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CHAPTER 15( AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP)

The fifteenth chapter of the book” SALIENT ISSUES IN GOVERNMENT AND NIGERIA’S POLITICS” is tagged “ AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP” BECAUSE IT GIVES A DEEP INSIGHT OF WHAT A PRESSURE GROUP IS. According to the first paragraph of this chapter to mount is to persuade or coerce a person into doing something . This makes pressure groups 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. Examples of some of these pressure groups include the Nigerian Bar Association(NBA) , Nigerian medical association (NMA), Academic staff union of universities (ASUU). Some definitions of what pressure groups are and what they entail by different scholars such as Anifowese who describes pressure groups as interest group, lobby groups or even protest groups were stated.

Pressure groups and political parties activities can sometimes seem to be similar but are in fact different from each other. The first difference is that political powers aim to gain power while pressure groups do not aim at gaining power . Secondly political parties have a wide range of policies while the pressure groups have clear cut out narrowed down goals they intend to achieve. Thirdly unlike political parties who have to give account for their doing pressure parties do not have to give an account for what they do. Further more political parties are more formally organized than pressure groups . Despite the many differences pressure groups and political parties do have similarities . Pressure groups exist to better the democracy of a state and to compensate for tyranny in the state. Despite the numerous positive impacts pressure groups have in the society there is a disadvantage that can arise when the democratic process becomes dominated by a few specific groups. Sometimes members of the pressure groups also use the groups for their own personal and selfish interests .

According to the chapter there are different types of pressure groups. Firstly interest groups. These are groups seen as sectional groups representing the people in the society for example the trade units. Secondly the cause groups are promotional groups who seek to promote particular causes . For example charities and environmental groups. Thirdly insider groups and outsider groups. Inside groups are those groups regularly consulted by the government while the outside groups are those groups that have no source of contact with the government . Also Anomic groups are groups which have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and the situation in the society. Lastly Associational groups and non associational groups . Associational groups are groups registered with the appropriate authorities in the state while while non associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization.

The functions of pressure groups spilled in this book includes linking the government to the people, promotion of participation of government , serving as sources of information to the government, curtailing of dictatorial tendencies, promotion of the interests of the minority , influencing legislation and lastly lobbying.

What pressure groups are, the types and the function were adequately spilled out for proper understanding in this chapter . With this the phrase pressure groups has been broken down for proper understanding and further research .