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REVIEW OF AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP

Understanding pressure group

By the word “pressure”, it means the use of persuasion or intimidate on to make someone do something. Therefore, a pressure group is a formal or 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 law to its own advantage. A pressure group seeks to promote its interest and influence government decisions and policies. Examples of pressure groups in Nigeria are Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) which represents the lawyers and solicitors, Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) which represents the doctor’s interests and so on. Pressure groups and political parties may appear similar but they are different from each other. The first distinction is political parties seek for government powers but pressure groups do not. Another is political parties have a wide range of policies while pressure groups narrow their goals. However these differences do not mean political parties and pressure groups do not have anything in common. They infact do. Political parties and pressure groups work together to achieve social changes. While pressure groups have their importance ,they also have their disadvantage. Sometimes due to their selfish interests , pressure is mounted to alter the government’s decisions without considering government’s limited resources.

Types of pressure groups

Interest groups

This group is also seen as sectional groups representing the society.

Cause groups

These groups are for promotion purposes to promote a particular cause. For example, like Amnesty International that seeks to end human rights abuse.

Insider groups and Outsider groups

Insider groups intend to have influence on government’s missions and visions being on a high or low profile while outsider groups have no access or link to the government and machineries.

Anomic groups

These are groups originated from certain events .They sometimes express their dissatisfaction with their smoky actions e.g protest, rioting , strikes and so on.

Associational groups and Non-associational groups

Associational groups are groups registered with authorities while non –associational groups are without a formal organization. Non -associational groups are gathered by virtue of kinship, social traditions , tribal afflictions and so on.

Functions of pressure groups

1. Links government to the people: pressure groups relate to the government what the opinions of the people are.
2. Promotes participation in government: The activities of the pressure groups promote political participation and carry the citizens along.
3. Serving as sources of information to the government: The interactions between pressure groups and the government offers the government valuable information on aspects of issues they may not be aware of.
4. Curtailing of dictorial tendencies: The activities of pressure groups ensure that government do not perpetuate themselves in power thereby drifting into a dictatorship.
5. Promotion of the interest of the minority: Pressure groups ensure that the interests of the minorities are not trampled upon by the government.
6. Influencing legislation: They mount pressure on the government to implement laws or policies that are of benefit to the people.

Pressure lobbying

Pressure groups may adopt variety of strategies to achieve their goals e.g, lobbying elected officials, media advocacy ,political action. The degree to which such groups can achieve their goals depends on their ability to be recognized as legal by the people. They may also sponsor bills and contact legislature to ensure the passage of bills.