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AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP

The Pressure Group is a structured and coordinated organization with a shared interest, the basic objective of which is to place pressure on every government agency in order to influence government policies and legislation to its own benefit. The pressure group is referred to as The Functional Representative'; this is the notion that different pressure groups, depending on their roles, serve different segments of society. Pressure groups are classified, according to Anifowose[1999], as interest groups, lobby groups, or even protest groups.

In Nigeria, there are many types of pressure groups, including religious pressure groups, social PG, educational PG, company PG, and technical pressure groups. Examples include the Nigeria Bar Association[NBA], the Nigeria Christian Association[CAN], the University Academic Workers Union[ASUU], etc. Pressure groups and political parties are assumed to be the same, especially in Nigeria, where people have superficial opinions rather than credible opinions, but in many ways they are actually different: political parties seek to gain government control, while pressure groups seek to influence political decisions; Although pressure groups limit their targets, political parties have a wide variety of policies; pressure groups are not responsible for their acts, while political parties are responsible for their actions.

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TYPES OF PRESSURE GROUPS

INTEREST GROUPS: This group is seen as sectional groups representing the people in the society e.g. Convection on Business Integration [CBI].

CAUSE GROUPS: These groups are promotional groups which seek to promote particular causes e.g. charities and environmental groups.

INSIDER AND OUTSIDER GROUPS: Insider groups are regularly consulted by the Government; they also have regular access to ministers or legislators. Outsider groups have no access or links to the Government and its machineries.

ANOMIC GROUPS: Here, they have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and situation in the society.

ASSOCIATIONAL AND NON-ASSOCIATIONAL GROUPS: Associational are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country; Non-Associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization.

FUNCTIONS OF PRESSURE GROUPS

The functions of Pressure Groups can be gotten from its explanation above however; the following points are the main functions of Pressure Groups and they are:

* It acts as a link between the government of the day and the individuals it rules.
* Promotes civic engagement in Government of the Day events.
* The pressure group acts as the government's source of intelligence.
* Pressure groups serve as the government's watchdogs.
* They are instrumental in growing political pressure so that measures for the good of people can be enforced.
* CURTAILING OF DICTATORIAL TENDENCIES: Activities of Pressure group ensures that Governments do not perpetuate themselves in power thereby drift into a dictatorship.