

A two page review on chapter 15

An Overview of the Ideal of Pressure Group

A pressure group is an organised body with a common interest to pressure or persuade a government institution with the goal of influencing government policies and laws to its own advantage. With regards to an issue, the Pressure Group promotes their interests through constant seeking to influence government decisions and policies to their advantage.

The Pressure Group is referred to as the “Functional Representative” because, it represents different sectors of the society based on their individual functions, like their occupations and professions. For instance, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) is a pressure group that represents Lawyers and Solicitors in Nigeria.

Anifowoso (1999) described pressure group as “interest groups, lobby groups, or even protest groups”. These groups originated because of the need to complement, enhance or even to protect the interests of their members or groups. (Paraphrased, Oyeyeye 1998).

Pressure groups also influence public policy, administration, and also determine political structures of the society and forms of government.

Pressure Groups and Political Parties may have features that seem to look alike, however, it should be noted that they differ from one another. Political Parties seek to gain government power unlike the Pressure Groups which merely want to influence political decisions. Also, political parties have a variety of policies whereas pressure groups narrow down their goals. It was explained that Pressure Groups are not accountable for any of their actions, while political parties do account for their actions.

An advantage of the existence of these groups is that they keep the government in check and help make democracy better to compensate for the tyranny of the majority of people in the society. The downside is that, due to them pursuing their own selfish interests, pressure is mounted to alter the direction of government decisions while not considering the scarcity of resources to satisfy these objectives.

Some types of Pressure Groups were considered in this chapter. The Interest group was seen as the sectional group, representing the people in the society. The Cause groups championed social movements usually aimed at achieving a singular objective. Then also were the insider and outsider groups. The former intend to have influence on the government missions and visions. These are regularly consulted by the government. However, the latter have no links with the government and its machineries; they are radical in nature because they are mostly denied by the government. Both groups are dependent on the party in power in order to function.

Also, Anomic groups have unorthodox behaviours and actions all based on what is happening in the society per time. Among associational and non-associational groups, the former have their own registered offices and constitutions while the latter are a non-formal organisation without these elements.

Some functions of the Pressure Group have been mentioned during this summary already. Some others include that, they promote participation in government, serve as sources of information to the government to the government and promote the interest of the minority.

Pressure Groups practice lobbying as a way to achieve their goals. They are involved in things like direct protests, or lobbying government machineries by pacifying them through their own family and friends.