

Pressure Group Politics in Nigeria: A Critical Examination of the N. L. C

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ABSTRACT

Pressure group has been primarily seen as a group of individuals that influence the policies and actions, of the government for the interest of its members. Over the years in Nigeria, the Nigeria Labor Congress (N.L.C) as a type of pressure group has operated in the economy with series of actions and activities that has influenced economic activities. The primary objective of this research is to analyze the impact of pressure groups politics on Nigerian workers and to proffer policy recommendations based on the findings of this study. The hypothesis that were tested in the study are thus: The relationship between N.L.C and the government has no significant impact on Nigeria workers. The activities of the N.L.C in the new millennium have no significant impact on workers productivity in Nigeria, pressure group politics adversely affects the internal composition and structure of members in Nigeria. The methodology adopted for the analysis is the use of questionnaire with the application of Chi-square (X^2) analysis, and the results derived shows that, firstly, the relationship between N.L.C and the government has significant impact on Nigeria workers, Secondly; the activities of the N.L.C in the new millennium has significant impact on worker's productivity in Nigeria, thirdly; pressure group politic adversely affects the internal composition and structure of members in Nigeria, It'-is therefore the recommendation of this paper that the Federal government should be sensitive to the demands of the N.L.C.

Keywords: Pressure, politics, critical, N.L.C.

INTRODUCTION

The term pressure group is used interchangeably with such terms as interest groups or organized interest. [1], defines pressure groups as voluntary associations of individuals who band for the defense of a particular interest. Interest in this sense Js a conscious desire to have a public policy or the authoritative allocation of values, and to move in a particular, general or specific direction.

The term pressure group is however loosely used here to' include trade or industrial unions, professional associations and any other association whose focus extends beyond the realization of the parochial interests of their members.

[2], categorized pressure groups generally into two namely: defensive pressure groups and promotional pressure groups. While defensive pressure group are basically concerned with the protection of their members' interest and have a defined membership; promotional pressure 'group are concerned will] promoting some general public interest as opposed to their own self-interest. Abimbola noted that the Trade or industrial unions, professional associational and the human rights association therefore fall into the categories of promotionally association pressure groups, otherwise referred to here an functional pressure groups.

According to [3], interest groups or pressure groups are many and varied. Some are formally organized, others are not. However, the more formally organized tend to be the more durable where as those informally organized usually dissolve after the crisis that originated them is resolved.

The longevity or durability of these groups, their consistency as well as their high sense of commitment to the realization of set goals all contribute to making them functional.

Functional pressure groups can be defined as those pressure or interest groups where activities are not limited or restricted to the promotion and protection of parochial interests but who are vocal and determined in pursuing politics and goals that have relevance to citizens in their own society. Viewed within the context of political participation, such groups often criticize unpopular or unfavourable government policies, organized conferences, sermons, rallies and even demonstrations or protest marches to express their displeasure and in some cases, to suggest alternatives to programmes or policies which they consider unfavourable.

Functional groups work towards sensitizing and mobilizing the populace against unpopular acts of government. In this respects, mention could be made of such groups as the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Nigeria medical Association (NMA), Nigeria labour Congress (NLC), human rights organizations such as the committee for the Defence of Human rights (CDHR), as well as pro-democracy groups such as UK: campaign for Democracy (CD), Academic Staff Union of universities (ASUU), National Association of Nigeria Students and the press.

Obviously, functional pressure groups have contributed to the democratic process in Nigeria just as some may have contributed to the problem of democratization in Nigeria, either overtly.

In the view of [4], pressure groups are to a very large extent necessary- and healthy for a thriving democratic culture to evolve. Obasanjo-and Mabogunje are, however also of the opinion that such groups must not be seen to be operating under the influence of foreign bodies. Moreover, the leadership under which there groups operate some of the time, the prevailing situation in the country, the organizational structure of these groups as well as the general mood of the society determine to a very large extent, the effectiveness of there groups and profoundly influence their contributions to the democratic process. Functional groups work towards sensitizing and mobilizing the populace against unpopular acts of government. In this respects, mention could be made of such groups as the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Nigeria medical Association (NMA), Nigeria labour Congress (NLC), human rights organizations such as the committee for the Defence of Human rights (CDHR), as well as pro-democracy groups such as the campaign for Democracy (CD), Academic Staff Union of universities (ASUU), National Association of Nigeria Students and the press. Obviously, functional pressure groups have contributed to the democratic process in Nigeria just as some may have contributed to the problem of democratization in Nigeria, either overtly. In the view of [5], pressure groups are to a very large extent necessary- and healthy for a thriving democratic culture to evolve. Obasanjo-and Mabogunje are, however also of the opinion that such groups must not be seen to be operating under the influence of foreign bodies. Moreover, the leadership under which there groups operate some of the time, the prevailing situation in the country, the organizational structure of these groups as well as the general mood of the society determine to a very large extent, the effectiveness of there groups and profoundly influence their contributions to the democratic process.

METHODOLOGY

Methods of Data Collection

The researcher used several methods to collect the needed data, these methods include:

1. Use of Questionnaires
2. Interview of persons
3. Observation of things and people

1. Use of questionnaires

Carefully prepared and detailed question forms called questionnaires were sent out to the respondents to be completed by them and returned to the researcher.

2. Interview

This is a mechanism through which oral information is collected from an individual. The researcher used this mechanism to obtain and extract relevant information in regards to the research objectives.

3. Observation of things and People.

The investigator however indirectly observed the staff of the aforementioned parastatal who is considered members of the pressure group and thus this aided in the formulation of the questionnaire used for the research.

Study of Documents

The researcher was however permitted to go through some published documents in respect to the investigation under *1* study, but the information extracted were not as relevant as the one extracted from the distribution of questionnaires.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises of all the staff of the ministry of labour and productivity in Enugu state. These are the people the researcher believed that would give the necessary information needed to evaluate and attain the objectives of the investigation.

Determination of the sample size. As this research will be targeted to concentrate on three ministries namely: the ministry of works and house, the ministry of finance and the ministry of commerce and industry, the sample size is arbitrarily chosen to be 60 staff of the above mentioned ministries, thus $60/3 = 20$. Therefore 20 staff was chosen to represent each ministry.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

System Theory

This research draws its inspiration from the systems theory of David Easton. Systems theory in political science is a highly abstract, partly holistic view of politics, influenced by Cybernetics. The adaptation of system theory to political science was first conceived by David Easton in 1953. In simple terms, Easton's behavioral approach to politics, [6] proposed that a political system could be seen as delimited (i.e. all political systems have precise boundaries) and fluid (changing) system of steps in decision making.

Easton aspired to make politics a science that is, working with highly abstract models that described the regularities of patterns and processes in political life in general. In his view, the highest level of

abstraction could make scientific generalizations about politics possible. In sum, politics should be seen as a whole, not as a collection of different problems to be solved.

His main model was driven by an organic view of politics, as if it were a living object. His theory is a statement of what makes political systems adapt and survive. He describes politics in a constant state, thereby rejecting the idea of "equilibrium", so prevalent in some other political theories [7]. Moreover, he rejects the idea that politics could be examined by looking at different levels of analysis. His abstractions could account for any group and demand at any given time, that is interest group theory and elite theory can be subsumed in political systems analysis.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter deals with how the information or data gathered from the field (questionnaire) are presented and analyzed. The extent of application of any "research work depends on careful analysis of data collected for the study [8]. The analysis also reflects the research hypothesis, its test and objectives of the study.

Furthermore, the researcher organized the collected data in tables by putting them in frequencies and percentages [9]. In

testing the various hypotheses the chi-square was used [10]. Therefore in the process of collecting relevant data, sixty (60) questionnaires were administered to three significant ministries namely: Ministry of Labour and Productivity, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Ministry of Finance, all in Enugu State [11]. Fifty Eight (58) of the questionnaires were properly filled and returned in a useful form this save the response rate of 96.7% as shown in the calculation below.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Response rate: } & \frac{\text{Number of questionnaire returned}}{\text{Number of questionnaire given out}} \times \frac{100}{1} \\ & = \frac{58}{60} \times \frac{100}{1} = 96.7\% \end{aligned}$$

TABLE 1 HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING WITH THE MINISTRY?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1-10 YEARS	8	14
11- 15 YEARS	10	17
15 YEARS AND ABOVE	40	69
TOTAL	58	100

From the analysis above 40 or 69% represent civil servants who have been in the ministry for 15 years and above while 10 or 17% represent those that have been in the ministry between 11 and 15 years and 8 or 14% represent those who have

been in the ministry between 1-10 years [12]. The analysis above therefore showed that the majority of the respondents is relatively old in the ministry and thus experienced members of the N.L.C as to know what is happening in the group [13].

TABLE 2 ARE YOU PART OF THE DECISION MARKING MEMBERS OF THIS MINISTRY?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
YES	25	43
NO	33	57
TOTAL	58	100

In ascertaining the number of decision members of the randomly selected ministries, 43% represent the decision making group while 57% represent the number of respondents that are not in the capacity of making decision in the organization.

TABLE 3 DO YOU APPRECIATE THE EXISTENCE OF P. G IN NIGERIA?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
YES	50	86
NO	8	14
TOTAL	58	100

The analysis above shows that 50 or 86% of the respondents favour the existence of pressure groups in Nigeria while 8 or 14% do not appreciate their existence.

TABLE 4 HOW CAN YOU GRADE THE ACTIVITES OF N.L. C IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
GOOD	15	26
BETTER	40	69
NOT IMPRESSIVE	3	5
TOTAL	58	100

Based on this analysis 15 or 26% of the respondents graded N. L. C as good, 40 or 69% graded it better while 3 or 5 of the respondents graded it not impressive. This entails that more percentage of the respondents fall into the category of batter option.

TABLE 5: DOSE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN N. L. C AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON NIGERIA WORKERS?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
HIGH	7	12
VERY HIGH	50	86
NEUTRAL	1	2
LOW	0	0
TOTAL	58	100

The analysis shows that 86% of the respondents favoured “very high” category while Higher recorded 12% “NEUTRAL” 2% and low 0%.

TABLE 6: ARE YOU IMPRESSED WITH THE LEVEL OF N. L. C ORGANIZATION?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
YES	40	69
NO	18	31
TOTAL	58	100

The table above shows that 69% of the respondents are impressed with the level of N. L. C organization while 18 or 31% are not impressed with it.

TABLE 7 DO YOU THINK N. L. C IS WELL POSITIONED TO ATTAIN THEIR DEMANDS FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
YES	28	48
NO	25	43
UNCERTAIN	8	14
TOTAL	58	100

The analysis clearly shows that 48% of the respondents assent that N. L. C is well positioned to attain their demands from the Federal Government, while 43% of the respondents favoured "NO" category and 14% are uncertain [13].

TABLE 8 DO YOU THINK THE ACCTTIVITIES OF THE N. L. C IN THE NEW MIIENNIIUM HAS SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON WORKERS RPRODUCTION?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
HIGH	10	17
VERY HIGH	45	78
NEUTRAL	2	3
LOW	1	2
TOTAL	58	100

Obviously 10 or 175 of the respondents favoured "high", favoured "very high", 3% of the respondents are neutral, while favoured "low".

TABLE 9 HOW WOULD YOU GRADE THE RESPONSE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO N. L. C DEMANDS?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
HIGH	18	31
VERY HIGH	10	17
LOW	30	52
TOTAL	58	100

The analysis follows the previous interpretation with significant discovery that 52% of the respondents assents that the response the Federal Government to N. L. C demands is low [14].

TABLE 10 DO YOU AGREE THAT PRESSURE GROUP PPOLITICS ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF MEMBERS IN NIGERIA?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
YES	7	12
NO	48	83
UNCERTAIN	3	5
TOTAL	58	100

It is clearly seen that's the pressure group politics adversely affects the internal structure of members in Nigeria. 48 or 83% positioned No, while 3 or 5% posits a state of uncertainty.

Testing of Hypothesis

In order to make use of the proportion of the normal curve and for effective and efficient analysis of data collected the researcher made use of "chi- square" in to testing the hypothesis [15].

The chi-square is normally used where the researcher wants to test the proportion of population, possesses certain characteristics that is equal to some particular characteristics [16].

The test appears thus:

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where" X^2 = Chi-square

O = Observed Frequency

E = Expected Frequency

Decision criteria: Accept Ho if tabulated value is less than the calculated value.

Test of Hypothesis 1

HO: The relationship between N. L. C and the Government has no significant impact on Nigeria workers [17].

SOURCE OF TEST QUESTION		
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
HIGH	7	12
VERY HIGH	50	86
NEUTRAL	1	2
LOW	0	0
TOTAL	58	100

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Expected Frequency} &= \frac{\text{Total Observed}}{\text{Total Number of opinion}} \\ &= \frac{58}{4} = 15 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Where } X^{*2} = \frac{\sum (O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where X^2 = Chi-Square

O = Observed Frequency

E = Expected Frequency

$$X^2 = \frac{(7-15)^2}{15} + \frac{(50-15)^2}{15} + \frac{(1-15)^2}{15} + \frac{(0-15)^2}{15}$$

$$= \frac{(-8)^2}{15} + \frac{(35)^2}{15} + \frac{(-14)^2}{15} + \frac{(-15)^2}{15}$$

$$= \frac{64}{15} + \frac{1225}{15} + \frac{196}{15} + \frac{225}{15}$$

$$\frac{64 + 1225 + 196 + 225}{15}$$

$$= \frac{1710}{15} = 114$$

$$X^2 = 114$$

Degree of freedom = K - 1 where k = 4

$$DF = 4 - 1 = 3$$

$$= 3 = 7.81$$

$$\therefore X^2 = 114 \text{ and } X_{\alpha}^2 = 7.81$$

Decision: Since the $X^2 > X_{\alpha}^2$, we reject H_0 and accept H_0 Comment: It entails that the relationships between NLC and the government has significant impact on Nigeria workers [19].

Note:

X^2 = Calculated value of Chi-square

X_{α}^2 = Tabulated value of Chi-square

Test of Hypothesis 2

H_0 : The activity of the N. L. C in the new millennium has no significant impact on workers' productivity in Nigeria.

Source of test question:

Table 8

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
High	10	17
Very high	45	78
Neutral	2	3
Low	1	2
Total	58	100

$$\text{Expected frequency} = \frac{\text{Total observed}}{\text{Total number of opinion}}$$

$$\rightarrow \frac{58}{4} = 15$$

$$\rightarrow X^2 = \frac{(10-15)^2}{15} + \frac{(45-15)^2}{15} + \frac{(2-15)^2}{15} + \frac{(0-15)^2}{15}$$

$$\rightarrow \frac{(-5)^2}{15} + \frac{(30)^2}{15} + \frac{(-13)^2}{15} + \frac{(-15)^2}{15}$$

$$\rightarrow \frac{25}{15} + \frac{900}{15} + \frac{169}{15} + \frac{225}{15}$$

$$\frac{25 + 900 + 169 + 225}{125} = \frac{1319}{125}$$

15

15

$$X^2 = 88$$

Degree of freedom = $K - 1$ where $K = 4$
 $DF = 4 - 1 = 3$

$$X^2_{(S)} = 7.81$$

Decision: Since $X^2 > X^2_{(S)}$, it implies the rejection of the H_0 and thereby accepting the alternative.

The activities of the N.L.C in the new millennium has significant impact on workers' productivity in Nigeria.

Test of hypothesis (3)

H_0 : Pressure group politics adverse affects the internal composition and structure of members in Nigeria.

Source of Question

Table 10

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
YES	7	12
NO	48	83
UNCERTAIN	3	5
TOTAL	58	100

58 = 19 = Expected frequency

$$X^2 = \frac{(7-19)^2}{15} + \frac{(48-19)^2}{15} + \frac{(3-19)^2}{15}$$

$$= \frac{(-12)^2}{15} + \frac{(29)^2}{15} + \frac{(-16)^2}{15}$$

$$\frac{144}{15} + \frac{84}{5} + \frac{256}{15}$$

$$\rightarrow \frac{144}{15} + \frac{841}{19} + \frac{256}{15}$$

$$\rightarrow \frac{1241}{19} = 65$$

$$X^2 = 65$$

Degree of freedom = $K - 1 = 3 - 1 = 2$

$$X^2_{(S)} = 5.99$$

Decision: Since $X^2 > X^2_{(S)}$, it entails that we reject H_0 , which entails the acceptance of the alternative. Therefore pressure group politic does not adversely affect the internal structure of members in Nigeria

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The primary aim of this research is to carry out an investigation on pressure group politics in Nigeria with a critical examination of the NLC in the new millennium (case study of Enugu State). The researcher was motivated to embark on this research on the basis of the obvious activities of the Nigeria labor congress in Nigeria, which affects other

macro economic variables in turn [20]. To achieve the aim of the conclusion, the researcher analyzed the concept of pressure groups in Nigeria with N.L.C in mind and Look the historical profile of the concept into cognizance.

Furthermore, the investigator explored the problematic framework of the concept of pressure group politics in Nigeria,

while the significance of the study explicated the beneficiaries and how important the investigation is to some class of persons and institutions [21].

The second chapter of the research reviewed the views of other scholars, political scientists, authors and academics on the concept of pressure group on the framework of N.L.C, the type of pressure group was also explored and more importantly the researcher made the history of N.L.C explicit.

In the course of the study, the hypotheses tested were thus:

Ho', the relationship between N.L.C and government has no significant impact on Nigeria workers.

Ho: The activity of the N.L.C in the new millennium has no significant

CONCLUSION

This investigation has been able to analyze the concept of pressure group politics in Nigeria. A critical examination of the N.L.C in the millennium (case study of Enugu state). Based on the study and the findings, the researcher therefore concludes that.

Firstly, that the relationship between N.L.C and the government has significant and effective impact on Nigeria workers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. The N.L.C should always ensure that their demands from the Federal are feasible to avoid the rejection of the assistance of the government, as this bears a negative connotation.
2. The election or appointment of the leaders of pressure groups especially the N.L.C should be on the basis merit and commitment, not on the framework of prejudice or tribal considerations.
3. The Federal government should create a framework of ensuring

impact on workers' productivity in Nigeria.

Ho: Pressure group politics adversely affects the internal composition and structure of members in Nigeria.

In the process of estimating the analysis, questionnaire were distributed to respondents who are majority executives and staff of the three ministries in Enugu State and in the analysis, the Null hypothesis (Ho) were all rejected with acceptance of the counter version (alternative hypothesis).

It is however based on the above findings that the researcher draws a rational conclusion, expressed in the proper recommendations.

Secondly, that the activities of the N.L.C in the new millennium -has significant impact on the workers productivity in Nigeria;

Finally pressure group politics does not adversely affect the internal composition and structure of members in Nigeria.

The researcher will thus articulate policy recommendations based on the findings of this research.

that the opinions of N.L.C are taking into consideration with matters concerning labor activities and politics in Nigeria.

4. The federal government should be sensitive to the demands of N.L.C as the study shows that their activities even through their relationship with the government affects worker's productivity.
5. Unnecessary and exploitative pressure groups should be abolished in Nigeria as their actions in one way or the other adversely distort the administration of any government in place.

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