Chapter fifteen of ***Salient Issues in Government and Nigeria’s Politics***gives a rundown of the concept of pressure group. Pressure means to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something. A pressure group is a formal or 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. Promotion of interest is the aim of pressure groups. Pressure is also known as ***“The Functional Representative”.*** The term is a showcase of the idea that various pressure groups represent different sectors of society based on their functions. Customarily, they perform via their occupations or professions. There are various groups representing various professions in Nigeria. The Nigeria Bar Association, is an example.

Different scholars have given their opinions on the definition of pressure group. Anifowose defined it as “interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups”. “Pressure groups came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interest of their members or groups” opined Oyeleye,1998. Forms of pressure groups vary-religious,educational,ethnic-oriented,gender-sensitive,economic,social. Pressure groups impact policy making, administration, forms and political structures in society. Pressure groups get the attention of government by application of pressure through the right channels. Activities of political parties and pressure groups bear a semblance, however, they contrast. Whilst power gain is the aim of political parties, pressure groups influence political decisions. Pressure groups taper their goals but political parties have numerous policies. Accountability, is an attribute of political parties but pressure groups do not account for their actions. Pressure groups do not formally organize themselves, whereas, political parties do. In spite of differences, there are similarities between political parties and pressure groups. Both groups collaborate to achieve certain social changes. Pressure groups align their interests with political parties that can further their interests proficiently. The positivity attached to pressure groups is owing to their ability to check and improve democracy, to make amends for the despotic nature of people in the society. They also fill the gaps in democracy, organize debates, encourage participation in politics and intensify accountability in the society. Though the existence of pressure groups is good for democracy, problems spring up when few groups dominate over others. The interests of a few may override others. Also, for the determination of the common good, compromise is required to reach consensus. Rigidity and refusal to compromise on issues by pressure groups will lead to monopoly of the democratic process. Pressure groups have a disadvantage. Sometimes, pressure groups mount pressure on the government for fulfillment of their selfish interests not minding the limitations of the government. An example is the strike action many professional bodies embark on leading to citizens’ suffering and the constraint on government because of lack of funds to fulfill their demands. A variety of pressure group types exist. They include interest groups, cause groups, insider and outsider groups, anomic groups, associational and non-associational groups. Interest groups also known as sectional groups represent the people in the society. Also known as promotion groups, cause groups advance particular causes e.g environmental groups and charities. Any group that champions social movement is also seen as a cause group with or without a formal structure. They always have a singular goal. Government usually seek the opinions of insider groups. They easily legislators. Outsider groups have zero access to government. They make their mark differently. Usually, outsider groups are radical in nature because of denial of access to government. Both insider and outsider groups may switch positions depending on the government in power. Anomic groups are unpredictable and spontaneous. They have no moral guide and act violently. Associational groups are registered with appropriate state authorities. They have their own offices and constitution. Non-associational are the opposite of associational groups. They are not formally organized. Functions of pressure groups are numerous. They serve as a link between the government and the people. Promotion of participation in activities of government is a function of pressure groups. Pressure groups act as sources of information to government-the communicate the opinions of the citizenry to government. Government tend to have tyrannical tendencies and pressure groups act as a buffer to these tendencies. The interest of the minority in society are enhanced by pressure groups-they serve as government watchdogs and ensure minority rights are not trampled on. Legislation processes are influenced by pressure groups to the benefit of citizens. Different methods like lobbying of elected officials directly or through relatives, sponsoring of proposed bills and communication with legislators to ensure passage, media advocacy, direct political action are employed. The extent to which pressure groups can achieve their goals is determined by their acceptance legitimate by the public.

Chapter fifteen explicitly explains all there is to know about pressure groups. From definitions, what it is referred to, types, examples, similarities and differences with political parties, upsides and downsides to functions. A good read will give the reader a good grasp of the concept of pressure groups.

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