

# TRAJECTORY OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND POLITICAL OFFICE SUCCESSION QUESTION IN NIGERIA

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## **Abstract**

This paper discussed the Trajectory of Effective Communication and Political Office Succession Question and examines the personal/public interest in relation to political office succession quest as an emerging trend of politics in Nigeria. It establishes that trajectory of effective communication is crucial for better political office succession towards public interest and sustainable democracy. The paper concludes that the trajectory of effective communication for political office succession and sustainable democratic process for public interest is inevitable, therefore this should encompass tailored context and intensity, reinforcing intrapersonal-interpersonal-public communication assemblage.

**Key words:** Trajectory, effective communication, political communication, political office succession, public interest.

## **Introduction**

Since 1999, Nigeria is deepening her democratic processes predicated at federal, state, and local governments headed by elected president and governors as foremost executive political office holders with tenure of four to eight years if reelected, and local government chairmen with tenure of three to six years if reelected to lead the promotion of socio-economic and political advancement and positive change through democratic practice within their tenure, then hand over to a successor which should emerge through the country's prescribed open democratic process. But there has been seemingly hoisting of preferred choices as successors through what appears as preference for self-serving and select group interest and the use of skewed political communication whereas the trajectory of effective communication can guarantee true democratic practice in the interest of the public.

The objective of this paper is to examine the personal interest in relation to political office succession quest against public interest; to understand this emerging trend of politics in Nigeria and to showcase and recommend the trajectory of effective communication as key for better political office succession towards public interest. According to Horn by ed.(2010), trajectory is the curved path of something

that has been fired, hit or thrown into the air, example is a missile's trajectory. It is about movement. The idea of trajectory in this context is the tailored, directed and contextual combination of communication employed for attainment of the aim of political office succession for true democratic practice towards public interest. Considering the era of social media pervasiveness it will be a serious mistake to underestimate the power of the social media networking in politics and political office succession.

While the new media appears to provide vibrant discursive channels that will facilitate democracy in the country, a careful observation of the trends reveal quite several threats that are not only worrisome but have the capacity to diminish the opportunities which they offer to countries with budding democracies like Nigeria one of such trails is the threat issues of hate and dangerous speech Suntai and Targema, (2017). Some of the challenges that hinder smooth succession of political office in Nigeria is knitted to the excessive power the constitution seem to equip political leaders. The selfish expression of these constitutional rights ranges from the award of contracts, to the manipulation of the media and security agencies even to the systematic manipulation of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as well as some electoral monitoring institutions like the civil society organisations. It is the consciousness of these mishaps that made Olaniyi, and Umar (2014) assert that Nigerian politicians do not believe that one could work for and actually earn votes in an election and at such they do not also believe that democracy is anchored on a series of elections. It is against this background that this investigates the trajectory of effective communication and political office succession question in Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem of this study is the perceived use of political communication for personal /group interest to manipulate political office succession process against true democratic process and public interest in Nigeria. It appears political office succession action is not subjected to open democratic process from the beginning. To buttress this assertion, The Guardian newspaper of June 2, 2022 published comments of stakeholders calling for an immediate review of the entire leadership selection process to involve the participation of citizens, especially members of the political parties, except that the governors and few individuals are the once who conclude on who should govern the people. In Nigeria, as quoted by the Guardian newspaper of June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, "We now have situations where less than 800 persons choose a major party's presidential candidate, in a country of over 200 million people."

### **Objective of the Study**

The major aim of this study is to investigate the trajectory of effective communication and political office succession question in Nigeria. Specifically, this study set out to:

1. Examine the personal interest in relation to political office succession quest against public interest.
2. Understand the emerging trend of political communication and political office succession in Nigeria.
3. Showcase and recommend the trajectory of effective communication as key for better political office succession towards public interest.

### **Theory of Symbolic Interactionism and Groupthink Theory**

The theory of Symbolic Interactionism has been associated with George Herbert Mead (1934) and Max Weber (1864-1920). The theory forms a useful lens for understanding how meaning, language and symbols constitute and interact for the understanding of self. The self would act according to the meaning attached to something, then uses language to explain and convince on the meaning while symbols are used to negotiate the meaning. According to Nickerson (2021), "Symbolic Interactionism theory assumes that people respond to elements of their environments according to the subjective meanings they attach to those elements, and meanings are created and modified through social interaction involving symbolic communication with other people". This explanation helps the understanding that the relationship between Symbolic Interactionism theory and the trajectory of effective communication for political office succession stems from the link between self, communication and social interaction. The self has views with attached subjective meanings which form repeated interaction between individuals to create society. As in the case of Cross River state where former Governor Liyel Imoke, due to personal interpretation and self-acclaimed intentions mesmerizes Cross River politicians and the entire masses by imposing Ben Ayade as his successor believing that Ayade will be a better Governor due to his personal assessment of Ayade, not knowing that he will one day dump PDP and decamp to APC and even dislodged PDP political structure in the state where Imoke is leading and holding forth.

The political implications of Symbolic Interactionism theory further espoused by Brook (1969) in Nickerson (2021) posit that self-views correlate with right or left-wing political beliefs and political roles will then manifest as personality. The problem of perceived personal and small group gain and subversive political succession action has implications for the true democracy in Nigeria which no doubt has not been subjected to open democratic process from the beginning.

Groupthink Theory: by Irving Janis (1972) cited in Hart (1991p247–278) refers to when groups make faulty decisions because they fail to critically analyse their options and weigh alternatives. This typically occurs in highly cohesive groups who are more concerned with maintaining group unity than finding the best option. According to Hart (1991), people affected by groupthink usually feel pressured to conform to the views expressed by an influential group leader. They hesitate to voice concerns for fear of being shamed or ostracized, and, in the absence of

dissent, they assume all other group members approve of the decisions being made. Alternatives to the group's actions are either dismissed or never considered at all. It is an occurrence where a group comes to a unanimous decision about a possible action despite the existence of fact that points to another correct course of action. In relation to the trajectory of effective communication and political office succession question in Nigeria, Groupthink theory provides background to the reality of the possibility that personal /group interest can be the basis to manipulate political office succession process against true democratic process and public interest. The perceived personal and small group gain can truncate critical, optional and alternative analytical efforts towards the common good. For instance, in Akwa Ibom State, political office successors are majorly Lagos based Akwa Ibom personalities. Their influence on the state politics is impactful on an incumbent governor's political prowess. As stated above, this was evident in PDP political primaries contest that brought in Victor Attah, Godswill Akpabio, Udom Emmanuel as governors and currently Umo Eno as the choice candidate for PDP governorship elections.

### **Methodology**

This study employed qualitative content analysis as a major method of data collection for effective understanding of the trajectory of effective communication and political office succession question in Nigeria. Content analysis is used because it helps to determine the presence of certain concepts within literatures or sets of literatures. Therefore, the researchers uses selected literatures to quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such concepts, then make inferences about the subject matter. Literatures used are broadly identified as books, book chapters, essays, interviews, discussions, newspaper headlines and articles. They also include historical documents, speeches, conversations, advertising, theater, informal conversation, or really any occurrence of communicative language. In the context of this paper, these literatures represent a variety of different types of occurrences that enhances systematic content analysis and they are broken down, into manageable categories on a variety of levels.

### **Trajectory of Effective Communication**

It has been established that communication can be effective and is important in human affairs. Communication sub topics influencing the course or trajectory for effective communication examined here are intrapersonal communication where it all starts; communication environment; shared vision; communication context and effective communication. The journey of trajectory of effective communication is encapsulated by Wilson (2006, p.2) who says that the communication process begins from memory and thought in human mind (intrapersonal communication) and progresses to oral exchange in one-on-one encounter. This is the foundation of other forms of communication such as interpersonal, group, public and mass

communication can be combined and used to build momentum for purpose attainment.

**Intrapersonal communication where it all starts:** Defining communication, Wilson (2006, p.2) views communication as “a form of expression of human behaviour, as processual in nature with clearly defined purpose or purposes. The processual nature starts from the thought processes in humans before the actual oral expression in a face-to-face communication”. This thought process is also referred to as intrapersonal communication anchored in the self of humans which feeds the encoding and the progressive stages of communication leading to decoding to become a reality or a living experience or behaviour thus the fulfillment of the purpose of effective communication. From self-conviction begins the muted idea to scheme political office succession followed by discreet selection of relevant stakeholders as ardent supporters of the one-man idea and there are within and outside of the political party and the need to use political communication to place the idea in the public for such gain. However, the media is projecting dissenting voices within the political and wider social circles.

**2. Communication Environment:** According to Akpan (1987) in Wilson (2006) humans and animals communicate in their own respects, there is no life without communication. Wilson (2006) affirms this by recognizing that “without communication we cease to exist as social creatures because communication is a social affair, form and procedure of expression of human behaviour with a purpose, starting with encoding, messaging with the help of channel to the receiver to decode. This procedure goes on with feedback. Communication brings man and his environment in constant interaction, according to Wilson (1997), “Communication is the basis in which man establishes a relationship with himself and things in his environment... Communication is the engine that powers every human activity, through it, we exchange symbols, establish relationship, banish fear and blast off the barriers to oneness and understanding”.

Communication and environment are interwoven, and they affect each other. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, defines environment “as the circumstances, objects, or conditions by which one is surrounded; the aggregate of social and cultural conditions that influence the life of an individual or community; the position or characteristic position of a linguistic element in a sequence.” Dictionary.com define environment as “the aggregate of surrounding things, conditions, or influences; surroundings; milieu, time, the social and cultural forces that shape the life of a person or a population”. Communication means exchange of ideas, news, views, messages, information, or emotions between two or more persons; whereas environment means all elements that surround us. So, communication environment means exchange of ideas, news, views, messages, information or emotions due to influence of various elements that encompass us.

The environment may be formal or informal. The essential factors of communication environment are language that has meaning, uniform and understandable by sender and receiver with proper feedback and complete information. According to McLean (2018), “The environment involves the physical and psychological aspects of the communication context, it is the atmosphere, physical and psychological, where you send and receive messages.”

**3. Shared Vision:** If one’s self-conviction is genuine towards improving things beyond the current situation, this should accompany the setting and determining a goal based on positive change envisaged in the society. This genuine conviction should be motivating enough to secure the commitment of all stakeholders and segments of the society. According to Lozare and Serlemitsos (2014, p.90), ‘shared vision should have elements of known stakeholders, indication of what is to be achieved, viable outcome, time frame of what is to be achieved and openness of how the public (audience) perceives the vision.’

**4. Communication Context:** Justin Beach (2018) says “determining the context of a particular instance of communication involves considering the cultural, historical, psychological, social and physical factors at play.” Communication context also refers to when “humans communicate with each other across time, space, and contexts. Also, contexts are often thought of as the combinations of people comprising a communication situation. For example, theories of interpersonal communication address the communication between dyads (two people), group communication deals with groups, organisational communication addresses organisations, mass communication encompasses messages broadcast, usually electronically, to mass audiences, intercultural communication looks at communication among people of different cultures, and gender communication focuses on communication issues of women and between the sexes. Newer contexts include: health communication, computer-mediated communication” and social and new media.

**5. Effective Communication:** Bearing in mind that barriers do exist in communication between source and receiver, effective communication ensures elimination of these barriers which results in effective communication occurrence. According to Snyder, Diop-Sidibe and Badiane (2003), among the factors that contribute to effectiveness of communication include, multiple “channels of communication and messages, emphasis of positive benefits versus negative consequences.” They assert that “people interpret and make meaning of information based on their own context as well as culture, norms and networks influence people’s behaviour” as key facts about human behaviour.

“Presenting effective communication in a nutshell”, a paper by Rafiki Consultants (2011, pp.2-12), and states: “identify and reduce or eliminate barriers to communication, seek confirmation that our message has been understood, question

if we are unsure of a message, strengthen our effective listening skills, avoid acting on rumours and assumptions, our attitude may influence other's behaviour.”

Numerous factors prevent the successful completion of communication (barriers). According to Ila and Flor (1998), “environmental barriers are conditions and channel noise, would fall under physical barriers (factors external to the communication but influencing it nonetheless). Socio-psychological barriers (psychological-cultural barriers, factors within the receiver and/or source that influence perception of meanings) and ethnocentrism; is viewing a group or culture as superior to all others. Discussing effective communication, Berlo (1960) explain “effect as the difference between what a receiver thinks, feels, and does before and after exposure to a message. Thus, effect is best expressed in behavioural terms”. Communication environment, communication context and effective communication describes the trajectory or directed, tailored and contextual combination of communication for exchange of ideas, news, views, messages, information or emotions to influence various elements and barriers that encompass us, and for the purpose of this paper is how trajectory of effective communication can resolve the political office succession question lingering in Nigeria.

#### **Political Office Succession Question and the Public Interest**

Constitutionally in Nigeria, the president, governors and local government chairmen, elected as executive political office holders are tasked to lead the promotion of socio-economic and political advancement for development and positive change in the country within their tenure, then vacate office and hand over to a successor which should emerge through prescribed democratic electoral process.

Succession politics has been defined as the transfer of political power from one person or group, government or regime to another (Ojo 2009, p. 9). Hughes and May (1988, p.11) agree that succession politics is ‘how political power passes, or is traded, from one government or administration to another’. They further describe succession politics in its narrow sense as the methodical arrangement for the transfer of important offices within a state, which offers latitude for change and coherence, that the degree to which power is successfully traded becomes a benchmark of the political development and maturity of a state. Mature democracies like Britain, France, and Germany and African countries such as Mauritius, Botswana, South Africa have experienced seamless succession. Succession takes different forms; Zhou (2013, p. 7) suggests that often the incumbent government has disregarded constitutional provisions in the operationalisation of public management –constitutions give the critical legal frameworks that manage and legalise the practice of public administration which is practised within the interactive structure of the legislative, judicial and executive arms of government.

Bearing in mind that political office succession conjures a relationship between elite politicians, political communication / media and the public and how this relationship can be fruitful and satisfactorily grounded on interests of all concerned, political office succession question and the public interest can be resolved according to Lozare and Serlemitsos (2014, p.90) who observed that “shared vision should have elements of known stakeholders, indication of what is to be achieved, viable outcome, time frame of what is to be achieved and openness of how the public (audience) perceives the vision.” According to Adeyanju (2013, 201):

The expanded information in public sphere and the quantum of information at the disposal of the citizens are making it imperative for those interested in public opinion to change their strategies at influencing it. Many politicians and governments are now moving fast to imbibe the new media and even the social media to get their messages across to the people. The traditional media are no longer enough to do this. It is becoming very common to see politicians have their own blogs and chat constantly with their audience on Facebook while at the same time monitoring their activities on Twitter.

Succession models in modern Africa were cut and pasted from a traditional perspective by politicians to suit their egocentric perceptions.

Political leaders in Africa seem to view themselves as the only sacred specie that can rule in perpetuity. The current political succession frameworks in Africa are reminiscent of the traditional succession framework. According to Chirikure (2016) pre-colonial Africa, succession was guaranteed and appointment issues were handled by spirit mediums in line with the different systems pertaining to each culture and tribe during the pre-colonial era like in the American systems, where each battalion has its own chaplain. Africa[n] tradition had two major models of succession, namely the collateral system (which rotates among family in Shona culture) and primogeniture (a chief begets a chief or Induna iyazali Induna in Ndebele culture).

It is important to note that the problem of succession in Nigeria is not just a civilian phenomenon. Even the military leadership had this problem when the coup makers, after the death of Ironsi, picked a junior officer Lt-Col Yakubu Gowon a northerner, over Brigadier Ogundipe, a southerner, Onwudiwe (2006). It was not a northern plot when General Gowon reneged on his promise to hand over power to the civilians in 1975, or when President Babangida hung on to power until he was removed in 1993 or when Abacha devoted his energies and public resources to self-succession instead of governing the country. According to Olaniyi, L. K. (2014), President Obasanjo attempted to change the constitutional provisions aimed at paving his way for a third term in office, created tension before and after 2007

general elections. Implementing succession programmes is therefore not only about constitutional provisions but about the inculcation of a culture of respect for the laws guiding it; acceptance of rulings by the courts and giving effect to judicial decisions. These observations suggest that INEC and similar such bodies have directly and otherwise contributed to the problem of succession in Nigeria (Olaniyi, 2014). According to Baffour (2003) highly corrupt leaders would alter the process of succession once they don't trust the successor; engage in gerrymandering to anoint a successor whom they hope to control.

Quite recently in Nigeria, the office of the president and the state governors, have been seemingly hoisting of preferred choices as successors through what appears as first self-serving or based on personal interest of the political office holders. According to Zaller (1991, p. 2), this scenario appears as a clause by politicians to "getting their programmes enacted in office among the programmes enacted in office is a succession agenda, has become a source of constant tension among the three actors (politicians, media and the public)."

The recent proliferation of new media platforms in Nigeria has attracted the attention of researchers to investigate the rippling effects in several fields such as the economy, education, politics and health among others. In all these fields, research evidence has demonstrated that the platforms have proved effective in increasing access to vital information that helps people to make informed decisions (Alexander, Ifeanyi & Martin (2016). As one could rightly expect, the heavy online presence has widened the scope of citizen journalism practice in the country, a form of journalism where members of the public play an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information. With citizens becoming reporters of issues and events happening around them, freedom of information is enhanced, empowering them to be actively involved in the democratic process Suntai and Targema(2015).

The implications of this succession quest whether for personal or public interest or combined is echoed by the Nigerian populace projected in the mass media space in Nigeria, according to the following headlines; The *Vanguard* newspaper: 'APC stakeholders' rail against Buhari's bid to pick successor'(June 2, 2022). *The Nation* newspaper:'2023 leadership and succession politics' (February 4, 2021), 'Buhari seeks APC governors support to pick successor', (June 1,2, 2022). *Punch* newspaper: 'Should Buhari groom a successor for 2023?' (August 2, 2019), 'Stakeholders rally against Kano, Benue governors' preferred candidates,' (April 24, 2022). 'APC exco, governors divided over Buhari's succession plan, screening report ready,' (June 2, 2022) 'Buhari cannot choose his successor,' (June 2, 2022), '2023: Race for Buhari's successor triggers debate on national unity.'(October 9, 2021). Emmanuel ruffling feathers in Akwa Ibom with anointed successor (February 20, 2022). *THISDAY* newspaper: 2023, Succession and

political leadership (February 4, 2021). *PM* news: Nasir El-Rufai's succession plan: Who is the chosen one (April 29, 2022).

According to the *Guardian* newspaper of 2 June 2022, “The reflection is that if governors, the “demi-gods” and their associates can impose their preferred persons in the states, why won’t the President who could be characterised as the ‘god’ of Nigeria, not do likewise? They are all, simply, leveraging the overwhelming powers vested in the executive arm of government by the military imposed 1999 Constitution. It’s unfortunate that the vast majority of citizens, and even members of political parties, do not participate in processes that produce those who would go on to contest elections and eventually become our president, governors and lawmakers...We now have situations where less than 800 persons choose a major party’s presidential candidate, in a country of over 200 million people.” A deviation to the above fact is provided in the *Guardian* newspaper (June 2, 2022) quoting Ali Ndume who justified the Nigerian President and referred to precedence set by Barack Obama over Joe Biden of America to succeed him as democratic.

Further analysis from states in Nigeria reveals such cases as the highest-bidder-takes-it-all for the office of the governor, an example of Cross River State in 2015 is pointer, where unsubstantiated report has it that Liyel Imoke, the former governor rumoured for ‘selling’ office on completion of tenure to a rich successor seems to establish precedence truncating due democratic process in political office succession. Interestingly, the current governor of Cross River State has keyed into public discourse and interest and disclosed that he is in support of power rotation between zones, but time will tell about the genuineness of this gesture regarding the exploitation of people’s aspiration and interest for personal gains.

In Akwa Ibom State, the succession crisis came to the fore when Governor Udom Emmanuel at the PDP stakeholders’ meeting held on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, in the Government House surprisingly announced his Commissioner for Lands and Water Resources, Pastor Umo Eno, as his preferred man for the 2023 governorship election. A former governor of the state, Obong Victor Attah, reportedly presented Eno as Emmanuel’s anointed successor, *Punch* (2022). This presentation made some stakeholders feel disappointed, and some politicians challenged the preferred successor in the party’s primary election. Although the governor’s choice won the primary election, some party members appear aggrieved.

In Enugu State, the battle over who succeeds Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi in May 2023 sets stakeholders against one another with many contestants lined up for the election. Between 1999 and now, the governorship seat has rotated between the three senatorial districts, and many believe the position should revert to Enugu East that first produced the governor, *Punch* newspaper (2022).

In Niger State, the governor's successor is zoned to Niger South, comprising eight local governments, and no fewer than 15 aspirants from the zone have indicated interest to become the next governor of the state. Although there is no written zoning arrangement, it is said to exist in principle. Punch (2022). In Rivers state, "There are allegations that Wike is using state funds to fund his party and his presidential campaign, so he needs someone he can trust. Political watchers of Rivers politics see Wike's choice of the account-general of the state as a third term for him as the choice means a continuation of his administration." Punch (2022). The political dynamics of a state influence changes in the administrative leadership, since the political architecture determines the turnover of administrative staff. Regular transfer of executive power is the major test of stability in a nation's political system Chikerema, A. and Nzewi, O. (2020). The tragic aspect of political succession is a question of great concern, due to the trajectory interference of the incumbent governors or presidents in choosing a successor for the governed in Nigeria. Nonetheless, the succession outlook is not completely gloomy in Africa, as several countries such as Nigeria South Africa, Botswana, Mauritius, Senegal, Mozambique, and Ghana (Habisso 2011) offer good examples of peaceful and orderly leadership change.

The crises of political office succession seem to pose a question on the trajectory of effective communication operational in each party due to the complexity of personal interest and greed. It appears that politicians' personal interest surpasses the collective interest of their party. The trajectory of effective communication for political succession should be subjected to shared vision in a democratic process to serve public interest. The concern of this paper is to showcase the trajectory of effective communication as key for political office succession trend with the example of Nigeria.

### **Current trends of Political Communication**

According to Norris (2004), "political communication is an interactive process of transmission of information among politicians..., the news media and the public. Discussion themes which can help position the current trends of political communication are considered in the subtopics; democracy, media and public interest; source-message-effects trends and effects of multimedia mix.

**Democracy, Media and Public interest:** Merriam Webster dictionary defines democracy as **government by the people especially rule of the majority**, a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections. On the other hand, Oxford University Press. (Retrieved 4 June 2022), defines democracy as a form of government in which the people have the authority to deliberate and decide legislation or to choose governing officials, considered part of "the people" and how authority is shared among or delegated by the people. This has changed over time and at different rates

in different countries, but over time more and more of a democratic country's inhabitants have generally been included.

According to Norris (2004), “political communication is an interactive process of transmission of information among politicians, the news media and the public. The process operates down-wards from governing institutions towards citizens, horizontally in linkages among political actors, and upwards from public opinion towards authorities.” This relationship has produced linkage between political system projecting their agendas to voters through the mass media. Interestingly, what binds democracy, and the media is public interest. Discussing the current trends of political communication as it concerns media and the public, Blumler (2015) asserts that political communication is a multilevel and complex process involving relationship between political and media systems, citizens, and surrounding political cultures.

The substance of public interest is concisely depicted by Udoakah's (2017, p.65) inference on the things that portray public interest; these he said are “moral judgments (public welfare, decency, safety and justice), the interest of majority rather than individual interest, supplying information to avert harm, exposure of evil and the things that contribute to the happiness of the generality of the people.” On the other hand, some of the things that negate public interest, according to Udoakah (2017, p.65) are covering up corruption and issues that can lead to non-payment of salaries and self-enrichment.

**Source-message-effect trends:** Norris (2004) sub-divided political communication into three major categories of production, contents and effects, this implies that political communication follows drifts, begins from source who are political actors, political parties and interest groups, responsible for production of political communication contents which is the message and the meanings attached then transmitted through preferred channels for effects that the communication is expected to derive. According to Norris (2004), the study of effects of political communication “has focused at individual or micro-level and the potential effects of exposure to different types of political communication messages, some of this work has been concerned with societal level diffuse effects but this is far rarer.” In recent years, the trends of political communication have been evolving, and research have identified and presented a continuum according to major considerations this researcher sees in relation to source-message-effect offering.

The earlier believe that the media has automatic, magic effects on individual and or societal effects has been anchored by Agenda Setting Theory but punctured with recent research postures and conclusions that the media has minimal but not maximum effect. According to Blumler (2015: p428), “the news may direct attention to problems, to substantive or strategic understandings of political controversy, to thematic or episodic versions of current issues. It may present

alternative ways of perceiving and dealing with the issues of the time or a predominantly monolithic one that is why the evolution of these approaches into theories of agenda building and frame building is welcome". Blumler (2015: p.428) believes that despite the source and contents of the message, mistrust, and skepticism about what political campaigning can offer and elections can achieve are said to be rife. With this explanation it means media mix enhances effects of political communication.

**Effects of Multi-media mix:** Political communication has gained traction from the eras of powerful, limited to minimal effects of political communication portrayed by the media. Bennett and Iyengar (2008) in Blumler (2015, p.427) maintain that "a new era of minimal effects might be emerging from present day conditions of communication abundance because the overall strength of impact no longer makes much sense, especially with "multiple message sources are now so diverse and fragmented". Looking at the above Blumler's position, the question would be how can political communication create powerful attention from the public? The answer appears potent according to Weaver (2015, p.94) in Blumler (2015, p.428) who says that "unless journalists and the mainstream news media report about certain problems and issues, they will not receive much attention or resources from the public or policy makers." The concern should be how political communication can be effective in line with any objectives and the role of the multi-media mix including new media for such perceived achievement. According to Pincus et al (2017) in *Wikipedia on multimedia*, to keep up with the changing world of multimedia, journalistic practices are adopting and utilizing different functions of multimedia through the inclusions of visuals such as varying audio, video, text, etc. in their writings. We will agree that today, social media and new media are indispensable in communication practice projecting interpersonal discussions and interaction.

Multi-media have been acknowledged as present-day conditions of communication abundance featuring multiple message sources. Even when effective multi-media is employed in political communication, what are usually thrown up are the issues bordering contemporary political scene such as political office succession is subject to citizens interpretations questioning electoral offerings, other issues identified are frequent criticisms of politicians in the media and frequent portrayals of crisis, conflict, and failure... abuses and shortcomings of all sorts according to Blumler, (2015, p.428) and monitorial democracy according to Keane (2013) in Blumler (2015):

The expanded information in public sphere and the quantum of information at the disposal of the citizens are making it imperative for those interested in public opinion to change their strategies at influencing it. Many politicians and governments are now moving fast to imbibe the new media and even the social media to get their messages across to the people. The traditional media are no longer enough to do this. It is becoming very common to see politicians have their

own blogs and chat constantly with their audience on Facebook while at the same time monitoring their activities on Twitter, Adeyanju (2013).

### **Conclusion**

The superficial hoisting of preferred choices as successors by political actors in Nigeria appears self-serving; intended to gratify personal and group aggrandizement and interest through manipulation of succession process against true democratic procedure and the public interest. Since political office succession is a necessary aspect of progressive democratic procedure, there is a need to investigate the trajectory of effective communication towards true and sustainable democratic process. The paper concludes that the trajectory of effective communication towards political office succession, true and sustainable democratic process is inevitable. Hence, it should encompass tailored context and intensity, reinforcing intrapersonal-interpersonal-public communication assemblage, beginning from individual's intrapersonal communication, thought, source-encoded practice that carries the vision of the individual, founded on people's interest with desire to change current situation for a better society.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is hereby recommended that this positive vision should become shared vision through engaging communication situations across intrapersonal-interpersonal-public communication assemblage of thoughts; interpersonal dyads, group dialogues; mass messages broadcasts of political communication and computer-mediated, new and social media mediated communication contexts for understanding, commitments and participation of people, groups and masses towards shared vision for collective action. These communication situations (intrapersonal-interpersonal-public communication assemblage) have the potency to promote information consumption, to monitor the social climate and shape the masses perception about social-political reality. The effects of the trajectory of effective communication can contribute to the design and redesign of the masses beliefs system with the consciousness to provide the masses with the desired knowledge that will help to promote the predetermined intentions of a politician.

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