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SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 15

To mount pressure is to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something to mount pressure is to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something. This makes a pressure group a formal or organised body with a common interest whose fundamental aim is to put pressure on any governmental institution with the goal of influencing government policies and laws to its own advantage. A pressure group promotes its interest regarding an issue; it seeks to influence government decisions and policies. The pressure group is referred to as The Functional Representative. "This is the idea that various pressure groups represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. This is usually done through their occupations or professions, for example, the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), represents the Lawyers and Solicitors, while Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) represents doctor s interests. There is also the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) which champions the interests of academics and condition of learning in Nigeria's Universities. According to Anifowose (1999) pressure group is described as "interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups. "Pressure groups came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interest of their members or groups (Oyeleye, 1998). What pressure groups seek to achieve is to ensure that government does their biddings. And with some pressure through the right channels and means pressure groups are able to make government listen to them. In addition to that, these groups influence public policy, administration and even go a long way to determine political structures of the society and forms of government. In nature, these groups could be religious. Businesses like, educational ethnic - oriented, gender - sensitive, economic, or social, among others. Some examples of pressure groups, in Nigeria are: ASUU (Academic Staff Union for University). Ifere, Oodua People's Congress (representing the Yoruba tribe.) Atem Consultative Forum Arewa People's Congress (representing the Hausa tribe), Nigeria Bar Association of Nigeria (NBA). Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) Pressure Groups and political party's activities may sometimes appear similar, but they are different from each other. The first distinction is that political parties seek to gain government powers; while on the other hand, pressure groups do not seek to gain power. Rather their aim is to influence political decisions. Second, political parties have a wide range of policies, whereas pressure groups narrow their goals. Also pressure groups are not actually accountable for any of their actions, while political parties do account for their actions. For example, when you vote for a political party during election period that is to make them accountable. In addition, political parties are more formally organised than pressure groups. However, these differences do not point to the fact that pressure groups and political parties have nothing in common they do. In fact, pressure groups and political parties relate together to achieve certain social changes, Pressure groups may align their interest with that of certain political parties that are believed to possess the capability to further their interests, Pressure group "s 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. However, while 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. In this situation, the voice of a small group of people with narrow interest can become overly influential. Moreover, in the democratic process, there is a need for compromise in order to reach consensus regarding the common good. If pressure groups remain rigid and refuse to compromise on specific issues, they can potentially monopolise the democratic process by focusing public debate on a few specific issues. While pressure groups have their importance place in the scheme of things in a nation, there is some downside.

Sometimes, due to their own selfish interest, pressure is mounted to alter the direction of government decisions while not considering government's limited resources. For example, when some professional bodies go on strike citizens suffer and government might be incapacitated due to shortage of funds to meet the requirements of these association. ASUU and NMA may indeed have genuine agitations, but when they go on strike, they hold other stakeholders to ransom and insist that government accommodate their requests.

Types of Pressure Groups

Interest Groups This group are also seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society. For example, the trade units, for instance, CBI (Confederation of British Industry) known as the voice of business in the country, and in Nigeria, Convention on Business Integration (CBI). **Cause Groups** These groups are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes, For example, charities and environmental groups. For instance, we can see the Amnesty International, which campaign for the need to end human right abuses. Any group that champions social movement is also seen as cause group, even though the group lacks formal structure. It is always aimed at achieving a single objective, key protesting about the expansion of airports, Seaports, railways, etc., just to mention few

Insider Groups and Outsider Groups Inter groups are regularly consulted by the government. They have regular access to ministers or legislators. The Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) is an example of such groups. However, an insider group may be high or low in profile; nevertheless, they intend to have influence on government's mission and visions. On the other hand, outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. They have to use other ways to have impact. Example this set of groups are the Animal Liberation Front which champions rights for animals, Earth Liberation Front, which argues for rights to earth exploitation and destruction

Groups in this category are radical in nature because they are mostly denied by the government. However, the Insider and Outsider group changes from time to time based on the party or government in power. Anomic Groups here have unpredictable actions and behaviour as they work based on the moment and situation in the society these groups are not guided by an appropriate behavioural style or rule, and they may sometimes act violently. Protest, rioting, strikes, and sometime revolution are some of the means through which they mount pressure.

Associational Groups and Non - Associational Groups Associational groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. Also, these groups have their own registered offices, constitutions and so on. On the other hand, non-associational groups are pressure group without a formal organisation. Their arrangement and gathering are by virtue of kinship or even family attachment, social traditions, tribal or even race afflictions, just to mention few.

Functions of Pressure Groups

Links Government to the People One of the functions of pressure groups are that it serves as if between the governments of the day and the people it governs. Pressure groups stay up to date on relevant information and are able to sensitise the people on such matter and at the same time relate to the government what the opinion

of the people is. Link Promotes Participation in Government Another function of pressure groups is that it promotes public participation in the activities of government of the day. Some pressure groups engage in demonstrations and other measures to put their views across to the government the activities of pressure groups therefore, promote political participation and carries the citizenry along. Serving as Sources of Information to Government.

Another function of pressure groups is that they as sources of information to the government. As the pressure groups lobby government on various fronts, the interaction offers the government valuable information on aspects of issues they may not even be aware of. Curtailing of Dictatorial Tendencies Criticism of government policies curtail any dictatorial tendency government may have. Also, the activities of pressure groups ensure that governments do not perpetuate themselves in power thereby resulting into a dictatorship. Promotion of the Interest of the Minority

Again, pressure groups champion the rights of the under - privileged, especially promotional pressure groups, as they go about their activities, they ensure that the interests of minority groups are not trampled upon by the government. Thus, pressure groups act as watchdogs on the government. Influencing Legislation Another function of pressure groups is that they are instrumental in the mounting of pressure on government so that it can implement policies that are to the benefit of citizens. Pressure groups put pressure on government to influence its policy, change a policy direction withdraw entirely a particular policy that does not favour their members or the citizenry. Pressure Groups Lobbying Pressure groups may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals, including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy, and direct political action (e.g., organised protests). Clearly, some pressure groups exert more influence than others. The degree to which such groups are able to achieve their goals may depend on their citizenry.

Also, Pressure groups may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals, including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy and direct political action (e.g., organised protests). Clearly, some pressure groups exert more influence than others. The degree to which such groups are able to achieve their goals may depend on their ability to be recognised as legitimate by the population, media, and by those in power. For example, civil rights groups, trade unions, and professional power. Associations are more widely recognised and accepted than newly formed pressure groups or single - issue pressure group. Pressure Groups lobby in so many ways. They lobby with governmental officials directly. For example, they lobby legislators, ministers and other government machineries. They might sometimes lobby these government officials through friends, spouses, children and other relatives. Also, pressure groups may sponsor bills in legislative houses and contact legislators to ensure the passage of the bills.