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**COURSE: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS (GST203)**

**LEVEL: 200**

**QUESTION: DO A TWO PAGE REVIEW OF CHAPTER 7, “POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA”**

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA**

Political parties are an important feature of politics in the modern age of mass participation. In democratic systems they help to keep the government accountable to public opinion. In an autocratic system, they help the government to maintain its hold on power. Political parties are an important link between the government and the people.

The first modern electoral democracy was in the United States of America, and it was here that the first parties were developed. By the 1820s there were well organized parties.

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalist movements in the 1920s.

There are as many definitions of political party as there are political thinkers. A political party performs so many tasks in the political process that it is difficult to establish a single definition.

“political party is 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” – R.G Gettel

“…an organized body with voluntary membership, its concerted energy being employed in the pursuit of Political Power” – Herman Finer

**CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICAL PARTY**

1. The major 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 is referred to as party ideology.
3. Every political party must be national minded

**TYPES OF POLITICAL PARTIES**

**Elitist/Cadre Parties**, **Mass Parties, Ideological Party, Broker party, Charismatic or Personality Party**

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA**

The fulcrum for the emergence of parties formation in Nigeria was constitutional development. The Clifford constitution of 1922 provided for 4 elective seats in the legislative council, the Richards constitution of 1946 retained the 4 seats and established regional assemblies. The macpherson constitution established regional executive councils and provided for a system of indirect elections to the much largely Nigerian Legislative Houses.

**EARLY POLITICAL PARTIES 1920-1950.**

The Nigerian National Development Party (1923), The Nigerian Youth Movement (1934), The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (1944) were the parties in this era.

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA 1950-1966**

Two major political parties emerged between 1950 and 1951. These were the Action Group (AG) and the Northern People’s Congress (NPC)

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

These parties are

NPN, UPN, NPP, GNPP

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE THIRD REPUBLIC**

For the first time Nigeria had a constitutional two party system. General Ibrahim Babangida promulgated the transition tho civil rule decree through which two political parties were registered, these parties were: SDP and NRC

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC**

Three political parties were registered in preparation towards the fourth republic in 1988 by the electoral committee (INEC). The names of the registered parties were the Alliance for Democracy (AD), All Peoples Party (APP) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).