

NZEALU BALUCHUKU CHINWE

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Government and Politics

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CHAPTER 7: Political parties in Nigeria.

Introduction

Political parties was first developed in the nineteenth century in response to the appearance of elections involving large numbers. They were an important link between the government and the people.

A political party is a group of citizens, more or less organised, having some agreement in broad principles of national policy with an effort to capture political power by some constitutional means.

Characteristics of political parties

Political parties are mainly characterised by the capture of governmental power through constitutional means. Some other features include party manifestoes to guide their conduct during and after winning elections, party ideology, national mindedness, an effective organisational structure and a party constitution to direct the behaviours of party officials and members within and outside government.

Types of political parties include

- Elitist / cadre parties who draw their membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in a country.
- Mass parties who draw their membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership
- Ideological party formed with political ideology / benefits which forms the basis of the party
- Broker party who draw their membership from upper and lower



- Charismatic party formed by individuals with charisma.

Political parties play so many roles some of which include political education, political mobilisation and recruitment, organisation of government, political representation and so on.

Political parties in Nigeria.

The major support behind the uprise of parties formation was constitutional development. The first political party was formed in Nigeria in 1923; The Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) which was led by Herbert Macaulay.

Political parties before independence were confronted with many issues such as political parties were without national outlook, Political parties placed much more emphasis on personalities rather than issues and so on.

The present day Nigeria has many political parties which have been registered by INEC, some of which are Nigeria People's Congress (NPC), Peoples Coalition Party (PCP), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), All progressive Congress (APC), Youth party (YP), National Action Council (NAC) among others.

~~However~~ Nigeria's political parties face some challenges with the high level of corruption and more. Most parties are formed with their aim of pushing forward personal interests. There is need to arrest this trend to foster development of Nigeria as a country.