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**MATRIC NO: 19/LAW01/224**

**COURSE TITLE: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL INSTITUTION**

**COURSE CODE: GST 203**

**LEVEL: 200**

**Do a two-page review chapter 7, ‘political parties in Nigeria;’ In salient issues in Government and Nigeria’s politics.**

The aim of this chapter is to grasp the introduction of political parties and the origin. Political parties are an essential feature of politics in the modern age of mass participation. In liberal democratic systems, they help to keep government accountable to public opinion; even in autocratic systems of government, they help the government maintain its hold on power. In either case, political parties are an important link between government and the people. It is an invention that first developed in the nineteen century in response to the appearance of elections involving large numbers of voters. Politicians developed the idea of political party to help themselves and like-minded friends. The first modern electoral democracy was in the U.S before other countries followed suite.

However, there are many ideas of what political parties are and also definitions by political thinkers. According to R.G. Gettel; political party is a group of citizens more or less organized, who act as apolitical unit and who by the use of political power aim a controlling the government and carrying out its general policies. A political arty performs so many tasks in the political process that it is difficult to establish a single definition. According to Agbaje(1999), ‘a political party is a group of persons bonded in policy and opinion in support of a general political cause, which is essentially is the pursuit, capture, capture and retention, for as long as democratically feasible of government and its offices. There are many definitions of political parties. And finally a party joins people together in a formally organised structure.

Moreover, there are various characteristics of political parties which include;

1. Its major feature is the capturing of governmental powers through constitutional means.
2. It has a broad principle of public policy adopted by its agency
3. Every political party must be national minded in their aims and functions.
4. It should be an organized body, because it can only derive strength from effective organisational structure.
5. It should have party manifestoes which guide their conducts durind and after winning elections.

Although, there are also types of political parties in this discussion including Elitist/Cadre parties, it draws its membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy.

Mass parties, it draws its membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership.

Ideological party, it is formed with political ideology or benefits which form the bases of the party.

Broker party, it is formed with its members from upper and lower classes of the society.

And last but not the least charismatic or personality party, it is formed or led by people with charisma.

The functions of political parties are; **A**. Political mobilisation and recruitment **B**. political education **C**. political representation **D.** interest aggregation **E**. political stability **F**. Organisation of government

Furthermore, the political parties’ growth developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and sentiments, and nationalist movements. The National congress of British West Africa Territories was formed in 1920 and various others followed soon after. During the early period of 1920-1950 was when the earliest parties were formed, The Nigerian National Development party (NNDP) 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 led by Herbert Macaulay regarded as the father of Nigerian nationalism it was based in just Lagos state and it has no national colouration. Also the NYM formed in 1934 by Ernest Ikoli. The National council for Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) was formed in 1944, it was later renamed The National Convention of Nigerian Citizens. Its first secretary and president were Herbert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikiwe. There were other parties formed from 1950-1966 and the two major parties that emerged from 1950-1951 were the Action Group (AG) and the Northern Peoples Party (NPC).

There were various problems that confronted the Pre-independence political parties which are; it was without a national outlook, it had more emphasis on personalities rather than issues, there were many intra and inter party conflicts. And Political party defection weakened the political parties during this era. During the second republic the ban on politics was lifted in September, 1978, following that about 53 political associations sought to contest the 1979 general election. In the third republic General Ibrahim Babangida promulgated the transition to civil rule decree through political parties. The Political parties in the fourth republic were all registered in INEC Independent National Electoral Commission.