**NAME: MBAMA CRYSTABEL ZINACHIDI.**

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 Chapter 15, "An Overview of the Idea of Pressure Group,"

Pressure group is a formal body with a common interest with the fundamental aim of putting pressure on governmental institution, with the aim of influencing governmental policies and laws to its own personal advantage. It represents different sectors of the society based on their own functions. They are usually formulated through their occupations, for instance lawyers and solicitors represent their interests through the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), the medical doctors represent their interests through the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), the Academic Staff Union for University also represent their interests through the (ASUU). According to Anifowose, pressure group can be described as the interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups. Pressure groups basically exists to checkmate the activities of the government and to make democracy better.

Pressure groups are acknowledged as potentially beneficial to a democratic society, problems can arise when the democratic process becomes dominated by a few specific people. Some examples of pressure groups in Nigeria are; Academic Staff Union for University (ASUU), the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). It should be duely noted that pressure groups are not accountable for any actions taken by then, for instance, during elections, you vote for a political party to hold them accountable but in pressure groups, they not accountable for their actions.

There are various types of pressure groups. *The* *interest group*; this group is a group that represents the society at large, e.g the CBI (Confederation of British Industry). Secondly, *The cause groups*; these are promotion groups, they seek to promote a particular cause, for example charity and environmental groups. *The* *insider groups and outsider groups*; insider groups are consulted by the government e.g the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA). The outsider’s groups on the other hand have no access to the government and its machineries. Next, the *anomic groups*; the anomic groups have unpredictable actions and behaviours because they work based on the moment and situation of the society. Lastly, *The associational groups and non-associational groups*; the associations groups are usually registered with the appropriate authorities in a state or a country, they also have their own registered offices and constitution while the non-associational groups on the other hand, are pressure groups without a formal organization. Their arrangements are usually based on virtue of kinship or family attachments, social traditions and so on.

These are few various functions of pressure groups:

The pressure groups serve as links of the government to the people. Pressure groups stay up to date on relevant information and are able to sensitise the people on such matters. Pressure groups participates in government. They promote public participation in the activities of government of the day, the activities of pressure groups therefore, promote political participation and carries the citizenry along. The pressure groups serve as sources of information to government. They curtail dictatorial tendencies; criticism of government policies curtails any dictatorial tendency government may have. The pressure groups promote the interest of the minority. The pressure groups champion the rights of the under-privileged. They influence the legislation; they are instrumental in the mounting of pressure on government so that it can implement policies that are to the benefit of the citizen.

Pressure groups adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy, and direct political action. Pressure groups lobby in varieties of ways, they could even lobby with governmental officials directly all in the quest to achieve their stated aim or goal.