

# Philosophical Foundation of Causality in Education and Their Implications for National Unity in Africa

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DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.16.07.2026.p17502

<https://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.16.07.2026.p17502>

Paper Received Date: 12th May 2026

Paper Acceptance Date: 16th June 2026

Paper Publication Date: 8th July 2026

## Abstract

The paper addresses a critical examination of how causal interrelationship could inform strategies for addressing challenges like ethnic division or economic disparity, to have a unique conceptual framework that can influence approaches to international unity in Africa. There is a limited philosophical clarification of causality and how it can serve the purpose of nationality in Africa. The relevant questions here may be: are there any links, positive or negative, between education, causality, and national unity? Can a shared understanding of causality foster cooperation across diverse African nations? How might the philosophical explanation inform practical steps towards unity? It is our opinion that education should deliberately harness the power of causality and be programmed to promote the principle of positive self-actualization, which is an antidote to unity in a community of human beings. The philosophical underpinnings of causality provide insight into how education can be used to shape and cement human society for progressive living and unity. This study employs a philosophical approach, clarifying causality to understand its impact on national unity. The findings have significant implications for understanding the complex relationships and dynamic nature of human society.

**Keywords:** Causality, Education, National Unity, Education Policy, Freedom.

## Introduction

In Africa, education plays a pivotal role in shaping values, attitudes, and behaviors that foster fundamental unity in a nation. Amidst discord and competitive challenges, education becomes a transformative agent and a beacon of hope to bridge inequality in a state. Therefore, understanding the philosophical clarification of the relationship between education, causality, and national unity is necessary to establish principles and rationale for international unity. In support of education's potential to foster national consciousness and unity through proper understanding of causality. *The Nigerian National Policy on Education (2024)* includes concepts such as inculcating national consciousness and unity. This underscores the power of education to promote awareness and appreciation of national identity. National unity is the desired outcome of education rooted in national consciousness, as well as well this can be applied in Africa.

Educators should incorporate content that promotes national consciousness as knowledge-based. Our understanding of education is rooted in causality, where the knowing power of both learners and teachers reacts through cause-and-effect relationships. This demonstrates that knowledge is intricately linked to subjects (cause) and objects (effect).

The essence of human beings living together in groups is to tap the benefits of social stability and peace; otherwise, self-consciousness, which is considered a liability, may generate a thought of "non-being" or nothingness and, in turn, lead to abnormalities as a result of the negative application of knowledge from any of the sides, which later undermines social stability

(Towoju & Abdullah, 2023). *Towoju, quoting Cookey (2016), states that education should be used as a tool of national unity, now more than ever. It is agreed that we should inculcate in the students of our educational institutions the idea of belonging to the whole nation of Africa.* This intensifies the notion that education is a powerful driver of international unity, especially in diverse societies of Africa. Curricula that emphasize international symbols of Africa and civic responsibilities can nurture a sense of belonging to the whole continent. When students internalize a broader identity, they are more likely to contribute to peace-building in Africa. In Africa, the symbols of African unity or integration through unionism are: The gold circle on the map of Africa symbolizes Africa's wealth and bright future. The circle stands for Africa's hopes, and the plain gold map of Africa without boundaries signifies African unity. The several interlocking red rings at the base of the emblem signify African solidarity and the bloodshed for Africa's liberation. The African Union emblem is the primary symbol of the African Union that is used on all official communication, seals, and documentation of the AU.

- i. The African Union
- ii. The Diversity Unity Symbol Manual depicts African values
- iii. Organization of African Unity (OAU)

Ukor (2024), *effective navigation of global concerns requires knowledge of challenges and how education can be used as an instrument of intervention.* Education can promote unity, critical thinking, and equip individuals to address global challenges, thereby fostering national unity. The proper understanding of causality and human relationships can inform good and prompt interventions. Ayeni, 2024, states that *education's primary role is to equip individuals with knowledge, skills, and values to cope with change. As an instrument of change, education faces challenges.* Educators must consider these complexities when making decisions to promote values that breed unity and cooperation. This study recommends applying knowledge of causality to foster national cohesion through national unity promotion and introducing education for shared identity, social stability, and economic growth.

In Africa, the challenges facing education for national unity in Africa emanate from human actions, as humans are central to their environment, society, and nation-building. Every change has a causality that originates from specific activities or actions. Human actions are determined by conditions, either internal or external, over which individuals may or may not have control. Every human action is determined by desirable or necessary goods, which are influenced by causal factors that sustain or initiate activities. These factors determine whether individuals yield to their attraction or not. Humans have the capacity to make choices, but these choices are influenced by causality. Education plays a pivotal role in shaping values, attitudes, and behaviors that foster national unity. Understanding the relationship between education, causality, and national unity is necessary to establish principles and rationale for national unity in Africa. Our knowledge in education is rooted in causality, where the knowing power of learners and teachers reacts through cause-and-effect relationships. Education can promote unity, critical thinking, and equip individuals to address global challenges.

The study recommends applying knowledge of causality to foster national cohesion through promoting national unity and introducing education for shared identity, social stability, and economic growth.

It is disheartening to confirm that people are no longer making use of their knowledge positively in Africa, to this fostering African unity may be achievable through in-depth knowledge of causality as it applies to human behaviors, and can be sharpened through the positive application of knowledge. African unity is sine qua non for peace, growth, development, and progress in all nations of Africa. Given the extent to which the understanding of causality can breed or energize national unity through education, the objective of this paper is to examine and clarify the basic fundamental guiding causality and their relevance to the education for national unity.

## **Theoretical Perspective to the Problem**

### **Theoretical Framework**

Plato's idealism is the most suitable theoretical framework because it fully supports the principle of unity in diversity. Idealism posits that beneath all diversities lies an essential unity. According to Plato, idealism explains how individuals can be assisted to attain the goal of self-realization, which is the ultimate goal of a well-organized society, guided by spiritual and moral principles. Knowledge in education, particularly with reference to causality, is central to the idealist principle of helping individuals build their character through self-discovery and realization. These are core determinants of unity and cohesion in human society. Self-consciousness and realization of one's potential are essential for personal and country development and growth. Idealism emphasizes the welfare of the entire human society or nation. Singh (2014) notes that self-realization involves gaining full knowledge of oneself, and the ultimate aim of education is to guide individuals toward achieving self-realization.

The aim of education, specifically associated with idealism, is the exaltation of personality, self-awareness, self-realization, self-construction, development of intelligence, and nationality. This is rooted in causality, which governs cause-and-effect relationships. In the process of perceiving external objects, intelligence and reason are applied to the mind through causal relations between the external object (cause) and the mind (effect). The senses react to stimuli (cause), and the body responds to desirable outcomes (effect) or avoids harm (effect). The knowing aspect involves the mind, intellect, or mental faculties (effect), while the doing aspect involves mental determination or actions that promote unity (effect). Actions can cause events, and effects can become knowledge, but knowledge doesn't always lead to specific actions. Education can play a significant role in building unity through cause-and-effect relationships. By understanding these relationships, individuals can make informed decisions that promote national unity and coherence.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Education in Africa has long been regarded as an instrument for change, transformation, national unity, and development, particularly in the face of social challenges such as segregation tendencies. Despite numerous policy initiatives and educational reforms, many African countries, such as Nigeria, Egypt, and Burkina Faso, continue to experience divisions along ethnic, religious, and socio-political lines. This situation raises doubts about the effectiveness of the educational system in promoting a shared sense of identity and social cohesion within African nations and beyond.

This challenge may not be unconnected to the philosophical foundations of causality within African educational systems. Educational practices are often implemented by stakeholders and educators with little or no understanding of the causal relationships between curriculum content and intended social outcomes. Consequently, there appears to be a disconnect between what is taught and the desired outcomes, particularly in fostering unity and collective identity. Therefore, the problem addressed in this study is the inadequate philosophical underpinning of causal relationships in education and how this deficiency affects educational outcomes, especially in relation to promoting unity in Africa.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to examine the philosophical foundations of causality in education and their implications for the promotion of national unity in Africa.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- Examine the concept of causality from major philosophical perspectives and its relevance to educational theory and practice.
- Analyze the philosophical foundations that underpin causal relationships in educational processes and outcomes.

- Explore the relationship between educational policies, practices, and the promotion of national unity in Africa
- Assess the implications of philosophical conceptions of causality for educational reforms aimed at fostering social cohesion and national integration.
- Propose philosophical and educational strategies for strengthening national unity through effective educational systems in Africa

### **Philosophical Underpinning of Causality in Education**

Education is pivotal on the cause-and-effect relationship, as its foundation rests on causation. Causation may be termed as a logical relationship between an object or event called "cause" and another object or event called "effects." All of which are direct consequences or results of the first. Cause can be termed as that which positively contributes to the being of effects. This is evident that cause has direction. Sowa (2018) states that as science progresses and unfolds new perspectives and understanding of the phenomenal world, the concept of causation continues to evolve. One may submit that new perspectives in science reveal complex systems of behavior and better revised causal theory by capturing the complexity of cause-effect relations. It explicates the relationship of the concept of causation on free will, determination, and reality of nature to make causality more meaningful and hence dependent on the understanding of its operation in the phenomenal world. The causality mention that causes (actions) such as positive application of knowledge, cooperation, shared values, and the like lead to effects (reactions) such as unity, peace, growth, and development. In the course of development of Africa's nations, unity and progress must be zealously pursued through a proper answer and understanding of causality. Causality can shape Africa's unity through the understanding of nations' interdependence or interconnections, since it is a serial, linear, or web of relationships and shared responsibilities.

In the process of teaching and learning, examples of "cause" and "effect" are a teacher's action when he/she employs the interactive teaching method, which is regarded as "cause." The students are motivated and stay focused, as this is the "effect." In the laboratory, science teachers may conduct experiments ("cause") to help students develop analytic skills and thinking ("effect"). NTI (2024) states that everything has a cause is taken to be of universal application... there is no event that has no cause, nothing ever happens without a cause. This lends credence to the view that students' academic performance may be influenced by prior knowledge, learning environment, while their behaviors may be caused by peer interaction, teaching method, likewise, the effectiveness of national educational policy may be caused by good funding, teachers' motivation, all these are samples of cause-and-effect relationships in education. To say that one effect or event ("good") is the cause of the second event ("bad") may be to assert that the prior occurrence of an event of a type "good" is a necessary condition for the occurrence of an event of type "bad," that is, it is a sufficient condition for it, or it is both necessary and sufficient. Here, "cause" may be a condition for a change, and therefore, cause is a generating force of an event or effect. Hilswit, (2022) states that in the universe (every human being's activities), there is nothing without a reason or no effect without a "cause." One may opine that in the process of educating, without experimentation in science, the outcome of learning would have been fundamentally otherwise; that is, motivation effect might not be visible, likewise, multiple causation such as experimentation and Socratic questioning method may have resulted in a similar outcome but in different paths and multiple effects such as good motivation and the breeding of interest.

Omoregbe, (2017) sheds more light on this when he stated that a central presupposition of the emerging science was the idea of universal causation, the belief that every event has an antecedent cause, and that there are no uncaused events. It was assumed that events occur in an orderly pattern, and this makes the formulation of causal or natural laws possible. In this wise, one may cite the example of some orderliness behind the organization of the world, laws, and order prevail in the universe as well as in human activities. For examples, carbon cycle, law of motion, water cycle, reproduction, circulating system, etc. These are examples of where causality prevails because they have been predetermined, pre-organized, pre-ordained, self-regulating, and self-directing. One of the issues of freedom of man and its relation to causation, Weigner, (2020) has this to say: people are

sometimes mistaken when they believe their actions to be free, insofar as factors outside their awareness do exert a causal influence on them. At times, automatic, unconscious, and non-self-determination processes may be the direct cause of action of man, anytime the thought of an event is provided by action, then the occurrence, people might believe that they have caused it, especially when the effect yields a good result instantly, even if in reality, they are not or haven't. O'Connor, (2000) maintains that free actions are caused in a unique way, not by other events but the agent himself... agent causation, that is, it is appealing because it captures the way we experience our own activity. One may opine that one is caused to act or behave in a certain way or ways by the reasons that favor us doing so. That can opportune us to make a decision in view of those reasons and could have decided to act differently in an unintentional sense, people do due to our "will power." The concept of will power does appear to be a useful metaphor insofar as both self-control and rational choice rely on some kind of power (Gailliot, 2017).

It therefore follows that the tenets of causality in education are:

- a. events/effects occur in an orderly pattern, making causality formulation possible.
- b. causality can be understood through the power of our sense organs.
- c. cause/events and effects are interconnected.
- d. causality relationships determine decision-making.
- e. all activities/behaviors of humans are caused.
- f. causality is the foundation of knowledge.

### **Causality: The Roadmap for National Unity**

Causality can serve as a guide for a pathway to national unity through the understanding of their roles in education. It is generally known that nature is regarded as a whole, and man is a part of it; man is therefore subject to the causality of nature, like every other thing in the universe. Payne, (2017) states that identifying causal connections is necessary for generating social theories. The point of stress here is that through the understanding of the complex "cause" and "effect" relationship between social, cultural, economic, and psychological factors, one can create prime solutions for the promotion of national unity. Knowledge brings responsibility, and with the blessing of choice-making and free will of man and their limitations, the opportunity of "cause" and effect relation can be used in emphasizing social justice, critical thinking, empowerment, and human relations to breed national unity.

Judging from the above, our policy of education can focus on the learners and the generality of the populace, using the experimental teaching system to effect an experimental learning system. The greatest gift of life is the freedom to choose; choice is the ability to make a self-action out of alternatives to achieve a goal of national unity. In this context, your choice here is the "cause," while national unity is the "effect." This is why choice as "cause" has the power to transform and deform. It transforms when you make the right choice and deforms when you make wrong choices. Education for national unity may be coined or acquired from the fact that we understand "self" by knowing others and understand others largely in the light of our own experience of the mind. The understanding we have about other things may depend on how the idea of its properties is interpreted by the mind. Education can be used to identify the method by which "cause" and "effect" can be used to coin national unity. National unity is possible in an enduring and continuous polity based on causality as science and technology progress if the principles of accommodation of ethnic diversity are taught or imparted through education, such values as reduction of regional disparities, equitable distribution of national resources, endurance, and positive application of knowledge, to mention a few. All these are possible because human intellect is structured in such a way that when we think about an event "cause," we try to find explanations for them in terms of cause and effect.

## **Implications of Causality for National Unity in Africa**

As generally known, in the context of Africa, causal relationships can be viewed as how intentional efforts such as the formation of the African Union (AU), Organization of African Unity (OAU), and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) can cause unity. On the other hand, historical factors such as colonialism and slavery have caused disengagement, fragmentation, hatred, and hence disunity. The positive cause-and-effect relationships can help/assist in achieving common goals and hence promote unity and progress and various unities of Africa. The philosophical clarification of causality in education provides valuable insights into how the educational process influences national unity across the following dimensions:

- a. Curriculum Development
- b. Social Integration
- c. Political Stability
- d. Interrelationship/shared responsibilities
- e. Honest and positive cooperation for symbolic relationships in Africa
- f. Good or harmonious policy
- g. Ethical re-orientation to foster individual nations' potential for Africa's greatness
- h. Commitment towards fostering a new and progressive African economy through conflict resolution and prevention

### **a. Curriculum Development**

The need to integrate moral philosophy and intercultural studies into the curriculum is imperative, as what is taught in schools is directly related to learners' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. This helps students to understand and appreciate cultural diversity while fostering a shared commitment to collective goals and national development.

### **b. Social Integration**

In schools, learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds interact and develop shared values, and education serves as a causal agent for social integration and cooperation. Educational institutions should consciously create environments that discourage segregation and promote inclusiveness, equity, and collaboration.

### **c. Political Stability**

Governments should invest in education as a long-term strategy for nation-building and the promotion of peaceful coexistence. Education should be deliberately structured to influence the positive application of knowledge. This involves promoting a well-grounded educational system capable of reducing political, ethnic, and social divisions.

### **d. Interrelationship/Interrelationship and Shared Responsibility**

Causality identify how nations' actions impact each other through fostering shared responsibility for regional challenges or development, thereby enhancing Africa's unity through an understanding of causal relationships between economic, security, environmental, and political issues.

### **e. Cooperation for Systematic Relations**

This is a mutual benefit which is achievable through the understanding of causal relationships whereby African nations recognize that their actions have consequences for others, they are more likely to engage in cooperative behavior such as regional

trade agreements or joint infrastructural development projects. Harmonious policy – policy decisions may be informed through causal insights across African nations. The causal relationship between policies and outcomes can enhance regional cohesion. For example, causal analysis can inform policies on regional economic integration, promoting more effective and coordinated approaches to economic development.

f. Ethical re-orientation – causal analysis can enhance a reevaluation of priorities and promote ethical considerations in regional decision-making and policy-making which may promote unity in Africa. Through understanding causal relationships, nations can prioritize policies that promote the common good, rather than narrow national interests. This may lead to a more equitable and joint distribution of resources and opportunities across the region and improve unity for progress. Conflict resolution and prevention for the propagation of unity in African countries, promoting identification of causal factors in conflicts helps nations address root causes and prevent escalation. Causal analysis can assist in identifying early warning signs of conflict, enabling nations to take proactive steps to prevent escalation. African nations can create a more virile, stable, and peaceful or conducive environment for regional integration. The philosophical foundations of causality in education reveal that education can serve as a powerful instrument of change, as it can be used to shape societal outcomes. Aligning educational practices with philosophical insights on causality within African educational systems is essential for achieving sustainable social cohesion, cooperation, and national unity in Africa.

### **Conclusion:**

In the African context, where nations continue to grapple with challenges of ethnic diversity, political fragmentation, and socioeconomic disparities, a sound understanding of educational causality is indispensable. Education must therefore be recognized not merely as a mechanism for knowledge transmission but as a transformative force capable of fostering unity in diversity and cultivating responsible citizenships consciousness, African nations can harness education as a strategic tool for strengthening national unity, promoting peaceful coexistence, and advancing collective progress.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the philosophical analysis of causality in education and its implications for national unity in Africa, the following recommendations are made::

- Educational policymakers should formulate and implement policies that promote national integration, social justice, and inclusive citizenship education. Such policies should recognize education as a causal instrument for fostering unity and peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural groups.
- Curriculum developers should incorporate philosophical, civic, and moral education into all levels of the educational system. This will help learners develop critical thinking skills, ethical consciousness, tolerance, and a shared commitment to national ideals.
- Teacher education programmes should emphasize the philosophical foundations of education and the causal relationship between teaching practices and societal outcomes. Teachers should be adequately prepared to serve as agents of national cohesion and value reorientation.
- Educational institutions should promote intercultural dialogue and collaborative learning experiences that encourage mutual understanding and respect among learners from diverse backgrounds. Such initiatives can strengthen social bonds and reduce prejudices that threaten national unity.

- Governments and educational stakeholders should ensure equitable access to quality education across all regions and social groups. Addressing educational inequalities will help eliminate feelings of marginalization and promote a sense of belonging among citizens.
- African nations should integrate indigenous knowledge systems and cultural values into educational programmes where appropriate. This will enhance cultural identity while fostering appreciation for the continent's rich diversity and shared heritage.  
Regular educational reforms should be guided by sound philosophical principles and empirical evidence regarding the causal effects of education on social development and national integration.
- Further research should be conducted on the relationship between educational philosophies, causal mechanisms in learning, and nation-building processes in different African contexts to provide deeper insights for policy and practice.

By implementing these recommendations, African countries can channel the transformative power of education as a strategic means of promoting national unity, and sustainable development.

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