**NAME:** Onuchukwu Precious Mmesoma

**MATRIC NO**: 19/law01/220

**DEPARTMENT**: Law

**CHAPTER 7**

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA**

By definition, according to R.G. Gettel, “political party is a group of citizens more or less organized, who act as a political unit and who by the use of political power aim at controlling the government and carrying out its general policies”.

Political parties are essential features of politics in the modern age of mass participation. In the liberal democratic systems, they help to keep governments accountable to public opinion; even in autocratic system of government, they help the government maintain its hold on power. Political parties are an important link between the government and the people.

Political party was developed by politicians at that time has a device to help themselves and like-minded friends get elected, but the party proved to have many other uses as well and went on to become a ubiquitous feature of modern politics. The first modern electoral democracy was at United States of America, and it was here that the first partied developed.

A political party is a group of officials or would-be officials who are linked with a sizable group of citizens into an organization; a chief object of this organization is to ensure that its officials attain power or maintain power. The following are some of the characteristics of political party:

* Political parties always have a broad principle of public policy adopted by its organization, which is referred to as party ideology.
* Political parties have party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections.
* Political parties are guided by party commission which directs the conduct of party officials and the members within the outside government.
* The major feature or central of political party is to capture governmental power through constitutional means.

**Types of political parties**

* **Elitist/Cadre parties:** This is a political party that draws its membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in a country
* **Ideological party:** This is a political party formed with political ideology or benefits which form bases of the party.
* **Mass parties:** This is political parties that draws its membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership
* **Broker party:** This is political party formed with its members drawn from upper and lower classes of the society.
* **Charismatic or personality party:** This is a political party formed or led by individuals with charisma. It revolves around the personal qualities of the leader.

**Functions of political party**

The following are some of the functions of political parties:

* Political education
* Political mobilization and recruitment
* Political stability
* Political representation
* Goal formation
* Electoral competition and governance.