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Management Theories and its Application in Organisations: The Nigerian Experience

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Abstract

Title

Management Theories and its Application in Organisations: The Nigerian Experience

Abstract / Summary

The development, transferability and practice of western management theories in Africa, nay Nigeria, have dominated literature on management in Nigeria. This study provides a descriptive examination and traces the historical development of each management school of thought, as well as its significance on management practice and limitations. Despite the fact that this study examined emerging thoughts in contemporary management practice, a significant gap was identified as dearth of literature on the practice of these management approaches in Nigerian organisations. To bridge this gap, this study analysed the major components of each management theory and presented models of Nigerian organisations built on same principles or approaches. Relying on historical and narrative analysis, the findings established evidence of the practice of western management theories in Nigerian organisations. The study concluded that management practice in Nigeria can be enhanced, if peculiar socio-cultural factors are given adequate consideration in the application of management approaches.

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The development, transferability and practice of western management theories in Africa, nay Nigeria, have dominated literature on management in Nigeria. This study provides a descriptive examination and traces the historical development of each management school of thought, as well as its significance on management practice and limitations. Despite the fact that this study examined emerging thoughts in contemporary management practice, a significant gap was identified as dearth of literature on the practice of these management approaches in Nigerian organisations. To bridge this gap, this study analysed the major components of each management theory and presented models of Nigerian organisations built on same principles or approaches. Relying on historical and narrative analysis, the findings established evidence of the practice of western management theories in Nigerian organisations. The study concluded that management practice in Nigeria can be enhanced, if peculiar socio-cultural factors are given adequate consideration in the application of management approaches.

Keywords: Management Theories, Management Practice, Nigeria, Culture, Organisations

1.   Introduction

Over the years, much literature has been churned out regarding the appropriate or best approach to management. Some writers have argued that a particular method is necessary to bring out the best in employees and achieve organisational goals while others have posited that a combination of these approaches might be more suitable in managerial quest of productivity and excellence. The introduction of these approaches to African countries, especially Nigeria, has proved problematic because of difference in culture and values of Nigerians relative to the western countries where these approaches were developed. Environmental and socio-cultural factors also contribute to this differences (Fashoyin, 2005; George, Owoyemi and Kuye, 2012; George, Kuye, Onokala, 2012).

It has been opined that managerial functions are fundamentally alike in any organisation and at every organisational stratum, whether it is planning, organising, motivating, leading, staffing or controlling. It has also been suggested that all managers and supervisors basically do the same thing, irrespective of the type of organisation or position within the organisation (Hick and Gullet, 1981). According to Koontz and O'Donnell (1980), this is referred to as universality of management and they posit that since management functions are universal, it consequently follows that such functions are transferable from organisation to organisation, and from one country to another. The universalisation and transferability of management approaches and its practice in Nigeria have generated much interest. Many scholars are of the opinion that without these foreign approaches to management, organisations in Nigeria will struggle to thrive while other writers believe that the consistent reliance on western management approaches have impeded the growth of indigenous management theories (Fashoyin, 2005; Osuntokun, 2001).

Through this article therefore, the researcher intends to briefly examine the development of each management approach, the transferability and usage of these western-developed management approaches in Nigerian organisations, the relevance and limitation of each approach in Nigerian organisations and challenges thereof.

2.   Research Methodology

This study is based on a qualitative approach and it is analysed using a narrative method that will lean more towards the interpretivist approach rather than the positivist approach. This approach

presupposes that a researcher cannot assume a value-neutral stance or remain impartial, because he/she is always implicated in the phenomena being studied. Thus, interpretivists try to comprehend phenomena, as described by participants rather than testing through scientific standards of verification (Roth and Mehta, 2002). According to Geertz (1973), what we believe to be facts cannot be accurately objective since they are really "our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (Geertz, 1973:9). Based on this, the analysis can only be justified and measured by the merit of each case and the support of evidence put forth. Rieder (1985) believes the interpretivist approach seeks to appreciate issues through observation and in-depth interviews. Unlike the positivist approach which assumes that the existence of objective reality and facts, which can be known or approximated through verifiable research methods. As the purpose of this paper is to observe and construct phenomena, the interpretivist method was deemed most appropriate.

This study being descriptive, as well as historical, relied essentially on secondary information sources gathered by the researcher via many books, articles, group discussion and casual face to face interviews. Secondary data is preferred because, as a source of data collection, it is relatively inexpensive compared to primary source of data collection (Zikmund, 1984) and it does not require contact with respondents or subjects because it is historical and data already collected by previous researchers on the subject matter (Ember and Levinson, 1991). Secondary sources methodology help to explain, to describe, validate findings and to infer from all findings having been validated to be true (Black and Champion, 1976).

3.   Conceptual and Theoretical Background

3.1   Management Theory and Practice

Management as a discipline rests on two major components; theory and practice (Lawal, 2012). According to Stoner (1978), any manager who wants to remain relevant in management practice must be up-to-date on existing management theories. Daft (1986) opined that management theory is interested in facts and sound principles, which prescribe what to do to achieve desired outcome in the organization (practice). The relationship between management theory and practice could not have been better captured by Inyang (2008). He surmised that: "Management theory provides the basis for management practice, and the practice in turn helps to reinforce the development of management theory. Management practice therefore involves the translation of existing management knowledge and theories into action that will result in the achievement of the dual goals of organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Management practitioners and professionals are in the vanguard of management practice, and their practice provides the opportunity for reviewing existing management theories and even developing new ones. Management theorists and practitioners reinforce one another and are in a continuous process of interaction. The knowledge of both is required to improve our understanding of management in society". (Inyang, 2008:124-125).

According to McGregor (1987), theory and practice are always together and the understanding of one can help predict the other. He postulated thus: "Every managerial act rests on assumptions, generalizations, and hypotheses – that is to say, on theory. Our assumptions are frequently implicit, sometimes quite unconscious, often conflicting; nevertheless, they determine our predictions that if we do a, b will occur. Theory and practice are inseparable" (McGregor 1987:6). Management theory is therefore not only related to management practice but also benefits as practice of management is further developed. Miner (1980) makes the point that the more that is known about organisations and their methods of operation, the better the chances of

dealing effectively with them. Understanding may be more advanced than prediction, but both provide the opportunity to influence or to manage the future. Theory provides a sound basis for action. However, if action is to be effective, the theory must be adequate and appropriate to the task and to improved organisational performance (Mullins, 2011).

3.2   Management Theories and its Classification

Numerous theories have been presented in literatures constituting management theory and these theories have been postulated by writers from disciplines as diverse as Sociology, Science, Philosophy, Engineering, Mathematics, Psychology and so on. The attempt to summarise management into theories, principles and concepts is to aid organisational effectiveness (Lawal, 2012). Like all useful theories, according to Lawal (2012), management theory is not an end in itself but should rather serve as a means of improving managerial efficiency. In order to help recognize main trends in the development of management theory, it is typical to classify the work of scholars and writers into various approaches, based on their observation of organisations, their structure and management (Mullins, 2011).

Attempts have been made by many scholars and writers to group or classify the various management theories into a distinct family. Categorisation of approaches may prove a straightforward task as Robbins and Coulter (2009) and Mullins (2011) identified four (4) main approaches each while it may also prove to be a much more expansive undertaking as Skipton (1983) attempted a classification of eleven (11) main schools of management theory. Whatever form of categorisation is adopted, it is possible to identify a number of other approaches, or at least sub-divisions of approaches, and cross-grouping among the various approaches. The choice of a particular categorisation is therefore largely at the discretion of the observer (Mullins, 2011).

Table 1: Classification of Management Approaches of Selected Authors

Author(s)	Classification	Observation
Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (2004)	1. Scientific Management School 2. Classical Organisation Theory School 3. The Behavioural School 4. The Management Science School (Quantitative) 5. The Systems Approach 6. The Contingency Approach 7. The Era of Dynamic Engagement	*Separated Scientific from Classical School. *Identified New School (No. 7)
Cole (2004)	1. Classical Theories 2. Bureaucracy 3. Human Relations and Social Psychological Schools 4. Systems and Contingency Approaches 5. Modern Approaches to Management	*Separated Bureaucracy from Classical School.
Lawal (2012)	1. Classical School of Management 2. Organic or Neo-Classical School (Human Relations and Behavioural Theories) 3. System and Contingency School 4. Dynamic Engagement Era	* Agreed with Stoner et al. (2004) by Identifying New School (No. 4)
Robbins and Coulter (2009)	1. Classical Approach 2. Quantitative Approach 3. Behavioural Approach 4. Contemporary Approach (Systems and Contingency)	*Recognised Quantitative as a Management Approach

Jones and George (2003)	1. Scientific Management Theory 2. Administrative Management Theory 3. Behavioural Management Theory 4. Management Science Theory (Quantitative Mgt, Operations Mgt, Total Quality Mgt) 5. Organisation Environment Theory (System and Contingency Approach)	*Recognised Management Science as a Management Approach
Mullins (2011)	1. The Classical Approach 2. The Human Relations and Neo- Human Relations Approach 3. The Systems Approach 4. The Contingency Approach	*Grouped Scientific and Bureaucracy theories as Classical Approach

Source: Adaptation from various Authors' books; *Researcher's assessment 2013

Irrespective of the method or technique adopted, categorisation enables managers to choose from the different approaches, ideas or solutions which may best suit the peculiar requirements of a situation. For the purpose of this academic undertaking, the researcher will mainly rely on the categorisation effort of Mullins (2011), that is, c*lassical approach, human relations and neo-human relations approach, systems approach and contingency approach*; including era of dynamic engagement (Stoner et al., 2004; Lawal, 2012).

3.3   The Classical Approach
Before the classical theories were developed, there were no clearly defined responsibilities, roles and tasks for workers and managers, which was largely due to the industrial revolution of late nineteenth century and the accelerated emergence of factories. No effective work standards existed and workers were placed on jobs with little concern of matching tasks with abilities or skills (Mullins, 2011; Cole, 2004; Robbins and Coulter, 2009). According to Stoner et al. (2004), skilled labour was in short supply and the only way to expand productivity was to raise the efficiency of workers. This led to the formulation of a body of principles known as scientific management.

3.3.1   Scientific Management
The primary concern of this school of thought was to increase productivity through greater efficiency. The earliest advocate of this school is Frederick W. Taylor while other notable contributors are Henry L. Gantt, Frank and Lillian Gilbreth and Harrington Emerson (Kuye, Gbadamosi and Adeoye, 2010; Lawal, 2012).

3.3.1.1 Frederick Winslow Taylor (Taylorism)
Taylor was a machinist and later became a foreman and manager in the 1870s through 1890s. McFarland (1970) posited that Taylor was particularly disturbed by a lack of measured standards for defining the workers' tasks and systematic 'soldering' of workers on the job. He was determined to discover and enlighten managers, as well as workers on what constituted a "fair day's work" and a "fair day's pay" (Weihrich and Koontz, 1993). Using time study as his base, Taylor broke each job down into its components and designed the quickest and best methods of performing each component. He was able to establish how much workers should do with the equipment and materials at hand. Workers who were more productive were encouraged to receive or earn higher 'scientifically correct' rates (Stoner et al., 2004). Overall, according to Robbins and Coulter (2009), Taylor was able to define the 'one best way' for doing each job and

he achieved consistent productivity improvements of 200 percent or more. His ideas and principles of scientific management spread within and outside USA and he became known as the father of scientific management.

3.3.2 Administrative Management

As scientific management was trying to increase efficiency of workers, administrative management was focusing on how to create an organisational structure with high efficiency and guidelines for managing complex organisations. The main contributor to this school of thought is Henri Fayol and others are Lyndall Urwick and E.L.F Brech (Cole, 2004; Lawal, 2012).

3.3.2.1 Henri Fayol

Henri Fayol made a major contribution to management by stating what he considered to be the key activities of any industrial undertaking. According to Kuye et al. (2010), Fayol categorised the activities into six and they are: technical activities (production), commercial activities (buying and selling, exchanging), financial activities (search for and optimum use of capital), security activities (safeguarding property and persons), accounting activities (providing financial information) and managerial activities (planning, organising, leading and controlling). In Griffin's (1993) view, Fayol was the first to identify the specific management functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling, and also provided a break-down of principles of management, which he thought could be applied to all business organisations, including industries. The fourteen principles are Division of Labour, Authority, Discipline, Unity of Command, Unity of Direction, Subordination of individual interests to common goal, Remuneration, Centralisation, Scalar Chain, Order, Equity, Stability of Tenure of Personnel, Initiative and Espirit de Corps. If Taylor has been referred to as the father of scientific management, then Fayol was the father of administrative management because he was the first to systematise it.

3.3.3 Bureaucratic School

The major proponent of this school of thought is Max Weber. He developed the concept of bureaucracy as a formal system of organization and administration designed to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Weber was interested in how management could be more consistent and he believed that bureaucratic structures can help eliminate the variability in managers having different skills, experience and goals (Lawal, 2012). Weber believed that there was a need for strictly defined hierarchies in organisations which will be clearly governed by defined regulations and lines of authority, especially for goal-oriented organisations with many employees (Stoner et al., 2004). According to Mullins (2011), Weber noted that the definition of tasks and responsibilities within the structure of management gave rise to a stable administration and standardisation of work procedures in spite of changes to the actual office-holders. He knew the development of bureaucracies will be a means of introducing order and judiciousness in organisations. The main features of a bureaucracy as advanced by Weber (1947) are:
  ➢ Continuous organisation of functions bound by rules
  ➢ Specified spheres of competence, that is, appointment based on competence
  ➢ Hierarchical arrangement of offices (jobs)
  ➢ Appointment to offices are made on grounds of technical competence
  ➢ Separation of officials from the ownership of the organisation
  ➢ Official positions exist in their own right and job holders have no rights to a particular position and rules

➢ Decisions and actions are formulated and recorded in writing

Weber emphasized rationality, predictability, impersonality, technical competence, and authoritarianism. Stewart (1999) summarises Weber's features into four main categories as specialisation, hierarchy of authority, system of rules and impersonality. One feature which distinguishes bureaucracy from other types of organisations is the characteristic of impersonality. A bureaucracy should not only be impersonal but be seen to be impersonal (Stewart, 1999).

3.4   The Human Relations and Neo-Human Relations Approach
This school of thought emerged as a result of the many criticisms of the classical approach, especially because it focused on tasks, productivity and organisational structure rather than people. During the early part of the 20th century, especially as a result of the great depression in the 1920s and 1930s, more attention shifted to employee behaviour and social factors at work. This led to the human relations and neo-human relations (behavioural) approach (Mullins, 2011; Kuye et al., 2010).

3.4.1   The Human Relations Approach
This approach developed as a result of focus on the human side of management and it sought to understand how social and psychological dynamics interacted with the work environment in influencing productivity and performance, thereby creating effective human relations (Stoner et al., 2004).

3.4.1.1 The Hawthorne Experiment
The human relations approach, which is sometimes referred to as neo-classical approach, is built around the research work of Professor Elton Mayo and his colleagues at the Western Electric Company's plant in U.S.A, between 1924 and 1932 and this work has been known as the Hawthorne experiment (Robbins and Coulter, 2009; Mullins, 2011). According to Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939), both of whom were part of the Hawthorne set of experiments, the research centered on the effects of physical working conditions on worker productivity and efficiency. The researchers concluded that additional concern given to the workers, and evident interest in them shown by management, were the core factors for the higher productivity. This, according to Mullins (2011) has become known as the 'Hawthorne Effect'.

3.4.2   The Neo-Human Relations (Behavioural) Approach
The result of the Hawthorne experiment led to more interest from researchers in the social sciences with background in sociology, psychology and anthropology, and they relied on more sophisticated research methods to explain what motivate employees at work. These researchers known as 'behavioural scientists' or 'behaviourists' built the platform for new management theory ideas and a major focus was the adjustment of the employee's complex character within the work organisation (Stoner et al., 2004; Mullins, 2011; Lawal, 2012). Contributors to this approach, according to Mullins (2011) are Abraham Maslow, Douglas McGregor, Frederick Herzberg, Rensis Likert, David McClelland and Chris Argyris.

3.5   The Systems Approach
The classical approach was concerned about the organisation, structure and productivity while the human relations approach was concerned about people, satisfaction and relationships.

However, the systems approach attempts to strike a balance between these two earlier approaches and it persuades managers to see the organisation both as a whole and as part of a larger environment (Mullins, 2011). The systems approach sees the organisation as an interdependent, unified system composed of interrelated sub-systems or parts, rather than separate entities (Stoner et al., 2004). According to Mullins (2011), the systems theory was first used in the physical and natural sciences by a biologist named Ludwig Von Bertalanffy but the subject has been developed by other contributors, especially Chester Barnard and Mary Parker Follet (Lawal, 2012). A system is defined as an established arrangement of parts that are interrelated and interdependent for the purpose of accomplishing particular or predetermined objectives (Jones and George, 2003). A typical organisation as a system will usually have such sub-systems (departments) as production, marketing, finance, sales, accounts and operations or customer service.

3.6   The Contingency Approach

Previous management theories and approaches assumed that their principles or processes were universally applicable in managing organisations. It was later discovered that the opposite is exactly the case. A small organisation, for instance, will require a different approach compared to a large and complex organisation (Robbins and Coulter, 2009). The contingency approach, which is sometimes called the situational approach, arose as a result of this and those who argue in favor of this approach affirm that there is no best management approach and 'it depends' on the circumstances or situation. Managers should take so many factors of the present situation into account (contingencies), before making a decision and they should act on those parts that are crucial to the situation (Cole, 2004; Mullins 2011). According to Robbins and Coulter (2009), the popular contingency variables to consider when faced with different situations are environmental uncertainty, organisation's size, routineness of task technology and individual differences.

3.7   Era of Dynamic Engagement / Emergent Approaches

Current or Contemporary management approaches have taken over the field of management and managers need to take these approaches into consideration as they strive to excel in the competitive business environment. According to Stoner et al. (2004), human relationships and time are compelling management to alter traditional approaches in the light of steady rapid changes. Due to the flurry of new and emergent management theories, Stoner et al. (2004) refer to it as the era of dynamic engagement and observed six different themes as quality management, inventing and re-inventing organisations, new organisational environments, culture and multiculturalism, ethics and social responsibility, and globalisation and management. Other new approaches identified by Cole (2004) and Lawal (2012) are finding competitive advantage, improving strategic thinking, consumerism, corporate governance, e-business management, entrepreneurship and knowledge management.

4.   Management Experience in Nigeria - Historical Perspective

4.1   Pre-Colonial Management Practice in Nigeria

Western scholarly conceptualisation have often implied that indigenous African, nay Nigerian management theories and philosophies are at worst, non-existent and at best simply 'underdeveloped'. Thus, there have been an influx of 'developed' management theories into Nigeria, which have been detrimental to the development of indigenous Nigerian management

theories (Gbadamosi, 2003). Many Nigerian scholars believe this postulation is ridiculous and have attempted to set the record straight by giving details of pre-colonial management practices in Nigeria (Yesufu, 1982; Ubeku, 1983; Ifechukwu, 1994, 2010; Eze, 1995; Osuntokun, 2001; Gbadamosi, 2003; Fashoyin, 2005; Inyang, 2008; George et al., 2012). Prior to the advent of the colonialists, there was a paternalistic employment relations system in place, which was principally based on traditions, culture and agricultural economy of the people. This shows that management practice in Nigeria was strong and thriving (Ubeku, 1983; George et al., 2012). It is therefore absolutely incorrect to say there was no management practice in Nigeria in the pre-colonial era, as the erosion of African and Nigerian management thought system was due to the colonial adventure (Osuntokun, 2001).

4.2   Management according to Values and Culture

According to Ifechukwu (2010), the management practice in Nigeria depicted decision-making by consensus and managerial style showed a genuine concern for people and production. This was possible because philosophy and practice was based on Nigerian core values, which are respect for elders and tradition, consensus, co-prosperity or social mutual concern, extended family, paternalism, competition, human relations orientation and hero-worship (Ifechukwu, 2010). These core Nigerian values, including religion as identified by Oghojafor, George and Owoyemi (2012), are observable among all the more than 250 Nigerian ethnic groups, especially the major tribal groups of Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo. Effective management and administration could not have been possible in Egba Kingdom, Sokoto Caliphate, Benin Kingdom or Oyo Empire, for example, if there was no application of these core values (Ifechukwu, 1994).

4.3   Transfer of Management Practice: Example of the British Voluntarist Employment Relations Practice

It cannot be emphasized enough that management in Africa, and indeed Nigeria, is strongly linked to and rooted in cultural beliefs and traditions. Needless to say colonialism in Nigeria disrupted the people's cultural beliefs and traditions, as well as its management philosophies and practices (Eze, 1995; Fashoyin, 2005). Every individual is a product of a particular culture, system and beliefs and such individual will have patterns of thought, feelings and behaviour, which have been acquired or learnt by being a member of a society. This acquisition or learning is done at early childhood because of the inclination to observe, learn and act at that age (Hofstede, 2001). While attempting to explain the meaning of culture, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) suggested that culture is comparable to the way computers are programmed and described it as the 'software of the mind' or according to Hofstede (2001), the collective programming of the mind. Hofstede (2001) and Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) concluded that these peculiar patterns of thoughts, feelings and actions, which are well 'programmed' in an individual's mind, will have to be unlearned before learning a new and totally different thing.

Such was the fate that befell Nigerians when the Colonialists arrived. The imperialists 'forced' Nigerians to 'unlearn' their established patterns and natural way of life since childhood, in order to learn and assimilate their own new patterns and processes, through techniques such as the British Voluntarist Employment Relations Practice. This forced assimilation over many decades, led to a transfer of alien management practices and the gradual decline of indigenous management thoughts and practices (George et al., 2012).

5.   Discussion

5.1   Management - The Nigerian Example

The spread of various imported theories and approaches to management in Nigeria have been immense and a cursory look at most Nigerian organisations, will reveal adherence to the tenets of one foreign approach or another. However, it is quite possible and often times the case, to see two or more foreign management approaches being combined to achieve organisational goals in Nigeria.

5.2   Scientific Management Approach

Many Insurance companies in Nigeria rely on the ideology of Scientific Management and Taylorism to get the best out of their workers, through the design of incentive systems which are based on output. Most Insurance workers earn an extra reward, via commissions and bonuses, if targets are met. Such targets add value and volume to the turnover of the organisation, as well as productivity. The marketing departments of most banks also rely on this approach.

5.2.1   Relevance and Criticisms / Limitations of Scientific Management Theory

As can be observed from most Insurance companies in Nigeria and as confirmed by Cole (2004), the rational approach to work by scientific management enables tasks and processes to be measured, it allows workers to be paid by achievements and tasks accomplished, it makes sure each worker earns equitably to work done and it ensures massive increase in productivity. The average Insurance worker or bank marketer in Nigeria is required to meet a target and this helps their productivity. Scientific management writers wrote at a time of industrial reformation and the emergence of large, complex factories with new forms of technology. The main concern was with the efficiency of both workers and management. The scientific management theory has laid the foundation in management theory upon which related thoughts are built (Mullins, 2011). This school of thought is also responsible for the development of a system of wage and incentives via the differential wage payment and bonus system.

Inspite of increased productivity, this school of thought is criticised for paying little or no attention to workers' welfare. Emphasis was placed on efficiency and production and little focus was on working conditions. This led to the opposition of this approach by workers and labour unions (Stoner et al., 2004). This is very correct and little wonder most bank and insurance workers in Nigeria are under immense pressure to meet monthly or quarterly targets. It is particularly worrisome for many female employees of these organisations, as it is the case that prospective clients sometimes demand for sex for one financial favour or another.

5.3   Administrative Management Approach

This approach, based on Fayol's principles, is largely used by the Nigerian Police Force, especially if there is no internal or external aggression or combat. Some of Fayol's principles which aptly applies to the Nigerian Police are authority, discipline, unity of command, centralisation, order and espirit de corps.

5.3.1   Relevance and Criticisms / Limitations of Administrative Management

In the submission of Stoner et al. (2004), it was generally believed that managers are born, not made but we have since learnt through this school of thought that management is a skill like any other and can be taught if the underlying principles are understood. Administrative management

has managed to develop basic management processes, procedures and principles which managers can adhere to in order to achieve sound organisational structures and success (Kuye et al., 2010). This is very true about the Police Force in Nigeria as the basic procedural requirement when you enter a Police Station, irrespective of the complaint, is to write a statement.

According to Kuye et al. (2010), this approach is only suitable for simple and stable organisations and not for today's dynamic and complex organisations. Some of the universal procedures and principles suggested in Administrative Management are also not relevant in some settings. The main reason the Nigerian Police Force has not positively evolved as an entity in the last few decades is because this approach suits it as a simple and stable organisation.

5.4   Bureaucracy Approach
Nowhere in Nigeria is this approach more prominent than Governmental Ministries, Departments and Agencies, referred to as Civil or Public service. All the principles postulated by Max Weber are all present in the public service, including "maintenance of formal written documents and extensive filing systems" as observed by Adebakin, Gbadamosi and Akpor-Robaro (2010:441).

5.4.1   Relevance and Criticisms / Limitations of Bureaucratic School
Bureaucracy aids specialisation of structures and ensures the predictability and stability of an organisation. Many of the large and complex modern organisations have had more need for Weber's bureaucratic principles (Lawal, 2012). There is no large organisation in Nigeria, that does not practice one form of bureaucracy or the other, especially Governmental parastatals. The reason a Government Ministry can run smoothly despite the frequent change of Ministers and Commissioners, is due to its bureaucratic structure. Green (1997) argues that there is still a place for bureaucracy in parts of most large organisations. The use and implementation of tried and tested procedures assist to ensure necessary ideals and ethics, and that necessary functions are implemented on a consistent and fair basis.

Perhaps the most criticised of all the classical approach to management is the bureaucratic school. Argyris (1964) argues that bureaucracies contain the mental growth of the individual and cause feelings of failure, frustration and conflict. Employee initiative may be stifled and there may be a lack of flexibility or adaptation to changing circumstances, when a situation is not covered by a complete set of rules or procedures (Mullins, 2011). What else will make a high ranking official of a governmental security agency refuse to give basic information on national television, if not for bureaucracy? Insisting such basic information as organisational website cannot be provided, without clarification of 'my oga at the top' (boss), strikes as a deep-rooted bureaucratic problem peculiar to public service. According to Crozier (1964), bureaucracy implies an organisation that cannot correct its behaviour by learning from its errors because of its rigidity, inflexibility and static format. In his own criticism of Weber's thoughts, Thompson (1961) said it created 'bureaupathology' in organisations. He (1961) believes that bureaucratic structures permit counter-productive personal insecurities to flourish and that the same managers try to protect their authority and position by detached, detrimental behaviour.

5.5   Human Relations / Neo-Human Relations Approach
A classic example of human and neo-human relations approach is found in most religious organisations in Nigeria, especially the Pentecostal churches. These theories emphasize informal

relationships, communication, uniqueness of individuals and motivation, rather than monetary incentives.

5.5.1 Relevance and Criticisms / Limitations of the Human Relations and Neo-Human Relations Approach

A crucial relevance of the human and neo-human relations approach is that it recognises the individuality and uniqueness of each worker and it seeks to understand what motivates each worker to achieve more. Individuals may behave differently under different situations. Unlike classical approach, which looked at relationship between tasks, jobs and workers from a mechanistic perspective, the neo-human relations approach sees workers as important organisational resources and emphasizes individual attitude and group processes (Crainer, 1998; Kuye et al., 2010). Another key impact of this theory is that it has led to a change in managers' attitude towards workers. Rather than coercion, force or intimidation from supervisors and managers, most organisations now rely on the language of thanks, appreciation and encouragement, as well as improved welfare, recognition of rest and participation in decision making. In Nigeria, church adherents are encouraged to serve God by becoming 'workers', via joining the choir or ushering unit, for example. The motivation is gradual promotion to become a Fellowship leader, Deacon or Pastor. Most of these 'workers' are not motivated by financial benefits but by opportunities to build informal relationships and become leaders.

A major criticism of the human and neo-human relations approach is that it is not accurate or exact about its ability to foretell human behaviour (Kuye et al., 2010). Ethnographers believe people behave differently under certain circumstances and so, behaviour is hard to predict. A choir leader who engages in act of fornication with a choir member, is hardly a behaviour to be predicted by proponents of this theory. Another setback is that it is considered too narrow because it concentrates on workers' behaviour alone without regard for other environmental considerations. The researchers' studies and applicability of this approach is limited to small social groups while the study and practice of management is more complex, dynamic and involves larger communities. Silverman (1970) and Lawal (2012) considered this approach to management to have a unitary frame of reference, narrow organisational perspective, simplistic and insufficient scientific method and over-simplified theories.

5.6 Systems Approach

A good example of an establishment that relies on this approach is University of Lagos (Unilag). This tertiary institution takes inputs from the environment (prospective students, grants, federal allocation), inputs undergo conversion (learning, research, mentoring) and released as output into the environment (graduates, publications).

5.6.1 Relevance and Criticisms / Limitations of the Systems Approach

Unlike the classical and human relations approach, the efficiency or otherwise of an organisation depends on its system rather than individual's personality and managers now know that the success or failure of an organisation is dependent on the type of system developed. This theory also provides an outline to plan and foresee consequences within the environment as they develop (Stoner et al., 2004). University of Lagos is a typical system because it has such interdependent and interrelated sub-systems like teaching hospital, distance learning institute, postgraduate studies and radio station. All these various efficient independent sub-systems in University of Lagos help to make it an efficient organisation as a whole. Previously, managers

disregarded the environment but due to this approach, managers now give consideration to the importance of environmental factors on the internal activities of an organisation and the level of interdependence among sub-systems. Such factors are government regulations and competition (Kuye et al., 2010).

A key criticism of this approach is that the collapse of a sub-system can lead to the failure of the system as a whole and we have seen vivid examples of how Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) embark on strikes, which paralyses the entire University system. Another limitation of this theory is that it is too abstract for managers to use because, although it helps to identify the many parts of an organisation, it does not specify how to achieve organisational goals with it.

5.7   Contingency Approach

Most Nigerian organisations that deal in fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs) rely on the contingency approach, which depends on the circumstances. Majority of these organisations take so many factors of the present situation into account (contingencies), before making a decision. Until Cowbell milk entered the Nigerian market with sachet packaging, milks were in tins. Most milk companies had to respond to such competitive contingencies, if they were to survive. Amoah-Mensah (2013) agrees and succinctly concludes that 'the dynamics and complexity of the external environment are pushing firms not to rely on their internal resources for competitive advantage' (Amoah-Mensah, 2013:108). This means firms can no longer rely on internal resources but must consider the contingencies of the external environment, if they are to remain competitive and relevant. Apart from sponsoring reality T.V programmes, brands such as Gulder, MTN, Star, Globacom and Maltina, have all embraced the social media, which is an emerging technological contingency in Nigeria.

5.7.1   Relevance and Criticisms / Limitations of the Contingency Approach

The primary relevance the contingency approach adds to management is that it affirms that there are no universal or simplistic principles for managers to adhere to and that management is entirely situational (Robbins and Coulter, 2009). A major benefit of this theory is that it makes managers much more dynamic and flexible in their approach to problem-solving and managing organisations, since alternatives for managerial acts are contingent upon internal and external factors. Until Globacom entered the communications industry in Nigeria, MTN made its subscribers believe per-second billing was impossible. Competitive contingencies convinced MTN otherwise and we now know better.

One of the major criticisms of the contingency approach is that it is reactive rather than proactive in nature. It only recommends what managers and supervisors should do in a given situation instead of what they must do before hand. MTN's response to per-second billing is only reactive in nature due to competition. Another limitation of this approach is that it does not give a detailed or step-by-step action to take when faced with different scenarios. Since there are always a large number of variables or factors to consider in any given situation, this approach becomes complex and laborious.

From the examples above, it is imperative to state that many Nigerian organisations have embraced these theories or approaches to management, inadvertently or deliberately. Suffice to

say before contact with the colonialists, many parts of what is now Nigeria had different indigenous management practices, which recognised the importance of culture, values and peculiar environmental factors. The diffusion or near-elimination of local management practices through the influx of foreign management approaches has had its consequences. Many workers still cannot practice these approaches perfectly because a lot of the principles directly clash with their natural culture and tradition.

6.   Limitations of this study and Areas for Further Research
This article has tried to identify the various management practices being practiced in Nigerian organisations and it is difficult to get an objective assessment without empirical data and analysis. A study of this nature should go beyond books, articles, informal group discussions and casual face to face interviews. Instead, the use of surveys and questionnaires administered on selected organisations, professional managers and workers, would have yielded quite an interesting finding. It will be appropriate also to include selected organisations in future analysis and discover if one or more Nigerian organisations use all the identified management approaches. The researcher has tried to look at the issues objectively, however the use of interpretivist approach leaves room for bias, because the observation and construction of phenomena is largely based on the opinion of the researcher. Thus, irrespective of the fact that the researcher has tried to be objective, a little bias due to patriotism for one's country (Nigeria) might be observed.

7.   Conclusion
It can be argued that since management actually involves the managing of human resources, financial resources, time resources and material resources; the various approaches to management are actually looking at the same thing but from different perspectives. This can be said to be the semantic complexity associated with management. Whether it is managing people to build a pyramid in ancient Egypt or managing a complex, dynamic organisation in the 21st century, provided it involves planning, organising, motivating, leading and coordinating, then it is Management. A methodical understanding of the various approaches to management as elucidated above, as well as each theory's limitations and relevance, and how it influences the achievement of organisational goals is imperative for managers. However, due to the fact that every human group in Nigeria has evolved different indigenous management practices that is suitable to its environment based on culture, such foreign theories must be placed in Nigerian perspective, that is, consideration for intrinsic socio-cultural factors, if they are to be complied with religiously by workers and accurately effective in achieving set organisational objectives.
Irrespective of the adoption of these western approaches by majority of Nigerian organisations, effort must be made like the Japanese, to borrow western technology to accelerate development whilst retaining traditional and cultural values in management (Ifechukwu, 2010). Indigenous management approaches, which are rooted in Nigerian culture and a blend of foreign management approaches should be developed to bring out the best in Nigerian workers.

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