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An overview on the idea of pressure group.

To mount is to persuade someone or coerce a person into doing something.

The pressure group is referred to as "The functional Representative". This is the

idea that various pressure groups

represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. This is usually

done through their occupations and

professions. E.g the Nigeria Bar

Association (NBA), represents the

Lawyers and Solicitors, while Nigeria

Medical Association (NMA) represents

doctor's interest. And the Academic Staff

Union of Universities (ASUU) champions

the interest of academics and condition of

learning in Nigeria's Universities.

According to Anifowose (1999) pressure group is described as "interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups."

Pressure groups came into existence to complement, enhance or even protect the interest of their members or groups (Oyeleye, 1998). And with some pressure through the right channel or means, pressure groups are able to make government listen to them. Some example of pressure groups, in Nigeria are:

Afenifere, Oodua People's Congress (representing the Yoruba tribe), Arewa Consultative Forum, Arewa People's Congress (representing the Hausa tribe), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). Pressure groups and political parties' activities may sometimes appear similar, but they are

different from each other. The first distinction is that political parties seek to gain government powers, while on the other hand pressure groups not seek to gain power. Rather their aim is to influence political decisions. Second, political parties have a wide range of policies, whereas pressure groups narrow their goals. Also pressure groups are not actually accountable for any of their actions, while political parties do account for their actions.

Types of pressure groups.

- **Interest groups:** They are also seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society. For example, the trade units, for instance, CBI (Confederation of British Industry)

known as the voice of business in the country, and in Nigeria, Convention on Business Integration (CBI).

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- Cause groups: These groups are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes, for example, charities and environmental groups. Any good at champions social movement is also seen as "cause groups," even though the group lacked formal structure. It is always aimed at achieving a single objective, like protesting about the expansion of airport, seaports, railways e t c.
- Insider groups and outsider groups: This groups are regularly consulted by the government. The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) is an example of

such groups. However, an insider group may be high or low in profile, nevertheless they intend to have influence on government's mission and Visions. On the other hand, outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. Examples are the Animal Liberation Front, which champions rights for animals.

- **Anomic groups:** These groups have more unpredictable actions and behaviours as they work based on the movements and situation in the society. These groups are not guided by an appropriate behavioral Style or rule and may sometimes act violently. Protest, riots, strikes and sometimes revolution are some of the means

through which the mount pressure.

- **Associational groups and Non-Associational groups:** They are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. Their arrangements and gathering are by virtue of kinship or even family attachment, social traditions, tribal or even race afflictions.

Functions of pressure groups.

1. **Links government to the people:** One of the functions of pressure groups is that it serves as a link between the government and people it governs.
2. **Promote participation in government:** Another function of pressure group is that it promotes public participation in

the activities of government.

3. Serving as sources of information to government: another function of pressure group is that they serve as sources of information to the government.
4. Promotion of the interest of the minority: again pressure groups champion the interests of the underprivileged especially promotional pressure groups. As they go about their activities, to ensure that the interests of minority groups are not trampled upon by the government.