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**PHARMACY**

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 **REVIEW OF CHAPTER 8, ‘CITIZENS ROLES IN A DEMOCRACY’. IN SALIENT ISSUES IN GOVERNMENT AND NIGERIA’S POLITICS**

Sovereignty resides in and flows from the people in a democracy. They have a collective right to choose their government, political and electoral systems as part of self-determination. The authority of the government likewise derives from the will of the people in their choice of these systems and the people have a right to take part in their government, including through genuine elections to determine who will legitimately occupy governmental offices. These precepts embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights captures the foundation for the famous formulation that democratic government is ‘of the people, by the people and for the people’. There is no democracy without the engagement of the citizens. Engagement is thus both a right and responsibility of citizens in establishing, developing and sustaining democracy. For democracy to deliver, citizens must become informed about issues that can improve their lives. Barriers to citizen participation are multiple in every country. They are both subtle and obvious, small and formidable, and based on numerous factors.

The term ‘Citizen’ has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and the government. Citizens have a set of rights and responsibilities including the right to participate in decisions that affect public welfare. Citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or by naturalisation. A man becomes a citizen of a particular state if his parents are citizens of that state or if he is born within the territory of that state. The process by which an individual may voluntarily change his/her citizenship of a state to another state is known as naturalisation. Citizenship can be perceived to be made up of, or divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship. Civil citizenship refers to the rights necessary to protect individual liberty (e.g. freedom of speech, justice), political citizenship is associated with participation in the democratic exercise of political power, either as a member of a political community (e.g. a voter) or as an individual elected by the members of such a community (e.g. a politician) and social citizenship embodies the claim that citizens ought to have access to those resources that allow them to live a civilized existence in accordance with the standards prevailing in society.

However, citizenship means different things to different people but whichever ways one looks at the concept, citizenship is a privilege status conferred by states on its people either by birth or naturalisation.

A right may be defined as a privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or a group. When a privilege is expressed within the framework of the constitution of the state, it becomes a civil right.

Democracy according to Abraham Lincoln is a government of the people, by the people and for the people. Since there is no single definition of democracy, a few features can be deduced from the various definitions of democracy; the fundamental rights of the citizens are guaranteed, independent and impartial judiciary, existence of rule of law, freedom of press and periodic election that is free and fair.

While the state provides rights and liberties, all citizens have duties to the state. Citizens should participate in every event in democracy with full enthusiasm to ensure the survival of democracy. One way of doing this is through citizens ensuring that rules are accountable. Citizens also have the duty in a democracy of ensuring their rights are preserved by challenging the government when it errs. Besides the rights, citizens must be critical of what the government does. A positive attitude should be maintained with development of state being the priority. Citizens are therefore expected to perform the following responsibilities in a democracy:

1. A citizen in a democracy should have the duty to vote as there is no point in democracy in which we do not participate.

 2. A citizen should be willing to pay taxes, since without taxes to fund a democratic government, there would be no democracy.

 3. A good citizen must have a duty to obey the law as democracy cannot exist in a lawless society.