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MATRICULATION NUMBER:19/MHS01/107

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COURSE: GST 203

ASSIGNMENT: Summarize chapter 8(Citizens Role In a Democracy) of Salient Issues in Government and Nigeria's Politics.

Introduction.

In a democracy, the people are sovereign and hence there cannot be a democracy without the engagement of citizens. For a democracy to perform all its functions, citizens must be aware of issues that can improve their lives and must be free to gather and express their views. Transparency is vital in a democracy so that the citizens can take well-informed decisions. A mutualistic relationship exists in a democracy as the citizens and the government need to be active for development in a state to occur.

Conceptual Clarifications.

The essence of a state is to provide opportunities to enable citizens to lead the good life. According to Turner, citizenship is a formal legal identity that the individual person inherits through a collection of legal rights and obligations. Naturalisation is the process by which an individual may voluntarily change his or her citizenship of a state to another state and the conditions for naturalisation vary from state to state. Civil citizenship refers to the rights necessary to protect individual liberty while political citizenship is associated with participation in the democratic exercise of political power either as a member of a political community or an individual elected by members of such a community and social citizenship embodies the claim that citizens ought to have access to those resources that allow them to live a civilised existence in accordance with prevailing standards in society. Citizenship is also about being willing to contribute to social action as well as to political debate. Ethical citizenship, a dimension of active citizenship among with integrative and educative, understands active participation in a collective strife towards the public good. Integrative citizenship involves the belief that every individual should fully embody these rules and

immerse themselves into the community. Educative citizenship is the process that develops a moral, practical and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship. To ensure full citizenship, people must be empowered to participate in the continual process of shaping their society and their identities.

Citizens' Rights and Democracy.

A right can be defined as a privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or a group and when a privilege is expressed within the framework of the constitution of the state, it becomes a civil right. A citizen is entitled to seek redress in a court of law when his or her rights are violated and has many rights which include the right of life, the right to work amongst others. The concept of democracy originated from Ancient Greece although it was limited as it excluded those of the lower social class. Abraham Lincoln perceived democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. The states and countries where the arrangements, constitutions and practices and the workings of the government are such that the individuals and their rights are ensured are referred to as democracies. The state can be said to exist to serve the individual and provide conditions which make for a full life. Some features of democracy include: freedom of press, existence of rule of law, free and fair periodic election, etc.

Duties and Responsibilities of Citizens In A Democracy.

For a democracy to succeed, citizens must be active not passive because they are aware that the success or failure of the government is their responsibility and no one else's. Citizens in a democracy should have the duty to vote as there is no point in a democracy in which we do not participate. Citizens should be willing to pay taxes as taxes are needed to fund a democratic government and enable the government provide for it's citizens. Good citizens have a duty to obey the law and aid the law enforcement officers if need be. Good citizens must stay away from giving destructive criticisms which do not help in building up the state. Citizens must also stay away from interfering with the rights and properties of other citizens.

Conclusion

There would be no democracy without the co-operation and commitment of citizens. All rulers must also be held accountable in order to ensure the survival of democracy. All citizens should treat other citizens with respect and always have the development of the state as their priority.