

# **THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN EDUCATION AND POLITICS**

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## **Abstract**

*This paper examines the role of communication in education and politics in Nigeria. The major concepts such as communication education politics were operationally defined. Communication was defined as the process of passing information or message to another person, while education was defined as the acquisition of knowledge and skills that enable one to be useful and acceptable member of his or her society. The paper posits that communication has a vital role in education and politics such as dissemination of information to the masses, presenting political manifesto, imparting knowledge to learners. The paper provides implication for counseling and made useful suggestions. The suggestions include: the State, Federal Government should provide communication means available to educational organizations and public offices for easy communication and retrieval of information such as; internet services, computers, handsets and libraries.*

**Key words:** Education, communication and politics.

## **Introduction**

Education is the key to all aspects of development in the world. It is also a key for uniting Nations, bringing human beings together, combating poverty, promoting social justices, human rights, democracy, culture diversity and environmental awareness. All these are achieved through communication. Communication is the process of disseminating information from one person to another. It has a vital role to play in education and politics in Nigeria. All human

aces are political animals. Communication is vital to politics and educational development without communication, there will be no political and educational development participation.

## **Conceptual Clarification**

### **The Concept of Education**

The concept education has no single universal acceptable definition, many scholars define the concept in different perspectives, for instance, Ker (2013) defined education as the process or art of imparting knowledge, skill, attitude and values to someone with the aim of bringing about a change in behaviour. Education is about a deliberate or conscious attempt by one person to effect a change in behaviour of another person by exposing the person to present a certain experience. It could be a way of transmitting from one generation to the next, the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society and the preparation of young people for active participation in societal maintenance or development. Thus, through education individuals are expected to learn appropriate behaviors, attitudes, societal values, skills and competences to make them useful to themselves, parents, government and to contribute to the development of the larger society. Ogbole (2001) defined the concept education as the acquisition of knowledge and skills to enable one to be an acceptable and useful member of his or her society and the country at large. Akpakwu (2013) sees education as the process of shaping ones behaviors or modification of behavior of the individual for adjustment in the society.

Halladu (2002) defined education as the transmission of culture from one generation to another through formal and informal ways. From the divergent views expressed by eminent scholars on the concept of education, the writer opines that, education is acquisition of “knowledge and skills” that help one to develop physically, intellectually and socially to enable one to function in his society and the world at larger.

### **The Concept of Communication**

The concept communication has several definitions. The term denotes both interaction and purposefulness. It is derived from latin word “communities” meaning to make, common to share, to impart, to transmit, ‘today; the idea of “ sharing” is still core of’ communication and definition. Peretomode (2006) defined it as the transfer of information, feelings or messages from source to a receiver. Simply put, it is the process of transmitting meaning from sender to receiver. Communication does not take place unless the receiver correctly interprets the information being transmitted.

Cereto (1989) defines communication as: “the process of sharing information with others individuals”. Egbo (2008) sees communication as the process of transferring information from one person to the other. The word information encompasses a wide variety of things ranging from oral and printed words, figure, statement, files, and document to such intangible, element as sound signal rays and colour whatever form information takes place, the essence is to convey a message. According to Idoko (2010) communication is usually a two way process. It can be downward communication which flows from people at higher levels to those at lower levels in the organization. This type ensures authoritarianism, a situation where those in power dictate the terms and the subordinate are not allowed to say anything.

Downward communication may be oral or written. Oral communication includes, instructions, lectures, speeches, meeting use of telephone, loud speakers etc. Written communication includes memoranda, letters, hand books, pamphlets, newspapers, periodicals, bulletin, boards etc.

Upward communication according to Idoko (2010) goes from subordinates to the superiors. There are also other kinds of communications that are lateral or horizontal flow of information which exist with people on the same or similar organizational levels who have a reporting relationship. For example, director school of education communicating with the director school of engineering, communication here is on equal basis. There is no superior/subordinate relationship. It is only necessary for co-operation purposes.

Criscross communication is one in which a subordinate which in one unit may seek the audience of a boss in another unit to intervene for them because they feel there is no way they can talk or have audience with their boss. There exists, also one which we call non-verbal communication. This use gesture, facial expression and body gesture.

### **The Purpose of Communication**

Communication has a lot of purposes to human activities and development. Idoko (2010) outlines four purposes of communication as follows:

- i) To influence the performance of organizational members, to motivate direct, instruct and evaluate.
- ii) To clarify and express feelings
- iii) To serve as an information inputs or exchange
- iv) To control the entire organization.

### **The Concept Politics**

The concept politics has many definitions. Scholars defined it in difference ways. The word politics comes from Greek words "Politika" meaning "affairs of the cities" Clump (1963) in Uchendu (1995) sees politics as the science and act of securing and advancing the temporal welfare of a community organized as a state. The business of politics therefore, involves both laying down of general principles and their application to concrete problems. The essence of politics is the temporal wellbeing of the community as a whole. Uchendus (1995) definition means the politics is concerned with attracting, securing and maintaining the well-being of community, state or nation. The definition also implies that politics involve laying down principles that guide the state in its operations. There is also the implication that politics is applied in the social solution of social, economic and technology problems of the nation. This definition about what politics is agrees with the definition of Okeke (2007) who sees politics as a device intended for finding solution to social and economic problem by political means. Politics is further seen by Okeke (2007) as a civilizing agent and a way of ruling in divided society without violence. This implies that with politics, one can govern a society without violence threat or war.

Kazi (2008) defined politics as the practice and theory of influence of other people on a civil or individual level. More narrowly, it refers to achieving and exercising, position of governance and organized control over human community particularly a state. A variety of methods are employed in politics, which include

promoting one's own political views among people, negotiation with other political subjects, making laws and exercise of force, including warfare against adversaries. Politics is exercised on a wide range of social levels: from clan and tribes of traditional societies, through modern local government, companies and institutions up to sovereign states, to the international level.

All the above definitions imply that politics is all embracing, so politics is not just a subject taught in the classroom, rather, it is much more than that, one must point out at this juncture that, politics deals with power. It involves so many things like decision making, allocation of resources and settlement of conflicts, provision and management of education as well as provision of social amenities.

### **Role of communication in Education**

Education is recognized as important medium for imparting knowledge, skills for preparing citizens for change in society and the accepted norms, values and practice. Achineku and Twar (2016) opined that, as in all societies, therefore, education was and remains a priority of traditional unlettered society in Nigeria. Without communication, the above will not be achieved. Akpakwu (2013) outlines the role of communication in education as follows.

- i) It serves as a medium of passing or imparting educational knowledge to learners. Akpakwu (2013) posit that knowledge and skills can be presented or imparted through communication. Communication can be oral or written words. Idoko (2010) maintained that, through communication a teacher can present facts to his or her students. There is no means of presenting facts to students apart from communication. The dumb and deaf. Received their lessons through sign language which is part of communication.
- ii) It serves as means of passing educational policy to members of the organization. This can be done through verbal and written communication. Hemen (2016) opined that, the head of an institution usually passes information to his or her members through communication either verbally or written words.
- iii) It helps to advertise the educational activities of a particular institution. For example when a particular institution wants to advertise her admission to the masses. They may use radio, newspaper, magazine, internet, posters, and flex to communicate to the masses, which is a very important role of communication in education.
- iv) It helps to address the public e.g. the students, staff assembly, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) can be addressed using different means of communication.
- v) It helps educational organization at all levels on daily running of educational institutions.
- vi) Good communication is required for educational managers to increase efficiency by updating the production process to take advantage of new and more efficient technologies and by training staff to operate the new technologies and expanded their skills. Good communication is necessary for educational managers to learn about new technologies, implement them in their institutions, and train the staff on how to use them.
- vii) The centrality of communication to the overall job effectiveness of the educational manager or administrator is evident when will consider how

much time managers spend communicating in organization. Lunenburg and Irby (2006) in their study shows that school administrator spend 80% of their time in interpersonal communication. Educational managers there for need a clear understanding of the process of communication if there are to effectively manage their organization effectively and efficiently.

- viii) Good communication is necessary to improve quality of staff performance. Educational managers need to communicate to all members of their institutions the meaning of and importance of high quality performance and the routes to attaining it. The staff needs to communicate quality problem and suggestions for increasing quality to their superiors, and share ideas on improving quality performance with one another through effective communication.

### **Objective of Communication in Education**

Akpakwu (2013) outlined the objectives of communication in education as follows:

- i) To develop information and understanding among all the staff of education.
- ii) To foster any attitude which is necessary for motivation, cooperation and job satisfaction
- iii) To discourage misinformation, ambiguity and rumours
- iv) To prepare workers for a change in methods or environment by giving them the necessary information in advance.
- v) To encourage subordinates to supply ideas and suggestions for improving upon the product or work environment, and taking these suggestions seriously.
- vi) To improve trade-union management relations by keeping the communication channel open.
- vii) To encourage social relations among educational workers by encouraging inter-personal communication.

### **The Role of Communication in Politics**

Jedere (2004) maintained that; all human beings are political animals; therefore, they need communication for political activities and interaction. Therefore, the role of communication can be seen below as outlined by Mamud (2004).

- i) It serves as a means of presenting political manifestos by aspirants and political parties.
- ii) The head of state or president can address the nation, through communication. In Nigeria we have been hearing presidential addresses from different presidents through radio, television etc.
- iii) It serves as a means of conducting political meetings and rallies
- iv) The States and National assembly use communication in their deliberation on regular basis.
- v) It also helps politicians to interact freely with their supporters.

### **Challenges of Communication in Education and Politics**

Communication has positively contributed to education and politics, never the less, there are some challenge which education and politics are facing in Nigeria. Idoko (2010) outlined some of the challenges as follows.

- i) Lack of communication facilities to educational institutions especially the secondary and primary schools. Majority of the schools are yet to hook themselves to the internet.
- ii) Misleading information on the social media on political issues. Most of the time information on the social media is sometimes be fake and provoking. The National Assembly has even made moves stop the social media, and they however do not have the support from the masses.
- iii) Some of the communication means required power to function and one of the major problems in Nigeria is problem of power supply.
- iv) Cost also is another challenge of communication. Some communication gadgets require a lot of money, which some institutions and political organization will not afford to buy or procure them.

### **Conclusion**

This paper examines the role of communication in education and politics in Nigeria. Based on the findings, communication has a role in education and politics. Because, through communication, educational policy and political activities can reach the masses, also through communication, political manifestos, ideology, discussion will be conducted. The paper further concludes by providing implications for counseling, which if well implemented there will be surely be a good cohesion education and political sector of Nigeria.

### **Suggestions/Recommendations**

Based on the discussion above, the following suggestions are made:

1. The State and Federal governments should make all the means of communication available and accessible to all educational institutions and public offices for easy dissemination of information.
2. Information should be passed to all concerned persons in educational institutions and the general public.
3. Educational organization and public offices should be hooked to the internet for easy retrieval of information.
4. Whatever information made to the public should be published, passed to the masses.
5. There should be regular supply of information from the stakeholder of education and the political sector.

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