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# Education and Effective Management of a Productive Society in the 21<sup>ST</sup> Century

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### Abstract

Education is crucial for fostering a productive society and as we navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world, the need for skilled managers who lead organizations, drive innovation and adapt to rapid changes has been more pressing. The study therefore examined "Education and Effective Management of a Productive Society in the 21st Century." Education and management can play a key role in creating a productive society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by helping people develop skills they need to succeed in the future. The primary purposes of education include personal development, social integration, economic productivity, and promotion of civic responsibility. Aspects of education approach was stated. Effective management in education must ensure that the objectives of education are achieved through the good functioning of the school which will affect the society positively. Productive society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century measure how effective a society utilizes its resources, systems, and institutions to improve the overall well-being and quality of life of its members. Strategies that contribute to effective management of a productive society was outlined. In conclusion, education and effective management will equip individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities to navigate complex challenges and make informed decisions in a productive society. Suggestions were made that the government should implement education policies that will bring about the establishment of good and effective management systems for regular feedback from students, parents, and teachers to continuously improve educational practices, effective management should embrace technical skills to enhance productivity to rebrand the society.

**Keywords:** Education, Effective Management, Productive Society, 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

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### Introduction

Education for effective management in the 21st century is increasingly focused on equipping leaders with a diverse set of skills and knowledge that reflect the complexities of a rapidly changing global landscape. A 21st-century educator is forward-thinking, adept in using educational technology, and adaptable and collaborative. Hansen and Birkinshaw (2017) stated that these are skills and knowledge needed to equip students' for the rest of their lives. Our educators in the twenty-first century are relationship builders, learners, inclusive, with connectivity, leaders, designers, and artists. It is a little more complicated than to define and deliver 21st-century learning. It is a little more sophisticated and a lot more difficult to evaluate. It provides situations in which interested students actively shape their learning when rightly diversified. Educators' responsibility in the twenty-first century, should be to assist every student in learning through

forward-thinking, adept in using educational technology, adaptable and collaboratively (Garcia, 2016), The diverse set of skills and knowledge acquired by the students, instills creativity, promotes teamwork, encourages and rewards critical and analytical thinking, and teaches them not only how to communicate, but also how to communicate effectively. These are the abilities that students will need to succeed today and in future dynamic workplaces. In a twenty-first-century classroom, teaching methods are diverse and adaptable, depending on the setting and needs of students and the society in general. They are inquiry-based, conceptually focused, produced in local and global contexts, focused on effective teamwork and collaboration, designed to reduce learning barriers to student effective learning.

In a twenty-first-century education, learners are taught core skills that are emphasized in developmentally appropriate manner. Thinking, research, communication, social, and self-

management abilities are among them. Navarra and Sampson (2018) stated that it is important to encourage students to view learning as a dynamic and active process. The context in which these four concepts can be supported is in a 21st-century classroom. Inquiry based, student-led learning and instruction are encouraged in the learning environment (Coburn, Hill, & Spillane, 2016), Students' can sit and work in groups at circular tables, with the teacher facilitating through active social engagement. Collaboration exists between the teacher and the learners. The teacher is no longer writing on a chalkboard in front of the class rather, students' collaboration and communication are encouraged by 21<sup>st</sup> century instructors, who ignite the students' curiosity, stimulate their drive to learn, and provide support for their individual journeys (National Education Association (2010). Education is widely conceived in Nigeria today as an indispensable tool for the people's socio-economic advancement, their political survival, and for the fullest realization of their aspirations and potentialities. While the Federal and State Governments largely perceived education in recent times as an investment in human capital development, with the sole aim of producing the required skilled manpower for managerial and technocratic levels of the economic, social and political sectors of the nation (FRN, 2013). Many secondary school leavers in Nigeria conceive education as a legitimate passport not only to self-fulfillment, but also as a ladder to higher socio-economic status in the society. Many individuals, groups and organizations hold tenaciously to the fact that education is a formidable instrument that could be judiciously used in Nigeria to wipe out all social vices, economic woes and ills that usually plague an illiterate society. Such vices include corruption, bribery, ignorance, conservatism, disease, malnutrition, superstitious beliefs, tribalism, nepotism, political instability, unemployment and economic stagnation as succinctly remarked by (Saiti, 2015). Mobile learning, citizen science, openness, and learning at scale are the four main concepts of technology-enhanced learning (TEL). TEL focuses on how technology is used in education and how it is used to design learning. Students' ability to engage with numerous texts in multiple modes of literacy: digital, media, information, critical, and design literacy is developed through TEL in a 21<sup>st</sup> century context. Head and Alford (2015) posited that emphasized that the most critical part of TEL is ensuring educators use technology to enhance and change their practices rather than simply replace old habits or maintain existing patterns of teaching. Education is widely accepted in Nigeria today as a form of investment in human capital development that yields economic benefits and contributes significantly to the nation's future wealth and development by increasing the productive and consumptive capacity of the citizens (FRN, 2013). Education equips the individual with relevant knowledge, skills and attitudinal orientation required to progress in one's chosen career in life and contribute meaningfully to the economic growth and security of the nation, through purposeful governance. Ironically, education in Nigeria today is facing myriads of problems. Effective management of the education system entails that the administrators of the institutions must identify these critical problems and harness judiciously available resources towards alleviating them. Peretomode (2020) established that effective management of tertiary education in Nigeria as a panacea for good governance and national security depends greatly upon the quality and quantity of all resources earmarked for this level of education, by all its stakeholders as well as prudential

management of the resources. A component part of effective management is concerned with facilitating the accomplishment of objectives of an organization through the systematic management of constraints and careful utilization of available limited resources which include human, material, equipment, supplies, finance, space and keeping the workforce updated with changing techniques and technologies by fostering long-term growth and sustainability of the education system.

### Overview of Education

Education is a multifaceted process through which individuals acquire knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. Education, according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013), stated that it plays a crucial role in personal development, socialization, and the functioning of the society.

The definition and purpose as stated by Darling-Hammon (2015) refers to education as the systematic process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, and habits through various methods such as teaching, training, storytelling, discussion, and research. The primary purposes of education include personal development, social integration, economic productivity, and the promotion of civic responsibility. It aims to prepare individuals for life, work, and active participation in the society.

The types of education system includes formal education, structured education that takes place in schools, colleges, and universities, typically following a set curriculum and leading to recognized examinations and qualifications. Informal Education is where learning occurs outside of a formal setting, such as through life experiences, family, community involvement, and self-directed learning (FRN, 2013). Non-formal Education as stated by Tyack and Tobin (2017) is organized educational activities that occur outside the formal education system, such as adult education programmes, workshops, and vocational training. The levels of education systems are the early childhood education which focuses on the development of young children (ages 0-5) and lays the foundation for lifelong learning. Primary Education or basic education for children (usually ages 6-12) covers fundamental subjects such as reading, writing, and mathematics. The secondary education which is education for adolescents (ages 12-18) builds on primary education and often includes a broader curriculum, including specialized subjects. Higher Education according to Heinrich and Marschke (2010) state that is Post-secondary education which includes universities, colleges, and vocational schools, offering advanced degrees and specialized training.

Educational systems like the public education are funded and operated by government entities, providing free or low-cost education to students. Private Education that are operated by private organizations or individuals, often requiring tuition fees and may offer specialized curricula. Alternative Education like Non-traditional educational approaches, such as Montessori, Waldorf, and homeschooling that emphasize different teaching methods and learning environments.

Curriculum and pedagogy is the content and subjects taught in educational institutions, which can vary widely based on educational philosophy, cultural context, and societal needs. Pedagogy in the words of Heinrich *et al* (2010) is the methods and practices of teaching, which can include various approaches such as direct instruction, collaborative learning, experiential learning, and inquiry-based learning. Assessment and evaluation are the process of measuring students' understanding and skills through various methods, including tests, quizzes, projects, and presentations. Evaluation is the

broader process of assessing the effectiveness of educational programmes, teaching methods, and learning outcomes. The education system face challenges of access and equity by ensuring that all individuals have equal access to quality education, regardless of socioeconomic status, geography, or background. Quality of Education is needed as stated by (Lortie, 2012). Addressing disparities in educational quality, teacher training, and resources across different regions and institutions need to be taken into consideration. Technological integration by adapting to the rapid advancement of technology and incorporating digital tools into teaching and learning processes. Globalization in navigating the challenges and opportunities presented by a globalized world, including the need for cross-cultural understanding and collaboration. Future trends in education like personalized learning is tailoring education to meet the individual needs and learning styles of students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Blended learning will help learners in combining traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning to enhance flexibility and accessibility. Lifelong learning is emphasizing the importance of continuous education and skill development throughout an individual's life. Focus on skills is shifting towards teaching critical thinking, problem-solving, and other essential skills that prepare students for the workforce (Lortie, 2012). Education is a vital component of individual and societal development. It encompasses a wide range of processes, systems, and methodologies aimed at fostering knowledge, skills, and values. As society evolves, so does the landscape of education adapt to meet the needs of learners and the demands of the modern world.

#### Aspects of Educational Approach

1. **Interdisciplinary Learning:** Effective management today requires knowledge that spans multiple disciplines. Managers must understand not only business principles but also economics, psychology, sociology, technology, and environmental science. Interdisciplinary programs encourage critical thinking and problem-solving from various perspectives.
2. **Emphasis on Soft Skills:** Ferlie, Musselin and Andresani (2008) stressed that while technical skills are important, soft skills such as communication, emotional intelligence, teamwork, and adaptability are crucial for effective management. Educational programs are increasingly incorporating training in these areas, recognizing that successful leaders must inspire and motivate their teams.
3. **Technology Integration:** With the rise of digital transformation, managers must be adept at using technology to enhance productivity and decision-making. Education programs are integrating data analytics, artificial intelligence, and digital marketing into their curricula, preparing future leaders to leverage technology effectively.
4. **Global Perspective:** In a globalized economy, understanding cultural differences and international markets is essential. Management education is increasingly incorporating global case studies, cross-cultural communication, and international business strategies to prepare students for a diverse workforce (Jansen & Schmid, 2011).
5. **Sustainability and Ethical Leadership:** There is a growing emphasis on corporate social responsibility and sustainable business practices. Educational programmes are teaching future managers the importance of ethical decision-making and the impact of business on society and the environment.

6. **Experiential Learning:** Hands-on experience through internships, simulations, and real-world projects are becoming a staple of management education. This approach allows students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings, enhancing their problem-solving and decision-making skills.
7. **Lifelong Learning:** The rapid pace of change in the business world necessitates a commitment to lifelong learning (Alexander & Rose, 2016). Educational institutions are promoting continuous professional development through online courses, workshops, and certifications, thereby enabling managers to stay current with industry trends and innovations.
8. **Agility and Innovation:** In an era marked by disruption, managers must be agile and innovative. Education programmes are fostering a culture of creativity and encouraging students to think outside the box, embrace change, and develop innovative solutions to complex problems.
9. **Networking and Collaboration:** Building a strong professional network is vital for career advancement. Management of education often emphasizes collaboration which help students to establish valuable connections.
10. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Effective management in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires an understanding of diversity and inclusion (Alexander *et al*, 2016). Educational programs are increasingly focusing on these topics, and preparing future leaders to create inclusive workplaces that value diverse perspectives and foster innovation.

#### Overview of Productive Society

A productive society is one that provides equal opportunities for all its members. This means that individuals are not held back by their background, social status, or other factors beyond their control. In the words of Knapp and Feldman (2012), a productive society can also be referred as one that fosters a strong work ethic, encourages innovation and creativity and provides equal opportunities for all its members. In a productive society everyone is given a fair chance to succeed, regardless of their race, gender, or economic status. This can be seen in the way that education and employment opportunities are accessible to all, as well as in the way that social safety nets are in place to help those who may have fallen on hard times. Without this commitment to equality, a society cannot hope to harness the full potential of all its members in terms of equal education for a better productive society (Knapp *et al*, 2012).

Productive society in education, refers to the measure of how effective a society utilizes its resources, systems, and institutions to improve the overall well-being and quality of life of its members thereby coming up with ideas and solutions to problem-solving and confronts these issues physically if need be (Saiti, 2015). It encompasses various aspects of social, economic and cultural life, aiming to achieve equitable and sustainable development for all and focuses on creating an environment that fosters individual and collective growth, innovation, and well-being and also a strong emphasis on lifelong learning. Education is seen as a continuous process that goes beyond the classroom and extends into all aspects of life. This includes providing opportunities for adults to acquire new skills and knowledge, as well as for individuals to pursue higher education and advanced degrees (Knapp *et al*, 2012). Therefore, education is one that values and invests in the intellectual and personal development of its citizens. By prioritizing education and

creating a supportive learning environment, such a society can foster innovation, creativity, and social progress for the benefit of all its members. Providing accessible and high-quality education equips individuals with skills, knowledge and critical thinking abilities that contribute to societal productivity. Education is one that values learning and knowledge as essential tools for personal growth and societal advancement for effective productive society for the benefits of all in a nation. In such a society, education is seen as a fundamental right for all citizens, regardless of their background or economic status. In a productive education system, there is need for providing equal opportunities for all students to access quality education. This includes ensuring that schools are well-funded, teachers are qualified and supported, and students have the resources they need to succeed academically. Furthermore, a productive education system emphasizes the importance of critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity in the learning process. Tyack *et al* (2017) emphasized that students are encouraged to think independently, ask questions, and engage in open dialogue with their peers and teachers. This helps them develop the skills they need to navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

### **Effective Management in Education for a Productive Society in 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Effective management in education is a multifaceted approach that encompasses various strategies, practices, and principles aimed at enhancing the learning environment, improving student outcomes, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. That is the quality of service in an organization and the impact it has on those it serves (Deming & Figlio 2016). In the opinion of the effectiveness of management in any organization especially education can be assessed by the ability to accomplish the set of objectives of the organization, quality of service rendered and degree of satisfaction derived by those served best utilization of available resources, skill, and competencies at the disposal of the management. The installation and adequate control measures by management is key and the management intelligence or machinery for information feedback to serve as basis for adjustment or improvement and for sensing the needs, demands and goodwill of the public. Bryson, Crosby and Bloomberg (2014) stated that it involves the coordination of resources, personnel, and processes to achieve educational goals. Effective management in education must ensure that the objectives of education are achieved through the good functioning of the school. Okoroma (2000) stressed that these functions like students personnel administration, provision and maintenance of funds and facilities, policy making and program planning, development of curriculum, procurement and development of personnel, maintenance of effective interrelationship with the community external and internal agencies are followed accordingly by management for effectiveness, efficiency and continuity.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century education being an integration of more practical, real-world skills and knowledge, such as financial literacy, technological competency, critical thinking, problem solving, and emotional intelligence but eliminates the traditional methodologies of teaching which depends on memorization and standardized testing in order to prepare students for success in the modern workforce and general benefits of the society (OECD, 2016). By addressing this gap, educators can better equip students with the skills they need to thrive in the rapidly changing world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

century education is a dynamic and evolving approach to teaching and learning that reflects the complexities of modern society. Amanchukwu, Stanley and Ololube (2015) emphasizes on the development of skills and competencies that prepare students for a rapidly changing world, where technology, globalization, and diverse perspectives play significant roles in a productive society. Productive society in education in 21<sup>st</sup> century, therefore, is a measure of how effective a society utilizes its resources, systems, and institutions to improve the overall well-being and quality of life of its members. It encompasses various aspects of social, economic and cultural life, aiming to achieve equitable and sustainable development for all and focuses on creating an environment that fosters individual and collective growth, innovation, and well-being and also a strong emphasis on lifelong learning.

### **Strategies that Contribute to Effective Management of a Productive Society in 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

It is essential to note that effective management in education is a dynamic and ongoing process that requires strong leadership, strategic planning, and a commitment to encourage a positive learning environment. By concentrating on these strategies, educational leaders can create institutions that not only meet the academic needs of students but also prepare them for success in an ever-changing world. The ultimate goal of effective management is to enhance student learning and achievement, and ensure that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. These strategies includes;

- **Leadership and Vision:** Effective management begins with strong leadership. Educational leaders, such as principals, superintendents, and department heads, must articulate a clear vision for the institution. This vision should be inclusive, inspiring, and aligned with the needs of the students and the community. Coburn *et al* (2017) stated that leaders should engage stakeholder, teachers, parents, students, and community members in the development of this vision to ensure buy-in and shared ownership.
- **Strategic Planning:** Strategic planning is essential for setting long-term goals and determining the steps necessary to achieve them. This process involves assessing the current state of the institution, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and establishing measurable objectives. Effective management requires regular evaluation and adjustment of the strategic plan based on feedback and changing circumstances.
- **Resource Allocation:** Effective management involves the judicious allocation of resources, including financial, human, and material resources. Educational leaders must prioritize spending to support programmes and initiatives that directly impact student learning. This includes investing in professional development for teachers, acquiring necessary technology, and maintaining facilities.
- **Staff Development and Support:** Academic and non-academic staff are the backbone of any educational institution. Effective management includes providing ongoing professional development opportunities that enhance teaching skills and pedagogical knowledge. Coburn *et al* (2017) is supportive of management practices, such as mentoring, coaching, and collaborative planning, foster a positive work environment and promote staff retention.

- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Utilizing data to inform decisions is a hallmark of effective management in education. This involves collecting and analyzing data on student performance, attendance, and other relevant metrics. Educational leaders should use this data to identify areas for improvement, track progress, and make informed decisions about curriculum, instruction, and resource allocation.
- **Curriculum and Instructional Leadership:** Effective management requires a focus on curriculum development and instructional practices. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is relevant, rigorous, and aligned with national standards. They should also promote innovative teaching strategies that engage students and cater for diverse learning styles. Coburn, *et al* (2016) posited that regular classroom observations and feedback can help maintain high instructional standards.
- **Community Engagement and Partnerships:** Building strong relationships with the community is vital for effective management in education. Saiti (2015) stated that engaging parents, local businesses, and community organizations can enhance support for schools and provide additional resources for students. Partnerships can lead to collaborative programmes, internships, and other opportunities that enrich the educational experience.
- **Creating a Positive School Culture:** A positive school culture is essential for effective management. This involves fostering an environment where students feel safe, respected, and valued. Leaders should promote inclusivity, celebrate diversity, and implement policies that address bullying and discrimination. A positive culture enhances students' engagement and academic success.
- **Communication and Transparency:** Effective communication is crucial for successful management. Educational leaders should maintain open lines of communication with all stakeholders, and provide regular updates on school initiatives, policies, and performance. Continuous Transparency builds trust and encourages collaboration among staff, students, and parents.
- **Improvement and Innovation:** Effective management in education requires a commitment to continuous improvement. Leaders should encourage a culture of innovation, where new ideas and approaches are welcomed and tested. Saiti (2015) emphasized that regularly soliciting feedback from staff and students can help identify areas for improvement and foster a sense of ownership in the educational process.
- **Focus on Skills over Content:** While foundational knowledge remains important, there is a growing emphasis on critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication which is often referred to as the "4 Cs." These skills are essential for problem-solving and innovation in various fields for students for life long sustainability.
- **Integration of Technology:** Technology is a cornerstone of 21<sup>st</sup> century education. Classrooms are increasingly equipped with digital tools that enhance learning experiences. Navarra and Sampson (2018) stated that online resources, educational software, and interactive platforms allow for personalized learning and access to a wealth of information. Students are encouraged to become digital citizens, understanding how to navigate and utilize technology responsibly.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Collaboration is a key component of modern education. Students often work in teams to tackle projects, fostering interpersonal skills and the ability to work with diverse groups. This collaborative approach mirrors real-world work environments, where teamwork is essential.
- **Global Perspective:** With the world becoming more interconnected, education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century often includes a global perspective. Students learn about different cultures, global issues, and the importance of empathy and understanding in a diverse world. This prepares them to engage in a globalized economy and society.
- **Personalized Learning:** Recognizing that each student has unique learning needs and styles, 21<sup>st</sup> century education promotes personalized learning experiences. This can involve differentiated instruction, adaptive learning technologies, and student-driven projects that allow learners to pursue their interests and strengths.
- **Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Modern education often breaks down traditional subject barriers, encouraging interdisciplinary learning. Students might engage in projects that combine science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM), fostering a holistic understanding of complex issues.
- **Emphasis on Lifelong Learning:** In a world where knowledge and skills are constantly evolving, the concept of lifelong learning is crucial. Bloom, Lemos, Sadun, and Van Reenen (2015) posited Education systems are increasingly anchored on instilling a love for learning and the ability to adapt to new information and challenges throughout one's life.
- **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Recognizing the importance of emotional intelligence, many educational frameworks now incorporate social and emotional learning. This helps students develop self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship skills, which are vital for personal and professional success.
- **Assessment Reforms:** Traditional assessment methods are being re-evaluated in favor of more comprehensive approaches that measure a range of skills and competencies. Formative assessments, portfolios, and project-based evaluations provide a more nuanced understanding of student learning and progress.
- **Community and Parental Involvement:** The 21<sup>st</sup> century education often emphasizes the role of the community and families in the learning process. Schools are increasingly seen as community hubs, fostering partnerships that enhance educational opportunities and support for students (Navarra *et al*, 2018). 21<sup>st</sup> century education is about preparing students not just for academic success, but for life in a complex, interconnected world. By concentrating on skills, technology, collaboration, and a global perspective, educators aim to equip learners with the tools they need to thrive in an ever-changing landscape. As education continues to evolve, it will be essential to remain adaptable and responsive to the needs of students and society.

## Conclusion

Education plays a pivotal role in fostering effective management within a productive society. It equips individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and critical thinking

abilities to navigate complex challenges and make informed decisions. A well-educated workforce is essential for innovation, adaptability, and sustainable growth, enabling organizations to respond to changing market dynamics and societal needs. Furthermore, education promotes leadership qualities and ethical practices, which are crucial for cultivating a collaborative and inclusive work environment. By investing in education, societies can empower individuals to contribute meaningfully to their communities, drive economic development, and enhance overall quality of life. Ultimately, a commitment to continuous learning and development is vital for achieving long-term success and resilience in an ever-evolving global landscape.

### Suggestions

The following relevant suggestions were made for educational leaders and managers on education and effective management of a productive society in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

1. Effective management in education should embrace technology integration by providing professional development training on the latest educational technologies and digital tools. Which will ensure teachers are equipped to integrate technology effectively into their teaching practices.
2. Effective management should implement blended learning approaches that combine online and face-to-face instruction, allowing for personalized learning experiences for a productive society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
3. Effective management should encourage a collaborative culture which will bring about team-based professional learning communities especially among teachers and students. Thereby, supporting each other's professional growth for a productive society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
4. The government should implement education policies that will bring about data-driven decision-making, assessment analytics, and to establish good and effective management systems for regular feedback from students, parents, and teachers to continuously improve educational practices.
5. Effective management should create a supportive environment to promote social and emotional learning for their interpersonal skills in a productive society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
6. Educational managers should cultivate global awareness that will establish partnerships with schools in different countries to promote cultural exchange and global citizenship which will also prepares students for the complexities of modern life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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