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19/MHS02/099

NURSING

MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

CITIZEN ROLES IN A DEMOCRACY

Citizen govern by democracy have the right to choose their governmental, political and electoral system. The authority of government derives from the will of the people in their choice of these systems, and the people have a right to take part in their government, including through genuine elections to determine who will legitimately occupy governmental offices. There is no democracy without the engagement of citizen thus engagement is a responsibility of citizen. For democracy to be deliver, citizen must become informed about their issues that can improve their life. They need to learn from those who compete in politics and how politicians intend to employ that information for the goof of the land. To achieve full citizenship, barriers such as age, gender, race and ethnicity need to be removed.

**Conceptual clarification on citizen and citizenship**

Citizen has a political meaning that implies certain relationship between the people and government. They have set of rights and responsibilities towards the country. Therefore citizen according to the ancient Rome are people who have the ability to enjoy certain liberties and right unlike slaves. Citizenship could be acquired by birth or by naturalization: I). citizenship by birth could be acquired if his/her are citizen of that states or if he/she is born from that state. II). Citizenship by naturalization can be acquired when an individual voluntary change his/her citizenship. Citizenship is divided into; Civil citizenship, political citizenship, social citizenship.

CIVIL CITIZENSHIP: This refers to the rights necessary to protect individual liberty, e.g. human rights such as freedom of speech, justice etc.

POLITICAL CITIZENSHIP: This is associated with participation in the democratic exercise of political power, either as a member of a political community (e.g. a voter) or as an individual elected by the members of such a community (e.g. politician). And lastly

SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP: This 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.

**Conceptual clarification of citizen right**

All citizens of a country are eligible to fundamental human rights. This rights exists to enable men to live and develop fully. Right maybe defined as a privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or a group. When privilege is expressed within the framework of constitution of the state, it becomes civil right. Important civil right includes: right to life, right to freedom of religion, right to education, freedom of speech e.t.c

**Conceptual clarification on democracy**

The word democracy is derived from Greek word “demos meaning people and kratos” meaning

Rule by the people Democracy originated from ancient Greece, citizens were free to discuss state affairs, take decisions and exercise their political rights. This is what Johnston (2000:23) classified as a direct democracy (a system that makes people exercise power themselves.

Indirect democracy is associated with the free discussion of political views, the right to differ concerning them and the settlement of differences by counting of votes.

Abraham Lincoln former president of America, perceived democracy as the government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

Since there is no single definitions of democracy it can be deduced from various ones;

❖The fundamental rights of citizens is guaranteed

❖Existence of rule of law

❖freedom of press

❖periodic election that is free and fair.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBLITES OF CITIZENS IN A DEMOCRACY

All citizens have duties towards the state these include:

Right to vote

They should be willing to pay taxes

They must have a duty to obey law

They must refrain from uttering destructive criticism

They must be refrain from interference with the right of member of a community

He/she must support education in every way.

In conclusion, citizens play an important role in democracy and there is no democracy without them. Citizens should check how institutions, investigating agencies, and even law making agencies put in place for the wellbeing of democracy are working. And in all a positive attitude should be maintained with the development of the state being the priority.