ANALYTIC BASIS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
The relationship between communication and national development has continued to be a focus of interest among communication scholars and researchers. Communication involves interaction and hardly could mutual understanding exist without some forms of communication. It is through effective communication that the diversity of the Nigerian society can be basically realised. This paper examines communication as a strategy for achieving national development. National development goes beyond having plenty money, it embraces all aspects of social behaviour such as the establishment of law and order, communication, resourcefulness in business dealings, health, education, culture and other aspects of life. One of the indices of national development is stable polity. Communication is a veritable instrument to ensure this. Development in one section of the country should be disseminated to other sections. To this end, the paper also discusses the relationship between communication and national development. Some theories and models has been evolved with regards to communication. The paper examines also some of these theories and methods of communication with communication typologies. It is believed that effective communication is a step towards bringing information, human ingenuity, creativity and innovation in the drive for national development.

Keywords: Communication, National Development, Government, Organisation, Society

Introduction

Communication is a social-psychological process, a field of study, a scholarly discipline, a behavioural science as well as a profession. As a social-psychological process, communication is relevant in the function of the society or any organization or groups; as a field of study, it focuses on message-related behaviour and has professionals engaged in teaching, research, and practice. As a scholarly discipline, it emphasizes explanation of communication behaviour and its teaching through classroom- laboratory experience in-group problem solving, speaking, interviewing and role-playing. As a behavioural science, it is the focus of theory building and research "in which investigators collect, quantify, analyse and interpret data in an attempt to discover how some ingredients, or variables of communication affect others". As a profession, communication involves practical application of knowledge, skills and techniques in improving communication in two-person relationships, families and work groups, organizations, nations and in the total family of man, (Barker and Kibler, 1971:18).

In every form of interaction, ideas are usually shared. Such sharing of ideas facilitates understanding and enhances progress. This is communication in practice. Devito (1988:27), UdaIl and Udall (1979:5) regard communication as the mutual sharing of ideas, messages, values attitudes through a channel to produce a degree of understanding between sender and receiver. Communication is a practical way of intercourse and exchange and a means of acquiring intellectual knowledge and this can lead to understanding of the heart between individual and groups (Stassinopoulou, 1965:77). Communication has been viewed by Alfred North WShitehead in his *Adventures of Ideas as persuasion*. In his words, "relations between human beings oscillate between force and persuasion and the worth of men consists in their liability to persuasion". (And in Plato's words "the creation of the world is the victory of persuasion over force". He amplified this statement when he said that "the fundamental purpose of communication is to enable men to agree... if only to agree to differ," (Stassinopoulou, 1971:80), Communication is conceived of as a social-psychological process relevant in the functioning of any group, organisation or society. It is in this regard that Katz and Klan (1971) see communication as the exchange of information and the transmission of meaning, which is the primary thrust of a social system or an organisation. Every organisation should, therefore, take in and utilize information so as to forestall any gaps, miscarriages or distortions. This implies that the information flow must be clear, unambiguous and intelligible. This means that the roads of communication must be kept free and broad and open, must be kept clean of superstitions, shadows, misunderstandings, and fears. Hiraclitus (Greek philosopher) has warned 'eyes and ears are bad witnesses to men if they have souls that understand not their language". Stassinpoulou, 1965). This underscores the need for undistorted information; information that will facilitate appropriate feedback. Such quality of information has been described as the capstone of communication, (Peretemode, 1991). Without feedback, no meaningful communication has taken place. This further buttresses the view by Eyre (1983:1) that communication involves the giving of understandable information and giving and understanding the message; it is the transferring of a message to another part, so that it can be understood and acted upon. Even though the importance of feedback has been stressed, it could be negative or positive; it could be question, comments, actions objections, contribution, etc. Through language, communication establishes a bond between people. A response or feedback may lead to change in behaviour or a re-enactment and continuity of the communication act, (Anumihe and Kalu-Nwiwu, 2000). Effective communication in an organisation makes it to tick. The centrality of communication in every organizational setting has been highlighted by Moorhead and Griffin (2001:47) thus:

> *Through information sharing, the leader is able to present, define and X-ray organizational goals and objectives: suggestions are tabled and deliberated and choices made as decisions making; zeal, hope and confidence are inspired and lighted as motivation; duties and responsibilities delegated; results are assessed and evaluated.*

Based on the afore-stated, it can be clearly stated that effective communication entails the leader being able to and possessing the knowledge on how best to interact with the various publics that are indispensable in the optimal performance of his organizational role.

Communication Theories and Models

Some theories have been evolved with regard to communication. Some of the theories are the Osgood and Schramm model, the Lasswell model, the Berlund's Transactional model, the Braddock's model, the Shannon and Weaver model and the David Berlow's model, among others. Hempel (1952) and Torgerson (1958) have adduced that one function of models is to help the researcher make the relationship between constructs clear and to organize them. In this regard, the model is viewed as a step in theory construction. Models are used to explain or clarify theories. Three types of models are commonly in use and they include: iconic, verbal and graphic, and mathematical models. Iconic models are analogical; such models resemble the subject they represent. Some examples are the model air plant, photographs, painting, sculpture - they are models of objects, persons or scenes (Churchman, Ackoff and Arnoff, 1957:159). Verbal and graphic models are the words (verbal) and graphic representation of the verbal model. Examples are verbal descriptions of network of constructs or graphic representations of these networks, geological structure of the earth, etc. In terms of mathematical models, it is a common knowledge that the ultimate objective of scientists is to express theories in sets mathematical or logical equations. However, Smith (1961:30) has reported of few attempts made to mathematize communication theories, the two few exceptions being the statistical concepts of information processing and the application of graph theory to the analysis of communication networks. In a survey by Smith (1961) and subsequent classification by Devitto (1968), some models have been identified and they include: information-processing model, an Intra personal communication model, an interpersonal communication model, a group or mass communication model, etc.

Theory comprises propositions, which try to explain some phenomena. Kerlinger (1973:9) described theory as the ultimate aim of science, and a set of interrelated constructs (concepts) definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomenon, Based on theories, deductions could be made, modification of the existing theory could equally be made in the course of research. The Shannon and Weaver model of communication views communication only as a one-way (linear) process with the following characterization;

     i.   information source
    ii.   transmitting signal
   iii.   channel
   iv.   receiving signal, and
    v.   destination

source $\longrightarrow$ transmitting signal $\longrightarrow$ channel $\longrightarrow$ receiving signal $\longrightarrow$ destination

The Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication:

The model is criticized because it does not incorporate feedback, which has earlier been described as the capstone of communication process. The model also looks at communication process as linear as well as a monologue (Chukwuma, 2003:3).

In the Osgood and Schramm model, communication process involves two persons interacting with both transmitting, receiving and interpreting the messages but there is conspicuous absence of feedback in the communication process. Emphasis here is communication effect rather than its meaning. Braddock's model sets out to rectify the perceived defects in the Lasswell's model. The model made reasonable in-road in terms of analysing communication processes but grossly omitted feedback. Newcomb's model was conceived of as a device to enable people understand themselves and their environment. The relationship between people and their environment introduced by this model makes it significant since social relationship has been brought to the fore. Such social relationship was meant to maintain equilibrium in the society. According to Chukwuma (2002), Barlund's transactional model aimed at projecting some related features of communication including its dynamics, complexity, continuity, circularity, uniqueness, and irreversibility. Tonga (1972) clearly commends Barlund's model when he said:

Barlund's model clearly sets the basic processes which occur both within the person and between persons, as environmental cues, and the situation itself is perceived interpreted and acted upon in ways which influence subsequent stages of the process.

Methods of Communication

Communication is a cyclical process because its variables are interwoven and usually in a continuum. Consequently, communication could be internal or external, verbal or non-verbal: it could express content or relationship, it could be international or unintentaona1 etc. Internally and externally, information could be passed from one place to another.

Thus, it can occur within a system and externally, between systems. Level of communication is necessary whenever discussion on communication is carried on. Onyebuenyi A.(2012) have described communication levels, which include: interpersonal, intrapersonal, group, mass communication and. In terms of verbal and non-verbal communication, Shannon and Weaver (1949:95) contend that communication "involves not written and oral speech, but also music, the pictorial arts, the theatre, and ballet and, in fact, all human behaviour". In verbal communication, words are used as symbols to represent objects and ideas. Other forms of message behaviour including sign language, action language, object language, space, and time, constitute non-verbal communication. Sign language could be exemplified by gesture, action language by movement of body such as posture, facial expression, etc. object language by display of tangible items such as hair styles, cars, jewellery, which communicate roles status. The use of time could be exemplified by punctuality or tardiness, and space by silence, pause, etc. In terms of content and relationship, every message transaction has content and a relationship aspect. A message conveys information (content) as well as defined relationship (friendly, annoying, indicting, reprimanding, etc.). In the case intentional and unintentional communication it is believed that the unintended messages are non-verbal. They could be facial grimaces, pantomimes, etc., which may be given diverse interpretations. Thayer (1961:43) states that communication, in its broadest perspective, occurs whenever an individual assigns significance or meaning to an internal or external stimulus. But Miller (1966:92) focuses more on intentional behaviour when he defines communication as "those behavioural situation in which a source transmits a message to a receiver with conscious intent to affect the latter's behaviours."

Communication Flow Typologies

Communication usually flows in a vertical (downward and upward) and a horizontal fashion. The downward flow of communication in form of directives, information, etc., moves from the top to the bottom. Employing this properly in an organisation, there is smooth flow of information and subordinates or members have clear understanding about the joints-on, rumours and gossips are dispelled and feelings of discontents are minimized. In the upward flow, subordinates should feel free to communicate with their leader without any feelings of inferiority complex. This approach enhances both free expression in the organisation and popular participation in organisational activities. As a result, progress and team spirit are engendered. Among the subordinates in an organisation, there should be some communication. This is horizontal. Here, members relate with one another, thereby the progress of their organisation. This approach, besides acting as a linkage among the various sections and departments of the organisation, provides friendly and positive psychological climate for the worker to thrive.

Besides the normal flow of communication channels, there could be the vine and the rumour dimensions. Though out of a formal channel, the grape vine carries such information that might be true but from an unidentified source. At times, an organisation may be contemplating some radical changes. Such moves could be deliberately made to filter out simply to sample people's opinions. D'Souza (1995:l34) contended that sometimes large proportion of gossips, rumours, speculations, inaccurate or partial information could accompany the grape vine but nevertheless, it carries more reliable information than could be expected. Rumour, on the other hand, appears damaging, destructive and unproductive if it is not checked.

Rumour is destructive, insinuating and antithetical information designed by their originators to run down the organisation particularly during trying periods when chaos, uncertainty and the like are imminent.

National Development

This is another concept that requires elucidation. Development implies self-improvement. In the words of Dudley Seer as reported in Offiong (1980), for development to be meaningful, it must aim at the realisation of the potentials of the human personality. The realization of such potentials involves good ambition, having gainful employment and elimination of inequality, which leads to poverty. Such an individual should be a contributing member of the society. It is the society, which gives the individual his unity of self, which is termed the "generalized other" that represents attitude of the whole community. Aghenta (1992) associates national development with modernization, scientific and technological progress, the emergence of nuclear energy, the electronic and biological revolution and new knowledge of man and universe. Ojoko (2001) sees national development as the total effort of a people to use their skills and knowledge and to harness the national resources of their environment for the improvement of their socials, moral, spiritual and political wellbeing. According to Mead (1964):

> *It is the capacity of the human individual to assume the organized attitude of the community towards himself and towards others that distinguishes the duties, rights, customs, laws and the various institutions and role systems in human society from the physiological relationships of an ant nest or beehive.*

The afore-stated indicates that individual is a contributing member of the society and that his self-improvement is tantamount to improvement of the society. Thus, the individual and his society are intricately linked. However, development in human society, according to Rodney (1974), is a multi-faceted process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-reliance, responsibility and material well-being. At the level of social groups development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationship. Here, development has been conceptualized as "a directed and widely participatory process of deep and accelerated socio-political change geared towards producing substantial change in the economy, the technology and the ecology of the country so that the moral and material advancements of the majority of the population can be obtained within conditions of generalized equality, dignity, justice and liberty". The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which have now moved to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which covered or focused on 8 keys areas of human wellbeing. These include:

I. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empowerment of women
4. Reduce child mortality rate
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other disease.
7. Ensure environmental sustainability, and
8. Develop a global partnership for development

From the various ramifications of development, there is the need for strong information dissemination so that individual citizens understand what is expected of them, both their rights and obligations.

Communication and National Development

Communication is relevant in the functioning of any government, group, organisation or society. Newcornb (1994), remarks that autistic hostility decreases communication, and in turn, decreased communication enhances autistic hostility. Thus, it is a common assumption that many of our problems, government, individual and society, are as a result of inadequate and faulty communication (Barker and Kibler, 1971).

The role or place of effective communication in ensuring national development has been established in areas of life. Such areas include the following sector:

Business Sector
In today's world, everyday function of business is tied to communication. Effective communication is crucial for the success of any organization. Through the use of proper communication skills, individuals will better function as a group; thus allowing organization to share information and analyze situations in order to achieve organization goals. Business success revolves around effective communication both within a hush and representatives of such business outfits, Again effective communication is a critical component in management. The manner in which individuals perceive and talk of each other at work about different issues is a major determinant of business success. It has proven that poor communication reduces quality, productivity and eventually leads to and lack of trust within an organization. So the importance of effective communication in business success and environment cannot therefore, be overemphasized.

Health Sector
Through effective communication tremendous progress has been made in the health sector. For instance, effective communication has been used extensively in the effort to reduce the scourge of Laser fever, SARS, Ebola, HIV/AIDS etc. For programmes on health care, nutrition, outbreak of epidemics, natural disasters, etc, the media in different countries have been used to create awareness to enable the citizens understand government activities as well as the activities of the different parts of the country. The level of awareness created through effective communication is carrying sophisticated social messages, which seek to contribute towards a reduction in HIV/AIDS risk behaviors among young people and in the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS and increase in condom use and community mobilization to support people with HIV and AIDS. Again, the principle of social mobilization as necessary component in the polio eradication programs in many countries are well acknowledged.

Educational Sector
There is general consensus on the importance of both written and oral communication in the general education of children. Virtually every educational sector makes the development of effective communication a central educational goal. Good communication skills still remain essential for communication of ideas and feelings to others. To be effective communicators, contemporary students are aware of' the potential of the new media and information technologies. In order to function effectively, academically, socially and professionally, students need to master effective communication skills.
Effective communication plays a vital role in the personal and social development of children; it enables children to gain an understanding of themselves and their world. Learning to express their thoughts, ideas feelings and being able to respond to the communications of others help students to participate in society successfully. As children talk about themselves and their experiences, they are leaning to organize their thinking and to focus their ideas (Lyle 1993).
Effective communication, therefore, plays a vital role in the personal and social development of children. The scope of this paper does not however include the other vital means of communication like road, sea, air and rail.
The common assumption that many of our problems, individual and society, are the result of inadequate and faulty communication (Barker and Kibler, 1971). In their words:

> *Communication needs to be seen as a process occurring between any sender of messages and potential recipient, but in relation to the social system in which it occurs and the particular function it performs in that system. General principles of communication as a social- psychological process are fine; they set the limits within which we most operate. But they need to be supplemented by an analysis of the social system, so that they can be applied correctly to given situation.*

One of the implications of the foregoing is that the nature of communication should be closely linked to the nature and characteristics of the society. This linkage is necessary for social relevance. Nigeria is embracing

a democratic culture, for instance. Therefore, the type and quality of communication in our social, political, economic, educational and general practices should be purposively made to enhance democracy. When democratic culture of communication is developed and sustained, government's efforts as well as the national aspirations will be better understood.

One of the indices of national development is stable polity. Communication is a veritable instrument to ensure this. Communication gaps should not be allowed to exist. All the three arms of government; the executive, the legislature and the judiciary should work harmoniously, allowing no communication breakdown, and at the same time keeping to the principle of separation of powers. In the public service, channels of communication should be properly defined and the workers properly enlightened on the mechanics of interpersonal and intergovernmental relations.

The citizen should be kept abreast of the goings-on in the society. His rights as well as his obligations should be made known to him. Interactions should be encouraged to prevent mutual suspicion. The plurality of the Nigerian society should be borne in mind. This necessitates actions that are transparent; actions that are clear-out. Communication among the various sections of the country should be free, friendly and harmonious. Developments in one section of the country should be disseminated to other sections. It is through effective communication that the diversity of the Nigerian society can be beneficially realised. Since Nigeria does not have a lingua franca, the language of communication should have national spread through deliberate literacy programmes, enlightenment programmes such as the national orientation activities, mass media activities that can permeate all the nooks and crannies of the society. In some cases, radio and television programmes should go beyond English language to local languages to enable the citizens understand government activities as well as the activities of the different parts of the country. Programmes on health care, nutrition, outbreak of epidemics, natural disasters, etc., are spread through effective communication. Instances abound. The incidence of HIV/AIDS, SARS, Laser fever, Ebola, were brought to the fore via the instrumentality of communication aimed at informing, enlightening and educating the citizenry about the diseases including their combating and preventive strategies. Since healthy citizens are indispensable for nation building, the effectiveness of communication in promoting good health ensures national development.

Development in other societies, cultures or states is spread through communication. Nigeria interacts with other counties through representation, diplomatic missions, exchange programmes, international assistance, etc. Through such media, innovations are made, new technologies are developed and improvements in different sectors of the economy are made.

Conclusion

In a democratic dispensation like Nigeria, the use of effective communication at the various levels and arms of governance in achieving national development cannot be over-emphasized. Communication involves interaction and hardly could mutual understanding exist without some forms of communication. Since feedback is an important requirement in the communication process, it necessarily follows that efforts should be made to ensure that the communication in any given situation is clear, unambiguous and intelligible. In this way, misconception is minimised.

Communication is not only important as regards person-to-person interactions, but also indispensable at societal, national and international levels. This facilitates interaction, peaceful and harmonious co-existence. Innovations in communication have increased information flow globally and this has, correspondingly, brought about improvements at various sectors of social life. Societal development, although, national development will remain a far cry if effective communication strategies are not brought to bear on the dissemination and utilization of information. If not through effective communication, I wonder how the estimated over two hundred million Nigerians will come to know what is expected of them, how they are being governed and the challenges ahead of them. Through effective communication, the government or nation in turn gets feedback on the responses of the people.

In all, effective communication still remains a veritable tool in good governance that fosters the following indices of national development.

- National integration
- Social engineering and transformation Religious tolerance
- Political mobilization
- Education
- Good health and
- Poverty alleviation

It is, therefore, suggested that governments, ministries, departments, agencies and individuals at all levels improve in their efforts in enhancing the growth of both human and material resources of the nation by investing more in education at various levels. A general high level of education among the citizenry engenders better understanding of government's developmental goals.

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