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QUESTION: Do a two page review each of Chapter 7chapter 8 'Citizen's Role in a Democracy', In Salient issues in Government and Nigeria's Politics

Chapter eight

Citizens role in a democracy

Sovereignty resides in and flows from the people in a democracy. The authority of government derives from the will of the people in their choice of these systems, and the people have a right to take part in the government, including through genuine elections to determine who will legitimately occupy governmental offices. These precepts are embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in modern constitution all over the world.

The capture of the famous formulation that ‘democracy is the government of the people by the people and for the people’ means that government and governmental processes belong to the people. There is no democracy without the engagement or involvement of the citizens. Citizens engagement pursues economic, social, cultural and political development including the provision of opportunity, resources, services and security. Citizens must become informed on issues that can improve their lives in order for democracy to deliver. Since there is no single definition of democracy, what can be deduced from the various definitions of democracy are; the fundamental rights of the citizens is guaranteed, independence and impartial judiciary, existence of the Rule of Law, freedom of press, periodic election that is free and fair.

As with so many other concepts, citizenship does not have just one definition, it means different things to different people. For instance, Brannan et. al. argue that the concept of citizenship holds that citizenship is not solely comprised of membership of a political entity, that being active is an essential of being a citizen. However, chapter 11, section 25: 1(a) of the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria defines citizenship as: ‘Every person born in Nigeria before the date of independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belongs or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria’. This section also stated that; a person shall not become a citizen of Nigeria by

virtue of this section if neither of his parents nor any of his grandparents was born in Nigeria.

.Every persons born in Nigeria after the date of independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belongs is a citizen of Nigeria; and

.Every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria.

Section 26(1) to section 32 also stipulates the conditions which any person that is trying to naturalise must fulfil before he or she can be registered as a citizen of Nigeria.

Citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or by naturalisation, by marriage, by honorary.

Citizenship can 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; social citizenship embodies the claim that citizens ought to have access to those resources that allow them to live a civilised existence in accordance with the standards prevailing in society. citizens have a set of rights and responsibilities, including the right to participate in decisions that affect public welfare, right to freedom of association, right to freedom of expression, right to vote and be voted for, right to life, right to freedom of movement and so on.

While the state provides rights and liberties, all citizens have duties in the State. Democratic citizens recognise that they don't only have rights, they have responsibilities which includes; the duty to vote; payment of taxes; duty to obey the law; a good citizen must refrain from uttering destructive criticism but must be prepared to offer constructive alternatives to government policies; a good citizen must refrain from interference with the right of other members of the community.