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**AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP**

This chapter highlights towards understanding the concept of pressure group. It sees pressure group as a formal or organized body with a common interest whose fundamental aim is to put pressure on the government institution with a goal of influencing government policies and laws to its advantage. This pressure group is also known as “The Functional Representative” these pressure groups represent various sectors of the economy based on their functions, they are usually done through different occupations and professions like the Nigeria bar association for lawyers, the Nigeria medical association for doctors. The main aim of the pressure group is to protect the interest of their members and through the right channels influence political policy, administration, political structures of the society and forms of government.

However, pressure group and political parties’ activities may appear similar but are entirely different in the sense that they have different aims. Their distinctions include the fact that the political parties seek to gain political power and are accountable for all their actions while the pressure group do not seek to gain power but rather influence government decisions and they are not accountable for all their actions. Pressure group can also checkmate democratic process and make it better.

Pressure groups are made up of different types which include the anomic groups, interest groups, cause groups, insider and outsider groups and associational and non-associational groups. The interest groups represent the society in area of business and trade units like the convention of business integration (CBI). The cause groups are promotion groups who seek to promote their causes they include charities and environmental groups; it is any group that champions social movement. The insider and outsider pressure groups is broken into two that is the insider group and the outsider group, the insider group are regularly consulted by the government that is they have regular access to the government like the Nigerian bar associations for lawyers and solicitors which fall under the judiciary arm of government and the judiciary advice the legislative and executive arms of government which causes them to have an influence on government decisions and policies while the outsider group is a group that has little or no access or links to the government and its machineries and has to use other means to have an impact on the government impact and decisions . The anomic group is a pressure group that is unpredictable and they work depending on the moment and situations in the society, they usually don’t follow appropriate behaviors or rule instead they use means like protests, strike, riots and violence. Lastly the associational and non-associational groups, the association groups are formal organization which is usually under appropriate authorities while non-associational groups are non-formal organization which is usually formed by kins, family attachments, social traditions and race or tribal affiliations

Nevertheless, these pressure groups have many important functions in the society. one of their functions is that they link the government to the people, they promotes the public participation in government activities of the day, they serve as a source of information to the government that is issues relating the nation that the government are not aware of these pressure group that are associated with these activities are called the insider groups such as the Nigeria bar association. Pressure groups also helps curtail any dictatorial tendencies the government might have; they promote and champion the rights of the minority and the under privileged and they influence the government policies and enable them implement policies that are beneficiary to the citizens.

Lastly, in order to achieve their goals pressure groups, adopt various strategies like lobbying government officials, elected candidates, politicians and media. Lobbying enables them to have more influence on government policies and decisions than others.