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POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

Political parties are an essential feature of politics in the mass participation. They are an important link between government and the people. The first modern electoral democracy was the united state of America and it was here the first parties developed.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION OF THE IDEA OF A POLITICAL PARTY

There are many definitions of the political parties as the political thinkers. From the different 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.

CHARACTERISTIC OF POLITICAL PARTY

Some of the major characteristics of political parties include:

1. The central feature is to capture governmental power through constitutional means.
2. Every political party must be national-minded.
3. Political party must be an organized body, because it can only derive strength from an effective organizational structure.
4. Political parties have party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections.

TYPES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

1. ELITIST/ CADRE PARTIES: these political parties draw its membership from highest election of social hierarchy in a country.
2. MASS PARTIES: These political parties draw its membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership.
3. IDEOLOGICAL PARTY: this is a political party formed with political ideology or benefits which form the bases of the party.
4. BROKER PARTY: this is a political party formed with its members drawn from upper and lower classes of society.
5. CHARISMATIC OR PERSONALITY PARTY: this is the political party formed or led by individuals with charisma.

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL PARTY

- Political mobilization and recruitments
- Political education
- Political representation
- Interest aggregation
- Political stability

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and nationalist movements. We have:

- i. Early Political parties 1920-1950: NNDP, NYM, NCNC
- ii. Political parties between 1950-1966: NPC, NEPU, UMBC, UNIP.
- iii. Political parties in the second republic
- iv. Political parties in the third republic.
- v. Political parties in the fifth republic.