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An overview of the idea of pressure group in salient issues in Government and Nigeria politics.

To mount pressure means to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something. A pressure group is a formal or organised body with a common interest whose fundamental aim is to put pressure on any governmental institution with the goal of influencing government policies and laws to its own advantage. The pressure group is referred to as 'The Functional Representative.' There are various pressure groups and they represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. Examples of pressure group are CAN, NBA, NMA, ASUU etc.

According to Anifowose, pressure group is an interest group, lobby group or even protest group. Pressure group seeks to ensure that government does all their biddings and they make the government to listen to them.

Pressure group and political party may sometimes appear to be similar but they are different from each other. The differences between pressure groups and political parties include;

Political parties seek to gain government powers while Pressure groups do not seek to gain government powers rather, they aim to influence political decisions.

Secondly, pressure groups are not actually responsible for any of their actions whereas political parties are responsible for their actions. They are held accountable. Political parties are more formally organized than pressure groups.

Political parties and pressure groups also have some similarities. Pressure groups and political parties relate together to achieve certain social changes. Pressure groups may align their interest with that of certain political parties that are believed to possess the capability to further their interest.

The Benefit of pressure group are to checkmate and make democracy better and also to treat the gap in the democratic process, to inform debates among

ourselves, to encourage participation, and to enhance good accountability in our daily society.

While pressure groups have their benefits, there are some downsides. Sometimes, due to their own selfish interest, pressure is mounted to change the direction of government decisions, while not considering the government's limited resources. For example, when professional bodies go on strike, citizens suffer and government might be incapacitated due to shortage of funds to meet the requirements of these associations. ASUU and NMA may indeed have genuine reasons to go on strike, but when they go on strike, they hold other stakeholders as ransom and insist that government fulfil their request.

The functions of pressure groups are to serve as a link between the government and the people, to promote participation in government activities thereby promoting political participation and carry the citizens along, to serve as a source of information to the government by providing the government with information on issues the government is not aware of, to prevent dictatorial tendencies which the government may have, and finally to promote interest of the minority which include the rights of the under-privileged and ensure it is not trampled upon by the government.

The types of pressure groups are, the Anomic groups which are not guided by any rule or behavioural style, the insider group which are regularly consulted by the government and have regular access to ministers and legislators, and the outsider group that have no link to the government, the Associational group which are registered under the state or country and the Non-Associational group which are not registered under the state or country, the Interest group representing the people of the society and finally the Cause group which seek to promote a particular cause.