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The term pressure means to persuade or coerce a person into doing something. Pressure group can be described as 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 and laws to its own benefit. The pressure group promotes its interest regarding an issue affecting their members; it is referred to as the “fundamental representatives”. They represent various sectors based on their functions e.g. NBA, NMA, ASUU. According, to Anifowose (1999), pressure group is described as interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups.

However, one of the basic functions of the pressure group is ensuring that the government does their bidding. And some of their pressures are through the right channels and means, and they are able to make the government to listen to them. In addition to that, these groups influence public policy, administration and even go as far as determining political structures. In nature they could be religious, business-like, educational, ethnic-oriented, gender-sensitive, economic or even social. Some examples of pressure group include, ASUU, NLC, NBA, CAN e.t.c

Usually, people often confuse pressure group with political parties but they are different from each other. The first distinction is that political powers seek to gain governmental powers while pressure groups do not seek to gain governmental powers but to influence the government political decisions. Secondly political parties have a wide range of policies whereas pressure groups narrow their goals. Also pressure groups are not usually accountable for their actions while political groups are accountable. In addition political parties are more formally organized than pressure group. Pressure groups relate together to achieve certain social changes.

By the way, pressure group’s existence is to checkmate and democracy better, to compensate for the tyranny of majority of people in the society. Also, to treat the gaps in the democratic process is to inform debates among ourselves, to encourage participation and to enhance good accountability in our daily society. Sometimes 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. While pressure groups have their importance place on the scheme of things they sometimes own selfish interest which could not be beneficiary to the citizens.

 Moreover, there are types of pressure groups namely

1. Interest groups: it is seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society e.g. CBI (Confederation of British Industry) known as the voice of business in the country and in Nigerian, CBI (Convention on Business Integration).
2. Cause group: these groups are promotional groups which seek to promote particular causes, e.g. charities and environmental groups.
3. Insider groups and outsider groups: insider groups are regularly consulted by the government; they have regular access to ministers or legislators. The NBA is an example of such groups, the insider may be high or low in profile and they intend to influence
4. Anomic groups: These groups have unpredictable actions and behaviors’ as they work based on the moment and situations in the society. They are not guided by appropriate styles so sometimes they could be violent.
5. Associational and non-associational groups: associational groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country while non-associational groups are groups without a formal organization their association is by virtue of kinship.

 Furthermore, the functions of pressure groups includes

1. Links government to the people; it serves as a link between the government of the day and the people it governs.
2. Promotes participation in government; it promotes public participation in the activities of the government of the day.
3. Serving as sources of information to government; they serve as sources of information to the government.
4. Curtailing of dictatorial tendencies; they ensure that government do not perpetuate themselves in powers there drifting to dictatorship.
5. Promotion of the interest of the minority; they ensure that the interest of the minorities are not trampled upon.
6. Influencing legislation; they put pressure on government to influence its policy, change its direction, and withdraw a policy that does favor their members.
7. Pressure group lobbying; they may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy and direct political action e.g. organized protests.

In conclusion, pressure groups are associations of people with the same opinion and also influence the government to accept their points of view and they should be confused with political parties because they have different function.