***Name:OMETAN PRECIOUS EFE***

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***Department:PHARMACY***

***College:MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES***

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***POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA***

***Political parties* are an essential fearure of politics in the modern age of mass participation. In liberal democratic system they help to keep government accountable to public opinions. The political party crops up in all aspects of politics. There are so many definition of political party as the political thinkers. However, polical party ia a group of official or would-be officials who are linked with a sizable group of citizens in organization, a chief object of the organization is to ensure that its officials attain power or maintain power (shively, 2008).**

**Some characteristics of political party are: to capture governmental power through constitutional means,they always have a broad principles of public policy adopted by its organisation which is referred to as party ideology, they must be national-minded,they must be an organised body, they have pary manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after elections, they are guided by pray constitution. Political parties perform functions which are: political mobilization and recruitment,political education,political representation, interest ahggregation,political stability,conflict management and political integration,organisation of government,etc.**

***Elitist/Cadre party* is a type of political party that draws its membership from the highest echelon of social hierachy in a country. *Mass party* is a political party that draws its membership from sections of the society and have wide membership. *Ideological party* is a political part formed with political ideology or benefits which firm the bases of the part. *Broker party* is a political party formed with its members drawn from upper and lower classes of the society. *Charismatic or Personality party* is a political party formed or led by individuals with charisma.**

**Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of tge nationalist consciouness and sentiments, and nationalist movement (Ikelegbe 2010). According to Ikelegbe , nationalists agitators formed groups and associations to organise against colonial misrule. The Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) was regarded as the first political party that was formed in Nigeria. According to Iklegbe,2010 two major political parties emerged between 1950 and 1951. These were the Action Group (AG) and Northern People Congress (NPC). These parties emerged from cultural association because of the prospects of the 1951 elections folloeing the macpherson’s constitutions . Polical parties before independence in Nigeria were not without some challenges. Some are:the political parties were without national outlook, they were much emphasis on personalities rather than issues,intra-party and inter-party conflicts in must cases polarised the political parties and there by splitting thrm into factions,etc.**

**Since the inception of the fourth republic however,other political parties has been registered by INELSO, Nigeria now has the following parties:Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party (ANRP), Action Democratic Party (ADP),Action Peoples Party (APP), African Action Congress (AAC), Fresh Democratic Party (FRESH),Youth party (YP),etc.**