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 CHAPTER 15

Pressure group is a formal or organized body with a common interest whose fundamental aim is to put pressure on any government institution with the goal of influencing government policies and laws to its own advantage. The pressure group is referred to as “The Functional Representatives”. It represents different sectors of the society based on their functions. According to Anifowose (1999) pressure group is described as “interest groups, lobby groups, or even protest groups.” pressure groups is to seek achieve to ensure that government does their buildings. Pressure group came into existence to complement, enhance or even protect the interest of their members or groups. Pressure groups and political parties activities may sometimes appear similar, but they are different from each other. The distinction between them is that political parties seek to gain government powers, while pressure groups do not seek to gain power. rather, their aim is to influence political decisions. Pressure groups and political parties relate together to achieve certain social changes. 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 are acknowledged as potentially beneficial to a democratic society, problem can arise when the democratic process becomes dominated by few specific groups. 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 instance when some professionals bodies go on strike citizens suffer and government might be incapacitated due to shortage of funds to meet the requirement of these association ASUU and NMA.

TYPES OF PRESSURE GROUPS

Interest groups: the individuals in this group is also seen as sectional group, representing the people in the society. For example, the trade units, for instance, CBI.

Cause groups: they are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes for instance charities and environmental groups. the group lacks formal structure but it is always aimed at achieving a single objectives like expansion of airports etc

Insider groups and outsider groups: the insider groups tend to have influence on government’s mission and visions and they are regularly consulted by the government. Outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. The insider and outside group changes from time to time based on the party or government in power.

Anomic groups: these groups have unpredictable actions and behaviour as they work based on the moment and situation in the society. these groups are not guided by an appropriate behavioural style or rule.

Associational groups and Non-Associational groups: Associational groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. Non- associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization.

FUNCTIONS OF PRESSURE GROUPS

Links government to the people: it serves as a link between the government of the day and the people it governs.

Promotes participation in government: it promotes public participation in the activities of government of the day.

Serving as sources of information to government: they are sources of information to the government

Curtailing of dictatorship tendencies: ensures that governments do not perpetuate themselves in power thereby drifting into a dictatorship.

Promotion of the interest of the minority: ensure that the interests of the minority groups are trampled upon by the government.

Influencing legislation and pressure groups lobbying.