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REVIEW ON THE CITIZENS ROLE IN DEMOCRACY

Sovereignty resides in and flows from the people in a democracy.

As the democracy provides in the Universal Declaration of Humans Right and the modern constitutions the people of the country have the right to choose governmental electoral and political system and even the decisions of the government is dependent on the citizens. Democracy is the government of the people by the people and for the people. Participation in government is both a responsibility and a right not an abstraction. Citizens engagement pursues economic social political and cultural development and others things. Citizens should be aware of their right as it pertains to democracy in other to improve their lives. And there are ways that we citizens can be involved. A way that citizens can be involved in government is that we can get accurate information especially government held information. And they would know how the government want to use the information to change lives that is the reason for transparency in democracy. So that citizens will still be able to insert their view. There are various barriers that makes people not to participate in government like genders, color, race, ethnicity, religion, age and so forth. And these barriers need to be handled to encourage participation in democracy. There is a relationship between democracy, the citizens and states development to the effect of citizen’s governance. Democracy is the active participation in of the people in governance that brings about developments.

A citizen or a citizenship implies that there is a relationship between the people and the governments, they have right that come with it. Participation in democracy Is part of the right of the citizens. In Rome citizenship was considered a Privilege because it was not given to slave’s serfs and some aliens because of various reasons. If you are a citizen, you enjoy certain right. Now at days “citizenship” is now used to describe the residents or the population of the state. The essence of a state is to provide citizens with the opportunity to live a good life. Citizenship can be acquired through two ways; by birth and naturalization. A person can acquire citizenship by birth if his parents are from that state or they give birth to him within that state. The citizenship by birth is what made turner to define citizenship as the formal legal identity that the individual person inherits through a collection of legal rights and obligation, controlling access to scare political economic and cultural resources of the society. We also have by naturalization. Naturalization has different interpretation by various countries. For a naturalizing citizen you stay in a particular country over a stipulated period of time and then you are can get your citizenship certificate.

In Nigeria, you become a citizen according to chapter111 section 25, paraphrasing that anyone that is born after or before independence and either of their parent or grandparents are citizens will be a citizen also anyone that is born outside of that country and either of their parent is a citizen of that country will be a citizen.

Citizenship can be divided into civil political and social citizenship. The civil citizenship are the rights that are in place to protect citizen’s liberty like freedom of speech. Political citizenship is used to allow the citizens to participate in democratic exercise either as a voter or a politician. And the social citizenship are the rights that enable the citizens to access those resources that allows to live a civilized life in the society. Many people have ways by which they define citizenship. According to Brannan citizenship is not just passive membership of a political entity but been active is an essential of being a citizen.

Glover said that active citizenship can be in three dimensions; the ethical, integrative and the educative citizenship. The ethical citizenship understands active participation in a collective strive toward 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, in this form of citizenship one needs an understanding of the personal interest of the community and if they are to truly act as members of the public. And the educational citizenship helps to develop the moral, practical and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship. Citizens participation helps you to overcome individualism and self-interest and differentiate private interest from public interest. In the modern times citizenship can be differentiated into passive and active. Passive in the sense that the rights and privilege are given by the state which is based on the notion of social justices while the active citizenship is an integral part of citizenship which is not enough. People must always be aware on the rights. Any how anybody see citizenship what is common is that citizenship is a privilege status conferred by states on its people either by birth or by naturalization

Citizen’s rights are defined as the privilege or prerogative conferred by the law upon a person or group. It is the ground work of the state because it is in place to make the lives of the people easy and for them to participate in democracy. The rights are not absolute because they are limited by rights of other citizens in the state. When a privilege is expressed in the framework of the constitution of the state it becomes a civil right and when I a civil right is invaded by another citizen, the person can seek redress in court. Some civil rights are right to life, right to freedom of speech, right to freedom of association etc.

Democracy is derived from a Greek word called “demos” meaning people and kratos meaning rule therefore democracy is peoples rule. Because of the way Greece practiced their democracy Johnston defined democracy as the system that makes people exercise authority themselves which is known as direct democracy. There are many meanings of democracy but there are a few things that can be deduced from it which are the fundamental rights of citizens are guaranteed, there is independency and impartial judiciary, existence of rule of law, free press and periodic, free and fair election. In democracy citizens have rights and responsibilities. These are some of their responsibilities: the citizens are to vote when it is time for voting, they are meant to pay their taxes because without that democracy cannot function properly, a citizen should always obey the law because lawlessness doesn’t encourage democracy, a citizen should abstain from interfering with other peoples right, a citizen must refrain from destructive criticism and involved in constructive criticism and lastly and a good citizen must support public education in every way possible.

In conclusion, democracy is a system of government where the citizens directly elect their president by voting and also active participation in government. Citizens have rights and responsibilities so therefore we the citizens must endeavors to perform our responsibilities and we should not interfere with other peoples right.