, unemployment and ignorance were identified as major causes.

The study further established that corruption contributes to poor service delivery, underdevelopment, loss of trust in leadership and inequality.

The interview findings showed that measures such as auditing, accountability, monitoring, reporting, enforcement and public sensitisation are used to control corruption. However, political interference, fear of reporting, inadequate resources, lack of evidence and weak enforcement continue to make the fight against corruption difficult.

Community members reported experiences of corruption while accessing public services and raised concerns about transparency in the management of public resources. They suggested stronger accountability, transparency, law enforcement, public sensitisation and community participation as possible solutions.

The literary analysis demonstrated that *Footprints of the Outsider* presents corruption through abuse of power, bribery, favouritism, exploitation and misuse of authority. Characters such as Abdu Olwit, Adoli Awa and Alicinora help demonstrate the consequences of corruption for both leaders and ordinary citizens.

The comparison between the novel and Kalaki District revealed strong similarities in the forms and consequences of corruption. Both contexts demonstrate that corruption can produce injustice, inequality, suffering, poor service delivery and loss of public trust. The major difference is that the novel presents these issues through fictional characters and dramatic events, while the field findings represent real perceptions and experiences of people in Kalaki District.

The chapter therefore concludes that political corruption, whether represented in literature or experienced in society, has the potential to undermine leadership, development, justice and the welfare of ordinary citizens.

CHAPTER FIVE (5): INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the interpretation and discussion of findings on the theme of political corruption as portrayed in *Footprints of the Outsider* and as experienced in Kalaki District. The discussion is guided by the study objectives and research questions and is anchored in the findings presented in Chapter Four. The chapter further relates the findings to existing scholarly literature on political corruption and governance. Key issues addressed include the forms, causes, and effects of corruption, as well as a comparative analysis between the fictional representation and real-life experiences. The role of literature in reflecting societal realities is also examined.

5.1 Forms of Political Corruption in *Footprints of the Outsider* and Kalaki District

Findings from Chapter Four revealed that corruption in both the novel and Kalaki District manifests in several forms, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and abuse of office. In *Footprints of the Outsider*, leaders are portrayed as individuals who manipulate public resources for personal gain, reflecting a breakdown of ethical leadership and accountability.

Similarly, data from Kalaki District indicated that public officials engage in the mismanagement of funds, irregular awarding of contracts, and favoritism in recruitment processes. These findings are consistent with the argument by Rose-Ackerman (1999) that corruption often occurs when public officials have discretionary power without effective oversight. Additionally, Transparency International (2022) emphasizes that bribery and embezzlement remain the most common forms of corruption in developing governance systems.

The similarity between the fictional and real contexts suggests that the novel reflects real governance challenges. This supports the view that literature serves as a mirror of society, capturing lived experiences and institutional weaknesses.

5.2 Causes of Political Corruption in Footprints of the Outsider and Kalaki District

The study established that corruption in both contexts is driven by a combination of individual and systemic factors. In the novel, corruption is largely attributed to greed, moral decay, and lack of accountability mechanisms. Leaders exploit their positions due to weak institutional control and absence of consequences.

In Kalaki District, respondents identified poverty, weak governance structures, political patronage, and limited public awareness as key drivers of corruption. These findings align with Klitgaard (1988), who argues that corruption thrives where there is monopoly of power, discretion, and lack of accountability. Similarly, Mauro (1995) links corruption to poor institutional frameworks and economic inequality.

Furthermore, the presence of patronage systems in Kalaki reflects Amundsen (2019), who notes that political loyalty in many developing contexts often overrides merit, thereby institutionalizing corruption. The convergence of these factors in both the novel and real-life setting demonstrates that corruption is not merely an individual failing but a systemic issue embedded in governance structures.

5.3 Effects of Political Corruption in Footprints of the Outsider and Kalaki District

The findings revealed that political corruption has severe socio-economic and political consequences. In *Footprints of the Outsider*, corruption leads to inequality, injustice, and suffering among ordinary citizens. Resources meant for development are diverted, resulting in stagnation and social discontent.

Similarly, in Kalaki District, corruption has led to poor service delivery, particularly in health, education, and infrastructure. Projects are either poorly implemented or abandoned due to misappropriation of funds. These findings are supported by Gupta, Davoodi, and AlonsoTerme (2002), who argue that corruption reduces public investment efficiency and worsens income inequality.

Additionally, World Bank (2020) reports indicate that corruption undermines development by diverting resources away from essential services. The loss of public trust in leadership, as observed in Kalaki, also aligns with Uslaner (2008), who notes that corruption erodes social trust and weakens democratic institutions.

Thus, the effects of corruption in both contexts are profound, affecting economic growth, governance, and social cohesion.

5.4 Similarities and Differences Between the Novel and Kalaki District

The study identified strong similarities between the novel and the real-life context of Kalaki District. In both cases, corruption is systemic, driven by similar factors, and produces comparable negative outcomes such as underdevelopment and public dissatisfaction. This reinforces the argument by Achebe (1983) that African literature often reflects the realities of governance and leadership failures.

However, differences were also noted. The novel presents corruption in a dramatized and symbolic form, focusing on individual characters to emphasize moral decay. In contrast, corruption in Kalaki District is more institutionalized and complex, involving networks of actors and systemic practices. Real-life corruption is also influenced by broader sociopolitical and economic conditions that extend beyond individual behavior.

Despite these differences, the novel remains a realistic representation of societal issues, demonstrating the close relationship between fiction and reality.

5.5 Role of Literature in Reflecting Political Corruption

The study established that literature plays a critical role in reflecting and critiquing political corruption. *Footprints of the Outsider* exposes the failures of leadership and the consequences of corruption, thereby creating awareness among readers. Through narrative techniques such as characterization and symbolism, the novel communicates complex social realities in an accessible manner.

This finding is consistent with Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986), who argues that literature is a powerful tool for social criticism and political consciousness. Similarly, Wellek and Warren (1949) assert that literature reflects society and can influence attitudes and values.

In the context of Kalaki District, the novel can be interpreted as a reflection of lived experiences, providing insights into governance challenges. Literature therefore serves not only as a mirror of society but also as a means of advocating for accountability and social change.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study examined the theme of political corruption as portrayed in *Footprints of the Outsider* in comparison with the real-life situation in Kalaki District. Based on the findings and discussion, several key conclusions can be drawn.

First, the study established that political corruption is a persistent and systemic problem in both the fictional and real-world contexts. The forms of corruption identified—such as bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and abuse of office—are evident in both *Footprints of the Outsider* and Kalaki District. This demonstrates that the novel presents a realistic reflection of governance challenges faced in society.

Second, the causes of political corruption were found to be both individual and structural. Factors such as greed, moral decay, weak institutional frameworks, poverty, and political patronage systems contribute significantly to the persistence of corruption. In Kalaki District, these factors are reinforced by limited accountability mechanisms and low levels of civic awareness among citizens.

Third, the study revealed that the effects of political corruption are severe and far-reaching. Corruption undermines service delivery, slows down development, increases poverty levels, and erodes public trust in leadership. In both the novel and Kalaki District, corruption results in social inequality and dissatisfaction among the population.

Finally, the study concludes that literature, as demonstrated in *Footprints of the Outsider*, plays a crucial role in exposing and critiquing corruption. It not only reflects societal realities but also raises awareness and encourages critical thinking about governance and accountability.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations for Community Development

There is a need to strengthen community participation in governance processes within Kalaki District. Community members should be actively involved in monitoring public projects to ensure transparency and accountability. Establishing community watchdog groups can help in identifying and reporting corrupt practices at the local level.

Additionally, civic education programs should be intensified to empower citizens with knowledge about their rights and responsibilities. When communities are informed, they are more likely to demand accountability from leaders and resist corrupt practices. Promoting a culture of integrity and ethical behavior at the grassroots level is essential for sustainable development.

There is also a need to encourage collaboration between local leaders and community members to ensure that development projects reflect the actual needs of the people. This will reduce opportunities for misuse of resources and enhance trust between the public and leadership.

2. Policy Recommendations

The government and relevant authorities should strengthen anti-corruption policies and ensure their effective implementation, particularly at the district level. This includes improving financial management systems, enforcing strict auditing procedures, and ensuring transparency in procurement processes.

Anti-corruption institutions should be empowered with adequate resources and independence to investigate and prosecute corrupt officials without political interference. Strong legal frameworks must be accompanied by consistent enforcement to deter corrupt behavior.

Furthermore, recruitment and promotion within public institutions should be based on merit rather than political connections. Eliminating nepotism and favoritism will improve efficiency and reduce corruption in public service delivery.

The government should also invest in digital governance systems to reduce human interference in service delivery processes, thereby minimizing opportunities for corruption.

3. Recommendations for Further Research

Future studies should focus on examining the impact of political corruption on specific sectors such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure development in rural districts like Kalaki. This would provide deeper insights into how corruption affects service delivery at different levels.

Researchers are also encouraged to conduct comparative studies involving other literary texts that address political corruption to broaden understanding of how literature reflects and critiques governance issues.

Additionally, further research should explore the role of youth and civil society organizations in combating corruption, particularly in developing communities. Understanding these dynamics can contribute to more effective strategies for promoting accountability and good governance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS (KALAKI DISTRICT)

Introduction:

You are kindly requested to provide honest responses. The information will be used strictly for academic purposes.

Section A: Background Information

1.Gender: ☐

Male ☐ Female

2.Age:

☐ 18–25 ☐ 26–35 ☐ 36–50 ☐ 51+

3.Education Level:

☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary

Section B: Awareness of Political Corruption

1.Are you aware of political corruption in your area?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2.How common is corruption in Kalaki District?

☐ Very common ☐ Common ☐ Rare

Section C: Forms of Corruption

1.Which forms of corruption are common?

☐ Bribery

☐ Nepotism

☐ Embezzlement

☐ Abuse of office

Section D: Causes of Corruption

1.What do you think causes corruption?

☐ Poverty

☐ Greed

☐ Weak laws

☐ Political influence

Section E: Effects of Corruption

1.What are the effects of corruption in your community?

☐ Poor services

☐ Poverty

☐ Lack of development

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LOCAL LEADERS

1.What forms of political corruption are most common in Kalaki District?

.....

.....

2.What are the main causes of corruption in your view?

.....

.....

3.How does corruption affect development in the district?

.....

.....

4.What measures are in place to control corruption?

.....

.....

5.What challenges do you face in fighting corruption?

.....

.....

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

1. Have you ever experienced corruption while accessing public services?

.....
.....

2. How do local leaders manage public resources?

.....
.....

3. What changes would you suggest to reduce corruption?

.....
.....

APPENDIX IV: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE (LITERARY ANALYSIS)

This guide was used to analyze Footprints of the Outsider by Julius Ocwinyo:

Identify instances of political corruption in the text

Examine characters involved in corrupt practices

Analyze causes of corruption in the narrative

Evaluate the effects of corruption on society

Compare fictional findings with real-life situations in Kalaki District

**APPENDIX V: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER To: Local Authorities,
Kalaki District**

Dear Sir/Madam,

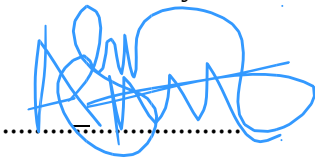
I am Angobu Nelson, a student at Busitema University conducting a study on the topic:

“An examination of the theme of political corruption in the novel Footprints of the Outsider by Julius Ocwinyo versus the community of Kalaki District.”

I kindly request permission to collect data from your community. The information obtained will be used strictly for academic purposes, and confidentiality will be maintained.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,



Angobu Nelson

(Researcher)

APPENDIX VI: CONSENT FORM Participant Consent Form

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that:

My responses will remain confidential

Participation is voluntary

I can withdraw at any time

The information will be used for academic purposes only

Name: _____ **Signature:** _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX VII: DATA COLLECTION SCHEDULE

Activity	Timeframe
Proposal Writing	January to February
Data Collection	March
Data Analysis	April
Report writing	May
Report editing	June
Report Finality	July
Report Submission	August