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SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 15

AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP

According to Maito S. Ajibowu Yekini, Understanding of Pressure Group he said that 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 government policies and laws to its own advantage. A pressure group promotes its interest regarding an issue; it seeks to influence government decisions and policies. Various pressure group represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. For example; the Nigeria Bar Association, represents the lawyers and solicitors, While Nigeria Medical Association, represents doctor’s interests.

According to Anifowose pressure group is described as interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups. ‘’Pressure group came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interest of their members or groups Oyeleye. Some examples of pressure groups, in Nigeria are: 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, NBA, Christian Association of Nigeria, Nigeria Labour Congress. Pressure group 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 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. For example, when some professional bodies go on strike citizens suffer and government might be incapacitated due to shortage of funds to meet the requirements of these association. ASUU and NMA may indeed have genuine agitations, but when they go on strike, they hold other stakeholders to ransom and insist that government accommodate their requests. The types of pressure groups are; Interest Groups, it represents the trade unit of the people in the society. Cause Groups, it helps to promote particular causes like charities and environmental groups. Insider Groups and Outsider Groups, this are groups are regularly consulted by the government.

The Nigeria Bar Association is an example of such groups. However, and insider group may be high or low in profile, nevertheless they intend to have influence on government’s mission and visions. However, the insider and Outsider group changes from time to time based on the party or government in power. Anomic Groups they have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and situation in the society. Associational Groups and Non-Associational Groups this groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country.

The Functions of Pressure Groups are; Links Government to the People. One of the functions of pressure groups is that it serves as a link between the government of the day and the people it governs. Another function of pressure groups is that it promotes public participations in the activities of government of the day. One of the functions of pressure groups is that it serves as a link between the government of the day and the people it governs. Another function of pressure groups is that it promotes public participations in the activities of government of the day. Some pressure groups engage in demonstrations and others measures to put their views across to the government. It also Serves as a Source of Information to the government. As the pressure group lobby government on various fronts, the interaction offers the government valuable information.

Curtailing of Dictatorial Tendencies, criticism of government policies curtail any dictatorial tendency government may have also, the activities of pressure groups ensures that governments do not perpetuate themselves in power thereby drifting into a dictatorship. Promotion of interest of the Minority, pressure group champion the rights of the under privileged especially promotional pressure groups. As they go about their activities, they ensure that the interests of minority groups are not trampled upon by the government.

Thus pressure groups act as watchdogs on the government. Influencing Legislature this function of pressure group is that they are instrumental in monitoring of pressure on government so that it can implement policies that are to the benefits of citizens. Pressure groups put pressure on government to influence its policy, change a policy direction withdraw entirely a particular policy that does not favour their members or the citizenry. Pressure groups lobbying this groups may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals, including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy, and direct political actions.

The degree to which such groups are able to achieve their goals may depend on their ability to be recognized as legitimate by the population, media, and by those in power. Pressure Groups lobby in so many ways. They lobby with government officials directly. For example, they lobby legislators, ministers and other government machineries.