

**Name: Okechukwu Lucy Chinenye**

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**Assignment: Do a two-page review of chapter 7, “Political Parties in Nigeria”,  
In Salient issues in Government and Nigerian’s Politics.**

## **Political Parties in Nigeria.**

Political parties are an essential feature of politics in the modern age of mass participation and is also an important link between government and the people. This can be seen in liberal-democratic systems where they help to keep government accountable to public opinion. In the political process of a given political system, the party is an essential political agency. Political parties were first developed in the nineteenth century in response to the appearance of elections involving large number of voters. 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. The first Modern electoral democracy was the United States of America and it was here that the first parties developed. By the 1820s, there were well-organized parties and the Democratic party which can trace its roots back to that time is the oldest political party in the world. Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalist's movement in the 1920s.

There are as many definitions of political parties as the political thinkers. In all, 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 officials attain power or maintain power.

### **Characteristics of Political Parties;**

1. The Major or Central feature of political Party is to capture governmental power through constitutional means.
2. Political Parties always have a broad principle of public policy adopted by its organization, which referred to as party ideology.
3. Every Political Party must be national-minded.
4. Political Party should be an organized body because it can only derive strength from an effective organizational structure.
5. Political Parties has party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections.
6. Political Parties guided by party constitution direct the conduct of party officials and members within and outside government.

### **Types of Political Parties;**

Elitist/Cadre Parties; Mass Parties; Ideological Party; Broker Party; Charismatic or Personality Party.

### **Functions of Political Party;**

Political Mobilisation and Recruitment; Political Representation; Interest Aggregation; Political Stability; Conflict management and Political Integration; Organization of Government; Provision of Alternative Government and Policies; Electoral competition and governance; Goal formation.

### **Political Parties in Nigeria;**

Political Parties was developed in Nigeria due to the growth of the Nationalist Consciousness and Sentiments and Nationalist Movement. The precursors of political parties in Nigeria included Herbert Macaulay, H.O. Davis, Ernest Ikoli, Nnamdi Azikwe and Obafemi Awolowo. The fulcrum for the emergence of parties' formation in Nigeria was constitutional developed.

### **Early Political Parties 1920-1950;**

The first Political Party that was formed in Nigeria was the Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP). Herbert Macaulay was regarded as the father of Nigerian Nationalism led the NNDP. The Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) was formed in 1934 by a group of young Nigerians led by Ernest Ikoli, Samuel Akinsanya and Dr. J.C Vaughan. The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) was formed in 1944 and was later re-named the National Convention of Nigerian citizen in 1960. The party was also the major Nigerian party until 1950.

### **Political Parties in Nigeria: 1950-1966;**

Action Group (AG) and the Northern People's Congress (NPC) were two major political parties that emerged between 1950 and 1951. Action Group emerged from the Egbe Omo Oduduwa and had Obafemi Awolowo as its leader while NPC emerged from Jam'iyya Mutanein Arewa. The Nigerian multi-party system of the first republic gave rise to the emergence of many political parties.

### **Problems that confronted Pre-Independence Political Parties;**

The political parties were without national outlook; They placed much emphasis on personalities rather than issues; Presence of Intra-Party and Inter-Party Conflicts which polarizes the political parties thereby splitting them into factions; Political Party defection led to the collapse of political parties during the era.

### **Political Parties in the second Republic in Nigeria;**

53 Political associations sought to contest the 1979 general elections after the ban on politics was lifted in September 1978 for which 5 were registered by the Federal Electoral Commission. These were the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), The Nigerian People's Party (NPP), The Great Nigeria People (GNPP), The People's Redemption Party (PRP) and The Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). A sixth party, The Nigerian Advance Party (NAP) was registered to contest the 1983 elections.

### **Political Parties in the Third Republic Nigeria;**

General Ibrahim Babangida promulgated the transition to civil rule decree through which two political parties were registered in accordance with the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1989. The two parties, the Social Democratic Party with Chief Tony Anenih as its National Chairman and the National Republican Convention (NRC) with Chief Tom Ikimi as its National Chairman, were established by the government.

### **Political Parties in the Fourth Republic;**

Three Political parties were registered in preparation towards the Fourth Republic in 1998 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). These registered parties included; The Alliance for Democracy (AD), All People's Party (APP) which was changed to All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) in 2002 and the People's Democratic Party which won the presidential election in 1999 and maintained its stronghold on the presidency for sixteen years.

### **Challenges Facing Political Parties Nowadays;**

We have extreme high level of corruption; Forged coalition of the wealthy as a basis of their registration; Most party leaders see their political party as a means to further their business interests.