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ASSIGNMENT

CITIZENS ROLE IN DEMOCRACY

People in a democracy have a collective right to choose their governmental, political and electoral systems as part of self-determination. The government belongs to the people; governmental processes belong to the people; and elections belong to the people.

For democracy to deliver, citizens must become informed about issues that can improve their lives. That is why transparency of both the citizen and government is a necessity for democracy. For full citizenship participation, both the subtle and obvious, small and formidable barriers must be removed.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

CITIZEN/CITIZENSHIP: the term citizen has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and government. Citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or by naturalization. Citizenship can be divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship.

1. Civil citizenship: refers to the rights necessary to protect individual liberty e.g. freedom of speech
2. Political citizenship: associated with participation in the democratic exercise of political power, either as a member of a political community or as an individual elected by the members of such a community.
3. 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.

Citizenships have different definitions to different people. For example, Glover (2004:18) who argues that there are three dimensions of active citizenship:

- Ethical citizenship: understands active participation in a collective strive towards the public good as an essential feature of citizenship.
- Integrative citizenship: the concept involves the belief 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 them to have a greater appreciation of the collective.
- Educative citizenship: refers to the process that develops a moral, practical and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship.

Kenny, a community developer differentiates passive from active citizenship; the former refers to the rights and duties given from the state and hence based on notions of social justice. While active citizenship ensures full citizenship, people being empowered to participate in the continual process of shaping their society and communities and their identities.

CITIZENS' RIGHT- These rights are not absolute since they are limited by the rights of other citizens in the state. Rights also entails some duties and responsible on the citizens' part. Important civil rights accorded to Nigerian citizens in its constitution include: right to life, freedom of speech e.t.c.

DEMOCRACY- since there is no single definition of democracy; the following features are deduced from the various definition of democracy:

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

They are various duties and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.