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Chapter 7

Political parties are an important link between government and the people (Dickerson and Flanagan, 2002. the political party is an essential political agency. The political party crops up in all aspects of politics. Politicians developed the idea of political party at that time as a device to help themselves and like-minded friends get elected, but the party proved to have many other uses as well and went on to become a ubiquitous feature of modern politics ( shively, 2008) .The first modern electoral democracy was the united state of America , and it was here that the first parties developed.in Britain , 1867 was the first year in which there was a reasonably widespread extension of the votes. A political party is a group of officials or would-be officials who are linked with a sizable group of citizens into an organization, a chief object of this organization is to ensure that its official attain power or maintain power ( shively ,2008) . finally political party joins people together in a formally organized structure.

Characteristics of political party

-The major feature of political party is to capture governmental power through constitutional means

-Political parties always have a broad principles of public policy adopted by its organization, which is referred to as party ideology.

- political parties has party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning election.

Types of political parties

Elitist / cadre parties-

Mass parties

Ideological party

Broker party

Charismatic

Functions of political party

Political mobilization and recruitment

Conflict management and political integration

Provision of alternative government and policies

Electoral competition and governance

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and sentiments, and nationalist movements (ikelegbe , 2010).

Early political parties in 1920-1950, the Nigeria development (NNDP) was regarded as the first political party that was formed in Nigeria

According to ikelegbe, 2010, two major political parties emerged between 1950 and 1951.these were the action group(AG) and the northern people congress (NPC). Political parties in Nigeria were not without challenges before independences, the political parties were without national look etc