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MATRIC NUMBER: 19/MHS01/306

DEPARTMENT: Medicine and Surgery

COURSE: GST 203 – government

In about 2 pages review chapter 15 in salient issues in government and Nigeria’s politics.

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 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. This is usually done through their occupations or professions. E.g. Nigeria bar association {NBA} represents lawyers and solicitors, Nigeria medical association {NMA} represents doctor’s interests. What pressure groups seek to achieve is to ensure that government does their biddings. And some pressure through the right channel and means, pressure groups are able to make government listen to them. In nature these groups could be religious, business-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}, CAN {Christian association of Nigeria}, and NLC {Nigeria labor congress}. Pressure groups and political parties’ 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 power, and rather they aim to influence political decisions. In addition political parties are more formally organized than pressure groups. However these differences do not point to the fact that pressure groups and political parties have nothing in common, they do pressure groups and political parties relate together to achieve certain social changes. Pressure group’s existence is to checkmate and make democracy better, to compensate tyranny of majority of people in the 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. While pressure groups have their importance place in the scheme of things in a nation, there is a downside. Sometimes due to their own selfish interest, pressure is mounted to alter decisions, while not considering government’s limited resources. Types of pressure groups we have: interest groups, this group is also seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society e.g. the trade units. We also have case groups, these groups are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes, for example, charities and environmental groups. For instance amnesty international, which campaign for the need to end human right abuses. Any group that campaigns social movement is also seen as a cause group. We also have insider groups and outsider groups, they are regularly consulted by the government. They have regular access to ministers or legislators. The Nigeria bar association is an example of such groups. However an insider group may have a high or low profile, nevertheless they intend to have influence on government missions and visions. On the other hand, outsider groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. Examples of this set of groups are animal liberation front, earth liberation front. We also have anomic groups, groups here have unpredictable actions and behaviors as they work based on the moment and situation in the society. These groups are not guided by an appropriate behavioral style or rule, and they may sometimes act violently. Lastly we have associational groups and non- associational groups, they 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 groups without formal organization. Functions of pressure groups: one of the functions of pressure groups is that they serve as a link between the government of the day and the people it governs, another function of pressure groups is that it promotes public participation in the activities of government of the day, another function of pressure groups is that they are sources of information to the government, criticism of government policies curtail any dictatorial tendency government may have, pressure groups champion the rights of the under privileged especially promotional pressure groups. 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 of benefit to the citizens. Pressure groups may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals, including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy, and direct political action. 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 recognized as legitimate by the population. Pressure groups lobby in so many ways, they lobby with governmental officials directly, and they might sometimes lobby these government officials through friends, spouses, children and other relatives. Also, pressure groups may sponsor bills in legitimate houses and contact legislators to ensure the passage of the bills.