

**COVENANT UNIVERSITY  
NIGERIA**

*TUTORIAL KIT  
OMEGA SEMESTER*

**PROGRAMME: POLITICAL  
SCIENCE**

**COURSE: POS 323**

## **DISCLAIMER**

The contents of this document are intended for practice and leaning purposes at the undergraduate level. The materials are from different sources including the internet and the contributors do not in any way claim authorship or ownership of them. The materials are also not to be used for any commercial purpose.

# **POS 323: POLITICAL PARTIES AND PRESSURE GROUPS**

**Lecturers: Dr. S. Joshua**

## **QUESTIONS**

- (1) Critically examine the differences between political parties and pressure groups.
- (2) Discuss factors that determine the effectiveness of pressure groups
- (3) Critically analyse the methods often used by pressure groups to achieve their demands
- (4) Discuss the various types of pressure groups
- (5) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of multiparty system
- (6) Account for the prevalence of one party system in Africa.
- (7) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of two party system
- (8) With copious examples, explain one party de jure and one party de facto
- (9) Discuss classification of political parties based on ideology
- (10) Discuss classification of political party based on party structure
- (11) Attempt classification of political parties based on party goals
- (12) Attempt a classification of political parties based on party organization
- (13) Critically examine characteristics of political parties
- (14) Attempt a classification of political parties based on leadership/followership structure
- (15) Discuss one party de facto
- (16) What kind of party system would you recommend for Nigeria?
- (17) Conceptualize pressure groups
- (18) According to Peter Harris “pressure groups exert pressure on relevant decision makers with the objective of obtaining some benefits”. Discuss
- (19) Discuss the sources of finance of pressure groups
- (20) “Political parties originated from factionalization”. How true is this statement?

## **MODEL ANSWERS IN ALTERNATE SEQUENCE (ODD NUMBERS)**

- (1) Critically examine the differences between political parties and pressure groups.

Answer: student is expected to give an introduction

Differences between the two can be seen in form of:

- Size
- Scope of Issues
- Aims
- Accountability
- Focus of Issues

- Organizational structure and should be discussed in detail
  - (3) Critically analyse the methods often used by pressure groups to achieve their demands
  - (i) Lobbying
  - (ii) Direct Collective actions
  - (iii) Engaging in election activities
  - (iv) Litigation should be discussed in detail.
  
- (5) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of multiparty system
 

Strengths: Greater presentation; various shades of interests are more represented in multi-party than in any type of party arrangement; It engenders the sense of objectivity and rational judgement; and It prevents the emergence of dictatorial or despotic government.

Weaknesses:

It can lead to instability in government; It can lead to the emergence of weak and slow government; It can lead to more of the attention of government been devoted to settling inter-party disputes and finally; and It is too expensive to run.
- (7) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of two party system
 

It guarantees political stability. This is because it makes possible the emergence of government that is based on an overall majority; It is more democratic.

  - It makes it difficult for authoritarian and dictatorial government to emergence; It is possible for good and responsible government to emerge under two party arrangement; It makes it possible for alternative government to emerge immediately the ruling government fails. This is very easy in parliamentary system e.g Britain.
  - It simplifies the electorate's choice and makes it possible for the electorate to choose directly the candidate of their choice in an election.
  - Weaknesses: Two party system can easily bring about division and polarisation;
  - It can results in unhealthy rivalry between the two political parties and by extension members of the two parties;
  - It can lead to factionalization with implication for multiparty system, systemic instability and chaos;

It does not really advance democracy as citizens' choice is limited to either of the two political parties.

- (9) Discuss classification of political parties based on ideology

**Socialist Communist Parties:-** parties of this nature are organised on socialist/communist principles and structured very strongly on the Marxist Ideological underpinnings. They have centralised command structure. A party of this nature exhibits the character of cell parties. Examples of these parties include: Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU), Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Wherever party of this nature exist in it pure form and succeeded in capturing government, it deals with opposition parties and turn the political system to one party system.

- **Liberal Democratic Parties:-** these parties exhibit the principles of liberal democracy. Emphasis is on such values like freedom of choice, freedom of association, liberty of individual citizens, rights to life, property ownership etc. These parties also placed emphasis on free economy system. They also allow inter-party competition. The Republican and Social Democratic Parties in the US, British Conservative and Labour parties as well as parties in Nigeria during the First, Second and the present Fourth Republic are some of the examples of Liberal parties.

- **Centralist Parties:-** these parties are on the central ideological spectrum. They are neither committed to the left nor the right of the ideological spectrum. They are rather pragmatic in the pursuit of their policies which could be economical, social or political. They are committed to implementing policies that are beneficial to their societies. At times they lean towards liberal democratic principles, at other time they subscribe to communist oriented policies depending on the needs of their societies at different times. These parties are neither revolutionary nor conservative.

(11) Attempt classification of political parties based on party goals

Answer: student is expected to discuss in detail the following: representative; nation-building and mobilization parties as they are goal oriented. These should be discussed in detail.

(13) Critically examine characteristics of political parties

Answer: student is expected to discuss the following in detail: conscious objective to capture political power; seeking popular support through election; permanency etc.

(15) Discuss one party defacto

Answer: one party defacto is when there is no constitutional provision hindering the emergence of more than one political party but a particular party has been so dominant in a political system and has been in government for long. Should be discussed in detail with examples.

(17) Conceptualize pressure groups

Answer: Pressure group is simply any collection of individuals who seek to influence public policies in one or more particular aspects without attempting to control the machinery of the state authority.

(19) Discuss the sources of finance of pressure groups

- Answer: Members' contributions
- Private finance/donation
- International donor' support
- Returns from investment