

NAME: ADEBAYO ADERENLE YEWANDE

MATRIC NUMBER: 19/MHS06/001

DEPARTMENT: MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENCE

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## REVIEW OF CHAPTER EIGHT

### CITIZENS ROLE IN A DEMOCRACY

#### INTRODUCTION:

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 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in modern constitutions capture the foundation for the famous formulation that democratic government is “of the people, by the people and for the people.” There is no democracy without the engagement of citizens. Engagement is thus both a right and a responsibility of citizens in establishing, developing and sustaining democracy. For democracy to deliver, citizens must become informed about issues that can improve their lives.

#### CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Citizen/Citizenship: citizens 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. In reality, the essence of a state is to provide opportunities to enable citizens to lead a good life.

Citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or by naturalization. A man becomes a citizen of a particular state if his parents are citizens of that state or if he is born within the territory of that state. Citizenship determined by the place of birth is fundamental in the laws of most countries. This informed Turner that 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 society. The process which an individual may voluntarily change his/her citizenship of a state to another is known as naturalization.

Citizenship can be perceived to be made up of, or be divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship, 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 a community and social citizenship embodies the claim that citizens ought to have access to those resources that allow them to live a civilized existence in accordance with the standards prevailing in society. Brannan et. al. argue that the concept of citizenship holds that citizenship is not solely comprised of passive membership of a political entity, but that being active is an essential of being a citizen.

However, there are broader definitions and perceptions of citizenship as well, as shown by Glover, who argues that there are three dimensions of active citizenship: ethical citizenship, integrative citizenship and educative citizenship. Ethical citizenship understands active participation in a collective strive towards the public good as an essential feature of citizenship. The personal sacrifices that are made aid some public benefit and are hence ultimately also enjoyed by the person who sacrifices. Integrative citizenship it holds that one needs an understanding of the personal interests of members of the wider community as well if they are to truly act as members of the public, and hence, the democratic activity that is associated with citizenship aids such an understanding as well. Educative citizenship it refers to the process that develops a moral, practical and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship. However, citizenship is a privilege status conferred by states on its people either by birth or by naturalization i.e. voluntary change of citizenship from a state to another.

**CITIZENS' RIGHT:** individual's rights and liberties of the state since it exists to enable men to live and develop fully. In order to let the citizen have a share in the running of his/her government, a group of rights is essential. A right is defined as a privilege conferred by law upon a person or a group. When a privilege is expressed within the framework of the constitution of the state, it become a civil right.

**DEMOCRACY:** it is derived from a Greek word "demos meaning people and kratos meaning rule, that is 'rule by the people'" direct democracy is a system that enables people exercise authority themselves. Democracy or representative government 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 votes.

#### Features of Democracy

1. The fundamental rights of the citizens is guaranteed
2. Independent and impartial judiciary
3. Existence of rule of law
4. Freedom of press
5. Periodic election that is free and fair

#### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENS IN A DEMOCRACY

For democracy to succeed, citizens must be active, not passive, because they know that the success or failure of the government is their responsibility, and no one else's. citizens are therefore expected to perform the following responsibilities in a democracy:

1. A citizen in a democracy should have the duty to vote.
2. A citizen should be willing to pay taxes, since without taxes to fund a democratic government, there will be no democracy.
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 community.

6. He/she must support public education in every way possible, through the payment of taxes, through local volunteer efforts, through according this system the respect to which it should be entitled.