**UZO-NWOSU MMACHUKWU**

**19/SMS04/052**

**GST 203 ASSIGNMENT**

**CHAPTER 7**

Political parties are an essential feature of politics in modern mass participation; they serve as an important link between the government and the people. The political party crops up in all aspects of politics which was first developed in the nineteenth century in response to the appearance of elections involving large number of voters, to help those interested of getting elected to be able to help themselves using the political parties.

According to R.G. Gettel, political party is a group of citizens more or less organized, who act as a political power aim at controlling the government and carry out its general policies. Also, according to Agbaje (1999), a political party is a group of persons bonded in a policy and opinion in support of a general political cause, which essentially is the pursuit, capture and retention, for as long as democratically feasible, of government and its offices. From the above opinions and many others, we see that political party is a group of citizens having some agreement in broad principles of national policy with an effort to capture political power by some constitutional means.

Some characteristics of political parties include:

* Political parties capture governmental power through constitutional means
* Political parties always have a party ideology which serves as a basis of classifying parties
* Every political party must take the nation into all its consideration
* Political party should be organized, etc

Political parties are of different types: Elitist/Cadre parties ( political parties derive its membership from people of the highest social hierarchy in a country), Mass parties (draws its party members from all sections of the society and have wide membership), Ideological party (political party with political ideology which form the basis of the party), Broker party (has its members drawn from the upper and lower classes of the society in order to reconcile the conflicting interest of the rich and poor), Charismatic or Personality party ( formed and led by individuals with charisma).

Functions of political parties are: Political education, Political representation, Political stability, Interest aggression, etc.

Political parties were formed through national consciousness and national movements to organize against colonial misrule. The National Congress of British West Africa (which was formed in 1920) had the first hand in the political activities and party formation. The main emergence for party formation in Nigeria was constitutional development: The Clifford constitution had four elective seats in the legislative council which were retained in the Richards constitution; the Macpherson’s constitution established regional executive councils, and provided for a system of indirect elections to largely Nigerian Legislative houses. The first political party in Nigeria was the Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) by Herbert Macaulay (the father of Nigerian nationalism) in 1923, which was formed under the elective principle of Clifford constitution of 1922. This party had won three seats allocated to Lagos in the legislative council in 1923, 1928, and 1933. Other political parties in the first republic include: National Youth Movement (NYM) in 1934, National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon (NCNC) in 1944, Action Group (AG) and Northern’s People’s Congress (NPC) which were formed between 1950 and 1951, etc. Political parties in the first republic had their issues that it faced during that period, some include:

* The political parties were without national outlook
* The political parties placed much emphasis on personalities
* Political parties in the first republic were polarized with intra- and inter-party conflicts.

Many political parties were formed after the first republic and were divided among the other republics:

**Second republic:** the political parties in the second republic were six in number which were allowed to participate in the general elections (five in 1979 elections and an extra one in the 1983 elections). They are: The National Party of Nigeria (NPN), The Nigerian’s People’s Party (NPP), The Great Nigeria People’s Party (GNPP), The People’s Redemption Party (PRP), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and Nigerian Advance Party (NAP)

**Third republic:** two political were registered in accordance with the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria by the military. The two political parties include: the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC).

**Fourth republic:** Three political parties were registered in preparation towards the fourth republic in 1998 for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to contest in the 1998 and 1999 general elections. They are: Alliance for Democracy (AD), People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and All People’s Party (APP) which later changed the name to All Nigeria People’s Party (ANPP) in 2002. Other political parties were formed in the course of the Fourth republic. Some include: Democratic People’s Party (DPP), All Progressive Congress (APC), etc.