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* **Review of Chapter 15 – An overview of the idea of pressure groups**

**UNDERSTANDING PRESSURE GROUPS.**

To mount pressure is to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something. This makes a pressure group a formal or organized body with common interest whose fundamental aim is to put pressure on any governmental institution with the goal of influencing government laws and policies to its own advantage. A pressure group promotes its interest regarding a issue; it seeks to influence government decisions and policies. The pressure group is referred to as ‘The Functional Representative’. Examples of pressure groups ; the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), represents the lawyers and solicitors, while Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), represents doctor’s interests, while Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) represents the interests of academics and condition of learning in Nigerian universities.

According to Anifowoshe (1999), pressure group is described as “interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups.”

Oyeleye, 1998: Pressure groups came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interest of their members or groups.

What pressure groups seek to achieve is to ensure the government does their bidding and through the right channels and means, this is made possible.

Pressure groups and political parties’ activities may sometimes appear similar, but they are different from each other. Distinctions may include: political parties seek to gain government powers while on the other had pressure groups do not seek to gain power but rather to influence government decisions, political parties have a wide range of policies whereas pressure groups narrow their goals, pressure groups are accountable for their actions while political parties are not.

Pressure groups existence is to checkmate and make democracy better to compensate for the tyranny of majority of people in the society. Also, to treat the gaps in the democratic process, to inform debates among ourselves, to encourage participations, and to enhance good accountability in our daily society.

**TYPES OF PRESSURE GROUPS**

1. Interest Groups: This groups are seen as sectional groups that represent the people in a society. For example, the trade units CBI Confederation of British Industry which is known as the voice of business in Nigeria.
2. Cause Groups: These groups are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes. For example, charities and environmental groups. For example, we can see the Amnesty International, which campaign for the need to ed human right abuses. The group is always aimed at achieving a single objective.
3. Insider Groups and Outsider Groups: Insider groups are regularly consulted by government and they have regular access to ministers or legislators for example, NBA the Nigerian Bar Association. On the other hand, outsider groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. For example, the Animal Liberation Front which champions rights for animals.
4. Anomic Groups: Groups here have unpredictable actions and behaviour as they work based on the moment and situation of society.
5. 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**

1. Links government to the people: it stays up to date on relevant information and are able to sensitize people on such matter and at the same time relate to the government what the opinion of the people is.
2. Promotes participation in government: some of them engage in demonstrations and other measures to put their views across to the government.
3. Serving as sources of information to the government: as the lobby government on various fronts, the interaction offers the government valuable information on aspects of issues they may not even be aware of
4. Promotion of the interest of the minority.
5. Influencing legislation.