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 **A REVIEW ON CITIZENS ROLE IN A DEMOCRACY**

In a society where the system practiced, the government of such nation is under the disposition of the people. The people collectively choose their government, who legitimately occupies governmental offices. That is to say, that authority of the government is derived from the will of the people as sovereignty resides in and flows from the people only in democracy.

The famous formulation of democracy “as the government of the people, by the people and for the people" means that government belongs to the people, governmental processes belong to the people; elections belong to the people. However, there is no democracy without the engagement of citizens thus, engagement is both a right and a responsibility of citizens as citizens engagement pursues economic, social, cultural and political development including the provision of opportunity, resources, services and security. Also, for democracy to be well practised, citizens need to be informed about governmental decisions and to be informed, citizens need accurate and timely information, particularly government held information as transparency is a necessity for democracy. But there are barriers to citizen participation, and these barriers need to be removed for full citizenship to be achieved.

A citizen politically, implies a type of relationship between the people and the government. And they have sets of rights and responsibilities. Citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or naturalisation. According to Turner, citizenship, is a formal legal identity that the individual person inherits through a collection of legal rights and obligations, controlling access to the scarce political, economic, and cultural resources of the society. And the process by which a person changes his or her country voluntarily is naturalisation; the conditions vary among countries.

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria define citizenship under Chapter 111 section 25:1(a)

* Every person born in Nigeria before the date of independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belongs or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria, provided that a person shall not become a citizen of Nigeria by virtue of this section if neither of his parents nor his grandparents was born in Nigeria.
* Every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria; and
* Every person born outside of Nigeria either of whose parent is a citizen of Nigeria.

Citizenship can be divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship. Civil citizenship refers to the right necessary to protect individual liberty. Political citizenship is associated with participation in the democratic exercise of political power, either as a member of a political community or as an individual elected by the members of such community. 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 the standards prevailing in society.

However, citizenship is not solely comprised of passive membership of a political entity, but that being active is an essential of being a citizen. Active entails volunteering in public service provision among others. In addition, there are three dimensions of active citizenship: ethical citizenship, which understands that active citizenship is a collective strive towards public good. Integrative citizenship, needs engagement in a wide sphere of participation that can go beyond formal political practices and institutions. Educative citizenship, refers to the process that develops a moral, practical and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship.

Furthermore, a citizens' rights can be defined as a privilege conferred by the law upon a person or group. They include: right to life, right to work among others. And they are essential to letting citizens have a fair share of running the government.

Democracy is derived from the Greek word demos which people, and kratos which means to rule that is, ‘rule by the people.’ The concept originated from ancient Greece, where it was classified as direct democracy, where people exercised authority themselves. However, the practice of the Ancient Greeks were opposed as certain calibre in the society were not involved in democracy. There has never been a single definition for democracy, however, certain features can be deduced: the fundamental rights of the citizen is guaranteed, Independent and impartial judiciary, existence of rule of law, freedom of press, periodic election that is free and fair.

The citizens have certain responsibilities to play in democracy, as they do not only have rights. And if democracy is to succeed, they must carry out their various responsibilities which include:

* A good citizen must obey the law
* A good citizen must refrain from interfere with the rights of other citizens
* A good citizen in a democracy should vote; among several other duties.

In conclusion, democracy is the best form of government in this modern era, and citizens should participate in every democratic event to preserve it, as democracy doesn't exist without citizens. Also, they must exercise their rights and perform their responsibilities for the development of the state which is top priority.