



Leadership Character as an Instrument for Organizational Effectiveness in the 21st Century

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Abstract

The success of an organizational leadership task is dependent largely on the quality of leadership which the organization brings to bear on its daily activities. It is for this reason that this paper looked at the leadership character as part of the major component for effective leadership in the 21st century. Leadership is the art of controlling, directing and coordinating of group of persons in a social system. It is the ability to transform vision into practical reality. Therefore, for organizations to make meaningful impact in this era of technology where innovation is key, leaders who are informed, proactive, knowledgeable, trustworthy, accountable, democratic and transformational in nature should be looked out for. The paper therefore, focused on the leadership character as an instrument for organizational effectiveness in the 21st century. The writer went further to give conceptual clarification of some terms such as: leadership; meaning and definitions, the imperatives of character required for organizational leadership, organization; meaning and kinds, and the qualities the 21st century leaders should possess. Furthermore, leadership characteristics, leadership character as an instrument for the 21st century organizational effectiveness are explained in detail. Conclusively, the 21st century leaders should be competent, vast and inspiring enough to influence the subordinates to work without coercion towards the attainment of group objectives. Among other things, the writer suggested that the 21st century leaders should be people who are informed, proactive and should be willing to embrace change by seeing the importance of exiting the ancient methods of running organizations to the modern methods. For example, in educational institution, the principals of secondary schools should be open to replace the old practice of chalk and board, to the use of computers, projectors and slides in their teaching-learning process.

Keywords: Leadership, Character, Organization, Instruments, 21st Century.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Nwanekezie, I. S. (2020). Leadership Character as an Instrument for Organizational Effectiveness in the 21st Century. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 13(4), 755-784.

INTRODUCTION

It could be said that the origin of leadership is as old as man. Taking the biblical narrative for example in the book of Genesis, God created the first man, Adam, and saw he could not cope alone, hence, He made the second person, Eve out of Adam's ribs as his companion or help mate (Genesis 2:22). Again, God gave them injunction to go into the world, increase and multiply and fill the earth (Genesis 1:28). The multiplication that followed could be likened to be the beginning of groups or society from the biblical point of view. The man Adam, acted as the first leader in charge of every other living things God called into being. As cited above, the increase in mans' population and the coming together of people, gave rise to groups, organizations or society.

From the ongoing, it is clear that where ever groups exist, be it family, village, communities, churches, institutions of learning, formal or informal groups and even nations, there is bound to be a leader to coordinate and direct the activities of others towards a purposeful goal. According to Okoroma in Austin (2019), leadership is the force needed to translate human and material resources in an organization into effective utilization. Man is an enigma that has a lot of potentials. With all his potentialities, man cannot live alone but lives interdependently with others in other to satisfy their basic needs. According to some of the earliest philosophers like Aristotle and Max, man is a socio-economic, rational and a political animal that lives in groups or communities. The gregarious nature of human being encourages corporate life existence that enables them meet up with numerous responsibilities, and this inter-group or inter-personal dependency has given rise to organizations. It is common knowledge therefore that, where ever groups exist, the need for leadership or administrators become a necessity; hence, the need for character leadership in all organizations whether formal or informal one.

To support the above statement, Okoroma cited in Koko and Nwiyi (2019) stated that, in order for leadership or management to take place, there must be an organization. Organization therefore could be seen as social groups that have common purposes or goals to be achieved through guided and laid down rules. Organizations are carefully coordinated, especially the formal organizations with policies and programs well structured and put in place. Haralambos in Koko and Nwiyi (2019) agreed and opined that all formal organizations, the government, factory, the army, welfare agencies and educational institutions are examples of bureaucratic organizations. The modus operandi in a formal organizations such as: planning, decision making, feedback mechanisms and what have you, are properly packaged; and these rules are put in place to guide the organizational ethics, checkmate unruly behaviours, conflicts, but most importantly, to maximize profits, hence, they are bureaucratic in nature. No wonder Etzioni in Koko and Nwiyi (2019) explains organizations as "social units that pursue specific goals." They are structured and serve as indispensable aspect of human existence. More examples include: school system, churches, hospitals, business firms, trade union, railway corporation, postal communication system, etc. Man passes through these various units from birth to adulthood. Experiences acquired influence their lives in various ways.

To give a little insight, man is born into the most fundamental organization, the family, with the collaboration of a medical organization called the hospital that cares for our health. Humans from the early age, attend the educational institutions called the school, which runs through a long period of time. Thereafter, he secures a job into a private, public or business enterprise or organization. He enlists into a religious organization for spiritual nurturing and

upliftment. As a worker, he could equally join trade union or professional association for solidarity and defense as seen amongst some trade unions in Nigeria (Koko & Nwiyi, 2019).

Organizations keep to their norms and principles which members should adhere to, or attract punishment in the event of deviation from the laid down rules. No matter the type of organization, if policies are put in place and there is nobody to coordinate, monitor, correct and assist the workers, that organization may degenerate into a mockery stock. According to Nwakwoala in Austin (2019), leadership involves ensuring that the organizational policies, decisions and programs are adequately implemented. In other words, the need for a character leadership in every organization is key if the resources of the organization must be put into effective use. Warren in Austin (2019, p. 819) puts it thus, “managers are people who do things right, while leaders are people who do the right thing”. so, it is safe to say that character helps leaders to do the right things at the right time. From this discussion, the concept and importance of effective leadership that has focus and character in all organizations cannot be compromised. However, it is not just enough to have a leader like the laissez-faire type of leadership, but the stress here is on character of the leader. Various factors or attributes possessed by leaders will distinguish them from the crowd. Northouse (2004) summarized leadership to include process and influence that occurs in a group and involves goal attainment. Leaders must have experience, knowledge, commitment, patience, but most importantly the skills to understand the dynamics of human behaviour in an organization, the ability to negotiate and work with others or subordinates in order to achieve the set goals.

Leadership character that would stand the test of time is needed, more so, in this 21st century era. As it seems, only the visionary, articulate, pragmatic, resourceful, skilled, versatile and humane leaders can fit into the 21st century institutions and make impact. According to Nwabueze, Chukwuji and Ugwoezuonu (2018), an investigation of world leaders in the course of recent years states that chiefs who have solid character will make a superior world for everybody, while leadership by and large is indispensable to the social, morale, financial and political textures of society. Leaders who understands what it means to be democratic or transformational in character and approach. They should be people that could embrace innovation and change with smiles, knowing fully well that the only thing that is constant in life is change, and should also know how to inspire all involved to tag along.

Ololube (2019) agreed that good leaders are made and that effective leadership is developed through a long process of long study, education, training and the accumulation of needed experiences. Bass and Boulding in Ololube (2019) also agreed that the basis of a good leadership is strong character and self-devotion to an organization. On the other hand, Abbasialiya (2010) talking from the employees’ angle, opined that leadership is the totality of the activities of a leader that affects the realization of the objectives, the well being of the employees and the organization. From the above, it does appear that only leadership character that can transform and promote an organization in this scientific era especially in the school system, should be advocated.

This computer age, the 21st century era or information and communication technology age, has come to stay with lots of changes, innovations, and explosion of knowledge in all spheres of human endeavor, such as science, education, health, manufacturing industries, food processing industries and what have you (Ogonu & Dagogo, 2019). Any organization, whether the school system or others that fail to upgrade or adapt to the fast-changing times will remain obsolete. This situation therefore, calls for effective leadership character that is knowledgeable, current and ICT compliance, visionary, ability to forecast, take risk by plunging into new

grounds, and being bold enough to influence the rest members of the organization as to why the digital age is better, and more beneficial to goal attainment and human satisfaction in an organization. No wonder Zaidieh (2012), stressed that the 21st century leaders or teachers must possess both self-direction and an ability to collaborate social networking, is built on the premises of how people know, should know and interact with one another. The leader that should stand the test of time and also have a glaring track record of humility, accountability and most importantly, trustworthiness. Such leaders that have the capability to make the subordinates develop implicit confidence and trust that may aid innovation are needed.

For example, school principals who exhibit these qualities can easily win the trust of teachers, students and the outside environment which could bring about positive changes that would project the image of the school, and uplift the academic attainment of the students. On the other hand, uninformed principals or leaders who are more interested in taking bribe or embezzling public funds would rather prefer to remain in the analog era than talk about change. They have no vision, mission or passion for change. They would rather prefer to discourage or lie, to see that things in the organization remain static unless the ones they must gain from.

Could this be part of what we are suffering today in the larger society where dishonesty and lack of knowledge is taking a toll. Talking about trustworthiness as an important quality for leadership character, Lamb and Mckee (2004) agreed that trustworthiness is often key to position of leadership as trust is fundamental to all manner of organized human groups, whether in education, business, military, religion, government or international organization. From the explanations above, the writer expresses that character leadership is key to effective leadership in this scientific era of knowledge explosion, as the use of computers, laptops and all the modern equipment are gradually replacing the traditional chalk and board system of teaching and learning, and other ancient ways of practices and procedures, in other fields of organizational endeavor.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

The study will examine the leadership character as an instrument for organizational effectiveness in the 21st century. The conceptual clarification focuses on the concepts of leadership, character, organization, and 21st century leadership. Thereafter, leadership characteristics and leadership character as an instrument for organizational effectiveness in the 21st century are explored.

Concept of Leadership

Leadership is the ability to influence or persuade the members of a group to work towards achieving the set goals. Every organization has targets to be achieved. Since organizations are goal oriented, the need for an effective leadership who has the knowledge and skills to plan, organize, direct and coordinate the activities of the group both human and material in order to hit the target at the end is expected. Therefore, the 21st century leaders should be fortified with the abilities and skills that would enable them achieve goals and inspire people to tag along. No wonder Jacqueline (2016) notes how important it is to understand the skills and abilities needed for the 21st century leaders.

Okeke (1985) gave credence to this when he explained that how well an organization is carried out, depends to a large extent on the quality of leadership which the leader brings to bear on the day to day performance of the duties. Kehler (2010) explained that leaders will each

influence at least 250 people in their life time. Leadership is all about knowing how to achieve goals and inspire or influence people by what the leaders say, do and through how they carry on with their work. Leaders influence their sub-ordinated by what they see them do.

Good leaders therefore should ask the followers to “do as they do, and not do as they say”. It is a process that demands the leaders influence over the behaviour of one or a group. To achieve this however, the leadership styles, abilities, skills, and situation may have been favorably put into play by the leader. It is worthy to note here that the concept of leadership is very difficult to define. There are as many definitions as there are researchers who have engaged in the study of leadership. In other words, many leaders have defined leadership from their own perspective which explains that the concept is not a one cap fits all definition. Leadership is the position of a leader, which could be explained as a process of planning, organizing and coordinating the activities of a group of workers to achieve the set goals.

Koko and Nwiyi, (2006) lend credence to this and opined that leadership is a process of guiding and directing the activities of a certain group of people towards the attainment of a set objective. All organizations, be it school business, hospital, churches or what have you, can only reach its expected heights if there is a visionary, knowledgeable, skilled and effective leader; who should possess the ability to forecast into the future, and break new grounds by taking risks without discouraged.

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines leadership as the power or the ability to lead other people. However, Kazim (2004) in Kasi (2019) explained that leadership is the focus of activity through which the goals and objectives of the organization are accomplished, leading for people to follow as subordinates or followers means setting precedence for people to follow and considering people’s feelings, likes, dislikes, desires and customs. Several other definitions abound according to the understanding of the leaders as to what it means to be an effective leader, and more so, when there is no generally accepted definition. Leadership involves a whole lot of understanding of how to apply the abilities and skills expected to realize goals, and inspire others along the right route. As Kotter (1987) cited in Botlhale (2019), opined that leadership process involves; developing a vision for the organization; aligning people with that vision through communication; and motivating people to action through empowerment and through basic need fulfillment. Ololube (2019) explained leadership as a kind of responsibility channeled towards the realization of goals by applying all resources and yet maintaining a coherent group in the process.

Northouse and Rowe (2007) cited in Ololube (2019) also expressed that leadership is a process whereby an individual influence a group of individuals to achieve a pre-set goal. It has been stated earlier that leadership means different things to different people. Stogdill (1974) supporting the statement, affirmed that there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept. Nonetheless, some of the generally accepted definitions cited in Botlhale, (2019), are stated below. They include: Batten (1989), Cohen (1990), Hemphill and Coons (1957), Katz and Kahn (1978), Rauch and Behling (1984), Stogdill (1950), Hoy and Miskel (1978), and Kouzes and Posner, (1995). They defined leadership thus:

- Leadership is a development of a clear and complete system of expectation in order to identify, evoke, and use the strengths of all resources in the organization, the most important which is people (Batten, 1989).

- Leadership is the art of influencing others to their maximum performance to accomplish any task, objectives or project (Cohen, 1990).
- Leadership is the behaviour of an individual when he is directing the activities of a group towards a shared goal (Hemphill & Coons, 1957).
- Leadership is the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of organization (Katz & Kahn, 1978).
- Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspiration (Kouzes & Posner, 1995).
- Leadership may be considered as the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts towards goal setting and goal achievement (Stogdill, 1950).
- Leadership is power based predominantly on personal characteristics, usually normative in nature (Hoy & Miskel, 1978).

Stressing this concept further, Fielder (1967), Schein (1980) and Ridden (1970) cited in Ukeje and Okorie (1990) have these to say on leadership definitions:

- The leader is the individual in the group given the task of directing and coordinating task relevant activities (Fielder, 1967).
- Leadership is a function of the relationship between the leader, the follower, and the task-situational characteristics (Schein, 1980).
- Leadership is the function of the leader, the superiors, the coworkers, the subordinates, the organization and the technology (Ridden, 1970).

From these definitions and explanations, one could state that leadership is the act or process of influencing, directing, coordinating and harmonizing both the human and material resources in an organization towards the actualization of the organizational goal. The leader is the central focus here or the action point. With the knowledge and skills, they could take initiative for new activities as they possess some power on personal characteristics. From all available facts, leadership always involves followership, hence, there can be no followership without leadership and vice versa. It is also necessary to state at this point that the situational variables under which a leader faces, will determine the leadership approach to be applied. In the same vein, the situation under which groups or individuals will follow the leader, equally varies considerably. However, these situational factors in organizational management, brought about the contingency approach to leadership study which is very necessary for better clarification.

Some of these factors have contributed in no small measures to the challenges militating against attaining a generally accepted definition of leadership; hence leadership does not depend only on position, behaviour and or personality of the leader, but also on the nature of the situation, and the interaction of the situation with the leader's personality and behaviour. Similarly, cultural factors, symbols are also limiting factors. However, no matter the complexity in leadership concept, there are wealth of valuable conceptual information and empirical data now available to aid any work.

Conclusively, the paper defines leadership as the sum total of the approaches a leader adopts such as attitudes, aptitudes, competences, skills, and knowledge in harnessing the organizational resources (human and material) to attain the set goals or objectives of an organization. The paper also recognizes that there are many theories of leadership, for example; Great Man Theory (1840s), Trait Theory (1930s–1940s), Behavioural Theories (1940s–1950s),

Contingency Theories (1960), Transactional Leadership Theories (1970s), Transformational Leadership Theories (1970), etc.

This work however, will not go into leadership theories but rather x-rays the leadership characteristics that will lead to organizational effectiveness in the 21st century.

Concept of Character

Character could be seen as the totality of one's personality. According to dictionary.com, character is the aggregate of features and traits that form the individual nature of a person. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, character is one of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual. As Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1995), puts it, character is the particular combination of qualities that make someone a particular kind of person. The New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language (2004), defines character as the total quality of a person's behaviour as revealed in his habits of thought and expression, his attitude and interests, his actions and his philosophy of life. According to Ololube (2018), character is the summation of philosophical, ethical, theological, sociological and even spiritual and economic actions coupled with emotional strings in relationship with values. Character is not a "one knot crack", it cannot be developed overnight but rather takes through a gradual process of long patience (Asita, 2019, p. 860).

It could therefore be said that these traits and endowment in a person accounts for individuals behaviour or reaction to any given situation. For example, true character leaders remain upright. They accept responsibilities, acknowledge their mistakes and failures without having to shift the blame to others. They are humble and open to learning. They cannot distort information or reports unlike dishonest leaders who will always cut corners, try to cover their pitfalls, blame others and claim to know it all. So many businesses, schools and even nations are suffering and drifting today because of untrustworthy and dishonest leaders. This paper therefore, attempts to project the leadership character and qualities that should bring about effectiveness in the 21st century leadership.

It is the real foundational makeup of an individual. Character is the sum total of mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual. There is an adage in Nigerian Igbo language that says "ezi agwa bu mma" meaning "good character is beauty", in other words, beauty without character amounts to nothing. Character determines who you are, and how far one can go either to succeed or fail in life. It is more than reputation and that is what guides an individual to do the right thing whether people are watching or not. Good character men or women will always do the right things, and as when due because they believe so. For an organization to succeed, the boss or the leader's character, and his method of piloting the strategies, can contribute to organizational success or failure. Hence, good leadership character involves collaboration with others because the success does not depend on the leader alone, but also with other workers and the entire organization.

However, the need for good leadership character for organizational growth in this era, cannot be over stated. Good character builds trust without which, people may not follow the leader. Upright character helps leaders to build excellence, that is, being all, you can be, within the bounds of doing what is right for the organization (Austin, 2019). Warren (1989), in Austin (2019) asserts that managers are people who do things right, while leaders are people who do the right things.

Authentic leaders who understand how character and strong personal moral life can affect an organization, do not compromise or cut corners. They always insist on doing things as they ought to be done. As Ibukun, Onywole and Abe (2011) cited in Nwokocha (2019), character centres around character attributes, qualities and excellencies. Other leadership attributes include the leader's dependability to make the right decisions especially at the face of challenges. They must display their skills and competences through good character. On the other hand, an untrustworthy leader can kill the morale of the subordinates with poor skills which will affect the organization adversely. Effective or good character leaders should develop the right communication skills, be people oriented, visionary, intelligence, high business acumen and fearless even to take risks. However, integrity and honesty are also key. In the words of Brandt Ron in Okeke, (1985; 154) "...Great leaders are sensitive to the fundamental needs and values of others... Moral leadership goes beyond everyday wants and needs to higher levels of reasoned, conscious values". If a leader cannot tell himself and others the truth, that will be the genesis of problems. Is it possible to state that Nigeria could seriously be suffering from lack of integrity and honest leadership? A good leader avoids moments that would lead to crisis because it is inevitable. Autocracy, nonchalant actions and pride may generate insubordination which will affect the organizational effectiveness, goal attainment and productivity.

Concept of Organization

For the purpose of this paper, the organizational theories will not be delved into. It will attempt to explain the meaning of organization, definitions, types and perhaps the importance. Organization from a lame man's explanation is the coming together of different individuals to work for the purpose of a common good. It can be seen as the father of management processes because no management can perform its duties without an efficient organization. According to Mooney and Reiley, (2008), in Nwokocha, (2019), explained organization as a medium through which people meet up to accomplish normal and related concepts or ideologies. In the management process, organization stands as the middle man that tries to integrate the various activities in a business to realize the pre-determined goals. Organizations have structural frame work of duties and responsibilities needed of personnel in carrying out duties with a view to achieving organizational goal. That explains organization as a group of people working together for a common purpose. However, other definitions of organization abound.

It could be defined as a consciously coordinated social units, composed of two or more people that functions on a relatively continuous basis to achieve common goals (Robbins, in Onwuemene (2019). Imevbore cited in Onwuemene (2019), explained an organization as being alive and stated its need to sustain that life by responding to its internal dynamics and external realities. According to Drucker (1993), organization is a human group that is made up of specialists who work together for a common goal. In other words, organization is always specialized and defined by its task or job. That is to say that organization is the instrument to achieving goals, and work for each person is determined, with the authority and responsibility involved in achieving the same purpose. The structures laid down in an organization also specify the duties and responsibilities of workers therein.

Duncan (2010) explained organization as the interdependence of parts of all collectives, entities, groups, communities and societies. From the above, organization could mean the connection among the factors, variables or workers in an enterprise all geared towards a common purpose. The structural outfit of an organization is not without interdependent parts, and the

ability to harmonize them in other to achieve the objective is key in an enterprise. Resources are effectively utilized through division of labour to various personnel's in their specialized areas. Organization brings about closeness among people and work so as to work in a better and efficient way.

Ogburu and Nimkoff (2009), maintained, that a social organization is an articulation of different people, their functions, and the rules governing the group. Conclusively, organization could be seen as a social system or structure where people of all classes and age could come together and work towards attaining some common goals. The feeling of fulfilling ones needs more effectively makes people to identify with groups. It could also be said that organization is goal oriented, that works to maximize benefits by using limited available resources. However, both internal and external factors can influence an organization. Internal factors include: plans, objectives, and their policies which are easily controlled internally, while external factors include: politics, country's economy, legal rules and regulations which most of the time are beyond organizational control. For this reason, organizations need constant caution and care to adapt and be able to manage situations that may arise from such external factors.

Kinds of Organization

In management, we have two main types of organization, thus: the formal and informal organization.

Formal Organization: formal organization is an organization founded with stated roles to achieve set goals; or a social system established for the implicit purpose of realizing the specified goals (Gulick -Urwick in Edem 1982; 11). Examples of formal organizations are listed below:

- School system;
- Hospitals;
- Postal agencies;
- Communication system;
- Military establishment;
- Banks;
- Railway corporation and a couple of others.

These institutions are described in terms of tasks, position and authority relationship (Edem, 1982). Goals are reached through the tasks done. For example, the task in the school system is to educate the children. The jobs in a formal organization can also be sub-divided into sets and assigned to each person with specific job description of the position. This breaking of jobs into sub-sections is known as planning. Urwick in Edem (1982) stated that planning is the process of working out in broad outline the things that need to be done, and the method of doing them to accomplish the purpose set for the institution.

Formal organizations also favour formation of authority relationship to fasten decision making which are embedded in specific and general instructions as guides to the organization. The authority chain establishes who can initiate actions and for whom; and bringing all workers in a scalar chain that ends in a governing body. Other feature/characteristics of formal organization includes:

- Planning and coordinating of human and material resources;
- Sensitization and motivation of the co-workers to carry out their functions better;
- To put in place, proper rational decision-making mechanism;
- Constant evaluation of the activities of both the workers and organization;
- Control mechanism through formulation of rules and regulations that will provide for discipline and unified standards;
- Division of labour.

Limitation: the leadership process of formal organization however, may have been found wanting in the area of being too impersonal, and human consideration lacking completely. Secondly, it has great emphasis on organizational health as clearly stated in the purpose, structure, regulations, policies, programs, funds and facilities. It is work centered and highly bureaucratic. Koko and Nwiyi (2006), said that the principles of bureaucracy do not rely on only one useful aspect of organizational realities rather it has its short comings which affect the organizational management. This work does not intend to go into organizational theories as stated earlier.

Informal Organization: The concept came as a result of informal relationships of workers within an enterprise and or outside. Workers simply show great group solidarity which is the bond of the membership. Their strong cooperation and collective actions of the members bring unity and strength. The two groups, formal and informal that exist together can be for each other's benefits. Chester Bernards in Edem (1982, p. 13) defines informal groups as an "interpersonal and unofficial association within the formal structure which sometimes may obstruct, but usually makes a positive contribution to its health". Some of the benefits of informal organization could be summed thus:

- It helps to improve the communication flow among the workers which could have overloaded the executives with several referring issues.
- They save their members from unnecessary embarrassment that could dent their ego or lower their dignity.
- They serve as psychological defense against their boss (Edem 1982). For example, informal relationships exist among teachers in a school organization. This could be as a result of their daily contacts in the staff room, free period, games time or in the garden during practical agricultural periods. It could also be in their meeting at the library, laboratory or any other way.

These unofficial consultations among teachers and the proximity of their classrooms, all could lead to good relationships. However, out culture and ethnic membership as Africans is another major factor. Workers of the same sex, marital status or old mates in schools, may group in cliques.

In summary, organization is seen as a system made up of input, output and process. Inputs are the resources which includes human, materials, finance, and time available for production, while the process deals with the act of applying the resources for production, and the outputs are the products got from the input through the process. The educational system for example, is an organization that have teachers, non-academic staff, students, school facilities, teaching aids, finance and time as the input; teaching itself, administration, learning, research

and the environment act as the process; while the intelligent students or graduates produced by the system serve as the output.

Organization as an open system can affect and be affected by its environment for better expectation and productivity. It is a microcosm of societal development that gives people the chance to learn, develop, and then contribute meaningfully into the restructuring of the economy, society, or the nation at large. All organizations have different levels of officials. There are super-ordinates which includes; leaders, supervisors, heads of sections, chairmen and what have you; and subordinates who are the lower level workers or staff.

Leaders of organizations must have good character, desires, and the tasks to be done, for the growth of the group and the society at large. The leadership character needed for organizations in the 21st century must therefore be such that could lead others effectively, as well as achieve their goals that are profit oriented. They should have the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for the upgrading of the existing structure. The 21st century organization leaders should also be equipped enough to understand and be quick to apply the models of dynamic change from the ancient or customary ways of operation, to the modern or new ways of applying technological innovation for easy and better development, that results to higher productivity.

Concept of the 21st Century

The 21st century is all about the computer age, modernization and the era of information and technological application for changes and growth in all aspects of human organizations. It is also known as a period of revolutionary change inspired by the marriage of computer and communication (Ogonu & Dagogo, 2019). This is the era of interconnectivity of how people reach out to others all over the globe by means of internet web, information and communication technology (ICT), media, Facebook, video conferencing, e-mailing and other social networks. Through these interactions with people, new and better ideas are shared, knowledge upgraded, new friends and organizational linkages are made, more research finding are made available for information awareness and update.

The advent of the information and communication technology (ICT) has no doubt transformed man's outlook to issues. The use of internet in the business world has obviously changed things to usher in easier access to resources, information, knowledge, managerial approaches and better leadership methods. According to Dictionary.Net, the 21st century is the current century of the Anno Domini era or the common era, in accordance with the Gregoria calendar, which began on January 1, 2001, to end in December 31, 2100. It is the 1st century of the 3rd millennium and it is distinct from the century known as the 2000s, which began on January 1, 2000 to end December 31, 2099. The 21st century is defined as the era we are in now, a time of freedom and technological advancement. Our generation is the first to experience a whole new digital world with a lot of new ideas, inventions, reforms, changes and innovation in all areas of life.

This age is marked with digital reformation in all spheres of life including organizations and educational institutions. It is a process of moving from the conventional ways of doing things to advanced method through technologically enabled process via the use of information and communication technology (ICT). This era uses computer and its devices to explore and impact new ways, methods and knowledge of operating organizations by using such instruments as: e-learning device, WhatsApp, video conferencing, e-mail, mobile phones, television display and other social media platforms such as twitter, Facebook, etc. in modernizing organizational

procedures and practices, as well as, bring new ideas and innovations into educational system which will modify the teaching and learning practices. The invention and the effective use of these technological devices have contributed greatly to advancement in all areas of organizational endeavor especially in the educational industries overseas.

School as an institution for example, is where teaching and learning take place. Education on the other part, could mean the activities of teaching and learning in a school environment that results to imparting knowledge. The 21st century education, therefore is the education in the digital world that uses computer and other technological gadgets to explore, modernize and improve knowledge as well as affect every other aspect of human life. Computer devices play a great role in this scientific era and are defined as electronic devices that can store, retrieve and process data. It is one of the mostly used facility of information and communication technology (ICT), others include: internet technology, telecommunication gadgets and satellite devices. Programs with computers and its online applications have upgraded communication, and made tasks easier and fast in organizations, and education inclusive. Pelgrum (2002) commented that ICT facilities form a crucial chain in the process of educational change in this century.

This goes to claim that the leadership character needed at this age, should be transformational and versatile in nature. A Leader who should be vast in the knowledge, uses and the importance of these technological equipment's. Such leaders will find it easy to make such great impact in an organization that could not only influence the environment, but also transform the image, productivity and upgrade the subordinate's capabilities and efficiency. In the school system for example, such a leader will not only transform the image of the school but also increase the teachers output which will be reflected in the excellent academic performances students.

Tools/Instruments for Effective Leadership of Organizations

Instruments could refer to those things required of a good leader for effective leadership. Some of the tools or potentialities needed include the following:

Collaboration: This plays a central and critical role in upholding and driving the organization forward. The ability of the leader to brainstorm with others and cross-breed ideas on new ways of modernizing things that should bring about institutional growth should be advocated. This approach could assist in bringing an organization back to life as those involved in the collaboration may get excited in sharing information that will transform the image of the organization. The new ideas shared could equally lead to problem solving.

Good Budgetary Strategy: This is a great tool for organizational effectiveness which an effective leader uses for planning and controlling the financial resources which could give guidelines for future plan of action expressed in financial terms over a given time. This is a tool that could guide the organization throughout the year.

Accountability: This is what distinguishes a good leader from others. Making accountability your watch word, and staying clear from fraud no matter how enticing it may look is key. According to Ogbu (2019), accountability is explained as the willingness of an individual to accept his/her actions, accept responsibilities for them and disclose the results in a transparent manner asking for help when needed. From the above, Ninalowo in Ogbu (2019), advised that all

government functionaries should be ready to answer for their actions any time to the public, and be able to justify their actions at the level of moral and ethical standard. Leaders should therefore, keep clean and straight records of all dealings and transactions within and outside the organization; and be willing and ready to subject themselves for accountability. Those that resist auditing or probe maybe unqualified for the position, or have some skeleton in the cupboard the writer suggests.

Transparency/Honesty: These should be the pride of every leader because they attract great reward. A leader should not be economical with the truth about any issue in the organization that needs clarification. The truth no matter how it is may save the organization, while compromise when discovered at last may ridicule and bring the organization back to bad light. According to Ololube in Igwe (2019), said that a leader's capacity for honesty can help personnel work constructively on solving issues and problems.

Responsibility/Integrity: Responsibility is part of leadership character, that is, the ability of the leader to accept responsibility and not to keep delegating and shying away from jobs. This occurs when leaders are ill prepared and lack knowledge of the job. Ololube in Igwe (2019) viewed integrity as one being consistent in words and deeds' which is an attribute of leadership that shows deep commitment to doing the right thing for the right reason regardless of the circumstances. A good leader must be properly equipped in words and actions, both in the managerial approach, skills, planning, organizing and coordinating both the human and material elements in the organization. Getting involved in activities, make leaders take charge and be ready to direct and assist the younger workers. They should sacrifice their time and talents to get things done better. To a good leader, gain is not the first priority but to make sacrifices and going extra miles for the upgrading and development of both the organization and the human element. Such developments could be measured in the realization of organizational goals, motivating and satisfying the needs of workers, free and clear flow of communication and above all, harmony in decision making process.

It is believed that leaders who put these instruments to effective use will attain the goals of the organization.

Organization and 21st Century Leadership

Organization is made up of a group of people that work together for a common goal. Every organization has a leader to direct and guide the resources (human and material) towards achieving the set goals. Leadership in the 21st century means leaders in the digital world that use computer and other technological devices to seek ideas and for transfer of ideas to others. The era is characterized by the use of computer in all aspects of human, organizations, enterprises or endeavor.

As Merian Webstar (2016) puts it, computer is an electronic device that can type, store, retrieve and process data. Other information and communication technology (ICT) facilities to be used in the 21st century organization include: internet technology, telecommunication gadgets, satellites, computers, etc. The use of these applications has advanced as well as made tasks in all organizational endeavor easier and fast. Pelgrium (2000) asserts that ICT has become a focal point in the process of organizational procedures in this era. With the embrace of technology, the traditional procedures and practices in an organization has to give way to modern enabled

devices. The paper will equally stress on the types of ICT facilities to be used in organization in this era such as e-mailing, softwares, video conferencing, etc.

Involving ICT in the running of organizations have received positive attention globally and locally. In Nigeria for example, internet enabling devices are being put in operation in most organizations like the bank, and even in institutions of learning. Also, many students today especially at the tertiary level are specializing in various branches of ICT. With the great innovations brought about by the use of ICT, it is believed that students will be exposed better to new ways of learning and application of knowledge which will eventually lead to the development of the society; hence, education is seen as the pivot for national transformation and growth.

Leaders in the 21st century in various organization therefore should have all the enabling equipment that will help them adapt to the new era. They should play central and critical roles in upholding and driving the human and material resources of the organization to safety by being proactive and innovative with every sense of responsibility in making sure that every member of the organization sees the need for change.

They should be updated with great information about new concepts, methods, and proceedings on how best to run their organizations and also exposed to learning new things. Hidden knowledge brought to light by this scientific era will equip the leaders of this century to their teeth on how to phase out the analog approaches and embrace the digital and more globally accepted approaches of running an organization.

Leaders in this era should have the ability to transfer information and have access to information that would have been an uphill task to access previously. The digital era would also help leaders embrace new fundamental structural policies, rules and procedures which are integral to achieving significant improvement in the organizational productivity and better human resource management in this era. Embracing the new digital tools would bring about greater leadership effectiveness and could open avenues for expansion, job creation, acquisition of broader knowledge, motivation, job satisfaction and self-actualization which leads to higher productivity by the workers.

The use of ICT in organization will make for faster and easier job accomplishment. However, it may be necessary to state that this era has come to stay and the 21st century leaders should embrace it with utmost sincerity and dedication in order to give their organizations better face lift. The leadership has to think in the area of building professional competency of the workers and developing their proficiency in order to increase effective organizational management and result. In the same vein, leaders in the institutions of learning should equally embrace ICT in the delivery of teaching and learning process. This in the actual sense should be a priority as it will promote the type of education that would facilitate innovation in the educational system, and also assist students explore and enjoy the full benefits of ICT.

In the words of Oyediyi, Shahu and Oluwalola (2019) in Ogonu and Dagogo (2019), the call for effective use of ICT in schools cannot be over stretched as it will expose and uplift the children with new information needed to fortify them for the eventualities that may occur as a result of global changes. It would also give students the opportunity for individualized learning and deepening of skills. In this regard, educationist should make ICT an integral part of teaching and learning process in schools.

ICT Resources Necessary for Effective Leadership in the 21st Century Organization

Organizations cannot function effectively without basic ICT tools or resources in the 21st century, hence, the need to consider the following:

Video conferencing (VC): It is an ICT device used in the conduct of a video conference or teleconference by a set of telecommunication technologists that allow two or more locations to communicate simultaneously by two-way video and audio transmission. Many lecturers, teachers and students in the developed world use it for teaching and learning across states and nations. In the same vein, organizational leaders can equally use it to hold meeting with people and different places without recourse to time and distance and thus, reducing the leaders travelling risks, expenses as well as save cost.

Interactive white board (IWB): Leaders could equally use this to encourage the workers engagement, motivation, critical thinking and collaboration in the new learning process as they get exposed to varieties of learning resources on the board. The level to which IWB can be used to change the traditional ways of organizational procedures in this scientific era, will depend mainly on the leaders technological “know how”, content, knowledge skills, and ability to select and adopt to the right IWB features for specific content delivery depends on the leader’s exposure. According to Williams, Asodike and Duru (2017), competency deals with the persons skills and abilities to use IWB for the personal and academic work depending on the frequency of use, through which people can gradually develop their skills and abilities. A proactive leader therefore, who envisages the urgencies and importance of the use, will give it time to achieve the aim.

Word processing: This is an ICT computer software application operated by users for word processing functions, which could also be used for editing, mailing and printing. This is central to the smooth and faster processing of the numerous documents and transactions organizations are involved in. Rostky (2000) affirmed that word processing helps reduce work overload by providing easier means of writing, and printing documents in an accurate and faster way, with all the modern inbuilt mechanisms to check errors.

Data analysis: This is the ICT process that uses statistical and logical ways to explain, illustrate, and evaluate data either for the past events or to project for the future developments. Data analysis has multiple areas and approaches with different methods and names in various organizations, businesses and social sciences etc. Leaders need data analysis to conduct research on new areas and obtain results that could solve current problems. Data analysis also reduces the amount of work, saves time and cost for the organization. Others are:

- Use of power points (project) excel;
- Mobile phone browsing;
- E-payment;
- Television;
- Social networking etc.

Benefits of Digitizing Organization

- Personalization of learning: both leaders and workers can personalize their learning as people can be independent and learn at their rate.
- It complements conventional organizational outlook: The efficient and effective use of ICT facilities in an organization, shows that workers are able to use them to complement the ancient methods that should be phased out. It would also loosen organizations from rigidity to being flexible in approach and procedures.
- Social network: this is the use of internet based social media sites to stay connected with interest groups or clients you have common interest or challenges with. It can have both social or occupational network, or through such sites like Facebook, twitter, Instagram etc. which is the best source for new updates on issues. Leaders of this age should hook on and do exploit from these social networks in the best interest of the organization.
- Enrichment of organizations: ICT applications can modernize organizations by making them more vibrant and engaging. This could reduce the long time spent on doing things as the better and faster ways of doing the same thing could be sourced online.
- Helps leaders and subordinates: It assists both leaders and subordinates to exchange materials, instructions, directions, mails, discussions and other important information to be passed electronically from any part of the globe.
- Better organization outlook: It improves the quality of the organization in outlook, activities and productivity.
- Use of modern tools: It offers a wide range of tools that could help workers to be motivated, creative, innovative and more resourceful which will go to boost the dignity of both the leader and the organization as production excels.
- Individualized learning: individualized learning experience is encouraged, as well as the risk of being on the road all the time, and cost reduction are drastically reduced.

ICT / Organizational Transformation Through Leadership Character

Technology talks about modernization which has become the cardinal principle of this era. Modernization of organization thinks about the customer which is an integral element of digital change for upgrading the employee knowledge, experience, productivity and providing high value. This is a part way to societal growth through digital transformation. Lambert (2000), mentioned about ten virtues good leaders should possess thus:

- **Humility:** This is a very important virtue for learning to be a better leader. It gives a leader the ability to build empathy and understand others.
- **Integrity:** This helps to build trust and encourage others to do so.
- **Collaboration:** Helps a leader to build team work.
- **Justice:** This refers to giving decisions accepted as legitimate by others. Making sure that the truth is upheld at all times.
- **Courage:** The ability of a leader to make tough decisions that counters others.
- **Temperance:** Helps leaders to take calculated and rational risks.
- **Accountability:** Helps leaders own and stand by the decisions they make and support the same in others.

- **Transcendence:** Being equipped as a leader with a sense of purpose, steadfastness or optimism.
- **Sense of judgement:** Helps a leader to balance and use the virtues to serve the needs of many stake holders within and outside the organization.

It has been observed that the absence of these qualities in a leader may result in ineffectiveness which are characterized by:

- **Leader lacks judgement:** the leader is without judgement which shows in wrong decision making. Issues that need prompt attention are unnecessarily delayed which could create confusion.
- **Lack of humility:** Leader lacks humility and feels big and important to relate with others; and can hardly accept suggestions from other people's point of view. Such leaders are introverts and hate to mix up with others.
- **Lack of courage:** such leaders lack courage, confidence and are afraid to take risks.
- **Being reactive:** the leader sees himself as right all the time, fears taking responsibility and finds it very comfortable to blame others. They look at themselves as never do wrong while all mistakes are shifted to the subordinate. This could be a contributory factor to the poor and ineffective leadership we have in our educational system and even in our nation today. They make watery policies, not proactive to issues, not responsive, intelligent and very dwarfed in critical thinking and objectivity.
- **Inability to take risk:** the leader avoids taking risk as a result of poor understanding and foresight for strategies for organizational growth. The colossal fear to lose becomes a hinderance to their effectiveness.
- **Lack of self-confidence:** this makes such leaders to always want to be understood in all issues by presenting what they want as the final decision. This act of course has a lot of consequences as it usually put the co-workers off who may conclude that the leader wants to work alone. They put up confrontational attitudes to cover their inadequacies and this could definitely lead to conflict, low interest in the job by workers, fall in the quality of production and organization not attending their goals.
- **Compromise:** such leaders usually attract low quality accreditation or assessment from external supervisors whom they may wish to offer inducement to cover their limitations. They do not plan to win clean but to cut corners and bribe their position through. Usually, the end for such leaders are self-destruction and poor reputation for the organization.
- **Fear of modernization:** they like to maintain statuesque, that is, as things were in the time of 'Adam', so shall it be forever. They dared change like death forgetting that the only thing constant in life is change. Such leaders could stagnate businesses, organizations, and even nations.

Simply put, fear must give way for development to come in. In this era of technology and innovation, there is need for leaders to upgrade themselves if they must measure up to the complexities of the new age, and be at par with the other developed nations. This is why the paper advocates for leadership character with vision, techniques, potentialities and what have you, to be able to manage and harness the 21st century organizations effectively. May I take a queue from what the ex-American president, Barack Obama once said "yes I can". So, the

leaders of this age should be convinced that if one person can do it, they could do it better by adopting all it takes to modernize their organizations.

Challenges of ICT in the 21st Century

The use of ICT in the modern world, organizations and its positive contributions in all aspects of human endeavor cannot be disputed. However, changing over to the era of ICT goes with its own challenges. They make things easy and fast but the gadgets also go with lots of complications and problems, which could be some of the reasons why switching from analogue to digital is unattainable. Some of the challenges could be x-rayed but not limited to the following points:

- **Cost implication:** ICT gadgets are very expensive in the third world. According to Emetarom (2000), the cost of ICT materials is very expensive in our country than in developed world, and this could pose as a big challenge.
- **Lack of leader's know-how:** There appears to be serious shortage of man power in ICT trained directors. This is a big challenge because some of the organizational leaders are not computer literate and cannot operate it. This incompetency in the side of the leaders could be a great set back.
- **Poor maintenance culture:** The fact that some leaders and the subordinates are not well grounded technologically could be a problem to allocate or spend money to train workers on how to keep the gadgets in order as some of the equipment's are delicate.
- **Epileptic power supply:** Lack of steady power supply in Nigeria is a big problem to the use of electronic facilities in offices. This can be detrimental to the efforts of digitization of organization etc.
- **High cost of ICT equipment:** There is high tariff on the importation of these equipment which may affect private organizations and individuals from fully participating.
- **Poor funding:** This has impacted negatively on so many institutions especially in education. Financing projects in Nigeria has been an uphill task. Both the government, public and private enterprises have challenges in providing adequate materials especially in the area of ICT. This attitude must stop if we must make appreciative impact.
- **Politics:** Politics play negative roles both in the government and private bodies. Experience has shown that both private individuals in organizations or government is ready to frustrate any plan that is not out to favour them. Even in an organization, those who dread computer or software development in their work places will work and criticize every move until the idea is dropped.

These and many more facts could halt the smooth delivery and use of ICT in organizations. Lack of technical support will likely affect technical maintenance which may result in higher risks of technical breakdown. This situation according to William et al. (2017) could discourage the end-users of ICTs in an organization. The 21st century leaders should therefore, be more receptive, proactive and innovative with every sense of responsibility and commitment in making sure that all aspects of the organization (financial, marketing, economy and the human elements) do not go down. The leader's patriotic zeal, energetic burst and innovative capacity will spur the subordinates to action even in the face of challenges.

The Roles of Good Leadership Character in an Organization

The importance of good leadership character in an organization cannot be over emphasized. Since the leader is the mirror that represents the organization internally and externally, makes it imperative for the leader to exhibit such acceptable attitudes that will promote the image of the organization. In other words, good leaders should have lots of potentialities that should speak for them among their subordinates, their peers, and the outside environment. They should exhibit such charisma of “do as I do, and not as I say”. They should be both works centered and people oriented in their administration. Some of the good qualities that leaders should possess include but not limited to the following:

Equality –this could mean seeing every one as same. It sees and relates to both low, high and mighty with equal respect, cordiality and care. They don't have dictionary for discrimination because that could polarize the organization and create problems. No special integrity is displayed for anyone nor do they tolerate favoritism which could breed mediocrity in an organization. The leader who is seen as the head of all, should treat all staff equally in praise, rewards, punishments just as one merits. There is objectivity, equity and moral justification in all their dealings. Such leaders should shun tribal sentiments and nepotic tendencies while doing the right things.

Discipline – According to www.collinsdictionary.com, discipline is making people obey rules or standards of behaviour, and punishing them when they do not. It is also the quality of being able to behave and work in a controlled way which involves obeying particular rules or standards. Igwela in Okwu and Wilson (2020) explains discipline to mean a very important requirements of socialization, learning and education. IT requires knowledge, skill, sensitivity and self-confidence.

From this perspective, discipline could be explained as any behaviour or attitude that conform to the established norms, values, standards, rules and regulations, that govern a group, organizations or communities. Good leadership character is seen on how disciplined the leader is, as people look up to them to get inspiration. Do they do as they expect others to do? Are they time conscious in all matters as they should lead by good examples? For example, punctuality should be the hallmark of leadership. When subordinates watch the actions of leaders, they will be motivated to comport themselves and behave accordingly. It is the action of the leader that shows who is in charge, as the slogan becomes, “do as the leaders do, not as they say”.

Humility – Lao-Tzu, Chinese founder of Taoism, author (6th century B. C), in Austin, (2019), defines humility “as the capacity to keep you from putting the self before others and argued that in doing so, one can become a leader among men”. Leaders who shift responsibility to themselves in good and bad times, have strong character to go beyond standard leadership constructs. Such leaders according to Brain in Austin (2019), possess attributes known as servant leadership. As Brain puts it, the philosophy of humility and commitment to workers is one of the key elements of leadership. Humility in the real sense, is the acceptance of one's strength and weaknesses. Good leaders bring down their ego to be able to lift up their workers. This makes for better relationship.

Compassion – Good leaders creates compassion which is an act of showing concern for the welfare of others in an organization. They make effort to understand the needs of the subordinates and takes steps to address those needs because they feel the pains of their subordinates especially in times of difficulty at the work place. This makes employees in an organization, to put in their best for increased productivity.

Co-operation – Good leadership character promotes co-operation in the organizational environment. They work as a team which promotes better understanding and efficient coordination as the leader shows more concern for employees in organization which usually results in increased productivity. No wonder Brain, in Austin, (2019) explained that the more leaders assist workers in their work identification, the greater the chances of encouraging workers commitments and building a cooperative workplace.

Excellence and effectiveness – this builds spirit of excellence and effectiveness in the governance of an organization. Excellence as a character attribute which could uplifts the followers to learn and work better. The leaders take responsibility for the group action even in the face of mistakes. They remain responsible and accountable and teach the workers to do same.

Peaceful co-existence – good leadership character supports peace and tolerance among the leader and subordinates because of the care exhibited by the leader. They could use these virtues to encourage others to apply their character more effectively.

Building of trust – good leadership character builds trust. It is very important that leaders build trust in people around them which makes for reliability and gives more freedom to all. Once people believe in a leader, they do what ever the leader says and this could result to higher performance and greater goal attainment.

Attainment of goals – leaders with good character do all the needful to ensure that the goals of the organization are achieved. They are careful to organize, monitor, identify mistakes, evaluate them in terms of cost, and remedy the strength or weakness of the organization. They also motivate the subordinates for excellent performances through rewards or appreciation. In support of this, Brain in Austin (2019) concluded that character is once again recognized as a critically important component of personality and therefore, its importance to leadership is considerable hence, character of a leader can hinder or enhance the attainment of goal of an organization.

From the points raised, one can appreciate that character is an indispensable quality for effective leadership. The leader's character can mar or promote the attainment of the organizational goals. When there is an enabling environment through good leadership character, communication flow becomes free and interaction turns cordial. The leader is not far from the workers, and this close interaction with each other leads to cross-examination of ideas from people of various backgrounds, skills, exposure and knowledge which could bring varieties of knowledge that could project organizational image. However, the existence of leadership that lacks the above characteristics in any organization, can only be imagined than explained as co-workers will be on their own for lack of cooperation and openness from the side of the leader, and this may lead to a colossal failure of the organization.

The 21st Century Leadership Styles for Effective Leadership of Organizations

The crop of leaders needed in this modern era should be those willing and able to marry diverse methods, approaches, skills and techniques in other to arrive at the set goals. They should be transformational, visionary, democratic, and participative in their strategic leadership styles in other to succeed in the bid to bring about effective changes in the organization. As a transformational leader which they should be, there is the need to give priority to workers commitment and capabilities which are highly needed in bringing about modernization and attainment of organizational goals; as greater efforts will lead to greater outputs. Leithwood et al. (1999) in Okai (2019) suggested eight dimensions of transformational leadership qualities thus:

- Building of vision;
- Setting goals;
- Promoting intellectual growth;
- Individual support;
- Ensuring best practices and good organizational values;
- Creating favorable organization culture;;
- Structural growth and participatory decision making;
- Ensuring high productivity.

The strong capacity for transformational leadership is key for the success of the 21st century modernization of organizations. For example, a school principle who has these leadership qualities can easily form and maintain cordial relationship with the teachers, non-academic staff and even the students who share the same value and interest in the school system; by creating enabling environment for effective teaching and learning to take place.

Visionary Leadership

The 21st century leaders are expected to have sharp vision which they are passionate about and are willing to share with others because any vision not shared or put into use, remains dormant. Vision means a lot in determining how far transformation and realization of the goals could go. The leader should express how the future of the organization should be; and have the ability to collaborate and motivate workers to be committed in accomplishing the vision geared towards organizational growth. Harper (2001) in Mba (2019) agreed that in organization, vision may be the most important role breakthrough leaders can play in creating forward/focused institution. Leaders bring about breakthroughs via clearly articulated visions. This is also in line with the leadership perspective of Kouzes in Mba (2019) asserted that an effective leader inspires and shares vision with others (followers).

In other words, leaders act as the propelling force and visionary thinkers who through their ingenuity create new ideas that can project the organization and the workers to greater heights. Thinking extensively, there has been this widely acclaimed adage that ‘ideas rule the world’, and most of the inventions in the world today are the product of people’s imaginations and constructive ideas. So, the 21st century leadership, should be visionary in nature to be able to impact positively by bringing visible changes in the organization.

Participative Leadership

This is also considered as another attribute to be acquired for effective leadership in this era. It is the same as democratic leadership style that can favour modernization of organizations because of its inclusiveness in the administrative process. The decision-making process here is a collective activity where members are involved and are allowed to contribute ideas for the running of the organization. The adoption of consultative and persuasive approaches makes it easier to get the support of the subordinated towards realizing the group goals. Denga (2015) maintains that the democratic leadership involves a high degree of subordinate's participation in decision-making. Members of the organization are seen as important part of the enterprise; hence, their positive inputs are taken seriously too. Workers usually support democratically reached decisions which gives them high morale. This goes to support that democratic leadership character can strongly bring about modernization of an organization. Aa Okoroma (2007) puts it, the leader should understand that the workers reserve popular sovereignty is the source of his authority.

Strategic Leadership

For any reasonable change to take place in any organization from the old ways (analogue era) to the new ways (digital era), strategic leaders are key. Those that should be able to formulate new strategies, make things clear, give directions, guide the motive and purpose of the organization towards achieving the goals within the new vision agenda. Workers should be keyed into the new agenda through long term commitment. This will help to create a new organizational culture in the event of change; as it remains the best process of guiding the new strategy for future changes ahead.

Other leadership qualities needed include honesty, self-discipline, wisdom, passion, fairness and competence which play vital roles in organizational growth. Leadership reliance on the character strength of the workers could also boost performance and productivity. This goes to say that leaders who lead by character project others and the organization before self. In a nut shell, good and effective leadership character is the bedrock for organizational growth as much more are expected to bring about effective leadership in this era.

Leadership Skills for the 21st Century

Leaders of this age should adopt so many models or approaches in other to meet up with the organizational demands, and be able to compete favorably with the outside world. To achieve this, they should embark on some innovative activities that would lead to discovery of new grounds to be explored for new knowledge for better modernization; hence, their proactiveness, ability to forecast and to take calculated risk would pay off.

- Human capacity development: this means the acquisition or the development of skills and abilities of people such that without effective leadership and good governance at all levels of the organization, it will be impossible to achieve and sustain. Wright and McMahan in Mba (2019) considered human capital as the knowledge, skills and abilities of the people employed in an organization. A well skilled leader could make effective administration, achieve goals, sustain quality and deliver high standard service. The

increasing complexities and needs arising from constant changes in society, coupled with the demand of higher level of productivity, calls for effective and ethical leadership.

For any organization to be deemed successful, good and effective ethical leaders are essential. In this paper, the essential qualities of effective leadership have been mentioned. However, some relevant literatures have revealed that a team is known by the qualities and skills associated with the leader. This invariably suggests that poor performance of a leader can affect the overall achievement of the team. According to Maxine (2016), some other skills needed for the 21st century leaders to work effectively include: critical thinking, creativity, collaborative ability, good communication, information literacy, media literacy, technology literacy, flexibility, leadership initiative, productivity and social skill. The listed skills are key to the 21st century leadership, when internet devices are used to teach, learn, produce, coordinate, organize and bring faster and better managerial effectiveness and efficiency to organizational growth.

- Critical thinking: This is very important for better and effective leadership because the new applications will lead to finding quicker solutions to problems. Secondly, it helps for improvements that would weed out problems as a result of analog ways of approach to issues, and replaces them with fruitful endeavors.
- Creativity: creativity is another important quality for the 21st century leaders. This means adopting new ideas or modern ideas and approaches which could help to view concepts in different lights, thereby bringing about innovation into the system. Innovation is strategic to adaptability and overall success of any company. When organization is innovated, new and current ideas are brought in and old ones, flushed out which brings growth.
- Collaboration: that is, knowing how best to work with others, and the method to get employees come together to achieve compromises that lead to achieving the best possible result for organizational growth, and to solve problems. The understanding of the idea of “greater good” plays out here which could lead to organizations wide success.
- Effective Communication: this is another vital tool for leadership in the 21st century. Communication is the glue that brings all these leadership qualities together. It is the process of sending out and receiving of facts, ideas, opinion and a way organization shares useful understanding with each other. Smith cited in Nwagwu (2019), explained that it is only by communicating effectively can any kind of planned or organized activity be carried through. According to Ibara cited in Ololube (2019, p. 180), “communication is the exchange of information and transmission of meaning, which is broadly intended to ensure performance at all levels that result in the implementation of decisions and the achievement of organizational goals”. Effective communication brings about high profitability to a company, and has the power to eliminate confusion, create openness and cordial relationship in a work place. Without applying the proper communication techniques in the 21st century organizations, leaders and their sub-ordinates will lack the pivotal skills or abilities to move the organization forward. It also breeds misunderstanding, contradictions, disunity and slow progress for both the human elements and the organization at large.
- Literacy skills: literacy skills, otherwise called IMT skills are concerned with the elements of digital understanding which the 21st century leaders should be vast with in order to cope with the competitive markets out there.
 - Information literacy should help the leaders know the facts, figures, statistics and data involved in the running of the 21st century technology business.

- Media literacy will help the leaders to understand the outlets through which information is published, and thereby being abreast with what is happening elsewhere that could help them make reforms.
- Technology literacy will expose the leader to knowing and understanding the various machines in the ICT age, their uses and their effectiveness.
- Information literacy is very important just like the media. For example, as computer, cloud programming, mobile devices, etc. become very important, the world needs more people to understand the concepts. All these will help the leaders to know the basic information needed and which gadgets does which work and why. Technology literacy has no doubt unmasked the high-power tools that run today's world organizations or businesses. For leaders to be effective in this era, they have to keep abreast of time through the use of these gadgets and their manipulation.
- Flexibility: this is an expression of one's ability to adopt to changing situations and circumstances. Flexibility could be based on two uncomfortable ideas:
 - Your way isn't always the best way.
 - You must know and admit you are wrong.

That could be the trouble with some leaders. However, flexibility requires that leaders show humility, and accepts they will always have a lot to learn even with their wealth of experience.

- Leadership is one's penchant for setting goals, walking a group through the right steps to achieve the goals as a group. Leadership alone is not enough to get everything right as true success requires initiative.
- Initiative: this may come just naturally with some people, but may be hard to learn and practice with others. The reward for good leadership initiative can vary from person to person. At times, it could lead to new business venture and some other time, it could lead to spending much more hours at work. Initiative is an attribute of reward which shows leaders character in terms of work ethics and professional progress. The 21st century leaders therefore, must combine initiative with productivity which is the ability of the leader to accomplish a task within a given period of time otherwise called efficiency.
- Social skills: these are crucial also for the success of a leader in this era. There is massive interconnectivity of people with others to get things done. The concept of network plays a great role here as proper social skills would make excellent tool for forging long lasting relationships with good leaders (Stauffer, 2020).

Importance of Good Leadership Character in the 21st Century

It is common knowledge that without groups there would be no leadership. Group formation gave rise to emergence of leaders to control and influence the behaviour of members in order to attain the predetermined goals of the organization. The existence of groups suggests that members are willing to cooperate and work together and not as individuals. Their willingness to work makes it easy for the leaders to direct their efforts for the accomplishments of goals. Absence of good leaders in groups therefore, creates big vacuum that could make the groups directionless and more like a mob.

Davis in Okorie (2000) gave credence to the statement when he asserts that without leadership, an organization is nothing short of a muddle of men and machines; and that a leader is deemed successful when members accomplish more task than should have been done singly. There is the notion that the most fundamental functions of leaders are to plan, organize, give directions and to ensure that workers work to achieve the set goals if all things are equal. Secondly, the level of motivation of workers in the job energizes them to put more efforts for the accomplishment of the desired objectives of the enterprise.

Earlier studies had the thinking or notion that the world is grouped into two, thus, “leaders” and “followers”, and that some people possessed certain traits or qualities which the followers appreciated. That school of thought equally agreed that “leaders are born not made” (Okai, 2019, p. 798). However, the present study did not go into the theories of leadership neither dwell on the identification of the personality traits, but rather tried to project the leadership qualities needed for organizational growth in this new era. The 21st century leaders therefore, must be knowledgeable, skilled and open minded, coupled with their innate abilities that will enable them to collaborate with others effectively in order to achieve the aims already set.

From the proceeding analysis, one can state that the doctrine which agrees that leaders are born is false. Rather, it could be said from all available facts especially as presented in this paper and the contingency theory, that leaders are born and made because of the combination of the various variables or potentialities that came into play as to what qualifies good leadership character. Worlu in Okai, (2019, p. 756), agreed with the above statement when he said “leadership cannot be treated as either born or made by the situation but as a result of the interplay of some variables such as born, made and the situation in which the leader operates”.

Significance of Leadership Character

This paper has tried to establish that when more people come together with a single purpose, leadership must emerge, whether in a family, school, church, communities or even as a nation. There is just nothing like leaderless group, organization or society. Formation of groups imply that members agreed to work together other than to work singly for the realization of their purpose (Okai, 2019). Working together is like a symbiotic business where the leader acts as a catalyst in the process of carrying out the organizational duties. Without leadership, the connection between individual and group goals may be at war. This situation if not checked may degenerate into workers trying to achieve their own goals while the overall group will be unable to attain its objectives. No wonder Davis in Okai (2019, p. 758) asserts that, “without leadership, an organization is but a module of men and machines”. The significance of good leadership in an organization therefore cannot be overemphasized.

Leaders plan, motivate, coordinate and direct the efforts of workers to realize the set goals. Every organization has laid down guidelines, structure, visions and purposes intended to be realized, which only good and character leaders can effectively achieve. The human elements bring the groups together, and they are the ultimate that gives success to all the potentials in the organization and its purpose. This is why good leaders should apply transformational and democratic approaches while collaborating with their subordinates in order to attain both the organizational goals and worker’s needs.

Other significance of leadership as added by Katz and Khan in Okai (2019), include but not limited to:

- Imperfection of organizational design – this explains that leaders fill the gaps created by the complexities arising from the limitation in designing organizations that will provide for all contingencies. They should make efforts to provide the needed designs for the survival of the enterprise.
- Continuously changing conditions – this is key to the changing world today due to technology. In the face of this constant change, organizations should have quality leaders that could weather the storm at any change in the business climate or organization. This equally calls for proactive leaders who could manage and allocate the material resources of the organization to meet the changing times because the changes definitely affect the environment, community expectations and community participation in the organizational activities. Okorie cited in Okai (2019) that the educational institution where the changing environment is affecting, could be a case in point. In her view, Communities in Nigeria are changing and their demands and expectations are increasing, both in vocal and in community participation in the activities of the school.
- Internal dynamics of the organization – dynamism in organization refers to changes which is the only thing that is constant in life. No one wishes to remain stagnant; so organizational growth attracts changes in all facets. It is therefore the duty of the effective leadership manager to understand how to trigger the motivation and direction that would guide the human efforts to adapt to the new functional structures, processes, policies, programs and coordination towards organizational balance and goal realization.
- Handling the human issue in organization – nothing lasts forever, including life. People come and go in all forms of human groups including organizations. In other words, people who make up the organization can change, resign, leave, withdraw, agree or disagree and so on (Okai 2019). Leaders who know their onions or who have the charisma and are vast in handling such human related issues are needed in every institution. Therefore, the need for proactive leadership who can forecast and strategize on how to refocus towards meeting the realities of change in the organization, from both internal and external environments cannot be over emphasized.

The paper therefore states that the importance and significance of effective leadership in all organizations in this ICT era are key for organizational direction, coordination and harmonization of both the human and material resource for the attainment of the set goals. If there is no leadership, there should be no organization, the paper asserts.

CONCLUSION

There is great need for leadership in every organization as there is no such thing as a leaderless group, organization or society. As explained earlier, an organization without leadership is like a muddle of men and machine that have no direction and cannot achieve any purpose. Even though there has not been a generally accepted definition of leadership, many scholars who have engaged in the study gave their own definitions. Nonetheless, there appear to be a general consensus about what constitutes good leaders, and what they are supposed to do in an organization to make it blossom.

Since all organizations are profit oriented, how effective and efficient the activities are carried out will depend on the leadership character. Furthermore, while expatiating on the leadership character for organizational effectiveness in the 21st century, there is a consensus that such leaders should be competent, vast and inspiring enough to influence the subordinates to work without coerce towards the attainment of group objectives. Again, they should possess other leadership characteristics worthy of note, which should include but not limited to the following: leading by self-example, have self-professional conviction, being a motivator, personal commitment and charisma, ability to set goals and accept goals, ability to put measure and controls, ability to maintain momentum, trustworthiness, ability to collaborate with others, adopting a democratic and transformational style of leadership and being open to embrace change. However, humility, honesty, accountability, equality and the use of rewards and appreciation for workers are key for effective leadership in the 21st century.

Character which is an essential factor in leader is viewed as the sum total of the potentialities that make up an individual, helps one uphold the values of life and to build the leadership effectiveness. Since leadership is the process that guides, directs, inspires, coordinates and influences others to work willingly towards goal attainment, the need for leadership character that could formulate rules and regulations, be both goal and people oriented with good communication network, are required to manage and move the 21st century organization to greater heights.

In the light of this, much will be expected from the 21st century leaders, especially from the third world if they must compete favorably with the rest of the world. Leadership broadly speaking should be our individual and collective efforts to change the world for the better. Given the highly interdependency, complexities, accelerating changes and unforeseen events in today's world, an understanding and responsive leadership character is needed. For this reason, this work has attempted to justify with various reasons why quality leadership will be needed for effective management and organizational growth in the 21st century.

Suggestions

- Leaders and workers in an organization should be introduced and trained in the use of ICT so as to have enough knowledge and skills in the area, as well as master how to utilize it effectively for higher productivity.
- Seminars, workshops, distant learning or In-service programs could be organized by the leaders or people in charge to upgrade their workers knowledge especially in the use of computers that facilitates more work, instead of carrying of files.
- The 21st century leaders should be people who are informed, proactive and should be willing to embrace change by seeing the importance of exiting the ancient methods of running organizations to the modern methods. For example, in educational institution, the principals of secondary schools should be open to replace the old practice of chalk and board to the use of computers, projectors and slides in their teaching-learning process.
- Governments, communities, NGO's, international organizations and agencies should come to the aid by lending support to the plight of organizations in Nigeria by sponsoring leaders and their workers on ICT training, to equip them for the enormous tasks, and to meet the high competition facing organizations in this present jet era.
- Providing ICT resources to all workers in an organization and by ensuring effective power supply for effective service delivery.

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