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Government Assignment

Citizens Roles In A Democracy.

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.

These precepts are embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in modern constitutions the world over. For democracy to deliver, citizens must become informed about issues that can improve their lives. A symbiotic relationship exists between democracy, the citizens and state's development to the effect that citizen's government, made by the citizens for the citizenry, is called democracy and it is the involvement or active participations of the people in governance that brings about development.

The term citizen has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and government. They 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. Citizenship can be perceived to be made up of, or be divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship. However, citizenship does not have just one definition, it means different things to different people.

Individual's rights and liberties are the groundwork of the state since it exists to enable men to live and develop fully. Right entails some duties and responsibilities on the part of every citizen. A right may therefore 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. Important civil rights include right to life, the right to work, right to freedom of religion among others.

Abraham Lincoln, former American President, perceived democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. According to him, democracy is a government of the people when it is designed to represent the common will of the citizenry within a state and that it is a government by the people when its ideological underpinnings is grounded in the people's culture, also it is a government which is for the people when the power employed by the operations of state business emanates from, and resides in the collective mandate of the people.

The following ^{features} are deductions from various meanings of democracy. They are:

- i. The fundamental rights of the citizens is guaranteed
- ii. Independent and impartial judiciary
- iii. Existence of rule of law
- iv. Freedom of press
- v. Periodic election that is free and fair

While the state provides rights and liberties, all citizens have duties to the state. Citizens are therefore expected to perform the following responsibilities in a democracy:

1. A citizen should have the duty to vote.
2. A good citizen must have a duty to obey the law.
3. A good citizen must refrain from interference with the rights of other members of the community.
4. A citizen should be willing to pay taxes.
5. A good citizen must refrain from uttering destructive criticisms but must be prepared to offer constructive alternatives to government policies.