NAME: LOLOMARI IBITEIN DEBORAH

DEPARTMENT: MEDICINE AND SURGERY

MATRIC NO: 19/MHS01/237

AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP

To mount pressure is to persuade someone into doing something. As such, a Pressure Group is an organized body coming together with a common interest to influence the decisions of the government to their advantage.

These groups could be religious, business-like, educational, ethnic-oriented, gender-sensitive, economic or social. Examples in Nigeria are: ASUU (Academic Staff Union for University), CAN (Christian Association of Nigerian), NLC (Nigeria Labour Congress), NBA ( Nigeria Bar Association), etc.

It is important however to note that pressure groups and political parties though the two may be somewhat similar, are different from each other.

**Differences between Political Parties and Pressure Groups**

* Political parties seek to gain government powers while pressure groups seek to influence political decisions.
* Political parties have a wide range of policies while pressure groups narrow their goals.
* Political parties are accountable for their actions while pressure groups are not usually accountable for their actions.

Pressure group’s existence is to checkmate and make democracy better, to compensate for the tyranny of majority of people in the society. It has its downsides too as they sometimes mount pressure on the government with little consideration to the limited resources.

**Types of Pressure Groups**

* Interest Groups: also known as Sectional groups, representing the people in the society. E.g. Trade units
* Cause Groups: These are groups that seek to promote particular causes. E.g. Charities, Amnesty International
* Insider Groups and Outsider Groups: Insider groups are regularly consulted by the government and have access to ministers or legislators. Eg. NBA. Outsider groups have no access to the government and its machinaries and thus have to use other means to have impact, eg. Animal Liberation Front
* Anomic Groups: These groups based on the situation in the society. The have no appropriate style of behaviour and can be unpredictable and even violent. They mount pressure by protests, strikes, etc.
* Associational Groups and Non-Associational Groups: Associational groups are usually registered with associations and are constitutionally controlled, eg. Educational institutions. Non-associations groups are non-formal organizations; their gathering is by virtue of kinship, family, tribe, race etc.

**Functions of Pressure Groups**

* Links the government to the people
* Promotes citizens participation in government.
* Serves as sources of information to government
* Promotes the interests of the minority
* It influences legislation

**Pressure Groups’ Lobbying**

Pressure groups adopt various strategies to achieve their goals one of which is lobbying. They can lobby government officials directly through friends, spouses, children and other relatives.