

Evolution of Management Thought: A Continuous or Discontinuous Process

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Abstract

This paper aims at reviewing the evolution of management theories, philosophies and thoughts in western world and Africa, especially Nigeria; and ascertains if it is experiencing a stunting growth. A qualitative research design was adopted, using thematic and theoretical method. This study lend credence to the influence of prevailing business environment on management theories, as theories evolved over time in order to suit the internal needs of organizations and their external environment. These theories are not mutually exclusive, as a good “mix” can always see an organization going; and there is no best way to manage, as stressed by the contingency theory which provides a synthesis to the plethora of management thought in the literature. Also in meeting the objective of the paper, effort was made to examine the evolution of management thought in Nigeria. Colonialism, culture, technological development and socio-economic thought were said to have influenced management thought and practice in Nigeria. The paper thus found that evolution of management theory is not stunting but continuing. This was exemplified by the recent government bail-out of ailing organizations during the recession that started in America in 2007. Also in Nigeria, the paper also drew attention to ongoing practice of government following-up chief executives and politicians that embezzled public funds under the auspices of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC).

Keywords: Management, Management Theory, Evolution

1. Introduction

People have evolved management to suit them and their environment, which is ever changing, by shaping and reshaping the organizations. As long as people engage in assiduous activities, they will be willing to manage i.e. organize, direct and control activities. Before management became a household name; people have written about how to make organizations efficient and effective. Some eminent amongst these are Niccole Machiavelli and Sun Tzu, classified under pre-classical school of management thought in this study. Charles Babbage, James Watt, Robinson Botton, Robert Owen etc. are inclusive in the category. These early thinkers made their contributions bit by bit and randomly; and so not articulated enough to be categorized as theory. But they are remembered today because of their significant contributions to management theory and discipline. According to Smith (2002), the Modern Management Theories have been traced back to the 1900 (Scientific Management); 1910 (Bureaucracy); 1920 (Administrative Management); 1930 (Human Relations); 1940 (Quantitative Management); 1950 (Systems Theory); 1970 (Contingency Theory); 1980 (Total Quality Management); 1990 (Learning Organization), and 2000 (Reengineering). Smith (2003) concludes that the emergence of the information revolution and networking has shifted the paradigm focus of managers and academics to Knowledge Management, Team Work and Networking. In early 2000 there was emphasis on government bailing out businesses in distress, as seen in gigantic organizations in the US and UK. Also in Nigeria emphasis has also been laid on recovery of public funds from ailing chief executives and politicians through the auspices of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). Studies on evolution of management (Jones and George, 2009; Kwok, 2015; Chung, 2008) have erroneously concentrated on western theories and commentaries on management and management dynamics. This study will thus incorporate some significant trends and dimensions of management thoughts and philosophies in Nigeria, the most populous black nation, which are of critical importance to African Management.

1.1 Objective of the Study

This paper aims at exploring the evolution of management thought with emphasis on the west and Nigeria; and ascertains if it is experiencing a stunting growth.

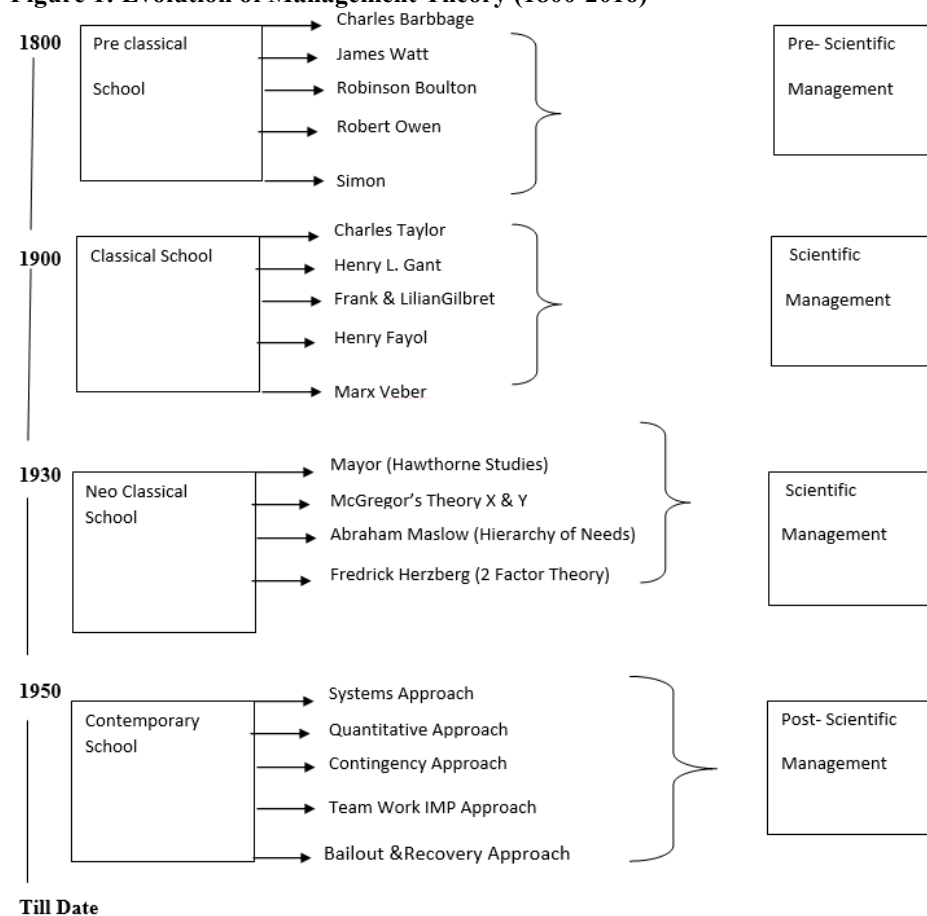
1.2 Methodology

The paper took a thematic and theoretical approach. This is fundamentally because it relies on the writings of published articles and other secondary data. It also upholds a qualitative research design following the tradition of George et al. (2012).

1.3 Evolution of Management Thought

The progressive and advancement nature of management theory indeed capture the dynamism and thus responsiveness of man to the internal and environmental needs of organizations. Idemobi (2010) suggests that management and organizations are products of their historical and social times and places. Advance nations can trace the evolution of management thought since 5000 years BC, but the earliest record of management practice in Nigeria can be traced back to 2000AD. The paper thus, will first elucidate the evolutionary trends in Europe, America and Asia before examining that of Africa, especially Nigeria. This paper is organized thematically to include pre-classical school, classical school, neo-classical school and contemporary school, as seen in figure 1 below. And thereafter, the Nigerian managerial philosophies will follow. This trend ensures that the objective of the paper is met.

Figure 1: Evolution of Management Theory (1800-2016)



Source: Adapted from Dubrin (2006)

2. The Classical School

The classical school of management thought was propounded by Taylor, Gantt, Charles Bedaux, and Frank and Lillian Gilbreth. This school of thought comprises of scientific management and administrative management. The scientific management involves the use of scientific approach in achieving maximum output, minimum input, and elimination of waste and reduction of inefficiency. In contrast, Fayol and Weber propounded administrative management that deals with the use of management principles in structuring and management of an organization. These theorists are hereby discussed below one after the other.

2.1 Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1915)

Taylor was a Mechanical Engineer who studied how workers and machines perform tasks, while working at Midvale Steel Company, Philadelphia. He measured and analyzed each measurable aspect of the work with the

use of time and motion studies and established a system that defines standard times and sequence for completion of a task. From the outcome, he developed a true science of management to determine the best method for performing each task. Taylor's approach for a successful organization include: (1) clear delineation of authority; (2) responsibility; (3) separation of planning from observations; (4) incentive schemes for workers; (5) management by exception; and (6) task specialization.

Taylor revolutionized management thought and established the foundation for formation of several management systems in years to come. Taylor's efficiency systems have been applied to many tasks in non-industrial organization, varying from fast food service, training of surgeons to call center operations aside from manufacturing. He also strongly recommended differential pay system i.e. paying productive workers more than others, by applying a "scientifically correct" rate that would benefit both company and workers. This system was opposed by workers and unions because they were afraid of lay-off which could emerge from non-availability of work as a result of overtime (i.e. working harder and faster). Also workers would be exposed to work under pressure to meet daily target because there was much focus on productivity resulting to exploitation of both workers and clients/customers.

2.2 Henry L. Gantt (1861-1919)

Gantt, an industrial engineer worked widely with Taylor's Scientific Management and was remembered for his humanizing influence on management theories. He laid emphasis on the conditions that pose favorable psychological effects on workers. He reconsidered Taylor's incentive system establishing the quota systems and bonuses for workers/supervisors who exceeded their quotas. He also created a visual plan and progress report system (GANTT CHART) that identifies various stages of work which must be carried out to complete a project, sets deadlines for each stage, and documents accomplishments. Gantt chart is used today for scheduling tasks based on time instead of quantity, volume or weight. In fact, Gantt Chart was translated into eight languages and used all over the world. It also formed the basis for development of critical Path Method (CPM) by Du Pont; and Program Evaluation and Review Technique (Pert) by American Navy. Also Lotus 1-2-3 is logical application of the Gantt Chart framework.

2.3 Frank and Lillian Gilbreth (1868-1924, 1878-1972)

Gilbreth's family contributed to scientific management theories as a husband and wife team. In contrast to Taylor's time study, they came up with motion and laws of human motion from which principles of motion economy was developed. In their research, motion and fatigue were intertwined- every motion that was removed decreases fatigue. With use of motion cameras, they found the next economical motions for each task in order to upgrade performance and reduce fatigue. They argue that motion study would go a long way to reducing worker morale because of its obvious physical benefits and because it demonstrated management's concern for the worker. The Gilbreths also championed the idea of workers standard day work, scheduled rest breaks and normal lunch periods. They also contributed significantly on child labor laws and laws on workers protection.

2.4 Charles Bedaux (1887- 1944)

Bedaux also contributed significantly to the theories of scientific management. He introduced rating assessment in timing work which resulted in great improvements in employee productivity. He agreed with Gilbreth's perception of creating a rest allowance to allow recovery from fatigue. His contribution was crude and poorly received at that time but later relevant to subsequent development of work study. He also expanded the range of techniques employed in work study which include value analyses.

2.5 Jules Henry Fayol (1841-1925)

Fayol was an Engineer and Manager of a group of French mines. He was acclaimed the founder of Classical Management School; not because he was the first to investigate management behavior, but because he was the first to systematize it. He posited that sound management practice follows patterns which can be identified and analyzed. He then formulated a blueprint for a cohesive norm of managers. He concluded that management is an activity common to all human undertaking (schools, government, home, business etc.) which does five basic administrative functions (planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling). It was generally believed that "managers are born not made". But Fayol opposed the notion and described management as a skill like any other one which could be taught or learnt in schools as long as its fundamental principles are understood. Fayol's 14 principles of management can be summarized to include: (1) division of labor; (2) authority; (3) discipline; (4) unity of command; (5) unity of direction (6) subordination of individual interest to the common good; (7) remuneration; (8) centralization; (9) hierarchy; (10) order; (11) equity; (12) stability of staff; ((13) initiative; (14) esprit de corps (Fayol, 1930). Fayols approach opposes the old notion that "managers are born, not made", proposing instead that management is a skill which can be acquired if its principles are understood.

2.6 Max Weber (1864- 1920)

Weber was a German Sociologist who based his approach to management on organizational structure by dividing organizations into hierarchies with clear distinction of authority and control. Smith and Cronje (2002) thus conclude that managers were given ‘legal authority based on their position in the organizational structure, to enforce rules and policy. Weber imagined that abstract rules and regulations, impersonality of managers and hierarchy of organizational structure would lead to more efficient management. He believed that managers’ authority in an organization should not be based on tradition, charisma and rational but on the position held by managers in the hierarchy, considering organization as a whole system. Weber’s bureaucracy helps large organization to function in a more stable, organized and systematic manner; but individuality and creativity are often sacrificed by doing away with personality or charismatic leadership. With the result, he concluded that leaders are meant to think “inside the box”, and so not adaptive to changing environment and challenges. Bureaucracy is therefore suitable for government organizations e.g. Government Printing press, Civil Service, not for current business organizations. In the highly complex and competitive global market of the 21st century, big organizations like Xerox and General Electric have shun bureaucratic management throwing away the organizational structure and going for ever-changing work teams, project teams and alliances aimed at unleashing employee creativity.

3. The Neo-Classical school

The need for group dynamics, complex human motivation and styles of leadership was stressed during the radical social and cultural changes that occurred in 1920s and 1930s. The human relations school of management thought emerged to address these issues. The prominent figures in this field include: Elton Mayo (1880- 1949); Mary Parker Follett (1868- 1933); Chester Barnard (1886- 1961); Abraham Maslow (1908- 1970); Douglas McGregor (1906- 1964); Rensis Likert (1903- 1981); Frederick Herzberg (1923- 2000); David McClelland (1917- 1998) and Chris Argyris (1923- present) etc. We shall thus discuss these theorists one after the other.

3.1 Elton Mayo (1880- 1949)

Mayo was a Harvard Professor who proposed that managers should become more “people-oriented” (Smith and Cronje, 2002). He was popularized by his ground breaking study of Western Electric Company’s Hawthorne plant in Chicago which he conducted in partnership with Fritz Roethlisberger and William Dickson between 1924 and 1933. Based on the Hawthorne experiment, Mayo declares that “logical factors were far less important than emotional factors in determining productive efficiency (George, 1968). Also that participation in social groups and “group pressure”, as opposed to organizational structures or demands from management, had the strongest impact on workers’ productivity (Smith and Cronje, 2002). The role of managers in organizations was revolutionized through Mayo’s Hawthorne findings. He proposed that managers should focus on the work group rather than individuals, and workers should be considered in their personal context in order to understand each employee’s unique needs and satisfaction. In practice, managers are encouraged to consult workers about change, take note of their views, and show concern for their physical and mental health (Wren, 2005).

3.2 Mary Parker Follet (1868-1933)

Follett made her own contribution to management thought by building on existing framework of the classical school. She introduced novel ideas in human relations and organizational structure which further led to development and emergence of behavioral and management science schools of thought. She affirms that management is dynamic and not static because she discovered the benefits of getting workers involved in problem solving. She therefore believed in group dynamics and was convinced that no one could become a whole person except as a member of a group because people grew through their relationships with others in organizations. She professed that management is the art of getting things done through people. Kwok (2014) summarizes Follett’s contributions to include the ideas that: (1) people closest to the action make the best decision; (2) subordinates should be involved in decision-making process; (3) coordination is vital to effective management (4) communication between managers and employees improve decisions; and (5) managers should find ways to resolve interdepartmental conflict. In fact, Follett’s “holistic” model of control took into account not just individuals and groups, but the effects of such environmental factors e.g. politics, economics and biology (Kwok, 2014); on management.

3.3 Chester I Barnard (1886-1961)

Barnard studied sociology and philosophy extensively that he used the knowledge to formulate theories about organizations. He became president of New Jersey Bell in 1927 and authored “Functions of Executives”, an influential twentieth century management book which presents a theory of organization and the functions of executives in organizations. He asserts that manager’s main roles are (1) to communicate with employees; (2) to motivate them to work hard to help achieve the organization’s goals; and (3) successful management depends on

maintaining good relationship with people outside the organization with whom managers deal regularly. Also Barnard also identified the degree of importance and universality of “informal organization” and suggested that organizations must adopt the use of groups effectively, even if they sometimes work at contradicting goals that counter management’s objectives. He also described organization as a cooperative enterprise of individuals, working together as a team and laid the foundation for development of a great deal of current management thought. For example businesses like General Electric, Dupont, Motorola, AT& T etc. are increasingly using teams as the building blocks of their organization.

3.4 Abraham Maslow (1908- 1970)

The most widely known theory of needs that established the foundation for the later development of behavioral management theories was Maslow’s theory of motivation. He displayed the needs of individuals in form of a pyramid with several levels of needs. He hypothesized that there are five sets of human goals which exists in a hierarchy, as follows: (i) physiological needs; (ii) safety needs; (iii) social needs; (iv) self-esteem needs; (v) self-actualization needs. As each of these needs become substantially satisfied, the next stage becomes dominant (Robinson, 2009). Jega (2003) demonstrates that a need must not be fully satisfied before the next stage becomes potent. According to Baridam (2002), Maslow based his theory of motivation on the following assumptions:

1. Individuals have certain needs that influence behavior; satisfied needs do not act as motivators.
2. Needs are arranged in an order of importance or hierarchy from the basic physiological to the complex self-actualization needs.
3. An individual’s need at any level on the hierarchy emerges only when the lower needs are reasonably satisfied.

3.5 Douglas McGregor (1906- 1964)

McGregor propounded theory X and Y, which described two different types of workers in his book “The human Side of Enterprise”, published in 1960. Theory X holds that the average human being dislikes work and would always avoid it because they are inherently lazy, therefore workers must be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened before they will work hard enough, and that they prefer to be directed, dislikes responsibility and desires security above everything. This is termed “stick and carrot” philosophy of management. Theory Y on the other hand postulates that the expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest, and that control and threat of punishment are not the only means to make people work; because commitment to objective is a function of reward associated with their achievement. Also that averagely, people learn under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility. Therefore human only need to be encouraged to work and not to be threatened to work.

3.6 Rensis Likert (1903- 1981)

Likert conducted series of researches on human behavior within organizations, especially in industrial setting. After examining different types of organizations and leadership styles, he affirmed that an organization must optimize human assets usage in order to achieve maximum profitability, high productivity and good labor relations. He also concluded that “highly effective work groups linked together in an overlapping pattern by the competitive groups” will lead to highest use of human capacity. He also outlined different management styles as follows: (1) exploitative- authoritative system; (2) benevolent authoritative system; (3) consultative system; (4) participative group system. The participative group system is considered the optimum whereby superiors lead and have complete confidence in the subordinates. In his findings, he discovered that motivation can only be achieve through economic rewards, employees are responsible for organizational goals; and effective communication and cooperative work prevail.

3.7 Frederick Herzberg (1923- 2000)

Herzberg became popular by the two-factor hygiene motivation theory. The hygiene factors do not really motivate workers but without them there will be dissatisfaction with work. The motivators involve what workers do on the job which develops intrinsic motivation with the workplace (e.g. achievement, training, promotion and interest in the job). The hygiene factors according to him are related to work and organization environment; the organization, its policies and its administration; supervision people receive while on the job, working conditions, interpersonal relations, salary, and status and job security.

3.8 David McClelland (1917- 1998)

McClelland was an American Psychologist noted for his acquired-needs theory, sometimes referred to as the three need theory or as the learned needs theory. He classified human needs into three as achievement, affiliation and power and he stated that individuals’ specific needs are acquired over time and are shaped by individuals’ life experiences. These needs according to him influence individuals’ motivation factors and effectiveness in job performances. He also described the individuals with high need for achievement (nArch) as ones who seek to excel

in their endeavors and thus try to avoid risky situations. Such people prefer to work alone or with other high achievers, and need feedback in order to monitor the progress of their achievement. He also described individuals with high need for affiliation (nAff) as people who like working in harmony with others and thus aim at acceptance by others in the workplace. They prefer to work in a place with high personal interaction and perform well in customer service and client interaction situations. The last category is those with high need for power- personal and institutional power. The former individuals need power to direct people while the later (institutional power or social power) want to organize the efforts of others to further the goals of the organization. Such managers are said to be more effective. McClelland formulated the Thematic Apperception Test which has been adopted for suggesting the types of needs and therefore jobs which a person might be well suited.

3.9 Chris Argyris (1923- 2013)

Argyris was an American business theorist, a Professor of Harvard Business School and a co-founder of organizational development. He became popularly known through his seminal work on learning organization and the impact on growth, effectiveness and adaptability of business. He focused on single and double-loop learning the maturity/immaturity continuum, organization communication and effects of each of these on employee motivation, accountability and empowerment. He theorized that, in contrast to double- loop learning, which questions underlying assumptions, single- loop learning, which solves problems superficially and symptomatically, fails to address the real issues that make companies effective. Argyris argued that communicating openly within an organization which is considered as good norm can hinder learning and retard progress if it's based on protest, denial of real challenges, inability to confront tough issues and failure to examine one's own attitudes and contributions to problems. Under maturity/immaturity continuum, he proposed that successful employee-empowerment requires management to provide opportunities for personal growth and development in seven areas in which children must mature as they approach adulthood. These are identified as: (1) passivity to activity; (2) dependence to independence; (3) few behaviors to many behavior; (4) Shallow interests to deep interests; (5) short-term perspective to long-term perspective; and (7) non self-awareness to self-awareness/ self control.

4. The Contemporary School

In the 80s, there was an increase in growth and competitive level in the global economy, as a result of convergence of economies, which shifted focus from traditional management theories as organization became non-restive as they tried to proffer solution to newer management issues. This led to creation of several management thought which are represented in this section as management approaches. These include: systems approach, quantitative approach, qualitative approach, contingency approach, information technology approach etc. We shall discuss these in turn.

4.1 Systems Approach

Senge (1990) championed system approach to management as published in his book "The Fifth Discipline". He challenged scientific theory of management by introducing the concept of system theory in organizational design. The scientific theory was based on the assumption that organizations were a closed system, with activities broken down into discrete activities. System approach suggests that organization should be considered as an open system and not a closed one. In this regard, he viewed an organization as a unit or an entity of interrelated sub-unit whereby every sub-unit contribute its own quota in achieving organizational goal. Systems approach thus provides a framework for planning and anticipation of both immediate and far-reaching consequences while allowing for understanding of unanticipated consequences as they develop. It therefore enables managers to easily maintain balance between needs of various parts of the enterprise and needs of the whole firm.

4.2 Quantitative Approach

The British came up with quantitative approach for solving complex problems in warfare, and it was later adopted by America and was widely known through the development of high speed computers and computer networks. This approach emphasized the use of several quantitative techniques in managerial decision making to ensure optimum use of organizational resources. Thus the application of mathematics and the scientific method to military operations was called operations research (CIPM, 2013). This approach was criticized for its emphasis on only the aspects of the organization that can be captured by members, missing the importance of people and relationships.

4.3 Contingency Approach

This approach is also known as situational approach; and was developed by managers, consultants and researchers who tried to apply the concepts of the major schools to real- life situations. In their attempt to apply the concepts to real life situations, some concepts which are effective in one situation failed in others and so they concluded that the results differ because situations differ. In other words, a technique that works in one case will not necessarily work in all. Hence, contingency Approach to management emphasized that no single way to manage

people or work is best in every situation. Managers are thus encouraged to study individual and situational differences before taking decision on course of action to follow. These differences one can note is as a result of differing environment and organizational needs and structures that affect the organization coupled with differing resources, capabilities pertaining to individual organization.

4.4 Information Technology Approach

This approach emanates from the impact of Information Technology (IT) and the internet on conduct of organizations with regards to knowledge Management (KM), Supply Chain Management (SCM), and Strategic Management (SM); and also the management evolution and revolution in response to dynamic environmental changes that are taking place.

4.5 Bail-out and Recovery Approaches

A new dimension in management thought, which was occasioned by the recession that started in America in 2007 which spill-over the whole world. Failing organizations due to their high relevance to the society, the government came to their rescue by use of stimulus packages to bail them out from their distress. A clear example of this is Arthur Anderson, the accounting, auditing and consulting global giant. Also the corporate scandals associated with Enron, Worldcom and Adelphia in the USA; and Parmalat and Mannesmann in Europe, has also raised the idea of recovery of public funds from airing corporate management. These have added a new idea to global management thought.

5. Management Thought in Nigeria

Management in Africa in general appears to follow the evolutionary developments in western management practices (Kamoche, 1992); as Nigerian organizations replicate the western management ideologies and practices, and also for criteria of success. Olusoji and Oogunkoya (2014) contend that management thinking and practice in Nigeria are shaped by colonization, culture, socio-economic thoughts and technology. Culture significantly determines organizational behavior and managerial practice (Hofstede, 1980; Peng, 2001; George et al., 2012; Triandis, 1995). According to Lytle et al. (1995), culture is the group's strategy for survival and it constitutes the successful attempt to adapt to the external environment. As seen in Inyang (2008), the Nigerian management practice is modeled using cooperative and communal attributes. Hofstede (2001) demonstrates the influence of culture on theoretical development and suggests that two dimensions of culture are particularly important: (1) religion and (2) traditional wisdom. These two cultural dimensions made people to understand the critical role of traditionalism in many aspect of life in Nigeria. For instance, the extended family system and respect for the elderly ones determines relationship and clarify the critical role of traditionalism in many aspect of life in Nigeria. Management philosophy and practice in Nigeria are conceived in different time periods: pre-colonial era, colonial Era, post-Colonial era and Modern Management Era.

5.1 Pre- Colonial Era

During the pre- Colonial Era, Nigerians were majorly into agriculture and they practiced management through settled agriculture. At this stage the management style practiced is deeply entrenched in their beliefs and traditions (Fashoyin, 2005). Pre- colonial era was predominated by communalism management philosophy which involves the process of solving management problems collectively by being ones brother's keeper most especially practiced in trades and agricultural activities. Inyang (2008) concludes that Nigeria is a multi-cultural nation embedded with diverse business and management principles before colonialism and had indigenous managerial principles of communality, father-figure, hard work, clan, loyalty, team- work and integrity. These attributes were disrupted by commercial slave trade of the 18th century which interrupted the intellectual capacity for Nigeria to develop indigenous management theory (Olusoji and Oogunkoya, 2014). The arrival of the European in the late 15th century, the increase in the level of slave trade from 16th century through 19th century, and formal colonization by Britain at the end of 19th century changed this management system radically. The next section examines the indirect rule management practice of the colonial period.

5.2 The Colonial Era

The colonial era followed immediately after the pre-colonial era. The colonies were governed via indirect rules. During this era, a system whereby traditional rulers rule their lands and collect taxes which are later remitted to the British government was adopted. Any traditional ruler that fails to comply with this system will be threatened to relinquish their positions. This system saved Britain the huge Economic and Political cost of running the affairs of the colonies. The indirect rule proved very successful in the Northern part of Nigeria as a result of the peculiarity of the Fulani Aristocracy who had governed Sokoto Caliphate for long and was able to run traditional Islamic law alongside the British civil law. The south was not accommodating and in as much as taxpaying was prevalent in the west; there were pockets of resistance under British mandate.

5.3 Post- Colonial Era

The post-colonial era started when Nigeria gained independent from the colonial masters in 1960. This led to the emergence of antagonism amongst different ethnic groups. As a result military dictatorship took over the affairs of the country. The ethnic groups in developing their heritage gave the country a rich culture and ability to develop managerial ideas and practice towards nation building. This resulted in various managerial philosophies: Patrimonial Management Philosophy, Communal Management Philosophy, Patronage Philosophy, Balanced Management Philosophy, Autocratic Political Management Philosophy, Indigenous Ecological Philosophy and Acculturation Management Philosophy (Olusoji and Ogunkoya, 2014). The Nigerian society functions in a highly patriarchal fashion with men exerting broad control over the lives of women, who are typically less educated and have limited access to wealth and social services (Dia, 1996). Fashoyin (2005) infers that communality is the basic management philosophy that governs existence and social relations in Nigeria. Thereafter, the high class citizens began to patronize their relatives and friends, giving them capital to start up business and paying off their bills - children's school fees, marriage costs and other charity works. The balanced management philosophy can be seen clearly in the recruitment system that is based on federal character and not really on favoritism. Under this system, a well-qualified applicant to Nigerian Civil Service from southern Nigeria could be rejected for an unqualified candidate from Northern Nigeria due to the need to ensure equal representation of all regions. Between 1966 and 1999, Nigeria experienced autocratic and dictatorial management styles due to frequent coups and long periods of military rule. Also ecological philosophy at this time involves environmental protection which involves use of different planting techniques to prevent or reduce erosion and increase fertility of the soil. Also acculturation philosophy prevailed in different parts of Nigeria. Inter-tribal marriages and relationships emerged during this era. The philosophy was grounded amongst the Southern Nigerians as they began to embrace learning of craft-work through apprenticeship scheme. By this system, the young apprentice stays with the master for some time to learn trade and later after mastery of the trade starts up his or her own small business.

6. Conclusion

This paper examined the evolutionary trend of management thought which lend credence to influence of prevailing business environment on management theories as the theories evolved over time in order to suit the internal needs of organizations and their external environment. It is pertinent to understand that these theories are not mutually exclusive, as a good "mix" can always see an organization going; and there is no best way to manage as stressed by the contingency theory which provides a synthesis to the plethora of management thought in the literature. Also in meeting the objective of the paper, effort was made to examine the evolution of management thought in Nigeria. Colonialism, culture, technological development and socio-economic thought were said to have influenced management thought and practice in Nigeria. It was also established that management is being practiced in Nigeria during the pre-colonial era and that communality, consensus and unanimity (Inyang, 2004) were the prevailing features. The paper thus found that evolution of management theory is not stunting but continuing. This was exemplified by the recent government bail-out of ailing organizations during the recession that started in America in 2007. Also in Nigeria, the paper also drew attention to recent practice of government following-up chief executives and politicians that embezzled public funds under the auspices of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC).

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