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SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 15

A pressure group is 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.

Pressure group is referred to as Functional representative. What pressure group seeks to achieve is to ensure that government does their biddings. And with some pressure in the right channel and means, pressure groups are able to make government listen to them. Pressure group came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interest of their members or groups.

Some example of pressure groups in Nigeria is: ASUU (Academic staff union for universities), CAN (Christian association of Nigeria), NLC (Nigeria labour congress), NMA (Nigeria medical association), NBA (Nigeria bar association) etc.

It is important to note that pressure group and political parties are different from each other because of the following reasons:  
 (1) Political parties seems to gain powers, while pressure group do not seek to gain power but instead influence political decision.

(2) Pressure groups are n or accountable for any of their action while political parties do account for their action. Pressure group and political parties also have some things in common e.g. they relate together to achieve certain goals etc. Sometimes, due to their own selfish interest, pressure is mounted to alter the direction of government decision, while not considering government limited resources.

TYPES OF PRESSURE GROUPS

1. Interest group – They represent the people in the society e.g. CBI (Confederation of Business Industry) known as the voice of business in the country, and in Nigeria.
2. Cause group – These group seek to promote particular causes e.g. Charity and environmental groups. Any group that champions as social movement is also seen as cause group, even though the group lacks formal structure. Cause group is always aimed at achieving a single objective like protesting about the expansion of airports, seaports etc.
3. Insider and Outsider group – Insider group are regularly consulted by government. They have regular ministers or legislators. An insider group may be of high or low profile. Outsider groups can access or links to the government and they use other ways to have impact. They are radical in nature b ecause they are always denied by the government e.g. Animal Liberation Front.
4. Anomic group – This group work based on the movement of situation in the society. The means through which they mount pressure is: Protesting, rioting, strikes and revolution.
5. Association Groups and Non-Association groups – Association groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. On the other hand, non-associational group are pressure group without a formal organisation.

FUNCTIONS OF PRESSURE GROUP

1. It serves a link between the government and the people
2. It promotes public participation in the activities of the government
3. They are sources of information to the government
4. Pressure group ensures that government do not perpetuate themselves in power thereby drifting into dictatorship
5. They ensure that the interests of the minority groups are not trampled upon by the government.

PRESSURE GROUP LOBBYING

To lobby means to influence government officials. Lobbying is one of the various strategies that pressure groups may adopt to achieve their goals. Pressure group lobby with governmental officials directly. Example, they lobby legislators, ministers and government machineries. Also pressure group may sponsor bills in legislative houses and contact legislators to ensure the passage of the bills