NAME: **ADELEKE MAHFUS ADEMOLA**

MATRIC NUMBER: **19/MHS01/029**

DEPARTMENT: **MBBS**

A REVIEW OF CHAPTER 8, **“CITIZENS ROLE IN A DEMOCRACY”.**

Citizens own the government in democracy. This is because the sovereignty resides in and flows from the people. Therefore, for democracy to deliver, citizens must have active participations in government. This chapter entailed what is citizenship, who is a citizen, what is democracy, the roles of citizenry in a democratic society. Citizenship according to Turner (1997:176) 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. A person can acquire citizenship of a state by birth or naturalization. Citizenship by birth is fundamental in the laws of most countries (including Nigeria). A person has acquired citizenship by birth if his parents are citizens of that country or if he is born within the territory of that country. On the other hand, citizenship by naturalization is the process by which an individual may voluntarily change his/her citizenship of a state to another state; but, it has conditions to be met.

There are several broader concepts on citizenship; it just does not have a single definition. Brannan (2006:55) argue that citizenship is not solely comprised of passive membership of a political entity, but that being active is an essential of being a citizen. Glover (2004:18) 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. Integrative citizenship however needs engagement in a wide sphere of participation that can go beyond formal political practices and institutions. Educative citizenship according to Dagger (1997) refers to the process that develops a moral, practical, and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship. Citizenship is divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship, and social citizenship. The rights to protect individual liberty is known as civil citizenship. Political citizenship entails 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. The last one, social citizenship, simply 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.

A right is defined as a privilege conferred by law upon a person or group of individuals. In order for citizens to be active, a group of rights is essential in a democratic society. The word democracy is from the Greek “***demos*** meaning people and ***kratos*** meaning rule, which is ‘rule by the people’” (Emiri, 2003, cited in Ojo, 2015). The most famous definition of democracy was given by Abraham Lincoln, the former president of U.S.A. He defined democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. According to him, democracy is a government of the people when it is designed to represent the common will of the citizenry within the state and that it is a government by the people when its ideological undercurrent is grounded in the people’s culture. And finally it is a government for the people when the power employed by the custodians of state emanates from, and resides in the collective mandate of the people (Daijibo, 2012 cited in Ojo, 2015:166). What can be gathered from the various definitions of democracy given by different scholars are that: the fundamental rights of the citizenry is guaranteed; there is independent and impartial judiciary in democracy; exixtence of rule of law; freedom of press and periodic election that is free and fair. However, democratic citizens not only have rights, they also have responsibilities to be performed. Some of these responsibilities are: they have to vote; willingness to pay taxes, obey the law; offering constructive alternatives rather than uttering destructive criticisms. They should also support any form of public education, which is the foundation of democracy.

All in all, citizens play an important role in democracy. There is a saying in societies: you get the government you deserve. For democracy to succeed, the citizenry must be active, because the success or failure of the government is their responsibility. We should read more about citizens’ role in this chapter. This is because access to information is paramount to an informed citizenry. There is no democracy without the engagement of citizens.