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**A TWO PAGE REVIEW ON CHAPTER SEVEN.**

**CHAPTER 7: POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA**.

Political parties are significant feature of politics in the modern era of mass participation. In liberal democracy, they help to keep government accountable to public opinion. Political parties can therefore be referred to as an important link between the government and the people (Dickerson and Flanagan, 2002). Politicians came up with the idea of political party at that time as a device to help themselves and their friends (with similar interest) to get elected. The first modern electoral democracy was the United States of America in the year 1820s there were well organized democratic parties. The first year in which there was widespread of votes in Britain was the year 1887.

There are various definition of political parties, from R.G Gettel definition to Herman Finer, Agbaje (1999), Burke (1975), Hughes (1972) etc. from the above definitions we can define political party collectively as a group of citizens, more or less organized, having some agreement in broad principle of national policy with an effort to capture political power by constitutional means.

There are many characteristics of political parties and here are some;

* Political party aims at capturing the governmental power through constitutional means.
* Political party has to be an organized body.
* Political party gives room for party ideology. Party ideology serve as a basis of classifying parties into leftist, rightist, liberal etc.

Types of political parties

There are five types of political party and they are;ss

* Elitist/ cadre parties: this is a political party that gets its members from the highest rank from the social hierarchy in a country. It consist of highly intellectual people such as; Doctors, lawyers, business tycoons etc.
* Mass parties: these are parties that get its membership from all sections of the society. It has a wide range of membership.
* Ideological parties: a political party formed with political ideology belief.
* Broker party: a political party where by members are drawn from both the upper and lower class of the society.
* Charismatic/ personality party: a political party formed or led by individual with charisma.

Political parties perform various functions and here are a few; political education, political mobilization and recruitment, organization of government, Goal formation, electoral competition and governance etc.

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA**.

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments, and nationalist movement (Ikelegbe, 2010). According to Ikelegbe, the following groups were organized against colonial misrule and they are; The National Congress of British West African territories formed in 1920, West African Student Union in 1925 and Lagos Youth Movement in 1934. The precursors of political parties in Nigeria were Herbert Macaulay, H.O Davies, Ernest Ikoli, Nnamdi Azikwe, Obafemi Awolowo etc.

The first political party that was formed in Nigeria was the Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) in 1923, which was introduced by Clifford constitution. The NNDP was led by Herbert Macaulay. In 1934, another party was formed, The Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) by a group of young leaders led by Ernest Ikoli, Samuel Akinsanya and Dr. J.C. Vaughan. The NYM party contested and won elections to the Nigerian Legislative Council in 1938. The National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon (NCNC) was formed in 1944 and was later re- named “The National Convection of Nigerian Citizens” in 1960, it was headed by Herbert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikwe.

There were two major political parties between the year 1950 and 1951, The Action Group (AG) and the Northern People’s Congress (NPC). The Action Group emerged from the Egbe Omo Oduduwa in 1950 and was inaugurated in April 1951. It was led by Obafemi Awolowo. The Northern People’s Congress (NPC) was formed from the Jam’iyya Mutanein Arewa in October 1951.

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIAN REPUBLIC**

The Nigerian multi-party system of the first republic gave rise to many political parties apart from the three major parties between 1950 and 1951, some of these parties are; Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU), United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) and the United National Independent Party(UNIP).

In the second republic, there were about 53 political association sought to contest the 1979 general election, five of the associations were registered by the Federal Electoral Commission. They are, The National Party of Nigeria (NPN), The Nigerian People’s Party (NPP), the Great Nigerian Peoples Party (GNPP), the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) and the Unity Party of Nigerian (UPN). Some of these parties emerged from the Action group and the NCNC.

In the third Republic, General Ibrahim Babangida promulgated the transition to civil rule decree through two political parties. The political parties are, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC). The registration of SDP was approved by the Armed forces Ruling Council with Chief Tony Anenih as its national chairman they won the annulled presidential elections of June 12, 1993. The NRC was registered through the consent of the Armed forces Ruling Council with Chief Tomi Ikimi as its national chairman.

During the fourth Republic, three political parties were registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The names of the party are; Alliance for Democracy (AD), All Peoples Party (APP) which changed to All Nigeria People’s Party (ANPP) in 2002 and the People Democratic Party (PDP). The AD gained power between 1999 and 2003 by winning the governorship election. The APP won 9 gubernatorial elections in the north- west and middle belt during the 1999 election and the PDP won the presidential elections in 1999 and retained it for sixteen years.

After the fourth Republic, there were over 50 political parties that registered under the INEC, some are, Action Democratic Party (ADP), All Progressives Congress (APC), Coalition for change (C4C), Zenith Labour Party (ZLP) etc.

Nigeria politics face a lot of challenges due to high level of corruption and politicians using the party for business interest. This is why parties are established as coalition of various factions of regional and economic rent-seekers.