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**CHAPTER 8(CITIZENS ROLES IN A DEMOCRACY.)**

Sovereignty resides in and flows from the people in a democracy as the authority of the government is derived from the will of the people’s choice in these kinds of systems and the people also have the power to determine who’ll legitimately occupy governmental offices. There’s no democracy without the engagement of citizens and for this to be achieved, the citizens must become informed about issues that can improve their lives by getting accurate and timely information especially government-held information, they should be able to express their views and preferences and the government should work to see how they respond to these views. As citizens, important things should be known to help eliminate barriers that may exist such as; Understanding ideas about citizenship. Politics and government.

A citizen is someone who has a certain type of relationship with the government and also has a set of rights and responsibilities, including the rights to participate in decisions that affect public welfare. Citizenship itself may be acquired either by birth or naturalization. By birth, man becomes a citizen if his parents are citizens of the state or he is born within the territory of that state. By naturalization, is when an individual decides to change his/her citizenship of a state to another state and the condition(s) of changing may vary from country to country.

Citizenship is 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., voter) or as an individual elected by members of such a community(e.g., 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 standards prevailing in society. However, different people have different views of citizenship as it doesn’t limit itself to one definition. For example, Brannan *et. Al.* (2006:55) says citizenship is about being willing to contribute to social action as well as to political debate, to be willing to get involved. Glover(2004:18) says it has three dimensions: ethical citizenship, integrative citizenship and educative citizenship. Ethical citizenship understands active participation in a collective strive towards the public good as an essential feature of citizenship. Integrative citizenship believes that every individual plays an assortment of roles, and that this form of citizenship enables the individual to integrate their various roles, and to immerse themselves into the community, hence causing to have a greater appreciation of the collective. Educative citizenship according to Dagger(1997) refers to the process that develops a moral, practical and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship.

Individual’s rights and liberties are the groundwork of the state since it exists to enable men to live and develop fully. In order to let the citizen, have a share in the running of his/her government, rights are essential although these rights may not be absolute due to limitations and basically rights may be defined as privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or group. If these rights are invaded by another citizen or the government, individual should be able to seek redress in court of law. Some of these rights include; Freedom of speech, right to freedom of religion, right to life, right to work amongst others. Democracy derived from the Greek word “demos” meaning “people” and “kratos” meaning “rule” meaning “ rule by the people”. It’s defined as the system of government by the people, of the people and for the people and is also considered the best form of government in modern era as it lets citizens to exercise and enjoy their rights. Democracy has some features which are; 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. As citizens, there are responsibilities to be performed to boost democracy and they are; citizens should vote, citizens should be willing to pay taxes, citizens must have a duty to obey the law, citizens must refrain from uttering destructive criticisms but must be prepared to offer constructive alternative to government policies, citizens must refrain from interference with the rights of other members of the community amongst others.