

**Godswill Akpabio's Rhetoric on the Matter of Joy Nunieh's NYSC Certificate: An
Analysis of His Win-Over Effect Using Elmo Lewis' AIDA and Aristotle's Three
*Pisteis***

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Abstract

The study focused on providing explanations for how and why the rhetoric of Godswill Akpabio on the matter of Joy Nunieh and the issues with her NYSC certificate was effective in winning over his audience. The 'explanatory tools' employed in the analysis were Elmo Lewis' AIDA Model and Aristotle's three *pisteis*. The work rested on framing as a theoretical basis. Survey data from another study by the authors – the parent study of this work – was rehashed to establish that Akpabio's interview with Arise News spotlighted in this work did indeed win over a sample audience of 400 online users who had watched the interview on the YouTube channel of the television network. The analysis showed that Akpabio's rhetoric in the interview did follow the four-step sequence of Lewis' AIDA model and also did meet the audience's expectations of him with regard to Aristotle's three *pisteis*. The study concluded that scholars can always explain win-over effect using different analytical tools derivable from literature. The recommendation to practitioners of political rhetoric was that they should always rank *ethos* above *logos* or *pathos* in their political communication because audiences' highest expectation of politicians is *ethos* above *logos* or *pathos*.

Keywords: *Akpabio, Joy Nunieh, rhetoric, AIDA, ethos*

Introduction

Even before Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, thinkers have always sought for an explanation of why some speeches would have a winning effect on audiences and some other speeches would not. It was a burning quest in the minds of classical philosophers. Aristotle may have articulated this quest more cogently than his precursors, but the quest predated him. Plato before him and the Sophists before Plato had had their share of preoccupation with this quest, striving earnestly to understand and explain how the rhetoric of the orators and debaters of the city-state of classical Greece won over the audiences of that day. In a sense, this quest defines the origin of communication studies because the study of rhetoric is "the oldest tradition of communication theory" (Craig, 2009, p. 960).

That quest and that old tradition did not die with the Greeks of the classical era studying the orators and debaters of their day. That quest still burns today, in Nigeria, in the studying of the rhetoric of the politicians of our own clime. This work embodies that quest.

In this work, the effect of Godswill Akpabio's July 12, 2020 interview with *Arise News* is analysed, with the 'winning formula' of his rhetoric explained using Elmo Lewis' AIDA Model and Aristotle's three *pisteis*. In the said interview, Akpabio, Minister for Niger Delta Affairs at the time, was rebutting a claim by Joy Nunieh, former Acting Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), that Akpabio had relieved her of her appointment because she had refused his sexual advances at her. Akpabio's narrative in the interview, however, was that she was relieved because she had issues with her NYSC certificate. As the data presented hereafter in this work shows, the audience believed Akpabio's side of the story. How and why his rhetoric had a win-over effect on them will be analysed in the work, and the system behind his effectiveness explained. The purpose of the analysis and explanation is to demonstrate that as much as rhetoric is an art, there is also a system to that art.

Aim of the Study

As already alluded, the aim of this work is to demonstrate that effective rhetoric can be explained for its effectiveness. In other words, if rhetoric – in the form of a television interview, for instance – is proven to have won over an audience, its win-over effect can be analysed and explained. Its winning mechanism can be demonstrated. In the case of Godswill Akpabio's rhetoric spotlighted in this work, data from an earlier study – the parent study leading to this work – had shown that his rhetoric on the matter of Joy Nunieh did win over his audience. Those data from the parent study will be rehashed here and explanations using the stated 'explanatory tools' presented accordingly.

Theoretical Basis

Framing theory provides this study its theoretical basis. Framing theory states in essence that the way in which a thing is presented to an audience will influence the way in which that audience will process the information and make sense of it. Here, the way in which a thing is presented is called "the frame". According to framing theory, the frame influences the meaning that the audience ascribes to a thing presented, even more than the thing itself.

"The roots of framing theory" (Volkmer, 2009, p. 407) were first planted in media scholarship by sociologist Erving Goffman. In his 1974 book, *Frame Analysis*, Goffman submits that political communication can predetermine audience interpretation of issues and things by means of the frames with which those issues and things are presented on

the media to audiences (Goffman, 1974). In Goffman's day, when communication scholarship was just weaning itself of infantile understanding of audience effects, Goffman's submissions were not only illuminating but also quite novel. Volkmer (2009) writes about this:

Framing theory emerged in the mass media age of the 1970s. In the United States, this was a time when media research... began to address quite specific forms of media influence on audiences... As audiences were exposed to continuous information streams, it became obvious that media... powerfully create world perceptions and political discourse (p. 408).

To "powerfully create...political discourse", Walter Lippman in his 1922 volume explains that political communicators frame "stereotypes that serve as pictures in our heads" (Volkmer, 2009, p. 408). These pictures, and the stereotypes that are used to create them, in turn frame our perceptions of the thing presented; as an American pollster, Frank Luntz, said in 1997, "It's not what you say, it's how you say it" (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 9). After much research work on political campaign messages, Luntz came to the conclusion that "the effect of the messages was not a function of content differences but of differences in the modes of presentation" (p. 9). In other words, the win-over effect is not so much in the content of the presentation as it is in the mode of the presentation.

For many scholars, framing theory is the rule-of-thumb theory for explaining rhetoric's effect on audiences (Frenkel-Faran & Lehman-Wilzig, 2007; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007; Volkmer, 2009; Ndinojuo, Ihejirika & Okon, 2018; Nsereka & Papamie, 2021). It is apt for explaining tailored communication. This study hinges on it as a theoretical basis for navigating the explanation on how Godswill Akpabio's rhetoric pulled off its win-over effect on his audience.

Elmo Lewis's AIDA Model

This review of Elmo Lewis' AIDA Model will begin with a discussion of the concept of hierarchy of effects as developed in advertising thesis. By 'hierarchy of effects' is meant the step-by-step process that an advertising message follows as it persuades its audiences to reach a buying decision (Batra & Vanhonacker, 1986). Scholars researching the art of selling had noticed a system to the effectiveness of salesmen and as early as 1898 had mooted the idea "that a hierarchy of effects was operative in [selling]" (Barry & Howard, 1990, p. 121). This sense of a hierarchy of effects was carried over from research in selling into research in advertising because as Reed and Ewing (2004) explain, "the prevailing view [at the time] was that advertising was selling in print" and therefore "the early advertising models emulated the sales models" (p. 92). Starch (1923), synonymizing advertising as 'printed selling' and as 'printed salesmanship', captures this prevailing view of that era:

There are two types of selling: oral selling and printed selling. Many, if not all, of the fundamental processes of these two types of salesmanship are essentially the same. Oral salesmanship deals ordinarily with one person at a time; printed salesmanship deals with many people at a time. The former is individual selling, while the latter is mass selling. (p. 5).

Largely all the proponents of the idea of a hierarchy of sales/advertising effects similarly submit that “audiences of [salesmen and of] advertising...respond to [sales and advertising] messages in a very ordered way: cognitively first ('thinking'), affectively second ('feeling'), and conatively third ('doing')” (Barry & Howard, 1990, p. 121). This order of the message affecting the audience's 'thinking' first, then their 'feeling' next, and ultimately their 'doing', has “been around in the advertising literature for more than a century” (Yoo, Kim & Stout, 2004, p. 49). This thinking-feeling-doing order of effects has come to be known as “the traditional hierarchy framework” (Yoo et al., 2004, p. 49).

Elias St. Elmo Lewis developed the very first hierarchy model, AID, in 1898. AID modelled selling effects in the order of 'attention' first, 'interest' next, and 'desire' ultimately. AID was developed “as a sales guide for salesmen to be successful in moving a prospect to buy” (Barry & Howard, 1990, p. 123). Later on around 1900, Lewis revised AID to AIDA (the last 'A' standing for 'action'), the “action stage” an afterthought added after Lewis realized it was “necessary to convince salesmen to move buyer prospects through [the] complete selling process” (Barry & Howard, 1990, p. 123). Lewis' AIDA continues to maintain a place in literature. Barry and Howard (1990) note that “the basic stages of the AIDA model were adhered to by the vast majority of advertising writers for 60 years after its publication” (p. 123).

Aristotle's Three *Pisteis*

Aristotle defines rhetoric as the art of “finding all the available means of persuasion” (Prosser, 2009, p. 103), the 'available means of persuasion' being three *pisteis*, namely:

Ethos, or ethical proof, which depends on the credibility of the speaker, knowledge of the subject, and good will for the audience; *logos*, or logical proof, which depends on enthymemes and syllogisms; and *pathos*, or emotional proof, depending on appeals to the audience's emotions, such as friendship, joy, anger, or sorrow (Prosser, 2009, p. 105).

These three *pisteis* are three 'means' or fulcrums available to a speaker to leverage on to produce persuasion. Rapp (2022) puts it this way: In Aristotle's thesis, “speech can produce persuasion either through the character (*ethos*) of the speaker, the emotional state (*pathos*) of the listener, or the argument (*logos*) itself” (Rapp, 2022, 2. para. 1). Another way to say it is that Aristotle divides rhetoric into three “argument-types” (Shanahan, 2009, p. 596) – the logical type, the emotional type, and the ethical type. These different argument-types are deemed by Aristotle as each being best suited for different rhetorical situations, depending on the particular type of audience. According to Prosser (2009):

Specifically addressing the Greek men of his day, [Aristotle] proposed that young men are most likely to accept and be persuaded by emotional proofs, middle-aged men are likely persuaded by a mix of logical and emotional proofs, and old men are persuaded by reasoned logic (Prosser, 2009, p. 105).

Aristotle's three *pisteis* have influenced much literature on rhetoric. Though put forth in the classical era, their influence has carried over into modern scholarship. This work uses them as one of its tools for explaining the win-over effect of Godswill Akpabio's rhetoric on the matter of Joy Nunieh and the issues with her NYSC certificate.

Review of Related Studies

Two empirical works centred on rhetoric and its win-over effect were selected for review. In their different ways, they both have bearing on the present study. The two studies are reviewed as follows.

Liu (2016) Reviewing the Rhetoric of Donald Trump’s Twitter of the 2016 Presidential Election

The main aim of the study under review was to “analyze how Trump persuade[d] the followers as well as convey[ed] the emotion for followers through rhetorical means and rhetorical techniques in Twitter, so that he successfully became the 45th president of the United States.” (p. 2). The research questions of the study under review are stated as:

- 1) How does Donald Trump use twitter to present arguments and what rhetorical means are used to persuade readers/followers?
- 2) How does Donald Trump use twitter to create and transmit emotion, feeling and affection?

The study under review employed the “Rhetorical Method as well as the Rhetoric and Metaphor instrument of Critical Discourse Analysis” (p. 2) to analyze “selected texts” from Trump’s tweets (p. 17). The main finding is stated as follows: “Trump’s frequently used rhetorical strategies are “ethos” and “pathos” on Twitter... “Logos” as a rhetorical strategy is hardly used by Trump; it depends on the other two strategies.” (p. 34).

The reviewed study’s finding as stated in the foregoing was that on Twitter, Trump’s rhetorical preference was more for ethos and pathos than for logos. Rational cogency was for him a secondary rhetorical objective – second after authenticity and emotional appeal. This finding is, without argument, germane to the subject matter under focus in the present study. However, as germane as this finding is, it leaves questions unanswered about how Trump’s preference of authenticity (credibility) and emotion over logic actually functioned in a system to ultimately win over his audiences. The present study aims to provide more answers to the questions about the system by which rhetoric wins over audiences.

Elegbe and Okon (2016) Persuasive Rhetoric in Goodluck Jonathan’s 2011 Presidential Political Campaign Advertisements in Nigeria

A stated objective of the study under review was “to examine the extent to which the perceived credibility of Goodluck Jonathan in the adverts influence voter’s sense of reasoning and emotions to vote for him.” (p. 73). The methodology of the study under review combined “questionnaire survey, in-depth interviews and content analysis” (p. 74) to make its main finding that “though different people are influenced by different persuasive appeals, some by appeal to logic, some by appeal to credibility and others by appeal to emotions which are interwoven”, in the case of the respondents surveyed in the study under review, “the personality of Goodluck Jonathan portrayed credibility that eventually influenced [their] emotion to vote for him” (p. 83). As instructive as this finding about credibility’s influence on emotion is, it still hardly explains the system by which credibility worked on or with emotion to produce the effect of action that it produced in the audience. It is this knowledge gap that this present study seeks to bridge.

Methodology

This work rehashed survey data from another study – the parent study leading to this work – in analyzing the win-over effect of Godswill Akpabio’s rhetoric in his July 12,

2020 interview with *Arise News*. The survey population consisted of the subscribers to the *YouTube* channel of *Arise News*, which as at February 1, 2022 numbered 205,077. From this population of 205,077 subscribers, a sample of 400 respondents was selected. This sample size was first predetermined using Taro Yamane's formula for arriving at a manageable sample size (Yamane, 1973), while the actual selection of respondents was by purposive sampling technique, the purposive criterion being that the respondents must have watched the video of Godswill Akpabio's July 12, 2020 interview posted on the *YouTube* channel of *Arise News*. The instrument for gathering data from this sample was online questionnaire designed using *Google Docs* technology.

Data on Akpabio's Rhetoric and Analysis of His Win-Over Effect

Title of Video: *MINISTER OF NIGER DELTA AFFAIRS SEN. GODSWILL AKPABIO DEBUNKS CLAIMS BY FORMER NDDC MD, JOY NUNIEH*

Date of Post: July 12, 2020

Retrieved on April 22, 2022 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=112U6CrUBrc>

Media Source: Arise News YouTube Channel

Length of Full Video: 34:20

Akpabio: ...I don't want to dwell on your last guest but I want to just mention one reason... She was not relieved of her appointment because of corruption. She wasn't relieved of her appointment because of the reason... She was relieved of her appointment because of insubordination. My ministry that should supervise her wrote seven letters to her; she never responded to one. And then of course, she said she was bigger than the minister of Niger Delta. So, insubordination. I have the letter here. Then outside that, the then Chief of Staff, may his soul rest in peace, sent this to me: this was a petition from an anti-corruption agency insisting that she did not have the requisite qualification to work as an acting managing director of a commission.

Ngozi Alaegbu [Arise News Presenter/Interviewer]: Okay, this... the title of this if I could read it; if you would permit me to do so: "A Case of Non-Possession of Valid NYSC Certificate by Joy Nunieh, Acting MD of NDDC: An Urgent Call for Redress".

Akpabio: And this is what she submitted as her only qualification on earth: a letter from Council of Legal Education. Just read what is written there: "Confirmation..."

Ngozi Alaegbu: Yes. "This is to confirm that Nunieh Joy Yimebe was a student of the Nigeria Law School during the 1989 and 1990 academic session".

Akpabio: Go on...

Ngozi Alaegbu: Yes. "And she was mobilized for the National Youth Service Corp programme for 1989/1990 service year. She has however informed us of the loss of her discharge certificate by a letter dated October 23, 2019".

Akpabio: And this is somebody who was supposed to have finished in 1990. And it is in 2019, a few days to her inauguration, that she's informing us through a letter from Law School, not through a letter from NYSC... I want to give you another document... a letter from the NYSC itself... this is from the National Youth Service Corp (NYSC)... just read that last paragraph...

Ngozi Alaegbu: "However, no record exists either in NYSC Kwara State or NYSC National Directorate Headquarters to evidence her participation in the scheme".

Akpabio: I rest my case...

Table 1 Data of Survey Responses on Akpabio's Use of Rhetoric to Rebut Nunieh's Claim

Which one of these statements do you consider to be the truth about the matter of Joy Nunieh's NYSC discharge certificate? (CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE THREE BOXES)	I cannot tell if she had/has an NYSC certificate	She lost her NYSC certificate	She does not have an NYSC certificate
	I cannot tell what is the truth of the matter about Joy Nunieh's NYSC discharge certificate	Joy Nunieh actually had an NYSC discharge certificate, but she lost it just as she has said	Joy Nunieh actually does not have an NYSC discharge certificate, so she said what she said about Akpabio to distract the public from the truth about her not having an NYSC discharge certificate
	4%	34%	62%
Which one of these statements best captures your assessment of whether Akpabio was lying or telling the truth in the video? (CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE THREE BOXES)	I cannot tell	He was lying	He was not lying
	I cannot tell if Akpabio was lying or telling the truth	Akpabio was lying	Akpabio was telling the truth
	3%	34%	63%

N = 400

As the data on Table 1 shows, a majority of the respondents believed Akpabio was telling the truth in his rebuttal. It is to be noted that all through in his rebuttal, the minister never denied Joy Nunieh's claim of him making sexual advances at her. He neither owned up to her claim of his sexual advances nor did he deny it. He simply stayed focused on making his point that the reason why she was relieved of her appointment was because of insubordination, particularly because of the issues with her NYSC certificate, and not because of any of the other reasons she had given previously. In all, his rhetoric was shown to be believable to a majority of the respondents.

Consciously or unconsciously, Akpabio's rhetoric lined up with AIDA. In the AIDA model, rhetoric aims to grab the attention of an audience first, then inspire their interest next, then fuel their desire after that, and then ultimately move them to action. Akpabio's rhetoric followed this sequence of four stages. Table 2 presents a breakdown of Akpabio's interview to explain that his rhetoric followed these four stages in sequence.

Table 2 Akpabio's Rhetoric Explained in the Sequence of the Four Stages of the AIDA Model

ATTENTION (Stage 1) **Akpabio:** ... The then Chief of Staff, may his soul rest in peace, sent this to me: this was a petition from an anti-corruption agency insisting that she did not have the requisite qualification to work as an acting managing director of a commission.

Ngozi Alaegbu [AriseNews Presenter/Interviewer]: Okay, this... the title of this if I could read it; if you would permit me to do so: “A Case of Non-Possession of Valid NYSC Certificate by Joy Nunieh, Acting MD of NDDC: An Urgent Call for Redress”.

INTEREST (Stage 2) **Akpabio:** And this is what she submitted as her only qualification on earth: a letter from Council of Legal Education. Just read what is written there: “Confirmation...”

Ngozi Alaegbu: Yes. “This is to confirm that Nunieh Joy Yimebe was a student of the Nigeria Law School during the 1989 and 1990 academic session”.

Akpabio: Go on...

DESIRE (Stage 3) **Ngozi Alaegbu:** Yes. “And she was mobilized for the National Youth Service Corp programme for 1989/1990 service year. She has however informed us of the loss of her discharge certificate by a letter dated October 23, 2019”.

Akpabio: And this is somebody who was supposed to have finished in 1990. And it is in 2019, a few days to her inauguration, that she’s informing us through a letter from Law School, not through a letter from NYSC...

ACTION (Stage 4) I want to give you another document... a letter from the NYSC itself... this is from the National Youth Service Corp (NYSC)... just read that last paragraph...

Ngozi Alaegbu: “However, no record exists either in NYSC Kwara State or NYSC National Directorate Headquarters to evidence her participation in the scheme”.

Akpabio: I rest my case.

The attention-interest-desire-action sequence that Akpabio followed in making his case, as shown on Table 2 above, partly explains how and why his rhetoric on the matter of Joy Nunieh had a win-over effect on his audience. He grabbed the attention of his audience first, then inspired their interest next, then fuelled their desire after that, and then ultimately moved them to action. With regard to “action”, the last “A” in the AIDA Model, what action was Akpabio requiring from his audience? Akpabio was requiring his audience to believe that his accuser lied on the issue of her NYSC certificate. If they would believe that she lied on the issue of her NYSC certificate, then they would take her story about his sexual advances at her with a pinch of salt. Did Akpabio’s audience perform this action that he was requiring from them? Did they get to believe that his accuser lied? Data from this present study shows that the audience under study believed

that his accuser lied (62% believe that she lied; and 63% believe that Akpabio was telling the truth). His rhetoric was not only believable but it was also believed; and he seemed to know so, because he said with finality, “I rest my case”.

Next, survey data from the parent study is presented showing how well or how poorly Akpabio navigated Aristotle’s three *pisteis*.

Table 3 Data of Responses on How Well or How Poorly Akpabio Navigated the Three *Pisteis*

In preparing himself to say what he had to say, which one of the following do you consider to be the biggest challenge that Akpabio had to find a way to deal with in that interview?(CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE THREE BOXES)	Logos	Pathos	Ethos
	Akpabio’s biggest challenge was how to put forth a cogent argument to establish the truth	Akpabio’s biggest challenge was how to make the people dislike Joy Nunieh and like him	Akpabio’s biggest challenge was how to discredit Joy Nunieh and restore his own credibility
	33%	6%	61%
Which one of these statements best describes the effect that Akpabio’s words in the interview have had on your notion of him?(CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE THREE BOXES)	Logos	Pathos	Ethos
	Akpabio’s words in the interview settled the truth of the matter for me	Akpabio’s words in the interview made me like him	Akpabio’s words in the interview made me believe him
	8%	3%	89%

N = 397

As the data on Table 3 shows, from the perspective of the audience, Akpabio met the most pressing rhetorical ‘need of the hour’ he was faced with; the most pressing rhetorical ‘need of the hour’ from the perspective of the audience being *ethos*. Table 4 below demonstrates how the three *pisteis* can be used as an ‘explanatory tool’ to show how and why Akpabio’s interview on his reason for Joy Nunieh’s sacking was effective in winning over his audience.

Table 4 Akpabio’s Win-Over Effect Explained Using Aristotle’s Three *Pisteis*

LOGOS	PATHOS	ETHOS
Akpabio: ...I don’t want to dwell on your last guest but I want to just mention one reason... She was not relieved of her appointment because of corruption. She wasn’t relieved of her appointment because of the reason... She was relieved of her appointment because of insubordination. My ministry that should supervise her wrote seven letters to her; she never responded to		

one. And then of course, she said she was bigger than the minister of Niger Delta. So, insubordination.

I have the letter here. Then outside that, the then Chief of Staff, may his soul rest in peace, sent this to me: this was a petition from an anti-corruption agency... ..insisting that she did not have the requisite qualification to work as an acting managing director of a commission.

Ngozi Alaegbu [AriseNews Presenter/Interviewer]: Okay, this... the title of this if I could read it; if you would permit me to do so: “A Case of Non-Possession of Valid NYSC Certificate by Joy Nunieh, Acting MD of NDDC: An Urgent Call for Redress”.

Akpabio: And this is what she submitted as her only qualification on earth: a letter from Council of Legal Education. Just read what is written there: “Confirmation...”

Ngozi Alaegbu: Yes. “This is to confirm that Nunieh Joy Yimebe was a student of the Nigeria Law School during the 1989 and 1990 academic session”.

Akpabio: Go on...

Ngozi Alaegbu: Yes. “And she was mobilized for the National Youth Service Corp programme for 1989/1990 service year. She has however informed us of the loss of her discharge certificate by a letter dated October 23, 2019”.

Akpabio: And this is somebody who was supposed to have finished in 1990. And it is in 2019, a few days to her inauguration, that she’s informing us through a letter from Law School, not through a letter from NYSC...

I want to give you another document... a letter from the NYSC itself... this is from the National Youth Service Corp (NYSC)... just read that last paragraph...

Ngozi Alaegbu: “However, no record exists either in NYSC Kwara State or NYSC National Directorate Headquarters to evidence her participation in the scheme”.

Akpabio: I rest my case.

Discussion of the Win-Over System Identified

Akpabio’s approach to navigating *ethos* was to puncture the credibility of his accuser rather than bolster his own. This approach proved to be strategic because as long as his accuser’s credibility was intact, whatever he would say to debunk her accusations would be a back-and-forth of his word against hers.

He used a number of rhetorical ‘levers’ to pull through his strategy of puncturing his accuser’s credibility. Most of his ‘levers’ hinged on name-dropping. For example, he said, “...the then Chief of Staff, may his soul rest in peace, sent this to me: this was a petition from an anti-corruption agency insisting that she did not have the requisite qualification to work as an acting managing director of a commission.” He had noiselessly dropped a big name, a credible name, the name of the late Chief of Staff, to pre-validate the claim he was about to make. His mention of “an anti-corruption agency” was also name-dropping, strategic for authenticating the petition he was about to get the interviewer to read out. Also, when he said, “I want to give you another document... a letter from the NYSC itself... this is from the National Youth Service Corp (NYSC)”, it was the ultimate name-dropping of the day; and it proved decisive. Since the issue was about Miss Nunieh’s NYSC certificate, whatever the NYSC had to say about the matter would be the most decisive.

A number of his other rhetorical tactics proved strategic to his navigating *ethos*. For example, mentioning that it was only a few days to her inauguration that she tendered a letter informing of the loss of her NYSC certificate was not a benign spin – it was calculated to poke a hole in the credibility of his accuser. Also, saying that the letter she submitted was from the Law School when it ought to have been from the NYSC was another blow to her credibility. On the whole, Akpabio’s rhetoric proved successful in navigating *ethos*.

As the studies by Liu (2016) and by Elegbe and Okon (2016) reviewed in this work instruct, Akpabio’s rhetoric stood little or no chance of ever winning over his audience if his rhetoric had failed on the count of *ethos*. Elegbe and Okon’s study had found that “the personality of Goodluck Jonathan portrayed credibility that eventually influenced [his audience’s] emotion to vote for him” (p. 83). Indeed, Liu’s study corroborates Elegbe and Okon’s study, as it had found that Donald Trump’s success with his audiences at the time was driven by a system in which *ethos* was ranked above *pathos* which in turn was ranked above *logos*. Put another way, *ethos* stimulated *pathos* which oiled *logos*. Akpabio’s system in the matter of Joy Nunieh was identical to this system. His system lined up with Aristotle’s three *pisteis*.

To say that Akpabio put *ethos* above *logos* is not to say that he navigated *logos* poorly. To the contrary, he navigated *logos* as successfully as he did *ethos*. His approach of speaking from the rostrum of document evidence proved a cogent way to make an

argument that was not just an argument, but was in actual fact a counter argument. His approach of producing the documents sequentially as he did, in the natural logic with which he presented them, manifestly empowered his rhetoric. Consciously or unconsciously, he followed a sequence that grabbed the attention of his audience first, then inspired their interest next, then fuelled their desire after that, and then ultimately moved them to action. This is the sequence of Elmo Lewis' AIDA model.

Conclusion and Recommendation

All through this work, the point being established is that for each piece of political rhetoric (speech, interview, remark etc) proven to have effectively won over its audience, its win-over effect can be explained using one or more 'explanatory tools' derivable from literature. In the case of Akpabio's rhetoric on the matter of Joy Nunieh, Elmo Lewis' AIDA and Aristotle's three *pisteis* were used. The foregoing conclusion is for scholars of political rhetoric but the following recommendation is for practitioners of political rhetoric.

On Table 3, the data showed that of the three *pisteis* of Aristotle's theory, the audience sought for *ethos* (or the credibility of the politician) over and above *logos* or *pathos*. This expectation of credibility is not exclusive to the case of Akpabio on the matter of Joy Nunieh. In the parent study, this expectation of credibility was found to be common for all cases of all politicians in all the situations surveyed. An explanation for this would be that, for a political figure, an audience will always want to first be convinced of his credibility (his *ethos*) before they will ever begin to consider his argument (his *logos*) or his likability (his *pathos*). Politicians should therefore put their credibility and believability first, above their likability or convincibility, every time they set out to engage the audiences that matter to them.

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