

Obi Obimtechukwu Princewill

MBBS

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GOVERNMENT CHAPTER 8: "Citizens Roles

in a Democracy".

Citizen (citizenship)

The term citizen has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and government.

Chapter III, section 25:1(a) of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria define citizenship as:

- a Every person born in Nigeria before the date of independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belongs or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria, provided that a person shall not become a citizen of Nigeria by virtue of this section if neither of his parents nor any of his grandparents was born in Nigeria.
- b Every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria; and
- c Every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria.

Citizenship is divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship, and social citizenship.

- Citizens' Rights

Right is a privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or a group.

Democracy

It has been etymologically established that the word democracy is derived from the Greek word "demos" meaning people and "kratos" meaning rule, that is "rule by the people". Abraham Lincoln, former American President, defined democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Features deduced from the various definitions of democracy

1. 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

Duties and Responsibilities of Citizens in a Democracy

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.

- a A citizen in a democracy should have the duty to vote.
- b A citizen should be willing to pay taxes, since without taxes to fund a democratic government, there would be no democracy.
- c A good citizen must have a duty to obey the law.
- d A good citizen must refrain from uttering destructive criticisms but must be prepared to offer constructive alternatives to government policies. He should not stir up racial or class division within the state which may lead to bloodshed or chaos.
- e A good citizen must refrain from interference with the rights of other members of the community. He must not interfere with the properties of other persons. He should be honest, just in his personal dealings and hard working. Citizens must make their contributions to the advancement of the nation. He must make their contributions to the
- f He/she must support public education in every way possible, through the payment of taxes, through local volunteer efforts, through according this system the respect to which it should be entitled. Public education is the foundation of democracy, meant to educate children to be responsible and knowledgeable participants in the democratic process.