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**ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS:  
A STUDY IN THE RISE OF AN  
OPPOSITION PARTY IN NIGERIA**

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# ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS: A STUDY IN THE RISE OF AN OPPOSITION PARTY IN NIGERIA

Ademola Pius Adebisi\*

## Abstract

Throughout its democratic years before 2015, the Nigerian political landscape did not record transition of power from a ruling political party to an opposition political party at the federal level. The country, however, witnessed one, when in 2015, an opposition party, the All Progressive Congress (APC) captured political power from the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). This study examined the factors that underlined this opposition party phenomenal rise and discovered that the party gained its strength through the merger experiment which in turn enabled it to gain popularity. The study also discovered that, in the synergy that produced the party lie fissiparous tendencies; disagreement over appointments sharing and weak management of intra-party conflict among other challenges which can disintegrate the party. The study therefore concluded that, although the party is till popular, it can only retain power in future elections if the fissiparous tendencies within it are mitigated.

Key words: Nigeria, Political Party, Opposition Party, Merger, Coalition

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## INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian 2015 general election was indeed a watershed in the country's strife to consolidate democracy. This is because, it was one election in which an opposition party, the All Progressives Congress (APC) wrestled political power from the ruling party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which had then held sway at the national level for about sixteen years. The APC, an amalgam or merger of three parties – the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) and a faction of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) and later joined by a faction of the PDP – not only defeated the incumbent party, but also recorded a landslide victory in that election. In his analysis of what a political party is, Leacock (cited in Kapur, 2008:638) had compared a party to a joint-stock company to which each member contributes his share of political power". This description of course aptly fits the synergy that produced the APC, and which in less than two years threw it up as a winning and ruling party in Nigeria.

Significantly also, the victory of the APC put paid to the fear that, Nigeria was tending toward a *de-facto* one party state, a fear founded on the previous long-standing hegemonic tendency of the PDP and its open boast that it would rule the country for sixty years. Political alignment, realignment, coalition, alliance and accord formation by opposition parties are not of course strange on the Nigerian political landscape. For instance, during the first republic, there was the United Progressives Grand Alliance (UPGA) formed by the Action Group, (AG); the remnant of NCNC and United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC). During the second republic also, there was the Progressive Parties Alliance (PPA) formed by the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Nigeria Peoples Party (NPP) and Peoples Redemption Party (PRP). However, the successes of these alliances if any, were not as



resounding and far-reaching as that of the APC, as those previous Alliances and Accord could not still produce a common platform to wrestle power from the dominant ruling party then at the national level. The merger strategy which, however, birthed the APC seems to be a cue taken by the nucleus of Nigerian politicians that formed the party, from similar phenomena of successful coalitions and party mergers that had occurred elsewhere on the continent of Africa. The phenomenal emergence and the victory of the APC at the 2015 polls can in the immediate be attributed to the strength that lies in harnessing and deploying political assets collectively. Needless to say, for the party to perform in government and retain the conquered political power, it needs to equally sustain the synergy that gave birth to it, as failure to do so, can lead to the disintegration and eventual death of the party. It is however an irony that soon after the elections, the party has found it pretty difficult to close its ranks as the fissiparous tendency in the party seems to be tearing the party apart. This trend has manifested in the division that attended the election of the principal officers of the federal legislative arm of government, the National Assembly; the divergent stance of members of the party in the approach to combat corruption and the accusation and counter-accusation of manipulation of the 2016 budget by both the Executive and the legislative arms of APC – led government among other obvious disagreements, all of which seem to be slowing down the party's promise of progressive change. It is against this backdrop that this article seeks to lay bare the strengths that produced the APC victory and also pin-point the challenges facing the party and which can pose serious threats to its opportunity to retain power at the national level in future elections.

## CONCEPTUALIZING POLITICAL PARTY

### Political Party

Attempts have been made by scholars to conceptualize what a political party means. Most of the definitions are of course largely derivatives of the basis of forming parties; activities or functions of political parties; the principles and interests of party founders, promoters and members and also the labels carry by parties. Whichever the case, let it be stressed that political parties constitute the plank through which those that control the machinery of government get to power or assume positions of authority. Put differently, they are springboard of political authority be it in a democratic state or otherwise. This is why Rosekin *et al* (2008:195) graphically submitted that:

Almost all present-day Societies, whether they are democratic or not, have parties that link citizens to government. Military dictators – such as Franco in Spain, Pinochet in Chile, or generals in Brazil – tried to dispense with parties, blaming them for the country's political problems. But even these dictators set up tame parties to bolster their rule... Whether they love political parties or hate them, countries seem to be unable to do without political parties.

It is on this basis that, Kapur (2008:638) wrote that, by a political party, then, we mean an organized group of citizens who hold common views on public questions and acting as a political unit seeks to obtain control of government with a view to further the programme and the policy which they profess. In another similar conception, Maclver (cited in Kapur, 2008:635) sees a party as an association organized in support of some principle or policy by which constitutional means it endeavours to make the determinant

of government. Going by these two notions of a political party, the following facts about political parties come to the fore: one, they are organised or built around similar or common interests. Two, their primary aim is to gain political power. However, it has been found in some democracies that some parties are fluid or not strongly organized. It is this observation of course that impressed Epstein (cited in Adebisi, 2010: 136) to define a political party as any group, however loosely organised, seeking to elect governmental office – holders under a given label. Apart from widening the scope of political parties and laying emphasis on their aim, this definition also recognises the fact that political parties, more often than not, do have labels or symbols by which they distinguish themselves from one another. To Janda, Barry and Goldman (2000: 237), a political party is an organisation that sponsors candidates for political offices under the organisation's name. In this conception, neither the interest that pulled members into this organization nor their view (s) about governmental policies are considered germane. This might not be unconnected with the fact that in some democracies, in terms of ideas, parties are hardly different. Apart from this, it has been observed that, in most cases today, party bond hardly rests on ideology. This is why Kapur (P. 63) wrote that, the old conception that a political party is a group of men professing the same political doctrine is not the entire truth now. The emphasis he wrote further, has shifted from ideology to organisation and this has been necessitated by the extension to the franchise and consequently the nationwide appeal a political party should have for its programme (P.63). Still in some democracies, like in Nigeria, party jumping or defection from one party to another without any ideological consideration or nicety has become a permanent hallmark of their democracies and party politics. Writing on the United States of America, Roskin *et al* (P. 195) submitted that:

To many Americans, a political party means little. The two major U.S. parties often appear alike; their basic values and proposals often overlap. In elections, candidates personality is usually, more important than party.

This is why Magastadt (2009: 390) in simple manner wrote that the purpose of a political party is to select, nominate and support candidates for elective offices. Taking a cue from all these notions, our contextual conception of a party therefore, is that of an organized group of people who share common political principles and ideas as to the direction their political society should gravitate to politically, economically and socially, and also seeks to gain the machinery of government to enable it drive or steer the political society towards that direction (Adebisi, 2015:4). For a political party to be properly constituted and gain the strength to win elections nationally, certain conditions are considered as desiderata. Kapur identified five of such conditions:

i. There should exist a certain measure of agreement among members, on fundamental principles which can bind the people together as a political unit. They may differ on details, but there should be no difference of opinion on principles they stand for. If there is no agreement on fundamentals, they cannot cooperate with one another and achieve their political ends: the desire to attain political power.

ii. Members must be duly organized. Without proper organisation, it will not be possible for members to conform to the common principles on which they agree. It is their organization into a permanently cohesive body that enables them to gain strength with which they can act in concert.

iii. That members so united should formulate a lucid and specific programme or manifesto which will appeal to the electorate and devise

all possible means to maintain it. A deviation from the manifesto can wreck the party.

iv. A party should always employ constitutional means to pursue and achieve its policy. It should avoid unconstitutional means to gain power and sustain it; it should not suppress other political parties.

v. All political parties should strive to promote national interests over and above sectional, sectarian or command interests. A deviation from this will turn the party to a faction (Pp.636 -639).

To these may be added the following: one, based on the peculiar nature of the Nigerian political ecology, a party must be mindful of the diversity or heterogeneity of interests of the political society and must accommodate or aggregate such interests. Two, it must also take into consideration the religious tendencies of the society as religion has become a sensitive issue in today's Nigerian political terrain. Three, it must appreciate the fact that in politics, there are no political saints and also no permanent friends. Four, today's political parties require enormous resources to organize, and mobilize its sympathizers and members and to also run an effective campaign.

Finally, a party must be led by men and women of integrity and peopled by talented political demagogues who can, through their aggregative skills and capacity, win the hearts of the electorate for the party. How all these and many more factors have inter-played to boost the strength of the APC are explicated elsewhere in this article.

## **THE EMERGENCE OF THE ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS (APC)**

The 2011 general elections were contested by Sixty-three (63) political parties among which were the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN); the All

Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the three political parties that later fused to form the All Progressives Congress (APC). Before the 2011 general elections, there were moves by the ACN and the CPC to form an alliance to contest the elections. However, the moves collapsed as the two political parties could not reconcile their differences which bordered majorly on who would lead the Alliance in Presidential election and speculatively on the direct and indirect roles played by three core members of the Northern Political Leaders Forum (NPLF), Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, Gen. Aliyu Gusau, and Alhaji Atiku Abubakar in nominating the presidential and vice-presidential candidates for the Alliance (The Punch, April 14, 2011, P.2). Announcing the collapse of the talks, forty-eight hours to the Presidential election, the Chairman of ACN, Bisi Akande said; "we are attracted to the leadership of the CPC but it had not been reaching out to us" (p.2). He however, explained further that a relationship between the two parties could not be ruled out in the event of a presidential re-run (P.2). However, the outcome of the elections was not favourable to both parties as they lost to the hegemonic ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) and of course, there was no cause for a re-run as the PDP's victory was a landslide one, though trailed by allegation of brazen and blatant rigging. In any event, with their dismal performance, it dawned on the leadership of the ACN, the CPC and the ANPP that, if opposition parties were to wrestle power from the dominant PDP, they must close ranks, forge unity and completely synergize their men and material resources to become a single political entity or party. Beyond this, they also came to the realization after the elections that, opposition parties were able to capture power from the ruling parties in countries like: Zambia (1991), Ghana (2000), Senegal (2000), Kenya (2002), Benin Republic (2006), Siara Leone (2007), and Cot'divoire, (Ivory Coast) (2010) only through alliances and coalitions. Hence the re-opening of coalition or merger talks by the ACN, CPC and the ANPP.

The determination of the parties to merge was further enhanced by the provisions in the Electoral Act 2010 (Amended) which allows for merger. According to Section 84 (1) any two or more registered political parties may merge on approval by the Commission following a formal request presented to the Commission by the political parties for that purpose. (2) Political parties intending to merge shall each give to the Commission 90 days notice of their intention to do so before a general election. The written request for merger shall be sent to the Chairman of the Commission and shall be signed jointly by the National Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer for the time being of the different political parties proposing the merger and shall be accompanied by:

(a) a special resolution passed by the national convention of each of the political parties proposing to merge, approving the merger.

(b) The proposed full name and acronyms, constitution, manifesto, symbol or logo of the party

together with the addresses of the national office of the party resulting from the merger, and

© Evidence of payment of administrative costs of N 100,000 or as may be fixed from time to time by an Act of the National Assembly.

4. On receipt of the request for merger of political parties, the Commission shall consider the request and, if the parties have fulfilled the requirements of the constitution and this Act, approve the proposed merger and communicate its decision to the parties concerned before expiration of 30 days from the date of the receipt of the fund request. PROVIDED that if the Commission fails to communicate its decision within 30 days the merger shall be deemed to be effective.

5. Where the request for the proposed merger is approved, the Commission shall withdraw and cancel the certificates of registration of all

the political parties opting for the merger and substitute a single certificate by registration in the name of the party resulting from the merger.

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (s) of this Section no merger of political parties received by the Commission less than 90 days before any general election in the country shall not be considered by the Commission.

In the course of the merger talks, a faction of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) another political party in the country which was rocked then by internal crisis also got involved in the negotiation. Its arrow-head was the Governor of Imo State, Rochas Okorocha. While his faction was engaged in merger talks, the National Executive Council (NEC) of APGA dissociated the party from the merger talks and described Okorocha's involvement as anti-party activities. Okorocha was thus expelled from the party and the Imo State Chapter of the party was dissolved (Sunday *Punch*, August 4, 2013:5). This development consequently gave Okorocha's faction the risky latitude to continue with the merger talks without a clear party platform. The merger Committee was headed by Tom Ikimi who was the Chairman for ACN merger Committee. On 6<sup>th</sup> February 2013, the establishment of the APC was announced and the resolution to form the party was signed by the representative of the ACN, Tom Ikimi; representative of Okorocha's faction of the APGA, Senator Aninie Okonkwo; while Garba Shehu, the Chairman of the CPC Merger Committee and Ibrahim Shakarau, the Chairman of ANPP Merger Committee signed on behalf of their parties. While the parties in the merger talks were consummating their union or fusion, there emerged in March 2013 two political groups laying claim to the acronym of "APC". They were the All Patriotic Citizens and the African Peoples Congress. The National Director of Operations of All Patriotic Citizens, Oliver Ike and the National Chairman of the African Peoples Congress, Onyinye Ikeogwuonu



claimed that they had submitted their applications while the promoters of All Progressive Congress said that, since they announced the name of the merger parties as APC on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 before the other two political parties, they owned the acronym. Apart from this, the merger parties wrote to the INEC to disregard the claim of the two political groups and further described it as an attempt by the ruling PDP to use fronts to scuttle the emergence of the All Progressives Congress as a formidable opposition party to it (*The Punch* March 15, 2013 P.2).

In any event, following the submission of application for registration by the All Progressives Congress to INEC, the INEC on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2013 announced the registration of the All Progressives Congress as a political party. In a Press statement issued by Kayode Idowu the Chief Press Secretary to the Chairman of the Commission, Attairu Jega, he said that in consonance with the Electoral Act, 2010 (Amended).

The Independent Electoral Commission has approved the application by three political parties – the ACN, the ANPP and the CPC – to merge into one, to be known as the All Progressives Congress. On considering the application, the Commission found that the applicant – parties have met all statutory requirements for the merger, and has accordingly granted their request. Consequently, the Commission has approved the withdrawal of the individual certificates of the applicant – parties and the issuance of a single certificate to the APC” (*The Punch*, August 1,2013: 2)

This development consequently put an end to the earlier struggle by the three political parties over the acronym – APC. Following the emergence of the party, it instantly became a strong opposition party as most of the Governors and other political office – holders in the states being controlled by the defunct three merger parties became APC members. The states

were, Oyo, Lagos, Osun Ekiti, Edo, Nassarawa, Imo, Zamfara, Yobe, Borno and Ogun State.

Bisi Akande was named as its Interim Chairman among other interim officers of the party. On August 20, 2013, the party publicly released its manifesto which its further described as road map for Nigeria.

While the APC was crystalizing, the ruling PDP was going through a ruinous and debilitating internal crisis which bordered on issues such as whether or not President Goodluck Jonathan should seek a second term in the 2015 election going by PDP Zoning formula; and the contention over who should lead the party among many crisis at the party's state chapters, notably in Rivers State. This could not but lead to the factionalization of the party which further led to the emergence of a faction known as the new PDP (n-PDP) within the party. Notable among the n-PDP members were Atiku Abubakar, Baraje, and Bukola Saraki. Initially also, seven (7) PDP governors were in support of this faction and did threaten to defect to the APC. The governors were Rotimi Amechi of Rivers State, Rabiun Kwankwanso of Kano State, Murtala Nyako of Adamawa State; Babangida Aliyu of Niger State; Abdu Fatah Ahmed of Kwara State, Aliyu Wammako of Sokoto State and Sule Lamido, of Jigawa State. At the peak of the crisis, those states governors except Babangida Aliyu and Sule Lamido defected to the APC thereby further enhancing the numerical strength of the APC nation-wide. This was followed by other glare of defections by legislators and other PDP members. From the on-set therefore, the APC was a rainbow coalition as it was discernible that it harbours people of divergent political tendencies. To be sure, within its ranks were people who believe in the establishment of true federalism or devolution of more powers to the states; such as Bola Tinubu, Bisi Akande and Atiku Abubakar; those coming into the party on the platform of the CPC were not so disposed to this tendency and so also those that defected from the PDP to the APC. Ideologically too, the APC is also an admixture of those who believe in democratic socialism

or capitalism cloned with a modicum of state control and pure liberals who believe in free-market economy. In other words and broadly speaking, it is a mix bag of the so-called progressives and conservatives on the Nigerian political landscape. This trends indeed contradict the position that a political party ought to be built around common principles, or ideology. However it seems that, at the point the party was formed, its promoters were united by the common objective of wresting power from the ruling PDP at the national level and also the determination of individuals to promote their political fortunes, through a strong party rather than ideological consideration. On 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 the APC held its first national convention and produced John Odigie Oyegun as the national Chairman of the party. Other Officers elected were Ogbuta Ado (Deputy National Legal Adviser); Racheal Akpabi (Zonal Women Leader/South-South); Tunde Asagho (Zonal Youth Leader/South-South); Timi Frank (Ex-officio); Hilliard E. Eta (National Vice-Chairman/South-South); Orji Ngofa (National Deputy Secretary); Muiz Banire (National Legal Adviser); Segun Oni (Deputy National Chairman); Tajudeen Bello (National Financial Secretary); Kemi Nelson (Zonal Women Leader); Adedokun Oluwasegun (Zonal Youth Leader); and Razak Ayolami Salin sile (Ex-Officio). Others are: Ositu Izunaso (National Organising Secretary); George Moghalu (National Auditor); Sunday Jacob Chukwu (Deputy Finance Secretary); Augustina Adoke (Deputy National Women Leader); Emma Eneakwu (National Vice-Chairman/South-East); Helen Ojukwu (Zonal Women Leader); Paul Chukwuma (Zonal Youth Leader); B.B. Akpugo (ex-officio); Lai Mohammed (National Publicity Secretary); Ramatu Aliyu Tijani, National Women Leader; Lado Abubakar Suleja (Deputy National Treasurer); Jock Alamba (Deputy Welfare Secretary); Zakari Idde (National Vice-Chairman/North Central); Hajiya Hassana (Zonal Women Leader – Youth-Central); Terver Adinge (Zonal Youth Leader) and Nelson Alapa (Ex-officio) (*The Guardian*, June 15, 2015: 1-2). This composition of the

Executive of the party, of course, portends national spread and thus enhances the party's popularity acceptability.

In the course of forming the party, political differences did not in the immediate subside, thus this culminated in dissatisfaction and the eventual defection of three key promoters and actors in the formation of the party, namely Tom Ikimi, Ibrahim Shekarau and Anine Okonkwo to the PDP. The APC, based on its claim to progressive ideology and attraction to some measure of state regulation of the economy, became a consultative member of the socialist international on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2014.

## **SOURCES OF THE APC WINNING STRENGTH**

The gain of every synergic move is often, enhanced capacity to attain collectively desired objectives. That the APC therefore gained greater momentum than when it was in the pieces of ACN, ANPP and CPC is stating the obvious. More specifically, the strengths of the party which enabled it to capture political power nationally as an opposition party lie in the following: The first gain in strength by the APC upon formation was the nation-wide or national outlook the party instantly wore. Hitherto, the ACN held sway in the Yoruba South-West while the CPC and ANPP held sway in the North and the APGA in the South –East especially in Imo State. With the merger and the defections to it, the party not only wore national outlook, but also gained popularity more so in states with high voters' strength. As at January 2014, while the PDP was in control of 18 states, the APC controlled 16 states while APGA and Labour Party (LP) controlled one state each. The distribution is as shown in the tables below.

Table 1: Voters' Strength in PDP States

| S/N | STATE       | VOTERS' STRENGTH |
|-----|-------------|------------------|
| 1   | Kebbi       | 1,603,468        |
| 2   | Katsina     | 2,931,668        |
| 3   | Jigawa      | 1,852,698        |
| 4   | Niger       | 721,478          |
| 5   | Kaduna      | 3,565,762        |
| 6   | Bauchi      | 1,835,562        |
| 7   | Gombe       | 1,266,993        |
| 8   | Kogi        | 1,215,405        |
| 9   | Plateau     | 1,983,453        |
| 10  | Taraba      | 1,308,106        |
| 11  | Benue       | 1,415,162        |
| 12  | Enugu       | 1,301,185        |
| 13  | Delta       | 1,900,055        |
| 14  | Ebonyi      | 876,249          |
| 15  | Bayelsa     | 474,389          |
| 16  | Akwa Ibom   | 1,714,781        |
| 17  | Cross River | 1,018,550        |
| 18  | Abia        | 1,481,191        |
| 19  | FCT         | 886,323          |

Source: The Nation, January 27, 2014, P.5

Table 2: Voters' Strength in APC States

| S/N | STATE    | VOTERS' STRENGTH |
|-----|----------|------------------|
| 1   | Sokoto   | 2,065,508        |
| 2   | Zamfara  | 1,746,024        |
| 3   | Yobe     | 1,182,230        |
| 4   | Borno    | 2,730,368        |
| 5   | Adamawa  | 1,714,860        |
| 6   | Kano     | 5,135,415        |
| 7   | Kwara    | 1,115,665        |
| 8   | Oyo      | 2,577,490        |
| 9   | Osun     | 1,293,967        |
| 10  | Ekiti    | 750,753          |
| 11  | Ogun     | 1,869,326        |
| 12  | Lagos    | 6,247,845        |
| 13  | Edo      | 1,412,225        |
| 14  | Imo      | 1,611,715        |
| 15  | Rivers   | 2,419,057        |
| 16  | Nasarawa | 1,224,206        |

Source: The Nation, January 27, 2014, P.5

Table 3: Voters' Strength in APGA State

| S/N | STATE   | VOTERS' STRENGHT |
|-----|---------|------------------|
| 1   | Anambra | 1,758,220        |

Source: The Nation, January 27, 2014, P.5

Table 4: Voters Strength Labor Party State

| S/N | STATE | VOTERS' STRENGHT |
|-----|-------|------------------|
| 1   | Ondo  | 1,558,097        |

Source: The Nation, January 27, 2014, P.5

This instant immense popularity was soon translated to votes as the party won the Presidential election, majority seats in the National Assembly and also Governorship and House of Assembly elections.

Another basis of APC's strength was its appealing manifesto. For instance, on March 6, 2014, the party publicly presented a 10-point Road map to Nigerians. Prominent on the Road map were: creation of 20,000 jobs per state; restoration of agriculture; independence for Economic and Finance Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), State Independent Electoral Commission (SIECS); five thousand naira (₦5,000) monthly allowance for 25million poorest people; establishment of technological driven industrial estates; ex-youth corps members to get allowance for 12 months; zero tolerance for official/private sector corruption; food, relevant quality education and better housing plan (*The Nation*, March 7, 2014: 1, 8, & 10). All these promises were of course appealing and irresistible to the Nigerian electorate as they were well crafted and articulated by the party's propaganda machinery, to address the myriad of socio-economic challenges confronting the country under the PDP rule. The 10 – point Road map of the party thus strengthened the APC as alternative to the PDP. The APC was further strengthened by

the poor performance of the economy of Nigeria under the rule of PDP. At about the time the APC was birthed all socio-economic indices pointed to poor performance by the PDP-led government a trend the APC effectively deployed during campaign against the PDP. To be sure, according to the Africa Development Bank (AFDB), the PDP-led Federal government's efforts to reduce poverty through programmes such as SURE-P and You WIN were "weak" as the proportions of people living below the national poverty line worsened from 65.5 per cent in 1996 to 69 per cent in 2010. The poverty rate at the rural areas was put at over 73%; 41 per cent of Nigerian children were stunted and 23 per cent underweight as evidence of pervasive malnutrition. Unemployment was put at 24 percent as against 21 per cent recorded three years before 2013. It was even projected that the labour market would bloat from 3 million in 2012 to 8.5 million in 2015 (AFDB, cited in *The Punch*, August 25, 2013: 16). Although there were positive trends in the rate of inflation put at 8.4 percent downed from 12 percent; and stable exchange rate of between ₦155 and ₦160 to a dollar, among others, however, the negative trends were drummed up by the APC to strengthen its root among the electorate and which of course had the desired – effect. This was further compounded by the pervasive corruption in the land and also insecurity, particularly the terrorist activities of the Boko-Haram Insurgents in the North-Eastern part of the country. As the PDP-led government appeared helpless in the face of these economic, social and security challenges, the APC seized the moment and promised a change and also assured Nigerians that the fulcrum of the APC-led government would be economy, corruption and security. As the people were yearning for change, having lived under the PDP-led government without much transformation of their conditions of living, the change mantra of the APC instantly became a crowd puller for the party.

Another resource from which the APC drew its strength was that, with the synergy, the party was able to garner a number of rich Nigerians to its

fold who made funds available to fund the party's campaign. Some were businessmen and former and serving political office-holders who believed in the cause of the party and thus made money available to fund the party's campaign. This enabled it to compete favourably with the ruling PDP. The financial muscle of the APC was further enhanced particularly by the serving governors who not only surreptitiously made money available to the party, but equally deployed State Administrative Resources (SAR) - radio and television stations, government vehicles and other facilities- to promote the party. Beyond this, in spite of the initial hiccups posed by the PDP for the party to raise funds from its grassroots supporters, the APC eventually got the window to solicit for token contributions from its supporters. All these enabled the party to run an effective campaign.

Also, the integrity of some of the key leaders of the party particularly that of its Presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, boosted the image of the party and made it attractive to the electorate. Apart from the fact that he had contested for the position of President thrice before the formation of the APC, Buhari was generally perceived as a very disciplined person who personified honesty and transparency. He was widely adjudged as incorruptible. This perception also flows from his past crusade for national discipline when he was a military Head of State, between 1983 – 1985, and his obvious simple life style and consistent criticism of corruption in the country.

Consequent upon the merger also, the APC equally became a pool of grassroots politicians who could mobilize support for the party. Some of the grassroots politicians included Muhammadu Buhari, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Bukola Saraki, Audu Ogbe, Bisi Akande, and most APC State governors, and other elected officials. Taking this advantage, the APC gained instant widespread support or strength across the country. This widespread popularity also afforded the party to get enough party agents to monitor voting, counting of votes and the protection of election results. The ubiquity



of APC agents in most polling booths across the country indeed strengthened the party's anti-rigging strategies.

The APC also drew its strength from the effective campaign machinery it was able to build after its emergence. Its campaign Council and Committees were drawn across the merger parties and were well organized and deployed to win the hearts of the electorate or run a successful political evangelization. The party's Publicity Secretary, Lai Mohammed was in particular a thorn in the flesh of the ruling party. He matched the propaganda of the PDP word for word and criticism for criticism. The local and international mass media and the social media were also effectively deployed to strengthen the party's popularity.

The party's sensitivity to the need for religious balancing in the choice of the leading contenders for political offices particularly for the offices of the President and Vice-president equally engendered confidence in the party among the electorate. At its formative stage, it was alleged that the party was planning for a Muslim-Muslim presidential and vice presidential ticket. This, the party's critics, alleged was a ploy to Islamise Nigeria. The party not only denied this allegation, but also ensured that the Presidential – Vice Presidential ticket emerged a Muslim-Christian ticket. Thus the party became a rallying point for both Muslim and Christian voters.

The good governance that was being experienced under the APC governors then also boosted the strength of the party. The visible achievements being witnessed then in APC States like Lagos, Osun, Ekiti, Rivers and Imo among others created the impression that a APC-led Federal government would certainly deliver or replicate good governance at the federal level and would even facilitate much better performance by state and local governments. Such transformation included renovation of schools; provision of modern health facilities and massive infrastructural development.

The crisis that rocked the PDP and which culminated in a flurry of defection of its members to the APC further strengthened the APC. As a

result of the crisis and the attendant defection, the PDP's losses instantly became the gains of the APC. Apart from swelling APC membership, the defectors also made available to the APC, election winning strategies and stratagems which contributed in no small way to the success of the party in the 2015 general elections.

Significant also was the adoption of the Modified Direct Primary System (MDPS) which borders on internal democracy in place of party dictatorship. It indeed also made the party attractive. Explaining the concept of Modified Direct Primary System, Lai Mohammed, at the end of the party's National Executive Committee inaugural meeting said:

“INEC says that you either do direct or indirect primary and we have opted for the direct. In other words, we have opted for a method that will ensure the participation of the largest number of our members. We call it modified because we are also aware of certain constraints of getting all our 20million members or thereabout to queue for election, especially in areas where we have security challenges like Yobe, Adamawa and Borno. We are working out a formula that will still enable the largest members of our party to participate. But I want to say that we are not settling for delegate elections.”

This promise of course made the party initially attractive to those that wanted to join. In reality also, the party did make good its promise, although the primary still generated rancour in some parts of the country, but was on a manageable scale.

Finally, the party's initial ranks also swelled because there was no ideological discrimination for intending members. It consequently became a nest for the conservatives, the progressives and other ideological shades. The aim then was to coalesce forces to dislodge the PDP at the national level irrespective of ideological tendencies. It thus, was a mere platform to nominate candidates for election. It was the combination of all the above factors that engendered the strengths of the APC and culminated in its

victory or success in the 2015 general elections as shown for example in the Table below:

Table 5: Final Results of 2015 Presidential Election

| S/N | STATE        | APC               | PDP               |
|-----|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1.  | Ekiti        | 120,331           | 176,466           |
| 2.  | Ogun         | 308,290           | 207,950           |
| 3.  | Enugu        | 14,157            | 553,003           |
| 4.  | Kogi         | 264,851           | 149,987           |
| 5.  | Osun         | 383,603           | 249,929           |
| 6.  | Ondo         | 299,889           | 251,368           |
| 7.  | FCT          | 146,399           | 157,195           |
| 8.  | Oyo          | 528,620           | 303,376           |
| 9.  | Nassarawa    | 236,838           | 273,460           |
| 10. | Kano         | 1,903,999         | 215,779           |
| 11. | Jigawa       | 885,988           | 142,904           |
| 12. | Katsina      | 1,345,441         | 98,937            |
| 13. | Kwara        | 302,146           | 132,602           |
| 14. | Kaduna       | 1,127,760         | 484,085           |
| 15. | Anambra      | 17,926            | 660,762           |
| 16. | Abia         | 13,394            | 368,303           |
| 17. | Akwa-Ibom    | 58,411            | 953,304           |
| 18. | Benue        | 373,961           | 303,737           |
| 19. | Borno        | 473,543           | 25,640            |
| 20. | Cross River  | 28,368            | 414,863           |
| 21. | Delta        | 48,910            | 1,211,405         |
| 22. | Edo          | 208,469           | 286,869           |
| 23. | Imo          | 133,253           | 559,185           |
| 24. | Kebbi        | 567,683           | 100,972           |
| 25. | Lagos        | 792,460           | 632,327           |
| 26. | Niger        | 657,678           | 149,222           |
| 27. | Yobe         | 446,265           | 25,526            |
| 28. | Plateau      | 429,140           | 549,615           |
| 29. | Bauchi       | 931,598           | 86,085            |
| 30. | Gombe        | 361,246           | 96,873            |
| 31. | Ebonyi       | 19,518            | 323,653           |
| 32. | Sokoto       | 671,926           | 152,199           |
| 33. | Zamfara      | 612,202           | 144,833           |
| 34. | Rivers       | 69,238            | 1,487,075         |
| 35. | Bayelsa      | 5,194             | 361,209           |
| 36. | Adamawa      | 374,701           | 251,664           |
| 37. | Taraba       | 261,326           | 310,800           |
|     | <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>15,424,921</b> | <b>12,853,162</b> |
|     |              | <b>APC</b>        | <b>PDP</b>        |

Source: [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org)

## THE CHALLENGES CONFRONTING THE APC

Just as the APC gained strength in its confederal form, in the same confederacy lies some challenges which may vitiate the party's bond more so that the party is not equally immune to some of the challenging socio-economic conditions bestriding the environment in which it is leading the business of government. Put simply and more lucidly, the APC today faces a number of internal and external challenges which will determine the fate of the party in the years ahead. First is the inherent and festering conflictual ideological fault lines and the initial divergent party affiliations or world views within the party. No sooner the party assumed power at the national level than the fissiparous tendency in the party began to manifest and constitute an albatross to governance. This has manifested in a number of ways in the conduct of the APC led government.

For instance the central-fugal tendencies in the party did play out when the two chambers of the National Assembly wanted to choose their Principal Officers, some groups within the party defied the party's position and went ahead to choose their candidates to lead the two houses claiming that the party could not dictate to the legislative body. This disagreement has of course laid the foundation for the frosty relations that exist between the executive and the legislature up to the time of this research. This frosty relations have been slowing down the pace of good governance and thereby presenting a converse image of the party as agent of rapid change.

Similarly there has been cold war among the different tendencies in the party as to which group is taking the lion's share of political appointments. More specifically, there has been the allegation that the members of the defunct CPC in the party which the President Buhari formerly belonged to, have been getting the lion's share of political patronage to the chagrin of the other blocs within the party. This has indeed been a threat to the unity of the party.

The situation got worse when even the wife of the President openly alleged that the APC – led Presidency had been hijacked by people who did not work for the party to the extent that those who built the party and laboured for its success in the 2015 general elections have been sidelined. This trend if not reversed can further deepen discord within the party and undermine its success in the future. In-fact amidst this trend there has emerged the feeler that some aggrieved members were planning to form a mega party out of the APC.

In its war against corruption, the APC led government appears not to be ready to spare even its members. For example, it has in line with its promise of the independence of anti-corruption agencies, refused to intervene in the trial of the President of Senate, Bukola Saraki, by the Code of Conduct Tribunal for alleged false declaration of assets. The Saraki group within the party however perceived the non-intervention by the executive arm of government and the party in the trial as vendetta for his defilement of the party in the choice of the leaders of the Senate. This kind of perception again has been undermining the unity of the party and also adversely affecting the relations between the executive and the legislature and by extension the effective and efficient performance the APC promised Nigerians during electioneering. This trend loomed because the APC harbours both disciplined and corrupt politicians whose visions are divergent.

Another challenge facing the APC-led government is the down-turn in the economy of the country. By the time the party took over the reins of government, it was discovered that the previous PDP government had almost depleted the national treasury through corrupt practices and extravagant spending. For example, it was discovered that the office of National Security Adviser diverted about \$28 billion meant for purchase of arms to the PDP purse to fund the 2015 election campaign through various means and individuals. Also, it was discovered huge amount of oil revenue

was not remitted by the NNPC to the federation account. Beyond this, price of oil which is the major source of revenue for the country nosedived from about \$100 in 2014 to as low as #38 in 2016. This sharp decline coupled with the extravagant spending of the previous government, created financial instability for the APC- led federal government. In fact, the inability of many state governments to pay workers salaries which loomed in Jonathan years escalated. This trend also affected the APC –led federal government’s ability to, in the immediate fulfil its campaign promises at the expected speed. The situation was not also helped by mounting inflation; growing unemployment and foreign exchange instability. The problem was further compounded by declining daily oil production which was trending at about 1.5million barrels per day as against the usual 2.2 million barrels per day. This was caused by renewed destruction of oil pipelines by Niger-Delta militants. Although Nigerians were showing understanding, however, some believe that the government has not been creative or innovative enough in tackling the challenge. This has been having a telling effect on the rating of the party as a strong platform to precipitate the much-sought after socio-economic transformation. Indeed, the PDP in spite of its internal wranglings, has been claiming that it years in power at the national level were far better than the brief period of APC in power not minding the different prevailing conditions under which both parties have operated.

Finally the party’s executive has not also demonstrated enough capability to resolve all the issues that has been widening the schism within the party. The development is not helped by President Mohammed, Buhari’s seeming aloofness or hands off style from the affairs of the party. As the “political leader” of the party, he ought, ex-cathedra, to have shown keener interest in the affairs of the party and demonstrated strong political will to rein in all divisive forces within the party and thus forge unity of purpose.

## CONCLUSION

The emergence of the APC as an opposition party and its subsequent success in capturing political power from a sitting government at the national level is a proof of the potency of collective efforts to achieve political ends. Besides, it has also reinforced the confidence of the Nigerian electorate in democracy; it has allayed the fear of the country becoming a de facto one party state and has also exuded salutary effect on the country's efforts to consolidate democracy. From the foregoing analysis, it is palpably evident that, though the APC is a product of coalition, however it is still a loose arrangement which if not properly welded is highly susceptible or vulnerable to disintegration. In order to avoid this pitfall, and to enhance the performance of the APC-led government, it is imperative that the party closes ranks soonest and graduate from "confederacy" to a "federation" and eventually to a "unitary" political organization with the common purpose of retaining political power. True it is that the PDP is equally bedevilled by seemingly intractable factionalization now which has not made it a viable opposition party and a better alternative to the APC. Should the PDP however close ranks, there is the possibility of the party bouncing back. Even if the PDP remains incoherent before the 2019 elections, there is also the possibility of a re-enactment of the APC feat by another coalition of forces with a different label and which may be an amalgam of APC, PDP and other smaller political parties. The fortunes of the APC can be further improved and sustained if the leadership of the party demonstrates the will to smoothen the rough edges in the relationships among the tendencies within the party confederacy; if the APC-led government can be more creative and innovative in tackling the economic problems facing the country and thus improve the quality of life of the citizenry as promised by the party, if the party executive and leaders can muster the political will to

instil discipline within the rank and file of the party and if the APC-government runs an inclusive government.

As it is, Nigerians still have confidence in the party because of the integrity of the President of the APC – led government; the significant achievements the APC government has recorded in the fight against the Boko Haram Insurgency and the anti-corruption crusade and efforts of the government. This can even be seen from the continuous defection from the PDP to the APC and the success of the party in some bye-elections held after the 2015 general elections. If the schism within the party however persists, the party risks dismemberment in the foreseeable future.



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## **IMPROVING SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE (SC) THROUGH FEMINIST STYLISTICS (FS)**

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# IMPROVING SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE (SC) THROUGH FEMINIST STYLISTICS (FS)

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## Abstract

Feminist stylistics (FS), like any other stylistics practice, draws basic assumptions from linguistics. Yet unlike other traditional stylistics practices, FS opens its doors to ideology and extra-textual factors in the analysis of a text. Unlike the formalist stylistics, for example, it renders less importance to linguistic form and linguistic elegance. Drawing relevant linguistic tools like passivisation, transitivity, agency and fragmentation from functional stylistics, FS can be applied to analyse power structures. In line with these assumptions, the ultimate aim of this research was to study the significance of FS in enhancing the sociolinguistic competence (SC) of students through teaching local poetry in English in the Ethiopian higher education context. A feminist stylistics model of teaching poetry was integrated with communicative language teaching (CLT) tasks so that an intriguing environment was recreated in the classroom for the students to develop their sociolinguistic competence. This project was an integral part of five other stylistics research projects. It was carried out on the basis of an experimental research design following a mixed method research. A total of 190 students (63.3%) were selected from the population of 300 students in various programmes of the Department of English and Other Languages at Adama University, Ethiopia, through a systematic sampling procedure. These students were again classified into experimental groups (95) and

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control groups (95) following a systematic sampling method. The students in the experimental group took FS module through the stylistics course which included FS and other modules in stylistics. A summary of the total mean gain score out of 20 showed an interesting result. Both the control and experimental groups performed almost similarly in their feminist stylistics pre-test which was calculated out of 20%. The experimental mean score was 9.8842 and a little bigger than the control mean score of 7.2316. Consequently, the t-test result showed that the existence of a mean difference of 1.33684 was not statistically significant. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the mean test scores of the two groups. On the other hand, the t-test results for both pre and post tests for the feminist stylistics module were also observed. The t-value of the feminist stylistics post-test was 8.651. And, the table value of t-critical was 1.96 with 188 degree of freedom and at a significance level of 0.05. Because the t-value of 8.651 exceeded the t-critical value of 1.96 for a two tailed test at 0.05 level of significance for 188 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the feminist stylistic method of teaching indigenous poetry does contribute to the improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of students in the English as a foreign language (EFL) context.

Key words: feminist stylistics (FS), sociolinguistic competence (SC), indigenous poetry, EFL, communicative language teaching (CLT) and gender free language

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Preamble**

This paper deals with some core concepts in feminist stylistics (FS), which are relevant for understanding and interpreting a literary text. FS, like any other stylistics practice, draws basic assumptions from linguistics. However, unlike the other traditional stylistics practices, it opens its doors to ideology and extra-textual factors in the analysis of a text. Unlike the formalist stylistics, for example, it renders less importance to linguistic form and linguistic elegance. Drawing relevant linguistic tools like passivisation,

transitivity, agency and fragmentation from functional stylistics, FS can be applied to analyse power structures coherently. Since the roles of shared knowledge, reader-response and context are relevant, the link between feminist stylistics and pragmatic stylistics is conspicuous. Most Significant of all, as far as a methodological framework is concerned, feminist stylistics is informed by systemic-functional linguistics (SFL), critical linguistics (CL) and critical discourse analysis (CDA). My argument in this research is not reductionist because I assume that feminist stylistics owns a distinct subject matter, basic assumptions and modes of analysis.

## **1.2. Problem statement**

Sexism is not only reflected in political power and economic structures, but also in language structures. Each text can carry an ideological message as Mills puts it: “Texts are invaded by socio-cultural norms, by ideologies, by history, by economic forces, by fashions, by gender and racial stereotyping and so on” (1995, p. 198). Language reflects general practices about gender differences, values and systems which can unconstructively influence the self-representation of women. Language is not gender free. Sexist language is pervasive in various cultures. “...sexist language is that language-use, conscious or unconscious on the part of the speaker, which may alienate females (and males), and which may lead to establishment of an environment which is not conducive to communication and effective social interaction” (p. 86). However, in the Ethiopian poetic culture, it goes unnoticed and continues to surface as a strong part of the natural system. To understand and interpret the systematic working of language, methods are lacking and discrimination through language continues to function in the system. In line with this argument, in higher education contexts of Ethiopia, home-grown poetry is not taught as an authentic subject with the

objective of developing the sociolinguistic competence, personal involvement, linguistic competence and cultural development of students.

### **1.3. Objectives**

Specifically, this research was conducted to:

- analyse how Ethiopian poets use language to subjugate women in literary texts,
- describe how the writers use language to present the cultural and gender roles of women in poetic texts,
- assist students in an EFL context to enhance their sociolinguistic competence using indigenous poetry.

### **1.4. Hypothesis**

A feminist stylistics method of teaching indigenous poetry does not contribute to the improvement of the sociolinguistic competence of students in an EFL context.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Basic assumptions**

Central to the feminist theoretical framework are the roles of language, ideology and context. Like critical linguists, feminist stylisticians assume that “language is not a transparent carrier of meanings but a medium which imposes its own constraints on the meaning which is constructed” (Mills, 1995, p. 11). Language is seen as a social behaviour and a form of social control. Mills (1995) goes on to state that society is, therefore, patriarchal.



“Most feminists hold a belief that women as a group are treated oppressively and differently from men and that they are subject to personal and institutional discrimination. Feminists also believe that society is organised in such a way that it works, in general, to the benefit of men rather than women, that is, that it is patriarchal” (p. 3). Language plays a dominant role in reflecting this patriarchal nature of the society.

For critical linguists like Fowler, language “serves to confirm and consolidate the organisations which shape it, being used to manipulate people, to establish and maintain them in economically convenient roles and statuses, to maintain the power of state agencies, corporations and other institutions (Fowler, Hodge, Kress & Trew, 1979, p. 190). The societal interrelation and social behaviour critically influence the stylistic choices of writers and speakers of the language. “Syntax can code a world-view without any conscious choice on the part of the speaker” (p.185). The writer uses the language which is already there in the society. The writer does not create the language of the society, but he/she creatively uses it. Core to feminist stylistics is ideology. Burton (1996) argues that:

... It is clear that we live in a classist, racist and sexist society... of these three major and massive injustices, sexism is the most deep-rooted (psychologically), the most pervasive, the most difficult to perceive, the most resistant to change-yet available as a locus for important and essential radical impetus to the organization of all unequal and oppressive power structures in our society (p. 226).

With this basic assumption, feminist stylistics works towards the following research questions:

- A. Why have authors chosen certain ways to express themselves rather than others?
- B. How are certain effects achieved through language? (Mills, 1995, p. 5)

These questions are not specifically designed for feminist stylistics. They are recurrent questions particularly in contextualist stylistic interpretations. In this feminist model, however, the questions can provide stylisticians with skills to fundamentally question those traditionally received wisdoms about gender and analyse the roles of language in texts of various kinds.

## **2.2. Sociolinguistic competence (SC)**

Students in EFL contexts in many cases are not exposed to exercises and practices to enhance their own sociolinguistic competence. In many cases, lessons focus on grammar exercises. The question here is what is sociolinguistic competence? How can we enhance sociolinguistic competence? Is it possible to transfer SC from the mother tongue context to a foreign language context where language inputs are negligible? Is there any research which evaluated the development of SC in an EFL context? Canale and Swain (1980) define SC as “knowing and understanding how to speak given the circumstances you are in” (p. 1). Similarly, Freeman and Freeman (2004) argue that second language learners must learn how to produce and understand language in different sociolinguistic contexts, taking into consideration such factors as the status of participants, the purposes of interactions, and the norms or conventions of interactions. This is something that language learners must be taught and given opportunities to practise. This includes, but is not limited to: expressing attitude or emotion, understanding formal and informal expressions, and knowing/recognising common slang or idiomatic expressions.

In a similar study in an EFL context, Mede and Dikilitas (2015) argue that in order to enhance the learners' knowledge of SC, language teachers should expose learners to authentic use of language and conversations through social media, songs, literature and so on as well as design classroom practices engaging students to use the language in real-life contexts. Besides, students should be encouraged to interact with native speakers by joining the student exchange programmes or the social network where they can make friends from different parts of the world. Sociolinguistic norms of language use should be integrated in the existing curricula as well as in the assessment which will aid the development of this particular strategy both in teachers and learners.

In a research, Kora (2016, p. 21) found out that the instruction of SC and pragmatic competence results in the increased level of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence and overall oral proficiency in the target language among L2 learners. In this experimental study, the scores of the experimental group increased from 55.88 (written pre-test) and 16.94 (oral proficiency pre-test), to 62.82 (written while-test) and 20.00 (oral proficiency while-test), and finally, to 72.59 (written post-test) and 22.47 (oral proficiency post-test). The final increase in the score yielded to 16.71 in the written tests and 5.53 in the oral proficiency tests, which is significantly more than that of the control group which is 5.21 in written tests and 2.11 in the oral proficiency assessment tests, thus confirming the hypothesis.

In the Malaysian context, Muniandy (2010) argues that it is important that the second language instructors in Malaysia be familiar with sociolinguistics. Teaching language is not just about learning the rudiments of the language, but also various cultural refinements. Students must be made aware of formal and informal language use. They should be knowledgeable as to appropriate expressions for different contexts. Students must be mindful as to when they can resort to colloquial language and when

formality is necessary. Lastly, students need to be made aware that mastering English does not mean acquiring native proficiency, but rather having universal intelligibility. As these reviews indicate, there is a strong need to incorporate exercises and drills in EFL contexts to enhance the SC of the learners.

### **2.3. A Review of the Basic Components of FS**

A study of feminist stylistics may include a critical analysis of context, lexis, syntax and discourse.

#### *A. Context in Feminist Stylistics*

Inherently feminist stylistics is a breakaway from a text-immanent model of poetry to a context-based model. This context dependent interpretation of poetry allows the inclusion of socio-historical, cultural, ideological and economic factors. Consideration of these extra textual factors in the interpretation of meaning is assumed to create situations for the reader to interact with the text, that is, to accept or reject the message as intended by the author. Whatever the author reflects in the text is not taken as fixed and final. The reader has a role to play in making the best out of the text. The values and effects have relevance in the meaning making process. Before presenting a feminist model of context, a critical linguist's view of context is presented. This view will help understand the feminist model of context. In the analysis of context, for example, Fowler identifies four essential factors which include: 1) Context of utterance, 2) Context of culture, 3) Context of reference and 4) Implicature.

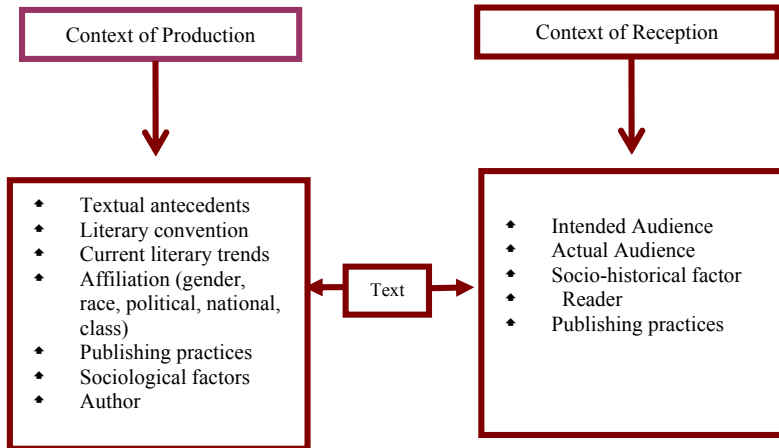
- I. Context of utterance: It is the situation in which the discourse is performed. It comprises the physical environment, the location of the participants, the channel and the time. Context of utterance can be

analysed stylistically interpreting elements such as time deixis, place deixis and person deixis.

- II. Context of culture: It is the hallmark of the network of social and economic conventions and institutions in the text. The context of culture influences the context of utterance and the formality levels in the poem.
- III. Context of reference: It is the topic or the subject of a poem (1-3 are adapted from Fowler, 1986, p. 86-87). Besides these three factors, Fowler includes “implicature” as an influencing factor.
- IV. Implicature: It is the knowledge and motive of the poet and the reader (addressor and addressee). Fowler defines “implicature” as “a proposition emerging from something that is said, but not actually stated by the words uttered, nor logically derivable from them” (Ibid, 106).

Interpretation of the context of utterance, context of culture, context of reference and implicature can help us define the meanings of context in poetry, which is an essential element in understanding the theme of the poem. Fowler also argues that implicature can be interpreted following Grice’s “Cooperative Principle”. Grice’s principle can assist the comprehension of poetic figures such as metaphor, hyperbole and litotes. Literary texts do not present natural speech situations which can be tested against these maxims. It should be, however, understood that literature is a reflection of the various contexts of society: its culture, ideology and thinking. In the following feminist stylistic model, context includes extra-textual factors (Mills, 1995, p. 241):

Figure 1: Context in the Feminist Stylistic Model Context



Moving away from the text-immanent staple of the formalist stylistic model of context, this feminist model of context considers both the context of production and reception of a text. Text is influenced both by factors of production and reception. Bidirectional influence is the influence of the text. Since the context of reception is not disregarded like in the traditionalist model of stylistics, the reader has relevant roles to play in the meaning making process. Meaning is fluid and is not fixed in the text. Bringing background experience, the reader can question, resist or reject the text. The meaning of the text varies from reader to reader because the text positions the reader in a variety of different ways. The reader can conceptualise and bring background knowledge and experiences to interact with the text. This model makes meaning processing a subjective process.

### *B. Lexis, Syntax and Discourse*

Feminist stylistics assumes that words can present and perpetuate a particular view of women. It excavates the places where ideological knowledge informs meaning. At the various levels, effects of sexist

language can be excavated. As stated in the work of Mills (1995), feminist stylistics aims to:

- expose the workings of gender at different levels in text
- influence to shape the boundaries of discourse
- change structures and ways of thinking
- draw the relationship between lexical items and discourse
- bring about change in representational practices through critique, teaching and developing new models of writing
- track down hidden assumptions
- make strange of the ordinary
- make readers re-examine the texts in light of gender
- create a form of consciousness raising ( Mills, 1995)

These objectives appear to be specific, measurable, achievable, reliable and timely (SMART) so as to reverse male-as-a norm view of discourse and sustain gender free classrooms. Great efforts, time and funding are required to achieve all the objectives. With these “SMART” objectives, analysis of a poetic text can be made at lexical, syntactic and discourse levels which are summarised in the table below (adapted from Mills, 1995, pp. 83-197):

Table – 1: Feminist stylistics levels of analysis

| LEXICAL ANALYSIS  | SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS  | <i>DISCOURSE ANALYSIS</i>   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>1. <u>Generic pronoun:</u><br/>“He”<br/>E.g. If physics teacher needs an assistant, he can contact the secretary.</p>  | <p>1. <u>Proverbs</u><br/>E.g. “Behind every successful man there is a woman.”<br/>1. “The way to a man’s heart is through his stomach.”<br/>2. “A woman’s place is in the home.”</p> | <p>1. <u>Character description</u><br/>E.g. Description of the women in terms of their legs and other parts of the body.</p>  |
| <p>2. <u>Generic pronouns</u><br/>E.g. Mankind, manpower, man-hour, craftsman, fireman, postman, dustman, fisherman.</p>  | <p>2. <u>Metaphor</u><br/>E.g. 1. Sally is a block of ice.<br/>♦ Comparing women with the moon, nature, night and heart</p>   | <p>2. <u>Role of female characters in texts</u><br/>♦ “Women have relations and men have jobs.”</p>   |
| <p>3. <u>Negative description of women</u><br/>Usage of words with sexual overtones and non-prestigious connotations e.g. courtesan, mistress, hostess, governess, adventuress, lady, queen, goddess and priestess.</p> | <p>3. <u>Jokes and humour</u><br/>E.g.<br/>Q: How do you get an Essex girl to laugh on Sunday?<br/>A: Tell her a joke on Friday.</p>  | <p>3. <u>Fragmentation</u><br/>♦ Representation of women fragmented into anatomical elements (eye, face, breast, legs, heart...)<br/>♦ Comparing parts of the female body with nature such as rose, sunlight, star, nightingale<br/>♦ Women are described as passive, natural and consumable.</p> |
| <p>4. <u>Address forms</u><br/>E.g. Lady poet, lady doctor, woman writer and lady chairperson</p>   | <p>4. <u>Transitivity choices and passivisation</u><br/>“Who does what to whom?”<br/>E.g. He held her tightly.</p>  | <p>4. <u>Focalisation</u><br/>♦ Position relative to the story and degree of persistence. Presenting the male character as the sole source of vision, information and judgement. Male oriented process of seeing and verbalising in text.</p>   |
| <p>===</p>  | <p>==</p>   | <p>5. <u>Schema</u><br/>♦ Producing different visions of male and female. Describing women as sexual objects, victims of murders, agents and being acted upon.</p>  |



### *C. Critical discourse analysis (CDA)*

Feminist stylisticians analyze sexism in a literary text at the levels of lexis, syntax and discourse. These textual features are interpreted against the contexts of production and reception of the text. Interpreting a literary text under the contexts of production and reception provides the stylistician with transferable skills as the analysis is made on the basis of models and basic assumptions. The skill is transferable because feminist stylistics draws analytical tools from Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL), Cognitive Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The basic assumptions in these fields are relevant and influential. Some basic assumptions of SFL, which have influenced feminist stylistics include:

- ◆ the existence of a strong relation between language and social force. Social forces determine language and language in turn has an impact on society;
- ◆ language is much a part of society serving ideational, interpersonal and textual functions;
- ◆ language is a form of social action;
- ◆ language and texts are integrated into our social world (Mills, 1995, p. 13)

Key tools such as coherence, agency and transitivity choices are drawn into feminist stylistics from SFL. SFL is not only fundamental to feminist stylistics analysis, but also helpful for the clear understanding of CL and CDA. Both CL and CDA have in turn contributed to feminist stylistics. Background concepts drawn from CR to feminist stylistics analysis include:

- ◆ language is not a transparent carrier of meaning;
- ◆ society impregnates language with meaning which can be negative, oppressive, restrictive and dehumanising ;

- ◆ social structure determines the form and content of language;
- ◆ language is a social phenomenon. It serves to confirm, consolidate, control , establish and maintain a system;
- ◆ language influences the linguistic behaviour of writers;
- ◆ Stylistic choices are determined by social forces rather than individual ones (Mills, 1995, pp. 10-12).

As Fowler (1986) puts it, language is not only an instrument of socialisation, but also a source of knowledge:

The meanings of the words in a language are the community's store of established knowledge. A child learns the values and the preoccupations of its culture largely by learning the language: language is the chief instrument of socialization, which is the process by which a person is, willy-nilly, moulded into conformity with the established system of beliefs of the society into which s/he happens to be born. Language gives knowledge, and allows knowledge to be transmitted from person to person. But, this knowledge is traditional, not innovative, for language is a stabilising, stereotyping mode of communication (Fowler, 1986, p. 19).

From critical linguistics, feminist stylistics draws tools such as passivisation, nominalisation, transitivity and thematisation (Mills, 1995, p. 11). How ideology is communicated in a text can be analysed following passivisation, nominalisation, transitivity choices and thematisation. CDA, which is a relevant research tool in social sciences and humanities, provides feminist stylistics with relevant tools. While defining CDA, Verdonk (2002) writes:

...texts-in all texts-are, consciously or unconsciously, motivated by particular value systems and beliefs, and that the resulting discourses are, therefore, always presented from some ideological perspectives. This politicisation is the business of what variously called Critical Language Study, Critical Linguistics or critical discourse analysis. ... They (people) have lost this awareness as a result of constant exposure to dominant norms, value systems, and beliefs which are linguistically mediated in the discourses of powerful political, social, and cultural institutions such as government, the law, education, the press, and the world of advertising (p. 75).

To analyse and comprehend a text following CDA, Fairclough provides three dimensions:

- ◆ The first dimension sees discourse as a text. It can be analysed using vocabulary (e.g. wording, metaphor), grammar (e.g. transitivity, modality), cohesion (e.g. conjunction, schemata) and text structure (e.g. episoding, turn taking).
- ◆ The second dimension considers discourse as a discursive practice. Discourse is produced, circulated, distributed and consumed in the society. This dimension can be analysed looking into speech acts, coherence and intertextuality in the text.
- ◆ Lastly, discourse is a social practice. Discourse features ideological effects and hegemonic processes. It can be viewed from intertextuality, which shows the way discourse is represented, respoken, or rewritten in texts. CDA makes it transparent so that change and intervention can be made (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, pp. 441-442).

Following these dimensions, CDA can be used to analyse power relations, ideology, inequality, dominance, discrimination and stylistic choices

available to the writer, how texts address the reader and how readers are positioned in the text. The argument here is feminist stylistics has its own theoretical framework, methods and objectives. The methodological skill can be transferred to analyse sexist language and gender not only in poetry but also in other literary forms.

The tasks below were designed so that awareness can be created in EFL/ESL classrooms for the students to use gender free language.

1. How do the literary writers in your own country use syntax to subjugate women in the literature?
2. How do the writers present the various body parts of women in their literary works? Why?
3. Who is the source of vision in the works? Why?
4. How do the writers use language to state the social role of the female character in the poem? Why?
5. How is language used to state the social role of male character in the texts? Why?

### **3. Research Methods: A Summary**

Research has shown that SC can be transferred from  $L_1$  to an EFL communication situation. The proper social ability to apologise, compliment, take turns, agree and disagree or complain appropriately can be transferred from the mother tongue to the foreign language context. FS, therefore, is the proper tool to unlock the complexities inherent in sexist language in this regard. FS develops the use of context dependent language, figures of speech, speech acts, politeness and cooperativeness markers and gendered sentences which can reduce the effectiveness of communication. Failure in proper gender free language use also implies failure in communication.

Testing and developing gender-free language competence is essential because proper gender-free language use promotes effective communication. Gender free language use should be taught because it is culturally specific.

To achieve the objectives of this research and justify the experiment objectively, the following procedures were followed:

#### *A. Conducting a pre-test*

Before introducing the feminist stylistics teaching method, a pre-test was conducted among students under the control and experimental class. The purpose was to validate the test and instruments.

#### *B. Carrying out the experiment*

FS and active learning methods were integrated to teach Lulit Kebede's 'New Generation' and Wossen Mulatu's 'Tonight'. Both poets are young Ethiopian writers who have begun experimenting with poetry in English. The poems are simple and short. In the experimental class, the following focus areas were included while teaching the poems selected:

- a. Context : context of utterance, context of culture, context of reference and implicature .
- b. Lexical analysis: generic pronouns, negative descriptions and address forms.
- c. Syntactic analysis: proverbs, metaphors, jokes, humour, transitivity choices and passivisation.
- d. Discourse analysis: character description, role of female characters in texts, fragmentation, focalisation and schema.

#### *C. Conducting the post-test*

The focus areas of the pre-test were repeated and given as the post-test both to the experimental and control class. For example, in the test students

were asked to classify sentences into sexist or neutral. Out of ten gender free and sexist sentences in the test, students classified the following as sexist:

1. Each student must have his notebook with him in class.
2. A Senator who cannot finish his term of office timely should not compete again.
3. Each student must hand in his/her homework on Thursday.
4. The nurse awoke her patient.
5. A truck driver should plan his route carefully.

The experimental class also classified the following sentences as gender free:

1. A student should meet with his /her advisor.
2. A fire-fighter died on the spot.
3. A police officer should care for the people.
4. A postal worker should work sincerely.
5. Early man used a system of gestures to communicate

The test also included questions such as the following:

1. Which one of the following power relations is expressed and implied in the poem?

- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| A. Hegemony   | D. Discrimination |
| B. Inequality | E. All            |
| C. Dominance  | F. None           |

2. State the social role of the female character in the poem.
3. State the social role of the male character in the poem.

4. Give examples of simile from your own culture that people often use to talk about women.
5. Give examples of metaphorical expressions from your own culture that are often used by people to talk about women.

Following the procedures above, a feminist stylistics model of teaching poetry was integrated with the communicative language teaching (CLT) tasks so that an intriguing environment was recreated in the classroom for the students to develop sociolinguistic competence. The current project was an integral part of four other stylistics research projects. It was carried out on the basis of an experimental research design following a mixed research method for administering a class test and questionnaire. A total of 190 students (63.3%) were selected from the population of 300 students in various programmes of the Department of English and Other Languages at Adama University, Ethiopia through a systematic sampling procedure and using a sampling frame. These students were again classified into experimental groups (95) and control groups (95) following a systematic sampling method. The following section presents the results of the experiment.

#### **4. A feminist stylistic analysis of selected poems**

This section presents a feminist stylistics analysis and a classroom presentation of two poems: ‘New Generation’ and ‘Tonight’. The poems were purposefully selected as they were written by women. They also exemplify gender problems and how sexist language is used. The classroom presentation was conducted focusing on four interrelated levels: a) context analysis, b) lexical analysis, c) syntactic analysis and d) a critical discourse

analysis (CDA). The classroom experimentation and the analysis of the poems were conducted with following major objectives, namely to:

- re-examine poetic language in light of sexist language use;
- change the structure and ways of thinking towards sexist language use;
- raise the consciousness of EFL/ESL students towards using gender free language;
- test and develop the sociolinguistic competence of EFL/ESL learners of poetry.

#### 4.1. Lulit Kebede's 'New Generation'

Step One: First silently and critically read the poem below

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>New Generation</b>    | Blowing over her         |
| By Lulit Kebede          | dancing eyes             |
| Every heart melts        | That spark like          |
| When she smiles          | twinkling stars          |
| Snow white are her teeth | Her skin so soft         |
| Teeth                    | A complexion so          |
| Lips like a red rose     | perfect                  |
| With an alluring         | Her beauty like a full   |
| fragrance                | moon                     |
| Calling the butterflies  | Glittering in dark night |
| From early spring fields | Her body, long and       |
| Silk is her hair         | clean                    |
| Galloping like a wild    | Swimming like a swan     |
| Horse                    | She really is a beauty   |
|                          | queen                    |



|   |  |
|---|--|
| Then why  | Living in a world that<br>has never been hers                  |
| Why some doubt her<br>beauty                    | Adopting all foreign<br>behaviours                             |
| Saying that she is a<br>Fairy                   | Habits, cursed by her<br>ancestors                             |
| Avoiding reality, living<br>in vanity           | Abused beauty they say<br>With no performed<br>duty            |
| With a mind so empty                            | Just a cover only pretty                                       |
| With a heart lacking<br>Purity                  | Where is she to share<br>her difference                        |
| Her conscious fighting<br>with its own Identity | To make it a better<br>place                                   |
| Imitating alien<br>Personality                  | <b>Source: Lulit K. and<br/>Wossen M. (2004.<br/>pp.32-34)</b> |
| Forgetting her<br>nationality                   |  |

Lulit and Wossen published *The Ribbon of the Heart*, a collection of poems, in a context where the educational qualification, experience and cost of publication do not favour women writers. The country also has a handful of women writers who are experimenting and writing poetry in English. The changing situation of Ethiopia has allowed the growth of these flowers in the desert. Lulit's 'New Generation', a poem in this publication, is a reflection of the changing ideological, educational and economic landscape of a growing nation. Written in the context of a changing patriarchal society, the context of the poem, lexical choice, syntactic structures and its discursal elements are interpreted and presented to the ELT classes.

### *A. Context in the poem*

In the interpretation of context, feminist stylistics includes the context of production and reception. This allows the inclusion of the responses of students. With this common agreement, the following task was given:

1. Describe place and time in the poem.
2. Describe the cultural values cherished and criticised in the poem.
3. What is the main topic of the poem?
4. Describe the hidden motives of the writer. Have you made any inferences after reading the poem?

These leading questions were designed to lead the way for the discussion of the context of utterance, the context of culture, the context of reference and implicature.

In the interpretation of the context of utterance in the poem, students were advised to describe the physical environment, the location of the participants, the means of communication and time markers in the poem. Linguistic markers of time, place and person were considered as indicators of the context of utterance in the poem. Time and place indexicals are less pervasively used compared with person indexicals in the poem. Students were, therefore, informed to rely on clues in the poem to describe the time and place of the poem.

The setting of the poem is contemporary Ethiopia. The poem presents a modern girl as the personal pronouns "she" and "her" exemplify several times. Elders are represented by "some" and "they". The conflict is between a modern girl with foreign values and elders who cherish traditional cultural norms.

Students were informed that the context of culture is the hallmark of social, cultural and economic conventions in the poem. The girl adopts

foreign cultural practices, breaking away from the indigenous cultural values:

Lips like a red rose  
 With an alluring fragrance  
 Calling the butterflies  
 from early spring fields  
 Silk is her hair

The poet describes the artificial silk hair, lipstick and perfume which the girl uses to alter her natural and indigenous identity. The way the girl smiles, the colour of her lips and impure heart have been the butt of social criticism:

Living in a world that has never been hers  
 Adopting all foreign behaviours  
 Habits cursed by her ancestors  
 Abused beauty they say

Her lack of national sentiment and adoption of alien cultural values have not been accepted by the elders. As a result, she is criticised.

The 'context of reference' deals with the topic of the poem. The poem is about a cultural crisis that the country is facing. The young, devoid of traditional wisdom, follow foreign values. The old, ignoring foreign values, cherish the local culture. The following lines imply the views of the elders:

With a mind so empty  
 With a heart lacking purity  
 Her conscious fighting with its own Identity

Imitating alien personality

### Forgetting her nationality

To the dismay of the elders, the new generation of Ethiopia, represented by the girl in the poem, blindly adopts foreign behaviour. The poem therefore describes the decline of traditional values cherished by the elders of the poem.

Impicature refers to the knowledge and the hidden motives of the poet that the reader infers from the context of the poem. It can be inferred from the poem that the modern society has created the situation for the young lady to adopt foreign behaviour. To the extreme disappointment of the elders, the contemporary modern society cherishes artificial behaviour. It is the artificial silk hair, red lips, soft body and perfume that the modern society cherishes. There comes strong conflict between modernity and the expectations of the traditional society. The circumstances are compelling enough to disregard any concern the lady may have for the elders.

### *B. Lexical analysis*

This section deals with the analysis of pronouns, negative description, sexist collocation and worldview. The words in the poem reflect a world-view maintained by the society. To guide the analysis, students were given the following task:

1. Give examples of words which perpetuate a particular world-view.
2. How does the poet use pronouns?
3. Why doesn't the poet use generic pronouns?
4. Discuss the lexical items which are chiefly employed to describe the girl negatively.

Often the pronoun "he" and the generic term "man" represent both sexes. It can be seen that such use of pronouns does not exist in this poem.

However, students were advised to replace the pronouns "she" and "her" in the poem with "he" and "his". Students were asked to report their feelings of the poem and other observations. They reported that the entire flavour of the poem is lost when the feminine touch of the poem is changed. Even the girls in each experimental group felt that a description of the body parts of a boy as in the poem is not expected. They indicated that the lexical collocation referring to the body parts such as 'heart', 'teeth', 'lips', 'hair' and 'eyes' is not a common way of describing a man. It is his masculinity, leadership qualities, courage and manhood which are often described in their own culture. They have not read any work of literature even in the local language which describes the lips or the eyes of a man.

Though the poet does not use generic pronouns and address forms to imply sexism, there are examples of negative description of the girl in the poem. The girl is a "beauty queen". The word "queen" is a sexist expression. Her body parts are compared with natural phenomena. Her teeth are "snow" white. Her lips are compared with a 'red rose'. Her hair is 'silk'. Her eyes look like a twinkling star. Most significant of all, the following description is sexually appealing:

Gallop like a wild horse  
Blowing over her dancing eyes  
That like twinkling stars  
Her skin so soft  
A complexion so perfect  
Her beauty like a full moon

The poet describes the eyes of the girl which are dancing and her body which is soft. Every word expresses her sexual attractiveness, not her power of reasoning or rationality. Therefore, 'wild horse, dancing eyes and twinkling stars' are negative descriptions which exemplify only the sexual

roles of a woman. Readers can also notice that this negative description is unconsciously chosen by the author.

*C. Syntax and gender free language use*

This section presents the syntactic structure of the poem and searches for the meaning of proverbs, metaphors, jokes, transitivity choices and passivisation. The objective of the analysis and experimentation is to enable students see how sentences are inundated with figures of speech and proverbs which work against women. The stylistic practice helps them use language consciously in social contexts properly and consciously and see the impacts of sexist structures. Proper use of syntax in social context in English is also believed to improve their socio-linguistic competence of their mother tongue. To guide the discussion, the following questions were given to the experimental class:

5. Why does the poet use metaphorical expressions?
6. Why does the poet prefer syntactic structures inundated with simile?
7. Why doesn't the poet use transitive and passive verbs pervasively in the poem?
8. Give examples of proverbs from your own culture which are often used to belittle the roles or the greatness of women.

The beauty of the girl in the poem is made more conspicuous describing her against the back ground of other objects. Students reported that the following metaphors were used to glorify the glamorous image of the girl in the poem:

9. Every heart melts.
10. Silk is her hair.
11. Glittering in dark.

12. She is a beauty queen.
13. She is a fairy.

The qualities of the girl are made vivid through metaphorical expressions. She is compared with butter, silk, stars, the moon and a horse. All are negative and inherently sexist.

Compared to sentences flooded with metaphorical ideas, the poet more pervasively employs sentences charged and loaded with simile. The simile also magnifies the beauty of the girl as in the following examples:

14. Lips like a red rose.
15. Galloping like a wild horse.
16. (Eyes) that spark like twinkling stars.
17. Her beauty like a full moon.
18. Swimming like a swan.

The use of simile has reduced the use of transitive and passive verbs though the subject of many of the sentences is the girl.

In the poem, the pronoun "she" represents the girl who is the subject of all the sentences in the first part. None of the verbs are passive or active in this part of the poem. Instead, the poet pervasively uses sentences with complements. The complements are gerunds, for example, 'galloping', 'blowing', 'calling', 'living', 'swimming', 'imitating' and 'forgetting'. The gerunds are used to describe the activities of the girl. But the activities are subordinated. The poet has also found the gerunds in subordinating clauses more convenient to compare all the actions of the girl with butterflies, stars, a foreign personality and dark night. The girl is the agent of her bodily experiences, not the world outside. She is not an active agent in the world. Whatever she does is referred to her beauty. The lines below are appropriate comments of elders:

Abused beauty they say  
With no performed duty  
Just a cover only pretty  
Where is she to share her difference  
To make it a better place.

According to the elders, she is not an agent in changing the situation of either other fellow creatures “to make it a better place.”

#### *A. Critical discourse analysis (CDA)*

This section deals with how language is used to describe women’s characters, roles of the girl, fragmentation, focalisation and schema. Language is not only a means of communication but an expression of hegemony, discrimination, inequality and domination. To investigate language use, the questions below were raised in the class:

1. How does the poet describe the girl in the poem?
2. What are the major roles of the female character in the poem? How about male characters?
3. How is the girl represented?
4. Who is the source of vision and culture? What is the position of the girl compared to the elders?
5. Is the girl a sexual object or a change agent? Who dominates whom?

The first impression of reading the poem helps us to see the beauty of the girl in the poem. The question is: Why does the poet describe the girl in that way? The girl is described to appear sexually attractive:

Every heart melts  
When she smiles



Snow-white is her teeth  
Lips like a red rose.

It is the perfume, silk hair and lipstick which are foregrounded to glorify the artificial beauty of the girl. Her teeth, heart and lips are negatively described. Her physical beauty is contrasted with the emptiness of her mind in the lines below:

With a mind so empty  
With a heart lacking purity  
Her conscience fighting with its own Identity  
Imitating alien personality

She is described as an artificial object who is imitating foreign behaviours. She does not own any Ethiopian feminine qualities at all.

Fragmentation is seen from three perspectives: a) fragmentation of the girl into anatomical parts, b) comparison of the body parts of the girl with nature and c) presentation of the girl as a consumable good. At the outset, the description of the various anatomical parts of the girl looks attractive. However, the description of her teeth, lips, hair, eyes and skin does affect the wholeness of her personality. She is fragmented into parts. To our dissatisfaction, her body parts are not only fragmented but also compared to a 'rose' 'butterflies', 'spring fields', 'wild horse', 'twinkling stars', 'full moon', 'dark night' and 'swan'.

The fundamental question is why does the poet fragment the girl and compare the body parts with nature or animals or natural occurrences. Culturally, the poet knows that this is the customary way to magnify the beauty of a woman. Deep inside the poem, however, the comparison of the girl with a wild horse, swan and butterflies belittles the qualities and roles of the girl. Deep inside again, comparing the girl with a rose, silk, perfumes

and makeup glorifies the artificial beauty of the girl. It is not her reasoning power and her social contributions which are described. The girl has to use various forms of artificial makeups to enhance her beauty artificially. She has to be sexually appealing. However, this will bring her to the level of a consumable sex item. The elders do not acknowledge her attractiveness or her fertility role.

With no performed duty  
 Just a cover only pretty  
 Where is she to share her difference?  
 To make a better place.

According to the elders, her contribution as an agent of change to make the country a better place is negligible. The elders are the sources of vision and resourcefulness. Her new maternity role is not recognized. Her ideas are less acceptable than the old ideas of the elders. The syntax is inundated with roles, visions, ideas and values which glorify the elders, a collection of old MEN. It is the hegemony, segregation, discrimination and patriarchal philosophy which inundate the day to day syntax. The syntax is full of ideas which magnify the greatness of men.

Often proverbs are used to open speeches in traditional cultures. In the words of Achebe, "Proverbs are palm wine with which words are eaten." They are repositories of the wisdom of the society often compressed to justify one's position. Sometimes traditional people use proverbs to justify the truth of their statements. The proverbs below were collected by the students, who also believed that these proverbs demean the roles of women.

- ◆ A man sent by a woman is never afraid of death.
- ◆ To trust a woman is to hold fog.
- ◆ Behind a successful man there is always a woman.

- ◆ Empty vessels make the most noise.
- ◆ A desperate man marries a pregnant woman.
- ◆ He who has a wife has given hostage to his wealth.
- ◆ A woman and a glass are always in danger.
- ◆ A dog is wiser than a woman; it does not bark at its master.
- ◆ A worthy woman is far more precious than jewels, strength and dignity are her clothing.
- ◆ Women's wisdom is as long as their nose.
- ◆ Wise women ruin cattle deals.
- ◆ A bow drawn by a woman won't shoot.
- ◆ The origin of women's wisdom is greed.
- ◆ Women know the ways of women.
- ◆ Women have twelve horns.

These were proverbs collected by the students. Discussions were conducted on how traditional cultures belittle the roles of women through sexist language, though the women try hard to change and contribute to the social and economic system.

#### **4.2. Wossen Mulatu's 'Tonight' : A feminist stylistics analysis**

Step One: Critically read the poem below.

Tonight By Wossen Mulatu (March 2003)

|                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Hope you'll hold her tight     | And solve all her puzzles  |
| And tell her it's alright      | Hope you'll hold her hands |
| Hope you'll kiss her cheeks    | And feel her with bliss    |
| Hope you'll stand close by her | Hope she won't be in the   |

|                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| side                           | streets again                 |
| And protect her from the cold  |                               |
| Hope you'll embrace her        | Selling herself to a stranger |
| And tell her that you love her | Hope you'll find a substitute |
|                                | To the forced prostitute      |
| Hope she won't show up nude    |                               |
| And expose herself to the      | Hope tonight                  |
| crowd                          | You will make her see the     |
| Hope won't abuse her beauty    | light                         |
| And leave her for the hungry   | (Source: Lulit and Wossen,    |
| Hope you'll dry her tears fast | 2004, p.52).                  |
| Hope make her forget the past  |                               |

'Tonight' presents prostitution as one of the most critical social problems. It has existed for decades in Ethiopia. As implied in the poem, prostitution, which is pervasively disseminated in almost all cities of Ethiopia, has become the last choice for many jobless young girls. It has also become the source of other multiple social evils. An outstanding question is who should end prostitution? Are there options for women to work diligently to free themselves from prostitution? Has the society bestowed visionary and entrepreneurship qualities to women so as to free themselves? Wossen's 'Tonight' seeks solution to these critical problems. Composed in 2003, the poem also documents a social problem of many African countries. It also reflects how language reflects the beliefs of the society in solving social problems. In this section, analysis of context in the poem, lexical patterns, syntactic structures and discourse features are interpreted in the class. The objective of the experimentation is to test and develop students' sociolinguistic competence.

### *A. Context in Wossen's 'Tonight'*

Written in the context of contemporary Ethiopia where the government strategically plans and uses literature to fight AIDS and prostitution, the poem suggests a solution. In this context where the media covers social problems, students were familiar with the problems of prostitution. With the assumption that students could bring their background experience to the classroom scenario, the following questions were raised. Active learning methods such as hot seating, thought bubbling and pyramiding were also used to generate ideas.

1. Is prostitution a critical social problem at all in Ethiopia? Does the context of the poem reflect the critical nature of the problem?
2. Describe the views of the society towards a prostitute in your culture. How do your people address a prostitute? What kind of language do they use?
3. How do you find the topic of the poem? Do you think the title reflects the message of the poem?
4. What have you inferred from the poem? Is there any hidden motive?
5. What should be done to advance gender-free language classrooms and society?

To structure the discussion, students were informed about hot seating, pyramiding and thought bubbling. Then small groups were formed. Each group leaders was informed to include at least one female student in the group.

While analysing the context of utterance, students were instructed to describe the location of the addressor (the poet), the addressee (the man) and the subject (the prostitute). The title of the poem, time, place and person

indexicals were considered as the linguistic indicators of the context of utterance.

In the poem, the pronouns “she” and “her” represent the prostitute who is the main subject of the conversation between the poet and the man. The prostitute is assumed to be in a cold street on that night. ‘Tonight’, the title of the poem, therefore, serves as a linguistic indicator of the time of the poem. It also shows the urgency of the problem.

In the Ethiopian cultural context, conversation between a man and a prostitute about sexual affair with the prostitute is a private issue. It can be inferred from the personal nature of the topic of the discussion that the poet’s advice to the man has taken place in a very secluded environment. However, the future position and location of the man and the prostitute are suggested in the following lines:

Hope you’ll hold her hands  
 And feel her with bliss  
 Hope you’ll stand close by her side  
 And protect her from the cold

Warm and closer relations are suggested. It is warmth and love which can rescue the woman from life in the cold streets. The place where she frequently goes is a cold street:

Hope make her forget the past  
 Hope she won't be in the streets again  
 Selling herself to a stranger

It is during the night on the streets that the man is expected to meet the prostitute.

The context of culture deals with the social, cultural and economic interrelations between the man and the prostitute in the poem. It can be observed from the context of the poem that the very idea of prostitution signifies the absence of better economic options for women in Ethiopia. It is the last choice that the country can offer. Culturally, prostitution is not an acceptable job. Therefore, the prostitute faces social discrimination and economic subjugation. The lines below imply the fear of the poet:

Hope she won't show up nude  
And expose herself to the crowd

Neither her nudity nor her “profession” is acceptable in the society. Consequently, the rehabilitation of the woman to the socially and culturally acceptable practices can be the solution. Marriage, which is a culturally acceptable practice, can be the solution only if the man in the poem gives his consent.

The context of reference refers to the major topic of the poem. The poem is all about the economic bondage of the woman under prostitution. The prostitute is the subject of the conversation between the poet and the man who are proposing a solution. The man is advised to rescue the prostitute as the lines below signify:

Hope you'll dry her tears fast  
Hope make her forget the past  
Hope she won't be in the street again

The man is persistently advised to rescue the woman and let her forget the past because the woman is involved in a culturally and socially unacceptable practice. Finding a stable life and life partner is one of her greatest challenges.

The analysis of the context of utterance, context of culture and context of reference can help us infer the hidden motive of the poet. Why does the poet advise the man to love a prostitute? The man is advised to hold the prostitute tight, kiss her cheeks and solve her puzzles. He is the one who makes her forget her past and gives her solace and protection. All these can be practical if the man marries the prostitute. Therefore, it is marriage, which is implied throughout the poem, that is the major solution for prostitution in Ethiopia. It is the man who is still the solution. Man saves the woman. It is the message implied in the poem.

*B. A lexical analysis of 'Tonight'*

The lexical analysis of the poem mainly focuses on the use of pronouns, reiteration, collocation and lexical cohesion. To achieve the objectives of this subsection, the following questions were given to the class:

1. Identify the lexical items which negatively describe the woman in the poem.
2. How does the poet use pronouns in the poem?
3. Does the lexical collocation referring to the body parts of the woman bring about any effect?
4. How does the poet organize the entire text?

As in the tasks under 'New Generation', students were informed to replace all feminine pronouns in the poem 'Tonight' with masculine pronouns. All groups were asked to reflect on their impression after replacing the pronouns. Almost all groups reflected that the replacement of pronouns does not work effectively. This is mainly because a man cannot be a prostitute in the contemporary Ethiopian culture. The replacement of the pronoun makes the man the object of almost all the sentences. This belittles the roles and practices of a man in the society. In traditional cultures, the



man often becomes the solution for many cultural and economic problems of the woman, not vice versa.

Key content lexical items also are patterned to glorify the practices of the man. Content words such as ‘kiss’, ‘hold’, ‘embrace’, ‘love’, ‘feel’, ‘fell’ and ‘stand close’ in the first stanza are used as collocations referring to human emotions. These are verbs which magnify his roles in providing warmth, care and protection. This consistent use of transitive verbs also organically cohere the first portion of the poem.

Negative lexical items are also used to belittle the social roles of the woman in the poem. Lexical items such as ‘prostitute’, ‘nude’, ‘expose’, ‘streets’, ‘selling’ and ‘substitute’ are negative lexical items which destroy the positive image of the woman in the poem.

Lexical items “hope” and “you” are reiterated in the poem again and again to glorify the benevolent practices of the man. His name is repeated like God in a prayer to give “hope” and ‘solace’ to the woman. This reiteration, however, is stylistically significant because it brings coherence to the entire poem. The reiteration maintains unity of ideas.

### *C. Syntax and gender free language use*

Unlike Lulit Kebede’s ‘New Generation’, Wossen Mulatu’s ‘Tonight’ is not charged and flooded with figures of speech about women. Wossen in this poem finds metaphor and simile inappropriate to present the situation of a woman. Wossen’s aim is not comparison, but action and agency which subjugate the women to an inferior position. Therefore, the interpretation of transitivity, passivisation, normalisation, agency and thematisation can expose the working of language against women. Wossen’s syntax is ignited with ideas which glorify man as the doer of all good practices. Man is a saviour. Man is a bread winner. The following ten lines of the poem are changed into passive constructions so that students can see how sentences reduce a woman to a passive position:

1. Hope you'll hold her tight. (Man is active.)  
Hoped she will be held tight. (Woman is passive.)
2. And tell her it's alright. (Man is active)  
And she's told it's alright. (Passive – woman)
3. Hope you'll kiss her cheeks. (Man is active.)  
Hoped her cheeks will be kissed. (Passive – woman)
4. And solve all her puzzles. (Man is active.)  
And all her puzzles [are] solved. (Passive – woman)
5. Hope you'll hold her hand. (Man is active.)  
Hoped her hands will be held. (Passive – woman)
6. And feel her hands with bliss. (Man is active.)  
And with bliss her hands [are] felt. (Passive – woman)
7. Hope you'll stand close by her side. (Man is active.)
8. And protect her from the cold. (Man is active.)  
And she's protected from the cold. (Passive – woman)
9. Hope you'll embrace her. (Man is active.)  
Hoped she will be embraced. (Passive-woman)
10. And tell her that you love her. (Man is active.)  
And she is told that she's loved. (Woman- passive)

The first stanza of the poem contains ten sentences with the man as the subject and the woman or her body parts either as direct object or indirect object. Transitive verbs such as 'hold', 'tell', 'kiss', 'solve', 'feel' and 'embrace' signify that he is the agent of all the actions. He is the actor. He is presented as a problem solver, a lover, an informer and as a saviour. In all these sentences, the woman is the object of all the active sentences. She is the victim and the source of evil – prostitution. Neither the poet (who is a woman) nor the prostitutes are change agents. Even the poet doesn't except advising the man to rescue the prostitute. Therefore, awareness of

passivisation and transitivity should contribute to the sociolinguistic competence so that EFL/ESL students use sentence structures properly.

*D. A critical discourse analysis of 'Tonight'*

Critical discourse analysis investigates how language is used to describe the woman, identify the social roles of women, fragmentation, focalisation and schema in the poem. The following questions were raised in the experimental class:

1. How does the poet describe the woman?
2. What are the major roles of the female character in the poem?
3. How does the poet present the female body?
4. Who is the source of information and vision?
5. How does the poet position the reader?
6. Who are the victims and the victors in the poem? Why?

As in 'New Generation', 'Tonight' directly describes the physical and psychological appearance of the women in the poem. It is through the actions that we probe into the image of the woman. The physical environment and the socio-economic context help the reader build a different image of the woman. Her nudity and sources of income worry the poet:

Hope she won't show up nude  
And expose herself to the crowd.

As she does not like her source of income, she cries and needs to shroud her disastrous past. She is also negatively described as the one resorting to flesh trade for survival:

Hope make her forget the past  
Hope she won't be in the streets again  
Selling herself to a stranger

This negative description not only presents a sexually appealing image of the woman but also the dark context in which the prostitute perseveres.

Fragmentation investigates the presentation of female body parts and the representation of women as a consumable and passive object. As indicated earlier, since the poem is not figurative like in Lulit Kebede's 'New Generation', there are few references to the body parts of the woman in the poem. The lines below make direct reference to the body parts of the prostitute:

Hope you'll hold her tight  
And tell her it's alright  
Hope you'll kiss her cheeks  
And solve her puzzles  
Hope you'll hold her hands

However, indirect references are made to her crying eyes and nude body. Since nudity and flesh trade are not acceptable practices, she is discriminated against socially. She is a victim of economic inequality and cultural practices.

Focalisation presents the position of the woman and the degree of her persistence in breaking away from her situation and the positioning of the reader. In the poem, man is presented as the sole source of information and vision. It is the man who can marry the prostitute and solve all her problems. It is a male oriented process of looking and verbalising. The woman suffers the consequences of economic inequality, cultural subjugation and ideological dominance.

We are positioned in the text as readers who believe that the man is the saviour of the woman. Readers follow the syntax which is charged and inundated with ideas which reflect the economic and the cultural supremacy of the man. Language is used to hide the reality. Students are recommended to investigate the deep and surface structure of the sentences which are hegemonic and belittle the roles of woman.

## **5. Major findings**

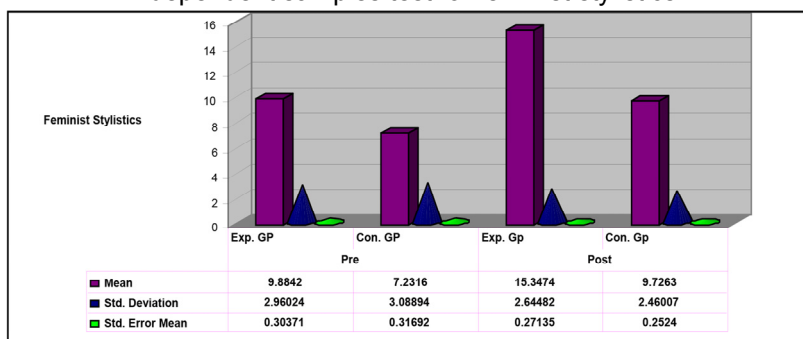
It was interesting to observe the improvements made by the experimental group in using gender-free vocabulary. Some of the sexist linguistic items which were taken in stride previously while addressing women now are taken as derogatory. Awareness was created so that words should be chosen and used with caution because all words do not mean the same to all girls and boys in the same classroom. The following are major findings observed. Compared to the students in the control group, students in the experimental class:

1. Identified negative descriptions which are sexist in nature correctly.
2. Noticed address forms which are sexist.
3. Identified metaphorical expressions from their own culture which belittle the roles and contributions of women in general clearly.
4. Described the inferior positions given to women figures in two poems. In the poems, men are visionary and resourceful and women are emotional.
5. Identified active and passive constructions which are written to glorify men as agents and women as objects clearly.

6. Described the roles of nature in glorifying the sexual attractiveness of women in the poems.
7. Interpreted the various body parts of women. They commented on the fragmentation of body parts and the comparison of women with nature in the poem.
8. Distinguished sexist sentences from gender free constructions in the list of 10 mixed sentences.

Students in the experimental group took the last module on feminist stylistics. The main objective of the module was to find out the pedagogic relevance of feminist stylistics in teaching Ethiopian poetry and the development of a gender free EFL classroom. Both the treatment and comparison groups took pre-tests which were scored out of 20. The bar graph and the table below present a summary of the t-test result for pre-and post-tests result for the feminist stylistics module.

Independent samples test for feminist stylistics



|      |                             | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances |      | t-test for Equality of Means |         |                 |                 |                       |   |         |
|------|-----------------------------|---|------|------------------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|---------|
|      |                             | F                                       | Sig. | t                            | df      | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |         |
|      |                             |   |      |                              |         |                 |                 |                       | Lower                                     | Upper   |
| Pre  | Equal variances assumed     | 9.113                                   | .003 | 2.974                        | 188     | .003            | 1.33684         | .44944                | .45026                                    | 2.22343 |
|      | Equal variances not assumed |   |      | 2.974                        | 176.935 | .003            | 1.33684         | .44944                | .44990                                    | 2.22379 |
| Post | Equal variances assumed     | .269                                    | .604 | 8.651                        | 188     | .000            | 3.15789         | .36504                | 2.43779                                   | 3.87800 |
|      | Equal variances not assumed |   |      | 8.651                        | 186.948 | .000            | 3.15789         | .36504                | 2.43776                                   | 3.87803 |

The bar graph above presents the mean test score for sample groups, standard deviation and standard error mean. As the mean pre-test score shows in the graph, both the control and experimental groups performed almost similarly in their feminist stylistics pre-test which was calculated out of 20. The experimental mean score, which is 9.8842, is a little bigger than the control mean score of 7.2316. Consequently, the t-test result shows that the existence of a mean difference of 1.33684 is not statistically significant. Therefore, there is no significance difference between the mean test scores of the two groups.

On the other hand, the table above summarises the t-test results for both pre- and post- tests for the feminist stylistics module. The t-value of the feminist stylistics post-test as presented in the table above is 8.651. On the other hand, the table value of t-critical is 1.96 with 188 degree of freedom and at a significance level of 0.05. Because the t-value of 8.651 exceeds the t-critical value of 1.96 for a two tailed test at 0.05 level of significance for 188 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the

feminist stylistics method of teaching poetry does contribute to the development of gender free language use in an EFL context.

## 6. Conclusions

A gender free presentation of language focusing on four interrelated levels namely: context analysis, lexical analysis, syntactic analysis and a critical discourse analysis (CDA) can aid the awareness of language use. Language should be used properly in classes, especially while addressing girls. A teacher can deliver gender free English lectures with the objective of using language in light of sexist language use, changing the structures and ways of thinking towards gender free language use, raising the consciousness of EFL/ESL students towards gender difference, testing and developing the sociolinguistic competence of EFL/ESL learners of literature. Gender free language classrooms can create conducive learning environments for girls' education.

The t-value of the feminist stylistics post-test was 8.651. On the other hand, the table value of t-critical was 1.96 with 188 degree of freedom and at a significance level of 0.05. Because the t-value of 8.651 exceeded the t-critical value of 1.96 for the two tailed test at 0.05 level of significance for 188 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected. The t-test analysis also showed that the p-value of the post-test was .000 which was less than 0.05. In both cases, the hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the feminist stylistics method of teaching poetry does contribute to the development of gender free language use in an EFL context.

This research recommends that lecturers need to broaden the development of gender free language use in an ELF context through Ethiopian literature in English. Aboriginal literary language is inundated with expressions which belittle the great roles of women in general. Texts are flooded by



socio-cultural norms, by ideologies, by history, by economic forces, by fashions, by gender and racial stereotyping, as Mills (1995) puts it. The aboriginal literature is the repository of all social practices against women. Language reflects general practices about gender differences, values and practices which can unconstructively influence the self-representation of women. Language is not gender free. Sexist language is pervasive in the various cultures. Therefore, an EFL teacher should expose the workings of gender at different levels in text, influence students to shape the boundaries of discourse, change structures and ways of their thinking, draw the relationship between lexical items and discourse, and develop new models of writing. The teacher has to make students re-examine the texts in light of gender using aboriginal literature.

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**ANTI-CORRUPTION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:  
STRENGTHENING NIGERIA'S POLICY  
FRAMEWORKS FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS'  
PROTECTION**

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# ANTI-CORRUPTION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE: STRENGTHENING NIGERIA'S POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS' PROTECTION

Solomon I. Ifejika\*

## Abstract

Corruption has become a leviathan in the Nigerian State, and it is one of the greatest challenges to good governance and development in the country. Nigeria has continued to feature on the Transparency International's list of the world's most corrupt countries, despite the numerous reforms that have been executed in the field of anti-corruption by successive governments. The lapses in anti-corruption reform initiatives and efforts have continued to keep every sphere of the nation's public sector under the adverse effects of corruption. In particular, anti-corruption legal frameworks are weak and deficient in that they do not incorporate adequate and dedicated statutory provisions for the protection of whistleblower. However, the Nigerian Federal Government under the Buhari administration has recently introduced a whistleblowing policy as a "stop-gap" measure, while awaiting the passing of the composite bill for a Whistleblowers' Protection Legislation which is currently receiving attention on the floor of the Senate. This paper, therefore, examines the Nigerian Federal Government's whistleblower policy framework, with the view to investigating its weaknesses and strengthening the policy. The paper finds that lack of legal backing, poor articulation and coordination among other factors, constitute the major weaknesses of the policy. Consequently, the paper argues that the

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Nigerian Federal Government needs undertake pro-active measures towards addressing the shortcomings of the policy, so as to enable it achieve its primary purpose. In view of this, the paper recommends a set of workable measures for strengthening the policy to make more meaningful impact on Nigeria's quest for a corruption-free society and good and responsive governance practice. The study relies on the Structural-Functional Theory as the basic explanatory tool. It adopts the qualitative descriptive and documentary methods of data collection and analysis. These approaches were appropriate as they enabled adequate achievement of the objective of the study.

Key words: Anti-Corruption, Corruption, Development, Good Governance, Whistleblowing, Whistleblowers', Whistleblowing Policy, Whistleblowers' Protection.

## **Introduction**

Corruption, as generally known, is the greatest challenge to good governance and development in all nations of the world; albeit, the phenomenon is more pervasive and deep-seated in developing countries. Given its global effects, the fight against corruption has therefore remained an important issue of concern to the international community and individual nation states. Propelling this general concern is the understanding that guaranteeing a 'corruption-free society' is a pre-condition for attaining good governance, which itself is the vehicle for delivering developmental goods in any society. Resultantly, a wave of anti-corruption crusade has swept, and is still sweeping through most countries of the world, particularly in developing nations, where the cancerous disease, 'corruption', has had more concrete ravaging effects. Ultimately, corruption has been the major impediment to the admirable dreams and aspirations of the yet weak and evolving nations; it hampers governance effectiveness, thereby bedeviling demonstrable efforts at actualizing established objectives aimed at

enhancing the collective good of the citizens of these countries. Resultantly, policy makers and governments of most countries of the South have been pre-occupied with the daunting task of finding workable measures to eradicate corruption from its roots.

It is pertinent, however, to mention that, while corruption is acclaimed to be more pervasive and pronounced among developing nations, African countries are the 'worst-hit' by the phenomenon. Africa as a whole, no doubt, has remained in the doldrums of development, mainly due to bad governance and a prevailing culture of corruption that permeates the public sectors. Nigeria, for instance, is popular around the world as the richest black nation owing to its great natural endowment in both human and material resources, but this fortune has not meaningfully transformed the conditions of lives of the generality of her citizens. In spite of her riches, Nigeria is rather known as one of the countries with the largest populations of poor people in the world, an evidential consequence of systemic corruption and miss-governance plaguing the country over the years. Corruption has also desecrated the ethos and codes of conduct in the Nigerian public service at all levels - Federal, State and Local Governments, and greatly distorted the integrity of the entire system. Moreover, corruption is the most singular factor responsible for the obvious near-total erosion of societal values and collapse of moral infrastructures in the present day Nigeria.

It is not surprising, therefore, that, in its measure and analysis of perceived level of public sector corruption in countries of the world, the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (Transparency International, 2012), shows that Nigeria consistently occupied appalling positions in the list of most corrupt countries in the world between 2001 and 2012 (Transparency International, 2013). This state of gloominess is certainly not due to failure by successive governments and/or administrations in Nigeria to demonstrate unflinching

committed and earnest desire to tackle the problem of corruption in the nation's public sector, in an effort to enthrone good and transformative governance culture. As a matter of fact, Nigeria has experimented with a number of current and past anti-corruption agencies and initiatives. Some of these include, namely and notably: the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP), Public Complaint Commission (PCC), Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), Ethical Revolution (ER), War Against Indiscipline (WAI), War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC) among others. The problem rather lies in the inadequacies of the country's anti-corruption legal frameworks which results in institutional and operational weakness of the anti-graft agencies and measures.

This undesirable state of affairs is rooted in the poor articulation and implementation of national anti-corruption policy measures. Most legal reform initiatives in the field of anti-corruption in Nigeria fail because of the lack requisite ingredients that would enable them to achieve set objectives. In accordance with best practice, for example, adequate statutory mechanism for whistleblowing practice and protection of whistleblowers are integral parts of any vigorous and workable anti-corruption campaign scheme. As evident above, Nigeria has consistently enacted various laws and set-up accompanying institutions to curb, if not completely eliminate corruption in her public and private sectors, but these laws are not well-structured to guarantee maximum protection to whistleblowers within the system. Thus, lack of legal protection discourages the disclosure or reporting of wrongdoing in the public and private sectors, thereby creating fertile grounds for corruption to thrive vehemently.

Nonetheless, being of two types, that is, external and internal whistleblowing, external whistleblowers who do not have any connection with an organization but reports their observations to regulatory authorities,

such as enforcement agencies, face little or no risks. But the internal whistleblower, who is an employee in a private or public organization in Nigeria, runs high risks including that of possible loss of job, victimization or persecution that may likely follow the disclosure of corrupt practices. Adding to this is the fact that there are not enough whistleblowers in Nigeria as it should be (*Businessday Online*, 14 November, 2013). This has greatly contributed to whittling-down the potency and efficacy of anti-corruption measures and efforts in the country over the years. In an attempt to encourage people to expose fraud in the public and private sectors, the Nigerian Federal Government put in place a whistleblowing policy in December 2016. As stated by the Minister of Finance, the policy is a 'stop-gap' initiative (*Premium Times*, December 21, 2016); the Federal Government is making do with the Whistleblowing Policy pending the passage of the proposed bill to the National Assembly for an Act for whistleblowers protection (*The Explainer*, February 14, 2017). At present, the Whistleblowers Protection Bill, 2015 has scaled through a second reading on the floor of the Senate (*Daily Post Nigeria*, October 20, 2016). The aim is to enable the country attain expected height in the on-going anti-corruption crusade and to realize the long-desired goal of good governance.

This paper, therefore, analyses the existing Nigeria's Whistleblowers' Protection Policy and suggests ways of strengthening it in order to make it real and authentic instrument for ensuring sufficient protection of persons/employees who raise 'red flags' or make disclosures in the public interest in both private and public sectors from reprisals by the accused. The paper is structured into nine sections. Section one is the general introduction of the study. Section two is concerned with clarification or definition of the concepts that are central to the topic of the study. Section three is composed of the theoretical framework of the study. Section four offers a general overview of the nexus between anti-corruption and good governance.

Section five demonstrates whistleblowers' protection mechanism as an anti-corruption and good governance promotion tool. Section six examines the Nigeria's whistleblower policy framework in relations to its goal and components. Section seven investigates and analyses the weaknesses or shortcomings of the policy. Section eight recommends measures for strengthening the policy framework, while section nine is the final conclusion of the paper.

## **Conceptual Issues: Anti-Corruption, Good Governance and Whistleblowing**

In order to enhance adequate understanding, certain terms or concepts that are centrally relevant to the subject matter being examined in this study demand proper clarification or definition. In this regard, the concepts that are germane to this study include 'Anti-Corruption', 'Good Governance', 'Whistleblowing', and 'Policy'. These terms are hereby considered below in attempt to offer explanations to their meanings.

**Anti-Corruption:** Corruption is "the breach or perversion of legal rules, established procedure, code of conduct or social norms, in the service of unethical or illegitimate ends" (Asobie, 2012:5). Khan (1996:12) defines the term in a similar manner as "a behavior that deviates from formal rules of conduct governing the actions of someone in a position of public authority because of private – regarding motives such as wealth, power or status". Corruption is also most commonly defined as the abuse of office for private gains (World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, 2006). According to Klitgaard, corruption can occur in a vast array of illicit behaviour, such as bribery, extortion, fraud, nepotism, graft, speed money, pilferage, theft, embezzlement, falsification of records, kickbacks, influence peddling and

campaign contributions (cited in Balboa and Medalla, 2006:3). In view of this, the term “anti-corruption” is conceived in this paper as involving efforts or measures at checking or combating corruption and/or illicit behaviours. The Collins English Dictionary (n. d.: Online) sees anti-corruption as “the opposition to or prevention of corruption”.

**Good Governance:** According to Asobie (2012:7), “governance is the process of organizing and mobilizing people and resources to achieve a common goal”. The World Bank (2007a) defines governance differently as referring to the manner in which public officials and public institutions acquire and exercise the authority to provide goods and services. For the Transparency International government means “...the relationship between leaders, public institutions and citizens, including the process by which they make and implement policies” (Transparency International, 2009:22). There exist the notions of good governance and bad governance. Bad governance is the opposite of good governance. In the views of the Transparency International (2009), good governance is characterized by participation, accountability, transparency, efficiency, responsiveness and inclusiveness, respect for the rule of law and minimizing of opportunities for corruption. Similarly, Asobie (2012) sees good governance as incorporating certain notable principles, namely transparency, accountability, civic participation, achievement of results and impact, whereas bad governance is characterized by opacity, corruption, exclusiveness, and focus on output, rather than outcome. Impliedly, corruption is an element of governance, albeit bad governance or the negation of good governance (Asobie, 2012). From the above, corruption therefore thrives in an atmosphere of bad governance while good governance thrives in an atmosphere of no or less corruption.

**Whistleblowing:** The Transparency International (2009:45) refers to whistleblowing as “the sounding of an alarm by an employee, director, or

external person, in an attempt to reveal neglect or abuses within the activities of an organization, government body or company (or one of its business partners) that threatens public interest, its integrity and reputation”. Eaton and Akers (2007:67) say that whistleblowing in its simplest form “involves the act of reporting wrongdoing within an organization to internal or external parties”. Internal whistleblowing entails disclosing information to a source within an organization, while external means reporting information outside an organization, such as to the media or regulators (Eaton and Akers, 2007:67).

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2005: Online) defines a whistleblower as “a person who informs people in authority or the public that the company they work for is doing (something) wrong or illegal”. Vandekerckhove (2006) uses the term to refer to a person who exposes any kind of information or activity that is deemed illegal, unethical, or not correct within an organization that is either private or public. In its words, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) construes a whistleblower as “a person who voluntarily discloses to the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Finance, a possible misconduct or violation that has occurred, is ongoing, or is about to occur with specific concerns which are in the public interest” (Federal Ministry of Finance, n. d.:2). The term ‘whistleblowing’ can therefore be simply defined as the act of exposing wrongdoing, while a ‘whistleblower’ is someone who exposes wrong in public interest.

On the other hand, a policy, in its common meaning can be defined as a decision about what to do or not to do in a given situation (Friedrich, 2010). In a somewhat related sense, a policy is seen as “statement of the goals and objectives of an organization in relation to a particular subject and the description of the strategies by which the goals and objectives are to be achieved” (Eminue, 2005:72). Understood this way, the idea of policy thus incorporates a concern with “the selection of goals, and the means for



achieving them within a given situation (Jenkins, 1978:15). In light of the foregoing, therefore, whistleblowing policy, within the context of this paper, is seen as a whole body of principles or decisions pertaining to the act of disclosure of wrongdoing and ensuring the protection of whistleblowers or informants within an organization, either public or private.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Within the field of the social sciences, it is emphasized, based on the established tradition or practice, that phenomena or issues, in most cases, are interrogated using certain known and enduring theoretical constructs, as tools of explanation, in order to enhance understanding. In this study, therefore, the Structural-Functional Theory or Structural Functionalism is employed as a framework of analysis. The Structural-Functional Theory is among the most popular and influential theories in the social sciences, highly relevant in examining variety of subject matters that are of concern to researchers in the field. “The Structural-Functional analysis originated in the biological and mechanical sciences. In the social sciences, it was first used in Anthropology. Later on it was developed and refined as a mode of sociological analysis, predominantly by Talcott Parsons and Marion Levy” (Saheb, n. d.:Online). Gabriel Almond is one of the chief writers or proponents of the theory (Enemuo, 1999). Other notable exponents of the theory include Talcott Parsons, Harold Lasswell and Marion Levy, among others (Eminue, 2005b). The approach remained under the influence of the sociologists, particularly Talcott Parsons and Marion Levy, before it was developed by political scientist, notably by Gabriel A. Almond and his associates (Saheb, n. d.).

“In 1960, Almond and Coleman, in their work ‘The Politics of Developing Areas’ used this approach for the study of non-Western political

systems” (Saheb, n.d.:Online). Structural Functionalism is a major theory for analyzing and understanding social relationships; it explains why and how social structures work in society by ascertaining their functions (Markert, 1993). It is “a framework for building theory that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability” (Macionis, 2010:14). The theory looks at society through a macro-level orientation, which is a broad focus on the social structures that shape society as a whole (Macionis, 2010). It concerns itself with social structures and their functions and perceives society as a whole in terms of the functions performed by its constituent elements; namely, norms, customs, traditions and institutions. Herbert Spencer, in his popular analogy, presents these parts of society as “organs” that work toward the proper functioning of the “body” as a whole (Urry, 2000). In general, “functionalists attempt to explain why certain conditions exist in society by trying to ascertain their purpose - their function”(Markert, 1993:786). Markert (1993:786) supports the earlier assertion, that the theory is...“used extensively, even dominantly in social sciences as well as in many of the natural sciences, biology in particular”.

In relation to Political Science, or in the study of politics, the Structural-Functional Theory seeks to study politics as a system of interactions, i.e., Political System, which it analyses as a set of structures performing functions. The theory describes Political System as a set of functions performed by many structures which together make-up the system of politics. Its attempts to ascertain what basic functions are performed by what political structures? (Saheb, n. d.). In other words, the Structural-Functional Theory primarily emphasizes or focuses on the role of structures and functions in understanding of politics and political processes. A structure, according to the theory, refers to a pattern of interrelated roles. On the other hand, functions, according to Marion Levy, are the “condition or state of affairs resultant from the operation of a structure through time”

(Eminue, 2005b: 89). While “structure” refers to any human organization that can do things and affect human beings and other human organizations such as family, a public corporation, a court, a bureau, a legislature, etc., “function” is entails the activity of the agency and its external effects, which could be either “manifest” or “latent”, implying that the former is intentional and the latter incidental (Eminue, 2005b).

One of the notable contributions of the Structural-Functional Theory to the development of the study of politics is that, it stresses the need to deemphasize focus on physical, legal, and historical description of institutions and agencies to identification of functions or services, thereby considering the study of Political Science as a study of a “system” (Eminue, 2005b). In this sense, the theory is regarded as being similar to the system theory. Notwithstanding, unlike the System Theory, Structural Functionalism is of the view that the units of a system do not function separately. Thus, rather than defining a system in terms of the units or parts, the theory understands a system on the basis of the functions performed by the units of the system (Enemu, 1999). The crux of the argument of Structural-Functional Theory is that, there is a set of functional requirements for any social system. These functional requirements constitute the operational conditions that must be satisfied in order to guarantee the continual existence of the structure. Consequently, the theory holds that, a relationship can only be described as being functional if it does promote the survival of the political system and others structures, that is, if it enhances its functionality, whereas a relationship that limits the chances of survival of the political system and related structures, or inhibits its functionality is regarded as dysfunctional. Such functions are described by Talcott Parsons, as pattern maintenance, goal attainment, adaptation and integration (Eminue, 2005b).

In accordance with the major argument of the theory, the adoption of Structural-Functionalism in this study is justified on the ground that, the

Federal Government Whistleblower Policy has come to be known as one of the established structures in the Nigerian political system. As the theory suggests, the policy is an integral part of Nigeria's overall anti-corruption architecture, specifically dedicated to the protection of whistleblowers. In other words, it exists and functions to strengthen existing anti-corruption structures put in place by the Federal Government of Nigeria, and it has proven to be playing a profound role in the on-going war against corruption, as well as the survival of the Nigerian State. Subsequent sections of the paper include the important contributions of the federal government whistleblower policy in the area of anti-corruption, and factors resulting to its weaknesses in this regard.

## **Nexus between Anti-Corruption and Good-Governance: A General Overview**

Literatures on corruption mainly attempt to establish the relationship between corruption, governance and development. In other words, scholars in the field have committedly explored and explained the effects of corruption on governance effectiveness and development generally. As practically obtainable, actions toward curtailing corruption are apparently aimed at creating good governance. As a result discussion of corruption is virtually often done within the framework of good governance (Balboa and Medalla, 2006), as the bulk of literature in the field mainly examine the consequences of corruption for performance of government and its institutions. For example, it is strongly held that:

Corruption undermines Government's ability to serve their people by corroding the rule of law, public institutions and trust in leaders. Corruption acts as a brake on development, denying millions of people

around the world the prosperity, rights, services and employment which they desperately need - and deserve (UNODC, n. d.: Online).

In essence, corruption and governance are interlinked, albeit they occupy opposite stances. With its end goal of creating a good government, governance aims at serving the interest of the people, but through the use of public office and resources, corruption serves the narrow interest of family and allies. Good governance is obliged by rules that aim at creating a transparent and accountable government, but corruption plays discreetly and sometimes directly on these rules to make decisions which will benefit those who have access to power and the highest bidder (Balboa and Medalla, 2006). Consequently, International Chamber of Commerce et al (2008) opine that corruption remains the single greatest obstacle to economic and social development all over the world. Buttressing this fact, World Bank (2012) alludes that a large chunk of \$1 trillion is paid in bribe annually, whereas an estimated \$2.6 trillion are stolen through corruption yearly, an amount overtly equivalent to more than 5 per cent of the global GDP (International Chamber of Commerce et al, 2008). Corruption stifles economic growth; where it is high, companies are discouraged from investing due to significant high cost of doing business (UNODC, n. d.: Online).

Corruption, thus, is indeed an albatross on a national and global level. In development countries, however, the consequences of corruption are unprecedented and more debilitating. The United Nations Development Programme estimates funds lost to corruption in developing countries to be times 10 the amount of official development assistance (UNDP, 2011). Corruption is so endemic and entrenched in developing countries that even the health and education – unarguably the most critical sectors in the development process, are adversely affected. As has been observed, corruption in the health sector results in the loss of huge amounts of public

resources in developing countries, as frauds and abuse in health care are estimated to cost individual Governments between \$12 billion and \$23 billion per annum (World Health Organization, 2009). In the pharmaceutical sector, large amounts of money, estimated at \$50 billion are spent yearly on products, a market so large and highly vulnerable to corruption (World Health Organization, n. d.). Revelations from recent estimates from the World Health Organization (WHO) show that as large as 25 per cent of medicines procured can be lost to fraud, bribery and other corrupt practices (World Health Organization, 2009). In short, in some countries the public health system is seen as the most corrupt public service institutions, an issue that undeniably blighting development (UNODC, n. d.). The World Health Organization (WHO) has stated that there are high mortality rates in countries with high incidence corruption (World Health Organization, 2009).

In the education sector, the UNODC summarily captures the trend and repercussion of corruption as follows:

Examples of fraud in education sector abounds. Academic fraud, for instance, is rife in many countries and is regarded as a serious threat to integrity and reliability of certification in higher education. Procurement wastage in the education sector, including school buildings, false maintenance costs and text books paid for but never received, cost the public dearly. And “ghost” or absentee teachers who feature on the list of active teachers in schools are huge drains on public spending. As a result, educational performance among the poorest populations is severely hampered and the system’s ability to deliver is harmed (NODC, n. d.: Online).

The UNODC further explain that:

...counting the impact of corruption in education goes beyond adding up immediate financial costs. Ensuring that educational funds are invested and administered in a fair and transparent manner protects a country's most valuable assets, its children. If young people come to believe that school or university admission and marks can be bought, a country's economic and political future is jeopardy and this entrenches a culture of corruption. Student may graduate with poor skills and thus contribute less to the economy and public sector (UNODC, n. d.: Online).

Balboa and Medalla corroborate the foregoing views in some sense arguing thus:

...more insidiously, corruption has a far reaching negative effect on the national psyche which goes back to undermine the whole system of good governance itself. Systemic corruption breeds a culture of corruption and skews the people's perception of what is right and wrong. For a number of countries where it has been effectively institutionalized, where wealth and power have become the measure of success, corruption has become socially acceptable, sometimes even aspired to. Energies of people are channeled towards occupying position in government to partake of the fruit of a corrupt system (Balboa and Medalla, 2006:2).

These are how corruption cripples good government and development in the developing nations. With poor health care and educational administration and service delivery, the publics in these countries are deprived of expected government's impacts. The position that the developing countries are the worst affected by corruption, is, thus, true. Corruption is, indeed, the biggest barrier to development in transiting

countries. Nevertheless, Balboa and Medalla (2006) believe that “corruption is a problem which all governments, at any level of development, have to deal with”. This means that, though indices of corruption may be high and common in transition countries, the phenomenon poses a challenge to all countries, regardless of the height that they may have attained in development. Hence, “there is now increasing recognition throughout the public and private sectors that corruption is a serious obstacle to effective government, economic growth and stability, and that anti-corruption policies are urgently required at the national and international level” (UNODC, 2013: Online). In effect, the international community, individual States, development partners and donors have regarded the fight against corruption as important activity, consistently formulating instruments to curb the menace.

At the global level, some notable conventions have been established to counter corruption such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Organized Crime. There are also regional and sectoral instruments such as the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions. At the national level, Governments are required to initiate reforms to establish legislative and institutional frameworks against corruption with adequate enforcement and punitive measures (UNODC, n. d.). Resultantly, there is hardly any modern government in the world without statutory measures for checking corruption. Anti-corruption efforts became an official concern in the agenda of the development community at the World Bank’s annual meeting in Hong Kong held in October 1996, when the then President of the Bank, Mr. Wolfensohn, addressed what he termed “the cancer of corruption” (Disch, Vigeland and Sundet, 2009). The position consensually held was summarized thus:



The negative impact of corruption on development is no longer questioned. Evidence from across the globe confirms that corruption impacts the poor disproportionately. Corruption hinders economic development, reduces social services, and diverts investments in infrastructure, institutions and social services. Moreover, it fosters an anti-democratic environment characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability and declining moral values and disrespect for constitutional institutions and authority. It also undermines efforts to achieve the MDGs. Corruption therefore reflects a democracy, human rights and governance deficit that negatively impacts poverty and human security (UNDP, 2004: ii).

What can be deduced from the above statements is that corruption should be rejected on the ground that it affects efficiency and effectiveness; it is in negation to the actualization of the Millennium Development Goals. Corruption is also rejected on a rights ground in that it undermines democratic values and institutions and works against the interests of the poor in particular (Disch, Vigeland and Sundet, 2009). Ultimately, it has been acknowledged that “when corruption prevails, democracy, a prerequisite for development, is threatened” (UNODC, n. d.: Online). Not only that corruption undermines democracy, governance and human rights by weakening State Institutions that promote fair and equitable societies, it also diverts funds that are meant for the provision of essential societal goods and services such as health care, education, clean water, sanitation and housing. In addition, corruption also creates marginalization as it limits access to employment; when jobs are given on the basis of nepotism rather than merit, opportunities are denied (UNODC, n. d.: Online).

It is on the basis of these arguments that the international community, sovereign states, donors and development partners have regarded the fight against corruption as a critical area of concern and an indispensable part of

their overall governance agenda. A wide range of donor support reforms mainly aim at improving governance in general and reducing corruption in particular (Kolstad, Fritz and O'Neil, 2008). Some of the areas donors support reforms include: democratization, public financial management (including revenues and expenditures), grassroots monitoring and support for civil society, and support to the media. These reforms are largely aimed at improving vertical, horizontal and managerial, and social accountability, respectively (Kolstad, Fritz and O'Neil, 2008). The efforts are driven by the realization that there can be no good and effective governance practice and socio-economic development in societies unless corruption is dramatically reduced or possibly completely eradicated. In particular, institutionalizing implementable frameworks to curtail or eradicate corruption in a bid to enthrone good governance has become a more crucial social responsibility for governments.

## **Whistleblowing as Anti-Corruption and Good-Governance Promotion Tool**

Integral in any robust national framework for combating corruption with the aim of promoting good governance culture, is whistleblowing. Any holistic legal mechanism for a pro-active campaign against corruption in any country must incorporate a virile whistleblowing mechanism and practice. Whistleblowing, being an act of disclosure by members of an organization of illicit acts indulged in by the organization and organization members to persons or organizations that may bring about a change (Rehg, et al., 2008), is gaining increasing recognition as an important tool in preventing and detecting corruption and other immoral malpractices (Transparency International, 2010). In view of the major argument of the Structural Functional Theory, this is the primary purpose or function of

whistleblower protection policy in any polity. Oakley and White have argued that Anti-corruption campaign may not be successful without effective whistleblowing practice (Oakley and White, 2006). Acknowledging this fact, many countries have established dedicated statutory frameworks to provide legal protection for whistleblowers, as part of their general strategy for fighting corruption in order to create enabling atmosphere for good, accountable and transparent government, to thrive.

What is worthy of note, here, however, is that:

Legal protection for whistleblowers varies from country to country and may depend on the country of the original activity, where and how secrets were revealed, and how they eventually became published or publicized. Over a dozen countries have now adopted comprehensive whistleblower protection laws that create mechanism for reporting wrongdoing and provide legal protections to whistleblowers. Over 50 countries have adopted more limited protections as part of their anti-corruption, freedom of information, or employment laws (Babalola, 2017: Online).

Australia, Canada, Jamaica, India, Ireland, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom, US, New Zealand, South Africa, Ghana, South Korea and Uganda are among the countries referred to above, and Kenyan and Rwanda have also been reported to be considering similar legislation. What is common to the legislation in these countries is that emphasis is placed on protection rather than mere reward (Babalola, 2017). Improving accountability in governance and fighting corruption is a task for all and sundry, and it includes in all sectors and segment of the society. Protecting those who blow the whistle or who expose illegal acts in good faith and in the interest of the public is, thus, a fundamental requirement. As Onuorah and Appah (2012:7) rightly observe, “an effective framework of

accountability requires that those whose who blow the whistle should be protected against any reprisal”. It is not therefore surprising that aforementioned countries have made specialized legislations to protect whistleblowers. Clearly, “recent financial crises underline the importance to all economies of encouraging whistleblowers in all sectors to raise concern before corruption hollows out and destroys economic, social and political activity” (Transparency International, 2013b:2).

The importance of whistleblowing in the search for a corruption free-society is embedded in the fact that the established institutional mechanisms for checkmating corruption may not be effective without whistleblowing, particularly in relations to insiders who identify and draw attention to acts of corruption which other mechanisms may not be able to capture (Oakley and White, 2006). So, it is necessary that even when “the level of economic development may affect a country’s ability to introduce the full panoply of measures necessary to protect whistleblowers but some measures can be taken relatively easily and the savings to be had through doing so successfully will far outweigh the costs” (Transparency International, 2013b:2). Report by four public audit agencies of the UK-England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland emphasize the need for a culture change in public sector organizations, from top to down. The agencies posit that:

Whistleblowing needs to be encouraged by employees as ‘the right thing to do’. It is clear that there needs to be a cultural change throughout the public sector and a very clear message must come from the top of every organization that senior management support workers who raise genuine concerns and that all such concerns raised will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately (Northern Ireland Audit Office, 2014:1).

There ought to be a culture of good governance in the higher landscape of the public sector, which supports whistleblowing and protects whistleblowers (Taiwo, 2015), whereas the notion of good governance connotes an organization culture where ethical practices are really upheld (Larmer, 2002), and so there is the need for legislation to encourage public sector employees to report wrongdoing (Zipparo, 1999), in their organizations in order to promote a good sense of ethical consciousness and practices in the system.

Corruption is known to be high in the public sector, and it has almost become a norm. Bribery, corruption, the ghost workers syndrome, recruitment of under qualified staff, mismanagement of funds and absenteeism from work have become the major features of the public sector. Refusal to bribe or play along can even make one's demand or matter to be kept pending for years. On the other hand those who offer bribe get prompt services (Lee and Oh, 2007). Such delays usually result in poor quality of services rendered which in-turn affects the performance of the organization (Taiwo, 2015). In other words, the public are deprived of quality social services where corruption prevails as public institutions and staff most often neglect or refuse to carry-out their statutory duties unless their palms are greased with bribes. Whistleblowing serves to shun these types of corrupt acts, and consequently improve accountability and efficiency of public organizations. Whereby employees are silent in the face of such threatening trend of corruption and immoral acts, due to fear, as a result of a perceived absent of an adequate legal mechanism to ensure their protection from reprisal and malicious acts, the dividends of governance would continue to elude the public and the damaging effects would be unprecedented.

Good as whistleblowing may be to the interest of the public, it is prone to risks. The act of whistleblowing does not only adversely affect public confidence in the concerned organization and profession of the corrupt person (Oakley and White, 2006), it also places the whistleblower at risks

(Cortina and Magley, 2003). The Westminster Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in July 2014 noted that “whistleblowing is an important source of intelligence to help government identify wrongdoing and risks to public service delivery.....However, far too often, whistleblowers have been shockingly treated” (Northern Ireland Audit Office, 2014:3). Whistleblowing is strongly connected with retaliation from culprits, leading to strained relationship between whistleblowers and supervisors. Whistleblowing may also adversely affect whistleblowers’ access to work-related benefits (Rehg et al., 2008). Researches have proven that, apart from perceived helplessness, fear of victimization and other related risks, whistleblowing can discourage employees from whistleblowing or reduce their willingness to report corrupt acts in future (Chassang and Miquel, 2012; Near, Rehg, Van Scotter and Mecile, 2004). It is for these reasons that legal protection of whistleblowers has been advocated widely.

Some have seen whistleblowing as “a culture that encourages the challenge of inappropriate behavior at all level” (Getting the Balance Right, 2005). No doubt, by law, every employer is entitled to total loyalty, trust and confidentiality from his employees. Notwithstanding, in relation to malpractices, corruption, fraud, cheating or when people’s lives are in concern, public interest is placed before duty of loyalty between the employer and the employee. This preeminence of public interest implies that the public have to know about the wrongdoing and those who report the wrongdoing have to be protected (Sule, 2009). This way, the incidence of inappropriate behavior would be reduce in both the private and public sector organizations, thereby paving way for better impact of such organizations on the society through improved service delivery. A green paper on whistleblowing in Jamaica further reveals its role in improving public sector performance and reasons why whistleblowing legislation is of high imperative. The green paper accordingly observes thus:

It is felt that to the extent that the environment facilitates persons who are willing to take a moral stance and reveal wrongdoing, the more difficult it will be for others to engage in corrupt activities and be later shielded by the silence of fearful would be whistleblowers. An important advantage of whistleblowing legislation therefore, is its tendency to require or foster development of internal mechanism for handling disclosures of wrongdoing within organizations, as this helps to increase accountability and transparency (Green Paper, 2008:3).

Sule consolidates this stand-point, arguing that:

In a democratic dispensation, whistleblowing legislation can trigger fundamental reforms in governance generally and without doubt is one of the fundamental ingredients of democratic accountability and integrity. In addition, it can bring about significant decrease in wasting public funds, decrease in corruption and will enhance responsiveness and amicable relationship between the government and the governed (Sule, 2009:12).

These views aptly buttress the undeniable fact that whistleblowing is at the heart of any meaningful and result-oriented anti-corruption and good governance efforts. Accountability and transparency are known as the principal hallmarks of good governance and these important elements cannot be found in systems with endemic corruption. By encouraging the disclosure of wrongdoing in public and private sector entities, whistleblowing limits the chances of corrupt practices, stimulates accountable and transparent stewardship and increases public trust and confidence in government – features that are apparently absent in an environment of bad governance.

Nigeria is a democracy and governance in the country has been known to be the “hot-bed” of endemic large scale corruptions. Successive governments’ in the country have been striving to combat corruption in the public sector, but most anti-corruption efforts failed because legal frameworks for fighting corruption have never been garnished with dedicated instruments to encourage whistleblowing and to protect whistleblowers in the public and private sectors. In the absence of fully gazetted whistleblowing legislation, the Nigerian Federal Government, having realized the importance of whistleblowing and the need to close this gap, in the meantime, has recently rolled-out a whistleblowing policy. The essence is to encourage the reporting of wrongdoing in the public and private sectors, as a way of strengthening the on-going war against corruption and facilitating the attainment of good and responsive governance at all levels.

## **Nigeria’s Whistleblowers’ Policy Framework: Goal and Components**

In a bid to promote good governance, public accountability, and the fight against corruption, whistleblowing has gained increased recognition and support internationally. In Nigeria, the present Muhammadu Buhari administration is notable for its pragmatic efforts to stop corruption in all its ramifications, but the country lacks a whistleblowing legislation governing the act of whistleblowing. This has given rise to an unassuming concept of whistleblowing that operates in Nigeria today, in an attempt to fill-in the gap (Thomson Okpoko and Partners, 2017). In 2016, the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) initiated, designed and issued a programme called the Whistleblowing Programme (WBP), which contains the ideas of the whistleblowing concept, its practicability and protective measures.



Subsequently, the policy was approved by the Federal Executive Council (FEC) in December 2016 (Thomson Okpoko and Partners, 2017), at a meeting chaired by President Muhammadu Buhari inside the Council Chamber of the Aso Rock Villa (*Premium Times*, December 21, 2016). Upon the approval by the FEC, the policy took effect immediately, and it is the only committed whistleblowers protection instrument that exists in Nigeria at present. The policy is being housed and driven by the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF).

### **A. Goal of Nigeria's Whistleblowers' Policy**

As the Structural Functional Theory emphasizes, and according to the Minister of Finance, Mrs. Kemi Adeosun, the main goal of the Whistleblowers Protection Policy adopted by the Nigerian Federal Government in December 2016, is to support the fight against financial crimes and corruption, by increasing exposure of financial crimes and rewarding whistleblowers. To promote such disclosures, the policy encourages and protects whistleblowers from harassment or intimidation by their bosses or employers. With the policy, Nigeria hopes to recover more looted funds through the encouragement of voluntary information about corrupt practices (Akinaso, 2016). It has been realized that the ineffectiveness of Nigeria's legal framework and fight against corruption apparently stems from the country's inadequate standards and practices for whistleblowers protection. Its absence and/or inadequacies harm the citizens, the economy and the rule of law (*Daily Post Nigeria*, October 20, 2016).

A serving law-maker, Senator Biodun Olujimi, offers an instance of a staff of the National Women Development Centre, Abuja who was unduly dismissed from the service in August 2011, for exposing embezzlement by top officials of N300m allocated for poverty alleviation programme. Similarly, Mr. Aaron Akase, a staff of Police Service Commission who

blew the whistle to reveal serious allegations of fraud in the Commission involving the management in 2015, was both humiliated and indefinitely suspended from work without salaries, and faced threats to his life and family. Nigeria's anti-corruption agencies have internal mechanisms and make provisions for whistleblowers protection, but the protection is insufficient, in view of the country's unsatisfactory performance in the fight against corruption (*Daily Post Nigeria*, October 20, 2016). In an effort to close the observed gap in relation to the inadequacy or lack of a comprehensive and dedicated law for the protection of whistleblowers, the Federal Government put in place the existing policy.

The selling points of Nigeria's whistleblowers protection policy are: (a) the possibility of increased accountability and transparency in the management of public funds and (b) the possibility that more funds would be recovered that could be deployed in financing Nigeria's infrastructural deficit (*Proshare*, February 13, 2017). Overall, it is hoped that the more accountable government becomes, the higher Nigeria's ranking will be on the indicators of openness and ease of doing business. The ultimate goal of the policy is to evolve a corruption-free society and attract more and more foreign investors (Akinnaso, 2016). In light of the above, the policy by the Federal Government appears to be another tool that is hoped would produce the much needed results in the fight against corruption and related illegalities in Nigeria.

## **B. Components of the Nigeria's Whistleblowers' Policy**

The Whistleblowing Policy consists of three major components, namely (Akinnaso, 2016):

### *1. Channels for Reporting Information and the Type of Information to be Reported*

Within the existing policy, three designated channels are provided to enable anyone who has authentic information about violation, misconduct, or improper activity that can impact negatively on the Nigerian people and government to report such. The channels include the following: via SMS to 09098067946; via Email to [whistle@finance.gov.ng](mailto:whistle@finance.gov.ng); or by logging on to the whistleblowers Website/Portal at <http://whistle.finance.gov.ng>. Phone calls are also welcome from Monday to Friday, between 10:00am to 03:00pm with the exception of public holidays (*Proshare*, February 13, 2017). The acts of violations to be reported include, but are not limited to mismanagement or misappropriation of public funds or assets; financial malpractice or fraud; collecting/soliciting bribes; diversion of revenue; fraudulent and unapproved payments; and procurement frauds (notably, kickbacks and over-invoicing).

### *2. Reward for Reporting Fraud*

Under the policy, the whistleblower is entitled to about between 2.5 per cent (minimum) and 5 per cent (maximum) of the recovered loot, provided that “there is a voluntary return of stolen or concealed public funds or assets on the account of the information provided”. Apparently, this gesture or reward is aimed at encouraging or motivating people to disclose or reports acts of fraud or violation as they may observe in either in the organization they work or anywhere such acts are seen or to be perpetrated (Akinnsaso, 2016).

### *3. Assurance of Protection to Whistleblowers*

In order to ensure the protection of whistleblowers from the likely hostile treatments and/or threats to their lives by any accused persons, the policy provides a mechanism for anyone who feels he or she has been treated

badly because of their report, to file a formal complaint. If the person has suffered harassment, intimidation or victimization for sharing his or her concern, restitution would be made for any loss suffered.

These are the three cardinal constituent elements of the Nigerian Federal Government Whistleblowing Policy that is currently operational in the country. In the meantime, there is no other specific policy framework dedicated to ensuring the protection of individuals who make disclosures in the interest of the public regarding acts of corruption or fraud in the private and public sectors in Nigeria, other than the existing policy. Until the proposed Whistleblowers Protection Bill, which is presently on the floor of the Upper-House (the Senate) of the Nigerian National Assembly is duly passed into law, the policy might continue to serve as the only available option.

## **Major Achievements of the Nigerian Whistleblowing Policy**

The Federal Government whistleblower policy has recorded some noticeable achievements in the field of anti-corruption in Nigeria. According to the Buhari Medai Support Group (BMSG), “the Federal Government’s whistleblower policy has given the war against corruption the necessary bite it needed to be effective and successful” (*Naij.com*, n. d.: Online). The policy has spurred Nigerians to expose stolen and hidden public funds worth tens of billions of naira from the date the policy was announce (*Vanguard*, April 16, 2017). In reality, the many successes of the policy in recovering stolen public funds give credence to the foregoing assertion. In February 2017, barely two months of its introduction, the Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, stated that the whistleblower policy has yielded \$151million and N8billion in looted funds.

The Minister says that the looted funds were recovered with the help of three whistleblowers, who provided actionable information to the office of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation (*News Agency of Nigeria*, 12 February, 2017 in *Sahara Reporters: Online*). The recovered loots do not include the \$9.2 million in cash allegedly owned by a Group Managing Director of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), which is also a fruit of the whistleblower policy; all the monies recovered in barely two months of the operation of the policy totaled \$160million (*News Agency of Nigeria*, 12 February, 2017 in *Sahara Reporters: Online*).

Another statement credited to Alhaji Lai Mohammed reveals that the whistleblowing policy has been instrumental to the recovery of about N50bn in looted funds (*The Explainer*, February 14, 2017). Furthermore, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) recently discovered the whopping €547, 730 (Five Hundred and Forty Seven Thousand, Seven Hundred and Thirty Euros), £21,090 (Twenty One Thousand and Ninety Pounds) and N5, 648,500 (Five Million, Six Hundred and Forty Eight Thousand, Five Hundred Naira) in Balogun market, Lagos (*Vanguard*, 10 April, 2017). Shortly after this, another report came that the sums of N15 billion made up of \$38, 000,000 (Thirty Eight Million Dollars), £27, 000 (Twenty Seven Thousand Pounds) and N23, 000,000.00 (Twenty Three Million Naira) were uncovered in a private residence in Ikoyi, Lagos, based on information relayed by a whistleblower. Following these was a N448, 850 million recovered from a Plaza in Lagos on April 10, 2017 (*Vanguard*, 16 April 2017). Before all these, a certain N49 million had been recovered by the EFCC at the stop-gap Kaduna Airport (*Vanguard*, April 16, 2017). With these monumental recoveries, there is no doubt, the fact that the Federal Government/Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) Whistleblower Policy has so far made some remarkable positive impacts on the fight against corruption and financial crimes in Nigeria.

The Buhari Media Support Group (BMSG) noted that “going by the huge amount of local and foreign stolen currencies found by EFCC, there is no doubt that the Federal Government has additional funds to implement people-oriented programmes” (*Naij.com*, n. d. :Online). The group also observes that the policy would enthrone the culture of financial discipline among government officials and agencies, in the management or handling of public funds. It further noted that the whistleblower policy has boosted the morale of intelligence groups that are responsible for carrying-out the task of investigating incidences or cases of stolen public funds (*Naij.com*, n. d.). Reinforcing these views, Yakubu (2017) avers that the whistleblower policy would go a long way in forestalling many acts of corruption and in bringing corrupt elements to book, as corrupt officials now do not only need to hide from the EFCC or ICPC but from the general public. Especially, the whistleblowers policy has added great momentum to the EFCC, which has been turning-in tones of money into the country’s treasury with the assistance of whistleblowers (*Vanguard*, April 16, 2017). A source discloses that since the unveiling of the whistleblower policy on December 22, 2016, the Nigerian Federal Government discovered and recovered at least N73 billion (Seventy Three Billion Naira) and the prospect of adding to it brightens by the day (*Vanguard*, April 16, 2017). Of course, more and more of these recoveries are expected to be made as the policy finds its proper footing in the country’s general anti-corruption scheme.

## **Weaknesses of the Nigerian Whistleblowing Policy Framework**

Despite its relative progress or achievements, a closer look at the Nigeria’s Federal Government Whistleblowers Protection Policy obviously reveals certain fundamental deficiencies or shortcomings of the initiative,

which stand to hamper its basic aim or purpose. Below are some of the inherent areas of weaknesses of the policy.

## **The Whistleblowing Policy is not a Law/Act**

A grand inadequacy of the Nigeria's Federal Government Whistleblowing framework is that, it is not a Law or an Act that passed through the legislative process and enactment by the National Assembly of the country. In other words, the policy initiative does not have legal teeth, as it is not backed by law. To the extent that the policy lacks legal force, it may likely fail to achieve the expected results to the fullest, as many Nigerians regard it as an unserious move, and hence look at it with levity. Akinnaso (2016: Online) supports these views, arguing that "unless the policy is backed by law, it is more or less useless". To many Nigerian informants who are enthusiastic to key into the policy to report wrongdoing in their organizations in order to get rewarded, Akinnaso cautions that: "...before you blow that whistle and expect protection or compensation, it will be advisable to wait until the government has completed the process of enacting a whistle-blower policy that is backed by law" (Aknnaso, 2016: Online).

This directly questions the usefulness of the existing Nigeria's whistleblowing policy. Even though the third component of the policy promises protection to whistleblowers (*Proshare*, February 13, 2017), informants in private and public sectors in Nigeria doubt the ability of the policy to actually provide them the needed level of protection from bad treatments which may result from their reporting of wrongdoing in their organizations, as would have done by an Act or a law (*The Explainer*, February 14, 2017). Recently, the Federal Government had to step into the case involving Mr. Ntia Thomson, who was unjustly sacked from his post

for blowing the whistle on the alleged squandering of \$229, 000 (Two Hundred and Twenty-Nine Thousand Dollars) and N800, 000 (Eight Hundred Thousand Naira) by top officials of the Department of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA) (*Vanguard*, April 16, 2017b).

Because there is no law to protect whistleblowers in Nigeria, it took a direct Federal Government intervention and issuance of order for the immediate recall of Mr. Thomson, before he was reinstated (*Vanguard*, April 16, 2017b). In addition, many fear that “it also remains to be seen if such a policy can be enforced by law, as without a law backing it, the government might not feel compelled to keep its promise” (*The Explainer*, February 14, 2017: Online). For these reasons, observers express concern about the fate of the policy (Akinaso, 2016). This amounts to a source of discouragement to persons who disclose corrupt practices and financial improprieties in the interest of the general public in private and public sectors organizations.

#### **Poor Articulation and Coordination:**

Another inherent problem of the whistleblower policy is that it is not properly articulated and coordinated. Incoherence in the components of the policy appears to have the tendency to engender serious controversies between informants and the government. For example, as stipulated under the second component of the policy framework a whistleblower is entitled to a minimum compensation of 2.5% and maximum of 5% of the loots recovered, so long as “there is a voluntary return of stolen or concealed public funds or assets on the account of the information provided”. However, it is not clearly stated how the exact amount of the reward will be calculated (*Proshare*, February 13, 2017). The 2.5% (minimum) and 5% (maximum) of the total recovered loots that the government offers whistleblowers is adjudged to be too small when compared with the risk they take, and the government’s mere promise of confidentiality is not



enough to assure them of adequate protection (Yakubu, 2017). Moreover, the policy is also not specific on whether the whistleblower will be entitled to his percentage until a conviction is secured based on the information given. This is because the government cannot take ownership of the money until a conviction is secured (*The Explainer*, February 14, 2017).

Further, under the third component of the policy, whistleblowers are entitled to restitution for any loss suffered, after filling a formal complaint regarding malicious or adverse treatments that they may receive for reporting improprieties, but the policy does not specify the details of the restitution to be made (Akinaso, 2016). These are mere statements under the whistleblower protection policy and they cannot adequately protect the whistleblower (Thomson Okpoko and Partners, 2017). The imprecisions and/or lack of clarity on the terms of operations of the policy are sources of intense confusion, and they can steer-up litigations or legal battles between whistleblowers and the government. Besides, another issue arises in that any person, who suffers adverse treatments for blowing the whistle in public spirit and in good faith, must file a formal complaint to an independent panel of inquiry to treat such complaints. In this case, the party against whom the complaint is filled has to appear to show that actions complained of were not necessarily meant to retaliate against the whistleblower for the disclosure. When such a formal complaint is filed, the real essence of the protection of the whistleblower is defeated because his or her identity and particulars would be disclosed. If the identity of the whistleblower is compromised for this or any other reason, Nigeria lacks a system which guarantees further protection to the whistleblower (Thomson Okpoko and Partners, 2017). This contradiction is a major flaw of the policy and it further makes case for a law for the protection of informant in Nigeria.

Poor coordination also affects the effectiveness of the policy initiative. As earlier observed, the whistleblower policy is being housed and piloted by the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF). Concern has been raised about the

ministry's ability to effectively manage the programme, considering its current work-load on the economy and the linkages necessary between the whistleblower policy and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), which prosecutes reported crimes (Akinnaso, 2016). Given the complexities involved in handling corruption and fraud related cases in Nigeria, domiciling the Whistleblower Policy in the Ministry of Finance creates another problem of its own, as the initiative is not being given adequate attention.

#### **Minimal Enlightenment and Sensitization of the Citizens on the Policy:**

A larger percentage of Nigeria's citizens are obviously not aware of any such policy as the Whistleblower initiative, neither do they understand its meaning and mode of operation, as well as its characteristic elements. This is due to the apparent low-level mass education and sensitization on the programme, hence the minimal level of awareness of the existence of, and understanding of the major contents of the policy. This general lack of knowledge of the initiative finds expression in the rush by Nigerians for information about the whistleblower policy (Akinnaso, 2016). In other words, the masses on their own are striving to get themselves acquainted to the policy, whereas the government ought to have embarked on intensive and extensive public enlightenment on it, before and consistently after the introduction of the programme, so as to ensure its appreciable level of awareness among the general populace. As a result of this lag, it is only a minute proportion of the country's population that is aware that such an important policy is being run by the government. Given this situation, the policy has not produced the highly desired results in the country's fight against corruption.

### **Seeming Possibility of Abandoning the Policy:**

Informed and close observers of public policy issues in Nigeria express concern and fear for the possible abandonment of the Whistleblowing Policy after the Muhammadu Buhari administration. The Nigerian Federal Government is known for its habit of initiating policies and failing to complete the processes, in terms of ensuring their full implement, just as the case with more than a thousand construction projects all-over the country. Thus, "...as with issues in the country the major challenge will be implementation" (*Daily Trust*, January 14, 2017). Agreeably, in relation to the policy, implementation is the fear: the government hurried to introduce the program without putting structures in place to ensure its implementation and sustenance in order to enable the policy to achieve seamless success (*TheWill*, December 26, 2016). The initiative is borne out of President Muhammadu Buhari's focus and eagerness to fight corruption, but the fear lies on whether his successor will maintain the same stance on the issue of corruption, if there is no formidable whistleblower policy that survives his administration (Akinnaso, 2016). Undoubted, based on experience, successive regimes and administrations in Nigeria have firmly sustained the harmful culture of abandoning policies or projects initiated by their predecessors. This unhealthy practice likewise portends latent dangers to the survival and sustenance of the whistleblower policy, especially as it is not a law or if it is not replaced by one.

### **Prone to Abuse and Uncertainties:**

Ordinarily, under a good practice, the guarantee of legal protection to a whistleblower is premised on the ground that the disclosure he or she makes is in public spirit and in good faith. In other words, reporting a wrongdoing must be in the interest of the general public, and not to galvanize certain selfish objectives. Accordingly, under the Nigeria's whistleblowing policy, serious concern are being raised as to how to ascertain the intention of any

whistleblower to determine if he or she is really qualified for the protection, especially in the situation of share lack of a legislature on whistleblowers protection in Nigeria (Thomson Okpoko and Partners, 2017). Describing and depicting the situation in Nigeria, a knowledgeable and close monitor says thus:

The whistleblower is simply a glorified informant, those obnoxious guys in between criminals and the police. Most times, they are disgruntled criminals themselves seeking to do harm to their former gang for the shabby way they were treated. Sometimes they cooperate with the police as kind of deal that will exonerate them, to escape the wrath of the law. People decide to expose their colleagues, gangs, or somebody they barely know for so many different reasons; but they mostly do so for their selfish reasons, for something they expect to get from the act (Yakubu, 2017:Online).

Of course, given the high poverty incident in Nigeria and the prevailing ‘get-rich-quick’ syndrome among the citizens, the tendency is high that employees may be tempted to whistle-blow against their bosses or employers. This may happen not just because of grievances they may be holding against them, but also in a bid to get financial reward. The view is held that “...the tempting reward being given by the Federal Government is actively motivating them to expose corrupt persons and their loot in an unprecedented fashion” (*Vanguard*, April 16, 2017). Reinforcing these arguments, another commentator posits as follows: “The challenge I see is that of abuse; I can call to report my neighbor if I am jealous of his achievements” (*TheWill*, December 26, 2016: Online). In one is falsely reported and his or her personal image dragged to the mud, Nigeria does not have any effective mechanism for ascertaining such false accusations, as have seen in the effort of EFCC and ICPC in handling corruption related

cases. Moreover, no amount of compensation would pay-off for the public disgrace, shame and embarrassment that would be experienced by the accused in the process. These are important aspects of ethical issues that the whistleblower policy does not take into proper consideration.

### **Delayed Emergence of the Policy:**

Another important criticism of the Nigerian Federal Government Whistleblower Policy emanates from its delayed emergence. Given President Muhammadu Buhari's widely-acknowledged zero-tolerance to corruption, as canvassed during electioneering, a policy such as this, is believed, would have been quickly put in place not too late after he was sworn into power in May 2015, as a component of his comprehensive strategy for tackling corruption. This could have been a good way of demonstrating his pre-planned determination to fight corruption. Having failed to do so, the late development of the policy is considered an indication that the Buhari did not have clear conception of a prior planned course of action on how his administration would tackle the problem of corruption. The government is rather constructing its anti-corruption programmes in the middle of the fight, unfortunately waiting till it ran into a brick wall before finding a way out. But the whistleblowing policy should have been carefully built, aggressively sold to the public, and quickly delivered to the National Assembly for processing (Akinnaso, 2016). This would have made the policy more vibrant and popular among the citizens, and helped to avert the delays currently being experienced in delivering a whistleblowing protection policy backed by law, to the yearning Nigerian populace.

## Conclusion

This paper has examined the whistleblowing policy recently developed by Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Finance and adopted by the Muhammadu Buhari's led Federal Government, as part of effort at advancing the administration's anti-corruption agenda. In accordance with the views of the Structural-Functional Theory used in this study, and as the findings of the study reveal, the whistleblowing policy has made some noteworthy achievements in the fight against corruption and financial fraud since its introduction in December, 2016. The various discoveries and recoveries of huge amounts of public funds enabled by the whistleblower policy are some of the concrete evidences in this regard. While the Nigerian National Assembly is yet to enact a designated legislation on whistleblowing practice for the country, the Federal Ministry of Finance's whistleblower policy currently serves as a 'fill-in-the-gap' tool. Like a tonic, the policy has spurred Nigerians to report corruption and financial crimes in the private and public sectors. Thus, the policy is making meaningful impact in the field of anti-corruption and good governance promotion under the current administration.

Despite its commendable successes, however, concerns have been raised about certain observable shortcomings of the policy. While many praise the Federal Government for initiating the programme, close observers and commentators direct attention to fundamental flaws in the policy framework which can greatly limit its success in the long-run. As the study reveals, the major inadequacies of the whistleblower policy include the following: the policy lacks legal backing or support; it lacks proper articulation and coordination; the policy took somewhat a long time to emerge; necessary structures were not put in place to ensure its proper implementation and sustenance, and thus there is the danger of succeeding administration to relegate the policy as with previous policies in the country; it is exposed to abuses and misapplication by citizens; and only few Nigerians are aware of the existence of

the policy due to low level of mass sensitization and enlightenment on it. Notwithstanding the prevailing situation, it is hoped that the recommendations of this paper would ameliorate the problems, if the Nigerian Federal Government would apply them purposefully and meaningfully.

## **Recommendations**

To strengthen the Nigerian Federal Government's whistleblowing policy in order to consolidate its seeming relative progress in combating corruption in the country, this paper recommends the following strategic measures:

A basic step to be taken by the Nigerian Federal Government to enhance the usefulness and effectiveness of the policy is, first of all, to endeavor to back it up with a Law and/or an Act enacted by the National Assembly. The Nigerian Legislature has a role to play in this regard. Given the immense achievements made so far by the policy in Nigeria's anti-graft effort, the Senate should be spurred to expedite actions to accelerate the passage of the Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015 which is currently on its floor into law. Once the Senate passes the bill, President Buhari who runs on a robust anti-corruption mandate should complement the effort by not hesitating to assent to the bill immediately. This would make the policy more enforceable and virile, and a 'fit-for-purpose' instrument for protecting whistleblowers. It would also stimulate increased public confidence on the policy, and thus reinvigorate the current war against corruption in the country. A whistleblower law would also put Nigeria in the league of countries in the world with designated legislations and standard practices for protecting whistleblowers, which would impact positively on her reputation both home and abroad.

While the whistleblower policy lasts, all the conditions, provisions and statements embodied in the policy should be precisely and clearly

articulated in specific terms, in order to eliminate possible controversies that may weaken public support for the policy. In this wise, the Federal Government should demonstrate sincerity and readiness to abide by its promises of financial reward and protection of whistleblowers from retaliatory acts. This would serve as an indication of the government's genuine political will and commitment in adopting the policy to enhance anti-corruption campaign in the country. Moreover, the 2.5% minimum and 5% maximum financial compensation needs to be reviewed upwardly, at least, to be a little commensurable with the risk involved in whistleblowing and to encourage more and more Nigerians to report corrupt practices in their immediate organizations and the society at large.

To enhance adequate coordination, the policy should be removed from the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF); given its heavy work-load, the ministry should cease to be the housing and coordinating body for the whistleblowing programme. The intricacies of anti-graft activities warrants the Federal Government to establish a specialized regulatory authority - the Bureau of Whistleblowing, to house and drive the policy now, and/or the Whistleblower Act when it eventually comes into existence and takes effect as a law. The existence of this type of specially designated authority to pilot the initiative would enhance a robust and effective whistleblowing regime in Nigeria, especially as the idea and practice have attracted wide-spread attention in many quarters. Moreover, it would be better to consider the policy as an integral component of Nigeria's comprehensive anti-corruption strategic framework. This way, the Bureau of Whistleblowing would have close working relationship with the anti-corruption agencies – EFCC and ICPC, in combating corruption and fraud in the private and public sectors.

Once the current administration succeeds in putting legal (the Act or Law) and institutional (the Bureau/regulatory body) structures in place for whistleblowing implementation, successive governments must not relent in maintaining and sustaining the effort. Given its importance in tackling the



problem of corruption and related malpractices, ensuring the sustenance of the initiative would strengthen the whistleblowing culture and practice in Nigeria in the long-run. Also, to deepen its implementation, all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of government should be compelled to embrace and implement the whistleblowing policy so as to ensure protection of whistleblowers within public organizations.

From all indications, Nigerians have been inspired by the whistleblower policy to willingly disclose corrupt practices, and hence, they seem to be striving to obtain adequate information and knowledge about the programme initiative. The Federal Government should therefore embark on mass education and sensitization on the whistleblowing policy in order to enhance greater awareness of it among the citizens, both in rural and urban centres. This would aid the inclusion of majority of Nigerian citizens in the anti-corruption war, and in taking the campaign to all levels and segments of the society, thereby increasing the prospect for eliminating the menace of corruption completely from the country's national life.

To guard against abuse and the use of the whistleblower policy as a means of making money, all disclosures must be subjected to thorough scrutiny to ascertain their authenticity and determine the motive behind such disclosures before bringing them to the knowledge of the general public. Where it is proven that one is falsely accused and reported due to share sentiment, or in a bid to get financial reward, the whistleblower concerned should be prosecuted and be made to pay all necessary compensations to the accused for any public disgrace and embarrassment suffered. This would serve as a deterrent measure to all who may want to blow the whistle against anyone in a bid to advance some personal interest, as against the public interest. The measure would also help to maintain the sanctity of the whistleblowing practice as an activity strictly undertaken to curtail wrongdoing in the public and private sectors, as a way of promoting the good of the general public and the society as whole.

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## Appendix

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# 『Asian Journal of African Affairs - *AJAS*』

## Article Submission and Review Process

### **Article 1 - Purpose**

The purpose of this regulation is to give guidelines about manuscript submission and the review process for submissions to the Asian Journal of African Affairs (hereafter referred to as “the Journal”) published by the Institute of African Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies.

### **Article 2 - Publishing time**

The journal is published twice a year, in February and in August.

### **Article 3 - Type and content of Article**

1. Manuscripts should be original work and academic contributions to African studies or Africa related field of studies. The submitted article should be of core academic values and should have originality which has not been submitted or published in any other journal.

2. The article could be a research paper or a review paper. A research paper is a paper with a theoretic analysis based on an experiential field study and literature materials. A review paper introduces the trend of research about particular issues and includes interviews and a book review.

#### **Article 4 - Structure and activities of the editorial Board**

1. The editorial board will be appointed by the director of the Institute of 1. The editorial board will be appointed by the director of the Institute of African Studies through discussion with the steering committee of the institute, and should be announced in the second half of the year's general meeting of the institute. The editorial board will consist of one chairman of the board and a number of other board members from various academic disciplines. The director will consider first, whether their final degree matches with the field of study for review, and second, their 5 years research achievement.
2. The board members can be re-appointed to serve up to 4 years without pre-notifying reasons.
3. The editorial committee will assign reviewers for the submitted manuscripts and accordingly make the final decision whether to publish the article.
4. The board members can independently suggest for modifications and supplements of the submitted manuscripts.

#### **Article 5 - Submitting manuscripts**

1. Application and submitting the manuscript

Authors wishing to publish their manuscripts need to fill out and submit the application form prepared by the institute and submit their manuscripts before the deadline. The manuscripts will have to be submitted either by email to the chief editor (the chairman of the board) or through the online system. Manuscripts should strictly be submitted in MS Word (latest version than '97) file format. The editorial board will reply by email upon reception of the manuscript. The detailed deadline for manuscript submission and the review schedule is explained in Article 7.

## 2. Identification of authors in co-authored papers

For co-authored manuscripts, details about the first author should be filled on the application form. And information about the first and second authors should be noted in order on the submitted manuscript.

## 3. Amount of the manuscript

Manuscripts, not exceeding 11,000 words in length, must be typed in MS Word. A title page includes the author's name, current position, postal address, telephone number, e-mail address and description of scholarly backgrounds and research interests.

## 4. Abstract and title

In principle, a manuscript written in English need to consist of a Korean abstract and a Korean title and vice versa. However, if the manuscript is submitted from overseas countries, there is no need to include the abstract and title in Korean. The abstract should not be more than 250 words while Korean abstract should not be more than two pages.

## 5. Designation of keywords

Manuscripts should contain 5 to 8 keywords revealing important concepts of the study both in English and Korean languages.

## 6. Submitted manuscripts will not be returned to the authors.

7. Refer to the guidelines of manuscript writing about the editorial policies for submission of manuscripts.

## **Article 6 - Reviewing policy**

### 1. Gathering of the editorial board and manuscript review

The editor-in-chief will call for the first gathering of the editorial board within one week after the deadline of manuscript submission. Submitted manuscript will pass through the review process in order to decide whether to publish it and the publishing of book reviews will be decided by the editorial board.

## 2. Appointment of reviewers

The task of reviewing the manuscripts will be done by reviewers designated by the editorial board or through the board meeting. The first board meeting will assign two reviewers for one manuscript. In principle, a person from the same institution or the same department with the manuscript submitter cannot be appointed as a reviewer.

## 3. Guarantee about anonymity of the review process

The review process needs to be fairly conducted by removing any clue about the identities of both the author and the reviewer.

4. The appointed reviewers need to conduct the manuscript review and submit their suggestion for modification to the editorial board based on the chapter 6 of the institute's regulation about the details of evaluation criteria.

5. The evaluation criteria will be 30% for originality, 40% completion, and 30% for contribution of the paper. In order for the paper to be accepted for publishing, the result must be with a score more than 15% points in each category with 60% points in total.



## 6. Judgment of the editorial board

The editor-in-chief calls the editorial board for the second board meeting within one month from the first board meeting and will judge on the final acceptance of the manuscript for publishing.

| <b>Reviewer (A)</b>      | <b>Reviewer (B)</b>      | <b>Evaluation Criteria</b>                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Pass                     | Pass                     | Publish   |
| Pass                     | Partial modification     | Publish after modification                      |
| Partial modification     | Partial modification     |   |
| Pass                     | Fundamental modification | Second review after modification                |
| Partial modification     | Fundamental modification |   |
| Pass                     | Fail                     | Modify or Fail after review by a third reviewer |
| Partial modification     | Fail                     |   |
| Fundamental modification | Fundamental modification | Not publish                                     |
| Fundamental modification | Fail                     |   |
| Fail                     | Fail                     |   |

## 7. Notification of the results

The editorial board will notify the final decision to the authors of the manuscripts.

1) Manuscripts with a “Not publish” decision could be resubmitted to the journal with the same topic and the same content.

2) Manuscripts with a “Modify or Fail after review by a third person” or “Second review after modification” decision will not be published on the

corresponding volume of the journal. The author could submit a new application form after making a complete modification to the manuscript and subsequently decision will be made whether to publish it on the next volume through a review process.

3) Manuscripts with a “Publish after modification” decision will be published after the author’s modification and final judgment by the editorial board. The author is expected to submit the modified paper by the deadline set by the editorial board. If the author fails to accept the modification or supplementation request, the editorial board may cancel the publishing decision.

4) Manuscripts with a “Publish” decision will be published on the corresponding volume without any modification.

#### 8. Final decision about publishing the paper

The editor-in-chief will call for the third board meeting within three weeks of the end of the second board meeting. The third board meeting will examine and make a final decision whether the modified manuscript submitted by the author is worth publishing it.

**Article 7 - Detailed timetable of publishing the journal  
(manuscript submission, review day, end of review)**

|                                   | First half of the year<br>volume (Feb. 28) | Second half of the year<br>volume (Aug. 31) |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Application deadline              | Dec. 15                                    | Jun. 15                                     |
| Manuscript submission<br>deadline | Dec. 30                                    | Jun. 30                                     |
| First editorial board<br>meeting  | Jan. 4                                     | Jul. 4                                      |
| Manuscript Review                 | Jan. 5- Jan. 31                            | Jul. 5 - Jul. 30                            |
| Second editorial board<br>meeting | Feb. 1                                     | Aug. 1                                      |
| Request for<br>modification       | Feb. 2 - Feb. 15                           | Aug. 2 - Aug. 15                            |
| Third editorial board<br>meeting  | Feb. 16 - Feb. 25                          | Aug. 16 - Aug. 25                           |
| Publishing                        | Feb. 28                                    | Aug. 31                                     |

## **Guidelines for Manuscript Writing**

1. Authors are requested to provide an abstract summarizing the aim, result and conclusion of the article within 150-250 words together with 5 to 8 keywords. Submitted manuscript must not exceed 11,000 words including the abstract, notes and references, but excluding tables.
2. Articles should be formatted for an A4-sized paper in MS Word. All pages (including those containing only diagrams and tables) should be numbered consecutively.
3. The title page should include the author's name, current position, postal address, telephone number, e-mail address, description of scholarly backgrounds and research interests.
4. Include the name(s) of any sponsor(s) of the research contained in the paper, along with grant number(s).
5. Manuscripts submitted for publication should be e-mailed to: [ias.hufs@gmail.com](mailto:ias.hufs@gmail.com)
6. All manuscripts submitted will be reviewed by the editorial board before publication.
7. References should be cited in the text according to the APA reference system, that is, use the last name of the author(s), the date of publication and, following quoted material, the page references. Also note:
  - a. Ibid. (and the like) are not used when repeating citations. Simply repeat the original citation verbatim, e.g. (Orwell 1945).
  - b. Multiple citations within parentheses should be divided by a semi-colon, and there should be no use of '&' within such multiple references.

References to works published in the same year should be cited as, e.g. (Smith 1991a, b).

c. Multiple citations within text should be ordered by date, not alphabetically by author's name, e.g. (Smith 1902; Jones and Bower 1934; Brown 1955, 1958a, b; Green 1995).

d. *et al.* may be used in citations within the text when a paper or book has three or more authors, but note that all names are given in the reference itself. In *et al.*, *et* should not be followed by a period.

e. Page spans in references should be given in full, e.g. Sedgewick (1935: 102-103).

The reference list should include every work cited in the text. It should be ensured that dates, spelling and title used in the text are consistent with those listed in the References. In addition, page numbers are required for articles, both place of publication and publisher are required for books cited and, where relevant, translator and date of first publication should be included. It should be noted that *et al.* should not be used in the reference list; rather each author's full name or surname and initials need to be spell out. Please refer to the following APA-style in-text citations and reference list.

## **Citing an Author or Authors**

### **A Work by Two Authors:**

Research by Wegener and Petty (1994) supports...

(Wegener & Petty, 1994)

### **A Work by more than Three Authors:**

Harris et al. (2001) argued...

(Harris et al., 2001)

**Unknown Author:** If the work does not have an author, cite the source by its title in the signal phrase or use the first word or two in the parentheses.

### **Organization as an Author:**

According to the American Psychological Association (2000),...

First citation: (Mothers Against Drunk Driving [MADD], 2000)

Second citation: (MADD, 2000)

### **Two or More Works in the Same Parentheses:**

order them alphabetically, separated by a semi-colon

(Berndt, 2002; Harlow, 1983)

### **Authors with the Same Last Name:**

(E. Johnson, 2001; L. Johnson, 1998)

**Two or More Works by the Same Author in the Same Year:**

Research by Berndt (1981a) illustrated that...

**Personal Communication:**

For interviews, letters, e-mails, and other person-to-person communication, cite the communicator's name, the fact that it was personal communication, and the date of the communication. Do not include personal communication in the reference list.

(E. Robbins, personal communication, January 4, 2001).

A. P. Smith also claimed that many of her students had difficulties with APA style (personal communication, November 3, 2002).

**Citing Indirect Sources**

Johnson argued that...(as cited in Smith, 2003, p. 102).

**Electronic Sources**

Kenneth (2000) explained...

**Unknown Author and Unknown Date:** use the abbreviation "n.d." (for "no date")

Another study of students and research decisions discovered that students succeeded with tutoring ("Tutoring and APA," n.d.).

**Sources without Page Numbers**

According to Smith (1997), ... (Mind over Matter section, para. 6).

## **Reference List: Author/Authors**

### **Single Author**

Berndt, T. J. (2002). Friendship quality and social development. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 7-10.

### **Two Authors**

Wegener, D. T., & Petty, R. E. (1994). Mood management across affective states: The hedonic contingency hypothesis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 66*, 1034-1048.

### **More than Three Authors**

Kernis, M. H., Cornell, D. P., Sun, C. R., Berry, A., Harlow, T., & Bach, J. S. (1993). There's more to self-esteem than whether it is high or low: The importance of stability of self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 65*, 1190-1204.

### **Organization as Author**

American Psychological Association. (2003).

### **Unknown Author**

*Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary* (10th ed.).(1993). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.

### **Two or More Works by the Same Author**

Berndt, T. J. (1999). Friends' influence on students' adjustment to school. *Educational Psychologist, 34*, 15-28.



Berndt, T. J., & Keefe, K. (1995). Friends' influence on adolescents' adjustment to school. *Child Development, 66*, 1312-1329.

### **Two or More Works by the Same Author in the Same Year**

Berndt, T. J. (1981a). Age changes and changes over time in prosocial intentions and behavior between friends. *Developmental Psychology, 17*, 408-416.

Berndt, T. J. (1981b). Effects of friendship on prosocial intentions and behavior. *Child Development, 52*, 636-643.

### **Reference List: Articles in Periodicals**

#### **Article in Journal Paginated by Volume**

Harlow, H. F. (1983). Fundamentals for preparing psychology journal articles. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology, 55*, 893-896.

#### **Article in Journal Paginated by Issue**

Scruton, R. (1996). The eclipse of listening. *The New Criterion, 15*(3), 5-13.

#### **Article in a Magazine**

Henry, W. A., III. (1990, April 9). Making the grade in today's schools. *Time, 135*, 28-31.

#### **Article in a Newspaper**

Schultz, S. (2005, December 28). Calls made to strengthen state energy policies. *The Country Today*, pp. 1A, 2A.

## **Review**

Baumeister, R. F. (1993). Exposing the self-knowledge myth [Review of the book *The self-knower: A hero under control*, by R. A. Wicklund & M. Eckert]. *Contemporary Psychology*, 38, 466-467.

## **Reference List: Books**

Calfee, R. C., & Valencia, R. R. (1991). *APA guide to preparing manuscripts for journal publication*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

## **Edited Book, No Author**

Duncan, G. J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (Eds.). (1997). *Consequences of growing up poor*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

## **Edited Book with an Author or Authors**

Plath, S. (2000). *The unabridged journals*. K. V. Kukil (Ed.). New York, NY: Anchor.

## **A Translation**

Laplace, P. S. (1951). *A philosophical essay on probabilities*. (F. W. Truscott & F. L. Emory, Trans.). New York, NY: Dover. (Original work published 1814)

## **Article or Chapter in an Edited Book**

O'Neil, J. M., & Egan, J. (1992). Men's and women's gender role journeys: A metaphor for healing, transition, and transformation. In B. R. Wainrib (Ed.), *Gender issues across the life cycle* (pp. 107-123). New York, NY: Springer.

**Reference List: Other Print Sources****An Entry in an Encyclopedia**

Bergmann, P. G. (1993). Relativity. In *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*. (Vol. 26, pp. 501-508). Chicago, IL: Encyclopedia Britannica.

**Work Discussed in a Secondary Source**

Coltheart, M., Curtis, B., Atkins, P., & Haller, M. (1993). Models of reading aloud: Dual-route and parallel-distributed-processing approaches. *Psychological Review*, 100, 589-608.

**Dissertation Abstract**

Yoshida, Y. (2001). Essays in urban transportation. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 62, 7741A.

**Dissertation, Published**

Lastname, F. N. (Year). *Title of dissertation* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Name of database. (Accession or Order Number)

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Lastname, F. N. (Year). *Title of dissertation* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Name of Institution, Location.

**Government Document**

National Institute of Mental Health. (1990). *Clinical training in serious mental illness*(DHHS Publication No. ADM 90-1679). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

### **Report from a Private Organization**

American Psychiatric Association. (2000). *Practice guidelines for the treatment of patients with eating disorders* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

### **Conference Proceedings**

Schnase, J. L., & Cunniss, E. L. (Eds.). (1995). Proceedings from CSCL '95: *The First International Conference on Computer Support for Collaborative Learning*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

### **Reference List: Electronic Sources (Web Publications)**

Bernstein, M. (2002). 10 tips on writing the living Web. *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites*, 149. Retrieved from <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>

### **Article from an Online Periodical with DOI Assigned**

Brownlie, D. (2007). Toward effective poster presentations: An annotated bibliography. *European Journal of Marketing*, 41, 1245-1283. doi:10.1108/03090560710821161

Wooldridge, M.B., & Shapka, J. (2012). Playing with technology: Mother-toddler interaction scores lower during play with electronic toys. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 33(5), 211-218. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2012.05.005>

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For more about citing audiovisual media, see pages 209-210 of the APA Publication Manual 6th Edition, second printing.

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