ABBAH MARY EDUGWU

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CHAPTER 8:CITIZENS ROLES IN A DEMOCRACY.

In democracy, the sovereignty resides in and flows from the people such that they have a collective right to choose their systems and the government authority is derived from the will of the people. The Universal Declaration of the Human Rights (UDHR) and the modern constitution formulates that democratic government is “of the people, by the people and for the people hence without the citizen’s engagement, there is no democracy.

For democracy to take place, citizens must be well informed about the government and its activities hence the need for transparency in democracy. Citizens cannot be truly informed if they are allowed to give their opinions or make free choices. A symbiotic relationship exists between democracy, the citizens and state's development ,it is the involvement or active participation of the people in governance that brings about the development of democracy.

The term Citizens has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain type of relationship between the people and the government. Individuals as citizens have rights and responsibilities including the right to participate in decision making that affect the welfare of the public. Citizenship of a state may be acquired either by birth or by naturalisation . It can be perceived to be made up of or divided into Civil citizenship ,Political citizenship and Social citizenship. There are broader definitions and perceptions of citizenship as well.

Citizen’s rights and liberties are the groundwork of the State since it exists to enable men to live and develop fully. In order to let citizens have a share in the running of his/her government, a group of rights is very essential. When a privilege which is also a right is expressed within the framework of the constitution of the state, it becomes a civil right. A citizen is entitled to seek redress in the court of law if his or her right is invaded by the government or by another citizen.

Democracy is derived from the Greek word "demos" meaning people and “kratos" meaning rule , that is “rule by the people “. The concept of democracy was first originated from ancient Greece where in the city states, citizens were free to meet frequently in assemblies which had the power to make laws . The Greek democracy was a limited institution. It excluded slaves, labourers and aliens from exercising political rights. The idea that all the citizens both high and low were allowed to take part in the running of the affairs of the state was first advocated in England after the great civil war.

Since there is no single definition of democracy, however what can be deduce, form the various definitions of democracy are features such as;The fundamental right of the citizen is guaranteed, independent and impartial judiciary ,Existence of the rule of law ,Freedom of press ,Periodic election that is free and fair.

There are certain duties and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy while the state provides rights and liberties . Democratic citizens recognize that they do not only have rights but also responsibilities, These responsibilities are as follows;The duty to vote, payment of taxes ,obeying the law of the government, refrain from uttering destructive criticisms, refrain from interference with the rights of other members of the community and lastly he must support public education in every way possible.

In conclusion , Democracy is a system of government where the citizens directly elect the government by voting. Citizens play an important role in democracy. There would probably be no democracy without the cooperation and commitment of citizens . Citizens should also check how institutions are put in place for the well being of the democracy.