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 REVIEW OF CHAPTER 7

*Political parties in Nigeria*

Political parties are an essential feature of politics in the modern age of mass participation. In politics, a political party is an organized group of people who have the same ideology, or who otherwise have the same political positions, and who field candidates for elections, in an attempt to get them elected and thereby implement their agenda. Political parties are a defining element of representative democracy. Political parties are an important link between the government and the people (Dickerson and Flanagan, 2002).

Political parties have different characteristics like;they always have a broad of principles of public policy adopted by its organisation, which is referred to as party ideology. The party ideology also serves as the basis for classifying parties as either liberal, communist, labour etc; Political party should be an organised body, because it can only derive strength from an effective organisation is more necessary to establish rapport with the masses; political parties has party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections; Political parties are guided by party constitution which direct the conduct of party officials and members within and outside government.

Types of political parties include the elitist/cadre parties which draws it's membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in a country. The mass parties which draws it's membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership. Ideological party which is formed with political ideology or benefits which form the bases of the party. Broker party is formed with it's members drawn from upper and lower classes of the society. Charismatic or Personality party is a political party formed or led by individuals with charisma.

Political parties perform a number of functions such as political mobilisation and recruitment,political education, political representation,interest aggregation, political stability, conflict management and political integration, organisation of government, provision of alternative government and policies, goal formation and electoral competition and governance.

As we all know, Nigeria became an independent federation in 1960. Before that time, in 1959, three sets of political parties were formed - the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC) and the Northern People’s Congress (NPC). In addition to these, the Action Group was created too.

The newly formed political parties were led by Nnamdi Azikiwe, Ahmadu Bello and Obafemi Awolowo respectively. The time of election came by, and no political party was able to win the majority. The NPC and the NCNC decided to form the national government which led to choosing Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the Prime Minister and Nnamdi Azikiwe as the Governor-General.

The political parties in Nigeria have changed a number of times during the last fifty years. There were different sets of said parties, and all of them have made a huge impact on the history of the country itself. They are a big part of the political history of Nigeria, and it is necessary to talk about them.

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Three years later, Nigeria became a republic, and Nnamdi Azikiwe became the president of Nigeria with Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister. Also, in the same year, the Census was conducted. It led to the split between National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons and the Northern People’s Congress.

The splitting resulted in a lot of different consequences. The NCNC decided to join a faction of the AG and formed a new political party - the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). It was led by Obafemi Awolowo. The other part of the split group, the NPC, joined the remaining faction of the AG and thus created a new party called the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP).

Some political parties in the first republic(1960-1966) are: Action group (AG),Borno youth movement (BYM), Dynamic party (DP), Niger Delta congress (NDC), Republican party (RP). Some political parties in the second republic (1979-1983) are: Greater Nigerian People's party (GNPP), National party of Nigeria (NPN), Nigeria Advance party (NAP), Nigerian People's party (NPP), People's Redemption party (PRP). Political parties in the third republic are: National republican convention (NRC) and Social Democratic party (SDP. Some political parties in the fourth republic (1999-present) are: All People's Party (APP),Alliance for Democracy (AD),All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP),Action Alliance (AA),All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA),Labour Party (LP), All progressives congress (APC), People's Democratic party (PDP).