**3rd Term Civic Notes**

**Week I: Meaning of Human Rights**

**Specific Objectives: I Should be able to:**

1. Define Human Rights
2. List examples of Human Rights
3. State reasons for the inclusion of human rights in the constitution

Human Rights refers to the natural rights and privileges enjoyed by citizens of a country by virtue of the fact that they are human beings. These rights are naturally stated in the constitution of a country.

The history of human rights date back time immemorial. However, it gained universal attention in 1948. This was as a result of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR of 1948) by an arm of the United Nations called the General Assembly.

After becoming the 99th member of the UN in 1960, Nigeria in compliance with the UN’s directive introduced human rights into the Nigerian constitution. Presently, Human Rights is contained in chapter 4 of the 1999 constitution.

Some of the examples of Human Rights are:

* Right to life
* Right to Personal Liberty
* Right to Self-expression (Freedom of Speech)
* Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion
* Right to Personal Liberty
* Right to Private and family life
* Freedom of Movement
* Right to peaceful association and assembly, etc.

**Reasons for the Inclusion of Human Rights in the Constitution**

1. For ease of reference.
2. To ensure that citizens can seek redress in the court of law.
3. To ensure that influential citizens or those in authority do not abuse their powers.
4. To guarantee equality, fairness and justice in the society.
5. To promote good leadership, transparency and accountability in the state.
6. To uphold the principles of justice, rule of law and constitutionalism in the state.
7. In compliance with UN’ directive that member-states should see to the inclusion of human rights in her domestic laws.

**Project Work for Week I:** State five benefits of human rights in Nigeria

**Week II: Characteristics of Human Rights**

**Specific Objectives:**

**I Should be able to:**

1. List the characteristics of human rights
2. Explain the characteristics of Human Rights

Some of the characteristics of human rights are:

1. Human rights are Natural
2. Human rights are Universal
3. Human Rights are Inalienable
4. Human Rights are Indivisible
5. Human Rights are Relative
6. Human Rights are Lawful

**Human Rights are Natural**

Human rights are said to be natural because all humans are born free and not in bondage. In this sense, the rights apply to person in this world regardless of whether the constitution of a country recognizes them or not. Human rights are not bought, sold, inherited or earned. They are natural to each person.

**Human Rights are Universal**

This means that they are recognized in all parts of the world, regardless of place and time. This explains why the United Nation’s General Assembly recognized Human Rights in 1948 under what is today referred to as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR of 1948). Human Rights are the same for all humans regardless of gender/sex, religion, social status and socio-political ideology.

**Human Rights are Inalienable**

This implies that human rights cannot be detached or separated from the nature of man. It forms the very essence of humans. Since human beings are born free, they have the instinct of freedom from birth and consistently cling to or try to assert the freedom they are born with. For example, humans are born to move and express themselves freely.

**Human Rights are Indivisible**

This means they are interrelated and should be enjoyed as a collective whole. It would be inconsistent to affirm one right and deny the other. For example, if one must enjoy the right to life, he/she should also enjoy the right to free speech, movement, private and family life, etc. the rights must be comprehensive and not enjoyed in parts. The denial of any of the rights will in the final analysis lead to the denial of virtually all the rights.

**Human Rights are Relative**

This means human rights have limitations. They are not absolute and should not be enjoyed by anybody at the expense of the rights of others. It goes with the saying: “my right to swing my hands stops where the nose of another person is.” There are legally recognized limits to the rights of citizens. This is so because any attempt to claim the rights as an exclusive entitlement of the privileged few will lead to the infringement of the rights of others.

**Human Rights are Lawful**

To say that human rights are lawful means it is stated or provided for in the constitution. In some societies, they are not written down but the people regard them as fair and just. For example, in primitive societies, human rights are expressed orally and transmitted by words of mouth from one generation to another.

**Project Work for Week II:** State five limitations of Human Rights.

**Week III: Categories of Human Rights**

**Specific Objectives:** I should be able to:

1. List categories of Human Rights
2. Explain categories of Human Rights

Human Rights have been categorized into the following:

1. Civil and Political Rights
2. Socioeconomic rights
3. Sociocultural rights
4. Environmental rights

**Civil and Political Rights:** This include those rights that are related to liberty and those that are related to citizenship duty. They include:

* Right to life
* Personal liberty
* Peaceful association and political participation
* Freedom of expression
* Dignity of the human person etc.

They are also referred to as “First Generation Rights.”

**Socioeconomic Rights:** They are those rights that promotes the welfare and living conditions of citizens. It refers to economic empowerment rights because it guarantees access to good standard of standard of living, practices, trade, vocation or good jobs and other decent means of living.

Examples are:

* Right to work
* Right to decent and adequate wage
* Right to living wage
* Right to free and compulsory education
* Right to food and healthcare, etc.

**Note** that these rights are not recognized in the Nigerian constitution. However, some of them exist as National Policy and Directive of State policy. Thus, the Nigerian government is expected to provide for citizens in a gradual and progressive manner as long as the resources are available. These rights are also known as “Second Generation Rights.”

**Socioeconomic Rights:** They are rights that pertains to human beings pr citizens as social beings in different areas of human activities especially in the practice of:

* Religion
* Family, relationship and family living.

These rights include:

* Right to decent and adequate standard of living and the attainment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health
* Right to special protection for mothers before, during and after childbirth and
* Right for the protection and assistance of families.

These rights and those highlighted Under Socioeconomic rights are recognized as human rights by the United Nations under the UDHR of 1948.

**Environmental Rights:** They are those rights that are environment related and targeted at ensuring heathy and sustainable environment, devoid of those hazards that could result to unfriendly environment. Environmental rights is violated in cases of indiscriminate bush burning, indiscriminate disposal of waste, indiscriminate deforestation and the cutting down of trees without a measurable degree of replacing them by planting trees, etc.

**Project for Week III:** State five dangers associated with the violation of human rights.

**Week IV: Political Apathy**

**Specific Objectives:** I should be able to:

1. Define Political Apathy
2. State forms of Political Apathy
3. Give reasons for political Apathy

Political Apathy is defined as the degree to which citizens of a country show little or no interest in politics. It is also referred to as the situation whereby citizens are not excited or satisfied with the affairs of politics. These means people are unwilling to take part in politics or show refusal to participate in all forms of political activities.

The direct opposite of Political Apathy is Popular Participation, Mass Participation or Political Participation. Political apathy is to a large extent experienced in many African countries like Nigeria due to corruption, lack of trust in the electoral process and bad leadership.

**Forms of Political Apathy**

1. Refusal of qualified adult citizens to vote during election.
2. Refusal of qualified adult citizens to register as voters for election.
3. Refusal of registered voters to check their names on the voters register for claims and objections when the list of voters is displayed.
4. Refusal of qualified citizens to contest elections and take up elective posts or political offices.
5. Refusal of citizens to form or belong to political parties in order to capture political power.
6. Non-involvement in electioneering campaign such as rallies where politicians declare their intentions and campaign promises.
7. Refusal to participate in protests and demonstrations against rigging of elections, bad policies of government and bad leadership.
8. Refusal to support any candidate or political party during election.

**Reasons for Political Apathy**

1. **Bad Governance:** People become disillusioned when the government rule without considering the interest of the people. In other words, they are discouraged from participating in politics as a result of bad leadership.
2. **Unqualified Political/Electoral Promises:** Political parties always have what is known as manifesto. It is a document showing the programmes or plan of action which a political party seek to achieve when it gets to power. if political parties fail to fulfil such promises after winning election, citizens may be discouraged from participating in future political/ electoral activities.
3. **Violence During Electioneering Campaigns:** This is usually done by thugs and some political opponents. It often involves the use of deadly weapons like guns and matchets to scare and attack perceived political rivals or those that may not vote in favour of a given candidate.
4. **Religious Beliefs:** This is due to undue perception that politics is a dirty game that corrupt the soul and make people unrighteous.
5. **Illiteracy and Ignorance:** This means when citizens either lack knowledge of the importance of politicking and democratic activities or are not educated enough to appreciate the relevance of political participation.
6. Poverty resulting from lack of basic needs can make citizens disregard political activities and focus on their private business for daily survival.
7. Lack of independent and impartial judiciary will lead to loss of confidence in the entire democratic process, thereby making citizens to be disinterested in politics.

**Wk V Ways of Fighting Political Apathy**

**Specific Objectives:** I should be able to:

1. State dangers of Political Apathy
2. Mention solutions to the problems of Political Apathy
3. Mention ways government can protect the interest of the citizens

Some of the dangers of Political Apathy are:

1. Bad Governance: Lack of interest in politics could lead to the emergence of bad leaders who will in turn govern the people without considering the interest of the masses and society at large.
2. Political Apathy could lead to the emergence of incompetent leaders or those that lack the capacity to manage the sociopolitical and economic affairs of the state. The result is mismanagement of public funds and high rate of poverty in the state.
3. Political Apathy could lead to conflict, unrest and anarchy in the state.
4. The practice could also generate problem of financial crisis that could lead to underdevelopment in the land.
5. As a result of political apathy, self-centered leaders sometimes seize the opportunity to manipulate the result of elections by increasing the figures of votes cast in their favour. This further increases the loss of confidence in the electoral process.
6. Political apathy makes leaders not to be accountable to the citizens because many of them feel the electoral process is not the true means of determining the emergence of leaders.

**Solutions to the Problems of Political Apathy**

1. The electoral body should ensure free, fair and credible elections. This means, elections must be devoid of thuggery, violence and electoral malpractices.
2. Government and relevant institutions of society should carryout massive enlightenment programmes on the dangers of political apathy. Citizens need to know that “the price the wise pay for not participating in politics is to be ruled by the unwise.”
3. Leaders should make realistic and realizable campaign promises and ensure that their promises are fulfilled when they gain political power. This will boost the confidence of citizens in the democratic process and motivate them to participate in political activities.
4. Government should ensure that citizens are gainfully employed so that they can conveniently participate in politics without feeling insecure about their means of livelihood and daily bread.
5. Political Parties should recruit competent and progressive leaders that will promote the interest of citizens in politics.
6. There should be good governance and effective practice of the principles of Rule of Law and Consitutionalism.

**Wk VI Civil Service**

**Specific Objectives: I should be able to:**

1. Define Civil Service
2. State the Structure of Civil Service
3. State the differences between Civil Service and Public Service

Civil Service is defined as the departments under the executive arm of government, responsible for implementing the policies and programmes of government. The political head of civil service is called minister while the administrative head is called Permanent Secretary or Director General. Unlike Public Service were workers are called public servants, those in civil service are called civil servants.

Examples of Civil Service institutions in Nigeria are

* Ministry of Education
* Ministry of Foreign Affairs
* Ministry of Finance
* Ministry of Justice
* Ministry of Transportation etc

**Structure of Civil Service**

The structure of Civil Service is represented in the following hierarchical order:

Administrative Class

Professional Class

Executive Class

Clerical Class

Auxiliary Class

1. **The Administrative Class:** This is the highest class in the civil service and it is made up of experienced and well-educated civil servants. Only degree holders can rise through the ranks to this level. This class is responsible for advising the government of the day, formulating the policies and programmes of government and general administration. Members of this class are those in the directorate cadre.
2. **Professional Class:** it is made up of personnels that are experts and specialist in a particular field of life. these include lawyers, doctors, accountants, engineers etc. their job is to carry out special assignments relating to their areas of specialization.
3. **The Executive Class:** The job of this class is to ensure day-to-day administration. Members of this class include Senior Executive Officers, Higher Executive officers, etc. the qualification for promotion into this calss are Higher National Diploma, Ordinary National Diploma, Advanced Level GCE etc.
4. **Clerical Class:** This class carryout what is called routine job in the Civil Service. Qualification into this class is basically O’ Level. Examples are secretaries, clerks and office messengers.
5. **The Auxiliary Class:** It is also called manipulative or messengerial class**.** No certificate is required for this class. No capabilities and technical skills. Examples of those in this class are cleaners, carpenters, mechanics, plumbers, drivers, bricklayers etc. most of them are craftsmen or artisans.

**Differences between Civil Service and Public Service**

1. Workers in Civil Service are called Civil Service while those in Public Service are called Public Servants.
2. The service rendered by civil servants is to the government while those rendered by public service institutions are rendered to the people or the masses.
3. The permanent secretary who serves as administrative head is responsible for managing the affairs of civil servants while the Board of Directors manage the affairs of public servants.
4. Civil service depends directly on annual budget while public service is not tied to the executive annual budget.

**WK VII: Problems of Public Service**

**Specific Objectives:** I should be able to

1. State problems of Civil Service
2. Explain solutions to the problems of Civil Service

Some of the problems of Civil Service are:

1. **Poor Condition of Service:** Public servants do not earn good salaries and they lack motivational incentives that will make them work harder. This has prevented highly qualified persons from getting attracted to public service.
2. **Bribery and Corruption:** The effectiveness of public service has been slowed down by bribery and corruption as some public servants will not do their jobs without demanding for bribe.
3. **Negative Attitude to Work:** Many public servants regard their job as “government work which does not require any serious attention.
4. **Tribalism:** Some high-ranking officials favour only people from their ethnic group.
5. **Political Instability:** Frequent change of government result in constant change of top officials like minister, commissioners, Head of Service and Director Generals.
6. **Over Staffing:** Public Service is overstaffed with people who are not willing to work and those with outdated ideas. As such, some go to work simply to gossip till closing time.
7. **Inadequate Training Facilities:** Training facilities are inadequate. Some Public Servants that are sent abroad for training do not return to the country to serve and deliver the knowledge they have acquired.
8. **Red-Tapism or Bureaucracy:** In simple terms, this means strict adherence to rules. It refers to the excessive formalities in the decision-making process. This hinders the effectiveness of service delivery.

**Solutions to the Problems of Public Service**

1. Relevant legislations or laws should be made to ensure that public servants are effectively punished if they engage in acts of bribery and corruption or violate existing public service rules.
2. Public Servants should be educated on the moral codes and the need for dedication, hard work, diligence to duty. This will prevent or eliminate the problem of poor attitude to work.
3. The problem of tribalism and nepotism in public service can be solved by ensuring that only qualified persons are recruited into the service. In other words, recruitment, promotion and transfer of public servants should align with the principles of federal character and quota system.
4. The salaries and incentives of public servants should not only be increased but should also be paid as at when due in order to motivate public servants in effective service delivery.
5. The government must ensure that the code of conduct, ethics and professional rules of public service institutions so as to guide the conduct of public servants.
6. Those responsible for recruiting and managing the affairs of public servants must ensure that the service is not overstaffed with the incompetent personnel or those with negative attitude to work.
7. Government should establish and strengthened Public Complaint Commission where citizens can boldly complain on the ineffectiveness of Public Servants.

**Week VIII: Civil Society**

**Specific Objectives:** I should be able to:

1. Define Civil Society
2. Identify types of Civil Society
3. Mention examples if Civil Society

Civil Society is defined as an association of voluntary individuals or groups whose aim is to support the government by improving the welfare condition of citizens in specific areas. Civil society groups are sometimes called non-governmental organizations. Apart from welfare services, some of them are engaged in activities aimed at promoting:

* Equality of Citizens
* Good Governance and
* Social Justice.

Civil Society Groups are not private owned organizations or profit-making institutions. They are also not organs or agencies of government. They are independent of the state. As non-profit organisations, they place more importance on good society, characterised by:

* Orderliness
* Peace
* Fairness and
* Justice

Some Civil Society organisations are set up to work against military dictatorship. Some are meant to promote democracy while those that are gender based concern themselves with improving the quality of women in our society by empowering them at various levels and destroying all traditions that place them at disadvantaged positions in the society.

**Types of Civil Society**

1. **Professional Associations**

Examples

* Nigeria Medical Association (NMA)
* Nigeria Bar Association (NBA)
* Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ)
* Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT)

1. **Pro-Democracy Groups**

Examples

* Campaign for Democracy

1. **Human Right Associations**

* Amnesty International
* Social Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP)

1. **Labour Groups**

Examples

* Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC)

1. **Student Groups**

**Example:**

* National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS)
* Student Union Government (SUG)

1. **Business Groups**

Example

* Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN)

1. **Gender Based Groups**

Example

* National Council of Women Society

1. **Educational Groups**

Example

* Global Initiative for Teachers (GIT)

1. **Religious Groups**

Example

* Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN)
* Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)
* Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN)

**Week IX: Functions of Civil Society**

**Specific Objectives: I should be able to:**

1. List the functions of Civil Society
2. Explain the functions of Civil Society
3. State qualities of Civil Society

The word ‘civil’ implies politeness, tolerance, non-military but relating to citizens within a country. Some of the functions of civil society are:

1. They check the excesses of political leaders and state officials. When government officials abuse the powers given to them, civil society organisations alert the public and encourage citizens to react against the abuse of power. They work against military dictatorship and mount campaign for democratic government.
2. Civil society organization encourages active participation in politics where there are political apathy. They encourage the people to enforce their political rights by getting directly involved in political activities and voting during elections.
3. They pursue the enforcement of fundamental rights of citizens such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion. They also ensure that citizens are not oppressed or marginalized by the state.
4. They help to develop value of society. They promote values such as tolerance, hardwork, respect for other people and moderation of behaviour.
5. Civil Society organisations make demand for social justice or fight against injustice and marginalization and oppression of the masses by those in positions of authority.
6. They strengthen multi-ethnic societies like Nigeria and promote the tenets of unity in cultural diversity.
7. They educate the public on important national issues and create valuable platforms for robust debate on such issues to ensure that citizens and leaders are properly guided.

**Qualities of Civil Society**

1. Civil Society Organisations are set up to make society better even though they focus on different ways of doing things.
2. The organisations are not set up by government and they are not part of government and they are not part of government. They are independent of the government.
3. They seek effective governance and progress at all levels of society and they promote popular participation.
4. Membership is voluntary and depends on certain conditions specified by the organization.
5. They are self-reliant and also could be funded by institutions that believe in their cause.
6. They work with political parties and government but they still retain their independence.
7. A good number of them are involved in charity work.
8. Civil Society Organisations are highly organized and each group focus on a particular cause.

**WEEK X: Problems of Civil Society**

**Specific Objectives: I should be able to:**

1. State problems of Civil Society
2. Explain possible solutions to the problems of Civil Society

Even though Civil Society Organisations seek to make society better, they are not perfect themselves. Thus, some of their weaknesses are:

1. **Extremism:** Sometimes, Civil Society Groups are extreme and pitch themselves against the government. They conduct their affairs as though they were at war with the state.
2. **Competition for Fund:** Some of them compete for funding from various institutions. These result in conflict among them and reduce their commitment to the cause for which they were initially set up.
3. Some members need to increase their own awareness of that cause for which they claim to stand for. This means members of some civil society groups don’t either understand the philosophy and goals of their groups or misrepresent the aim for which the groups were set up.
4. Some of the groups that fight the cause of the poor and indigent people hardly represent their interest because most of them are in business to make money and pursue their interest.
5. Some non-governmental organisations raise funds from different international agencies but those in leadership positions embezzle the fund at the expense of the target beneficiaries.

**Solutions to the Problems of Civil Society**

1. In sourcing for funds, civil society groups should be educated on the best possible ways. Within the limits of reason and ethical standards. Inother to avoid conflict that would arise from undue competition.
2. Members of each organization should be enlightened or oriented on the cause of fighting so as to become more effective in pursuing their goals.
3. Those fighting for the poor at the grassroot level should create opportunity for the people to be represented in leadership positions of civil society groups in order to give a sense of belonging.
4. The powers and influence of civil society leaders should be checkmated to avoid undue acquisition of political power without elections.
5. To solve the problem of inadequate funding, civil society groups should engage themselves in providing essential services so as to generate funds for their projects.
6. Those engaged in embezzlement of funds in civil society groups should be investigated and punished according to law to serve as deterrent to others.

**Popular Participation**

**Specific Objectives:** I should be able to:

1. Define Popular Participation
2. State forms of Popular Participation
3. State reasons for popular participation

Popular Participation is defined as the active involvement of citizens in political activities of the state. It is also called political participation or mass participation. Political participation is a feature of democratic practice which allows adult citizens to participate in the decision-making process of the state either as voters or elected representatives.

**Forms of Political Participation**

* Registering as a voter during election.
* Contesting as candidates for elective post during election.
* Belonging to a political party or showing support for political party of your choice.
* Participating in electioneering campaign, political rallies and assemblies.
* Speaking out against the bad policies and programmes of government through destructive arguments, discussion and debate on relevant media platforms.
* Participating in peaceful protest against bad governance and undemocratic/unlawful government.

**Reasons for Popular Participation**

1. To ensure that good leaders are recruited during elections to lawfully recognize leadership position in the state.
2. To ensure that those holding leadership position enjoy popular recognition by citizens or members of the state.
3. To give sense of belonging to members of the public and ensure their actively involved in matters of state.
4. To subject the policies and programmes of government to the will of the people through periodic and transparent elections.
5. To conform to the tenets and principles of democratic values and practices.