Name : Agim Amarachi Sarah

Department: Public health

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Chapter 15

The title of this chapter is “An Overview of the Idea of Pressure Group.” It takes us into understanding the concept of pressure groups, highlights and explains the types of pressure groups, as well as the functions they perform.

According to this article by Maito S. Ajibowu-Yekini, “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.” This gives the reader a general idea as to what pressure and pressure groups are. Pressure groups seek to ensure that government does their biddings. They influence both public policy, administration, and even go a long way to determine political structures of the society and forms of government. Their existence is for the better interest of the people and to make democracy better to compensate for the inadequacies of the government.

Next up, the types of pressure groups were addressed. These include interest groups, cause groups, insider and outsider groups, anomic groups, and associational and non-associational groups. Interest groups represent the people in the society like trade units, while cause groups are promotion groups which seek to promote particular causes like charities and environmental groups. Insider groups are regularly consulted by the government and can be high or low in profile. On the other hand, outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. They have to use other ways to have impact. Anomic groups, however, have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and situation in the society. Finally, we have the associational and non-associational groups. Associational groups are usually registered and have their own offices and constitutions. However, non-associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization.

Furthermore, the functions of pressure groups have to be faced. These include how they link the government to the people, how they promote participation in government; serve as sources of information to the government; curtail dictatorial tendencies; promote the interest of the minority; how they influence legislation, and how they lobby. All these functions they perform are all in the favor of the citizens; to promote the interest of the general public. Examples of these pressure groups are civil rights groups, trade unions, and professional associations.