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**REG NUMBER: U14CH1007**

**COURSE: B.SC CHEMISTRY**

**YEAR: FOUR YEARS**

**TOPIC: ANTI-CORRUPTION AND DEMAND FOR ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE  
COUNTRY**

When specifically viewed with Africa's history in mind, administrative corruption, thought rampant across Africa today is an alien culture. Pre-colonial Africa, for the most part, was founded on strong ethical values sometimes packaged in spiritual terms, but with the end result of ensuring social justice and compliance. In both centralized and decentralized pre-colonial African communities, governance was conducted with the uttermost seriousness. As the laws were mostly unwritten in nature and therefore prone to be easily forgetting, they were often couched in supernatural terms to instil fear and be instilled in the subconscious. Examples abound of the heavy emphasis on accountability and good governance across several pre-colonial African communities.

The term 'corruption' is used to a shorthand reference for a large range of illicit or illegal activities. Although there is no universal or comprehensive definition as to what constitute corrupt behaviour, the most prominent definition share a common emphasis upon the abuse power or position for personal advantage. The Oxford Unabridged Dictionary (2002) defines corruption as perversion or destruction of integrity in the discharge of public duties by bribery or favour; while Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary (2006) defines corruption as inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means (as bribery).

With little or no knowledge of the economic earnings of potential tax payers, colonial masters imposed flat-rate taxes known as hut tax on the colonies. The mode of tax payment was often steeped in violence, whereby district commissioners of warrant chiefs were empowered to arrest any defaulter.

The prevailing culture of acquisition of alien taste, a culture of consumerism rather than production; and oppression of the less endowed are the natural outcome of iodizing usurpers and people who reaped where they did not sow. Sixty years later, Africans for the most part, remain enchanted with the trappings of modernity without the character to cultivate it. Fast cars, big houses, expensive vacations to the west, Brazilian wigs and others are only some of the manifestations of a generation mentored by pilferers and oppressors in the form of colonial authorities.

Corruption is a cancer that has eaten deeply into the fabric of Nigeria policy. The general global perception about graft in Nigeria is that it is generally acknowledged that corrupt practices are endemic and systemic in both public and private sectors of Nigeria. From the foregoing, it is evident that corruption undermines the country's integrity and security. It also poses serious developmental challenge being responsible for the poverty of the populace. Public resources meant for the development of all ends up in few hands, the nation pays the price. This has resulted to absence of social amenities such as portable water, electricity and good roads. The populace becomes demoralized and become willing tools to be used as sabotages to the state. It has led to the extinction of institutions of national significance and pride such as Nigeria Airways, National shipping lines, steel Rolling mills, Nigeria Telecommunication Limited, and car assembly plants e.t.c. Many reasons have been put forward as portable causes for the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria. The political bureaus in its report mentioned such causes as excessive materialism generated by our individual capitalist order which emphasize personal wealth without regard to the collective interest and

welfare of the larger society. Other causes of poverty, illiteracy, get-rich-mania, statism, and wrong attitude to public property, absence of a welfare scheme which cushions effect of unemployment, retirement, large families, and quest for power, double standards and low level of patriotism. These are important in themselves: the cost of corruption can be classified into four factors, political, economic, social, and environmental. Our democracy and political leadership cannot develop in a corrupt climate. Economically, corruption leads to the depletion of our national wealth. It has led to the use of scarce public resources to finance uneconomic high profile projects such as power plants, pipelines that cost billions whereas if these were channel towards building schools, hospitals and roads or the supply of Electricity and water to rural areas which are basic needs of life.

#### **The possible solutions to averting Corruption in Nigeria.**

- **Restoration of indigenous values and institutions:** Nigerian indigenous values and system were for the most part debunked by first, the missionaries, and then colonialists in a much more forceful manner. Indigenous solutions to corruption must once again be explored followed by the rediscovery of indigenous systems of administration. Rwanda has successfully done the latter through the Gacaca, Abunzi, Umuganda, Umudugudu and other indigenous systems. The above is by no means a call for Nigeria Muslims and Christians to revert to African traditional religion as is often perceived whenever the indigenous is mentioned.
- **Formal informal and non-formal Education:** The greatest vehicle for cultural transmission towards a transformation of prevailing social paradigm is education. In its formal form, the curriculum of learning across Nigeria must be overhauled to make for real mental and intellectual independence. In its non-formal manifestations, conferences, workshops, camps, and other non-formal learning situations must be

widely utilized to re-educate citizens on the fact that real living occurs only when individuals have sound moral values, or at least, consistently and seriously aspire to it.

- **Religion as a nation building institution:** Nigerians listen to their spiritual leaders, much more than they do politicians and policy makers. The pulpit ought to be mobilized as a knowledge and faith based platform for reaching the souls of Nigerians and in directing them towards nation-building
- **Promotion of the “African” nation state:** For the past 50 years, Nigerians have been struggling in vain to assimilate the artificially imposed colonial boundaries. It is time to promote the greater African nation-state and de-emphasize the cosmetic divisions that is filled with antagonist ethnic groups.
- Nigeria must be encouraged, motivated and facilitated to travel widely across the continent in order to overcome the ethnic animosities that was ignited by colonialism, established by the post-colonial tussle for power among ruling elites, and strengthened by geographic claustrophobia.
- **Strengthening of anti-graft institutions:** Strong anti-graft institutions are a necessity across Nigeria state, as in any other part of the world. Government should appoint credible and determined individuals who may even be nationals of other African countries.
- The EFCC need leadership that commands legitimacy, which will enable them to assert their independence and build the integrity with its rank and life. EFCC should be empowered and grant absolute autonomy in handling cases relating to corruption. Anti-corruption laws, legislation and regulations should be written in simpler language and made accessible to the populace.

**In conclusion:** Seeing corruption as amoebic in nature (that is, without a definite form), this paper shown that it occurs in various forms and a wide range of places such that there seems to be no single approach to its eradication. Corruption is increasingly seen as a serious crime with devastating consequences such as wasteful spending, bigger budgetary deficits, great economic inequalities, disinvestments as well as unorthodox trading practices. With regards to the fight against corruption, education is central in inculcating desired knowledge, skills and values and its use in combating corruption should focus on the will to know how to act.

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