

# Public Relations, Mass Media and Informal Education

*Demush Bajrami, PhD*

*Teuta Reci, BA*

South East European University – Tetovo, Macedonia

*Arburim Iseni, PhD*

State University of Tetovo, Macedonia

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## Abstract

Nowadays, governments, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, the private economy and each individual make an effort to integrate the idea of sustainable development in all areas of the educational system. Specific skills and knowledge that we gain as children and teenagers in the family, at school, in training or university will not last for a lifetime.

Humanity is programmed to survive. In this context the term ‘programmed’ does not mean the same thing that we use in the computer sciences. Herein, we are dealing with emotional tangle and the continuing struggle to find ourselves. In this way we discovered education as a process. The purpose of practicing this process is that the personal development of an individual can be organized by certain rules. However, the formality enters the function to some extent and we also know that man is inclined to lay in his use of free will. So now we have reached to a new discovery, which is appointed as informal education.

This paper, first of all encompasses this form, but also skewed approach to public relations and prospects is also different from those which have been hitherto. First, we will discuss what PR is. Further, we will elaborate education as a process; moreover, we will see how it can be split any further. Hence, history encompasses a factual situation. Lastly, it will be given the interconnection among PR, mass media and informal education.

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**Keywords:** Public Relations (PR), informal education, mass media, educational system, knowledge, skills.

## Introduction

In the concept of lifelong learning, the process of continuous learning can be seen as an inseparable companion in the journey of an individual.

Therefore, any careful observer will use the already known statement that "Education is not preparation for life, but it is life itself." Lifelong learning is the process of learning that can be either formal or informal in the public and private educational system, in which people develop skills, enrich their knowledge and improve their qualifications or give themselves a new direction in order to best meet their needs and to the society in which they live. These three categories of learning find basis in the European Commission Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, published in 2000.

Formal learning takes place in relevant institutions and vocational education and is finalized by recognized diplomas and qualifications, and non-formal learning takes place in the created structures of education and training and not necessarily is accompanied by certificates of formalized.

It can be provided in the workplace or through participation in youth organizations, trade unions, political parties, attending private lessons or preparing for exams, etc. We also have informal learning, which is present in everyday life.

Lifelong learning has become central in many important international documents on education. Among them, we think that it should be mentioned the Memorandum issued by the European Union Commission on "lifelong learning" (October 2000), the Conference of UNESCO on adult education (CONFINTEA, held in Hamburg, in November 1997), etc.

Following these global and regional trends, many universities have implemented informal methods of education within the formal educational system.

Knowing that the PRs present job skills and expressions, which enable the creation of an opinion favorable to the people around an organization, institution or individual, Canfield says that PRs is a philosophy of exclusive management of expression in theory and practice, based on communication with the public, to ensure mutual understanding and goodwill. (B.Canfield, 1999: 237)

Ultimately, the development of science, technology and means of communication has enabled people to be informed more quickly about all the changes in the environment and secures accurate information in time about these changes in the environment which simultaneously contributes to avoid unpleasant surprises. In the context of this study on lifelong learning, one of the main tasks of Public Relations remains the information to contribute to the promotion of informal education.

### **What are the Public Relations?**

Public relations activities are convincing and they include the use of mass media. Besides, PR function is made while using the interpersonal communication. PR messages appear as notifications, news, and editorial, to

occupy space or time. Public Relations term has many meanings and interpretations. (Dominick, 2010:481)

A veteran of Public Relations has collected 500 different definitions, starting from the shortest definition: “Public relations means doing something good and getting credit for it”; up to 100-word definition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. Instead of collecting these multiple definitions, one thing that may be helpful and clear is to define public relations by examining what people do to deal with the PR: Public relations involve working with the public. On one side, PR professionals try to influence *public opinion* in a way that is positive to the client.

Public relations deal with communication. As mentioned above, PR communication is a two-way communication. Public Relations professionals pay attention to the thoughts and feelings of the company’s public. Some experts consider PRs as a two-way channel of communication between the organization and its public. (Dominick, 2010: 482)

Practice has left traces since in ancient times. Military reports and comments prepared by Julius Caesar can be seen as the triumph of his personal relations and public policy. During the Middle Ages, the church, as well as craft unions had practiced basic forms of Public Relations. The origins of modern techniques to PRs are dating from the first decade of the twentieth century. (Dominick, 2010: 484)

The Internet has created new dimensions for Public Relations. It has opened new channels of communication between organizations or companies and the public, and between PR professionals and media. Also, for companies that are concerned about their public image he has also become the main channel of withdrawal of opinions. Within a short time the PR professionals began to use the Internet to facilitate their media efforts. (Dominick, 2010: 490)

So, one should consider the fact that the development of science and technology with the social media have brought a revolution in the communication process. Social media provide information and fast communication between people of all changes in the environment.

### **What does the education represent?**

Education is developed by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of humanity. This process begins unconsciously almost at birth, and is constantly training to individual forces, loading consciousness, forming his habits, training his ideas and promoting his feelings and emotions. (Dewey, 2003:11). John Dewey (2003:11) stated: "I really believe that the unique education achieved through stimulation of the child by force demands social situations in which he will appear."

This educational process has two sides - one psychological and sociological. Child's instincts force him/her to provide material and provide the starting point for the entire education, except efforts educator associated with any activity that a child performs his initiative independent educator; education becomes a subject of pressure from abroad. (Dewey, 2003:12).

The child has his own instincts and tendencies, but we do not know what to say about this until we can translate them into their social equivalents. To know what is really a potential we need to know what its purpose, usefulness, or function is; and this can only know if you conceive of the individual as active in social relationships. (Dewey, 2003:13)

With the advent of democracy and modern industrial conditions, it is impossible to categorically prophesied that civilization will be the same twenty years later. Therefore, it is impossible to prepare the child for any precise set of conditions. (Dewey, 2003:14). Thus, the need to monitor changes in the environment within a certain profession has initiated the creation of specific models for specific segments within the profession.

### **School as a Traditional Institution!**

The school is primarily a social institution. Education beings as a social process, with the school as simply a form of life in community in which all branches of its teaching are concentrated to be as effective in promoting child on sharing the resources inherent to humanity and to use its forces for social purposes. (Dewey, 2003:15)

Education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for the next life. The school as an institution should simplify existing social life; should reduce it, as it were in an embryonic form. (Dewey, 2003:15)

Although all definitions can be contested this subdivision of education will refer to the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) 2001. According to Cedefop education is divided into three groups: informal, non-formal and formal education.

Formal education: structured hierarchy in chronological assessment, there are strands of primary school to university and that includes, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialized programs and institutions for full-time technical and professional training.

Non-formal education: The process involved for a lifetime, where every individual takes attitudes, skills and knowledge from daily experience and influence educational and sources in the environment of his or her - from family and neighbors, work and games of childhood, from the market, libraries and mass media.

Informal education: any organized educational activity outside the established formal system - either as a separate activity or as an important

feature of some broader activity - that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientele and learning objectives.

### **Informal Education and Historical Timeline**

Based on how we live today in a highly technological society, one can easily assume that previous societies (7000-5000 BC) had fewer laws and less education. Our assumption, however, would be incorrect.

By studying the remains of prehistoric tools, weapons, and tools, as well as early myths, heroes, and art, anthropologists have learned more about the ideas and habits of early humans. Rules regarding the roles of parents, the treatment of children, punishment of misconduct, conduct business, worship of gods, playing games has existed since the early educated tribal societies. (Arthea J.S. Reed, 1998:78)

As stated above informal learning is a term that resembles the different situations of structured learning, such as sessions of swimming for children, sports programs organized by the local community and seminars in the form of conferences, the which does not have the level of curriculum, syllabus, accreditation and certification. The debate over the relative value of formal and informal learning has existed for a number of years. Traditionally, formal learning occurs in a school or university and has a greater value placed on it than informal learning.

However, OECD brought a new spirit in the sphere of education and involved informal education in some countries which supported the slogan "lifelong learning for all", which appeared as a strategy since 1996.

This includes 23 countries from five continents, who are trying to clarify and validate all forms of learning, including formal, informal and non-formal.

### **Interconnection**

We already know the fact that is discussed on how important education can be and innovations that can be made in it. But we see another phenomenon related to education. It is the infertility in education. This is very well explained by John Dewey who in his book "School and Society" (2003:71) states that: "All infertility in education comes from isolation. Organization is nothing but the things about one another in order for them to function with ease, elasticity and fullness." So we can easily say that being isolated does not bring more development.

On the other hand we all know that all the new things at first are viewed with irony and not easily accepted. So the same thing happened with informal education. There were thoughts that it does not actually present education, demand to not be nominated at all, and so on. But we see PR on stage, which indirectly indicated that it is not necessary to associate success

with formality. During the period when the idea that the informal gave to education, UNESCO emerged a move towards lifelong learning and the notion of "society that learns" which culminated in Learning for Lifelong Configuration ("The Faure Report", UNESCO-s 1972). Lifelong learning will be the "main concept" that should form the educational systems (UNESCO, 1972:182). What emerged was a tripartite categorization influential in learning systems.

Further we see different programs, which were PR strategy, which continued to expand this concept. These included: Specially trained educators (maybe 4 or 5 weeks) (not teachers) who routed through local villages to set up and run programs, to recruit potential helpers and members of the group. The use of mass media, such as: radio and television, things like newspapers and magazines, or comics. Providing a massive scale - the target set was an entire region or country.

Many of these programs obviously had considerable success. In this regard, Russia, Cuba, Tanzania, Somalia, Ethiopia and Nicaragua have been often quoted that have successfully organized mass campaigns - particularly with regard to the recognition of literary writing (Coles 1987: 38).

Thereupon, on one hand it is noticeable how collaboration between Public Relations and informal education can bring great success. Now on the other hand non-formal education should be appearing Public Relations as a subject that can be practiced and taught without the need of a curriculum or syllabus. But these efforts pertaining to the future and each of these two practices would achieve the fame that they deserve.

## **Conclusion**

Learning today means to get new knowledge, but also to reinforce what you already have in the brain; education also has those same goals. Man creates knowledge, learns how to behave, reveals the skills of his / its, and creates value and anti-values. So it is a continuous process, which is unlikely to end. In most cases we think that tracking formal lessons develops a person, but in most cases this is not so true. In this case it appears informal education.

Educated / informal learning is a term that covers different situations structured learning, such as swimming sessions for children, sports programs organized by the local community in the form of seminars and conferences.

This type of education is not the level of curriculum, syllabus, accreditation and certification that relate most to "formal education"; but we must not forget that it is very structured, and this distinguishes it from "informal education". We know that the present Public Relations practice which helps with the management of information dissemination between an individual or organization and its public.

It is known that PR is part of school curricula, but it would be nice if this practice becomes part of formal education, where people will be able to learn best practices, as everything develops spontaneously and personally are not in constant stress for grading issues. On the other hand PR-was a benefit for informal education, as we saw above. So, these two phenomena are complementary to one another and also provide different benefits to each other

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- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonformal\\_learning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonformal_learning)
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