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ASSIGNMEMT

Do a two page review of chapter 7, political parties in Nigeria in salient issues in government and Nigeria’s politics

Political parties in Nigeria

There are as many definitions of political parties as the political thinkers. A political party is a group of officials or would be officials who are linked with a sizeable group of citizens into an organisation; a chief object of this organisation is to ensure that its officials attain power or maintain power. Finally a party joins people together in a formally organised structure. From the above opinions, we infer 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. Some of the characteristics of political parties:

The major feature of political party is to capture governmental power through constitutional means. The means of capturing such power must also be peaceful and lawful. Political party always have a broad principles of public policy adopted by its organisations which is referred to as party ideology. Every political party must be national minded in aims and functions it must take into consideration the interests of the nation. A party which falls short of national character and represents only a sectarian outlook cannot be a political . Political parties should be an organized body, because it can only derive strength from an effective organisational structure. Such an organisation is more necessary to establish rapport with the masses. Political parties has party manifestos which guide their conduct during and after winning elections. Political parties are guided by party constitutions which direct the conduct of party officials and members within and outside government.

Types of political parties include;

Elitist/cadre parties: this is a political party that draws its membership from the highest echelons of social hierarchy in a country.

Mass parties: this political party draws its membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership. Mass parties takes such names as political party labour party workers party etc

Ideological party: This is a political party formed with political ideology or benefits which form the bases of the party

Broker party: This is the political party formed with its members drawn from upper and lower classes of the society. The basic aim of this type of political party is to reconcile the conflicting interests of the rich and the poor by carrying out policies of social justice for the interests of all.

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

1. Political education

2. Political representation

3. Political stability

4. Political mobilization and recruitment

5. Interest aggregation

6. Organisation of government

7. Provision of alternative government and policies

8. Electoral competition and governance

9. Conflict management

10. Goal formation.

Political parties in Nigeria: political parties were developed in Nigeria following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalist movement. Nationalist according to ikelegbe formed groups and associations to organise against colonial misrule.

As things stands now, Nigeria political parties face some challenges first, there is an extremely high level of corruption which has made political a competitive business. Second, the regulatory framework for the establishment of parties should be changed so that new parties do nothave to forge coalitions of the wealthy as a basis for their registration. Moreover, the aim or political project of most Nigerian parties has been the development of a national system for sharing out "the national cake" as a system of patronage. This is why the parties are established as coalitions of various fractions of regional and economic rent-seekers. Most party leaders see their political party activity as a means to further their business interests. There's need to arrest this trend and make political parties to be directed to fostering cohesion among Nigerians and engineering the development of the Nigeria.