

# Public Enterprise Leaders' Challenges in Fighting Corruption: A Case Study of Metals and Engineering Corporation in Ethiopia

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*Abstract- As corruption is a problem in any nation in the world, it is too in Ethiopia, including Public Enterprises. The leadership approach is becoming a significant element in altering the anti-corruption efforts in combating corruption in the Public Enterprise realm. This study describes the leadership approaches as an additive effort to fight against corruption in the Ethiopian Public Enterprises realm. We used a qualitative research approach and convenient sampling techniques to analyse the data obtained from secondary and primary sources. First, the study found that the Public Enterprise's objective is not achieved due to a lack of political and administrative leadership commitment and capability to plan, implement, monitor, and support anti-corruption activities in the Public Enterprise. From this, the researcher argues that two kinds of human insecurity—being absolutely poor and/or rich – lead to corruption in the sector caused by insecurity from being unfairly poor and insecurity from being unfairly rich, requiring altruistic leadership indispensably. Therefore, ethically, morally, and professionally developed leaders are earnest in changing the despondent Corruption in METEC/EEG or at the federal level.*

*Indexed Terms- Corruption, Exemplary Leadership, leadership effectiveness, and Public Enterprise*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Corruption is a negative concept that threatens everywhere in the world. The badness of corruption practice is explained in different spiritual and other academic and non-academic pieces of literature. On a global scale, the international community increasingly demonstrates its interest in fighting against corruption by launching various activities

since corruption is an abuse of public offices for private gain [1].

Corruption is a victimless crime [2], and the negative impact of corruption is known worldwide; the world has come up through different ups and downs in searching for solutions to the problem, including states with less corruption perception index countries because humans, as human beings, are greedy prone to temptation, competition. Jealousy, except at lesser or greater levels from individual to individual, is a context where even the saint steals if he or she gets a chance [3].

As a result of its negative impact and living around us for the last thousands of years, it has been getting critical attention from different stakeholders worldwide, especially in the 1990s. Especially after the rule of thumb of monopoly plus discretion minus accountability was applied, institutional weaknesses began to be identified during the first generation of anti-corruption reform programs. For instance, creating a legal framework, reducing the number of transactions vulnerable to corruption, reducing gains from corrupt transactions, increasing the probability of being caught, and increasing the magnitude of penalties were generic or macro interventions during the early interventions. However, it is difficult because the political elites are part of the problem during the practical anti-corruption reforms and measures at the ground level [4]. Here, the researcher inquires whether it is a real problem in the Ethiopian leadership context and a mechanism for the same problem.

## II. CORRUPTION IN ETHIOPIA

Corruption in Ethiopia is known for its destructiveness. Demssie Beshi and Legese Beyene

[5], in their study titled "Corruption in Ethiopia: Assessing the Effectiveness of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission in Combating Corruption." The authors used a qualitative approach and found that although the anti-corruption commission played an important role in the country's anti-corruption struggle history, the anti-corruption institution is still ineffective compared to society's needs and wants. They also argued that all sections of society must participate or cooperate with the government in the fight against corruption. Their out-looking towards the solution of the need for all to fight against corruption as an acceptable remedy, but their gap is that who will take the lion's share if not fully responsible and accountable? It is the main focus of this study.

[6], in their book entitled "Fighting Corruption in African Contexts," found that a holistic higher education program is too essential to produce future ethical leaders in Africa by using a survey of diverse research in the academic literature and a South African case study on the existing context of the nature and scale of Corruption in South Africa. Their contribution shows a great perspective of seeing the unseen. Especially it is almost seeing the gaps in many scholarly perspectives, especially in the Ethiopian context, where many focus on technical problems of corruption rather than seeing the major problem except Zemelak Ayitenew Ayele [2]. In their conclusion, designing ethical education curricula at school and university levels and teaching students can produce future ethical leaders. They also concluded that governments should change the bad culture of abusing the impunity power of government autocrats. It seems to be the exact cause and effect of the Ethiopian challenge in its fight against corruption. Zemelak, in his study of "Corruption in Ethiopia: A Merely Technical Problem or a Major Constitutional Crisis?" used a methodology of secondary data analysis. He finally argued that Corruption in Ethiopia is not only an administrative problem. He further argued that since anti-corruption institutions and other organisations lack constitutional protection, institutional independence, and clear mandates on the anti-corruption struggle, they lack the constitutional protection and institutional independence that their mandates require. Then he also concluded that an unprecedented incidence of corruption is experienced

in Ethiopia; as a result, a reform that does not consider the same issue and seeks to deal with corruption only at a technical level is not likely to be successful in terms of challenging the challenger called corruption. Although the author is not telling explicitly, the need for capable leadership in government hierarchies is crucial to solving corruption-related problems and strengthening anti-corruption measures, a great point motivating the researcher at this moment.

### III. LEADERSHIP

Although leadership is defined in different forms based on the behaviour and characteristics of people trying to define this subject matter, leadership is almost everything. As a result, it is a complex concept about which many said many. On the other hand, scholars define it differently depending on their situations. For instance, to see a few of them, leadership is a universal call offered as a solution for most of the problems of organisations everywhere [7]. John Adair explains leadership as accomplishing institutional objectives by assigning successful leaders at strategic, operational, and team task levels [8].

Here the scholar defined leadership narrowly, especially compared to others' perspectives. For instance, Stogdill defined leadership as inter-relating with traits, behaviours, influences, interaction patterns, role relationships, and occupation of a position [9]. Conversely, leadership is a process whereby an individual influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal, objectives, mission, and vision [10], as cited in [11]. His explanation intends to express how leaders create, grow and transform organisations or persons whose acts affect other people more than others affect them and are agents of change. Leaders with great ambition build a great institution and nation, leaving their good name and footprints in the enterprises or institutional history. One of their aims is to develop a good team as continued leadership and leave a successful successor as a legacy to the company. Therefore, great leaders can create and nurture or cultivate more great leaders. He also interprets as great leaders are known for coaching others, inspiring enthusiasm, helping others to fix challenges, saying

"we" rather than saying "I," practically showing things are done, providing special attention to depend on good-will, striving to develop people, highly provides credit or encourage, always asks people to show other perspectives, and are willing and courageous to say "let us go." On the other perspective, leaders do not derive others, do not inspire fear, do not blame others, do not say "I," know how things are done, do not depend on authority, do not use people indirectly, do not take credit, do not command people, and do not say "go" like bosses. Because there is a broader explanation that can answer several leadership questions about what, for whom, when, why, and how leadership is relevant, in this regard, looking into the leadership definition and utilisation of Kouzes and Posner's leadership thought is very helpful. Therefore, these scholars define leadership as a boundless situation that can happen anywhere, at any time, and that is never bounded by cultural elements like religion, language, or ethnicity [12].

#### IV. THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW OF LEADERSHIP

First, the need for theoretical literature is like a ship with a captain; without it is a ship without the same. It is also possible to add another synonymous analogy that, without theoretical literature, is the same as seeing one face without a mirror. Using scientifically studied mirrors in the form of framework, theory, or model help researchers have good ways of analysing and correcting failed practices. Otherwise, it will be by trial and error [13].

However, in contemporary literature, there are different explanations, definitions, and theoretical perspectives explaining different leadership styles and behaviours with their merits and demerits. For example, great man, threat, behavioural, contingency, and transformational theories, as well as the leadership challenge model, are common.

##### 1.1. *Great man theory of leadership*

It is a kind of leadership theory that rhetorically tells about the characteristics of leaders in a traditional way. It evolved around the mid-19th century. It assumes that leadership traits are intrinsic or born

rather than made without identifying human and organisational behaviours with scientific methods [14].

##### 1.2. *Trait theory of leadership*

It is one of the earliest leadership approaches emphasising leaders' traits. The central assumption of this approach is that certain people possess innate characteristics that make them better leaders than others. Clawson further explains that the innate traits of a leader can be adaptability to situations, alertness to the social environment, ambition and achievement-oriented, assertive, cooperative, decisive, dependable, energetic (high activity level), dominant (desire to influence others), persistent, self-confident, and tolerant of stress. Not only but the trait theory requires innate skills in terms of intelligence (clever), conceptually skilled, creativity, diplomatic and tact, fluency in speaking, knowledge about group tasks, administrative ability (organised), and persuasive and socially skilled [15].

##### 1.3. *A behavioural theory of leadership*

The behavioural theory of leadership emphasises the significance of certain leadership behaviours, which leaders and followers can copy. It also assumes that leaders are not born successful but create them. Therefore, the behavioural theory assumes the actions of the leader. The patterns of behaviours are labelled in terms of "leadership styles." The styles can be task-oriented leaders, country club leaders, people-oriented leaders, dictatorial leaders, status-quo leaders, and the like [16]. Nevertheless, it is not holistic and dynamic.

##### 1.4. *Contingency (situational) theory of leadership*

The contingency kind of leadership theory proposes that there is no single style or way of leading people and institutions in this dynamic world because different situations and environments require different leadership styles. Therefore, the leader's ability to create good relationships with their followers (leader-member relationship), the leader's ability to maintain and control followers through punishment and rewards (leader positional power), and finally, the extent to which the tasks are organised, structured and clearly defined goals and procedures (task structure) [16]. On the other

explanation, contingency theory emerged in the 1960s, and it is all about balancing needs, context, and behaviours [16].

*1.5. Transformational theory of leadership*

This type of leadership theory emerged around the 1970s, and it is all about leaders being able to show their commitment to doing for the collective good. On the other explanation, it is a kind of leadership philosophy that focuses on human behaviours where transformational leaders enable followers to come up with solutions to challenges. Integrity, trust, respect, delegation, vision, appreciation, mentoring, recognition, listening skills, and influencing people are the elements of transformational leadership, like the servant leadership style on followers. In this theory, transactional (exchange) and transformational theories are identified. The transactional or exchange leadership style is all about influencing others through what they offer in exchange. In comparison, transformational leadership is about influencing others or followers by raising motivational and morality mechanisms. Leaders use motivational and moral measures to make the transaction effective [16].

*1.6. The leadership challenge model of leadership*

When we see the above leadership theories explained above, eventhough each has its positive chronological impact on the corporate transaction, the leadership challenge model of Kouzes and Posner can be taken as the best of all of these. The model has five exemplary leadership practices by which leaders can streamline the daily working approaches from these good leadership practice points of view. These practices include modelling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart of exemplary leadership practices [12]. Furthermore, an exemplary leadership model also provides an opportunity to evaluate organisational leaders' behaviours by exerting the ten commitments of leadership that enable an extraordinary thing to occur in the organisational environment [12].

*1.7. Leaders' challenges in fighting against Corruption in Ethiopia*

From the Ethiopian context point of view, in recent years, leaders have been propagating the issue of transformational leadership as the best mechanism to implement the country's transformational objective. For example, Duressa and Debela explain that there is a high disparity in the interest of successfully implementing institutional transformational objectives due to a lack of leadership development programs that can enable institutional leaders to perform better [10].

Demissie and Legese argue that all sections of society must work with the lead hand in hand to fight against corruption properly and control the malpractice of corruption hindering the country's development [17]. However, in their explanation, the effectiveness of leadership is determined by the effective participation of the other sections of society, although it requires a high involvement of leadership especially effective leadership that can cope with the current anti-development corruption challenge.

*1.8. Driving Factors of Corruption as Symptoms of Bad Corporate Governance in the Public Enterprise Sector:*

If exemplary leaders do not lead public enterprises, probably corporate managers might be challenged by different kinds of challenges like a corruption risk that needs to be reversed by an exemplary leadership approach. For example, practically visible corporate governance weaknesses challenge public enterprises, by and large, exposing corruption practices. It needs different insights, probably interrelating with better leadership approaches to challenge the challenges emanating from a different individual, group, and overall organisational faintness in the corporate governance system. These challenges are lack of Integrity; lack of democracy; weak investigation, prosecutions, and sanctions; failure to ensure corporate governance indicators; lack of moral values; lack of strong institutional oversight; and weaknesses in social prevention measures. Furthermore, ultimately such kind of vicious circle indicates the need for insight into these challenges and can be taken as the best check for the real existence of corruption scandals by which many countries were/are suffering from this challenge.

### 1.8.1. *Lack of Will and Capacity of Political Leadership:*

Political leaders directly or indirectly have their part in the success or failure stories of public enterprises. Although public enterprises do business and strive to maximise profit and have social responsibilities to prevent corruption prevalence in the socio-political system, it is hard to achieve these objectives without the will and capacity of the political leaders. Similarly, without the will and capacity of leaders, fighting corruption will be a mere desire. Corruption incidents are connected with the activities of the state, especially with the state's monopoly and discretionary power, which requires the leaders' involvement honestly.

The will and capacity of state political leaders can be seen in the size and structure of the government. Although it needs further study to deal with the connection between the government size and the occurrence and level of corruption, few empirical studies show that as the size of the government increases, the probability of increasing the level of corruption increases. However, most importantly, the type of government decides how many institutions are corrupted. In this case, if political leaders are willing to exercise global, regional, national, and local real democracy principles, corporate good governance indicators, and anti-corruption strategies, the probability of minimising corruption will be obvious [18].

Of course, public enterprises in a nation with a better governance system probably will have a better corporate governance system. The existence of a better governance system is the existence of capable leadership. For instance, Ethiopian public enterprises are controlled by the controlling authority called the public enterprise holding and administration agency [19]. The agency acts as any other executive institution with a mandate to support the performance and full or partial privatisation of state-owned enterprises. The agency also has functions to ensure the effectiveness, competitiveness, and profitability of state-owned enterprises; develop modern corporate governance structures; manage and report on state-owned enterprise performance; supervise the governance and management of all state-owned enterprises; and recommend new investment areas

including through amalgamation, division, and privatisation of state-owned enterprises [19] making the effectiveness of the agency's leadership capability in fighting against corruption constant. Its leadership effectiveness in fighting corruption might not have an extraordinary situation, unlike other institutions in the Ethiopian state. Because including the anti-corruption institution, the democratic institutions can make decisions on their own in their legally provided power jurisdiction. It is due to the unlimited power, and political interference from above them that made institutions weak, which made the anti-corruption struggle still made behind in the country since the limited resources assigned for the anti-corruption struggle were expelled for other unproductive activities. This circumstance makes anti-corruption and other interrelated democratic institutions weak in implementing anti-corruption measures and fighting against corruption.

Therefore, a little improvement in public-sector governance contributes to a little improvement in the public or state-owned enterprises' corporate governance system. On the other hand, public enterprises have effective or ineffective, weak or strong, capable or incapable, humble or arrogant, and so forth leaders at any of the executive, legislative, and judiciary critical public-sector institutions probably directly or indirectly reflected in the public Enterprise's leadership. The will, commitment, and capability to fight against corruption depend on this circumstance. Thus, public enterprise organisations' performance highly depends on the political leaders' demonstrated willingness to support public enterprises in creating adaptive leaders, enabling them to fight against corruption. F.W.de Klerk of South Africa and Pim Fortuyn of the Netherlands can be traced as successful political leaders who brought tangible changes to their respective societies.

### 1.8.2. *Lack of Democracy:*

In the essence of democracy, the state is organised under fundamental principles such as fundamental freedoms and rights, election, the rule of law, separation of powers, and public opinion and freedom of media at least [20]. Although corruption happens in healthy and unhealthy democratic conditions, minimising corruption makes it reach a point where it has no significant impact on the

economy and society. Even political development is practically seen in different European and western countries by and large. The challenge has unhealthy democracy where P.E.s' administrative and political leadership is ill. It is happening either due to a lack of democracy or deliberately or unconsciously the inability to apply the basic principles of democracy that enable it to fight against corruption. In such a kind of challenge, corruption is not debatable. Because although there is democracy in principle and even policies, strategies, and anti-corruption institutions and procedures that enable to fight against corruption, the lack of real leadership commitment and capacity makes it exist and even sustain. While the chair of Transparency International speaks to show the difference between having a healthy democracy and successfully fighting corruption and vice versa, Delia Ferreira Rubio concluded that it has quite different. From this, we can understand that corruption is much more likely to flourish where democratic foundations are weak and as has been seen in many countries where undemocratic and populist politicians capture democratic institutions and use them to their own personal and political groups' advantage. Of course, ensuring democracy alone may not necessarily lead to reduced Corruption [21].

#### *1.8.3. Weak Investigation, Prosecution, and Sanction:*

The investigation, prosecution, and sanction are practical measures in fighting against corruption. Of course, to make the anti-corruption system sustainable, establishing healthy anti-corruption mechanisms are very important. Despite taking the investigation, prosecution and sanctions measure as the only mechanism to prevent corruption, taking all necessary conditions like understanding the nature and extent of corruption experienced and ensuring the anti-corruption institutional and situational prevention existence, as well as social prevention mechanisms, is significant. However, once all the necessary conditions for anti-corruption measures mentioned above are taken place, a strict and disciplined anti-corruption enforcement mechanism of investigation, prosecution and sanction are crucial [22]. Otherwise, the chance of P.E.'s exposure to corruption is obvious. Several empirical shreds of evidence indicate that especially lack of practical

investigation, prosecution, and sanctions on the small or petty type of corruption in the long run results in systematic corruption, which is vast and bigger than the petty type of corruption. Not only but if these measures are not there, the incidence of corruption will continue to grow up to the grand or political type of Corruption in P.E.s[23].

#### *1.8.4. Failure to Insure Corporate Governance Indicators:*

Corporate governance principles are indicators of whether to have failed or successful corporate governance in the P.E.s spectrum. Nevertheless, applying and implementing these corporate governance indicators still requires exemplary leadership to ensure good corporate governance. By implication, the integration of successful leadership and successfully ensured transparency, accountability, and integrity kinds of corporate governance indicators in the public Enterprise are successfully fighting against corruption and vice versa. However, Public Enterprises are led by different contradictions. For instance, in the Ethiopian case, while the country's constitution explains the government's conduct and accountability, the government's affairs shall be transparent. It also explains that any public official or an elected representative is accountable for any failure in official duties. It adds that in case of loss of confidence, the people may recall an elected representative to take any relevant measure which can be determined by law.

To look into the detailed contexts of transparency, accountability, and Integrity, first, transparency as a corporate governance indicator is a context where the entire institutional remuneration and benefits packages are determined by independent leaders, tied with sustainable performance, and made public. Not only but it is also where P.E.s publicly report (to the parlama in the Ethiopian case) on their institutional corporate governance structure as well as on the overall anti-corruption performances. Second, accountability is the other corporate governance principle; it is the other context where independent internal and external bodies assure the healthiness of implementations due to proper implementation of anti-corruption programs. Not only but accountability is a situation where everyone in the P.E. is

accountable for his or her action, as well as a context where significant consideration must be given to the formalisation of stakeholder consultations in the process of minimising the risk of corruption. Thirdly, as the other corporate governance indicator, Integrity is a context where responsible political and P.E. leaders should take optimum care to apply similar good corporate governance standards across all P.E. institutions or any other sister companies in fighting against corruption. Also, Integrity is a circumstance where certain responsibilities are given to other government bodies to oversee the ethical implementation of good corporate governance indicators in P.E.s. In addition to these points, Integrity is a situation where the entire leadership system can successfully manage the misuse of the P.E.'s financial, material, and human resources. It is also a situation where successfully protecting those participating in the whistle-blowing process from victimisation and retaliation in fighting against corruption in the P.E. corporate governance system. In this situation, institutional financial, material, and human costs are minimised, and also Public Enterprises fulfil the social responsibility measures [24].

Therefore, corporate governance indicators are important indicators that help in taking measures to minimise and control the institutional risk of corruption. Of course, the successful result of anti-corruption measures depends on how institutions improve their anti-corruption systems (rules and institutions) and human capacity. These indicators are added to ethical services like loyalty, confidentiality, honesty, serving the public interest, exercising legitimate power, impartiality, respecting the law, responsiveness, and exercising leadership in P.E.s. Above all, this requires applying the "rules of the game" to be implemented practically according to the rules' objectives. In this case, the attempt to implement an institutional system of applying anti-corruption rules, proclamations, directives, procedures, strategies, and plans requires exemplary leadership and ultimately could have a successful institution in fighting against corruption.

#### *1.8.5. Lack of Moral Values:*

Moral values are important as any other controlling mechanism in fighting against corruption. Although

taking any measure like strong financial control, professional competencies, independence of board members, corruption investigations, prosecution, and sanction to prevent corruption is important, without exerting maximum efforts on the human thinking behaviour is almost solving only fifty percent of the Challenge of Corruption. On the other explanation, these remedies are not sufficient. As individuals are self-utility maximises (selfish), contrary to institutional objectives, whatever motivational system is established, individuals never depart from their egocentric behaviours. It arises from a lack of moral values, resulting in the challenge of corruption continuing to exist alive [25].

#### *1.8.6. Lack of Strong Institutional Oversight:*

Over-sighting institutions that are differently independent are becoming important in the current overall governance system. Public Enterprises are found in this paradigm where institutions have a platform for directly presenting performance reports, including anti-corruption implementations. The challenge is that in actual practice, sighting requires real independence from the unwanted and corrupt approach and beyond the power involvement of the executive organ of the government over the others. For instance, if we see the government structure of Ethiopia starting from the Imperial past until the recent EPRDF, the oversight process was weak since the executive has organised to secure personalised and group political and economic merits [26]. Belay Asfaw strengthens the issue that close monitoring and follow-up strategies help avoid unnecessary economic misallocations and mismanagement challenges [21], which can be seen from an oversight perspective on P.E.s.

#### *1.8.7. Weaknesses in Social Prevention Measures:*

In the process of fighting against corruption, responding to the social prevention mechanisms is as important as understanding corruption as a challenge to good corporate governance; establishing and capacitating anti-corruption institutions; and responding to situational prevention–disclosure of assets, monitoring Enterprise contracts and procurements, and result oriented leadership for motivation. By designing and implementing social affair anti-corruption programs with incentives, there is a possibility to raise social awareness of anti-

corruption laws and procedures that helps to enhance transparency and other good corporate governance indicators. Generally, conserving the existing good ethical values in the community and teaching the unknowns is a critical pro-active measure that must be taken at the grass root level, which makes the deterrence action easy and minimises those engaging in corruption activities[21].

*1.9. Areas of Corruption in Public Enterprises:*

In general terms, the prevalence of corruption in any corner of the world is high in a country with low political will and commitment to fight against corruption. In countries with weak political will and commitment to leadership, anti-corruption measures are implemented weakly. Also, corruption is rampant in countries with dictatorial leadership, weak institutions, and few political rights. In these situations, the implementation of judicial reform is impossible, which conveys proper separation of power and appropriate checks and balances.

In terms of the continent, the above explanation regarding corruption directly fits African countries before and after colonial independence. These intentional and unintentional leadership gaps in corruption are direct or indirect indicators of bad governance in the continent. It is what Bissessar and Owoye explain that corruption causes institutions and leadership to fail in general[27]. As a result, Jespersen explains that the entire African economy is ill, characterised by stagnant industrial manufacturing, high imports, rapidly expanding foreign debts, declined Agricultural products, and poor living standards for the people [27]. Therefore, Public Enterprises are specifically found in such scenarios in Africa, including Ethiopia. Different types and forms of corruption can be seen in areas like procurement, marketing, sales, contractual project, and other areas, particularly in public-owned enterprises. For the sake of another example, Transparency International also points out that public contracting, privatisation processes, theft of assets, and money laundering are a few areas where corruption is practised [27].

*1.10. Consequences of Corruption in Public Enterprises:*

Separately viewing the consequences and causes of corruption is too difficult since these issues are interchangeably dependent on one other. The above causes of corruption directly or indirectly result in a wide range of bribes, fraud, nepotism, embezzlement, and favouring corruption manifestations [28]. As a profit-making and social responsibility-fulfilling organisation, Enterprises face challenges of loss, Bankruptcy, and the inability to pay even basic employee salaries. Thanks to the annual performance report of EEG, the Enterprise planned to make a profit of 447, 351,234.94 before tax in 2013 E.C. or 2021 G.C., where the actual performance was (187,900,173.12) before tax as a loss which accounts -for 42% of the annual plan.

As a result, a substantial risk of Public Enterprise financial and material as well as human resource wastages, including the risk of damage to society, can sustain the age of bad corporate governance. Although corruption incidents have a probability of undermining public trust on several indicators like financial and non-financial resources, services, social responsibility, the rule of law, and human rights management, the Enterprise by itself identified that corruption in the bad corporate governance circumstance in its organisation exposed it for public trust to be undermined. It also admits that the organisation is already exposed to a bad name and image.

V. METHODS

This article's main objective is to explore the public Enterprise sector leadership challenges in fighting against corruption in the case of Metals and Engineering Corporation (METEC) in Ethiopia. In response to the research objective, the data obtained through qualitative survey implicating the individual, group, and ethnic-oriented Public Enterprises leadership challenges are presented and analysed in this research section. The results and discussions are presented and analysed by using both primary (qualitative survey, interview, and personal observation) and secondary (books, articles, journals, periodicals, research reports, proclamations, directives, media, annual performance, and



corruption reports from stakeholders and customers organisation) data sources employing non-probability content analysis technique. Among the three unidimensional, multi-dimensional, and explanation classifications of a qualitative survey, the explanation which can relate descriptive categories to contexts provides a possibility of using simple numbers in terms of frequency and percentage. In this part, the primary and secondary data obtained (the respondents' responses on the organisational success in achieving business and social responsibility objectives and the reasons for organisational failures, if any) are summarised and analysed to achieve the research objective by using these simple numbers supporting by typical qualitative analysis to address widely as a field of social science [29].

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Organisational achievements in the case study area

| Responses on organisational success in achieving business and social responsibility objectives | Frequency and percentage of responses on organisational success in achieving business and social responsibility objectives |            |
|--|--|------------|
|  | Frequency  | Percentage |
| yes  | 34   | 27         |
| No   | 94   | 73         |
| Other  | -  | -          |
| Total  | 128  | 100        |

(Source: Researcher's case study report, September 2021)

These respondents were also asked about their perceptions of the organisational success in achieving the business and social responsibility objectives in Table 1 above. Only 34 (27percent) respondents perceive that their organisation successfully achieved its business and social responsibility objectives. However, they added that there are undeniable positive achievements, such as the reasonable attempts to bring, adopt, & implementing new industrial technologies and establish modern corporate governance and financial systems aiming to contribute a pivotal role in the country's industrial

development. However, 94 (73percent) respondents understood that their Enterprise was unsuccessful compared to the sector's strategic plan in achieving the same objective. From this, we infer that the overall success of the Enterprise is not in a position to produce and provide healthy goods and services. As a result, the Enterprise is not generating the expected revenue and profit. It also tells that the Enterprise's participation in the social responsibility objectives like supporting and encouraging youth-based development projects, entrepreneurs, and disadvantage associations is too insignificant. It also strengthens the logic behind the foundation of the severe corruption problem and weak leadership commitment to fight against corruption in the Public Enterprise arena. Despite P.E.s recruiting skilled and capable human power, establishing a new working and financial systems, and upgrading technologies, without leadership commitment to planning, implementing, coaching, and supporting anti-corruption activities, P.E.s get insignificant changes in their overall corporate governance improvements. As a result of these circumstances, the age of insured and sustained good corporate governance will be sustained, and Public Enterprises will remain unproductive and incompetent in general.

Table 2: The respondents' perception of the reasons for organisational failures

| Perception of the reasons for organisational failures                                       | Frequency and percentage of responses on the reasons for organisational failures (negative results) |            |
|---|---|------------|
|   | Frequency   | Percentage |
| Employment because of Corruption  | 24  | 19         |
| Bankruptcy (high dept) because of Corruption  | 22  | 17         |
| Weak performances in operations because of Corruption                                       | 23  | 18         |
| Inability to satisfy customers and maximise good organisational image because of Corruption | 20  | 16         |

|   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| The inability to maximise revenue and profit because of Corruption  | 23  | 18  |
| Unable to be successful in a standard operating procedure (SOP) so that operating industries certified like ISO | 15  | 12  |
| Total   | 128 | 100 |

(Source: Researcher's case study report, September 2021)

Based on Table 2 above, in addition to the previous analysis, respondents were also asked about the reason behind their organisational failure. Moreover, while they responded, 24 (19percent) of those experts said that their organisational failure is over-employment because of corruption. 22 (17percent) believe that it is caused by high dept (Bankruptcy) due to corruption. 23 (18percent) and the other 23 (18percent) believe it is caused by weak operations performance and the inability to maximise revenue and profit because of corruption, respectively. Another 20 (16percent) added that the inability to fight corruption enabled the organisation to satisfy and maximise customers and create a good organisational image consecutively. Finally, other members were asked the same, and 15 (12percent) of them perceived that it is because of the inability to be successful in a standard operating procedure (SOP) that operating industries certified like ISO. From this, we can infer that for each reason for Public Enterprise's failures, there is the so-called "corruption." That means that in every inability of

P.E. success, the immediate cause will be corruption manifested differently. Therefore, making corruption a cross-cutting issue in P.E.s enables leaders to minimise organisational failures significantly and sustainably.

Furthermore, as the name implies, the data collected through a semi-structured interview tool requires a multi-method focus involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the subject matter. Therefore, an interview was administered targeting the leadership positions in the Enterprise. This case is subdivided into three categories—the case-study area leaders, the case-study area stakeholders, and the case-study area customers in the purposely selected branches of the case-study area. The study area branches are Addis Ababa head office, Bishoftu Automotive Industry, Akaki Basic Metals Industry, and Adama Agricultural Industry. Then, twenty leaders were found at different leadership positions—three leaders that were found at the top, middle, and lower level from each branch industry twelve; one stakeholder organisation leader who is directly or indirectly a stakeholder to the respective purposely selected head office and brunch industry one from each four; and finally one customer organisation leader who is directly a customer to the respective purposely selected head office and brunch industry one from each four by employing convenience type of non-probability sampling technique.

Table 3: The respondents' perception of the different leaders' challenges in the fight against Corruption in the Public Enterprise

| The<br>matic<br>areas               | Results  |  |  |   |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
|                                     | Interview<br>(20 EEG,<br>S.H., and<br>C leaders)   | Qualitative<br>survey  | Observation  | Secondary<br>sources  |
| Achievement                         | There is high debt because of a lack of leadership effectiveness and commitment to fighting Corruption                     | There are actual corruption practices & leadership incapacities          | There is no fundamental change except for minor results                                      | The loss outweighs the entire business's success. Because of leadership ineffectiveness and inefficiency  |
| Reasons for organisational failures | Inability to maximise revenue and profit because of corruption & unable to be successful in a standard operating procedure | Weak performances in operations because of Corruption & Corruption power | Over employment because of Corruption & inability to satisfy customers because of corruption | Weakly participation in implementing the governance; unable to be successful in a standard operating procedure; law participation and high debt because of Corruption |

(Source: Researcher's case study report, September 2021)

As depicted in Table 3, the previous Metals and Engineering (METEC), the current Ethio-Engineering, the Enterprise's organisational stakeholders, and customer leaders from different leadership hierarchies were asked whether the public Enterprise is achieving institutional objectives. The majority agree that most of the time, organisational

objectives, especially on the performance of operational tasks—performance from a customer perspective, a financial perspective, an internal performance perspective, and a learning and growth perspective; Project performance—Implementation of internal construction projects, Implementation of expansion projects, execution of unfinished mega projects; and finally properly identifying and leading business risks—lack of competitiveness and change of production technologies, financial risk, foreign exchange shortages and rate fluctuations, aged of production machines and lack of spare parts, protecting the image of the Enterprise, and human resource management objectives and activities are not achieved as per the Enterprise plan and expectation. These objectives and activities were not properly identified and planned in their explanation. Moreover, they were raising that the Enterprise was experiencing high debt rather because of a lack of exemplary leadership—modelling the way or performing a conducive work environment, envisioning or inspiring organisational vision, challenging the process or facing the risks and finding the opportunity in it, enabling others to act or positively influencing followers, and encouraging the heart or recognising the positive achievements being knowledgeable, skilled, and committed to fighting the corrupt process in the Enterprise in the process of leading by knowledge due to a lack of committed leaders in fighting corruption. First, it implies that the lack of administrative leaders' commitment emanated from leaders' unwonted desire to protect their unfairly collected public resources and re-use them using different techniques to simulate as the resources are obtained legally. Second, it also implies a high motive in people's minds to be rich and become free from poverty in the hierarchy caused by the inability to cover their basic needs. Of course, although these implications have the greatest contribution in showing how the public administrative power and resources are misused, they still need further explanation to enrich the issue in Ethiopia in achieving the desired institutional results. Besides the researcher's observation, it was seen that it is impossible to say that the purpose of the Enterprise has been achieved to the extent that it can bring about a fundamental change except for minor results. For instance, data from the Ministry of Finance, Public Enterprises Holdings and Administrations Agency,

and Ethiopia-Engineering Group shows that the Enterprise encountered high business losses. In these institutions, different organisational data also confirm the same. For instance, according to the Council of Ministers' decision on tax debt cancellation at its meeting on 16, 2012, when the customs duty and tax collection debts were submitted to the Customs Commission, the Ministry of Finance passed a debt cancellation decision based on the delegation given to the Ministry of Finance. Accordingly, in the name of "Metals and Engineering Corporation" until June 30, 2011, Ethiopian Calendar, the duties and taxes requested by the Customs Commission to be paid for the goods imported into the country, including currency differences, administrative fines, and interest, total government duties and taxes, including Birr five billion fifty-seven million nine hundred six thousand three hundred sixty-six with eighty-three cents (5,057,906,366.83 Birr) shows that they have been forgiven. This issue is shown in two categories, namely until June 30, 2007,– the duties and taxes, including penalty taxes requested by the Customs Commission to be paid for the different goods imported into the country but remain uncollected with debt as well as of 541,311,4969.98 Birr and from July 1, 2007, up to June 30, 2011,– However, due to the indebtedness of the organisations and the properties that are not in their names, they were inherited by the creditor banks as debt compensation, so the uncollected duties and taxes amount to 1,483,322,411.29, and administrative penalty amount to 47,310,124.55 and interest amount to 717,664,497.79 amount to 2,248,297,033.63 Birr. In general, about seven billion three hundred six million two hundred three thousand four hundred with forty-six cents Birr (7,306,203,400.46 Birr) is forgiven as an uncollectible by the government. There are also other inconvenient organisational performances. At the same time, the rest of the other tasks needed to be done on the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project. However, the project delivery did not follow a project execution system. the project was delivered before finalising the activities that needed to be finalised per the product plan. In addition to these, the vague and unclear reports done on the delivery work done regarding the Yayu Urea Fertilizer Manufacturing Plant and the Geo-thermal plant projects lack performance transparency; low production performance of many industries that are

found under the Enterprise; the corporation's failures to contain accurate and reliable information on the corporation's assets and liabilities; the Enterprise's failure to include the performance and condition of the flexible manufacturing factories in the report; regarding the general audit activities, the Enterprise did not include the internal audit, external audit and their findings in the report that they have planned and carried out several times even recommended by external controlling bodies like the Ethiopian House Peoples Representative. There were positive achievements like the establishment of 2274 civilian workers employed at different times from contract to permanent workers and the Enterprise's start-ups to include in financial reporting, i.e., detailed description of assets and liabilities, detailed description of profit and loss, detailed description of cashflow.

From this detailed explanation by leaders and different secondary data explanations, we can infer how much the Enterprise suffered from different leadership challenges and achieved organisational objectives insignificantly, if not only losses, rather than maximising corporate profit and revenue in contributing to the national development in the country. It also indicates that leaders are seriously examined by the challenges of leadership in creating a conducive organisational environment in preventing corrupt activities desired for best organisational implementations and achievements [10].

On the other hand, leaders were also asked about the culture of implementing anti-corruption strategies in Public Enterprises. Of course, even after raising and making the issues about the existing national anti-corruption strategy called governance and democratic participation program designed in the 1990s and others. Although they were familiar with the existing anti-corruption strategy, most respondents believed that the Enterprise was unsuccessful in implementing the national anti-corruption policy and strategy fully pledged manner. Rather, there were attempts to implement the strategy by designing the structure of the anti-corruption department, assigning only a few employees, and preparing a "suggestion box" where internal and external customers can freely express any complaints or satisfaction about service delivery. As per the researcher's observation, even though it is

possible to see small signs of the anti-corruption struggle, it is difficult to see or imagine the process of the struggle from beginning to the end in the framework of the country's anti-corruption strategies like governance and democratic participation program (GDPP) in the 1990s. As can be observed from different kinds of literature, institutional reports, and experiences, it is a customary trend to observe conflicting ideas. For instance, the government of Ethiopia has been issuing different development policies and strategies to eradicate poverty—achieving broad-based, accelerated, and sustained economic growth, first supported by a two-year plan of Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP), which covered the years 2002/03 to 2004/05; second by a five-year plan called Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) which covered the years 2005/06 to 2009/10; third by the other five-year plan called the Growth and Transformation Plan I (GTP I) which covers the period from 2010/11 to 2014/15; and finally, another five-year plan called the Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II). Specifically and as long as the previous Metals and Engineering Corporation (METEC), the current Ethio-Engineering (EEG) is concerned, live alone the anti-corruption strategies, designing and implementing preparing essential guidelines that enable the implementation of the corporate finance and management systems like Corporate Governance Code, Dividend policy, guidelines for the use of dividends, Executive recruitment and placement framework, the recruitment, selection and placement guidelines of the Board of Directors, and the like in the Enterprise, for instance, are still under preparation [30]. Not only designing new working systems but altering and implementing the existing ones, like forming contractual employment guidelines, has problems. For instance, 579 workers have been working without renewing their contract for many years after the expiry of their contractual agreement with the Enterprise showing how the existing leadership of capability lacks the concepts and practices of exemplary leadership that would be used to help the leadership journey in altering the leadership of Public Enterprise corporate governance path. However, this leadership perspective in developing the role of leadership and improving corporate governance is at its lower stage, demonstrated by unproductive, less

committed, less courageous, less capability (lacking skill, knowledge, role-model, and ethics), and so forth.

No one had a claim about this interesting and ambitious statements, but there are claims about the absence of broad-based, accelerated, and sustained fighting against corruption. Not only but the civil service reform program (CSR) made in 1996 had great pressure from western policy owners and financial funders like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a structural adjustment program (SAP) that focused on the macro-economic and institutional reforms [31] which were dictating as loan conditionality from these international institutions. It was during this circumstance that the Ethiopian anti-corruption commission was established. Therefore, there is still a question of whether the anti-corruption commission was there to fight corruption or get foreign aid and loan. Of course, the end justified the means of implementing the civil service reform in 1996 since the fight against corruption brought an insignificant change in the strive of developing Ethiopian economic development. Specifically achieving the desired goal in the Public Enterprise—significantly applying at least the existing national anti-corruption strategy by committed P.E. leaders. However, at most, maximum since the government's anti-corruption policy and strategy was not designed to build synergies and coordinate among different stakeholders, including METEC/EEG institutions, they are not planning, implementing, or controlling as desired. From this analysis, it is possible to infer that it is a matter of lacking interest or commitment from both the political and Public Enterprise leadership that is unable to decide and take actions to bring significant change in the fight against corruption because pieces of information are showing that the significant growth of the trend of corruption in the country's anti-corruption history. Therefore, as the political leadership pays attention to designing the country's holistic economic policies and strategies, the focus on the anti-corruption struggle is too minimal. The minimal focus given by the political leadership in the fight against corruption in the country has contributed to the potential Public Enterprises leaders playing an important role in the fight against corruption.

Similarly, the lack of public Enterprise leadership's focus on the same challenge has contributed to the potential of employees and the community to fight against corruption. However, a mere design of ambitious policies and strategic plans like the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP), Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP), Growth and Transformation Plan I (GTP I), and Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II), instead it has remained only an invisible and intangible idea and desire. Instead, it requires the leadership's great commitment to making it practical and tangible by making the existing national anti-corruption strategy more focused and a holistic government approach so that all organisational leaders can play an important role in the fight against corruption. In practice, however, it is only a few—the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commissions (FEACCs), regional Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission counterpart (REACC), the federal police, and the Federal Attorney General (FAG) stakeholders are trying to discharge their duties and responsibilities in a conventional approach that needs beyond these few only.

Finally, interviewees were also asked what should be next in Table 3. As usual, most believed that the government as a responsible and elected government and political party should first decide to strengthen the struggle and practically implement the anti-corruption strategies by making the accountability process efficient and effective. The Public Enterprise was an institution where much embezzlement has been committed since the human resource assignments were based on ethnicity, family, marriage, friend, and self-benefit. Of course, it will be too early to evaluate the Enterprise after the new reform made four years ago in 2019. As per the researcher's observations, however, weak implementations of the principles of good corporate governance in the Public Enterprise are observable. For instance, although not reported on time, drowning in debt of more than 60 billion birrs; failures in making the human resources based on study results; the inability of performing and submitting project works at a given quality and time; lack of leadership courage in the provision of many capacity building pieces of training in various sectors

in the Enterprise to increase the anti-corruption awareness of the leaders and followers; the inability of doing institutional fixed assets and stock valuation / Asset Valuation / works in a standard manner; the Inability of Implementing International Standard Financial System (IFRS); being unable to separate and submit the bills that have been collected and paid for a long time; lack of leadership commitment be able to organise corruption complains from complaints and the fact that no one was corruption suspected and prosecuted in the life of the Enterprise except being able to organise more than 150 prosecutions with the Attorney General in 2021 for the first time after the new reform has introduced; leadership weakness to be able to improve working systems by issuing guidelines and internal management manuals; leadership and institutional inability to improve the financial capacity of the Enterprise by selling products that have been old for a long time by making maintenance improvements and making wisely use of the country's resources and unwanted focus on foreign procurements that increased the Enterprise's value of corruption through time; lack of research development activities to periodically assess leadership, technical, production and productivity improvement strategy, procedural, and stakeholders and customers satisfaction challenges; leadership weaknesses to study feasibility studies before designing and implementing small, medium, and large scale projects; and so forth are some of the factors one way or another affecting every good corporate governance indicator. Several secondary data also show how the lack of a conducive implementation strategy for anti-corruption challenges the entire fight against corruption in the Public Enterprise realm. For example, according to the Ethiopian Delegation team of the Governance and Democratic Participation program (GDPP) for experience sharing from Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) initiated by the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (FEACC) in November 2019 shows that there is a great disparity between designing the anti-corruption strategy and practical implementation as well as coordination among the anti-corruption stakeholders. Therefore, the primary challenge of the country's political and administrative leadership. As a result, Public Enterprises are the results of these challenges seen as a country. There is

a gap in leadership capability in the Public Enterprise realm to periodically address and implement regular surveys and studies to create a conducive anti-corruption struggle environment that helps achieve institutional mission and vision. From the above data presentations, we can infer that without anti-corruption institutions' integration and lack of strategies in addressing the whole political, administrative, and revenue and social responsibility-making organisations, it has become difficult to tackle the challenge of corruption in the country. Otherwise, embezzlement of public Enterprise funds, misuse of power, and failure of duty for personal gain can be explained as grand Corruption and a serious challenge for every organisation, specifically Public Enterprises that are leading huge public resources.

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- *Conclusion*

In exploring the foremost Public Enterprises leaders' challenges in fighting against corruption, specifically focusing on general organisational achievement, the major finding of this study is that the Enterprise is at the lowest stage because of a lack of efficient and effective leaders in the Public Enterprise sector as identified in this understudy. It results from a bad attitude toward individuals or groups illegally using the institution's financial and non-financial resources at any organisational hierarchy to benefit themselves, ethnic and self-benefit-oriented network members.

Mainly, the Enterprise is not successful in achieving corporate business and social responsibility objectives; for these and the lack of political and administrative leadership commitment and capability of fighting corruption, especially the inability to solve the human insecurity caused by either unfairly rich or unfairly poor which leads to sustain the age and existence of corrupt practices in the sector in Ethiopia. Furthermore, it is identified that the reasons for organisational failures are over-employment, high debt, weak performances in operations, inability to satisfy customers, incapability to build good organisational images, the inability to maximise revenue and profit, and finally, unable to be successful in a standard operating procedure (SOP) that enables to fulfil ISO standards. There is also a lack of cooperation in a coordinated manner with the

relevant body of the anti-corruption agency— leadership responsibilities like proactively preparing whistleblowers to receive complaints and, as a result, organising and sending corruption complaints to the concerned body. The public enterprise-anti-corruption agency linkage is weak because of a lack of capability and leadership willingness to facilitate an enabling environment by planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the anti-corruption strategies to fight the development cancer of corruption. Pragmatically, the Public Enterprises, the anti-corruption agency, and the state's major political institutions' leadership commitment to plan, implement, monitor, and support paper-based national anti-corruption decisions and strategies to support and achieve the national anti-corruption objectives is insignificant due to a lack of political and administrative leadership capability and commitment.

- *Recommendations*

First, the state's political leadership should decide to fight against corruption in the country, taking it from the heart by strengthening major political institutions like the Executive, Legislative, Ombudsman, and Ethiopian Human Rights Commission. Not only to strengthen the controlling institutions like Federal Ethics and Anti-corruption Commission and the Federal Auditor General (FAG) as well as the administrative organisations like the Public Enterprises and Holdings Agency and Public Enterprises. The government should also design a human power capacity-building policy to solve the human insecurity caused by either being unfairly rich or unfairly poor, which leads people to practice corruption. Such kinds of measure from a leadership development perspective enables response to the existing leadership gap to alter the Public Enterprises' efficiency and effectiveness so that the Public Enterprises sector can generate high revenue and maximise profit pursuing their social and business responsibilities in Ethiopia.

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