**UKANNA NNEOMA GEM.**

**19/MHS01/415.**

**GOVERNMENT ASSIGNMENT.**

**CITIZENS ROLES IN A DEMOCRACY.**

Sovereignty resides in and flows from the people in a democracy. They have a collective right to choose their governmental, political and electoral systems as part of self-determination. The authority of government likewise derives from the will of the people have a right to take part in their government including through genuine elections to determine who will legitimately occupy governmental offices. These precepts are embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the modern constitutions the world over. There is no democracy without the engagement of citizens. For democracy to deliver, citizens must become informed about issues that can improve their lives, they need accurate and timely information, particularly government-held decisions. Barriers to citizen participation are multiple in every country. Citizens must, therefore, understand ideas about citizenship, politics and government.

**CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS.**

Citizen/Citizenship: The term citizen has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and government. To be a citizen means to enjoy certain liberties and rights as opposed non-citizens. They provide rights and liberties to enable citizens lead the good life. Citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or by neutralization. Citizenship can be perceived to be made up of, or be divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship. However as with so many other concepts, citizenship does not have just one definition, it means different things to different people. Glover argues that there are three dimensions of active citizenship: ethical, integrative and educative citizenship.

**Citizens’ Rights:** individual rights and liberties are the groundwork of the state since it exists to enable men live and develop fully. These rights are not absolute since they are limited by the rights of other citizens. Rights entail some duties and responsibilities on the part of every citizen.

**Democracy:** it has been etymology established that the word democracy is derived from the Greek word “demos” meaning people and “kratos” meaning rule. Democracy first originated from ancient Greece where in city states, citizens were free to meet frequently in assembles which had the power to make laws. 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.

**Features of Democracy:**

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

**Duties and Responsibilities of Citizens in a Democracy.**

While the state provides rights and liberties, all citizens have duties to the state, which includes:

1. A citizen in a democracy should have the duty to vote.
2. A citizen should be willing to pay taxes, since without taxes it is impossible to fund a democratic government.
3. A good citizen must have a duty to obey the law.
4. A good citizen must refrain from uttering destructive criticisms but must be prepared to offer constructive alternatives to government policies.
5. A good citizen must refrain from interference with the rights of other members of the society.
6. (S)he must support public education in every way possible, through payment of taxes, through local volunteer efforts, through according this system the respect to which it should be entitled.

**Conclusion**

Democracy is a system of government where the citizens directly elect the government by voting. Citizens play an important role in democracy. Citizens must be aware of their rights and responsibilities at the same time, without the awareness among citizens, a government may turn into a tyranny. Citizens must not lose sight of the pursuit of public interest. A positive attitude should be maintained with development of the state being the priority.