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A Review On Citizens Roles in Democracy

Power resides in the people of a state and they have the right to elect people into power. Democracy cannot exist without the engagement of the citizens.

A citizen is one who is a member of a state and is entitled to rights and privileges of that state. They have a set of rights and responsibilities, including the right to participate in decision-making that will affect the common good of all. Citizenship may be acquired in many ways, for example; birth and naturalization. Citizenship can be subdivided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship. Civil citizenship are the rights necessary to protect the individual liberty, political citizenship is the right of a citizen to engage in democratic exercise of political power, either as a member of a political community or as an individual elected by the members of that community, while social citizenship states that citizens should have access to resources needed for for civilized living in accordance with the standards prevailing in society.

According to Glover, there are three dimensions of active citizenship: ethical citizenship, integrative citizenship, and educative citizenship. Ethical citizenship understand active participation in a collective strive towards the public good as an essential feature of citizenship. Integrative citizenships involves the belief that every individual plays a role and this enables the individual to integrate their various roles and to immerse themselves into the community. Educative citizenship refers to the process that develops a moral, practical and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship.

Citizens are entitled to some benefits for being a member of a state. These entitlements are called RIGHTS. A right may be defined as a privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or a group. Rights that are expressed in the constitution are CIVIL RIGHT.

Democracy is derived from the Greek words **demos** which means people and **kratos** which means **rule**. Democracy started in Ancient Greece where citizens met to deliberate on matters concerning the well-being of the state. This democracy excluded slaves, aliens, labourers from exercising their political rights. England advocated that all people irrespective of their status in the state are entitled to take part in the running of the state. Abraham Lincoln defined democracy as **the government of the people, for the people and by the people**. Democracy as the government of the people is designed to represent the common will of the people within the state, government by the people, the government ideologies are grounded in the people's culture and government for the people is when the power employed by the custodians of the state business comes from and resides in the collective mandate of the people. The features of democracy are: guaranteed fundamental human rights, independent and impartial judiciary, existence of the rule of law, freedom of the press, periodic free and fair elections.

Apart from the knowing their rights as citizens, they need to understand that they have responsibilities, roles they need to play in government. Citizen are to be active and not passive in all things pertaining to the state, because whatever happens, they will bear the result,

whether good or bad. Here are some of them the responsibilities of citizens in their country: citizens are expected to vote, this is their civic duty, they are to vote in competent men and women to represent them in political offices. They are also expected to obey the law as enshrined in the constitution. They are to pay their taxes regularly, they are also enjoined to support public education in every way possible.