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**CHAPTER 8: CITIZENS ROLES IN A DEMOCRACY**

In a democracy, the authority of a government derives from the will of the people, they also have the right to take part in their government through genuine elections to determine the one who will legitimately occupy governmental offices. The following processes are in universal declaration of human rights and in the modern constitutions all over the world. They capture the formulation that democratic government is “of the people, by the people and for the people”. There is no democracy without the engagement of the citizens.

Therefore the term citizen has a political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and government. Citizens have a set of rights and responsibilities, including the right to participate in decisions that affect public welfare. Citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or by naturalization. Citizenship can be divided into civil citizenship, political and social citizenship. Civil citizenship refers to the rights 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 and social citizenship embodies the claim that citizens ought to have access to those resources that allow them to live civilized existence in accordance with the standards prevailing in society.

In order to let the citizen have a share in the running of his/her government, a group of rights is very essential. These rights are not absolute since they are limited by the rights of the other citizens in the state. Right entails some duties and responsibilities on the path of every citizen. Democracy may not have a single meaning but definitions can be deduced from features such as: The fundamental rights of a citizen is guaranteed, independent and impartial judiciary, Existence of rule of law e.t.c. However it is a system of government where the citizens directly elect the government by voting. It is considered as the best form of government in the modern era, as it allows citizens to enjoy and exercise many rights and it gives them responsibilities at the same time. And citizens play an important role in democracy.

A government of the people demands constant vigilance and support by the people. Democratic citizens know that they must bear the burden of responsibility for their society if they are to benefit from its protection of their rights. Citizens are expected to perform some responsibilities like duty to vote, payment of taxes, duty to obey the law e.t.c. There would probably be no democracy without the cooperation and commitment of citizens. Citizens must be aware of their rights and responsibilities as without the awareness among the citizens, a government may turn into a tyranny. Citizens should be able to participate in every event in democracy with full enthusiasm to ensure the survival of democracy. One way of doing this is through citizens ensuring that rulers are accountable. Citizens also have the duty in a democracy of ensuring that their rights are preserved by challenging government when it errs.