

CIVIC EDUCATION

LESSON NOTE

BASIC 9

Subject Content

- 1. The constitution: Meaning and types of constitution**
- 2. Colonial constitutions: Clifford's constitution of 1922 and Richard's constitution of 1946**
- 3. Colonial constitutions: MacPherson's constitution of 1951 and Lyttleton constitution of 1954**
- 4. 1960 Independence constitution: features, advantages and weaknesses of the 1960 independence constitution**
- 5. Post 1960 constitution: 1963 Republican constitution of 1963: features, achievements and weaknesses of the republican constitution of 1963**
- 6. Post 1960 Independence constitution: 1979 presidential constitution: features and achievements of the 1979 constitution**
- 7. Post 1960 Independence constitution: features of the 1989 presidential constitution, features of the 1999 presidential constitution**
- 8. Supremacy of the Constitution: Meaning and Reasons for the Supremacy of the Constitution**
- 9. Election: Meaning and Types of Election**
- 10. Importance of Election in Democratic Society**
- 11. Revision**
- 12. Examination**

Week 1

THE CONSTITUTION: MEANING AND TYPES OF CONSTITUTION

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

- 1. Define constitution**
- 2. Explain the types of constitution**

Constitution is defined as a body of rules and regulations by which the citizens of a country are governed or ruled. A constitution also defines the powers and functions of the political office holders such as Presidents, Governors, Chairmen and Councilors of Local Government etc. All the citizens in a country are expected to abide by the rules and regulations provided. The constitution also states the rights, duties and obligations of the citizens.

THE TYPES OF CONSTITUTION

Written Constitution: It is a body of rules and regulations of a country that are written in a single document. Examples of country that operate written constitutions are America, Nigeria etc.

Unwritten Constitution: It is defined as a body of rules and regulations of a country that are not written in a single document. An unwritten constitution is usually based on the cultures, traditions, conventions and beliefs of the people. Britain is a good example of a country that operates an unwritten constitution.

Rigid Constitution: Rigid Constitution is defined as one that is very difficult to amend or change. Most written constitutions are rigid. America, Ghana and Nigeria have written and rigid constitution.

Flexible Constitution: It is defined as the type of constitution that is easy to amend. Most unwritten constitutions are flexible. Britain, Italy etc have unwritten and flexible constitution.

Assignment

1. Differentiate between a written and an unwritten constitution

Week 2

COLONIAL CONSTITUTIONS: CLIFFORD'S CONSTITUTION OF 1922 AND RICHARD'S CONSTITUTION OF 1946

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

1. Explain the features of the Clifford's constitution of 1922
2. Discuss the features of Richard's constitution of 1946

THE CLIFFORD'S CONSTITUTION OF 1922

The Clifford's constitution of 1922 was named after governor Hugh Clifford who represented the queen of England in Nigeria before our independence in 1960.

FEATURES OF CLIFFORD'S CONSTITUTION

1. It provided an executive council.
2. Clifford's Constitution established a central legislative council made up of 46 members for the colony and southern protectorates.
3. It provided elective principle for the first time in Nigeria.
4. It allowed the formation of political party e.g. Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP) in 1923.
5. It provided for the establishment of newspapers

RICHARD'S CONSTITUTION OF 1946

The Richard's constitution replaced the Clifford's constitution of 1922. The constitution was made mainly to promote the unity of Nigeria and to encourage Nigerians to participate in their own affairs.

FEATURES OF RICHARD'S CONSTITUTION

1. It introduced bicameralism in Nigeria.
2. It integrated the north with the south under one legislative council.
3. Franchise qualification was reduced to £50 per annum.
4. The constitution divided Nigeria into 3 regions: West, North, and East.
5. The colonial Governor-General exercised veto power, as he could overturn the decisions of the legislative council.
6. It retained executive and legislative councils.
7. Africans were included in the executive council.

Week 3

COLONIAL CONSTITUTIONS: MACPHERSON'S CONSTITUTION OF 1951 AND LYTTLETON CONSTITUTION OF 1954

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

1. **Explain the features of the MacPherson's constitution of 1922**
2. **Discuss the features of Lyttleton's constitution of 1946**

MACPHERSON CONSTITUTION OF 1951

This constitution was named after Sir John Macpherson who replaced Richard's in 1951.

FEATURES OF MACPHERSON CONSTITUTION OF 1951

1. It created a central legislative council called House of Representatives.
2. Nigerians were appointed into the executive council as ministers (12 Ministers).

3. It created a central executive council.
4. It continued with the three unequal regions: East, West and North regions.
5. Each region had both legislative and executive councils.

LYTTLETON CONSTITUTION OF 1954

FEATURES OF LYTTLETON CONSTITUTION

1. It established a federal system of government. It gave Nigeria a full federal structure.
2. It made provision for the post of a speaker of the House of Representatives.
3. It created the post of premier for each region.
4. Each region had its own civil service and judiciary
5. Lagos was detached from western region and made the federal capital of Nigeria.
6. Lieutenant-Governor in the regions became governors and the governor became Governor General.

Assignment

1. What are the general features of the colonial constitutions

Week 4

1960 INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION: FEATURES, ADVANTAGES AND WEAKNESSES OF THE 1960 INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

1. Explain the features of the independence constitution of 1960
2. State the achievements of the independence constitution of 1960
3. Enumerate the weaknesses of the independence constitution of 1960

The resolution of the 1957 and 1958 conference gave birth to the 1960 constitution. The 1960 constitution bestowed full independence on Nigeria. The full independence meant that Nigeria was no longer under the control and dictates of the British Government.

FEATURES OF 1960 INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION

1. It provided for a parliamentary system of government.
2. The governor-general was the ceremonial head of state.
3. The prime minister was the head of government and administration.
4. Fundamental human rights were written in the constitution.
5. The constitution of 1960 was a rigid constitution.
6. It laid down procedures for the creation of regions.

ADVANTAGES OR ACHIEVEMENT OF 1960 INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION

1. It ushered independence for Nigeria.
2. It defined citizenship and how it can be acquired.
3. It made provision for human rights.
4. It provided the procedure for the appointment of supreme court judges.

DISADVANTAGES OR WEAKNESS OF 1960 INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION

1. 1960 independence constitution was imposed on Nigerians. Nigerians did not take part in the writing of the constitution
2. The Privy Council in London was the highest court and not the supreme court.
3. The Queen of England was still the head of state and this gave room for interference

Week 5

POST 1960 CONSTITUTION: 1963 REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION OF 1963: FEATURES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION OF 1963

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

1. **Explain the features of the Republican constitution of 1963**
2. **State the achievements of the Republican constitution of 1963**
3. **Enumerate the weaknesses of the Republican constitution of 1963**

FEATURES OF 1963 REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION

1. It retained parliamentary system of government.
2. The Queen of England was no longer the head of state.
3. The Prime Minister was the head of the government.
4. The supreme court was made the highest court of appeal instead of the Privy Council in London.
5. It abolished the judicial service commission.

ADVANTAGES OR ACHIEVEMENTS OF 1963 REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION

1. It gave Nigeria a republican form of government.
2. An elected head of state by the parliament replaced the Queen of England as the head of state.
3. It was the first constitution fully made by Nigerians.
4. It brought British political interference and influence in Nigeria to an end.

DISADVANTAGES/ PROBLEMS / WEAKNESS OF REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION

1. No supremacy of the constitution but supremacy of the parliament.
2. No clear separation of power.
3. The prime minister was accountable to the parliament and not to the people.

POST 1960 INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION: 1979 PRESIDENTIAL CONSTITUTION: FEATURES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE 1979 CONSTITUTION

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

- 1. Explain the features of the 1979 presidential constitution**
- 2. State the achievements of the 1979 presidential constitution**

FEATURES OF 1979 CONSTITUTION

1. It provided for the office of the executive president who was the head of state and commander in – chief of the Nigerian armed forces.
2. The executive president was both the head of state and head of government.
3. The 1979 constitution introduced the presidential system of government.
4. It provided for the office of the vice president.
5. The president has maximum of two terms of four years each.
6. There was a clear separation of powers among the organs of government.
7. Fundamental human rights were provided in the constitution.
8. It provided for election at the local government level.
9. It initiated the federal character principle.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE 1979 CONSTITUTION

1. It created the office of the executive president to be properly elected.
2. There was clear separation of powers and functions among the organs of government.
3. The 1979 constitution was supreme.
4. It provided for a new federal capital territory called Abuja.
5. It made provision for the rights of Nigerians.

POST 1960 INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION: FEATURES OF THE 1989 PRESIDENTIAL CONSTITUTION, FEATURES OF THE 1999 PRESIDENTIAL CONSTITUTION

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

- 1. Explain the features of the 1989 presidential constitution**
- 2. Discuss the features of 1999 presidential constitution**

FEATURES OF THE 1989 CONSTITUTION

1. It introduced a two – party system.
2. Legislative houses were to be on part time.
3. It retained presidential system of government.
4. Fundamental human rights were provided in the constitution.
5. The minimum qualification for major political offices was school certificate.

FEATURES OF THE 1999 PRESIDENTIAL CONSTITUTION

1. It retained presidential system of government.
2. It provided for 36 states including the F.C.T. Abuja.
3. It provided for the independence of the judiciary.
4. It retained bi-cameral legislature, the house of senate and the House of Representatives.
5. Fundamental human rights were provided in the 1999 constitution.

Week 8

SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION: MEANING AND REASONS FOR THE SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

- 1. Define supremacy of the constitution**
- 2. Discuss the reasons for the supremacy of the constitution**

MEANING OF THE SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION

Supremacy of the constitution simply means the constitution which is the law of the land is above everybody in the country. Supremacy of the constitution means that all political office holders such as the president, governors etc must act according to the provisions of the constitution. Supremacy of the constitution means there is only one constitution for the country which is above anyone. Supremacy of the constitution is one of the basic principles of the rule of law.

REASONS FOR THE SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. The political office holders derive their powers and functions from the constitution.
2. The constitution is supreme for smooth running of government in a country.
3. To ensure political stability.
4. To ensure that there is peace, unity, development and orderliness in the country.
5. To protect the interest of the minority groups in the country.
6. The constitution is the final authority over any matter in the country.
7. The three organs or arms of government such as the legislature, executive and judiciary derive their powers from the constitution.

Week 9

ELECTION: MEANING AND TYPES OF ELECTION

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

- 1. Define election**
- 2. Explain the types of election**

MEANING OF ELECTIONS

Election can be defined as an act or process of voting for a candidate to represent the people of a country in various government positions. It is also defined as a process of choosing our political leaders. Examples of political office holders or leaders are president, governors, members of the houses of senate and representatives, Chairman and Counselors of local government areas. Election is a procedure that allows citizens of a country to choose their leaders or representatives.

TYPES OF ELECTIONS

The types of elections are as follows:

1. Direct election.
2. Indirect election.
3. By – election.
4. Run – off election.
5. Primary election.

- 1. Direct Elections:** Direct elections involve the electorates (voters) casting their votes directly in an election for candidates of their choice that will represent them in various government positions.
- 2. Indirect Elections:** This system involves the formation of an electoral college by the legislators. The members of the electoral collegewill vote for the candidates of their choice on behalf of the citizens of the country. The Americans elect the president through electoral college.
- 3. By – Elections:** This is an election that takes place to fill a vacant elective post as a result of disqualification, death or resignation of the individual holding a public office. The election takes place in that constituency where there has been a vacancy.
- 4. Run – off Elections:** When none of the candidates wins the election by absolute majority in a general election, another election would be conducted. In this final election, only the candidates with the highest votes are allowed to contest.

- 5. Primary Election:** This involves the political parties presenting candidates for any election in a country. It is an election conducted within a political party to choose candidates that can adequately represent the interests of the party in an election.

Week 10

IMPORTANCE OF ELECTION IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

Specific Objectives: At the end of this lesson, I should be able to;

- 1. Define election**
- 2. Discuss the importance of election**

Elections take place in every democratic society. Without elections democratic society cannot succeed.

The importance of elections are as follows:

1. **Choice of Leaders:** Elections give the people in a country the opportunity for choosing their leaders into different political offices such as president, governors, legislators etc.
2. **Easy and peaceful change of government:** Elections provide an opportunity for the masses to peacefully remove bad government from office and ensure peaceful change of government to another.
3. **Promotes Democracy:** Election is one of the pillars of democracy. Regular free and fair elections help in sustaining democracy in any country.
4. **Provides opportunity for political education:** Election provides opportunity for political parties to give political education to the people of a country. It is usually done through campaigns and rallies where political parties make their manifestos known to the people.

5. Provides opportunity for participation in government: Election gives the citizens of a country the opportunity of participating in government by casting votes for the candidates of their choice.
6. Elections act as basis for measuring the popularity of the government in power.