

**NAME: EKONG EDIDIIONG
UDEME**

**COLLEGE: MEDICINE AND
HEALTH SCIENCES (MHS)**

**DEPARTMENT: MEDICINE AND
SURGERY (MBBS)**

MATRIC NO: 19/MHS01/147

COURSE: GOVERNMENT

COURSE CODE: GST 203

CHAPTER: CHAPTER 7

**TOPIC: POLITICAL PARTIES IN
NIGERIA**

A political party is an important link between government and the people. The political party crops up all aspects of politics. It is an invention that first developed in the nineteenth century in response to the appearance of elections involving large numbers 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 parties were developed in United State of America and 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. In Britain, 1867 was the first year in which there was a reasonably wide spread extension of the votes. However, there are many definitions of political party that have been made by different individuals. Some of them are: R.G Gettel defines political party as a group of citizens more or less organized, who act as a political unit and who by the use of political power aim at controlling the government and carrying out its general policies; Herman Finer defines political party as an organized body with voluntary membership, its concerted energy being employed in the pursuit of political power; Shively defines political party as a group of officials or would-be officials who are linked with a sizeable group of citizens into an organization, a chief object of this organization is to ensure that its officials attain power or maintain power. From the above opinions we infer that a political party is a group of citizens, more or less organized, having some agreement in broad principles of national policy with an effort to capture political power by some constitutional means.

Some of the characteristics of political parties are:

1. The major or central feature of political party is to capture governmental power through constitutional means.
2. Political parties always have broad principles of public policy adopted by its organization, which is referred to as party ideology.
3. Every political party must be national-minded, i.e in aims and functions, it must take into consideration the interest of the nation.
4. Political party should be an organized body, because it can only derive strength from an effective organizational structure. Such an organization is more necessary to establish rapport with the masses.
5. Political parties has party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections.
6. They are guided by part constitution which direct the conduct of party officials and members within and outside government.

There are five types of political parties; they are: i: Elitist/ Cadre Parties: It is a political party that draws its membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in a country. ii: Mass Parties: It is a political party that draws its membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership. iii: Ideological Party: It is a political party formed with political ideology or benefits which form the bases of the party. iv: Broker Party: It is a political party formed with its members drawn from upper and lower classes of the society. v: Charismatic or Personality Party: It is a political formed or led by the individuals with charisma. It revolves around the personal qualities of the leader.

Some of the functions of a political party include: political mobilization and recruitment, political education, political representation, interest aggregation, organization of government and many others. The political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalist movements. As follows:

Early Political Parties (1920-1950): Herbert Macaulay who was regarded as the father of Nigerian nationalism led the Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) which was regarded as the first political party that was formed in Nigeria. The elective principle introduced by Clifford constitution of 1922 gave rise to the formation of NNDP in 1923. It was based in Lagos and won all the three seats allocated to Lagos in the legislative council in the elections of 1923, 1928, 1933. The party was formed mainly by leaders and its political activities and campaigns were aided by a newspaper called Lagos Daily News launched in 1925. The Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) was formed in 1934 by a group of young Nigerians led by Dr. J.C. Vaughan. Promotion of Nigerian unity and national consciousness and the achievement of complete autonomy within the British Empire were among the objectives of the NYM in its charter published in 1938. The party contested and won elections to the Nigerian Legislative Council and Lagos Town Council in 1938. The National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon (NCNC) was formed in 1944. The party campaigned vigorously against the Richards constitution of 1946, between 1946 and 1948. The party was the major Nigerian party until 1950. Nnamdi Azikiwe became its president in 1946 after Herbert Macaulay's death.

Political Parties in Nigeria (1950-1966): The Action Group (AG) and the Northern People's Congress (NPC) were two major political parties that emerged between 1950 and 1951. These parties AG and NPC emerged from cultural associations, Egbe Omo Oduduwa (formed in 1945, as a pan Yoruba cultural society) and Jam'iyya Mutanein Arewa (formed in 1949) respectively because of the prospects of the 1951 elections. Following the Macpherson's constitution. The AG was started

as the political wing of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa in 1950. It was formally inaugurated in April, 1951. Its leader was Obafemi Awolowo, the general secretary of Egbe Omo Oduduwa. The main aim of the AG was to provide leadership to and capture political power in the western region. On the other hand, the Jam'iyya constituted itself into a political party, the NPC in October, 1951. The main purpose of the NPC was combating ignorance, idleness, injustice in the northern region and control of the government in the North. The Nigerian multi-party system of the first republic gave rise to the emergence of many political parties apart from the major parties. Some of the smaller parties include: Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU) formed in August, 1950, it was led by Late Mallam Aminu Kano and; United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) led by Late J.S. Tarka, founded in 1955.

Some of the problems that confronted Pre-Independence Political Parties are: The political parties were without national outlook; The political parties placed much emphasis on personalities rather than issues; Intra-party and inter-party conflicts in most cases polarized the political parties and thereby splitting them into factions; Political party deflection weakened or led to the collapse of political parties during this era.

Political Parties in The Second Republic In Nigeria: The ban on politics was lifted in September, 1978. Following that, about 53 political associations sought to contest the 1979 general elections. Five of these associations, were registered by the federal Electoral Commission. These were The National Party of Nigeria (NPN) The Nigeria People's Party (NPP), The Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP), the Peoples 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. The NPN's main goal was national unity, with the slogan "one nation, one destiny." Their major programmes were those of provision of food, shelter and qualitative education. In 1979, the party won gubernatorial elections in 7 states. The aims of the UPN were embodied in its four cardinal point programmes, which were free education at all levels, free health services for all citizens, full and gainful employment for all the able-bodied and integrated rural development. The party won gubernatorial elections in five states in 1979 and lost one of them in the 1983 election. The aim of NPP is to work towards full employment for all Nigerians and to promote economic, social and political equality of all sections of the country. The party won gubernatorial elections and controlled three states: Imo, Anambra and Plateau. The GNPP's major campaign programme and slogan was "politicians without bitterness." It controlled two states, Borno and Gongola, between 1979 and 1983.

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. Thus, for the first time, Nigeria had a constitutional two party system. The constitutions, objectives, policies and programmes of the two political parties were set up by the military government. The registration of SDP was approved by the Armed Forces Ruling Council with Chief Tony Anenih as its national chairman. It had its registered offices at the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja; all the state capitals, Abuja municipals and all Local government headquarters. The party's programmes, were a little to the left, in terms of favouring more public ownership and control of the economy. The National Republican Convention (NRC), on the other hand, was registered through the approval of the Armed Forces Ruling Council with Chief Tom Ikimi as its national chairman. The party had registered offices at the Federal Capital Territory every state capital and local government headquarters. The party's programmes favoured more private initiatives and more state regulations.

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) among several political associations that struggled for registration as political parties. The names of the registered parties are the Alliance for Democracy (AD), All Peoples Party (APP) which in 2002 changed its name to All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP). These parties are organized and administered at the ward, local government area, states, zonal and national levels and have registered offices at all levels. AD sponsored and contested elections throughout Nigeria during 1998 and 1999 general elections. It gained political power in six states of the south-west of the federation between 1999 and 2003 by winning the governorship elections. Also won several States Assembly seats and local government elections. The APP won nine (9) gubernatorial elections in the north-west and middle-belt zones during the 1999 elections. It won several State Assembly and National Assembly seats. The third party, PDP, has as its major aim maintaining and preserving the integrity, unity and sovereignty of Nigeria as one indivisible political entity. PDP won the presidential elections in 1999 and maintained its stronghold on the presidency for sixteen years. However, other political parties have been registered by INEC, some of them are; Action Democratic Party, All Progressives Congress (APC), All Grand Alliance Party (AGAP) and many others.