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Chapter 15

To cause pressure is to persuade someone or compel a person into doing something. the goal to influence and put pressure on governmental institutions to bend this policies to their own advantage makes a pressure group arranged and formal. Pressure group promotes its interest regarding an issue its seeks to influence government decisions and policies. The pressure group is referred to as the functional representative. According to Anifowose (1999) Pressure group is described as interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups. Pressure groups exist to protect and enhance the interests of their members ( oyeleye, 1998), In other words they exist to ensure that government does their bidding. They also influence But public policy, administration, an even go a long way to determine political structures of the society and forms of government. Some of the examples of pressure groups in Nigeria are ASUU( Academic staff union for University) , Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and so on. Political parties and pressure groups may seem similar although they are different. The first difference is that political parties seek to gain power while pressure groups do not seek to gain power. Pressure groups narrow their goals while political parties have a wide range of policies. Adding to that, political parties more formally organised than pressure groups. However, the few differences pointed out does not mean that political parties and pressure groups don’t have anything in common. Pressure groups and political parties relate together to achieve certain social changes. Pressure groups exist to checkmate and make democracy better, to compensate for the tyranny of majority of people in the society. They also treat gaps in Democratic process , encouraged participations, and to enhance good accountability in our daily society. Pressure groups potentially beneficial to a Democratic society. Due to their own selfish interest, pressure is mounted to alter the direction of the government decisions, while not considering government limited resources. There are different types of pressure groups like the interest groups which is also seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society example, trade units for instance, CBI (Confederation of British industry)Known as the voice of business in the country. Looking at another type of pressure group called cause groups Which are promotion groups they seek to promote particular causes, for example, charities and environmental groups. The third type of pressure groups are inside out groups an outsider groups, inside out groups are regularly consulted by the government they have regular access to ministers or legislators example Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) While on the other hand outside groups have no access or links to the government and it's machineries. They have To use other ways to have impact. An example is the Animal Liberation Front. The 4th type of pressure group is the anomic groups Which are not guided by an appropriate behavioural style or rule, and they may sometimes act violently. Example protest, rioting, strikes an sometimes revolution are some of the means through which they induce pressure. The fifth one is the associational groups are known associational Groups. associational groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. Also, these groups have their own registered offices constitutions and so on. While none associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organisation, the arrangement and gathering are by virtue of kinship or even family attachment, social traditions, tribal or even race afflictions. There are many functions of pressure groups and they include the following ; One of the functions of pressure groups is that it served as a link between the government of the day and the people he governs which means that pressure groups stay up to date on relevant information and are able to sensitise the people on such matter and at the same time relate the government what the opinion of people is. Another function of pressure groups is that it promotes public participation in the activities of the government of the day, the activities of pressure groups therefore promote political participation and carries the citizenry along. Thirdly pressure groups our sources of information to the government . As the pressure groups lobby government on various fronts, the interaction offers the government valuable information on aspects of issues that they may not even be aware of. Pressure groups serve the function of criticism of governmental policies curtail any dictatorial tendency government may have. Again, pressure groups champion the rights of the underprivileged , especially promotional pressure groups. As They go about their activities, they ensure that the interests of minority groups are not trampled upon by the government. Thus, pressure groups act as common watchdogs on the government. Another function of pressure groups is that they are instrumental in the mounting of pressure on governments so that it can implement policies that are to the benefit of citizens. pressure groups put pressure on government to influence its policy, change a policy direction, withdraw entirely a particular quality that does not favour their members or citizenry. Pressure groups may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals, including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy, and direct political action example organised protests. Obviously, some pressure groups exact more influence than others. The degree to which such groups are able to achieve their goals may depend on their ability to be recognised as legitimate by the population, media, and by those in power. Pressure groups lobby in many ways. The lobby with governmental officials directly, they might sometimes lobby this government officials through friends, children and other relatives and also, pressure groups may sponsor bills in legislative houses and contact legislators to ensure the passage of the unapproved laws.