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CHAPTER 15

To mount pressure is to persuade someone or force someone into doing something. Therefore a pressure group is an organized body with a common interest whose fundamental aim is to put pressure on any governmental institution with the goal of influencing government policies and laws to its own advantage. A pressure group seeks to influence government policies and decisions.

The pressure group is referred to as “The functional representative “. This simply put various pressure groups to represent different sectors and giving them each functions. It is usually done through their occupations. Some examples include the

1.The Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) which represents the lawyers and solicitors

2.The Nigeria medical association (NMA) which represents the doctors interests.

There are various definitions to peer pressure as given by certain people. Anifowose(1999) says pressure group is described as “interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups “ According to Oyeleye 1998, pressure groups came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interests of their members or groups.

The main aim of the pressure group is to ensure that the government does what they want. Pressure groups influence both public policy, administration Etc. With the right steps and pressure using the right channels , the pressure groups are able to get what they want from the government.

Pressure groups can be religious, business related, educational, economic, social etc.

Pressure groups and political parties activities may sometimes seem similar but they’re quite different. Firstly, political parties seek to gain government powers, while pressure groups do no seek to gain power, all they are interested in is , is to influence political decisions. Secondly, political parties have a wide range of policies, whereas pressure groups narrow their goals. However, political parties and pressure groups relate together to achieve certain social changes.

The existence of pressure groups is to checkmate and make democracy better, also to inform debates among yourselves, to encourage participation’s, and to enhance good ability in our daily society. Pressure groups have their importance place in the scheme of things in a nation. There are various types of pressure groups. They include :

1.Interest groups

This group represents the people in the society. For example, the CBI (confederation of British industry) known as the voice of business in the country.

 2. Cause groups

These are promotion groups, which are involved in promoting particular causes. For example, charities and environmental groups.

3. Insider group and outsider groups

Insider groups have regular access to ministers. They are frequently consulted by the government. An insider group may however be high or low in profile, still it has an influence on government’s mission and vision. Outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries, they have other ways of impacting.

4. Anomic groups

This group have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and a situation in the society.

5. Associational group and non associational groups

Associations groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. These groups also have their own registered offices, constitutions and so on. Non associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization.