CHAPTER - II

THEORETICAL ASPECTS

In the theoretical frame work of democratic pluralism states are assumed to be neutral arbiters evaluating the claims of a vast number of possibly competing pressure groups in accordance with the national interest. States are assumed to attempt to represent the interests of societies as a whole rather than the interests of a narrow ruling class or ruling elite and pressure groups are said to make important contributing to the democratic process.

Pressure groups constitute a vital element in the process of political modernization. In modern democratic polity (states), they form the normal mass-median (vehicles) for self-expression by citizens sharing a common interest or common opinions. They represent a response to increasing functional differentiation due to the ever-widening and increasing socio-economic activities of welfare states. Modern states are no more police states. Their activities are not merely confined to law and order problems and defense of the country. Their functions have pervaded almost all aspects of human life and its welfare. A determined effort is made to destroy all type of inequalities of citizens regardless of differences of race, religion, creed, language and sex, to ensure that the citizen does indeed have the equal opportunity to exercise his right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Respect for individual life is the ideal of democratic government. Totalitarianism has subordinated the importance of the individual. The individual achieves greatness only in so far as he serves the state.
Democracy emphasizes the dignity of the individual. Its ideal is that human life should be better and richer and fuller with equal social, economic and political opportunity to develop his personality and potentialities according to his maximum ability or achievement. Perhaps this goal may not be fully achieved because it makes stupendous demands on human life. Yet it is the pursuit of this goal that gives meaning to political life in modern democracies irrespective of their types of government. Fundamentally, the democratic political process is one of mutual discussion, accommodation, tolerance and compromise through peaceful and non-violent means. There is hardly a place in a democratic system for a solitary and individualistic political life. People join groups or organizations that express attitudes and values consistent with their own. By joining such an organization, a member receives a reinforcement of his values and opinions as interaction of mutual opinions are brought out by other members of the groups. This interaction of group members is likely to lead to the expression of values and opinions of which other members might not be ware at all. Discussion of new issues and events may be based upon previously expressed opinions or, upon beliefs that are fundamental to the groups primary objective. One does not necessarily make a conscious effort to seek out and join, groups that hold values and opinions similarly to ones own. Before joining a group, an individual ascertains if the particular group which he desires to join would also meet his personal demands, political and otherwise because these groups attempt in various ways to influence the decisions and actions of powerful political organizations, modern democratic governmental apparatus and public officials.
Groups, like all organizations in society are multifunctional. Patterns of group identity, mobilization, and politicization have a significant impact on the patterning of cleavages within the society, but they may also serve as critical agents of social integration, participation and as channels of communication between the individual and the state. Perhaps the primary function of such designated pressure groups, however, is to serve as mechanisms for the articulation of demands and the pressing of group claims on the political system. Factors operating to increase conformity to group standards and norms are usually smallness of size, frequency of contact, homogeneity of interests and internal cohesion. If a group is small, meets frequently, is comprised of individuals who generally hold the same beliefs, and has a great deal of solidarity, it can be expected that pressures from such groups to achieve their common demands will be more effective. Another factor relates to democratic decision making. If an individual feels that he has participated in some decision making process, he is likely to be more committed to the group’s opinion than one who has merely been a passive spectator. Similarly, if an issue is ambiguous and the result of a position are difficult to predict, the group supplies cues to form opinions and take actions.

Pressure groups are embedded in a political culture which comprehends the configuration of individual and collective attitudes towards politics and the organization of society and the functioning of the political system. These attitudes and values play significant roles in shaping forms, styles and behavior of the organizations which groups create. Pressure groups not only attempt to shape public policy, but are also shaped by the very public policies they seek to
influence. Public policy affects levels and rates of group mobilization, determines channels of access groups may employ and conditions group behavior and styles, of interest articulation. The level of government intervention in the society and economy and the attitude of government toward groups contribute to the number and intensity of pressure groups. Modern governments find it advantageous to seek support and cooperation from politically influential groups in the society in order to accomplish larger governmental objectives or to mobilize such key groups as a mechanism for regulating and controlling their activities. Public policy plays a critical role in shaping group behavior. Public policy also plays a major part in shaping groups strategy, their access patterns and economic policies affecting business. The actual potential of any group is determined by the attributes of the group itself and the political capital it can mobilize to press its demands. Those who are impressed with the effectiveness of pressure groups, both in influencing the conduct of government, conduct of elections and in shaping the political issues describe democracy as government by public opinion.

The substance of democracy as it has been practiced in modern democratic countries is a flexible system of adjustment between individuals and groups carried as under ultimate popular control rather than the direct enforcement of a popular will. Various interests always desire to be heard when the administration has a discretionary power to making decision in particular cases. These pressure groups attempt to exert influence on every phase of the political process. They attempt to mould public opinion, urge political parties to endorse favored policies and attempt to secure the desired decisions and
action from executive, legislative and even judicial officials. It is concerned with the specific policies affecting the particular group. The pressure groups have a significant influence on the action of both executive and legislature. They supplement the activities of political parties in molding the exercise of both legislative power and executive power. Neither legislature nor executive operates in a vacuum each can be thought of as a cylinder connected by several series of many pipes to political parties and pressure groups. The thrust developed, in the cylinders, which pushes out laws, decrees and orders, always bears a relation to the pressures pushing in such pressure groups are more significant in the complex and interdependent society of our present time.

The emergence of pressure groups is to be explained by almost the same conditions that account for the growth of political parties. A mature and enlightened society with its increasing specialization and differentiation gives rise to a host of needs and interests that, for their fulfillment, necessitate the growth of secondary associations that continue influencing the political process. We call them pressure groups or interest groups as they seek to influence public policies through the medium of their associations or groups cherishing common benefits or protection of their similar demands. A pressure group is thus an organized social groups whose members share common attitudes or interests and which seek to influence the political decision makers with the aim of influencing the public policies in the perspective of such attitudes or interests. In a pluralistic society of today, political powers instead of being concentrated in the hands of a group or class, is treated as diffused among many pressure groups competing against each other for capturing power. The
political power of such groups is visible at every point in the institutions of government. Diversity of interests is a concomitant of diversity of multifarious pressure groups in a modern society. These groups not only communicate the wishes of their members to public authorities, but they also bring which is commonly called “pressure” to bear upon the governmental agencies. Pressure groups are usually in alliance with a political party and they actively work for the party victory by influencing electorates in elections. They constitute a powerful political element of modern democratic institutions. They promote their interests by attempting to influence government rather than by seeking responsibility for the management of government. Thus, pressure groups, as they seek to influence the exercise of public power and political institutions, play a powerful role in a democratic system of government. In fact, they supplement the party system and the formal instruments of government by acting as spokesmen for the group interests. They are powerful adjuncts of the modern party system. These pressure groups support political parties whose views coincide with their own or are at least not totally at odds with theirs. Sometimes powerful pressure groups may make efforts to create their own political parties or they make seek to secure representation for group spokesmen by obtaining party endorsement of such group candidates and they may seek to influence party programmes in ways which are favourable to the group’s interests. One of the most potent assistance to political parties is the financing of parties and their candidates. Having articulated its demand, a pressure group seeks access to decision makers in an effort to influence public policy by so changing the perception of the policy makers, that they are prepared to accept the groups point of view in totality or in part. Thus, in a
democratic system, a pressure group can bring its influence to bear upon the ‘political masters’ through public opinion, political parties and electoral campaigns, the legislative process, the political executive higher of the bureaucracy and even the judiciary. Pressure groups, however, concentrate their time, energy and resources or securing access to those levels of policy decision makers that really constitute the political power within the country’s political system. The pressure groups seek to generate public support for their views, influence the kinds decision-makers selected by political parties and the electorate and build a strong and trustworthy relationship with actual decision-makers. In short, the primary goal of a pressure groups is to influence the governmental decisions in terms of its own demands and interests. The term is employed to signify any collection or unification of persons with common objectives or interests and who seek their fulfillment or realization through political media or political assistance or political action to influence public policy in their favour. A pressure group always expects favour from government at the day. As such they were held in scorn due to their all kinds of efforts and political tactics to achieve their sectional objectives. “They were the sinister forces gnawing at the foundations of modern democracy of representative government and the word Lobby supposedly comprehended a whole congeries of abuses, corruption, fraud and the like”.¹

MEANING AND DEFINITIONS:

Pressure groups have been defined in varied ways. One can define a pressure group “as any group attempting to bring about political change whether through government activity or not and which is not a political party in
the sense of being represented at that particular time in the legislative boy”. A pressure group or an interest group, according to David B. Truman refers to “any group that, on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in the society for the establishment, maintenance, or enhancement of forms of behavior that are implied by the shared attitudes”. V.O. Key, Jr. calls pressure groups as organizations which “promote their interests by attempting to influence government rather than any nominating candidates and seeking responsibility for the management of government.” A pressure group may thus be designated as an organized interest group whose members share common attitudes, beliefs or interests group whose members share common attitudes, beliefs or interests and which seeks to influence public policies and the process of decision-making to achieve their sectional common interests or ambitious without trying to take over any responsibility for government. A pressure group draws to itself only those who share a common attitude or hold a common interest and a pressure groups main function is to canalize this attitude or interest to the political decision-makers with the aim of influencing the letter’s policies with the ultimate objective of releasing its interest. A pressure group being more interested in articulating its own particular interest cannot be expected to have policies on issues unrelated to the interest it represents. A pressure groups remains engaged in pursuing and promoting its particular interest and its interested in those political issues which are integrally and directly connected with them. A pressure group is therefore power wilding group of persons who exercise all types of pressure tactics on decision-makers and thus often succeed in their group efforts of influencing public policies without ever entering directly the corridors of political power.
Hence a pressure group has been defined as an organized aggregate which seeks to influence the context of governmental decisions without attempting to place its members in formal governmental capacities."⁵ According to A.R. Ball, "Pressure groups are firmly part of the political process and that they attempt to reinforce or change the direction of government policy, but do not with, as pressure groups, to become the government. They range from powerful employer organizations and trade unions operating at the national level, to small and relatively weak local civic groups to improve local amenities."⁶ Pressure groups may campaign for candidates of a party which promises the pressure group to assist in the fulfillment of the particular pressure group's vested interest. As such pressure groups supplement the party system in a democratic society be serving as advocates for the pressure group’s interests.

It is recently that the study of pressure groups has drawn the attention of academicians and political scientists. The study of pressure groups remained ignored and political scientists remained engaged in the study of functioning of political parties until political sociology as a new discipline emerged with its shift in emphasis and brought pressure groups within the scope of its enquiry. We may say that the academic study of pressure groups is a twentieth century development. It was initiated and involved by the group approach to politics in Arthur F. Bentley in his book. The Process of Government-published in 1908. Later, Prof. David B. Truman of Columbia University published in 1951 his book. The Governmental Process mentioned in detail the nature and role of Interest Groups in the political process. He found that significant amounts of power are wielded in American politics by these politically powerful groups
known as “pressure groups” which are important elements in the political process. The power such groups dispose is involved at every point in the institutions of a democratic government. The political interest group derives its peculiar significance from its association and connections with the more formalized institutions government. For long political sociologist preferred to use the word ‘interest’ groups instead of ‘pressure’ groups due to unpleasant significance of the word ‘pressure’. However, political sociologists and political scientists have reached favourably in favour of the word ‘pressure group’ since in a modern pluralistic society there are different types of groups, quite distinct from political parties that continue influencing the political process and decision-making policies at different levels and the only way of studying these divergent groups catering to a particular group’s interest and needs is to bring them all under the popular democratic word-pressure group.

It is, of course, difficult to draw a dividing line between a pressure group and a political party. In some political systems, a political party is found to have accommodated some of the important pressure groups. For example, in Britain, the Labour Party is mainly composed of different trade unions whose members have acquired indirect membership in the party. In America, the political system is dominated by powerful pressure groups at almost all levels of government and they are distinct in their methods, as in France, some of the numerous political parties are, in actual practice, nothing but pressure groups. Further, in some countries as in India, most of the pressure groups function more as agent of political parties in so far as they attach importance to the respective political goals of the parties than to the articulation of their own interests. The trade
unions of India are working under the direct control of major political parties.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE:

The primary aim of pressure group is to influence the public policy and governmental decisions in terms of its own demands. More approaching the public authorities or governmental agencies is not enough to achieve a pressure group’s objective what is necessary to make a strong case or public opinion in favour of its demand by launching a public campaign. A pressure group usually does this by collecting funds by advertising process in country’s newspapers, issuing and distributing leaflets and pamphlets holding public meetings, symposia, seminars etc., The government too is forced to consider demands of such groups by considering the group’s sacking, popularity and its political strength. Sometimes groups agitations results in political strength. Sometimes groups agitations result in political bargaining. In a free democratic society, there is a definite increase with exercise of fundamental rights, basic civil and political freedoms-a-freedom exercised by people who voluntarily associate to influence the course of public policy such as freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly and a free press. These democratic devices and basis freedoms are constitutionally safe-guarded in a democratic society so that citizen may direct and influence the governmental institutions in groups interests. The role of pressure groups in thus very vocal and effective in a democratic society for achieving their common but sometimes vested interests. They make all efforts to approach and influence decision-makers with their so called group views. A pressure group represents a specific goal-oriented action in as far as it demands from its members common
behaviour towards commonly acknowledged goal. The range of the goal is directed to the fulfillment of common needs and interests of its members by approaching and influencing political bosses.

A pressure group may try to adopt its objectives to the pattern of the environment in which it is placed or it may try to change this environment so that it suits its own objectives. The basic strategy of a pressure group may either be compromise or adjustment or be one of struggle which it may adopt depending on the demands of the existing environment. Merely political approach to the decision-makers is not enough. It is necessary to make out a convincing case. As such a pressure group tries to create a climate of favourable public opinion and for the fulfillment accomplishment of this it may start a public campaign and may take different forms. The ultimate objective of a pressure group is to start a campaign in order to educate the people on matters that are of vital and crucial importance not only to it but to society as well. The newspapers and other communication media are the powerful medium for pressure groups to advertise and educate the masses in order to win their support and they often succeed in their objectives. The powerful pressure groups often spend money lavishly to propagate its interests through such public-propaganda means. If necessary to achieve their objectives, these pressure groups make use of both peaceful as well as physical demonstrations. These groups are very prompt and sensitive in using whatever psychological, sociological, political or other means about human nature may serve their ultimate group purpose. Their device “is concerned with the most effective use of communication media, not only of mass media, but of personal contact,
small groups, local papers, bill boards, radio and television stations.”

**CONCEPTUAL IMPLICATION:**

Pressure groups, in fact, are found among all types of people and all kinds of profession and in all countries where the right of voluntary association is recognized. Participation in the activities of these groups offers citizens and vested interests in a democratic polity to participate in governmental activities. These groups include labour unions, service unions, business and commercial groups, co-operatives, women, students, and other professional groups. These groups engage influential persons or agents which are often designated as “Lobbyists” to maintain close contact with different wings of the government of the day, political parties and public men and thus they constantly bring the group influence on public policy and administration. Press and other modern media of communication are utilized to create favourable public opinion for achieving their objectives. Group interests are thus the animating forces in the political process. The exercise of political power consists to a great extent in the advancement of legitimate group objectives and in the mediation of conflicting and adverse group interests, and in the checking and restraint of group objective which may be politically harmful to the society at large. These pressure groups remain engaged in promoting their interests by attempting to influence the government rather than by directly nominating candidates and taking responsibility for the management of governmental affairs. They do not openly associate with one or the other of the political parties. “Yet by and large pressure groups, as they seek to influence the exercise of public power, play a distinctive role: they supplement the party system and the formal instruments of
government by serving as spokesmen for the special interests with society. As such pressure groups constitute one of the principal and powerful political factor in modern democratic.

Pressure groups may be formed voluntarily and spontaneously because of a common objective or interest to accomplish a common practical aim. The extent to which a group is found attractive and personally gainful by its members is termed its cohesiveness. Members of pressure groups that rate high on cohesiveness find a high degree of satisfaction in being together and achieving their common interests. The morale of an interest group or pressure group is reflected with optimism and confidence with which its members approach their common gains. Morale and cohesiveness are related to the kind of social, economic and political climate that prevails in a particular interest group. Pressure groups may be exclusive or inclusive, depending on their functions and goals. A pressure groups cohesiveness depends on the extent to which its members recognize and adhere to its norms, and any deviancy poses a threat to groups cohesiveness. Hence the strength and possibility of achieving any pressure groups objectives, ultimately depends upon a particular groups unity and cohesiveness among its members and groups common efforts as well as sacrifices. They constant forming and reforming of groups is fundamental to political and social conflict.

Multiplicity of political parties in modern democratic state does not prevent or restrict of growth of socio-economic ethnic and such other groups bringing pressure to bear on them. Men have different needs and interests which a state along cannot caster. So modern welfare state no doubt attempts
to fulfill the common basic needs of its people. There still remains the need for achieving so many other sectarian or group needs which such group associations along can fulfill. Modern democratic states provide wise latitude and freedom to their citizens to form such association or groups to achieve their common interests. The success of such groups will ultimately depend upon the personality of their members, the legitimacy of their demands, the support which such groups enjoy in public and the degree of vigor and single mindedness. A pressure groups is a such a powerful medium through which people with common interests and objectives may endeavor to influence the cause of public affairs by their group approach to decision-makers. A pressure group without attempting to capture formal control of government uses its persuasive powers to obtain political decisions in its favour. Also there may be groups which do not directly or indirectly try to control public affairs through political pressure, but they may gain so much public confidence and popularity that their interests cannot be ignored by political chiefs. Such groups may be linguistic, communalist religious etc. Hence today pressure groups are sometimes considered as healthy factors in political life if they over look national interest and confine themselves to their limited common interests. Thus, in a democratic polity and in a civil society wedded to the ideal of secularism, associations ensure an increase in the capacity and capabilities of the political system in development process.

Pressure groups effectively influence the power centre without openly participating in the decision process. But it is an open secret that the lobby of pressure groups and interest groups pressurizes and sometimes compels the
political decision-makers to decide matters and issues as per its vested interests. This becomes inevitable for the governing class or political party in power because democracy implies a maximum possible participation in the decision-making process by various groups in a civil democratic society. These pressure groups are involved in fact, in the political and other stage of policy making processes. In many ways, a political party is the channel through which the various pressure groups seek realization of their voice in political affairs. Many party leaders have came from dominant pressure groups. The major pressure groups representing business, organized labour, the agrarian interests, the various professions and other interests. Whenever political reforms are proposed, such interests are often consulted and taken into confidence. Political parties to succeed in elections encompass the interests of pressure groups which are their party try to attain status and with all branches of the government and usually at all levels of the government. Lobbying consists of the activities and attempt of such groups to influence the minds of legislative and executive officials in regard to public issues, problems and policies. Public officials are more and more looking to these group interests for guidance in the formulation of public policy. Much of national policy is evolved by shifting and modifications of these group opinions.

Pressure groups influence the framers of public policy and government throughout the year and not merely on an election day. The trend and ultimate outcome of elections are determined to a great extent by the political forces of pressure groups on specific issues. Lobbying and pressure group politics offer avenues for the expression of public opinion. It should be remembered that
democracy is always concerned with the free discussion of political issues and ideas, with the freedom to resort to constitutional means for expressing the changing currents of opinion either individually or through an association or a group. Of the associations, pressure groups formed for ventilation of specific grievances or achievement of common socio-economic or political gains play a dominating role in modern democracies. Such pressure groups are prominent factors in the formation of initial political attitudes and also in their development. These groups use lobbying techniques and the other devices to influence public policy. Lobbying and election tactics are very closely tied with pressure groups in all countries. Those pressure groups assume greater political importance and significance which possess a higher degree of cohesiveness, internal discipline, and financial resources. In some democratic states where devices of direct democratic are in operation as in some states of U.S.A., Switzerland and other countries too if a pressure group or a particular interest groups fails to succeed in the fulfillment of its demands from the government, it can sponsor an initiative or constitutional amendment or demand a referendum to realize them.

FORMULATION OF PRESSURE GROUPS:

A pressure group is formed around a person of magnetic attraction who enjoys the confidences of the members and exerts a powerful force in welding and keeping together the diverse elements in the group. Attractive and popular leadership helps to increase the morale of the group as it matures. Also large organizations employ highly qualifies experts whose business is to keep their members informed and to explain complex issues in simple terms and also the
means to be adopted to achieve their group objectives. In fact, the publicity
directed toward the government and the public has become a major function of
the work of the officials or leaders of pressure groups. The increased use of
publicity and public techniques by organized groups has very much benefited
the pressure groups to create a strong and favourable political atmosphere in
their favour. The use of modern methods of direct popular control such as
referendums, the strike votes taken by some groups and periodic elections are
potential instruments of democratic control. The organized groups make most
of their efforts in contacting directly the influential persons, agencies, and
committees which offer the greatest opportunity for meeting specific demands
of pressure groups.

Pressure groups help to focus attention on the dereliction and lapses on
the part of public authorities and to compel public action. These activities have
an important and on the whole favourable and salutary impact on the policy of
the government by exercising control and surveillance over public policies and
administration. In connection with the obligation to keep the general public
informed of matters within their jurisdiction, the group agencies carry on
extensive propaganda and information services through press releases,
speeches and other publications. In many cases such informational activities
are conducted pursuant to directions of the group and government gives
cognizance to the great organized pressure groups within a democratic society.
The government too has the equal responsibility of speaking a such issues or
demands. The government son its part is not always captive to the sectional
private interest and does not surrender to weak force of private interests. We
believe that government must lead and follow its own policy and political commitments at the time of elections, but at the same time we also recognize that there are limits both political and moral beyond which neither government or legislature may go beyond. The number and variety of pressure groups which from time to time attempt to influence public policy in their interests is legion. The charge that different pressure groups are of varied and unequal influence is easy to make, but a remedy to check misuse of pressure politics is not so easy to fine. It is difficult to create a system whereby all types of pressure groups could be equally represented at all times in all the major wings of government. How the varied pressure groups and the conflicts amongst them should be harmonized and the ultimate common welfare of all sections of people be protected from the excesses of political power concentrated in and irresponsibility displayed by various pressure groups is one of the great tasks of and challenge to modern democracy which ultimately stands for establishing a welfare state. The task of government in a popular type of government is to effect adjustments or coordination among the various pressure groups which at any given time are pressing for realization. Sometimes, very influential pressure groups seem exercising forms of such private type of political authority which differ little from recognized governmental authority.

Pressure groups wield significant power in the political decision of democratic states. Their power is involved at several points in the institution of government. At times their influence on the activities of formal government may be so powerful politically that they may in fact control the exercise of public authority. Pressure groups are often in alliance with a political party both visibly
and sometimes invisibly and they also make all efforts to influence the elections. The most popular and convenient medium of pressure group is propagandas in its favour through modern media of mass communication. The government too is very receptive to the demands of all such groups, because if democracy is to survive, it can only as survive by striking a proper balance amongst various pressure groups. Whatever the form of political process, the pressure groups undoubtedly play an important role in the formation of public opinion and public policy. They often succeed in coercing the government to take action in their favour. The powerful pressure group not only try to coerce the state to achieve their objectives, but they often seek to erode the public policies of the state by influencing the decisions of the government. In some political systems having multiple parties as in France, some of the political parties are, in actual operation, nothing but pressure groups. Also, in some countries same of the political parties are, in actual functioning more agents of political parties in as far as they give greater importance and publicity to the respective political goals of the parties rather than to the accomplishment of their own interests. For example, Trade Unions in India are very closely associated with political parties. However, the primary function of any pressure group ultimately remains to influence the governmental decisions at all levels. Also, the way a pressure group articulates its common interests and desires, is an important determinant of its effectiveness. A pressure group gains strength and political efficacy when its common interest expresses the convincing demands in public interest. Thus, a pressure group influence in influencing and shaping public policy is ultimately conditioned by its political ability to identify its sectional interest with the common public interest. A pressure group while
pursuing its sectional advantage and interest must make efforts to win general public confidence that it is seeking common public welfare. Since the multifarious needs, socio-economic and other common political requirements are multiplying in a modern welfare states, the emergence of pressure groups too has become the feature of almost all modern democratic states.

The political role of pressure groups is growing immense in modern politics. Outside the normal channels of party politics, well organized and well-financed pressure groups are able to exercise a great influence on the government, yet their attitudes are equally shared with non-political patterns of social interaction. They are involved both in the formal and informal activities of government. Organized pressure groups have powerful voice in the political process. Associations of individuals interacting on the basis of shared attitudes and exerting claims upon other pressure groups in the society find in the institutions of government an important means of achieving their objectives. Such well organized groups visibly or invisibly become a part of the governmental institution as are political parties and the various organs of the government. Pressure groups always seek access to the key points of political decisions within these institution. Governmental decisions often reflect the effective access or political approach by such pressure groups. The diversity of an individual's activities of interests involve him in a variety of present day potential pressure groups. Despite the large number of pressure groups formed in modern society not all groups, or interests are organized. Many groups, for example, families or petty business do not operate as pressure groups. These unorganized interests are reflected in the various socio-economic institutions of
modern society and with braying degrees of effectiveness the governmental agencies do recognize the claims of these unorganized interest groups which function as pressure groups and serve as a balance wheel in a democratic political system are powerful political forces of democratic polity. Key remarks that many such interest groups “tend the develop behind the nonpartisan façade to perform the function of recruiting, and backing candidates. These nonpartisan political groupings may be most transient and rudimentary. In many nonpartisan jurisdictions the issues generate a politic of quick low temperature.”

**DETERMINANTS:**

Pressure group politics is determined by several factors-constitutional as well as extra-constitutional agencies. We may mention here few of the important determinants which constantly influence the formation, functioning and effectiveness of pressure groups in modern societies. The nature of pressure group politics is largely determined by the structure of governmental agencies, that is, the type of political organization. Democratic government is commonly accepted as the most popular type of government prevalent in modern era. It is so because democracy ultimately recognizes human dignity and equal respect for individual personality. The fundamental goal of democracy is the securing of the conditions and providing equal opportunities for the realization of individual potentialities and the participation of all in the control of government. It is the pursuit of this goal that gives meaning to political life with democracies. The ideals of democratic government, that is, government controlled by the people for their welfare, must be widely accepted
and believed by the people. Totalitarian states subordinates the importance of the individuals; the individual achieves greatness in so far as he serves the state. In a way, democratic government rests upon public opinion, the consent of the governed and the general will in contrast to those governments wherein governmental decisions are made by the tooling oligarchy or by a single political party and enforce a upon the will without their consent or approval. In short, politically, democracy implies equality of opportunity for development of individual personality according to individual choice, free and periodic elections, and the participation of all the guidance and control of government formed through a popular process. This popular or democratic process leads to the formation of varied interest groups, pressure groups or political parties which contribute to the proper and efficient functioning of modern democracies. It is primary function of such democratic processes to ensure that the state remains an instrument for furthering genuine common interests and common goal of the people and that those who exercise the power of government shall act with a sense of responsibility.

Pressure groups assume importance according to the nature of the constitution in a democratic states. For example, in a unitary type of government, all political powers-mainly legislative and executive are centralized in one central authority-the parliament and the cabinet as in Britain. In such a type of unitary constitution, pressure groups assume a powerful position at the national level. In a federal type of constitution, there is dual polity-that is specific distribution of power by the constitution itself between the Union or Federal Government, the certain specified powers are expressly granted to the
national government and the residue of powers remaining after such assignment to the national or federal government are exercised by the units or states as in U.S.A. and India. In such a federal system of governmental structure, political parties and pressure groups are active both at the national as well as state level. In such a system, many regional issues are settled at the state level without ever rising to the level of national politics. However, in the practical functioning of federal constitutions, it is seem that pressure groups remain more active at the national level. Again, democratic constitutions may be of a presidential type as in U.S.A. In a parliamentary system the real executive that is, the cabinet headed by the Prime Minister remains responsible to the popular House of the Parliament. Hence pressure groups seek access both to the legislature as well as to the executive through a variety of political tactics and influence. Hectic efforts are made by pressure groups to secure victory of their favourite candidates and political parties at times of parliamentary election. Once a pressure group is successful in having achieved its goal of influencing governmental decisions and policies in its favour, it becomes inactive in relation to the political process.

The group characteristics, that is, the nature policy and the popularity which any pressure group gains among the people also determine the effectiveness of a pressure group. If people feel that a particular pressure group aims at the common welfare of the larger section of society, they will undoubtedly support such an organization of persons united for common good. They will disfavor groups which are formed to fulfill sectional or personal interests or ambitions of its supporters. The attitude of the people towards any
pressure group is, therefore, a powerful determinant of groups effectiveness in public life. A pressure group influence, power and capacity to affect political behaviour is basically relational behavioral and situational. That is to say, to assess the political power of a particular interest group or a pressure group, one has necessarily to relate the groups activity to a specific situation facing the country at a particular time in comparison to the approach and comparative efforts of other group’s in tacking and solving such situations. The nature of such power which any pressure group exercises over the community of people residing in a particular area as well as the decisive role which a group plays in the reconciliation or solution of socio-economic and political conflicts or crisis constitutes the content of politics in a democratic society and is a powerful determinant of pressure politics.

In addition to the above factors, public opinion and political mobilization as well as achievements of multifarious groups in a democratic political system and their visible influence upon the decision-makers affect the potentiality of a pressure group. The determinants of public opinion and political mobilization include the basic social institutions, namely, the family, the school, professional groups etc. and the modern media of mass communication such as the press, the trade, the radio, television, public meetings and such other agencies of expressing and shaping public opinion and which motivate political activity as well as political mobilization. The effectiveness of mass communication media as an influence upon political mobilization varies with the nature of the people, socio-economic set-up and the nature of political institutions prevailing in a country. The number of pressure groups sand the intensity with which they are
able to pursue their objectives depends upon the social legitimization of a particular group’s activity and the prospects of fulfilling group demands in a given political system. Ultimately, however, effectiveness of pressure groups depends upon their physical resources such as wealth membership, group’s aims and objects etc. Many a time, pressure groups and political parties are inter-dependent and mutually influential in the enactment of public policy. Since pressure groups seek to influence the exercise of public policy by decision-makers, they play a distinctive role in the process of political modernization. The democratic right to form associations, the privileges of freedom of speech and free press and the modern media of mass communication have given rise to a multiplicity of pressure groups which seek to fulfill the various common interests of individuals and groups by influencing governmental policy in their interests. They have thus become an important factor in shaping politics. In a democratic polity, pressure groups are the channels, through which they affect the governmental process. All so-called pressure groups exert their power and influence upon the decision-makers in their favour. Powerful pressure groups such as trade unions and big business organizations exert greater as well as effective influence in the struggle for gaining utmost political power and utilizing such power in the formation and executions of governmental policy in their respective interests. These groups also attempt to courting good will among the people. Pressure groups demand and their political bargaining for economic, political or social power and their influence on governmental agencies is found increasing in democratic systems government. They expand most of their efforts in seeking access to the persons, governmental agencies and committees which offer the greatest
opportunity for meeting their specific demands.

In short, pressure groups are the animating forces in the political process of democratic polity. Well-organized cohesive and well financed pressure groups play a powerful role in influencing public policy by their access to the governmental agencies. Pressure groups have, thus, become necessary adjunct of free democratic society. The legislative struggle in democratic states is largely a struggle between contesting pressure groups. As a result of the increased governmental activities of modern welfare states, the number of pressure groups has very much increased. Their pressure on government has become more pervasive and continuous. The role of pressure groups in a democracy has, indeed, assumed so much importance in influencing public by their lobbying and confusing activities that observers and critics have described them as a third House of Congress in America, operating outside the Constitution. Eminent political scientists have given pressure groups interesting designations, such as ‘unofficial government’, ‘invisible government’, ‘anonymous empire’ etc. To quote, Prof. David B. Truman, “their activities are visible in every country where freedom of association is an element in the constitutional fabric.” Pressure groups constantly seek to influence the decision of public bodies and process of governmental activities. They constitute core of political influence as well as a catalytic force that makes the institutional frame work respond to the socio-economic and political needs of a developing democratic society. In subsequent chapters, we shall discuss the characteristics, mechanisms and functioning of pressure groups in different countries, particularly India.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


