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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

Pressure is to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something. This makes a pressure group a formal or organised 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. The pressure group is referred to as "The functional Representative". This idea of various pressure groups represents different sectors of the society based on their functions. This is usually done through their occupations or professions. E.g. Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) represents the lawyers and solicitors, while Nigerian medical Association (NMA) represents doctor's interests. According to Anifowose (1999) pressure group is described as "interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups." Pressure groups could be religious, business-like, educational, ethnic-oriented, gender-sensitive, groups in Nigeria are: ASUU (Academic Staff Union for University), Afenifere, Oodua people's congress (representing the Hausa tribe), Nigerian Bar Association of Nigeria (NBA).

Pressure Groups and political parties' activities may sometimes appear similar, but they are different from each other. The distinction between political parties and pressure groups is that political parties seek to gain government powers; while pressure groups do not seek to gain power their aim is to influence political decisions. Political parties have a wide range of policies, whereas pressure groups narrow their goals. Also pressure groups are not actually accountable for any of their actions, while political parties do account for their actions. Political parties are more formally organised than pressure groups. Pressure groups and political parties relate together to achieve certain social changes. Pressure group's existence is to checkmate and make democracy better, to compensate for the tyranny of majority of people in the society.

Types of pressure groups

**Interest Groups:** This group is also seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society. For example, the trade unions, for instance, CBI (Confederation of British Industry) known as the voice of business in the country, and in Nigeria, Convention on Business integration (CBI).

**Cause Groups:** These groups are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes. For example, charities and environmental groups.

**Insider groups and outsider groups:** Insider groups are regularly consulted by the government. They have regular access to ministers or legislators. The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) is an example of such groups. An insider group may be high or low in profile; nevertheless they intend to have influence on government's mission and visions. On the other hand, outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. They have to use other ways to impact. Example this set of groups the animal liberation front which champions rights for animals, Earth liberation which argues for rights to earth exploitation and destruction. However, the insider and outsider group changes from time to time based on the party or government in power.

**Anomic groups:** Groups here have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and situation in the society.

**Associational group and Non-Associational Groups:** Associational groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. Non-associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization.

**Functions of pressure groups**

**Influencing legislation:** They are instrumental in the mounting of pressure on government so that it can implement policies that are to the benefit of citizens.

**Promotes Participation in Government:** it promotes public participation in the activities of government of the day. The activities of pressure groups promote political participation and carries citizenry along.

**Serving as source of information to Government:** They are sources of information to the government.

**Links Government to the people:** It serves as a link between the government of the day and the people it governs.

**Promoting of the interest of the minority:** pressure groups champion the rights of the under-privileged, especially promotional pressure groups.

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