

Name : Atolagbe Jamila  
College: SMS  
Department: Business Administration  
Martic no: 19/sms03/007  
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Assignment  
An Overview of the Idea of Pressure Group

Pressure group is 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 policies and laws to its own advantage. It promotes its interest regarding an issue. Examples are: Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) , Nigeria Bar Association(NBA), etc.

According to Anifowose(1999) pressure group is described as interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups. It came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interest of their members.

Pressure groups and political parties sometimes may appear the same, but they are actually different. The first difference is that political parties seek to gain government power while, pressure groups aim to influence political decisions. Second, political parties have a wide range of policies, whereas pressure groups narrow their goals. Also political parties account for their actions while, pressure groups are not accountable for any of their actions. However, these differences do not mean the political parties and pressure groups don't have anything in common, which is that they both relate together to achieve certain social changes.

Pressure groups exist to checkmate and make democracy better, to compensate for the tyranny of majority of people in the society.

Types of pressure groups

Interest groups: this group is also seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society. For instance CBI ( confederation of British Industry) known as the voice of business in the country.

1.Cause groups: these groups are promotional groups, which seek to promote particular cause. For example, charities and environmental groups.

2.Insider groups and outsider groups: insider groups are regularly consulted by government, eg Nigeria Bar Association. On the other hand, outsider groups have no links to the government and its machineries, eg Animal Liberation Front, which champion rights for animals.

3.Anomic groups: these groups are not guided by an appropriate behavioral style or rule and they may sometimes act violently.

4.Associational groups and non- associational groups: associational groups usually register with appropriate authorities in a state or country. Non associational groups are a pressure group without a formal organization.

#### Function of pressure groups

- Links government to the people.
- Promotes participation in government.
- Influencing legislation.
- Serving as source of information to government.
- Promotion of the interest of the minority.
- Curtailing of dictatorial tendencies.

#### Pressure groups' lobbying

Pressure groups may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals, including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy and direct political action. Pressure group lobby in so many ways. They lobby with governmental officials directly. They might sometimes lobby the government officials through their friends, spouses, children and other relatives. Also pressure groups may sponsor bills in legislative houses and contact legislators to ensure the passage of the bills.