

Q. No Critically evaluate the importance of political parties in a modern state. Assess their role as effective instrument for mobilizing public opinion.

Exordium

Political parties hold very significant role in modern state system. It is a combination of people with similar belief, values and ideologies regarding political affairs. This group of individual works as a building block for democracy. Meanwhile, the attitude, beliefs and values of public towards the political party, political issues, or political agendas. The combined opinion of public is public opinion. Political parties are the instruments for mobilizing public opinion. Public opinion and political parties are the two sides of "political system in modern state."

A. Types of Political parties

There are certain types of political

parties including

a- Major political parties

These are the major or full-fledge parties which compete for government. These major parties form government by winning. The major political parties in US are 'Republicans' and 'Democrats'. In Pakistan, PML(N), PPP and PTI are major political parties.

b- Minor political parties

These minor political parties are established to influence policies and usually not competing for government. Such parties include, 'Liberation party' and 'Green party'.

c- Single - Issue party

These parties are established to promote specific issue, their aim is the solution of that particular single issue. For instance, 'Abolition party'.

B- Political System

Political system is very according to the ideology of a country. Political

parties combine and develop political system.

1. Single party political system

In single party political system only one party is allowed. It is criticized that if there is single political party and one is claiming a democracy then it is just foul play. It is said, democracy without opposition is merely a performance.

In China, there is only one political party, it is not allowed to form a new political party. The one reason is xenophobia which is fear of culture. It mocked that democracy demands opposition and single party political system can not claim to be a democratic political system.

2. Two party political system

In this political system two parties are competing for government. This system is visible in 'US' and 'UK'. In US, only two parties are major which compete for political power including,

'Democrats' and 'Republicans'.

3. Multi ~~Three~~ party political system

In such system, there can be number of political parties and people can vote any of them. This system is present in Pakistan, India and Germany.

C- Characteristics of political parties

a- Policy making

These parties make policies for the welfare of public. These parties influence system and fulfill their concerns by making policies.

b- Develop relation among public and Government

The political parties are the linking devices, the contact with public and then aware government of public stance. For instance, a member of political parties is debating on some public issue. He is the voice of public.

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c- Influence agenda

These parties are powerful enough to influence the agenda of government.

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They tried to shape agenda according to public's wishes.

C- Accountability

They also show some accountability, as public can directly contact them. Public gave them vote so that they can complete their needs and solve their issues.

These characteristics shows the importance of parties.

D- Public opinion

The collective opinion of public regarding political issue or politics is public opinion.

Characteristics

- 1- It must be collective of a social group, the opinion of individual can not be the public opinion.
- 2- It is based on ideologies like equality or justice.
- 3- It must be informed, if a minor group is awake with opinion and majority is sleeping with opinion. The opinion of minor group will be public opinion.

- 4- Public opinion is usually rigid towards change but it evolves with time.

Political parties have significant impact on mobilizing public opinion. Public opinion can influence political parties and political parties can alter public opinion. Political parties are very essential in a democratic country.

There are instrumental way for mobilizing public opinion.

1- Historical context

The opinion of individual is align with public opinion because of political culture which was established with time. The individual is aware of historic political leaders and usually influenced by them. The political view of political leaders in history even influence people after few decades. For instance Nelson Mandela in South Africa, Gandhi in India and Quaid-e-Azam in Pakistan.

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2- Socialization

Socialization is a significant factor which can influence public opinion. It includes family, peers, education, religion etc. Political parties use these as a tool to influence public. They even use religion to manipulate thinking.

The peer who belong to one political party presents it in a fantacizing way and influence others's thinking.

Political parties active on social media or ~~to~~ on TV and newspaper, people listen to them and they penetrate unknowingly in their minds.

Political parties also use media against their opposing party. Also, education institutions help political parties to impregnate their ideology among youth.

3- Economic influenced

Economy is a leady part, public can alter their opinion for economic gains. Even if the

party which is in government but public opinion was against them. After their economic reforms people will divert their opinion with time. However, Pakistan often face criticism for buying votes, it can not change public opinion but it can prove that public opinion as ~~will~~^{null} and void.

4- Geo political concerns

If a country is situation on certain locality which faced huge geopolitical issues, the public opinion will suffer. The political party which address their geopolitical issues (including colonized nation, rivalry with neighbours) will attract public opinion. For instance, Ronald Reagan told public that he will make Afghanistan, Vietnam for USSR, so he won their support. It requires to identify public opinion first. Political parties ^{often} highlighter geopolitical issues to divert attention of public opinion.

from national issues.

Denouement

Franklin Delano Roosevelt noted, public opinion is a mysterious and invisible power, to which everything must yield. Public opinion is

powerful and vital driving force in democracy. But, no doubt it is often corrupted by fake propaganda of political parties. Political parties

present propaganda to exploit public opinion. Political parties use different tools for this including religion, education and media.

Jonathan Swift criticized political parties and reveal their hidden ideas by saying, political parties

are the madness of many but the gain of few. However, one can not deny the importance of political parties. Also, their role as effective instrument for mobilizing public opinion.