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## Corruption: Its Nature and Effects on Human Life

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### ABSTRACT

Corruption has become an important issue in many of the intellectual debates today. Be it the field of politics, administration, education, or even philanthropy, everywhere, at all levels the cancer of corruption has entered and literally damaged our social structure on moral, ethical and humanitarian grounds. That is why, this paper tries to define what 'corruption' is and explain the causes behind its existence in our society. The researcher feels that it is because of too much significance given to materialistic pleasures has led the modern man towards epicurean culture that has resulted into huge quantity of corruption in all walks of human life.

**Key Words:** corruption, morality, humanity.

Whether the creator is great or his creation? The answer must be in favour of the creator. But in reality, the picture is totally other way round. Thus, instead of live human being, money has got an extreme significance than its creator who is surprisingly human being again. And this has resulted into corruption. That is why money matters a lot in our life than our relations, blood, morality, ethics and principles of life. It seems that getting fed up of the corrupt practices all around him, the modern English poet D. H. Lawrence might have written the poem *Kill Money*, where he writes:

“Kill money, put money out of existence.  
It is a perverted instinct, a hidden thought  
Which rots the brain, the blood, the

bones, the stones, the soul.”<sup>1</sup>

It is said that problem does not come alone but is always accompanied by some sort of solution or solutions to it. The only thing is that we have to identify the solution which is in the problem itself. Thus, it is obligatory on the part of everyone to reach to the etymology of this issue to explore the various causes behind corruption.

**Definitions of Corruption:** *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines 'corruption' as “Dishonest or illegal behavior, especially of people in authority.”<sup>2</sup> By this it is crystal clear that authority begets corruption. And it happens because the person having authority is weak. He has feeble moral background. It seems that he

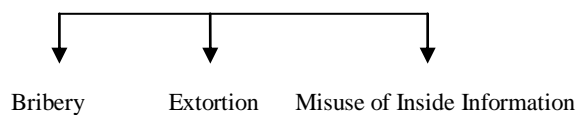
might have forgotten the pious cause behind the creation of life on the earth.

*Britannica Concise Encyclopedia* has defined the term 'corruption' as "Improper and usually unlawful conduct intended to secure a benefit for oneself or another".<sup>3</sup>

Thus unlawful conduct is undertaken to benefit all those who are involved in the chain of corruption.

**Forms of Corruption:** Corruption has different shapes. It has diverse forms which are founded on the experience of the persons affected by it.

#### Forms of Corruption



**Causes behind Corruption:** It would be worthwhile here to enlist different causes behind this most severe social issue of the present time that directly affects all human beings all over the world. These causes are:

**Indifferent Attitude of Community:** Basically the number of people indifferent to the external happenings is alarmingly large. They live within the shadow lines drawn by them. They are born, brought up and breathe their last in their own compartment created by themselves. This narrow approach of these self-centered people has bestowed full autonomy to those who are in power in order to involve in innumerable illegal practices which gives birth to corruption in all walks of life.

**Lack of Enforcement Policies:** The culprits who are involved in corruption are not

exposed immediately and brought to the bars as soon as they commit the crime. This is due to the lack of enforcement policies on the part of administration. The policy makers lack strong will power and determination to do so due to their direct or indirect involvement in it. So provisions of escape are made first before making legal claws on any issue. And the whole system functions to protect the culprit and not to punish him or her.

**Lack of Everlasting Element in Human Life:** Man who is in rule is not certain of his power and life. Having uncertainty experienced in every walk of life, he tries to enjoy every moment of life. To him 'Life is an ice-cream. He wants to enjoy it before it melts away'. That is why, he keeps aside the debate of what is right and what is wrong. He does not consider the pages of morality. No doubt, Shelley in his poem, *To a Skylark* has said:

"We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not;"<sup>4</sup>

But, in fact, those who are in power live for the present. They do not consider the past and dream for fine future for life. If they dream it is for the accumulation of wealth for the betterment of their own life and not for the good of life in general. And this has watered and nourished the seed of corruption which has been transformed into a big tree today.

**Money: The Creation of Man:** In the beginning, man was living in the cave. But in the course of time, he came out of it and built his own house. With the interaction of



members of his group he needed a medium of communication. Thus language came out. And then importance of currency was realized. And money entered in the life of pious and pure human being. At the beginning, it was really valuable to keep the life moving smoothly. But with the increase in population, it lost its value and the earlier white and pure money became black and impure. Money came to be considered as the only source of satisfaction. And man started running after it, forgetting the very virtuous cause of its creation.

**Transitory Amenities of Science to Man:**

The Industrial Revolution brought a flood of various types of facilities and conveniences for man. It succeeded in creating false assumption in man that these amenities will lead him to the path of heaven. Even it was believed that enjoying these services offered by science is the true meaning of life. And to have these amenities, he has to run to earn money by the easiest possible means. Having uncertainty in his authority and in his life, he wants to hoard great deal of money in a very short time. Ultimately, his natural desire is transformed into material quest. This has accelerated the speed of corruption.

**Increase in population:** Increase in population has minimized the opportunities of services. It has lessened the certainty in getting the position twice. Ultimately, the person in authority takes undue advantage of the situation. He tries to compensate his loss by earning more than he had given in the initial stage. Eventually, people in power

compete with each other to satisfy their greed for money.

**Dominance of the Present:** India has a rich cultural, moral, religious and philosophical heritage. However the people with authority have not learned anything from their rich legacy. Even they hardly think of future of the mankind. They do think of the present and present only. Thus they are least careful of the effects of their present behavior causing tremendous damage to the future of our next generation. This has made the land fertile for the seed of corruption. And they are reaping the benefits of their own toil.

**Lack of Vision:** Man is the leader of the whole world which is full of various types of species. It is underlined that the leader of these species must be visionary and farsighted. He should not be self-centered and mini-minded. He should be great in treating the little properly. It is said "The greatness of a great man lies in how he treats the little men." But, the fact today is totally different. The rational leader is ransacking nature to satisfy his quest for money. Till the present, he has not been thoroughly satisfied and not certain that he will be satisfied entirely in near future too. Actually, we have to define the term 'satisfaction' constructively. In spite of this bitter truth, he is running after money. It is because he has lost the common sense. And he is on the path of corruption which is consistently leading him to the hell.

**Meaningless Competition:** Is the competition healthy? The answer is negative. The merciless speedy competition has brought uncertainty in our life. To get

the number, result, or award, illegal paths and practices are followed. And these illegal practices are leading to corruption. There is nobody to raise a question if the result acquired through such competitions is fair or not. It is because both the competitor and the examiner are involved in this evil process. And it is very shocking that such tendencies have been encouraged by the misleading concept of social prestige. The followers of corruption have even acquired national and international recognition. Today, we have raking of countries in the field of corruption. And, we see India as the top ranker in the list of most corrupt nations in the world.

#### **Blind Imitation of Fashion and Foreign**

**Thing:** The Indian poet in English Nissim Ezekiel in his poem *The Patriot* has said:

“But Modern generation is neglecting...  
Too much going for fashion and foreign thing.”<sup>5</sup>

This very blind imitation has underlined the importance of money. And as it is difficult to acquire money within the borders of moral law, people in power have chosen the other way round. They have forgotten the universal principle given by Mahatma Gandhi of ‘Simple living and high thinking.’ Morocco, one of the suitors of Portia in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* has uttered:

“All that glitters is not gold;  
Often have you heard that told.”<sup>6</sup>

These lines aptly underline the importance of reality and not the appearance in human life. But having eyes but not eyesight, those

in power have conveniently neglected these principles of good life and are after the hoarding of wealth which has led to the flourishing of corruption.

#### **Inferiority Complex in Man Created by**

**Advertisements:** Television is the significant invention of science which has helped to spread the knowledge all over the world. But the excessive and careless use of it has caused disturbances in our life. It has affected its creator by all means. This addiction of the modern man to TV has been exploited by the advertisement companies for their own benefit. They telecast the ads of their products and services in such a manner that sometimes it seems that they know the needs and tastes of the consumers more than the consumers of themselves. In fact, these companies influence the minds and hearts of the people so much that they begin to determine the tastes and needs of the people. Rather they have made the people puppets in their hands. Excessive advertisements have begotten a sense of incompleteness in their viewers. So these people begin to use the things and objects which they were not using earlier. All this has raised the cost of living. Under the fad of lifestyle we have become the victims of these new products irrespective of their adverse effects on us. Rather all are in a race to acquire the products advertised on TV and fulfill their unwanted needs which are the outcome of multinational companies for whom money matters a lot and not the man. To purchase all such things propagated in ads we need a lot of money and to acquire it we tend to follow illegal practices. And

directly or indirectly this quest of the modern man has generated the style of corruption.

**Negligence to the Principles of Mahatma**

**Gandhi:** Mahatma Gandhi has given three basic principles to the whole world. They are *Satya*, *Ahimsa* and *Asteya*. He has too underlined the principle of 'simple living and high thinking'. Simple living does not require huge amount as such. It does not compel us to ransack environment and earth. But we have absolutely neglected this principle. Rather we have changed this teaching of our great leader into 'high living and simple thinking'. This tendency of high living requires lots of money which cannot be earned by following straightforward ways. Therefore, those in power become dishonest leading to the birth of corruption.

**Self-centered Life Style:** If creation forgets its origin, its pious intention, then it has no right to call itself a creation. God did create this world with holy intention. 'Live and let live' was the principle behind it. But today man has become self-centered and complacent. He thinks of him and him only. He does not live for others. He wants to amass and hoard money for his own satisfaction. He does not see beyond his own horizon. Thus, neglecting the right path, he has chosen the wrong one that he feels will lead him to the life of delight. This very greedy temperament of those in authority has caused corruption.

**Huge and Continuous Rush to the Urban**

**Life:** In the past, villages were self-dependent and autonomous. But with the industrial revolution, they were thoroughly

neglected. New factories and businesses began in the cities leading to the creation of jobs in urban area. It resulted in the migration of people from villages to the cities in huge number. These untrained migrants fell victims to the urban life style. Actually, they were left with no other option than to accept it. The mechanical, showy, and hollow city-life is founded on the unfulfilled demand for money and to acquire it these people were forced to undertake immeasurable illegal practices. To acquire money by hook or crook has become the ultimate motto of the inhabitants of urban area. All this has cultivated the crop of corruption.

**The Evil Impact of Corruption on Human**

**Being:** There are three words in English - animal, man and beast. The beast is the destructive development of human being. It is because the beast has no ethical base. It destroys life for no reason. It is quite self-centered. It does not think of the future. In short, we do not find any human touch in the physic and psyche of human nature. Too much fascination for money has transformed the man into the beast. Therefore, it is essential to find out certain remedies if any for this burning issue. Accordingly, the following solutions can be adopted to irradiate the devil of corruption from the life of a cultured and civilized human being.

**Constructive Remedies to Irradiate Corruption:**

- Strengthening the Right to Information Act
- Speedy improvement in judiciary practices

- Importance of joint family
- Moral consultancy centers in schools, colleges and universities
- Constructive change in the life shown through the movies and serials
- Moral consultancy centers for the politicians and their activists in the country
- Constructive appraisal of the good in all shapes in time
- Severe and timely punishment for the culprit

These may not be the only measures to curb corruption. But honestly any sensitive

human being can certainly feel that if implemented effectively these remedies will assist to minimize the level of corruption. The only thing is that we have to take the first step in the direction of eradicating the vice of corruption from our life and it will ultimately lead to its end and free our country from its evil effects.

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