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**Assignment 1**

**Chapter 7: Political Parties in Nigeria**

Political parties are an essential feature of politics because it is an important link between the people and the government. Political parties in liberal-democratic and autocratic systems respectively play important roles in each of the system’s politics. Political parties was first developed in the nineteenth century in response to the appearance of elections involving large numbers of voters. The first parties developed in the first modern electoral democracy in the United State of America, by the 1820s, there were well-organised parties. As time moved by Britain and other countries around Europe started their various political parties.

A political party performs so many task in the political process that it is difficult to establish a single definition. There have been different definitions by political thinkers, 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” and also from Dowse and Hughes who see political parties as “associations formally organised with the explicit and declare purpose of acquiring and maintaining legal control, either singly or in coalition with other similar associations, over the personnel and the policy of the government of an actual or prospective state.” Various definitions has been made as years have gone by but from the various definition created, it was inferred that 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 have various characteristics which defines there features in a political system. These are; Firstly, the major or central feature of political party is to capture governmental power through constitutional means, but capturing power by some violent or unlawful means cannot be allowed in the arena of political parties, the means of capturing such powers must also be peaceful and lawful. Secondly, every political party must be national-minded, i.e. in aims and functions, it must take into consideration the interest of the nation, a party which falls short of national character and represents only a sectarian outlook cannot be a political party. Thirdly, they have party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections.

**Kinds of Political Parties**

1. Elitist/Cadre Parties: This is a political party that draws up participation from the most elevated echelon of social progressive system in a country.

2. Mass Parties: This is a political party that draws its participation from all areas of the general public and have wide enrollment.

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 the society.

**Functions of political parties**

Political parties perform a lot of functions, some of which includes : political mobilization, political education, political representation, interest aggregation and many others.

**Political parties in Nigeria**

Political parties in Nigeria were created following the development of the patriot awareness and assessments, and patriot developments (Ikelegbe, 2010).

According to Ikelegbe, nationalist agitators shaped gatherings and associations to go against provincial mismanagement. Along these lines for this reason, The National Congress of British West Africa Territories was shaped in 1920, the West African Students Union in 1925 and the Lagos Youth Movement in1934. Herbert Macaulay, H.O. Davies, Ernest Ikoli, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo and others were antecedents of political parties in Nigeria, where in the cutting edge of political exercises and gathering development during the 1920s and from that point.

The support for the rise of gatherings arrangement in Nigeria was sacred turn of events. The Clifford Constitution of 1922 gave four elective seats in its administrative gathering, while the Richards constitution of 1946 held four elective seats and set up territorial congregations. The Macpherson's constitution set up local chief committees, and accommodated an arrangement of roundabout decisions to the much generally Nigerian Legislative houses.