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200 LEVEL

ASSIGNMENT

Summarize Chapter 15 of the textbook “SALIENT ISSUES IN GOVERNMENT AND NIGERIA’S POLITICS”

ANSWER

CHAPTER 15

UNDERSTANDING PEER GROUP

To mount pressure is to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something. This makes a pressure group 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 governmental policies and laws to its own advantage. The pressure group is referred to as ‘The Functional Representative.’ This is the idea that various pressure groups represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. For example, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), represents the lawyers and solicitors.

What pressure groups seek to achieve is to ensure that government does their biddings. And with some pressure through the right channels and means, pressure groups are able to make government listen to them. Some examples of pressure groups include; ASUU, NBA, NLC, CAN, etc.

Pressure groups and political parties' activities may sometimes appear similar but they are different from each other. The first distinction is that political parties seek to gain government powers, while on the other hand, pressure groups do not seek to gain power. Rather, their aim is to influence political decisions. Second, political parties have a wide range of policies, while pressure groups narrow down their goals. Also pressure groups are not actually accountable for any of their actions, while political parties do account for their actions. In addition, political parties are more formally organized than pressure groups. But they are similar in the sense that 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. While pressure groups have their importance in the scheme of things in a nation, there is a downside. Sometimes due to their own selfish interests, pressure is mounted to alter the direction of government decisions, while not considering government's limited resources.

Types of pressure groups

Interest groups: they represent the people in a society

Cause groups: these groups are promotion groups which seek to promote particular causes e.g. charities.

Insider group and outsider groups: insider groups are regularly consulted by the government. They have regular access to ministers or legislators e.g. Nigerian Bar Association. Outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. They have to use other ways to make impact e.g. Animal Liberation Front.

Anomic groups: these groups have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and situation in the society. They are not guided by appropriate behavioral style and may sometimes act violently.

Associational Groups and Non-Associational groups: They are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country.

Some functions of pressure groups include; it links government to the people, promotes participation in government, serving as sources of information to government, curtailing of dictatorial tendencies, promotion of the interest of the minority, influencing legislation and so on

Pressure groups may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals, including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy and direct political action. Some pressure groups exert more influence than the others. Pressure groups lobby in so many ways. They lobby with government officials directly or through friends, spouses, children and other relatives.