ASEMUDARA ADEMIBO FRANK

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 AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP.

To apply pressure is the process of convincing someone or coerce them into

doing something. This means that a pressure group acts as an organised body

that puts pressure on any governmental institution with the main goal of

influencing government policies and laws to its advantage. The pressure group is

referred to as “the functional representative”. This is the idea that various

pressure groups represent different sectors of the society based on their

functions.

Pressure groups came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect

the interest of their members or groups. In nature, these groups could be

religious, business-like, educational, economic, etc. Pressure groups and political

parties activities might appear similar sometimes, but they are different from each

other. This is because political parties seek to gain government powers, while

persuade groups do not seek to gain power but their aim is to influence political

decisions.

Pressure groups exist in order to checkmate and make democracy better, and

also to treat the gaps in the democratic process and to enhance good

accountability in our 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 individuals or groups.

**Types of pressure groups**

**● Interest groups:** These are sectional groups representing the people in

the society

**● Cause groups:** These are promotional groups which seek to promote

particular causes eg charities and environmental groups)**● Insider groups, Outsider groups and Anomic groups:** These groups

are not guided by appropriate behaviour, they work based on the moment

and situation of the society.

**● Associational groups:** These types of groups are usually registered

under appropriate authorities and have their own registered offices,

constitutions and so on

**● Non-associational groups :** These groups are without a formal

organisation

Pressure groups perform different functions; they serve as a link between the

government of the day and the people it governs. It promotes public participation

in the activities of the government of the day. They serve as sources of

information to the government, they help curtail dictatorial tendencies, pressure

groups, they are instrumental in the mounting of pressure on government so it

can implement policies that will be beneficial to the citizens and most importantly

lobbying. Pressure groups lobby in order to achieve their goals, they even lobby

with government officials directly. The degree to which groups are able to

achieve their goals may depend on their abilities to be recognised as legitimate

by the population, media and by those in power.