

# Pressure Groups: Features, Functions,

## Definition

A pressure group is a group which consists of like-minded people who work together to influence or to persuade a government or people in authority to change something or to do something. They work actively to achieve a common goal. These groups play an important role in decision making of government, and no government takes important actions without considering their opinion. People working in pressure groups have no interest in making their government. They refer themselves as social workers. Rather than gaining power, they pressurized the people in power to make policies and take actions as they want or which is good for society.

## Types of pressure group

In the past few decades, the number of and the types of pressure groups have increased incredibly, and each type of pressure group work towards a particular goal or beliefs. These groups can also be differentiated based on their structure.

### 1. Sectional Pressure Group:

Sectional pressure groups are the groups which work for the benefit of a certain group of people or their economic benefits or to preserve the rights of a group of people.

1. National Union of Journalists
2. National Union of Teachers
3. Confederations of British Industry

### 2. Promotional Pressure Groups:

Promotional pressure groups are different from sectional ones as they don't work or act for economical or self-purposes. These groups consist of people who are concerned about a social cause. The work done by these groups is for earth, environment, mankind, animals, and various social causes, etc.

Every country has hundreds of promotional pressure groups working for various social causes. Followings are examples of famous promotional pressure groups around the world.

1. Greenpeace
2. Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
3. World Wildlife Funds

### 3. Local Groups:

Local pressure groups are created by people who are concerned with local matters. The people who run these groups are the people who are affected by a particular action taken by the government.

For example, if the government tries to destroy a community club of a small town or prevention of the destruction of public property, etc. these groups are also referred to as temporary groups because these groups are formed and come in action for a particular social cause.

### 4. Transnational Pressure Groups:

These are the opposite of local pressure groups. These groups work across various countries under the same name. These pressure groups work for various social causes all around the world.

### 5. Religious Pressure Groups:

These groups work for their religious ideologies and belief.

### 6. Economic Pressure Groups:

They work for their economic interests. They try to pressurize the government to formulate policies for their economic well being.

## **Features of Pressure Group**

### 1. A common Objective:

A pressure group can't exist without an objective. A common objective is important as the members of a pressure group come together because they all have the same beliefs.

For example Green Peace pressure group. This group is active in more than 40 countries.

### 2. Group of People:

A pressure group starts with a one-person and turns into a big community. Therefore, we can say that people are also another important feature of a pressure group.

More the people stronger will be the group. A group of 100 people have more strength and can force authorities to decide as per their will than the group of 5 people. Because of this reason, the pressure group advertises their objectives and goal with intensity by running forms, websites, online groups, and campaigns to inspire people to increase their community.

### 3. Work Technique:

Work technique is another important feature as each pressure group has a different work technique to achieve their objectives.

Some groups have links in the government and take advantage of their links to make the government take decisions as they want whereas other groups which don't have any connection in the government use the methods like lobbying, strike, etc.

### 4. Strike:

The strike is one of the most common methods used by pressure groups to get the attention of the government or higher authority towards a matter. A strike is when people stop doing their routine jobs until their demands are met.

This type of method is frequently used by workers in a factory, doctors in hospitals, government employees, or even students use this method to grab the attention of the higher authority. It is a harmless method where inconvenience is created by the stoppage of work.

### 5. Lobbying:

In this method, they try to influence the individual members of the government whose decisions play an important role in the final decision-making.

This work technique got its name from "the lobby" outside the offices. During office, people work in their offices, but they spend a lot of time together unofficially. Those times are used by members of the pressure groups to influence the members of the government.

In this method, people from the pressure group meet ministers and civil servants and present the information related to the interests, cases, memoranda, and cases, etc. lobbying is an effective technique.

### 6. Electioneering:

This work technique involves boycott elections by the members of the pressure group. Their purpose for electioneering is to influence parties to choose candidates of their choice. In this way, they can secure their interest indirectly.

### 7. Mass Media:

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this is a new technique used by pressure groups in order to secure their interests. Pressure groups take the help of mass media to influence the general public and to grab their attention.

They publish articles in newspapers and post social media posts to ask people to support their cause, and they also collect funding through this mean. In addition to this, they make the use of the internet and social media to communicate about upcoming events and encourage people to participate in those events.

## 8. Funding:

Pressure groups are independent groups, and they don't get any financial support from government authorities to run their group. To collect funds, they run online programs and ask the members of the groups to contribute financial help for the cause. Larger the group larger will be the funding.

## **Functions of the pressure group**

### 1. Provide support to the minority by Pressure Groups:

The government usually comes to know about the issues that are presented by the cream class of society. This is because these people have a connection in the government, and they have a platform to make their voice heard.

But on the other hand, there is a part of the population that have even worst problems, but they don't have any connection in the government or platform where they can reach government and let the government know about their problems.

Pressure groups work to help this part of the population. They provide a platform to these people and make the government hear their issues and provide help to them.

### 2. Creating a connection between government and common public:

Common people usually don't have a direct connection with the government, and people in government don't pay attention to the problems of people when they approach them individually. A pressure group establishes a connection between the common public and the government in power.

They convey the views of people, the problem faced by them, and interests of people to government and make them take decisions which are in favor of the public.

### 3. Force government to participate in social causes:

The government usually doesn't pay much attention to social causes as they don't understand the situation. In such a scenario, pressure groups play an important role, and through their work techniques, they pressurize the government to participate actively to deal with the issues.

### 4. Remove Dictatorship by Pressure Groups:

The meaning of dictatorship is when one person or one group of people dominates the entire population. Pressure groups ensure that there is no dictatorship in the government, and decisions are taken, which are favored by the majority of people.

Pressure groups invoice what majority of people want and use their work techniques to make the voice of common people audible and make the government take decisions and create policies which are in favor of the entire population.

#### 5. Collects facts and information:

The government doesn't work on emotions and arguments. They require information and fact in order to act as the people of pressure group wants.

Therefore, people work relentlessly to collect information and facts about the causes they are working for and present it to the government in order to influence their decisions not by merely creating pressure on them but by providing them factual information.

### **Examples of Pressure Groups**

#### Greenpeace

Greenpeace is an example of a transnational pressure group. This organization was founded in 1971. It was formed by a small group of people. The goal of this organization is to save the natural world from the destruction, and they aim to create a world which is more green, peaceful, and healthy.

This organization is an independent organization and collects funds from ordinary people. It doesn't accept funding from government or official authorities. Their method of doing their work is very peaceful. Green peace is working hard to protect the earth from the destruction, and it is growing at a rapid rate.

#### Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND):

This organization campaign for the disarmament for nuclear and other harmful weapons by the countries. This organization works non-violently and seeks to create a better and secure place for future generations. Campaign for nuclear disarmament was created in November 1957.

They propose that governments should stop investing and creating nuclear and other harmful weapons and should take other ways to create security.

This organization gets its funds from the public, and they encourage people all around the world to participate in their campaign to make the world a secure place.

#### Amnesty International:

The Amnesty international organization started in 1961 in London merely by publishing an article in the observer newspaper. Since then, this organization is working relentlessly to protect human rights all around the world.

It is a community of more than 7 million people who supports the same idea that everyone has a right to enjoy basic human rights. Like the above two organizations, this organization also collect

their funding through common people and don't take a donation from government bodies and other powerful bodies.

### **Pressure Groups in Pakistan**

Teachers association

Lawyers association

Young Doctors Association

Chamber of Commerce and Industries.