

# Analysis of Theories of Management Relevant to the Marketing Function in Contemporary Times

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## Abstract

This paper reviews some Management theories namely: the Scientific Management theory, the Classical organizational theory, the Behavioral theory and recent developments in Management theory. The paper analyzed how the theories relate to the Marketing Function as well as review the extent of success achieved by these theories. The paper concludes that though the Management theories help in interpreting the rapidly changing nature of today's markets, not all have been successful in influencing, interpreting or explaining the marketing functions.

**Keywords:** marketing functions, theories of management, contemporary times

## 1. Introduction

Historical trends of trade lead one to conclude that marketing has always existed. (Bartels & Roberts, 1976). Marketing is an aspect of Management and Management is a very important human activity. From the time human beings began forming social organizations to accomplish aims and objectives they could not accomplish acting alone as individuals. Managing has been essential to ensure the coordination of these individual efforts. Hence, managers are saddled with the responsibility of ensuring effective and efficient utilization of resources to bring about productivity. Management theories have universal application in solving managerial problems (Boone, 1981). From this view, it can be deduced that this is the reason management theories could be applied by marketing practitioners in their daily operations.

Kotler & Armstrong, (2006) defined marketing as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging value with others. Marketing includes all the activities necessary to move a product from the producer to the consumer. This involves management functions like planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, controlling and evaluation of results. Many companies now feel that services provided to the customer after purchase are also an important part of marketing. Marketing starts with market research, a learning process in which marketers get to know everything they can about the needs and wants of consumers and it ends when somebody buys something. However recent developments has made marketing to extend even to after sales thus some companies now provide after sales services.

Management theories are important in the handling of marketing functions because these theories are usually presented in such simple but profound forms that may be regarded as a set of pigeon holes or filing cabinets in which facts are accumulated. Nothing is more lost than a loose fact (Homans, 1958). This paper attempts to fill a gap by analyzing how management theories are relevant to marketing functions and current happenings in the Nigerian Markets.

## Marketing and Management

Marketing is referred to as the task of creating, promoting and delivering goods and services to consumers and businesses (Kotler, 2003). Marketing is viewed as a set of activities that leads to or helps facilitate an exchange (Rachman & Romano, 1980) while Baker (1985) refers to marketing as selling goods and services that don't come back to the people who do.

While Management is the art, or science, of achieving goals through people. Since managers also supervise, management can be interpreted to mean literally "looking over", this means making sure people do what they are supposed to do. Thus managers are expected to ensure greater productivity or continuous improvement.

Management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims (Koontz & Wehrich 1990). This basic definition means several things. First, as managers, people carry out the managerial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. Second, management applies to any kind of organization. Third, management applies to managers at all organizational levels. Fourth, the aim of all managers is the same which is to create surplus. Finally, managing is concerned with productivity this implies effectiveness and efficiency.

From the above definitions, and combining the definitions of both marketing and management, we can define Marketing Management as the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which exchange of goods and services is carried out effectively and efficiently. Marketing management is the art or science of choosing

target markets and getting, keeping and growing customers through creating, delivering and communicating superior customer value (Kotler & Keller, 2009). This is consequently a business discipline which is focused on the practical application of marketing techniques and the management of a firm's marketing resources and activities.

### **The Functions of Marketing**

Marketing functions were the first concepts to be isolated in the traditional schools that emerged in the marketing discipline. They addressed the question: what is the work of marketing? The functional approach was described by Converse (1945) as the most significant theoretical development of early marketing thought; indeed he compared it with the discovery of atomic theory because it sought to identify and catalogue the fundamental elements of the field. Few concepts in the marketing literature have so closely followed such a clearly delineated life cycle. The functional approach to understanding marketing began its introduction during the 1910s, underwent rapid growth in the 1920s, entered early maturity in the 1940s, peaked in the 1950s, began declining in the 1960s, and was discarded by the 1970s (roughly paralleling Hunt and Goolsby's 1988 review).

Weld (1917) recognized that functions are 'universal', often shifting backward and forward in the channel of distribution. They are not always performed by middlemen, but often to a greater extent by producers themselves and the final consumer performs part of the marketing functions' (1917). Very similar to Shaw's list, Weld's listing includes seven functions which are risk bearing, transportation, financing, selling, assembling, rearrangement (sorting, grading, breaking bulk), and storage. Although arranged and combined somewhat differently, the only new function added is storage.

In 1948, the American Marketing Association Committee on Definitions expressed their dissatisfaction as follows: It is probably unfortunate that this term [marketing function] was ever developed. Under it, students have sought to squeeze a heterogeneous and non-consistent group of activities. Such functions as assembling, storage, and transporting, are broad general economic functions, while selling and buying are essentially individual in character. All these discrete groups we attempt to crowd into one class and label marketing functions (McGarry, 1950). Attempting to revive the functional approach, McGarry (1950) reconsidered the concept based on the purpose of marketing activity, which he regarded as creating exchanges. He believed he had arrived at six functions constituting the *sine qua non* of marketing:

Contractual – searching out of buyers and sellers.

Merchandising – fitting goods to market requirements.

Pricing – the selection of a price.

Propaganda – the conditioning of the buyers or of the sellers to a favorable attitude.

Physical Distribution – the transporting and storing of the goods;

Termination – the consummation of the marketing process.

Hunt and Goolsby observed that, in attempting to breathe new life into functions, McGarry was sowing the 'seeds of its demise'. The functions or work of marketing, however, later reemerged as channel 'flows' in the institutional school, and as managerial tasks in the marketing management school.

Marketing function is a role that helps a company to identify and source potentially successful products for the market place and then promote them by differentiating them from similar products. Typical marketing function types within a larger business might include performing market research, producing a marketing plan and product development as well as strategically overseeing advertising, promotion, distribution for sale, customer service and public relations. In order for the marketing bridge to work correctly, providing consumers with opportunities to purchase the products and services they need, the marketing process must accomplish these nine important functions.

Buying - people have the opportunity to buy products that they want.

Selling - producers function within a free market to sell products to consumers.

Financing - banks and other financial institutions provide money for the production and marketing of products. Also the marketer himself can provide finance when he sells on credit to the consumer.

Storage - products must be stored and protected until they are needed. This function is especially important for perishable products such as fruits and vegetables.

Transportation -products must be physically relocated to the points where consumers can buy them. This is a very important function. Transportation includes rail, road including trucks, ship, airplane, and telecommunications for non-tangible products such as market information.

Processing - processing involves turning a raw product, like wheat, into something the consumer can use -- for example, bread.

Risk-Taking - insurance companies provide coverage to protect producers and marketers from loss due to fire, theft, or natural disasters.

Market Information - information from around the world about market conditions, weather, price movements, and political changes, can affect the marketing process. Market information is provided through all forms of

telecommunication, such as television, the internet, and phone.

Grading and Standardizing - Many products are graded in order to conform to previously determined standards of quality. For example, when you purchase Dangote Products in Nigeria you know you have bought quality.

### **The Study of Management Theory**

Theories are perspectives with which people make sense of their world experiences (Stoner et. al., 1995). Theory is a systematic grouping of interdependent concepts (mental images of anything formed by generalization from particulars) and principles (are generalizations or hypotheses that are tested for accuracy and appear to be true to reflect or explain reality) that give a framework to, or tie together, a significant area of knowledge. Scattered data are not information unless the observer has knowledge of the theory that will explain relationships.

Managers who apply theory to managing must usually blend principles with realities. Once managers know about theory, they will have the capacity to forestall future problems that may occur in the enterprise. Contemporary theories of management tend to account for and help interpret the rapidly changing nature of today's organizational environments.

This paper will review several important management theories which are broadly classified as follows: The Scientific Management School comprising the works of Frederick W. Taylor and Lillian Gilbreth's motion study, among others; the Classical Organizational Theory School comprising the works of Henri Fayol on Administration, and Max Weber's idealized Bureaucracy, among others; Human Relations School comprising the work of Elton Mayo and his associates; The Behavioral School comprising of the works of Douglas Mc Gregor and Recent Developments in Management Theory comprising works such as Systems Approach, Situational or Contingency theory, Chaos theory, and Team Building approach.

#### ***Scientific Management School***

The first of these schools was scientific management, which dominated management philosophy between the 1890s and the early 1920s. Scientific management concepts were heavily influenced by the ideas of American efficiency engineer Frederick W. Taylor (1856-1915). Taylor was decrying the "awkward, inefficient, or ill-directed movements of men" as national loss. Taylor consistently sought to overthrow management "by rule of thumb" and replace it with actual timed observations leading to "the one best" practice. He believed that organizational efficiency could be achieved by using statistics, logic, and detailed analysis to break jobs and responsibilities down into specific tasks.

He also advocated the systematic training of workers in "the one best practice" rather than allowing them personal discretion in their tasks. He further believed that the workload would be evenly shared between the workers and management with management performing the science and instruction and the workers performing the labor, each group doing "the work for which it was best suited". Taylor's strongest positive legacy was the concept of breaking a complex task down into a number of subtasks, and optimizing the performance of the subtasks; hence, his stop-watch measured time trials.

The chief contribution of scientific management was that it successfully applied modern techniques of science and engineering to the management of resources and organizational systems. It has to be stated that scientific management met with significant success among which included: the science of cutting metal, coal shovel design that he produced at Bethlehem Steel Works (reducing the number of workers needed to shovel from 500 to 140), worker incentive schemes, a piece rate system for shop management, and organizational influences in the development of the fields of industrial engineering, personnel, and quality control.

Alongside Taylor's postulates is Gilbreth's motion study. The ultimate result of this study led to the centrality of efficiency in organizations. Gilbreth was particularly interested in how there could be reduction of the unnecessary motions resulting from bricklaying at a construction site; he succeeded in reducing the motions from 18 to 4 and then proposed that each worker should be involved in doing his or her own work, prepare for the next higher level, and training their successors. Scientific management principles were displaced during the 1920s by the classical management school of thought.

#### ***Classical Organizational Theory School***

Classical management theory is largely attributable to Henri Fayol, who is also known as the father of management. Classical management emphasized the identification of universal principles of management which, if adhered to, would lead to organizational success. Universal principles encompassed two broad areas. The first was identifying business functions and the second was structuring organizations and managing workers.

In essence, classical theory holds that management is a process consisting of several related functions, such as planning and organizing. Thus, by identifying specific business functions including marketing, finance, production, and sub functions within those and other major categories, companies can efficiently divide an organization into departments that work as a process. Furthermore, by carefully structuring chains of authority and responsibility, an entity can successfully facilitate the performance of individuals within departments to achieve company goals.

Importantly, Fayol is credited with identifying five basic management functions: planning, organizing,

commanding, coordinating, and controlling. In addition, his 14 principles of management established a framework for management that continues to influence modern management theory. Those principles included: unity of command, unity of direction, centralization, or centralized control and decision making; and stability of tenure of personnel.

In this category of management theory also, are the works of Max Weber's bureaucratic theory. Weber postulated that western civilization was shifting from "wertrational" (or value oriented) thinking, affective action (action derived from emotions), and traditional action (action derived from past precedent) to "zweckational" (or technocratic) thinking. He believed that civilization was changing to seek technically optimal results at the expense of emotional or humanistic content. Weber then developed a set of principles for an "ideal" bureaucracy as follows: fixed and official jurisdictional areas, a firmly ordered hierarchy of super and subordination, management based on written records, thorough and expert training, official activity taking priority over other activities and that management of a given organization follows stable, knowable rules. The bureaucracy was envisioned as a large machine for attaining its goals in the most efficient manner possible.

However, Weber was cautious of bureaucracy when he observed that the more fully realized, the more bureaucracy "depersonalizes" itself – i.e., the more completely it succeeds in achieving the exclusion of love, hatred, and every purely personal, especially irrational and incalculable, feeling from execution of official tasks. Hence, Weber predicted a completely impersonal organization with little human level interaction between its members. The classical school of management remained dominant from the 1920s until the 1940s. It was gradually supplanted, however, by theories that focused on the importance of individual needs and group interaction in organizations.

### ***Behavioural School***

The behavioural school also emphasized the importance of the human psyche in management. It differed, however, from the human relations approach in that it stressed behavior over interaction. It sought to rationalize and predict behavior in the workplace through scientific analysis of social interaction, motivation, the use of power and influence, leadership qualities, and other factors. Behaviorists believed that a chief goal of managers should be to increase the effectiveness of workers through motivational techniques, such as empowerment and participation in decisions, and to redesign jobs to take advantage of individuals' strengths and weaknesses.

Demonstrating the gradual transition from mechanistic management theory to a more humanistic approach was the renowned Theory X and Theory Y, which American management theorist Douglas McGregor (1906-1964) posited in the 1950s. Theory X depicts the old, repressive, pessimistic view of workers. It assumes that people are lazy and have to be coerced to produce through tangible rewards. It also presumes that workers prefer to be directed, want to avoid responsibility, and treasure financial security above all else. In contrast, Theory Y postulates that: humans can learn to accept and seek responsibility; most people possess a high degree of imagination and problem-solving ability; employees will self-govern, or direct themselves toward goals to which they are committed; and, notably, satisfaction of ego and self-actualization are among the most important needs that organizations should address.

Theory X and Theory Y relate to Maslow's hierarchy of needs in how human behavior and motivation is the main priority in the workplace in order to maximize output. In relations to Theory Y the organization is trying to create the most symbiotic relationship between the managers and workers which relates to Maslow's Hierarchy of needs of Self Actualization and Esteem. For Self Actualization the manager needs to promote the optimum workplace through morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, and acceptance of facts.

### **Recent Developments in Management Theory**

In addition to the schools or approaches that dominated much of the 20th century are five other approaches to management theory and application: systems, situational or contingency, process, chaos and team building. They emerged during the mid-1900s, gained widespread appeal during the latter part of the century, and continued to influence management thought and practice through the 1990s. These approaches differ from most of the schools of management thought in that they are not posited as a wrong or right ideology, but rather are complementary—they can exist and be applied simultaneously depending on the particular internal and external environment of individual organizations.

#### ***The Systems theory***

The systems management approach emphasizes the importance of educating managers to understand the overall system so that they will realize how actions in their department affect other units. An organization can be likened to a mobile phone: if you touch one part, the entire apparatus swings into motion. For example, the hiring of a single individual into a marketing department is bound to have some degree of impact on other divisions of the organization over time. Similarly, incorporating behaviorist theory, if managers are given more autonomy and responsibility they are likely to perform at a higher level. As a result, subordinates in their departments are likely to perform better, which may cause other departments to be more effective, and so on.

Importantly, the systems approach also recognizes that all large organizations are comprised of multiple



subsystems, each of which receives inputs from other subsystems and turns them into outputs for use by other subsystems. At least five types of subsystems, according to systems theory, should be incorporated into management processes in larger organizations. Production subsystems are the components that transform inputs into outputs. In a manufacturing company this subsystem would be represented by activities related to production. In most business organizations all other subsystems are built around the production subsystem. Supportive subsystems perform acquisition and distribution functions within an organization. Acquisition activities include securing resources, such as employees and raw materials, from the external environment. Human resources and purchasing divisions would typically be included in this group. Distribution (or disposal) activities encompass efforts to transfer the product or service outside of the organization. Supportive subsystems of this type include sales and marketing divisions, public relations departments, and lobbying efforts.

Maintenance subsystems maintain the social involvement of employees in an organization. Activities in this group include providing employee benefits and compensation that motivate workers, creating favorable work conditions, empowering employees, and other forms of satisfying human needs. Similarly, adaptive subsystems serve to gather information about problems and opportunities in the environment and then respond with innovations that allow the organization to adapt. A firm's research laboratory or a product development department would both be part of an adaptive subsystem. Finally, managerial subsystems direct the activities of other subsystems in the organization. These managerial functions set goals and policies, allocate resources, settle disputes, and generally work to facilitate the efficiency of the organization.

#### ***The Contingency theory***

Like the systems approach, the contingency approach to management views the organization as a set of interdependent units operating in an open system. It differs from all other management approaches, though, in that it is based on the idea that every organization and situation is unique. Its situational perspective implies that there is no single best way to manage. Therefore, specific techniques and managerial concepts must be applied in different ways and in different combinations to achieve organizational or departmental effectiveness. In fact, the contingency theory has been described as a sort of amalgam of all other ideologies. Its chief contribution to modern management theory is its identification of critical internal and external variables that affect management processes.

The situational or contingency theory asserts that when managers make a decision, they must take into account all aspects of the current situation and act on those aspects that are key to the situation at hand. Basically, it is on the approach that "it depends". For example, if one is leading troops in Iraq, an autocratic style is probably best. If one is leading a hospital or University, a more participative and facilitative leadership style is probably best. Also in service marketing dealing with a customer complaint on the spot is an example of applying situational theory.

#### ***The Process approach***

Perhaps the most widely accepted organizational management theory is the process approach. It also serves as a descriptive overview of the various tasks and responsibilities management faces, and it draws on many of the theories contained in the five schools of management as well as the systems approach and contingency approach described above. For example, the process approach derives from Fayol's ideas, particularly his five management functions. And, like the systems approach and the later schools of management thought, the process approach emphasizes the point that management is an ongoing series of interrelated activities rather than a one-time act.

The process approach also recognizes other management theories that have gained acceptance in the late 1900s. Of import is the generally accepted management pyramid model, which is comprised of three hierarchies based on experience and education. At the top of the pyramid is top management, or the executive level that handles long-term strategy. At the center is middle management, which translates top management objectives into more specific goals for individual work units. Finally, line managers and supervisors fill the bottom of the pyramid. They handle the day-to-day management of employees and operations.

#### ***The Chaos theory***

The Chaos theory is advocated by Tom Peters (1942). As chaotic and random as global events seem today, they are equally chaotic in organizations. Yet for many decades, managers have acted on the basis that organizational events can always be controlled. Thus, a new theory, known as chaos theory, has emerged to recognize that events are rarely controlled. Chaos theorists suggest that systems naturally go to more complexity, and as they do so, they become more volatile and must, therefore, expend more energy to maintain that complexity. As they expend more energy, they seek more structure to maintain stability. This trend continues until the system splits, combines with another complex system or falls apart entirely. It will need an effective manager for the latter worst scenario not to happen.

#### ***The Team Building Approach***

The last management theory but not the least and for now is the Team Building approach or theory. This theory emphasizes quality circles, best practices, and continuous improvement. It is a theory that mainly hinges on reliance on teamwork. It also emphasizes flattening of management pyramid, and reducing the levels of

hierarchy. Finally, it is all about consensus management – i.e., involving more people at all levels in decision-making. Team building theory is applicable to marketing products. Marketing products requires team work because it doesn't just start and end with selling of products. Buying, selling, storage, transportation, processing and market information all requires team work.

The management theories that have been discussed, important as they are, have to be translated in practice by managers. No doubt a marketing manager who translates these theories into realities is bound to have increase in productivity and loyalty from others.

### **Marketing Theories Relevant to Marketing Functions**

Taylor and Gilbreth's Scientific Management Theory has an impact on marketing functions in contemporary times. Looking at the functions of marketing as it relates to Taylor's strongest positive legacy of breaking a complex task into a number of subtasks hence optimizing the performance of subtasks. In the Nigerian markets functions like buying, selling, transportation, storage, risk taking and obtaining market information are all tasks divided into sub tasks. Marketing managers also apply Taylor's four underlying principles of management for example in the Nigerian banking industry where a target of a particular amount is set for marketers to achieve. An employee who achieves that target and is rewarded will be motivated to do more. Other employees seeing an employee rewarded will be encouraged to achieve targets. People who engage in personal selling are adequately trained and brought together to achieve results. They have a way with words that a customer feels convinced or motivated to buy products not prepared for. Finally, when work is divided between workers and management, employees feel there is commitment on the part of management. Gilbreth's Motion study encourages productivity and cuts costs which are very important to the Nigerian markets.

Max Weber's theory does not play any significant role in marketing relationships and functions. Functions of buying, selling, transportation, storage among others all involves human level interaction. The role of marketing managers is to harmonize between objectives of the business organizations and the market in which they operate. Marketing practitioners need to be personal up to a level and concerned with much human level interaction between members and customers. This is very evident especially in service marketing where at the end of the day, a customer walks away with a feeling rather than anything tangible. But, when it comes to structures which he also talked about in his theory, marketing involves structures and procedures. For example when an individual goes to a restaurant and is served promptly by a courteous waiter, with food which has excellent taste makes that feeling of satisfaction to go a long way from the beginning of the process till the end, it involves interaction.

Henri Fayol's administration theory is relevant to marketing functions because it encompasses all what a marketing manager does or should do. The fourteen principles of administration that go along with management's five primary roles are in line with marketing functions. Authority should be given along with responsibility, there should be unity in direction, remuneration of staff, centralization, team work, stability and initiative, above all a marketer should be disciplined.

The systems theory has a significant impact on marketing function because marketing is that combination of factors which is taken into consideration prior to the undertaking of certain selling or promotional activities. This includes inputs from the external environment, the customers, the transformation process, the communication system the external factors and outputs and so on.

Team building theory is applicable to marketing functions. Marketing products requires team work because it doesn't just start and end with selling of products. Buying, selling, storage, transportation, processing and market information all require team work

### **Conclusion**

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