NAME: JATTO SHAKEERAH OYIZA

MATRIC. NO.: 19/MHS01/217

DEPT: MBBS

LEVEL:200B

COURSE: GST 203, GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

ASSIGNMENT: 2 Page review on chapter 7 of salient issues in Government and Nigeria’s politics

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties are an essential feature of mass participation in the modern world which serve as an important link between the government and the people either in a democratic or autocratic system of government and are an important part of the political process as they appear in all aspects of politics. Political parties were first introduced in the nineteenth century as a result of the presence of elections involving large numbers of voters. At the time the concept of political parties was brought about by politicians as a means to help themselves and their friends get elected. The Democratic party of America is the oldest political party in the world with its roots tracing back to the 1820’s.

Political parties have been defined in various ways by various political thinkers. A political party is a group of officials or aspiring officials who are associated with a substantial group of citizens into an organization with its main objective being to ensure its officials obtain power or maintain power. A political party has many features, one being that a crucial factor of a political party is to attain power. Another being that every political party has a set of principles of public policy referred to as party ideology, a political party must also always regard the interest of the citizens, a political party must also be an organised body and have a party manifesto which governs their conduct during and after winning an election as well as a party constitution which governs the conduct of party officials and members within and outside the government.

There are five different types of political parties. The first type are the Elitist/Cadre parties which attracts its membership from the highest ranks of social hierarchy in a country. The second type are the Mass parties which attracts its membership from all parts of society and have a large membership. The type is the Ideological party which are developed with political ideology or benefits which set up the foundation of the party. The fourth type is the broker party which is develop with its membership being attracted from the upper and lower class of society whose main purpose is to resolve the opposing interests of the rich and poor. The last type is the charismatic or personality party, this type of party is formed and led by people with charisma and it reflects the personal qualities of the leader.

Political parties carry out numerous functions which include political mobilization and recruitment, Political education, Political representation, Interest aggregation, Political stability, Conflict management and political integration, Organisation of government, Provision of alternative government and policies, Electoral competition and governance and Goal formation.

Political parties in Nigeria came about following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalist’s movement, nationalist agitators formed groups and associations to oppose colonial misrule.

During the beginning of the formation of political parties there were three major ones formed between 1920-1950. The first political party formed in Nigeria was the Nigerian national development party (NNDP) formed in 1923 and was led by Herbert Macaulay who was referred to as the father of Nigerian nationalism. Then the Nigerian youth movement (NYM) was formed in 1934 and was led by Ernest Ikoli, Samuel Akinsanya and Dr. J. C. Vaughan. The national council of Nigeria and Cameroon(NCNC) was formed in 1944 but was later renamed the National Convention of Nigerian Citizen in 1960, its first president and general secretary were Herbert Macaulay an Nnamdi Azikiwe respectively and was the first political party to be organised to seek total independence for Nigeria.

Later two major political parties formed between 1950 and 1966 which surfaced from cultural associations. The Action Group(AG) developed from the Egbe Omo Oduduwa in 1950 and was led by Obafemi Awolowo with its main purpose being to provide leadership and gain political power in the western region. The Northern People’s Congress (NPC) developed from the Jam’iyya Mutanein Arewa in 1951 with its main aim being to combat ignorance, idleness, injustice in the northern region and control of government in the north. During this time smaller political parties also emerged mainly due to the disagreements that came up in the major parties. However, the pre-independence political parties faced several issues some of these issues being that the political parties were without national outlook, they also placed much emphasis on personalities rather than problems in the country, intra-party and inter-party conflicts in most cases polarised the political parties causing them to split into factions and the political party defection weakened or led to the collapse of political parties during this era.

During the second republic in Nigeria, five out of 53 political associations formed in September 1978 were registered by the federal electoral commission to contest in the 1979 general elections after the ban was lifted a year before. These associations were The National Party of Nigeria(NPN), The Nigerian Peoples Party(NPP), The Great Nigerian Peoples Party, The Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) and The Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). The National party of Nigeria(NPN) officially launched in 1978 and consisted of social clubs, tribal unions, and associations, committee of friends, former NPC leaders and ex-public officials with its main aim being national unity and provision of shelter, food and qualitative education, they won the presidential election in 1979 and ruled for 4 years and three months. The Unity Party of Nigeria was a faction of Action Group and its main goals were free education at all levels, free health care for all citizens, full and gainful employment for all the able bodied and integrated rural areas. The Nigerian Peoples Party was gotten from the NCNC and its purpose was to work towards full employment of all Nigerians and to promote economic, social and political equality of all sections of the country. The Great Nigerian Peoples Party(GNPP) was led by Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim and controlled Borno and Gongola between 1979 and 1983, its slogan was “politicians without bitterness.”

In the third republic of Nigeria, Nigeria had a constitutional two party system when general Ibrahim Babangida declared the shift to civil rule decree through which two political parties were registered according to the constitution in 1989. The two parties were the Social Democratic Party(SDP) and The National Republican convention(NRC). The SDP was approved by the armed forces ruling with chief Tony Anenih as its national chairman, it favoured more public ownership and control of the economy while the NRC was approved by the armed forces ruling with chief Tom Ikimi as its national chairman, it favoured more private initiatives and more state regulations and paid less attention to free education and other social welfare policies.

In the fourth republic of Nigeria three parties were registered by the Independent national electoral commission(INEC) in 1998. They were, The Alliance for Democracy(AD), All Peoples Party(APP) and The People’s Democratic Party(PDP). Since the beginning of the fourth republic other political parties have been registered by INEC and as of now Nigeria has over 80 political parties.

The political parties in Nigeria presently, have an excessively high level of corruption as most political leaders use their political parties as an opportunity to further their business interest. This needs to change as political parties should instead be aimed at promoting unity among Nigerians as well as inducing development in Nigeria.