Chapter 2
Making Schools Effective:
21st Century School Leaders' Agenda

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ABSTRACT

The 21st century dispensation has brought a lot of challenges in developing countries such as Zimbabwe that have resulted in schools becoming ineffective. The study was prompted by the need for schools to prepare students to meet the demands of an emerging digital world. The change management theory was used with the aim to inform the changes which are taking place in 21st century schools. The corpus of the study has been published works for the years 2011 to 2014. The Nziramasanga Commission, which informs the basis of Zimbabwean education, was also studied.

INTRODUCTION

Globally the education sector has been affected by radical changes which have been brought about by the technological era. The 21st century twist has brought a new trend in education due to availability of powerful technologies which give way to critical thinking as well as problem solving in students. There is no country which can subsist in isolation in the face of a rapidly changing world. It is only those education systems which will transform their education systems which will remain relevant in the new technological dispensation. Given this, Zimbabwe's education system demands to be reviewed as well as transformed in the provision of quality education in order to remain abreast with the times. This calls for change in the system of governance in the whole

sector. There is need to redefine the roles and expectations of leadership in order to develop in students skills which are going to keep up with the 21st century. This study investigated works which have been published on Zimbabwean education through the lens of Kotter's change management theory. The review is made using the 21st century pillar of education called creativity. The study focused on the research question: How can schools be made effective in the 21st century? The study assumes that if school leaders are empowered with the necessary and sufficient competencies schools would be made effective in the 21st century. The characteristics of 21st century education would be discussed. Change management would also be defined.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This section gives the background of the study.

Article 26 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights recognises the right to education. Just because many countries are a signatory to the United Nations, this makes education compulsory in some countries. Subsequently UNESCO draws from this right to come up with four pillars of education on which education should be hinged. These are learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. (Oloniram, 2016). All these pillars are important in the 21st century learning as they make the student understand the world better and turn him into a responsible human being. Consequently Zimbabwe crafted its own education Act from these pillars. In order to understand the reforms which took place in Zimbabwean education there is need to understand its development from the colonial period. This is because some of the problems the system is facing now were inherited from the colonial era.

Zimbabwe has invested so much on education with the literacy rate reaching 91,4% (UNESCO, 2009). Between 1992 and 1999 the literacy rates of those who were between 15 and 24 years only went up to 98%.This came about as a result of the policy of Education For All which the government introduced soon after the country gained its Independence in 1980.(UNESCO,2009)This was meant to redress the inequalities which existed in colonial education where the British colonisers education system denied the Blacks opportunities to participate in education which was meant to make them economically sound. Foreign education had a hegemonic effect on the education system and was meant to dehumanise Africans. Local knowledge was devalued and deemed inferior. The education system either prepared indigenous Africans to take control of their social, cultural and economic lives but did more than corrupt

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