Political Parties

Outline:

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₪ **Basis for the Formation of Political Parties**

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Definition and Characteristics

Political Party?

- **Political Party – a group of people who seek to control government through the winning of elections and the holding of public office**

- People who have joined together based on certain common principles/beliefs

Political Party?

- Some parties may not seek power through elections but may work as pressure groups;

- Every party espouses a certain ideology but at times form coalition to represent disparate interests;

  "A political party may thus be defined as an organized group of citizens who prefer to share the same political views and who by acting as a political unit try to control the government" (Gilchrist)

Definition and Characteristics

▪ <u>Four things are essential for the formation of political party:</u>

i.   The people should be organized.

ii. There should be similarity of principles.

iii. The aim of political party should be attain political power.

iv. A political party should use <u>peaceful means </u>for attaining political power.

Functions of Political Parties

Functions of Parties

A Bridge between People and Government

Political parties are major "inputting" devices, allowing citizens to get their needs and wishes heard by government. Without parties, individuals would stand alone and be ignored by government.

By working in or voting for a party, citizens can have some impact on political decisions. At a minimum, parties give people the feeling that they are not utterly powerless, and this belief helps maintain government legitimacy, one reason even dictatorships have a party.

Functions of Parties

Aggregation of Interests

Melding separate interest into general party platforms. **Interest aggregation** is the activity in which the **political demands** of groups and individuals are **combined** into **policy** program.

If interest groups were the highest form of political organization, government would be chaotic and unstable. Parties help tame and calm interest group conflicts by **interest aggregation** — pulling together their separate interests into a larger organization.

- A classic example of was the Democratic Party that **Franklin D. Roosevelt** built in the. 1930s— a coalition that got Democratic presidents elected **five** times in a row. It consisted of workers, farmers, Catholics, Jews, and African Americans. Labor unions, for example, working with the Democrats, got labor legislation they could never have won on their own.

- In 2008 and 2012, **Obama** aggregated young people, women, African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans into winning coalitions.

- The key is that each interest can accomplish its separate goals only in cooperation with others' interests who need the favor returned under the umbrella of the party

Functions of Parties

Integration into Political System

- Parties also pull into the political system groups that had previously been left out. Parties usually welcome new groups into their ranks, giving them a say or input into the formation of party platforms

- **Members of the group feel represented and develop a sense of efficacy and loyalty to the system**

- The British Labour Party and the U.S. Democratic Party, for example, enrolled workers by demanding union rights, fair labor practices, welfare benefits, and educational opportunities. Gradually, a potentially radical labor movement learned to play by democratic rules and support the system. Now, ironically, British and American workers are so successfully integrated into the political systems that many vote Conservative or Republican.

Functions of Parties

Political Socialization

- Parties also teach their members how to play the political game.

- Parties introduce citizens to candidates or elected officials and show members how to speak in public, to conduct meetings, and to compromise, thus deepening their *political competence* and building among them legitimacy for the system as a whole.

- Parties are also the training grounds for leaders.

- Some European parties attempted to set up distinct subcultures—with party youth groups, soccer leagues, newspapers, women's sections, and so on. The effort was self defeating, however, for as these parties socialized their members to participate in politics, they emerged from their subcultures.

Functions of Parties

Mobilization of Voter

In campaigning for their candidates, parties are **mobilizing** voters—whipping up interest and boosting turnout.

Without party advertising, many citizens would ignore elections.

Organization of the Government

- The winning party gets government jobs and power and shifts policy its way.
    - The party with the most seats in the U.S. House of Representatives or Senate appoints the chamber's leaders and committee chairpersons.
- A new president can appoint some 3,000 people to executive departments and agencies, allowing the party to steer policy for at least four years.
- In no system, however, does a party completely control government, for bureaucrats are also quite powerful. **Parties *attempt* to control government; they do not always succeed**

Functions of Parties

Watchdog

The party NOT in power closely watches the actions of the party in power.

Informing and Activating Supporters
- Activate interest and participation in public affairs
- Primarily by:
  - Campaigning for their candidates
  - Taking stands on issues
  - Criticizing the candidates/positions of their opponents
- Inform voters the way THEY want them to be informed
  - Advertising

Basis for the Formation of Political Parties

Basis for the Formation of Political Parties

1. **Religion:**

Many form political party on the basis of religion. Their aim is to protect the interests of their followers. For instance: Catholic parties in Europe, Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha in India

2. Economic:

There are many classes in the society, i.g., Capitalists, labourers, businessman and service. Conservative parties protect the interest of capitalists, while communist and socialist parties protect the interest of labourers

3**. Racial:**

Schedule caste federation in India, Nazi in Germany

Basis for the Formation of Political Parties

4. **Psychological or Natural Difference:**

o **Reactionaries:** consider old tradition of the society as ideal and they want to review them.

o **Conservatives**: there are people who support status quo cautiously consider or resist change, rely on traditional values.

o **Liberal:** Liberalism support reform, change and attaches to great safeguard of the human rights. They use constitutional methods.

o **Radical or Extremists**: There are certain people who hate the entire system of the society and they want to bring in radical changes in it by using revolutionary methods. Radicalism can result from either conservatism or liberalism, it depends on how far a person will go to implement their ideology.

o https://www.huffingtonpost.com/chloe-spencer/determining-your-place-on_b_891780.html

Party Systems

Party Systems

- "Party systems" are not the same as "parties."

- Parties are organizations aimed at winning elections. **Party systems are the interactions of parties with each other.**

- With parties, we look at the **trees**; with party systems, we look at the **forest**.

- Much of the health of a political system depends on the party system, whether it is stable or unstable, whether it has too many parties.

- An unstable party system can wreck an otherwise good constitution.

- **Simplest way to classify party systems is to** count the number of parties in them: one, two, and multiparty. In between one and two, we put "dominant party system." In between two and multiparty, we put "two-plus party system."

- Associated with totalitarian or authoritarian regimes.

- The Soviet Union, China, and many of the emerging nations of Africa and Asia are or were one-party states. These have a single party that controls every level of government and is the only legal party.

- The leaders of such parties rationalize that they are still democratic because they represent what the people really want and need. No fair election or public opinion poll can substantiate this claim.

- When allowed, as in East European countries, citizens repudiate one-party systems. Some developing lands, especially in Africa, argue that having several parties spells chaos and violence, for they form along tribal lines.

- **In contrast to one-party systems, opposition parties in dominant-party systems contest elections, but they rarely win**.

- Some democratic nations had dominant-party systems, but they tend not to last because voters get fed up with the dominant party's corruption and ineptitude.

- **India was long governed by the Congress Party**, Japan by the Liberal Democrats, and Mexico by the Party of Institutional Revolution (PRI).

- Russia now has a dominant-party system under Putin's United Russia Party.

Classifying Party Systems: Two-Party Systems

- Bi-party does not mean that a particular country has only two parties and there is no third party in it. It means there are only two major parties and the rest of the parties are less important.

- Most familiar to us is the two-party system of the United States and Britain.

Example: there two parties in England – 'Conservative' and 'Labour Party'. Sometimes Conservative Party and at other times the Labour Party forms the government. Other parties have small or no seat in the parliament.

Party Systems: Multiparty Systems

- These have several competing parties. Three or more parties compete for control of government.

- Common in Europe, Japan

Classifying Party Systems: Two Plus Party Systems

- Many democratic countries now have two large parties with one or more relevant smaller parties.

- Germany has large Christian Democratic and Social Democratic parties, but the Free Democratic, Green, and Left parties win enough votes to make them politically important.

- Austria was long dominated by two big parties but now has a third party, the highly nationalistic and anti-immigrant Freedom Party.

Classifying Party System: Fluid Party Systems

- New and unstable democracies often have party systems so fluid and inchoate they change before your eyes and fit none of the previous categories. **"Mess" is the only way to describe them**.

- In such countries, parties rise and fall quickly—sometimes existing just for one election—and are often personalistic vehicles to get leaders elected but otherwise stand for no program or ideology.

- Poorly organized, many of them soon fall apart.
  - Charismatic Latin American politicians often invent new parties, but they rarely last.
  - The Russian party system was fluid; President Putin founded his own Unity Party just before the 1999 election and by 2004 turned it into Russia's largest, but it is personalistic, just a tool for Putin to govern with.

Party Systems: Concluding Remarks

- As long as there are at least two parties, we call the system a "competitive party system," the essence of which is to impede corruption. Scholars have long debated which is better: two-party or multiparty systems. It's hard to say, for both have fallen prey to paralysis and **immobilism.**

- A single party that locks itself in power, whatever its ideological rationale, tends to become corrupt. One way to keep corruption in check is by an "out" party hammering away at corruption in the administration of the "in" party.

Political Parties: Bangladesh

- Bangladesh have around 40 registered political parties.
- **Alliances**
  - ‡ **Grand Alliance** also known as 14 Party Alliance is a coalition government in Bangladesh that formed in 2008 and consisted of the Bangladesh Awami League, Jatiya Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal- JASAD, Workers Party, Liberal Democratic Party and nine other parties.
  - ‡ **20 Party Alliance:** extending its predecessor the 18 Party Alliance.
  - ‡ **Left Democratic Alliance**
  - ‡ **Jatio Oikko Front:** The **Jatio Oikko Front** is a newly formed alliance Consisting of Four political parties including Bangladesh Nationalist Party.Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-JSD, Gano Forum And Mahmudur Rahman Manna's Nagorik Oikko Bangladesh.