

GOVERNMENT

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AN OVEVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP

A pressure group is a group that tries to influence public publicity in the interest of a particular cause. It is a formal group 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 laws to its own advantage. The pressure group is referred to as "The functional representatives". Pressure group came into existence to complement, enhance or even to protect the interest of their members or groups.

Pressure group 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 powers, while on the other hand pressure group does not seek to gain powers. Pressure groups are not actually accountable for any of their action, while political parties do account for their action.

Pressure group is to checkmate and make democracy better, to compensate for the tyranny of majority of people in the society. Also to treat the gaps in the democratic process, to inform debates among ourselves, to encourage participations and to enhance good accountability in our daily society.

If pressure group remain rigid and refuse to compromise on specific issues, they can potentially monopolise the democratic process by focusing public debate on a few specific issues.

While pressure groups have their importance placed in the scheme of things in the nation, there is some downside. Most times due to the selfish interest of pressure group, pressure is mounted to alter the directions of government decisions, while not considering government's limited resources. Some disadvantages are they are quite biased in favor of their own interest, their demands sometimes are too high and unrealistic for government to meet, they may shut down the whole economic or social life of a country through their prolonged strike.

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Types of pressure groups

1. Interest group; This group is seen as sectional groups, representing the people in the society. For example, the trade unions, CBI (Confederation of British Industry)
2. Cause group; These groups are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes. For example charities and environmental groups. For instance Amnesty group, which campaign for the need to end human rights abuse.
3. Insider group and Outsider group are regularly consulted by the government. They have regular access to ministers or legislators. On the other hand, Outsider groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries.
4. Anomic groups; these groups work based on the moment, the situations in the society. They are not guided by an appropriate behavioural style or rule.
5. Associational groups; usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country. While non-associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization.

Functions of pressure groups

- . Links government to the people: helps serve as a link between the government of the day and the people it governs.
- . Promotes participation in government: some pressure groups engage in demonstration and other measures to put their views across to the government.
- . serving as sources of information to government: another function of pressure groups is that they are sources of information to the government.
- . Curtailing of government policies curtail and dictatorial tendency government may have.
- . Promotion of the interest of the minority
- . influencing legislation

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In conclusion, pressure group lobbies in different way to the government and with the government.