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Do a two page review of Chapter 8, Citizens Role in a Democracy, In Salient issues in Government and Nigeria's Politics.

Chapter 8

There is no democracy without the involvement of citizens. Participation of citizen in the government is both a right and a responsibility. Transparency is very essential in a democracy as the citizens need to be informed. There needs to be freedom of the citizens to express their views and make sure that the government responds to their views. There are a lot of barriers to citizen participation and these barriers need to be removed for full citizenship to be achieved. Citizens need to be educated and have knowledge on citizenship, politics and government so they can fully express their views and hold public officials accountable

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

1. **CITIZEN/CITIZENSHIP:** Citizens have a set of rights and responsibility such as the right and responsibility such as the right to take place in matters concerning the state. The essence of a state is to provide opportunities to enable citizens lead the good life. Turner defines citizenship as the formal legal identity an individual inherits through a collection of legal rights and obligations, controlling access to the scarce political, economic and cultural resources of society. The process by which an individual can change his citizenship from one state to another is known as naturalization. Citizenship is divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship. The term citizenship has many definitions as it means different things to different people. Being a citizen of a country also entails participating and being willing to contribute to the development of that country. There are three dimensions of active citizenship which are: Ethical citizenship, integrative citizenship, educative citizenship. According to Kenny "to ensure full citizenship, people must be empowered to participate in the continual process of shaping their community, society and identity"
2. **CITIZEN'S RIGHT:** It is essential for citizens to have rights in order to participate in the running of the states. A right is defined as the privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or a group. A civil right is when a privilege is expressed within the framework of the constitution of the state and if ones civil right is invaded by another individual, redress should be sought in court.
3. **DEMOCRACY:** The word democracy is gotten from two Greek word "demos" meaning people and "kratos" meaning rule. Democracy as a concept originated in ancient Greek but it was a limited democracy as some groups of people were not allowed to participate in the affairs of the state. The concept were all citizens regardless of their social status were allowed to participate in state affairs started in England. The American colonies also developed their own democratic ideas and it began to spread from country to country. Abraham Lincoln defined democracy as "the government of the people, by the people, and for the people". The features of democracy are i. Independent judiciary ii. Freedom of press iii. Existence of rule of law iv. Free and fair periodic elections and v. Fundamental human rights is guaranteed.

In a democratic government, the citizens have to be active and perform their duties and responsibilities in order for the government to succeed. Citizens are expected to perform the following duties;

- i. Duty to vote
- ii. Duty to pay taxes
- iii. A good citizen must obey the law
- iv. A good citizen should offer constructive criticism to government policies
- v. A good citizen must support public education

vi. A good citizen must refrain from interfering with the rights of other citizens.

In conclusion democracy is the best form of government, there would be no democracy without the involvement of citizens. Citizens should actively participate in the development of their country can make sure their rules are held accountable and should make sure they perform their duties enthusiastically.