

# GOVERNMENT

## RULE OF LAW

*Rule of law* can be defined as the supremacy of law over every individual and government in the society. The principle of rule of law was made popularly by a man known as Prof. A.V Dicey in his work "Introduction to the law of the Constitution." Also this principle states that the law is supreme and absolute above individuals both the rules and the ruled and every other institution in the state. This principle was achieved on the philosophy that the law is not a respecter of any individual both the rich and the poor are equal before the law.

## PRINCIPLES OF RULE OF LAW

Principle of equality: this principle states that all citizens are equal before the law.

Principle of supremacy: this principle states that the law is supreme, absolute and every individual and institution in the state.

Principle of impartiality: it states that the law can never be partial in application on the citizens

Principle of personal liberty: this principle states that the citizens are free to enjoy their fundamental human rights.

## LIMITATIONS TO THE APPLICATION OF RULE OF LAW

Immunity of Head of State: he may not be sued or appear in court. This privilege is not extended to the citizens and it is a limitation of the rule of law.

Diplomatic Immunity: Diplomat cannot be prosecuted in the country where they are residing as accredited representatives of their country.

Immunity of the Parliament: the law makers are immune from every utterance, actions or statements made in parliament.

Delayed Justice: Justice delayed is agreed as justice denied. The reasons are that some individuals have spent years in custody with their cases frequently postponed.

Tribunals: they are not constitutional or legal courts. Memberships of a tribunal in most cases are people without knowledge. Individual right for a fair hearing are always denied them.

Delegated Legislation: Most bodies or organisations exercising this power of legislation have often made it possible for the rights of citizens to be violated and even without the possibility of obtaining any redress.

The rich and the privileged few: They often use their wealth and positions to prevent justice. This is a limitation to the application of the rule of law.

Types of government: A one party system can grow into dictatorship, thereby limiting the application of rule of law.

The military in politics: The intervention of the military in the political process and suspensions of the constitution are limitations of the rule of law.

State of Emergency: If a country is in crisis or wants to fight war, state of emergency could be declared. Arbitrary rule may be enthroned and the citizens may be denied of some of their rights.

## **FACTORS THAT CAN ENSURE THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE RULE OF LAW**

Independent judiciary: To ensure the enforcement of the rule of law, there must be an independent judiciary.

Press freedom: The press must be free not to censored. The government not control or dictate to the press.

The law to be kept open: The law must not be kept secret but open so that people easily see it and make reference.

Quick dispensation of justice: Justice must not be delayed but must quickly be dispensed, because justice delayed is justice denied.

Period of detention: Citizens or suspects should not be detained by the police for more than the stipulated hours (twenty-four hours).

## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

Human rights are those inalienable fundamental human rights to which a person is entitled to simply because he/she is a human being regardless of one's nation, skin, colour, class in society age, e.t.c. these rights are applicable everywhere, in the sense that they are universal and they are egalitarian in nature which means it is applicable to everyone. Human rights are achieved on the philosophy that "all men are born equal both in dignity and in right" in Nigerian human rights are found in section 33-43 of the 1999 constitution as amended in 2011. There was a universal declaration of human right by UNO in the year 1948 in USA.

### **EXAMPLES OF HUMAN RIGHT**

Right to vote and be voted for

Right to freedom of movement

Right to peaceful assembly and association

Right to fair heaving

Right to private and family life

Right to dignity of personal liberty

Right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria

Right to peaceful assembly and association

Right to freedom expression and the press

Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Right to dignity of human person

No human being should be subjected to slavery

Right to seek redress in the law court

Right to freedom of discrimination

Every human being has the right of nationalism

Right to education

Right of freedom of speech.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF HUMAN RIGHT**

**Political right:** These rights are concerned with the right to vote and be voted for in the political system e.g, right to vote and be voted for. Right to form or join any political group of one's choice, right to contest any political position.

**Civil rights:** These right includes those rights that are related to liberty and citizenship duty e.g right to peaceful assembly, freedom of movement, right to education, e.t.c.

**Legal rights:** These rights are related to rights to seek redress in court wherever our human rights are violated by others. E.g, right to fair hearing, right to consult a lawyer, right to appeal judgement, e.t.c.

**Social rights:** These are rights that pertains to human being as social beings in different areas of in different areas of human activities and these includes, right to life right of marriage, right to personal liberty, e.t.c.

**Religious right:** These right deals with law we worship God and how to show our faith e.g right to pain any religion group, right to change one's religious, right to manifest one's religion publicity or privately.

**Economic rights:** These rights include economic empowerment related which guarantees that citizens have across to good standard of living e.g right to own property. Right to general employment, right to transact legitimate business

## **WAYS OF SAFE GUARDING RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Independent judiciary:** To ensure the enforcement of rule of law and protection of human rights the judiciary must by independent.

**Press freedom:** The press must be free and not to be conserved. The government should not dictate to the press.

**Democratic government:** A democratic system of government accommodates the protection of human rights and operation of rule of law.

**Separation of powers:** Powers should be strictly separated and adhered to by the various arms of government this helps to ensure protection of human rights and operation of rule of law

**Seek redress in courts:** Citizens should know their rights and be prepared to seek redress in courts of law

**Check and Balances:** Check and balance among the organization government will help to present abuse of human rights and operation of rule of law.

## **LIMITATION OF HUMAN RIGHT OF A CITIZEN**

**Condemned to death by court:** A citizen can be denied his right to life if he/she is condemned to death as a result of murder or robbery.

**Detained by law:** A citizen maybe be denied some of his rights if he/she is detained by law.

**Laws of slander, libel and sedition:** the above mentioned laws limits a citizens' freedom of expression.

State of emergency: in times in state of emergency is a condition that limit the rights of citizen freedom of movement.

Banned politician: the right of a citizen to vote and be voted for may be denied if such a citizen is a banned politician because of his past rules in previous elections.

Saving case in court: Court of law can restrict some right of an individual if such a person has serious pending case in court.

## **SEPERATION OF POWERS**

The theory of separation of powers was developed by a French political thinker by name Baron de Montesgui as in his book titled "Espirit des Lois" which means "Spirit of the law" in 1748.

Therefore, separation of power can be defined as the division of all governmental powers that exist in a given state should not be reserved or concentrated in one organ of government. That if these powers are divided into the three organs of government, the legislature, executive and judiciary, that the chance of dictatorship will be reduced to the barest minimum.

## **MERITS OF SEPARATION OF POWERS**

Freedom and liberty: with this principle the freedom and liberty of the citizens are secured.

Absence of dictatorship: when powers are separates among the organs of government this helps to avoid the dictatorship in government.

Democratic: separation of powers is an essential element of modern democratic system.

Checks and Balances: they produce a proper co-ordination of functions in government, since each organ act as a check on the other.

Stable political system: As powers are separated and every organ is mindful of its function it helps to ensure a stable political system.

## **Demerits of Separation of Power**

Rigidity: a rapid application of the principle of separation of powers can hinder the smooth running of government.

Slow Decision making: separation of power into the three arms of government tends to lower the quality of decision of government.

Rivalry: strict application of separation of power may lead to unhealthy rivalry among the organs of government.

Affects performance: separation of power can delay and affect each arms performance of its functions.

Total separation of power near impossible: this is as a result of the overlapping nature of the functions of the three arms of government.

## **SEPARATION OF POWER IN PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT**

President does not make law: the president doesn't make law because he/she don't sit in parliament.

Clear Separation of power: to this system of government, there is clear separation of powers between all the arms of government.

Popular election: in this system the president is popularity elected by the people and not appointed in parliament.

Impeachment: the president can only be impeached if found guilty of a serious offence by the parliament.

Dissolution of parliament: the parliament cannot be dissolved by the president unless its tenure is complete.

## **SEPARATION OF POWERS IN THE CABINET SYSTEM**

The prime minister make law: The prime minister makes law, because the sits in parliament with other parliamentarians.

No clear separation of powers: In this system of government there is no clear separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary.

No popular elections: In this system, the prime minister is not popularly elected but appointed by the parliament.

Vote of no confidence: The parliament can pit vote of no confidence on the cabinet and the entire cabinet will be removed.

Ministers sit in parliament: Ministers in this system belong to the executive and also in the legislature.

## **CHECKS AND BALANCES**

The principle of checks and balances can be defined as the use of one organ of government to check the actions and activities of other organ in government. The principle does not advocate fusion of the three arms of government in the performance of their constitutional functions, there should be military independent, and they should act as watch dog of each other to avoid misuse of power.

## **MERITS**

Abuse of power: This principle helps to check mate abuse of power in any organ of government.

Orderliness and efficiency: This principle helps to ensure orderliness and efficiency in the exercise of function by the organs of government.

Respect for human rights: Checks and balances

Constitutionalism: Strict application of this principle helps to ensure smooth working of the constitution since such is entrenched in the constitution.

Control of power: Checks and balances help in controlling power among the three organ of government.

## **DEMERITS**

Veto power: The power of veto in the executive can affect the working of the principle.

Impeachment: The power of the legislature is to impeach the executive, making the executive puppet to the legislature.

Interference: These are some tracks or evidence of one organ interfering in the affairs of the other organ.

Powers of the president: Some of the judicial and legislative powers of the president run counter to the issue of separation and check and balances of powers.

## **REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT**

Representative government also known as indirect democracy is defined as a government of elected representatives of the people. Those elected, through organised elections rule on behalf of the people and with every assurance that their interests will be enhanced and protected. The system is based on accountability and responsibility of the political leaders. Elections in to different political positions in government are conducted periodically.

### **FEATURES OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT**

Free and fair elections: In every representative government, elections are conducted free and fair, devoid of any electoral malpractices.

Periodic election: Elections are conducted periodically in some political systems; it could be every four or five years.

Up-to-date electoral register: This exercise will help to remove fraud and names of dead registered voters.

Freedom of choice: The people should have free choices to make when deciding for political parties and candidates.

Universal adult suffrages: All adult citizens must have the opportunity to vote and be voted for in any political election.

### **CONDITIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT**

Rule of law: There is the need for everybody including the political leaders, to abide by the provisions of the constitution and respect for the law of the land.

Written constitution: Written constitution helps to specify the rules of the game as everything will be properly documented.

The practise of multi-party system: The most acceptable party system that knows for equitable and proportional representation should be allowed to stay e.g, multi-party system.

Universal adult suffrage: Every qualified adult should be allowed to vote and be voted for in any political election.

People's opinion: People's opinion should be respected especially on issues of national importance.

## **MERITS OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT**

Choice of leaders: The opportunity is created for the people to choose political leaders without any hindrance.

The system is simple to operate: It is easy to identify those responsible for the failure of the government.

It makes for stability: The government in place is legitimate and legally constituted.

Election is the yardstick: The government is set up through the normal electoral process.

The elected leaders are accountable: The representatives are responsive and accountable to the electorate under this system.

## **DEMERITS OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT**

No true independency of the judiciary: This is because judiciary may be under the control of the government in power.

Illiteracy: The inability of some voters to properly identify party names and symbols may lead to wrong choice of candidate.

Selfish interest: The representatives may not adequately represent their people or community due to some selfish interest.

Corruption: It makes for corrupt practices among the politicians who may want to acquire power at all costs.

Costly to run: Too much money, men, etc, are needed for a successful conduct of elections of this magnitude.

## **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

Political participation is defined as the process where by individuals get themselves involved in political activities and in the decision making of their country.

### **Forms of Political Participation**

**Voting in election:** This is one of the ways of political participation and it gives the individual the opportunity to vote for candidate of his choice.

**Contesting elections:** When an individual stand as a candidate on the platform of his party for an elective post, he participates in politics.

**Supporting political parties:** A wealthy and influential individual, who is no more interested in partisan politics can sponsor or support a political party.

**Supporting candidates for elective posts:** This could take the form of moral or financial support.

**Protests and demonstration:** When citizens demonstrate or protest against any policy of the government, the individuals are involved in political participation.

## THE PURPOSE OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**Decision Making:** Some people participate in politics in order to contribute their quota in the decision making process of the country.

**A venue for money making:** To some people, the essence of political participation is money making and other gains associated with it.

**For respect and prestige:** Some individuals participate in politics because they want to acquire respect and prestige in life.

**As occupation:** Some individuals could claim that politics is the occupation they have chosen and so their active participation is in fulfilment of their political career.

**Management of the nation's resources:** Some individuals with enough resources and skills take part in politics, because they want to be involved in managing equitably the nation's economic resources.

## FACTORS AFFECTING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**Lack of trust in the government:** If previous government have been failing in their promises, the people may lose confidence and trust in such government and subsequent ones.

**Fear of Intimidation:** This may deny the individual the opportunity of expressing his opinion freely and this may affect his political participation.

**Apathy or lack of interest:** Apathy could create a barrier between individual and politics as not relevant and not worth going into.

**Ignorance or illiteracy:** The effect of this is that the individual may not see the need to **participate in politics**.

**Frequent removal of elected governments:** This involves military intervention in politics, by frequently removal of elected civilian government.

## CENTRALIZATION

Centralization is defined as the process by which political powers is central decision making body. The highest degree of centralization is achieved where all powers of government are vested in a central authority. The degree of centralization is highest in a unitary state. Britain, France, etc, are centralized states. In some political systems, they may see the need for some degree of centralization of power.

### REASONS FOR THE ADOPTION OF CENTRALIZATION

**Best practiced in a homogenous state:** This system is best practiced where there are no sharp differences in religion, language, beliefs etc.

**Delegation of functions:** The central government can delegate powers and functions to other components.

**Powers concentration:** All the powers and authorities of the states are concentrated in the hands of the central government.

**Flexibility:** the constitution of a centralized state is flexible.

**Strong central government:** This is because it has all the powers the state and the people gives support to it only.

## **ADVANTAGES OF CENTRALISATION**

**No conflict of authority:** There can be no conflict of authority or confusion regarding responsibility for work to be done.

**Co-ordination of functions:** Centralization makes for effective co-ordination of functions in both human and material resources.

**Prevention of waste:** It prevents waste inefficiency and a high level of indiscipline in both the civil and public services.

**Less Bureaucratic:** Centralization is less bureaucratic and simple to operate.

**Unity:** A centralized government unites different groups of decreased opinions and interests in the society.

## **DISADVANTAGES OF CENTRALIZATION**

**Remoteness:** It makes for remoteness of decision making centre from where the decisions are to be complemented.

**Dictatorships:** Centralization may encourage dictatorship in the system

**Interest groups:** It is not possible for centralization to accommodate every interest group in the system.

**Amendment of the Constitution:** The central government alone can easily amend the constitution for selfish purposes.

**Political participation and decision making:** The people are not politically active and adequately involved in the decision making process of the country.

## **DECENTRALIZATION**

In this system the central government set policies for the local areas, appoint some official with some powers and authority and decreased them to carry out specific functions. There by regulating government policies at the local government level. USA, Nigeria is a good example of decentralization.

## **MERITS OF DECENTRALIZATION**

**Quick development:** Quick development is achieved in a decentralization system because in this system there is opportunity for development. Every unit has the tendency to develop even faster than others

**Competition among units in terms of development:** In a federal state, there are competitions among various units resulting in some states developing much better than others.

**It brings government nearer to the people:** This is a credit to decentralization; government is brought nearer to the people of the grassroots.

Absence of dictatorship the supremacy of the constitution and the application of the rule of laws removes the tendency for a doctorial government.

**Fear of domination:** The fears of the minority are removed from the domination by the majority.

## DEMERITS OF DECENTRALIZATION

**Costly to operate:** This system is costly to operate because many functions are created within the same system.

**Delay in taking decision:** The need for a wider consultation in decision making process, equality, makes for a delay in taking quick decision.

**Differences in the level of development:** The system does not make for even distribution of development since some unit develop faster and better than others.

**Weak centre:** The centre is weak because of the autonomy of the various units.

**Duplications of positions in government:** Functions in government are duplicated requiring too many hands in the process.

## DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Delegated legislation is defined as the act of transferring powers and functions through the acts of parliament to other organizations such as ministers, local governments, public corporation (NEPA, water board), etc, laws made by these bodies are referred to as by laws.

Parliament finds it more convenient to lay down the general principles of laws and then leaves the administrative and technical aspects to those other bodies whose powers are delegated by the parliament. Delegated legislation is a special feature of modern government.

## TYPES OF DELEGATED LEGISLATURE

**Bye-laws:** These are laws made by local government, public corporations, and ministries. These powers are conferred on them through the act of parliament.

**Order in council:** In Britain, for example, these orders or proclamation are for the queen or king to give orders on some matters having the backing of the law.

**Provisional orders:** A minister may be able to be given power to run and undertaking eg, a transport corporation, but at this stage, it is provisional or temporary until confirm by parliament.

**Special procedure orders:** The minister makes the order and presents it to the parliament. the order comes into force after 14 days, unless petitions of a general objection have been lodged against it.

**Statutory instrument:** Ministerial regulation is governed by statutory instrument acts. These instruments are mainly directed to rules applicable to the country. For example, no smoking in public institutions (schools, health institutions etc as directed by the ministry of health.

## MERITS OF DELEGATED LEGISLATURE

**Reduction of work load:** Delegated legislature has succeeded in reducing the pressure of work on parliament.

**Useful for emergencies:** In period of emergency, delegated legislatures do help to avert casual ties.

**Efficiency:** Delegated legislature makes for efficiency and precision.

**Saves time:** Delegated legislature saves parliament enough time, whose legislative machinery could break down if it were to enact all laws.

**Technical language:** It is useful were technical languages are involved in government policies that demands experts.

## DEMERITS OF DELEGATED LEGISLATURE

**Parliamentary control:** The laws made by these bodies and their activities may lack effective parliamentary control.

**Abuse of power:** This can manifest itself. The department involved in this exercise can easily abuse powers delegated to them.

**The executive:** The executive may tend to grow more powerful than the legislature.

**It is undemocratic:** Most of the laws made by some of these bodies are draconian and undemocratic and do not have the support of the people.

**The executive could become dictatorial:** The executive arm seems to have too much power at its disposal; it could make it become dictatorial.

## CONTROL OF DELEGATED LEGISLATURE

**Parliamentary control:** The parliament has the right to control the bill of those various bodies before such bills become laws.

- **Judicial control:** The law court exercises control over rules and regulations made by these organizations.
- **Ministerial control:** Activities of public corporation are under the control of the minister.

**Accountability of ministers:** Ministers are in most cases summoned in parliament to account for the rules and regulations, by laws, made in their various ministries.

**Public opinion:** The opinion of the public towards most of these organizations could be negative or positive.

## CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship can be defined as the legal status as recognized under law of being a member of a sovereign state.

*Who is a citizen?*

A citizen is an individual who is a member of a sovereign state and owns allegiance to the state he resides in which he enjoys full civil and political rights.

### Ways of Acquiring Citizenship

**By birth:** An individual acquires citizenship by birth if either of his parents, mother or father is a citizen of the country.

**By Naturalization:** An individual acquires citizenship by naturalization in a country where he lives for up to 15 years and has satisfied all the constitutional requirements for nationalization.

**Marriage/Registration:** If a woman is married to another person of another nationality, she can acquire the citizenship of the husband's country through registration.

**Honorary:** An individual can be honoured with the citizenship of another country; this is made possible if the individual has distinguished him/herself in a particular area.

**Conquest:** Through conquest after secession of struggles, citizenship of certain individuals may be changed by acquiring a new status.

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CITIZEN AND NON-CITIZEN

CITIZEN	NON-CITIZEN
1. A citizen is a legal member of a country	Non-citizen is not a legal member of a country
2. A citizen owns allegiance to his country	Non-citizen do not owe allegiance to the country
3. A citizen enjoys full civil and political rights.	Non-citizen do not enjoy full civil and political rights
4. A citizen will be ready to put his life at stake in defence of his country	Non-citizen will not be ready to put his life at stake in defence of the country.
5. A citizen has the right to contest for election in the country	Non-citizen do not have right to contest election in the country.

## DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF A CITIZEN

**Law-abiding:** Every citizen is expected to obey all the laws of his country.

**Payment of taxes:** A good citizen is expected to pay all the taxes due to him as at when due.

**Loyalty:** Every citizen owes loyalty to the government of his country.

**Defense of the country:** A citizen should be prepared to defend his country when it is threatened.

**Respect for national flag:** It is obligating for every good citizen to show respect to national flag which stands as a symbol of authority of his country.

**Civil responsibilities:** It is also the responsibility of a good citizen to register during registration exercise and vote during elections if he is qualified to vote.

## POLITICAL PARTIES

Political party can be defined as organized group of people who share similar political beliefs, interest and opinions with the central aim of gaining political power in order to control the government of the country.

### FEATURES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

**Contesting election:** This is the primary motive of a political party to contest election and be in government.

**Manifesto:** This is the plan and programme of a political party which the party tends to fulfil to the people if elected into power.

**Primary election:** It is an election conducted within a political party to choose popular candidates that can represent the interest of the party in any election.

**Organization:** Political parties are organized with procedures for electing party leaders are properly defined.

**Campaign:** During the period of campaign, political parties publicize their manifesto to the electorate and the purpose of this is to win their support and votes.

## **REASONS FOR FORMATION/FUNCTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES**

**Control of government:** The primary function of political parties is to contest election and control government.

**Recruitment of political leaders:** Political parties serve as a machinery for employing political leaders in a state.

**Serves as a link:** Political parties serve as a link between the citizens and the government.

**Political education:** It provides political education and awareness through lecture symposia, manifestoes and other social programmes.

**Organizations:** Political parties serve as organization for running of government.

**Change of government:** The existence of political parties makes peaceful change of government in a country possible.

## **TYPES OF POLITICAL PARTIES**

**Elitist/oligarchic parties:** This is a type of political party which all its members are made up of wealthy and upper class member of the society, which do believe that the controlling of government should be in their hands.

**Branch/mass party:** This type of party is made up of people of any kind of background in the society both the poor and the rich are all members of the party; APC, PDP.

**Religious Parties:** These parties are formed based on religious doctrines and they do appeal to religious sentiments in order to win election.

**Broker party:** These parties are formed when members drawn from upper and lower class of the society with the aim of reconnecting the conflicting interest of the rich and the poor economy in the society.

**Charismatic parties:** These parties are formed by individuals with charismatic qualities and features people are attracted to these parties as a result of people that formed those parties.

**Ideological parties:** These are political parties formed based on political ideologist, eg; communist party of Russia, socialist party of China, etc.

## **FACTORS THAT AID ELECTORAL SUCCESS OF POLITICAL PARTY**

**Manifesto:** If a political party has a good manifesto, these may bring about great electoral success in and election.

**Good past performance:** A good track recorded by a political party may give it an edge over others.

**Quality party leadership:** Leaders of political party are capable and have vision; the party can make headway at the polls.

**Quality candidates:** The type of candidates present by a party to contest election due determination the success of the party in election.

**Finance:** A party with adequate fund to organize the best of campaigns and rallies, and this do produce good result.

**Propaganda:** How effective the propaganda of a political party is to determine the electoral success of the party.

## **PROBLEMS OF POLITICAL PARTIES**

**Party disloyalty:** Some party members are often disloyal and do involve in some anti-party activities.

**Inadequate funding:** Poor funding of a political party does affect the smooth running of the party and its electoral success.

**Imposition:** the imposition of ideas and candidate on political parties by some powerful and influential members of the party does affect the party.

**Bribery and Corruption:** Political parties are always guilty of bribery and corruption.

**Poor organisation:** Another problem of political parties is poor party organization and management.

## **PARTY SYSTEM**

Party system can be defined as the conduct of government based on the number of political parties permitted to operate within a political system. The constitution of a particular country does specify the numbers of political parties to exist or operate in that country.

### **Types of party system**

**Zero party system:** Is a type of party system in which no particular party is allowed to operate but political leaders are elected by the people in individual basic and independently.

**One party system:** Is a type of party system in which one particular party and constitutional allowed to operate. China is a good example of one party system country.

**Two party systems:** Is a type of party system in which two political parties is allowed to operate legally and constitutionally in a political system. Britain is a two party system country.

**Multi-party system:** This is a type of system in which more than two political parties are allowed to legally and constitutionally to operate in a country.

## **FEATURES**

**Existence of many party:** There exist more than two political parties in a country.

**Choice:** The citizens can easily make choice of party and programme.

**Periodic election:** Elections are conducted at periodic intervals.

**Rule of law:** There is respect for the rule of law by political leaders and citizens making up the system.

**Absence of dictatorship:** There is no place for dictatorship in multi-party system.

## MERITS

**It is democratic:** The electorate are exposed to be a number of choices and that is what democracy is all about.

**Change of government:** The provision is used in the construction of change of government through periodic elections.

**Wider political participation:** The scope of political participation is enhanced and widened.

**Recognition of opposition parties:** The other political party outside one ruling party can criticize government policies.

**Reduces Dictatorship:** This is because in the system, no party is strong enough to suppress the other party.

## DEMERITS

**Coalition government:** Multi-party system often leads to the coalition government in parliamentary system which is often weak and unstable.

**Ethnic based political parties:** This party system often leads to the formation of ethnic based political parties which may not be in the national interest.

**Political instability:** With too many political parties competing for political powers, unhealthy rivalry and political instability may result.

**Expensive to run:** This is because of the cost involved in party organization.

**Too many political programmes:** The people could be confused as to which of the parties has the best to offer them.

## PRESSURE GROUPS

Pressure group can be defined as an organized group whose central aim is to influence government politics and to protect the interest of its members.

### TYPES OF PRESSURE GROUP

**Economic pressure groups:** the pressure group mount pressure on the government on economic issues affecting its members.

**Professional pressure groups:** they are professional association like NBA, NUJ, NUT etc aimed at protecting the interest of its members

**Religious pressure groups:** these are pressure group formed with the main aim of pursuing their religious interest and influencing government religious policies eg (CAN) Christian Association of Nigeria.

**Occupational pressure group:** these are formed by workers who belong to the same occupation in order to protect their occupation and interest of their members.

**Educational pressure groups:** these are groups whose major aims are to seek for the improvement of the educational system e.g NUT, ASUU.

**Anomic pressure groups:** these are unorganized groups which are interested in immediate achievement of goals. They use arson, violence, etc. e.g students riot group, riots against high in fuel price etc.

## FUNCTIONS/ IMPORTANCE OF PRESSURE GROUPS

**Watch dogs:** Pressure groups act as the watch dogs that check the activities of the government.

**Dissemination of information:** Pressure groups play an important role of passing vital information on government to their members.

**Link:** Pressure groups act as an important link between the government and the people.

**Man power bank:** They provide man power bank from which government can draw experts to serve in the governments.

**Improved standard of living:** They help to increase the standard of living of their members and other members of the public.

## TECHNIQUES/SKILL EMPLOYED BY PRESSURE GROUPS TO ACHIEVE THEIR AIMS

**Lobbying:** Pressure group tends to lobby influential officials of the government to influence governmental policy.

**Ultimatum:** These are final statements conditions pressure groups issue to be accepted by the government without which actions they may deem necessary will be taken.

**Strikes:** Pressure groups may embark on strike (refusal to work) they do use this to achieve their aims

**Demonstration:** Demonstration could be peaceful or violent pressure groups adopt these methods to mobilise support from members of the public.

**Dialogue:** This is a formal discussion between representative of government and pressure group. If dialogue fails, confrontation is inevitable.

**Protest letters:** Writing of protest letters to government officials or to legislature is also used by pressure group in achieving their aims.

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN POLITICAL PARTY AND PRESSURE GROUPS.

POLITICAL PARTIES	PRESSURE GROUPS
1. To contest election and control the government	To influence government political and pursue the interest of their members
2. Political party is organized to reach everybody in the society not self-seeking.	Pressure groups are basically self-seeking and not organised to reach everybody in society.
3. Political party tends to accommodate virtually different interests in the society in terms of membership.	Pressure groups do not accommodate different groups in the society.
4. Political parties pursue goals, interests that will improve the life style of the members of people in it.	Pressure group pursue interest and goals will improve the life style of their members
5. Political parties do have strong ideology to pursue	Pressure groups do not have strong ideology to pursue.