

AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP

MEANING OF PRESSURE GROUP?; According to Anifowose [1999] pressure group is described as an interest group, lobby groups or even protest groups. Pressure group came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protest the interest of their members of groups. Pressure group in my own words can be defined as organized groups, which influence government decisions socially or economically, without necessarily entering into election activities for the control of government, in doing this they influence the executive, legislature and other officials of government to achieve their immediate aim, however, some of these groups are part of the political process, because sometimes they appear similar but they are different from each other and they attempt to reinforce or change the direction of government policy, but do not wish as it were to be in government. Pressure groups exist to checkmate and make democracy better to compensate for the tyranny of the majority of people in the society, examples of these pressure groups include ASUU [Academic staff union for university], Afenifere, Oodua Peoples Congress [representing the Yoruba tribe], Arewa Consultative Forum, Arewa Peoples Congress [representing the Hausa tribe], Nigerian Bar Association of Nigeria [NBA], Christian Association of Nigeria [CAN], Nigeria Labor Congress [NLC].

TYPES OF PRESSURE GROUPS

- 1] Interest groups; this group is also seen as sectional group, representing the people in the society e.g. the trade union, for instance, CBI [Confederation of British Industry]
- 2] Cause groups; these groups are promotional groups which seek to promote particular causes e.g. charities and environmental groups; like Amnesty International, which campaigns for the need to end human rights abuse.
- 3] The groups and outsider groups; they are regularly consulted by the government and have regular access to ministers or legislators e.g. the Nigerian Bar Association
- 4] Anomic group; they have unpredictable action and behavior as they work based on the moment and situation in the country
- 5] Associational groups and non associational groups; these groups that fall under these categories are usually registered with appropriate authorities

FUNCTION/MERITS OF PRESSURE GROUPS

They are different functions of pressure groups; such as they help to link government to the people, that is they serve as a link between the government of the day and the people that govern it, they also help in promoting participation in the government, that is pressure groups help in the promotion of public participation in the activities of the government of the day by using different demonstrative measures to point views to the government

Also they serve as sources of information to the government; this is also another function of pressure group that is they are as a source of information to the government agencies they help in giving the government valuable information on the aspect of issues. They also curtail of dictatorial tendencies, this explains that criticism of government policies curtail any dictatorial tendency government may have. It also holds and promote interest of the minority and influencing legislation, that is it promote champion rights and they are instrumental in mounting of pressure on the government

PRESSURE GROUP LOBBYING; this group adopt variety of strategies to achieve their goals and aims which include lobbying elected officials, media advocacy and direct political action e.g. civil right groups, trade union etc. pressure group lobby in so many ways they lobby with governmental official directly e.g. ministers, legislators and other governmental bodies . They may also sponsor bills in legislative houses and contact legislators to ensure the passage of bills.