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QUESTION: Summarize Chapter 15 in about 2 pages.

PRESSURE GROUPS

Pressure group, also referred to as “The Functionalist Representative,” is a formal or organized body with a common interest whose aim is to put pressure on any governmental institution with the goal of influencing government policies and laws to its own advantage. These groups influence public policy, administration and determine political structures of the society and forms of government. Some examples of pressure groups in Nigeria include; Academic Staff Union for University (ASUU), Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and so on.

Although pressure group may appear similar to a political party, there are numerous differences between the two. Firstly, the aim of a political party is to acquire governmental power whilst the aim of a pressure group is to influence political decisions. Also, political parties have a wide range of policies, whereas, pressure groups narrow their goals. In addition, pressure groups are not actually accountable for any of their actions but political parties are accountable for theirs. Fourthly, political parties tend to be more formally organized than pressure groups. Despite these differences, a pressure group may align its interest with that of a political party that is believed to possess the capability to further their interest.

There are various reasons for the existence of a pressure group. Some of which include; to protect the minority from the tyranny of majority's of people in the society, to improve the democratic process in the society, to treat the gaps in the democratic process, to tackle political apathy by encouraging participation in the democratic process and so on. In spite of the fact that pressure groups are very essential for the smooth running of the government, some problems may arise in the process of carrying out their activities.

FUNCTIONS OF PRESSURE GROUPS

Links government to the people; pressure groups often serve as a link between the government and the governed. Through their ability to always stay informed, they are able to educate the government on the happenings in the society.

Promotes participation in government; pressure groups help to promote public participation in the activities of the government. The activities of pressure groups promote political participation and ensure the citizens are up to date in the activities of the government.

Serving as sources of information to governments; pressure groups offer the government valuable information on issues they may not be aware of.

Curtailing of dictatorial tendencies; pressure groups criticize the activities of government as well as ensure that the government does not perpetuate themselves in power.

Types of Pressure groups

Associational Pressure Groups

This groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. They have their own registered offices constitutions and so on. They are organizations that are formal.

Non-Associational pressure groups

This are non formal organizations, their arrangements and gathering are by virtue of kinship or even family attachments, social traditions, tribal or even race afflictions and so on.

Anomic pressure groups

They have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and situation I. The society, they are not guided by behavioral style or rule.

Institutional pressure groups

This are groups where by the members are made up of professionals e.g lawyers (attorneys) journalists, doctors e.t.c

LOBBYING IN PRESSURE GROUPS.

The use of lobbying also serves as a function because it is also an instrument being used by members of the pressure groups.so that it can implement the interest of the citizens. Pressure groups lobby in so many ways. They loony with governmental officials directly .They may lobby government officials directly or indirectly, that is, through their friend spouses, children and so on. Also, pressure groups may sponsor bills in legislative houses and contact legislators to ensure the passage of bills.