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***COURSE CODE: GST 203***

2nd ASSIGNMENT

**CITIZEN’S ROLE IN A DEMOCRACY**

**Democracy** is a system of government where the citizens directly elect the government by voting. It can also be said to be a system of government by the people, of the people and for the people.

Gotten from the Greek word **‘demos’** meaning people and **‘kratos’** meaning rule, that is ‘rule by the people’

It is considered as the best form of government because it allows citizens to exercise and enjoy many rights and it gives them responsibilities at the same time.

**A Citizen** is a person that has a set of rights and responsibilities including the right to participate in decisions that affect public welfare. To be a citizen means to enjoy certain liberties and rights as opposed to the slaves who could not enjoy them.

**Citizenship** is a state of being a citizen of a particular country; it can be acquired by birth or by naturalization.

According to the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, citizenship is ;

* Every person born in Nigeria before the date of independence, either whose parents or any of whose grandparents belong or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria.
* Every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria.
* Every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria.
1. There are so many definitions of citizenship but in general it can be said to be a privilege status conferred by states on its people either by birth or by naturalization.

**Citizen’s rights** are privileges conferred by law upon a person or group. If the civil rights of a citizen are invaded by another citizen or the government, he or she can seek redress in the court of law.

The Nigerian civil rights include; Right to life, Right to work, Right to freedom of religion, Right to education, Right to freedom of speech, writing and publication among others, Right of association.

**Features derived from the definition of democracy**

1. The fundamental rights of the citizen is guaranteed
2. Independent and impartial judiciary
3. Existence of rule of law
4. Freedom of press
5. Periodic election that is free and fair

**Duties and responsibilities of citizens in a Democracy**

1. A citizen in democracy should have the duty to vote.
2. A citizen should be willing to pay taxes since without taxes to fund a democratic government, there would be no democracy.
3. A good citizen must have the duty to obey the law.
4. A good citizen must refrain from uttering destructive criticisms.
5. A good citizen must refrain from interference with the rights of other members of the community.