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CHAPTER EIGHT: CITIZENS ROLE IN A DEMOCRACY.

The authority of government derives from the will of the people in their choice of these systems, and the people have the right to take part in their government, including through genuine elections to determine who will legitimately occupy governmental offices. These precepts are in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in modern constitutions all over the world.

Citizen/Citizenship: It has a political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and the government. Citizens have set of rights and responsibilities. Citizenship of a state may be acquired by birth or by naturalization. Citizenship can be perceived to be made up of civil citizenship, political citizenship, and social citizenship. There are different meanings of citizenship, however, there are broader definitions and perceptions of citizenship, as shown by Glover [2004:18], who agrees that there are three dimensions of active citizenship: Ethical citizenship, Integrative citizenship, Educative citizenship.

Ethical citizenship understands active participation in a collective strive towards the public good as an essential feature of citizenship.

Integrative citizenship needs engagement in a wide sphere of participation that can go beyond formal political practices and institutions.

Ethical citizenship according to Dagger [1997] refers to 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, their communities and their identities.

Citizen Rights: Rights entails some duties and responsibilities on the part of every citizens. It can be defined as a privilege conferred by the law upon a person or group. When it is expressed within the framework of the constitution of the state, it becomes a civil right. When it is invaded by another citizen or government, he/she can seek redress in the court of law. Examples of these rights include; right to work, right to life etc.

Democracy: Etymologically, it is derived from the Greek word "demos" meaning people and "kratos" meaning rule, that is 'rule by the people'. It originated like other political concepts from Ancient Greece. Today democracy which is also known as indirect government is associated with the free discussion of

political views, the right to differ concerning them and the settlement of differences by counting of votes. It is a way of determining who shall govern and to what ends they shall rule.

Abraham Lincoln, former American President, perceived democracy as government of the people when it is designed to represent the common will of the citizenry within a state and that it is a government by the people when its ideological undercurrents is grounded in the people's culture, also, it is a government which is for the people when the power employed by the custodians of state business emanates from, and resides in the collective mandate of the people. Since there is no single definition of democracy however, the features that can be deduced include: The fundamental rights of the citizens is guaranteed, Independent and impartial judiciary, Existence of rule of law, Freedom of press, Periodic election is free and fair.

Duties and Responsibilities of Citizens in a Democracy: The state provides right and liberties, all citizens have duties to the state. For democracy to succeed, citizens must be active not passive, because failure and success of government is their responsibility

Citizens are expected to perform the following responsibility in a democracy:

- 1) A Citizen in a democracy should have the duty to vote. People who are unhappy with the leaders are free to organize and make a case or vote those leaders out of office at established time of elections.
- 2) A citizen should be willing to pay taxes. A democracy must provide for all of its citizens and this can be achieved when citizens pay taxes.
- 3) A good citizen must have a duty to obey the law. Democracy cannot exist in lawless society. They should report breaches of the law and provide useful information they may have to help cases.
- 4) A good citizen must refrain from cases that cause division which may lead to bloodshed or chaos.
- 5) A good citizen should not interfere in the rights of other members of the community. They should make contribution to the advancement of the nation.
- 6) Education is power, so they should support public education in every possible way. It is the foundation of democracy meant to educate children to be responsible and participants in democratic process. Education strengthens citizens to be better informed and in place to interrogate government policies.

In conclusion, citizens play an important role in democracy as there would be no democracy without the co-operation and commitment of the citizens. Democracy assures basic fundamental human right for citizens like right to vote, right to liberty. Citizens should participate in every event in democracy enthusiastically to ensure survival of democracy. A positive attitude should be maintained with the development of the state being a priority.