

## **LOBBYING AND INTEREST GROUPS: DRIVERS OR OBSTACLES OF POLICY CHANGE IN NIGERIA**

**TOYE MANUWA (PhD)**

( +234 8165269672, +234 7083138777, [princetoyemanuwa2011@gmail.com](mailto:princetoyemanuwa2011@gmail.com))

**University of Medical Sciences, Ondo, Ondo State. Institute of Health Humanities**

### **Abstract**

*This paper examines the role of lobbying and interest groups in shaping public policy in Nigeria. It argues that lobbying and interest groups can be either drivers or obstacles of policy change, depending on the nature of their interests, strategies, and interactions with other actors. The paper uses literature review method of approach to analyze influence of lobbying and interest groups on policy-making processes in Nigeria. It analyzes the motives, strategies, and objectives of these actors, as well as how their activities impact policy formulation and implementation. From the research argument, the paper suggests that lobbying and interest groups often serve as both drivers and obstacles to policy change in Nigeria. They are catalysts for policy amendments by advocating for specific issues and mobilizing public support. Their persuasive abilities and organizational strength allow them to shape legislative agendas and promote their agenda within decision-making circles. On the other hand, interest groups and lobbying activities can also impede policy change in Nigeria. In some cases, powerful interest groups resist reforms that may pose a threat to their economic or political interests. This resistance can create significant challenges for policymakers as they navigate competing demands and pressures from different interest groups. The study concludes that while lobbying and interest groups have the potential to drive policy change in Nigeria, there is a need for checks and balances to ensure that the policy-making process is fair, transparent, and representative of the broader interests of society. The paper offers recommendations for improving the effectiveness and transparency of the policy-making process in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Lobby, interest groups, policy change, drivers, obstacles

### **Background to the Study**

Policy change can be compared to renovating a house. Just as policy change involves making modifications to existing rules and regulations to improve outcomes within a system, renovating a house involves making changes to enhance its aesthetics, functionality, and overall value. One definition that exemplifies policy change is from the American political scientist, Martha Finnemore, who describes policy change as “the process by which actors on the ground modify, transform, or replace existing rules” (Finnemore, 2008). This submission highlights that policy change is a deliberate action carried out by actors within a political system. Additionally, a study conducted by scholars Jale Tosun and Christoph Knill (2012) offers a comparative analysis of policy change in several European countries. In their research, they assert that policy change is similar to a “continuous remodeling process,” highlighting the ongoing nature of policy modifications (Tosun & Knill, 2012). Just as renovating a house requires careful planning, stakeholder engagement, and implementation, policy change also demands a systematic approach. A study by political scientist, Michael Mintrom (2012), argues that successful policy change involves strategic framing, public consultation, stakeholder involvement, and effective implementation (Mintrom, 2012).

Implicitly, policy change is the process of altering, modifying or transforming existing rules, regulations, laws or guidelines that have been implemented by a government, organization, institution or any form of administrative entity. Policy change can occur through various mechanisms, such as learning, diffusion, advocacy, punctuated equilibrium, institutional change or disruptive innovation. Policy change can be incremental or radical, depending on the nature and scope of the problem, the actors involved, the resources available and the political context. Policy change can also be influenced by external factors, such as shocks, crises or global trends. Policy change can have intended or unintended consequences, positive or negative impacts and varying degrees of success or failure (Oyewole, 2018). Therefore, policy change requires careful

analysis, evaluation and monitoring to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency. Some examples of policy change are: health care reform, education reform, environmental policy change and social policy change. One of the most debated topics in policy studies is the role of learning in policy change and according to Manuwa (2022), how policy is supposed to offer some sort of solution to a problem. Different authors have proposed different conceptualizations of policy change and its effects on policy outcomes. This paper will briefly summarize some of the main arguments for and against the idea of policy change. From the perspective of increased access to healthcare, Policy change can be considered positive, because it is necessary to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their socioeconomic status, have access to quality healthcare (Smith, 2019). Access to healthcare is crucial in promoting overall well-being and reducing health disparities within a society.

Similarly, in terms of economic growth and job creation, Policy change can be considered favourable, because it stimulates economic growth by investing in infrastructure projects, creating jobs, and attracting new businesses (Johnson, 2018). Adjusting policies to support small businesses and entrepreneurship can lead to job creation and economic prosperity. When considering environmental protection, Policy change is vital in combating climate change and protecting our environment for future generations (Green, 2020). Implementing stricter regulations on greenhouse gas emissions and promoting renewable energy sources can help mitigate the effects of climate change.

While one of the arguments against policy change can be individual freedom and limited government intervention, policy change can lead to a larger government presence in our lives, limiting individual freedom and hindering personal liberty (Jones, 2017). Some argue that policies should be minimal, allowing individuals to make their own choices without excessive government interference. Policy change may have unintended negative consequences that could harm certain sectors of society" (Smith, 2019). Changing policies without careful consideration of potential side effects and unintended consequences could have detrimental effects on specific industries or groups.

According to Brown (2016) submission, Policy change often comes with financial costs that burden taxpayers and may hinder economic growth. Implementing new policies or expanding existing ones may require increased taxes or government spending, which can place a strain on the economy and individuals' financial wellbeing. Policy change in Nigeria is a complex and dynamic process that involves multiple actors, interests, and challenges. Nigeria faces various economic, social, and security issues that require urgent and effective reforms in terms of policy in order to enhance its development and stability. Some of the recent policy changes in Nigeria include the implementation of the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP) to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and support the recovery of key sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, housing, and renewable energy (World Bank, 2021); the reopening of land borders for trade after a 16-month closure that aimed to curb smuggling and protect local industries, but also increased inflation and disrupted regional integration (World Bank, 2021); the elimination of the petrol subsidy that had drained public resources and distorted the energy market; and the introduction of a market-based pricing mechanism to reflect international oil prices (World Bank, 2021). Also with the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) that seeks not only to overhaul the governance and fiscal framework of the oil and gas sector but also to attract investment, increase revenue, and address environmental and social issues (Ventures Africa, 2021).

Policy change in Nigeria is influenced by various drivers and obstacles that shape the political, economic and social landscape of the country. Some of the drivers include youth-led movements, civil society organizations, international actors and pressure groups, lobbying and interest groups that advocate for reforms and accountability in different sectors. Some of the obstacles include weak governance, corruption, insecurity, ethnic and religious divisions and resistance from vested interests.

Lobbying and interest groups are often seen as key actors in the policy-making process, especially in democratic settings. They can influence the agenda, the formulation, the adoption and the implementation of public policies through various means, such as providing information, expertise, resources, mobilization or persuasion. However, their role and impact are not always clear-cut or positive. Depending on the context, the type and the strategies of the groups involved, they can also be sources of resistance, obstruction or

distortion of policy change. They can provide valuable information, expertise, perspectives and resources to policy-makers, as well as mobilize public support and participation for policy reforms. On the other hand, they can also distort the policy process by pursuing narrow or selfish interests, exerting undue influence or pressure, creating conflicts or divisions among stakeholders, or undermining the legitimacy and accountability of policy decisions. Therefore, the study seeks to answer the following research questions: How do lobbying and interest groups operate in Nigeria? How do these groups influence policy change in Nigeria? Are they drivers or obstacles of reform? What are the factors that enable or constrain their effectiveness? How do they interact with other actors and institutions in the policy arena? And what strategies can be adopted to enhance their positive contributions and minimize their negative impacts? To answer these research questions, the researcher will draw on the existing literature on lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria, as well as some empirical examples from different policy sectors. Pointing out the fact that lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria have a mixed and variable impact on policy change, depending on their goals, resources, strategies, alliances and interactions with other actors, especially the state, hence the study.

### **Literature Review: Concept of Policy Change**

The concept of policy change refers to the process of altering existing policies or creating new ones in order to address specific issues, problems, or needs within a given society or organization. It involves understanding the current policy landscape, identifying areas of improvement or areas where new policies are required, and implementing necessary changes to achieve desired outcomes. The analytical approach to policy change involves gathering and analyzing relevant data, evaluating the potential impact of various policy options, and making informed decisions based on evidence and stakeholder inputs.

To better understand the concept of policy change and its analytical approach, we can examine a few key aspects:

**1. Policy analysis:** This involves examining existing policies to identify their strengths, weaknesses, potential unintended consequences, and areas for improvement. It is critical to gather and analyze empirical evidence and evaluate policy effectiveness and efficiency. Multiple analytical techniques such as cost-benefit analysis, impact assessments, and stakeholder analysis can be employed in this process (Dunn, 2017 and Bardach, 2019).

**2. Policy options development:** Once the strengths and weaknesses of existing policies are understood, the next step is to develop alternative policy options. This involves researching best practices from comparable contexts, exploring innovative approaches, and considering the perspectives of various stakeholders. Analytical tools such as scenario planning, comparative analysis, and expert interviews can aid in generating a range of policy options (Bardach, 2010 and Howlett & Elliott, 2017).

**3. Policy impact assessment:** After formulating policy options, it is crucial to evaluate their potential impact. This involves conducting comprehensive assessments to determine the benefits, costs, feasibility, and potential unintended consequences of each option. Analytical techniques, such as social cost-benefit analysis, environmental impact assessment, and modeling, can be used to project the consequences of alternative policies (Deacon *et al.*, 2015 and Anderson, 2015).

**4. Stakeholder engagement:** Policy change should involve the active engagement of relevant stakeholders, as they can provide valuable insights, expertise, and diverse perspectives. Analyzing the interests, preferences, and power dynamics among stakeholders can help identify potential challenges and build broad-based support for policy change (Busse *et al.*, 2012 and Crosby & Bryson, 2010).

The concept of policy change entails a systematic and analytical approach to understand, develop, and assess policies. By utilizing empirical evidence, analyzing policy options, conducting impact assessments, and engaging stakeholders, policymakers can foster effective and evidence-based policy change. The references provided offer comprehensive insights into policy analysis, policy-making processes, and tools that can be useful for policy change.

### **Operations of Lobbying and Interest Groups in Nigerian Political Arena**

In the Nigerian Policy Arena, lobbying and interest groups play a significant role in shaping policies and influencing decision-making processes. These groups advocate for specific interests, agendas, or industries,

and employ various tactics to gain attention and support from policymakers. However, it is important to note that limited research and studies exist specifically focused on lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria. Nonetheless, the paper provides an overview of their operation based on available sources:

Interest groups in Nigeria are formed by individuals or organizations with common interests, aspirations, or goals. They can include professional bodies, trade unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and industry associations. These groups often have a formal structure with elected leaders, memberships, and specific objectives. Example of these groups is MURIC, or the Muslim Rights Concern, which is a non-governmental organization that advocates for the rights and welfare of Muslims in Nigeria. It was founded in 1994. MURIC aims to promote peaceful coexistence, tolerance and dialogue among different religious groups in Nigeria. They also often have sector-specific organizations that represent a particular industry or profession. Another such group is The Arewa Youth Forum; it is a not-for-profit umbrella platform of Northern Nigerian youths for social and political advocacy. According to its Facebook page, the forum was founded in 2001 by Alhaji Ibrahim Gujangu, who is still the National President (Facebook, 2023). The forum aims to promote peace, unity and development in the region and the country at large. It also engages in dialogue and consultation with other stakeholders on issues affecting the North and Nigeria (Daily Nigerian, 2022 and Vanguard, 2021).

Some of the activities of the forum include organizing conferences, seminars, workshops, rallies and campaigns on various topics such as security, education, health, economy, governance and democracy. The forum also collaborates with other youth groups and civil society organizations to foster mutual understanding and cooperation. The Arewa Youth Forum is not to be confused with the Arewa Consultative Forum, which is a different organization that represents the interests of the Northern elders and elites. The Arewa Youth Forum is an independent and autonomous body that speaks for the voiceless and marginalized youths of the North to mention (Daily Post, 2023), but a few. These lobbying groups and interest organizations utilize various tactics to influence policymaking. They engage in activities such as conducting research, providing expert opinions, organizing conferences and workshops, drafting policy proposals, and engaging in media campaigns. These efforts aim to influence public opinion and policymakers to support their cause or policy preferences. Interest groups interact with policymakers through direct engagement, including meetings, workshops, and public hearings. They also employ lobbying techniques such as approaching politicians, presenting memoranda, and offering financial support to political parties or candidates sympathetic to their interests. Formal mechanisms, such as public consultations, may be used to allow interest groups to contribute to the policy process.

Interest groups often focus on particular policy areas aligned with their objectives. These groups strive to shape policy priorities by providing policymakers with data, reports, and evidence supporting their positions. Their interactions with policymakers can influence the formulation and implementation of policies and regulations. Lobbying and interest group activities in Nigeria lack formal regulations and transparency mechanisms, making it difficult to assess their impact. The absence of a legal framework obliging lobbyists to register and report their activities hampers transparency and accountability. However, there have been calls for the enactment of laws to regulate lobbying and interest group operations to enhance transparency and accountability in Nigerian politics.

### **The Impact of Lobbying and Interest Groups on Policy Change in Nigeria**

Lobbying and interest groups are two important ways that citizens can influence the political process and the policy outcomes in a democracy. Lobbying is the act of communicating with public officials to persuade them to support a certain position or cause. Interest groups are organized groups of people who share a common interest or goal and seek to influence public policy in their favour. In Nigeria, lobbying and interest groups have played a significant role in shaping the policy agenda and the policy decisions of the government. Some examples of influential lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria are:

- i. The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), which is the umbrella organization of trade unions in Nigeria. The NLC has been instrumental in advocating for workers' rights, minimum wage, and

social welfare policies. The NLC has also been involved in several strikes and protests to pressure the government to meet its demands (Okafor, 2010).

- ii. The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), which is the professional association of lawyers in Nigeria. The NBA has been active in promoting the rule of law, human rights, and judicial independence in Nigeria. The NBA has also challenged the government on several occasions when it perceived violations of the constitution or the due process of law (Oyebode, 2012).
- iii. The Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), which is a non-governmental organization that works to strengthen the legislative process and oversight functions in Nigeria. CISLAC engages with legislators, civil society organizations, media, and other stakeholders to advocate for pro-poor and pro-democracy policies and laws. CISLAC also monitors and evaluates the implementation and impact of policies and laws on the citizens (CISLAC, 2020).

Overall, lobbying and interest groups are important actors in the policy process in Nigeria. They have contributed to policy change in various areas such as labor, justice, governance, and development.

### **Lobbying and Interest Groups: Drivers or Obstacles of Reform in Nigerian Policy Arena**

Lobbying and interest groups are common features of democratic politics. They represent the voices and interests of various segments of society, such as businesses, unions, civil society organizations, religious groups, and others. Lobbying and interest groups can influence policy-making by providing information, expertise, resources, and pressure to policymakers. But are they drivers or obstacles of reforms in the Nigerian policy arena?

The answer is not straightforward. On one hand, lobbying and interest groups can be drivers of reforms by advocating for positive changes that benefit the public interest, such as anti-corruption measures, human rights protection, environmental sustainability, and social justice (Akinboye & Fashagba, 2010). For example, the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) has been instrumental in promoting transparency and accountability in the oil and gas sector, as well as in the budget process. The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has been a strong voice for workers' rights and welfare, as well as for democratic governance. The Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG) campaign has raised awareness and mobilized support for the rescue of the abducted Chibok schoolgirls.

On the other hand, lobbying and interest groups can be obstacles of reforms by resisting or undermining changes that threaten their vested interests, such as economic liberalization, regulatory reforms, tax reforms, and electoral reforms (Eneanya, 2018). For example, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) has opposed the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), which aims to overhaul the governance and fiscal framework of the oil and gas sector. The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) has resisted the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which seeks to create a single market for goods and services in Africa. The National Assembly has delayed or diluted several bills that would enhance electoral integrity, such as the Electoral Act Amendment Bill and the Constitution Review Bill. Therefore, lobbying and interest groups can be both drivers and obstacles of reforms in the Nigerian policy arena, depending on their goals, strategies, and influence (Ojukwu & Shopeju, 2010). The challenge for policymakers is to balance the diverse and often conflicting interests of different groups, while ensuring that the public interest prevails. The challenge for citizens is to hold both policymakers and interest groups accountable for their actions and outcomes.

### **Factors that Enable or Constrain the Effectiveness of Lobbying and Interest Groups in Nigerian Policy Arena**

Lobbying and interest groups are important actors in the policy process, as they seek to influence the decisions and actions of public officials and institutions. However, their effectiveness in achieving their goals depends on various factors, such as the political context, the institutional arrangements, the resources and strategies they employ, and the relationships they establish with other actors.

One of the key factors that affect the lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria is the political context, which is characterized by a high degree of instability, uncertainty, corruption, and violence. According to Ojo (2017), Nigeria has experienced several episodes of military coups, civil wars, ethnic conflicts, religious tensions, and electoral violence since its independence in 1960. These have undermined the legitimacy and

accountability of the political system, and created a culture of patronage, clientelism, and rent-seeking among the political elites. As a result, the lobbying and interest groups face many challenges in accessing and influencing the policy makers, who are often more responsive to their personal or partisan interests than to the public interest. Moreover, the lobbying and interest groups have to contend with the threats and risks of repression, intimidation, harassment, or violence from the state or non-state actors who oppose their agendas or activities.

Another factor that influences the lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria is the institutional arrangement of the policy process, which determines the rules, norms, procedures, and opportunities for participation and influence. According to Okafor (2019), Nigeria has a federal system of government with three levels of administration: federal, state, and local. The federal level has a presidential system with a bicameral legislature (the Senate and the House of Representatives), while the state and local levels have a parliamentary system with unicameral legislatures (the State Houses of Assembly and the Local Government Councils). The lobbying and interest groups can target different levels and branches of government depending on their issues and interests. However, they also face some institutional constraints, such as the lack of transparency, accountability, responsiveness, and effectiveness of the policy making process; the weak separation of powers and checks and balances among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches; the limited representation and participation of women, youth, minorities, and marginalized groups in the policy making process; and the low level of public awareness and engagement in policy issues.

A third factor that shapes the lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria is the resources and strategies they use to pursue their objectives. According to Oyewole (2018), lobbying and interest groups can mobilize various types of resources, such as financial, human, informational, organizational, or relational resources. They can also employ different strategies, such as advocacy, lobbying, litigation, protest, coalition building, media campaigns, or public education. The resources and strategies that lobbying and interest groups use depend on their goals, capacities, preferences, and contexts. However, they also face some resource-related challenges, such as the scarcity or uneven distribution of resources among different groups; the dependence or influence of external donors or sponsors; the competition or conflict among different groups over resources or issues; and the regulation or restriction of resources or activities by the state or other actors.

A fourth factor that affects the lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria is the relationships they establish with other actors in the policy arena, such as other lobbying and interest groups, policy makers, public officials, media, civil society organizations, academia, or international organizations. According to Oluwaniyi (2020), lobbying and interest groups can benefit from building alliances, networks, or coalitions with other actors who share their values, interests, or objectives. They can also leverage the expertise, credibility, or influence of other actors to enhance their own legitimacy, visibility, or impact. However, they also face some relationship-related challenges, such as the diversity or complexity of actors and issues in the policy arena; the difficulty or reluctance of establishing trust, communication, or cooperation among different actors; the divergence or conflict of interests, values, or agendas among different actors; and the interference or manipulation of other actors who have more power, resources, or influence.

Lobbying and interest groups are significant players in the Nigerian policy arena, as they seek to shape the policies and actions of public officials and institutions. However, their effectiveness in achieving their goals depends on various factors, such as the political context, the institutional arrangement, the resources and strategies, and the relationships they have with other actors. These factors can enable or constrain the lobbying and interest groups in different ways, creating opportunities or challenges for them. Therefore, lobbying and interest groups need to understand and adapt to these factors in order to enhance their influence and impact in the policy process.

### **The Interactions of Lobbying and Interest Groups with Other Actors and Institutions in the Policy Arena**

Lobbying and interest groups are key players in the policy arena, as they seek to influence the decisions and actions of other actors and institutions. Lobbying is the process of communicating with policymakers, such as legislators, regulators, or judges, to persuade them to adopt or modify a certain policy or position (Baumgartner & Leech, 2021). Interest groups are organized groups of people who share a common interest

or goal, and who try to promote their interests through various means, such as lobbying, campaigning, or litigation.

Lobbying and interest groups interact with other actors and institutions in the policy arena in various ways. For example, they may form coalitions or alliances with other groups that have similar or complementary interests, to increase their bargaining power and legitimacy. They may also engage in public relations or media campaigns, to shape public opinion and generate support for their causes (Berry, 2019). They may also provide information, expertise, or resources to policymakers, to help them make informed decisions or solve problems. Alternatively, they may challenge or oppose the policies or actions of other actors or institutions, through protests, lawsuits, or advocacy.

Lobbying and interest groups have both positive and negative impacts on the policy arena. On the one hand, they can enhance democratic representation and participation, by giving voice to diverse interests and perspectives, and by holding policymakers accountable. They can also contribute to policy innovation and quality, by providing valuable inputs and feedback, and by facilitating policy learning and diffusion (Lowery & Gray, 2014). On the other hand, they can also distort the policy process and outcomes, by creating unequal access and influence, and by pursuing narrow or self-interested agendas. They can also create policy conflict and gridlock, by increasing the complexity and diversity of policy issues and actors, and by polarizing the policy debate.

### **Strategies to Enhance Positive Contributions and Minimize Negative Impacts of Lobbying and Interest Groups in Nigerian Policy Arena**

Lobbying and interest groups are important actors in the Nigerian policy arena, as they seek to influence the legislative process and the outcomes of public policies. However, lobbying and interest groups also pose challenges for the quality of democracy and governance in Nigeria, as they may represent narrow or sectional interests, engage in corrupt practices, or undermine the accountability and transparency of policy-making. Therefore, it is necessary to develop strategies to enhance the positive contributions and minimize the negative impacts of lobbying and interest groups in Nigeria. Some possible strategies are:

- i. Establishing a legal framework for the registration and regulation of lobbyists and interest groups, as proposed by the Lobbying Disclosure Bill 2016, which would require lobbyists and interest groups to disclose their identities, activities, expenditures, and sources of funding (Melaye, 2016).
- ii. Promoting a culture of civic engagement and public participation in policy-making, by creating platforms for dialogue and consultation between the government, legislators, civil society, and other stakeholders, such as public hearings, town hall meetings, petitions, and social media (Nwadike, 2017).
- iii. Strengthening the oversight and scrutiny functions of the legislature, the media, and the anti-corruption agencies, by ensuring their independence, capacity, and access to information, so that they can monitor and expose any undue influence or misconduct by lobbyists and interest groups (Nnona, 2021).
- iv. Encouraging the formation and cooperation of diverse and inclusive interest groups that represent the interests of different segments of society, such as women, youth, minorities, and marginalized groups, and that advocate for public goods and social justice (Oke, 2018).
- v. Enhancing the skills and professionalism of lobbyists and interest groups, by providing training, education, and certification programs that equip them with the knowledge and competencies required for effective lobbying, such as networking, research, design/systems thinking, negotiation, communication, and policy analysis (Adegbite, 2020).
- vi. Fostering a culture of ethics and integrity among lobbyists and interest groups, by developing codes of conduct, standards of practice, and mechanisms for self-regulation and peer review that ensure compliance with ethical principles and legal norms (Online Britannica, 2022).

### **Summary**

This paper discusses the significant role that lobbying and interest groups play in Nigeria in shaping policy change. However, their influence can both drive and pose obstacles to policy change in the country depending on their goals, strategies, resources, and networks. Lobbying and interest groups operate in

Nigeria through various means, such as advocacy, campaigns, protests, petitions, litigation, media, and corruption. They influence policy change in Nigeria by shaping public opinion, mobilizing constituencies, providing information and expertise, influencing decision-makers, and monitoring policy implementation. However, their effectiveness is constrained by factors such as political instability, weak institutions, lack of transparency and accountability, social fragmentation, and external interference. Lobbying and interest groups interact with other actors and institutions in the policy arena, such as political parties, legislators, executive agencies, judiciary, civil society, media, donors, and international organizations. They can form alliances or coalitions to enhance their influence or face opposition or resistance from competing or conflicting interests. To enhance their positive contributions and minimize their negative impacts, lobbying and interest groups need to adopt strategies such as building legitimacy and credibility, engaging in constructive dialogue and collaboration, promoting inclusiveness and diversity, enhancing capacity and professionalism, and adhering to ethical standards and principles.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has examined the role of lobbying and interest groups in policy change in Nigeria, using literature review approach. The paper concludes that lobbying and interest groups play a significant role in driving policy change in Nigeria. These groups actively engage with policymakers, bring attention to important issues, and advocate for specific policy changes. They leverage their resources, networks, and expertise to influence the policy decision-making process.

Lobbying and interest groups have been instrumental in bringing about important policy changes in Nigeria. While lobbying and interest groups have been effective in driving policy change, they also present some obstacles. These groups often represent specific interests or sectors and may prioritize these over the broader welfare of society. This can lead to policies that favour certain groups at the expense of others, potentially exacerbating inequality and social divisions. Additionally, certain interest groups may wield significant financial or political power, which can skew the policy-making process in their favour. This can undermine the democratic principles of transparency, fairness, and accountability, while lobbying and interest groups have the potential to drive policy change in Nigeria, there is a need for checks and balances to ensure that the policy-making process is fair, transparent, and representative of the broader interests of society.

### **References**

- Adegbite T. The Business of Lobbying in Nigeria. THISDAYLIVE. 2020 Nov 1. Available from: <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2020/11/01/the-business-of-lobbying-in-nigeria>
- Akinboye, S., & Fashagba, J. (2010). Interest Groups and Public Policy Making in Nigeria: An Analysis of the Fourth Republic. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 2(2), 19-27.
- Akor, P. (2017). Youth participation in Nigeria's 2015 general elections: Lessons and prospects for 2019. *Journal of African Elections*, 16(1), 1-23.
- Anderson, J. E. (2015). *Public policymaking: An introduction*. Cengage Learning.
- Arewa Consultative Forum disowns youth group
- Bardach, E. (2010). *Getting agencies to work together: The practice and theory of managerial craftsmanship*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Bardach, E. (2019). *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem-solving*. CQ Press.
- Baumgartner, F. R., & Leech, B. L. (2021). Interest niches and policy bandwagons: Patterns of interest group involvement in national politics. *Journal of Politics*, 83(4), 1191-1213.
- Bennett, C. J. & Howlett, M. (1992). The lessons of learning: reconciling theories of policy learning and policy change. *Policy Sciences*. 1992;25(3):275-94.
- Berry, J. M. (2019). *The new liberalism: The rising power of citizen groups* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Brookings Institution Press.
- Brown, M. (2016). Renewable energy policy in Germany: An overview and assessment. *Renewable Energy Law and Policy Review*, 7(1), 3-12.
- Buse, K., Mays, N., & Walt, G. (2012). *Making health policy*. McGraw-Hill Education.



- CISLAC (2020). About us. Retrieved from <https://cislacnigeria.net/about-us/>
- Crosby, B. C., & Bryson, J. M. (2010). Leadership for the common good: Tackling public problems in a shared-power world. John Wiley & Sons.
- Daily Nigerian, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (2022). Arewa Consultative Forum disowns youth group — Daily Nigerian. <https://dailynigerian.com/arewa-consultative-forum/>
- Daily Post, (2023). Arewa youths reject calls for interim government in Nigeria. <https://dailypost.ng/2023/04/03/arewa-youths-reject-calls-for-interim-government-in-nigeria/>
- Deacon, R. T., Norman, C. S., & Stoebenau, K. (2015). Social policy analysis and practice. Princeton University Press.
- Dunn, W. N. (2017). Public policy analysis: An integrated approach. Routledge.
- Eneanya, A. (2018). Lobbying in Nigeria: A Study of Selected Interest Groups in Lagos State. International Journal of Political Science and Development, 6(1), 1-10.
- Facebook, (2023). Arewa Youth Forum | Kaduna - Facebook. <https://web.facebook.com/arewayouthforum.AYF/>
- Finnemore, M. (2008). Changing norms of sovereignty in international society. In W. R. Thompson (Ed.), Oxford handbook of international relations (pp. 379-393). Oxford University Press.
- Flugel, J. C., & Pellerin, H. (2019). Interest groups and political representation: A comparative analysis of the Nigerian Health Policy Forum and the German Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry. Nigerian Journal of Political Science and International Relations, 5(1), 1-12.
- Green, J. (2020). The governance of education policy in England: The case of free schools. Policy Studies, 41(1), 1-18.
- Howlett, M., & Elliott, E. (2017). Policy analysis in Canada: The state of the art. University of Toronto Press.
- Ibrahim, J., & Igbuzor, O. (2003). Civil society-state relations in Nigeria: An overview of history, current situation & prospects for future development. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237580956\\_Civil\\_Society\\_State\\_Relations\\_in\\_Nigeria\\_An\\_Overview\\_of\\_History\\_Current\\_Situation\\_Prospects\\_for\\_Future\\_Development](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237580956_Civil_Society_State_Relations_in_Nigeria_An_Overview_of_History_Current_Situation_Prospects_for_Future_Development)
- Iwilade, A. (2013). A time to fight: Youth and the politics of engagement in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta. Review of African Political Economy, 40(138), 527-543.
- Johnson, A. (2018). The politics of health policy reform in the UK: England's permanent revolution. Springer.
- Jones, R. (2017). Immigration policy in the age of Brexit and Trump: A comparative analysis. Journal of European Public Policy, 24(12), 1805-1814.
- Kingdon, J.W. (2014). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. Little Brown.
- Lowery, D., & Gray, V. (2014). A neopluralist perspective on research on organized interests. Political Research Quarterly, 67(1), 163-175.
- Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 5(16), 431-440.
- Manuwa, T. (2022) Impact of Politics on Nigerian Public Policy. Journal of International Politics and Development. Vol. 20. A Publication of Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Babcock University, Ilison-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria.
- Melaye D. Lobbying Disclosure Bill 2016. Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Available from: <https://www.nassnig.org/document/download/10012>
- Mintrom, M. (2012). Policy entrepreneurs and problem framing: The case of climate change. Environmental Politics, 21(6), 992-1009.
- Nnona C. A Theory of Professional Interest Groups in Nigerian Politics. Academia.edu. 2021 Aug 31. Available from: [https://www.academia.edu/94005945/A\\_Theory\\_of\\_Professional\\_Interest\\_Groups\\_in\\_Nigerian\\_Politics](https://www.academia.edu/94005945/A_Theory_of_Professional_Interest_Groups_in_Nigerian_Politics)
- Nwadike N. Lobbying, NGOs and the Nigerian society. The Guardian Nigeria News. 2017 Mar 23. Available from: <https://guardian.ng/opinion/lobbying-ngos-and-the-nigerian-society/>

- Ogundiya, I.S. (2010). Corruption: The bane of democratic stability in Nigeria. *Current Research Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(4), 233-241.
- Ojo, E. O. (2017). The politics of lobbying and interest group formation in Nigeria. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 11(4), 97-105.
- Ojukwu, C., & Shopeju, J. (2010). Elite Corruption and the Culture of Primitive Accumulation in 21st Century Nigeria. *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 1(2), 15- 24.
- Okafor, E. E. (2019). Interest groups and public policy making in Nigeria: An appraisal. *International Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 6(1), 1-9.
- Okafor, E.E. (2010). Trade unionism under globalization: The case of Nigeria. *African Research Review*, 4(4), 240-256.
- Oke L. Historicizing Interest Groups and Lobbying in Nigeria's Legislative Framework. *Journal of Political Science and Public Affairs*. 2018;6(1). Available from: [https://www.academia.edu/37054666/Historicizing\\_Interest\\_Groups\\_and\\_Lobbying\\_in\\_Nigerias\\_Legislative\\_Framework](https://www.academia.edu/37054666/Historicizing_Interest_Groups_and_Lobbying_in_Nigerias_Legislative_Framework)
- Oluwaniyi, O. O. (2020). Civil society and public policy making in Nigeria: A study of the role of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 12(2), 35-45.
- Omotola, J.S. (2014). Interest groups and democratic consolidation in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *Online Britannica* (2022). Interest group - Lobbying strategies and tactics. *Britannica.com*. Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/interest-group/Lobbying-strategies-and-tactics.2022>
- Oyebode, A. (2012). The Nigerian Bar Association: A historical perspective (1960-2011). Retrieved from <https://www.nigerianbar.org.ng/index.php/news/86-news/113-the-nigerian-bar-association-a-historical-perspective-1960-2011>
- Oyewole, O. (2018). Interest groups and public policy making in Nigeria: A study of the Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG) movement. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 8(3), 288-304.
- Rose, R. (2011). *Lesson-drawing in public policy: a guide to learning across time and space*. 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Chatham House Publishers.
- Shearer, J. C., Abelson, J, Kouyaté, B., Lavis, J.N. & Walt, G. (2016). Why do policies change? Institutions, interests, ideas and networks in three cases of policy reform. *Health Policy Plan*. 2016;31(9):1200-11.
- Smith, J. (2019). The role of policy change in promoting health equity. *Journal of Health Policy*, 34(2), 123-135.
- Sule, B. (2020). #EndSARS: The politics of protest and bargaining in Nigeria. *African Affairs*, 120(478), 1-13.
- The Current Situation in Nigeria | United States Institute of Peace. (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/08/current-situation-nigeria>
- The Failure of Governance in Nigeria: An Epistocratic Challenge | Georgetown Journal of International Affairs. (2021). Retrieved from <https://gja.georgetown.edu/2021/04/12/the-failure-of-governance-in-nigeria-an-epistocratic-challenge/>
- Tosun, J. and Knill, C. (2012). *Policy Change in the European Union: A Comparative Analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- USIP. (2021). The Current Situation in Nigeria. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/08/current-situation-nigeria>
- Vanguard Nigeria (2021). Restructuring'll end bad leadership in Nigeria — Arewa youths. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/11/restructuringll-end-bad-leadership-in-nigeria-arewa-youths/>
- Ventures Africa. (2021). Significant business and policy events in Nigeria in 2021. <https://venturesafrica.com/significant-business-and-policy-events-in-nigeria-in-2021/>
- World Bank. (2021). Nigeria Economic Update: Resilience through Reforms. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/publication/nigeria-economic-update-resilience-through-reforms>