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19/MHS01/440

Medicine and surgery

An overview of the idea of pressure group.

        To mount pressure is to persuade someone or force someone into doing something. Therefore a pressure group is an 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. A pressure group seeks to influence government policies and decisions. The pressure group is referred to as “The functional representative “. This simply put various pressure groups to represent different sectors and giving them each functions. It is usually done through their occupations. For example, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) which represents lawyers and solicitors and represents doctor’s interest respectively.

        There are various definitions to peer pressure as given by certain people. Anifowose(1999) says pressure group is described as “interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups “ According to Oyeleye 1998, pressure groups came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interests of their members or groups. The main perspective of pressure groups is to ensure that government does their biddings, this is achieved by applying pressure and using the right channels. Pressure groups and political parties activities may sometimes seem similar but they’re quite different. Firstly, political parties seek to gain government powers, while pressure groups do no seek to gain power, all they are interested in is , is to influence political decisions. Secondly, political parties have a wide range of policies, whereas pressure groups narrow their goals. However, political parties and pressure groups relate together to achieve certain social changes.

        Pressure groups exists to checkmate and make democracy better, to treat the gaps in the democratic process, to encourage participation’s, and to enhance good ability in our daily society. The voice of a small group of people with narrow interest can become overly influential, so in democracy there is need for compromise in order to reach a consensus regarding the common good, if pressure groups refuse to compromise this can lead to conflict. Pressure groups have their importance place in the scheme of things in a nation. There are various types of pressure groups. They include :

1. Interest groups:This group represents the people in the society. For example, the CBI (confederation of British industry) known as the voice of business in the country.
2. Cause groups: these groups aim to promote particular causes ,like charities and environmental groups. Any group that champions social movement even with the lack of a formal structure is seen as a “cause group”
3. Insider groups and Outsider Groups: these groups are regularly consulted by the government example include NBA. An insider group may however be high or low in profile, still it has an influence on government’s mission and vision. Outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries, they have other ways of impacting.
4. Anomic groups: these groups have unpredictable actions and behaviors as they work based on the moment and situation in a society. They are not guided by appropriate behavior style and sometimes act violently.
5. Associational groups and Non-associational groups: Associations groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. These groups also have their own registered offices, constitutions and so on. Non associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization.

        Pressure groups perform different functions which include; linking government to the people by staying up to date on relevant information and sensitizing the people, promoting participation in Government by engaging in demonstrations and other measures to put their views across to the government, they serve as sources of information to the government, curtailing of dictatorial tendencies, promoting the interest of minority and Influencing legislation by applying pressure on government to influence its policy.

        Pressure groups adopt variety of strategies in order to achieve their goals, these strategies include; lobbying elected officials, media advocacy and direct political action. Some pressure groups exert more influence than others and this may depend on the ability to be recognized by legitimate by the population, media and those in power.