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**COURSE TITLE: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS**

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**Assignment: 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**

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*Understanding Pressure Group*

To mount pressure is to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something. A pressure promotes its interest regarding an issue; it seeks to influence government decisions and policies. The pressure group is referred to as “The functional representatives”. This is the idea that various pressure groups represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. This is usually done through their occupations or professions. For example, the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), represents the Lawyers and Solicitors, while Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) represents doctor’s interests. There is also the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) which champions the interests of academics and condition of learning in Nigeria’s universities. 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. In addition to that, these groups influence both public policy, administration, and even go a long way to determine political structures of the society and forms of government. In nature, these groups could be religious, business-like, educational, ethnic-oriented, gender-sensitive, economic, or social, among others. Some examples of pressure groups, in Nigeria are: ASUU (Academic Staff Union for University), Afenifere, Oodua People’s Congress (representing the Yoruba tribe), Arewa Consultative Forum, Arewa People’s Congress (representing the Hausa tribe), Nigeria Bar Association of Nigeria (NBA), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC). While pressure groups have their importance place in the scheme of things in a nation, there is some downside. Sometimes, due to their own selfish interest, pressure is mounted to alter the direction of government decisions, while not considering government’s limited resources.

*Types of Pressure Groups*

Interest Groups: This group is also seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society. Example, the trade units CBI (Confederation of British Industry) known as the voice of business in the country.

Cause groups: These groups are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes. For example, charities and environmental groups. Any group that champion’s social movement is also seen as “cause group”, even though the group lacks formal structure.

Insider Groups and Outsider Groups: Insider groups are regularly consulted by the government. They have regular access to ministers or legislatures. However, an insider group may be high or low in profile, nevertheless they intend to have influence on government’s mission and visions. They have to use other ways to have impact. However, the insider and the outsider group changes from time to time based on the party or governmental in power.