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QUESTION:

IN ABOUT 2-PAGE REVIEW CHAPTER 15, "AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP". IN SALIENT ISSUES IN GOVERNMENT AND NIGERIA'S POLITICS, PAGES 194-200

AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP

Understanding pressure group

To mount pressure is to persuade someone into doing something. So therefore a pressure group is a formal or organized group that seeks to influence government policies or laws to their own advantage. The pressure is known as "the functional representation". They represent various sectors of the society based on their occupations or professions such as the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA). We also have ASUU (Academic Staff Union of Universities) that have interest in a better conditions of learning in Nigeria's universities. Pressure groups are defined as "interest groups, lobby groups, or even protest groups" according Arifowose (1999). These groups seeks to make government do their biddings. Through the right means and channel, they make the government listen to them and go the extent of influencing public policy, administration and structure or forms of government. These groups can be religious, political, educational, economic, and social and so on. Pressure groups and political parties may look similar but they are different. One of the distinction is that political parties have a wide range of policies but pressure groups have a specific policy. Political groups are more accountable for their action than pressure groups and are more formally organized. These differences does not means that they are not similar, they both seek to achieve certain social changes. The existence of pressure groups is to ensure that democracy work effectively and encourage participation from the citizens. Though pressure groups are important, problems can arise when a few groups become dominating. Compromise is necessary but if some pressure groups refuse to compromise, they may monopolize the democratic process by focusing on specific issues. Due to their selfish desires, they may alter government decisions not thinking about the government's limited resources.

TYPES OF PRESSURE GROUPS

1. Interest groups
2. Cause groups
3. Insider groups and outsider groups
4. Anomic groups
5. Associational groups and non-associational groups
  1. Interest groups, also known as sectional groups that represent people in the society. For example, the trade units such as CBI (Confederation of British Industry) and in

- Nigeria, Convention on Business Integration (CBI) known as the voice of business in the country.
2. Cause groups, also known as promotion groups that seek to promote a particular cause and also champion a particular social movement though the group might lack a formal structure for example, charities and environmental groups such as Amnesty International which champions human right. They can also aim to achieve a single objective like protesting about the expansion of airport, seaports etc.
  3. The pressure groups regularly contacted by the government are known as insider groups and have access to masters or legislators for example Nigeria Bar Association (NBA). They may have a high or low profile but they will influence government's decision. Outside groups on the other hand, have no access to government and look for other ways to make impact. They are radical in nature because they are denied by the government. Examples are Animal liberation Front, Earth liberation etc. these both groups change over time based on the government in power.
  4. Anomic groups are groups that do not have a predictable behavior as they work based on a situation or moment in the society. The group may not have an appropriate behavioral style, they may act violently.
  5. Associational groups are pressure groups that are usually registered with appropriate authorities while non-associational groups have no formal organization, they meet on the basis of kinship, family, tribal, social tradition or even race affiliations

- Functions of pressure groups
- a) They serve as a link between the government and the people and they sensitize the people on updated information.
  - b) They promote people's participation in government
  - c) They serve as a source of information to the government as they inform them on things they may not be aware of
  - d) They prevent the government from drifting into dictatorship
  - e) They act as watchdogs of the government and prevent them from oppressing the minority groups especially promotional pressure groups.
  - f) They mount pressure on government to implement policies that benefit citizens

#### Pressure Groups Lobbying

They are different strategies in which pressure groups achieve their goal including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy, and direct political action. Some pressure groups exert more influence than others for instance the civil rights groups, trade unions and professional associations are widely accepted more than newly-formed or single-issue pressure groups. They lobby in so many ways. They may lobby government officials directly which they may do through their family members. They can also sponsor bills in legislative houses and meet legislators to ensure the passage of bills.