

CIVIC EDUCATION

A Consumer is a person who buys goods and services either for personal, household or industrial purpose

Due to the long suffering of the consumers in the hands of bad producers consumer protection council of Nigeria was established in 1970 to state and take care of the rights of a consumer

The rights of a consumer are as follows

1. Right to satisfaction of basic needs
 2. Right to safety
 3. Right to information
 4. Right to choose
 5. Right redress
 6. Right to consumer education
 7. Right to heard
 8. Right to a healthy environment
-
1. Right to Satisfaction of basic needs consumers should derive maximum satisfaction from the goods and services they save spent their money on.
 2. Right to Satisfy: The consumer have right to safe food, drink goods and services in a market. The producers should have the safely of the consumers in mind.
 3. Right to information: Consumers should be given adequate or proper information on the consumption of a product or service manufacturing dates and expiring dates should be well stated.
 4. Right to choose: Consumers should not be forced or talked into buying a product. They should be given the express right to choose what they want in the midst of multiple brands of products and services
 5. Right to redress: The consumers have the sight to go to court to seek redress against any producer of unsafe or defective products that leads to lose of life consumer can also seek redress in courts if the product they purchased is not performing the function which the producers claimed.
 6. Right to consumer education: To prevent market malpractices and exploitation of consumers, consumer awareness and education are essentially required
 7. Right to be heard: The consumers have the right to lay their complaints on any substandard goods produces for them by producers
 8. Right to a healthy environment: Consumers give entitled to a healthy and peaceful environment. The producers should not pollute the environment or cause damage to the lives of people.

CONSUMERS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Consumers should demand and keep proofs of transection eg receipt and invoice
2. Consumer should think independently he / she should not allow other people to take decision for him / her
3. Consumer should say what he /she is comfortable or not comfortable with an regards the products being purchased

4. A consumer should respect the environment by keeping it clean. A consumer should not dirty the environment with the product he has purchased.

DEMOCRACY

Democracy is defined as a system of government in which political power belongs to the people. It is also known as the government of the people by the people and for the people

FEATURES OF DEMOCRACY

1. Free and fair election in a democracy there is always free and fair elections. All parties involved in the contest are treated fairly.
2. Fundamental human rights: The fundamental right of citizens are upheld and protected in a democracy there is freedom of speech movement, religion etc.
3. Existence of the rules of Law: Democracy ensures everybody is equal before the law
4. Periodic election there must be election at regular intervals for the citizens to have opportunity.
5. Supremacy of the constitution: The constitution is a document that contains all the rule, customs laws that governs the conduct of citizens. it must therefore supercede every other law in a state
6. Press freedom: The press must have the freedom to perform it's functioning of disseminating information of the general public. It exposes immoral actions to the rules of law
7. Independent Judiciary: The judiciary should be free and independent of other arms of government that is the executive and legislature

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

These are democratic institutions that are very important to the smooth operations of democratic processes

1. Political Parties: A political party is defined as an organised group of people with similar political aims and opinions that seeks to influence public policy by getting its candidates elected to public office Eg PDP, APGA, APC etc

FUNCTIONS OF A POLITICAL PARTY

1. Political Parties educate the masses on political issues
2. They train people aspiring to be politicians
3. They organise the electorate for political participation
4. They serve as link between the people and the government
5. They conduct party primaries to select their representatives that would contest elections

INEC

Independent National Electoral Commission is the body empowered with the responsibility of conducting and organising election in Nigeria

FUNCTIONS OF INEC

1. They register political party

2. They compile voters registers
3. Divide the country into electoral districts
4. It is their duty to screen and register political aspirants who wish to contest election
5. They provide electoral material eg ballot box, ballot paper
6. They regulate political campaign and other political activities
7. They determine qualification for eligibility to vote and be voted for (franchise)
8. Declaration of election results
9. INEC has it as their functions also to defend election results in courts when necessary

PRESSURE GROUPS

This may be defined as an organised people who share similar interest and make the government to pass decision that will favour them Eg NU7

FUNCTIONS OF PRESSURE GROUP

1. They protect the interest of their members
2. They also serve as public opinion forum
3. They act as intermediary between the government and the people
4. They guide the government in the formulating policies
5. They educate the public on vital public issues through seminars or mass media

ARMS / ORGANS OF GOVERNMENT

There are three arms of government which can as well be referred to as organs of government

1. Executive
2. Legislative
3. Judiciary

Executive: This is the arm of government charged with the duty of implementation and execution of government polices

FUNCTIONS OF EXECUTIVE

1. To decide on the policies to be submitted to the parliament for law making
2. To give approval to bills before they became law
3. To control the export and import trade in the country
4. To implement the laws made by the Legislature
5. To maintain laws and order in the country

The legislature

This is the arm of government that is responsible for making laws

Functions of legislature

1. To make laws for the state as well as amend the constitution
2. To approve the annual budget
3. To supervise and control government agencies
4. To investigate he activities of government institutions
5. To impeach and remove the president of state whenever the need arises
6. Approved policies of the executive arm of government.

THE JUDICIARY

This is the organ of government that interprets the law and enforces it.

FUNCTIONS OF JUDICIARY

1. To interpret the Law: It explains what the law says
2. To settle dispute between people and state
3. To administer the oath of office ie the judiciary swears in important government officials
4. The Judiciary protect citizens rights and liberties
5. The judiciary watches over governmental laws and punished offenders

IMPORTANCE OF DEMOCRACY

1. It facilitation orderly transfer of power in a democratic dispensation
2. Decisions reflect the wish of the majority
3. Fundamental human rights are guaranteed
4. It encourages mass participation or citizens in government
5. It guarantees the freedom of the press
6. It ensures peaceful Co-existence

PILLARS OF DEMOCRACY

Pillars of democracy means agencies institution bodies or organisation that promote democratic principles.

That is those institutions bodies and people who give the needed support for the smooth running of democracy

They include

1. The people: democracy has been defined as government of the people by the people for the people. Hence the people form the centre of democracy without the people the practice of democracy will be in rain.
2. INEC: This is the body that organises and conducts elections without which elections will be difficult
3. Political Parties: Without political parties, it will be difficult for candidates to emerge and contest for election
4. The constitution: The constitution is the bedrock of every democratic government. This is because it contains the rules, laws principles and conventions by which a state is governed
5. The rule of law: All citizens are equal before the law and the law protects all citizens. Nobody is above the law. Democracy becomes impossible where human rights are restricted.
6. Majority rule: In a democratic society the party that has the highest numbers of votes during election controls the government of the day. It is not possible for all the contestants in an election to win
7. Minority Rights: In as much as one party wins the others enjoy their rights Democracy encourages tolerance of the views of the opposition
8. Transparent electoral process: This refers to free and fair elections. The conduct of election could be derived of intimidations, harassment rigging and other electoral malpractices

ELECTION

Election is defined as the method or process of choosing leaders through voting. It can also be defined as a process whereby all eligible adults vote to choose their leaders. In Nigeria, elections are conducted under the platform of political parties

Voter: This is the individual that goes to the polling booth to cast a vote for the candidate of his / her choice. A vote is also called an electorate

Voting: This is the process or method by which the electorate (voter) selects the choice of candidate during election

TYPES OF ELECTION

1. **Direct Election:** This is the type of election whereby people are allowed to participate and vote directly for candidate of their choice. It is also known as **OPEN BALLOT**
2. **Indirect Election:** This is the type of election whereby people's representative is permitted to vote on their behalf
3. **Bye election:** This is a process whereby an election is conducted to fill a vacancy as a result of resignation, removal, disqualification or death of an individual
4. **Primary Election:** This is a type of election done by political parties to choose a candidate that will represent their party
5. **Secret ballot election:** This type of election involves voters casting their votes secretly

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIRECT AND INDIRECT ELECTION

1. Direct Election is democratic while indirect election is undemocratic
2. Direct election is very costly and difficult to maintain while indirect election is cheap and easier to maintain
3. Rigging is greatly encouraged in a direct election while in an indirect election rigging can be reduced or checked
4. Direct election leads to victimization and intimidation. Indirect election does not encourage victimization and intimidation
5. Direct election reflects the real choice of the people while indirect election does not reflect the true choice of the people.

IMPORTANCE OF ELECTION

1. **Formation of a new government.** A new government is formed when general elections are conducted
2. **Change of government:** Elections provide the opportunity to elect new government at the end of the tenure of an incumbent administration
3. **Election of credible leaders:** Election gives voter the opportunity to elect credible leaders into renewed positions of government
4. **Civic Responsibilities:** Elections give voters the opportunity to perform their civic responsibilities by voting for people of their choice.
5. **Rule of Law:** Elections enable people to adhere to rule of law as opposed to autocratic regimes which is rule by force

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A VOTER

1. Election of credible candidate: It is the responsibility of voters to ensure that they vote for credible candidates.
2. Obeying electoral Law: Voters are expected to obey all rules and regulations governing the conduct of election
3. Avoidance of Electoral Malpractice: It is the duty to voter to show ford conduct during elections
4. National Interest: Voter are expected to put national interest for and above ethnic or personal interest in the election of candidates

QUALIFICATION FOR ELECTION

1. Citizenship: Citizenship of the country are the only people who are permitted by law to vote during general elections
2. Age: Citizenships who are eighteen years and above are the only once allowed by Law to participate during election
3. Voters registration: All eligible adults are required by Law to undergo voters registration exercise. Registered voters are issued with voters card to enable them cast their votes during general election

PROCEDURES FOR VOTING

Voting is carried out through central procedures enshrined in the electoral act of the Nigerian constitution

1. Voters registration exercise: The first procedure for voting is registration exercise which involves the registration of eligible voters for general election
2. Accreditation of Voters: Eligible and registered voters are accredited on the of election. The electoral officers ensures that accredited for election
3. Issuance of ballot paper: Voters are issued with ballot paper after they have been accredited
4. Voting for a candidate: Voters elect their candidate by thumb printing a political party
5. Dropping of Ballot in the ballot boxers: After thumb printing they drop the ballot paper in the designated ballot boxes
6. Counting of Votes: The votes are counted after everyone has cast his or her vote. This is done in the presence the political party agents go well as voters
7. Announcement and declaration of elections results: The successful candidate with the highest number of votes are declared winners by the polling officers

ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE: Electoral malpractice means the acts of engaging in different acts of electoral misdeeds in order to manipulate general elections. It is also defined as the act of employing illegal methods by individuals and groups in a bid to manipulate election.

Forms of Electoral Malpractice:

1. Take Ballot Papers: This is the process of bringing in fake ballot paper to voting centres by agents to manipulate votes in favour
2. Artificial Scarcity of election materials: This is the process of supplying insufficient election materials to voting centres in order to disenfranchise some of the electorates from exercising their civil responsibilities.

3. Under age voting: Electoral malpractices is committed if anyone below the age of 18 is allowed to vote in on election.
4. Facilitation of an election figure: This is when the total number of votes cast on an election day out numbers the registered votes in an election centre
5. Snatching of ballot boxes and papers: This is a form of malpractice in which agents snatch away ballot boxes and papers during election
6. Announcing of fake result: This happens when the electoral commission of a country announces election results other than the genuine result obtained in the voting centres
7. Thuggery and intimidation: This involves employing things to harras and intimidate voters
8. Fake manifestoes are fake and unfulfilled.

CONSEQUENCES OF ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE

1. Incompetent leadership: Electoral malpractice paves way for people who are incompetent and incapable of addressing public issues to assume office
2. Hinders the growth of democracy: Electoral malpractices hinder democratic growth of a country
3. Unemployment and poverty: When election is manipulated there would be increase in the level of unemployment and poverty.
4. It creates conflicts: Electoral malpractice by politicians brings about hatred and hostility between groups which might result in conflict and violence
5. Corruption: Electoral Malpractice brings corruption practices build as embezzlement of public funds award of illegal contract.

PREVENTION OF ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE

1. Electoral materials should be adequately provided and must be secured
2. Intimidation, bribery, rigging of any sort must not be tolerated
3. The electorates must be properly educated so as to know the importance of their votes in order to avoid being bought over with money
4. An impartial and an independent National electoral commission must be constituted
5. The method of one man, one vote must be emphasized.
6. Country and declaration of election votes must be made open
7. Elections must be held regularly at intervals to prevent sit tight leadership