

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Every society is composed of three categories of human groups. These are the

1. Good citizens
2. Bad citizens
3. The passive citizens

In a free democratic society, all these citizens are entitled to certain Rights and Freedoms. Rights are described as Birth Rights and in addition to birth rights, society also gives the individual certain freedoms. However, there are those who seem to be totally ignorant of both their rights and responsibilities. These pose problems to the individual's personal achievements as well as the country's efforts to develop. This is because in as much as we claim our rights, we fail to discharge the responsibilities associated with them.

#### **Who is a citizen?**

A citizen is an individual who by birth, honour naturalization and registration is a legal member a state. The 1992 constitution of Ghana defines a citizen as a person who is accepted as a Ghanaian either by reason of birth, by adoption or by registration(naturalization). All citizen of Ghana has rights and responsibilities to the Republic of Ghana.

A "citizen" is a member of a political community, which is defined by a set of rights and obligations. "Citizenship therefore represents a relationship between the individual and the state, in which the two are bound together by reciprocal rights and obligations" (Heywood 1994).

Citizenship simply means membership of a country or the legal right of belonging to a particular country. This means that all Ghanaian are citizens or members of Ghana; hence, they hold the nationality of Ghana. T. H. Marshall (1950) defined citizenship as 'full membership of a community'. According to him, citizenship is constituted by three elements: civil, political and social (which are resumed in the following scheme).

Bogdanor (1991) opines that citizenship is the relationship between the individual and the state and among individuals within a state. He went on to state four major domains of citizenship, namely: civil, political, socio-economic and collective/cultural dimensions. the civil domain of citizenship is a way of life where citizens define and pursue commonly held goals related to democratic conceptions of society. It inscribes

fundamental community values, rights of the individual citizen and the rights of private interest groups and associations. It includes freedom of speech, expression and equality before the law. He saw the political domain as the rights and duties with respect to political system. He saw the socio-economic domain of citizenship as the relationship among individuals in a societal context and to rights of participation in political spaces. He said that social citizenship refers to the relationship among individuals in a society and demands loyalty and solidarity. Again, he stated that economic citizenship refers to the relation of an individual towards the labour and consumer market and implies the right to work and to a minimum subsistence level.

On the collective domain of citizenship, as the manner in which societies take into account the increasing cultural diversity in societies, diversity due to a greater openness of other cultures, to global migration and to increased mobility. He further stated that collective citizenship refers to awareness of a common cultural heritage. To him this component includes the quest for recognition of collective rights for minorities. The culture-state relationship is based upon human rights which recognize an anthropological dimension of a person and which implies a certain conception of human beings, their dignity and the affirmation of legal equality against all forms of discrimination on the basis of membership in a particular group or category

According to Veldhuis (1997), these four (4) domains hold implications for the processes of citizenship. The political domain requires knowledge of the political system, democratic attitudes and participatory skills. The socioeconomic domain requires knowledge of social relations in society, social skills as well as vocational training and economic skills for job-oriented and other economic activities. The collective/cultural domain requires knowledge of the cultural heritage, history and basic skills such as good literacy skills.

## **WAYS OF ACQUIRING CITIZENSHIP IN GHANA**

The constitution of Ghana clearly explains how individuals qualify to be a citizen in chapter three (3) of the 1992 constitution.

The law outlines 3 main categories of nationality. Hence, a person can be a citizen by Birth, Registration through marriage and by Naturalization. Aside these three (3) main categories, one can become a citizen of Ghana through foundling and adoption.

### **Nationality by Birth**

Under the Ghanaian law, nationality by birth is determined by the date and year the person was born. For example, if you were born before 6th March 1957, then you are a citizen of Ghana by birth if you were born in Ghana and one of your parents were born in

Ghana or one of your grandparents was born in Ghana.

### **Nationality by Registration and Marriage**

Where a person is a citizen of any country, such a person may become a citizen of Ghana by application and approval. Such a person must be of good character, resident in Ghana for at least 5 years (or a shorter period in special circumstances) before the application and must be able to speak an indigenous Ghanaian language.

Also, where a non-citizen marries a citizen of Ghana, by proper application, that person can register to be a citizen of Ghana. Where there is a dissolution of marriage, such a person continues to be a citizen unless the citizenship is renounced. The registration is done after the oath of allegiance is taken and the person becomes a citizen by registration from the date stated on the certificate of Registration.

### **Nationality by Neutralization**

A person is a citizen of Ghana by neutralization where such a person has applied to the Minister and approved by the President of Ghana. Such a person becomes a citizen after the certificate of neutralization has been issued and oath of allegiance sworn to.

### **Nationality by foundling**

A person is a citizen of Ghana by foundling and presumed to be a citizen by birth where the person is under 7 years and was found in Ghana and such person's parents are unknown.

### **Nationality by Adoption**

A person is a citizen of Ghana by adoption if that person is less than 16 years and the adopted parents are Ghanaians.

### **Dual Nationality**

Dual Nationality is acceptable under the Ghanaian laws. This means that a Ghanaian can hold citizenship in any other country and still hold citizenship in Ghana. However, a person with a dual nationality cannot hold certain public offices and cannot be a Member of Parliament or Speaker of Parliament. The Supreme Court of Ghana has given reasons that people with dual nationality cannot hold public offices because of the issue of conflict of interest, national security, and state allegiance to Ghana and confidentiality.

### **Qualities of a Good Citizen**

The following qualities describe someone who is a good citizen

a. She/he should pay allegiance to the ideas of democracy

- b. She/he must be aware of social problems and tries to help solve them
- c. The good citizen seeks to meet basic human needs such as food clothing and shelter
- d. She/he recognizes the interdependence of all people in a family, school, community, national and the world relationships
- e. The citizen is expected to use his acquired knowledge, skills and ability in enhancing the process of democratic living (Tamakloe et al 1992).

## **CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION**

Citizenship education denotes the development of ideas beliefs, habits behaviour and attitudes of people so that they may become useful members of society and contribute their share for improvement of society. Mudaliar Commission as quoted in Aggarwal (1982), citizenship in democracy is very exacting and challenging responsibility for which every citizen has to be trained. It involves many intellectual societal and moral qualities. It can also be said that it is citizenship education that provides the learner with the knowledge skill and attitudes necessary to participate in modern democracy.

According to Jarolimek (1971), citizenship education is the preparation of young peoples to be human, rational participatory citizens in a world that is becoming increasingly interdependent.

Morrisett (1969) hints that ideally citizenship refers to informed and moral decision - making about political issues in voting, obeying the law and possibly running for office. He added that citizenship also involves intelligent thinking and moral decision- making concerning ecology, fire prevention public and personal health among others

Citizenship education can also be defined as educating children, from early childhood, to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society. 'Society' is here understood in the special sense of a nation with a confined territory which is recognized as a state.

A knowledge of the nation's institutions, and also an awareness that the rule of law applies to social and human relationships, obviously form part of any citizenship education course. Taken in this sense, citizenship education is based on the distinction between:

the individual as a subject of ethics and law, entitled to all the rights inherent in the human condition (human rights); and

the citizen – entitled to the civil and political rights recognized by the national constitution of the country concerned.

### **Goals of Citizenship Education**

The goals of citizenship education are to help the young people become well informed, hardworking, selfless, honest and responsible citizens (Mensah 1976).

Barth (1983) points out four goals of citizenship education as follows;

- a. To gain knowledge about the human conditions which include the past, present and the future.
- b. To acquire skills necessary to process information.
- c. To develop the skill to examine values and beliefs.
- d. To encourage the application of knowledge through active participation in society

In effect, the goals of citizenship education are clearly meant to help the individual acquire knowledge, which she/he can use to process information, develop skills and examine values through the application of knowledge.

Aggarwal (1982) also stresses that citizenship education enables an individual to;

- i. understands the social, economic and political forces that are shaping the faces of the world
- ii. be tolerant and broad minded
- iii. think clearly and effectively without any kind of prejudice
- iv. make decision independently
- v. be a patriot in the true sense with a composition outlook
- vi. be devoted to freedom
- vii. be a good leader and follower
- viii. understand his rights and responsibilities
- ix. admit his follies, if any
- x. earns his livelihood in an honest way
- xi. be firm against heavy odds
- xii. utilize his leisure profitable
- xiii. act upon principles courageously

- xiv. maintain inter-group understanding
- xv. have faith in democratic ideals of life
- xvi. believe in the quality of man
- xvii. have a goal to make further progress

According to ASEP (1992), social studies programme, which has the development of responsible citizenship as its goals, must therefore provide students with skills that allow them to;

- i. Gain knowledge
- ii. Process information
- iii. Examine values and beliefs
- iv. Actively participates as citizens in society
- v. In most cases, these skills are expressed as Cognitive skills, Affective skills, psychomotor skills and social/interpersonal skills.

## CHAPTER TWO

### APPROACHES TO TEACHING CITIZENSHIP

In order for citizenships education to take its proper place in social studies, there is the need to provide every opportunity for student to think for themselves and make decisions on their own. This call for approaches to teaching the concept

**EXEMPLARY APPROACH-** This is based on the idea that example is better than precept. The social studies teacher must set examples of ideal behaviour in relation with others to follow him or her. The teacher must practice what she/he teaches. She/he must not tell students to obey the laws of the land without him or herself following them.

**EXPERIENCE SERVICE APPROACH** –This is based on the principle that experience is the best teacher. The learner must be given a good chance for active and responsible

involvement in the activities of the school and community. Such experience could be obtained through groups methods of teaching (discussion), class projects and group competitions (debates, visits to Parliament House, District, Municipal and Metropolitan meetings, celebration of national days, social and students councils)

**ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE APPROACH** – This approach teaches the facts, concepts and generalizations about social phenomena. In teaching and learning of social studies, concepts like voting, citizenship and human rights can be treated whilst students are in schools so that they will grow with them. When the learners master such skills, concepts, facts etc., they will assist them to meet challenges of civic matters whether anticipated or unanticipated.

**LAW RELATED APPROACH** – This approach provides legal framework for learners to study law related issues while in school. For example, information on legal concepts such as the system of juvenile justice, rule of law, problem of law enforcement agencies and the constitution can be treated in class.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT APPROACH** – This approach attempts to involve the students to real life situations or experiences. This is made possible when teachers take students on a fieldtrip to communities to let students have a feel of what is happening over there. The students must be encouraged to pay house dues, participate in clean-up campaigns and attend festivals as well as taking part in the electoral processes in the community.

**INSTITUTIONAL SCHOOL REFORM APPROACH** – In this approach, students are taught to obey and respect the authority that governs them. The school must offer good example of respect to authority in an attempt to inculcate democratic principles and values in the learners. The school must be governed democratically such that students as well, will have a voice in enacting school rules and regulations. The teacher should not in any way intimidate his/her students with personal and selfish interests of students are to be trained in democratic way of life.

**CRITICAL THINKING APPROACH/ METHOD** - Critical Thinking involves one's ability to interpret data of various sorts and to generalize them. A critical citizen is someone who cannot be made to accept issues without thoroughly examining them. She/he cannot be easily manipulated by leaders and can reasonably draw his/her own decisions. This can be achieved through analyzing thought-provoking issues which will set students into thinking.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **QUALITIES/ RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GOOD CITIZENS**

#### **THE FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD CITIZENSHIP**

Good citizenship means to conduct oneself in accordance with the rights, duties, and privileges of being an inhabitant of a geographical location by means of birth or naturalization

#### **QUALITIES OF A GOOD CITIZEN**

Every citizen of a country is expected to possess certain qualities. The following are some of the qualities 'you need to know particularly with respect to Ghana:

**Being loyal to the state:** A good citizen must be loyal to his or her country at all times. Being loyal means that you are faithful and committed to the ideals and visions of the country. A loyal citizen will protect the interest of his or her country and would not



disclose vital national secrets to “enemy” countries.

**Promote national pride:** A good citizen promotes the prestige and good name of his or her country. He or she must show respect to national symbols, laws, institutions and ceremonies. We can promote national pride by supporting our national teams and clubs when they engage in international sports and games. We can also promote national pride by taking active part in social activities such as general cleaning, neighbourhood protection, and other community activities.

**Defend the Constitution:** The defense of the constitution and other laws of the country is a very good attributes that a good citizen must have. We must expose people whose actions undermine the state and the constitution of the land. We must also resist all oppressive rules and all manner of disrespect for human rights, freedom and liberties. We can also defend the constitution by actively participating in all national exercises such as voting during the elections, participating in censuses, open fora and other discussions relating to good governance, constitutional review and amendments.

**Being respectful and tolerant to others views:** A good citizen must respect the rights, freedoms and legitimate (legal) interests of other people. He or she must desist from actions that may affect the welfare or interest of others. A good citizen must also tolerate the views, opinions, and beliefs of others in society. Showing respect and tolerance for each other’s views, opinions and beliefs will foster national peace, security and unity.

**Fostering national unity:** Fostering national unity, living in harmony, peaceful co-existences and good neighbourliness are good hallmarks of a citizen. Every citizen must aspire to live peacefully with their neighbours and other persons in society. This can be achieved when every Ghanaian understands each other at school, home, workplace, religious place of worship, and within the community.

**Paying of rates and taxes:** A good citizen must declare his or her income honestly to the appropriate and lawful agencies and pay all tax liabilities to the state. Personal income tax, value added tax, tolls and levies, import and export duties, corporate tax, and property rates are some key taxes and levies we must pay as citizens of Ghana. By paying our taxes, rates and levies, we are contributing to the provision of social amenities and supporting the government or assemblies to meet their expenditures.

**Good citizenship behaviors**

## **THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GHANAIAN CITIZENS**

Responsibilities are duties or roles that the state expects from its citizens. Every citizen

is expected to perform certain basic functions or duties as his or her contribution to the state. Right and responsibilities go together. There can be no rights without responsibilities. The citizen is equally obliged to perform certain duties in return for these services. The responsibilities expected of a citizen include the following:

**Showing loyalty to the state:**

The basic duty of a citizen is loyalty to his country. We owe it a duty as Ghanaians to hold allegiance (loyalty) to our country and be faithful at all times. This loyalty is what we express in our national anthem and pledge. Loyalty also requires that we hold dear the ideas of the state and be prepared to die for the common good of the country.

**Payment of taxes:**

Citizens must pay their taxes to the state in order to develop the country. We must be honest in declaring our actual income so that the tax collecting agencies of the state can properly assess us for taxation purposes.

**Participating in political activities:**

We must take part in all national elections e.g. Presidential and parliamentary elections. Citizens must also be prepared to form or join any political party in order to champion their welfare and interest. This will help us to express our opinions and take active part in the decision-making process in the country.

**Protection of state property:**

National assets (property) are acquired with the tax payer's money or loans; hence every citizen must help to protect them. State buildings, roads, schools, hospitals, water bodies (river, lakes, lagoons, and ponds and springs) and national parks must be safeguard for the future generations.

**Serving the nation:**

All citizens must work and serve the nation with zeal, happiness and enthusiasm. Doctors, teachers, sports' personalities, armed forces, civil and public servants as well as ordinary civilian must play part to move the nation forward. We must be willing to accept postings to any part of the country as part of a civic responsibility. This will make our services and God-given talents benefit all citizens of the state.

**Assisting national institutions:**

We must assist and co-operate with the police, armed forces and other institutions by providing them with information, data and material support. A good citizen must appear before a court or a committee of enquiry or lawful institutions to help in settling disputes

or cases. Passing vital information to the security agencies to enable them detect crime and apprehend all misfits (law breakers) in our society are our civic duty as Ghanaians.

**Being obedient to the laws of the state:**

A citizen of a country owes it a duty to obey the laws of the land. This is because laws are made to protect the interest of everybody. Therefore, we must obey the laws of the land (Ghana) as civic responsibility.

**Defending the 1992 Constitution of Ghana**

A citizen of Ghana is mandated by the 1992 Constitution to defend it at all times. This can be done by exposing people who are planning to overthrow constitutional Governments.

**Respecting the rights of others:**

Citizens should also respect the rights of other persons in society. They must ensure that they live peacefully with other people by being sensitive to their needs, plight, and circumstances.

**Voluntary Services**

A citizen is expected to offer his or her services to his nation. During communal labour in communities or towns, one is expected to offer his/her services free of charge. An individual must offer National Service to the country.

**REASONS WHY CITIZENS SHOULD PERFORM THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **MEANING OF FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS**

#### **What are Human Rights?**

##### **Fundamental Human Rights**

This means the basic rights that form the foundation of human liberty and dignity. Edmund Burke defines Fundamental Human Rights as the conditions which are inalienable to a person and which need to be protected by law. It is a birth right every individual is entitled to and cannot be denied.

Human rights are claims or demands, which every living person should have or be able to access or enjoy. It therefore goes without saying that when we say one has the right to live, it means no one has the power to take away the life of another person because it is his right to claim or have his life. OR Human rights are commonly understood as being those rights which are inherent to the human being.

The concept of human rights acknowledges that every single human being is entitled to enjoy his or her human rights without distinction as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

However, we sometime see that some people are deprived of the right to live e.g. Firing squad. One can be deprived of his/her right to live if he/she takes the right of life of somebody unlawfully or intentionally.

## **Characteristics of human rights**

There are five basic tenets underlying human rights as they apply to all people. Human rights are:

- ✓ Universal in that they belong to all people equally regardless of status. All people are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
- ✓ Inalienable in that they may not be taken away or transferred. People still have human rights even when their governments violate those rights.
- ✓ Interconnected because the fulfillment or violation of one right affects the fulfillment of all other rights.
- ✓ Indivisible as no right can be treated in isolation. No one right is more important than another.
- ✓ Non-discriminatory in that human rights should be respected without distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, color, age, national or ethnic origin, language, religion, sex, or any other status, which has the purpose or effect of impairing the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Rights are freedoms and privileges that every citizen of a country must enjoy unconditionally.

Rights are God given or natural privileges that must be provided by law and protected by the state. They are fundamental to the existing and survival of the human race.

Rights are provided for by the constitution or the laws of a country; hence they must be guaranteed, respected, and provided at all times.

## **Features of Rights**

1. They are claims on society.
2. They are obligations society has to fulfill
3. They are social demands.
4. They are supported by law.
5. They are entitlement of individual citizens.

## **Types of fundamental human rights**

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana recognizes certain rights, freedoms, and privileges which are generally termed Fundamental Human Rights.

The main rights and freedoms in most Constitutions are classified into:

1. Legal rights
2. Political rights
3. Economic rights
4. Natural rights
5. Social right.

### **Natural Rights**

Every individual citizen is entitled to life. The state or an individual cannot deprive one of his or her right to live in an unlawful manner. For an individual to enjoy these rights, he/she is entitled to basic freedoms.

These are:

- a) Freedom from torture and inhuman treatment
- b) Freedom of movement
- c) Freedom to join any religious group or body and to worship the way he/she likes without restraint
- d) Freedom to join any association formed for lawful purposes
- e) Freedom of speech.

### **Political Rights**

These rights are also called constitutional rights.

- a) it confers on an individual the right to vote and to seek political office in one's community or country
- b) It gives right to form a political party or join any political groups of one's choice.
- c) Every citizen has the right to participate fully in a government and criticize or to express his opinion on any issue

For an individual to enjoy political rights, every state must recognize the freedom of the individual to free speech and the right of assembly.

### **3. Economic Rights**

An economic right gives the individual the right to be employed or to work to earn a decent living.

- a) It confers on the individual the right to own land, business, houses and all forms of property.
- b) It also means that one should not be discriminated against on applying for a job on the grounds of sex, tribe, status etc.
- c) It also allows the individual the use of his lawfully acquired income to buy and own property he so desire.

Economic freedom enhances production distribution and consumption of products of society

### **4. Social Rights**

Social Rights refer to the privileges which enable one to use any public facility. These include:

- a) Educational Rights

A citizen has a right to be educated and in any school of his choice

### **5. Legal Rights**

- a) Legal rights confer on an individual the right to seek legal aid or have easy access to law to sue or be sued.
- b) Where the individual's rights have been abused unduly that individual should have the right to sue or be sued.
- c) Legal rights protect the individual from arbitrary arrest, detention without trial and banishment without any justification.
- d) It also protects the individual from unjustified abuse of power, oppression, coercion and inhuman treatment

Existence of Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice

This body is charged with dealing with all case of human abuses in the Ghanaian society. It deals with human right violations by individuals, the government and its

agencies. It is the official watchdog of human rights in Ghana. It is one of the provisions of 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution

### **Rights of a Student**

1. Right of access to school facilities
2. Right to join any student group or club of your choice
3. Right to be taught
4. Right to participate in classes
5. Right to school library and dining hall
6. Right to be assessed fairly, etc.

### **WAYS IN WHICH FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS CAN BE ABUSED**

#### **1.Domestic slavery:**

Engaging girls and boys below 18 years as labourers or domestic servants amounts to the abuse of their rights.

It is unlawful for any person to be held in slavery or servitude or perform forced labour as stated in the 1992 Constitution.

#### **2.Child labour:**

Every child has the right to the same positive treatment, maintenance and special care to develop his or her talent.

Therefore, it is wrong or unlawful to torture a child, force him or her to work under dangerous or risky conditions, punish, degrade or deprive him or her of education, health, social and economic benefits.

#### **3.Sex trade:**

This involves the use of children and under – aged girls as sex workers or prostitutes. It is an infringement of the right of an individual to be forced into any form of sex trade-prostitution, indecent forms of exposure, lesbianism or homosexuals.

#### **4.Discrimination:**

Discrimination means treating people in a bad way (unfair) or giving special consideration to others based on certain or conditions such as sex, ethnicity, religious considerations and status in society.



In Ghana, discrimination takes various forms and some of which are gender (sex), religions, social, political, ethnic, creed and economic status (wealth).

No individual should be given different treatment based on any of the considerations mentioned or listed above. This is because; all persons are equal before the laws of the state.

#### **5. Persons with disabilities:**

Many people with disabilities are subjected to many abuses.

This takes the form of looking down on them, not offering them job opportunities, and constructing buildings that are not friendly to them.

It is wrong to exploit the physically or mentally challenged persons in society.

#### **6. Depriving medical care of sick persons:**

Some people deprive sick persons of their right to medical care.

It is a constitutional right for any sick person to have access to medical care.

A sick person who cannot talk or give consent shall be deprived of medical treatment.

#### **7. Women and the weak in society:**

Women are abused on various grounds. Examples are beating, marital rape, female genital mutilation, widowhood rights, puberty rites, trokosi and discrimination.

#### **8. Bullying:**

In most basic and second cycle institutions, seniors give out harsh treatment to juniors for minor offences or for no apparent reason.

Bullying is against human rights and is punishable by school rules and regulations.

#### **9. Child kidnapping:**

Some individuals engage in kidnapping of children. Some of the children are sold to other people. They are used for minor jobs and some are deprived of education.

Those from rich homes are kidnapped and ransom (money) is demanded in exchange for the child.

#### **10. Child trafficking:**

Some children are sent to fishing communities along the River Volta where they are used for fishing expeditions. Some of them are deprived of education, food, clothing and adequate shelter. Others are sent to cocoa farms to work on farms.

## **CONDITIONS FOR CURTAILING FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS**

The privileges and rights of a citizen maybe denied or limited in:

### **1.Presidential Power**

The fundamental rights of a citizen can be curtailed for security reasons. Where national security is threatened, the President can invoke special powers conferred on him by the Constitution to restore law and order. Though parliamentary approval is necessary, this cannot prevent him from using the emergency powers to restore law and order. An example of Presidential power is the use of curfews.

### **2.Infirmity of Mind and Body**

Persons who are mentally and physically unsound have to be isolated from society. This limits their rights to exercise their freedom of movements etc.

### **3.Law Breakers**

The state has the right to prevent crime and to stop the activities of lawbreakers. When arrested, tried and found guilty, the state can curtail their movements through imprisonment.

### **4.Citizens with Certain Contagious Diseases**

This can easily spread, so here the state may limit one's freedom and rights. By keeping such people in isolated areas, they are prevented from exercising their right.

### **5.Non-Payment of Taxes**

Where an individual refuse to honour his tax obligations to the state, he can be detained and freedom limited. Again, refusing to pay T.V. license and water bills may attract disconnection or imprisonment.

### **6.Unlawful Attempt to Overthrow the Government**

Assembling in any way and possessing arms with a view to overthrow the constitution attract a death penalty when found guilty. Insurrection in the army and police are acts against the state. Culprits arrested may end up in jail. From the above we realize that the citizen has the right to make claims on the state. At the same time, the individual should also perform certain duties. Failure to oblige results in impositions of

- a) Imprisonment
- b) Restrictions
- c) Banishment

- d) Confiscation
- e) Death Penalty

## **REASON WHY HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE OCCUR IN GHANA**

Many people in Ghana are abused of their rights and freedom on daily basis.

Many reasons are assigned for these abuses.

Below are summaries of the reasons why human rights abuse still persists in Ghana:

### **1. Illiteracy:**

Those who are not educated formally are highly at risk to all forms of abuses.

This is because most of them have little knowledge of the rights and freedom they are entitled to. As a result, others take advantage of the situation to perpetuate all kinds of abuses against them.

### **2. Poverty:**

The high cost of litigation or seeking legal redress to one's problems or to fight abuse does not favour many poor people in society. The cost of soliciting or hiring the services of an attorney or a lawyer is far beyond the reach of many people in Ghana. As a result, many do not seek legal solutions to their problems.

### **3. Fear:**

Many people do not report abuses to the security agencies because they fear to bear the consequences of their actions. A raped victim, for example will not complain or report it for fear of the social stigma and isolation. Sometimes the attackers (abusers) threaten their victims with death and sever beatings.

### **4. Apathy:**

The desire by many abused persons to be less concerned about the situation does not help matters. The unwillingness to expose abusers and to fight for one's rights and freedom have contributed abuses in Ghana.

Many people have little or not trust for the institutions of state responsible for dealing with abuses. They keep their problem to themselves rather than exposing the perpetrators.

### **5. Experience from military regimes:**

Past military regimes and the experiences of human rights abuses have contributed to the continuous abuses by some state institutions.

#### **6.Lack of political representation:**

Democracy is associated with majority rule. The minority and vulnerable groups are not well represented at the national level and these open doors for some of their rights to be abused. Most laws enacted by the legislature or parliament seek the interest and welfare of the majority in Ghana with little regard for the minorities.

#### **7.Greed / lack of sympathy:**

Many adults abuse the right of children, women and the sick for their personal greed or lack of sympathy. For example, parents or guardians who give out their children to agents for fishing does so for their personal interest.

#### **8.Ignorance:**

Many people allow themselves to be abused due to ignorance of their rights and the laws that protect them. For example, children, women and sick persons are abused due to lack of information of their rights and freedom.

### **WAYS BY WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES CAN BE PREVENTED**

#### **1.Constitutional checks:**

The entire Chapter Five of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana is on the Fundamental Human Rights and Freedom. It gives Constitutional protection to individuals in the country.

The provisions in the Chapter Five are entrenched or rigid (very difficult to change) due to their importance and the significance in protecting human rights.

The Constitution also imposes its checks and balances on the three arms of government. For example, Parliament cannot make any law that affects the human rights of an individual in Ghana.

The Judiciary (courts) can declare the Executive (presidency) actions that affect the rights and freedom of the people as unconstitutional. They cannot be enforced by any state institution.

#### **2.The role of the courts:**

The courts must be ready to handle all cases of abuse. The High Court may direct or

order an individual or institution to perform certain functions or prohibit an illegal action. Our lawyers and judges must be fair, firm and impartial in the administration of justice

### **3. Practicing democratic system of government:**

In a democratic government, an aggrieved person can go to court and seek redress for all manners of human right abuse. But in military government, it is difficult to do so.

### **4. The role of Commission on Human rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)**

The 1992 Constitution established CHRAJ to investigate complaints of administrative injustices, abuse of power, corruption, and unfair treatment of an individual by a public officer or an institution. CHRAJ sees to it that the Rule of law is respected and observed.

### **5. The role of the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU):**

DOVVSU monitors and arrest individuals who abuse human rights of another person. They process cases of human rights abuses they have investigated in the law court. They also use their facilities to educate and inform pupils and students on what to do when their rights are abused by another person.

### **6. The role of the Federation of International Women Lawyers – Ghana (FIDA):**

FIDA service as an advocated body for women groups and abused persons.

It publishes newsletters, magazines, and pamphlets on the rights and freedom of persons mostly abused.

### **7. The role of National Council on Women and Development (NCWD):**

This is a national body responsible for protecting the interest of women in general. It is responsible for coordinating all issues on women in the country.

### **8. The role of Amnesty International:**

This is an international non-governmental organization that conducts research on human rights abuses. They also demand justice for those whose rights have been abused.

### **9. The role of Department and Social Welfare:**

Their role is to protect the rights of children and the vulnerable in society

### **10. The role of National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE):**

The NCC is mandated by the 1992 Constitution of Ghana to educate the public on their rights and freedom so that they can fight against all forms of human right abuses when they occur. They have helped learners' ad students to form Civic Clubs to enable them

address some human rights and freedom issues.

**11. Education:**

It is difficult to abuse the rights of persons when they are aware of their rights and freedoms.

**12. Enforcement of the law:**

The Ghana Police Service and other institutions must be equipped to effectively enforce law order to enhance the protection of human right and freedoms of Ghanaians.

**13. The role of the media:**

The media must also play their watchdog role by exposing all forms of abuse through their editorials or programmes. Radio, television, newspapers, and magazines must expose all forms of human rights abuse by highlighting them for the public.