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**MATRIC NUMBER; 19/LAW01/125**

**DEPARTMENT; LAW**

**COURSE; GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL INSTITUTION (GST 203)**

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**Assignment**

**Do a two page review of Chapter 8, Citizens Role in a Democracy, In**

**Salient issues in Government and Nigeria’s Politics**

**CITIZENS ROLE IN A DEMOCRACY**

Introduction

For democracy to deliver, citizens must become informed about issues that can improve their lives. They must be free to come together to express their views and preferences and work to see that government responds to citizens views. The barriers to citizen participation are multiple in every country. They need knowledge to make decisions about policy, choices and the proper use of authority.

The term citizen/citizenship has a political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and government. Citizens have a set of rights and responsibilities, including the right to participate in decisions that affect public welfare.

Furthermore, citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or by naturalization. It can be perceived to be made up of, or be divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship.

It has been etymology established that the word democracy is derived from the Greek ‘*demos* meaning people and *kratos* meaning rule by the people’. According to Abraham Lincoln, he perceived democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. There have been no definite perception as to how democracy can be defined but there exceptions that can be deduced from its meaning with the following features;

* The fundamental rights of the citizens is guaranteed
* Independent and impartial judiciary
* Existence of rule of law
* Freedom of press

The duties/responsibilities of citizens in a Democracy

* The duty to vote
* A citizen should be willing to pay tax
* The duty to obey the law

In conclusion, democracy is a system of government where the citizens directly elect the government by voting. Citizens play an important role in democracy. There would be no democracy without the co-operation and commitment of citizens. Citizens must be aware of their rights and responsibilities as without the awareness among the citizens. Citizens must also not lose sight of pursuit of public interest.