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ASSIGNMENT

Do a review on chapter 15 (2 pages) in salient issues in government and Nigeria's Politics.

Pressure group

This is an association of a group of people with common interest who tries to achieve their aim or interest by influencing the government. Various pressure groups represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. For example; Academic Staff Union Universities (ASUU). This group champions the interests of academics and conditions of learning in Nigerian Universities.

According to Anifowose 1999,describes pressure groups as interest/lobby/protest groups. Another Scholar Olaleye (1998) believes that Pressure groups came into existence in order to complement,enhance or protect the interest of their members.

Pressure groups are sometimes likened to political parties but it should be noted that they are different from each other. Political parties seeks to gain government power while pressure groups aim is to influence political decisions.

Upon the difference in pressure groups and political parties they still have something in common with eachother which is they both relate with eachother in other to achieve certain societal changes.

Pressure groups has various purposes in human existence and society;

- Pressure groups existence is to checkmate and make democracy better.

- They are also to compensate for the tyranny of majority of people in the society.
- Also the pressure groups are to treat the gaps in the democratic process. To inform debates among ourselves, to encourage participation and to enhance good accountability in our daily society.

Pressure groups are acknowledged as potentially beneficial to a democratic society, problems can arise when the democratic process becomes dominated by a few specific groups. If pressure groups remains rigid and refuses to compromise on specific issues they could monopolise the democratic process by focusing public debate on a few specific issues.

In every advantages there is always disadvantages. Due to their personal interest, pressure is mounted to alter the directions of government decisions. Just like the ASUU when they go on strikes they also hold other stake holders to ransom and also insists and ensure that the government grants their wish.

There are various types of pressure groups which includes:

1. Associational groups and Non- associational groups: The first are registered under appropriate authorities and as well has their registered office. While the latter are pressure groups without a formal organization.
2. Anomic groups: These group are unpredictable and are not guided by an appropriate behavioural style. This group sometimes acts violently . Through protests, rioting and strikes they mount pressure.
3. Interest groups: This group represents people the people in the society. An example is CBI (Confederation of British Industry).
4. Cause group: This group is aimed at achieving a single objective,like protesting about the expansion of airports, railways and so on . This group seeks to promote particular causes. They are like charities and environmental groups.
5. Insider and outsider groups: The insider groups are consulted by the government. They also have influence on government missions and visions. An example of an Insider group is Nigeria Bar Association (NBA). While, the outsider groups has no access to the government. They are radical in nature and are mostly denied by the government. Example of an Outsider group is Earth Liberation Front. The two groups changes from time to time depending on the government in power.

Pressure groups has a lot of functions;

- They link governments to the people: Pressure groups serves as a link between the government and the people (public). Pressure groups are

always informed on current and important information and reports it to the public and as well to the government to give feedback on the public's opinion or say on the information.

- Promotes participation in Government: Pressure groups carry citizens along. They engage in demonstration and other measures to put their views across to the government.
- Influencing legislation: Pressure groups put pressure on the government to influence its policy, change a policy direction and also to withdraw an entire policy that doesn't favour their citizenry members.
- Serving as sources of information to Government: This is another major function of the pressure groups. They serve as a source of information to the government.
- Curtailing of dictatorial tendencies: Pressure groups make sure that governments are not in power for a long time because it could lead to dictatorship.
- Promotion of the interest of the minority : Pressure groups ensure that the interest of minority groups are not ignored by the government. They act as watchdogs on the government.
- Pressure groups lobbying: In order, to achieve their goals they lobby with governmental officials like the legislators, ministers and government machineries. They lobby these government officials through relatives, friends, spouses and so on .

In Conclusion,

Pressure groups is a formal or organised body with a common interest whose aim is to put pressure on governmental institution with the goal of influencing government policies and laws to its own advantage. Pressure groups seek to influence government decisions and policies.