

**MANAGEMENT THEORY JUNGLE AND FUNCTIONALITY OF
MANAGEMENT THOUGHTS: A THEORETICAL REVIEW**

JASMINE OKPONANABOFA TAMUNOSIKI-AMADI (Ph.D)

**Department of Business Administration,
Niger Delta University,
Bayelsa State.
+2348035237880**

&

BASUO BIO KUROAKEGHA

**Department of Business Administration,
Niger Delta University,
Bayelsa State.**

Abstract

This study aims to contribute to the discussion that the concept of management theory jungle developed by Koontz (1961). Management theory juggle posited that there are different opinions about management theory which are still immature. The study employed a theoretical review in justifying the presence of management theory jungle in today's system. The theoretical review of the issues discussion and agreed that all the six schools of thought as classified by Koontz (1961) has made the use of management theories to be confusing and conflicting. Thus, it is safe to conclude that management theory to adopt in management practice has remained a fiction. As managers are always presented with a plethora of theories on each problem; the one to adopt becomes a problem in itself, there is need to incorporate culture, environmental issues and political as well as the legal environment to the development of management theories. This implies that theories should be situational and environmental friendly.

Keywords: Management, theory, management theory jungle, organisational productivity,

Introduction

Managing is a field of study that is as old as civilization, and this is evident in the history of man itself (George, Owoyemi & Okanlawon, 2012). It is crucial to ensure the coordination of individual efforts right from the time people engaged socially. Well-coordinated efforts are pivotal for achieving the aims and objectives that cannot be realised individually. Thus, management is an act of achieving results by coordinating individual efforts. All human efforts requiring assemblage of man and machine to ensure productivity and service quality calls for use of management. Management has evolved and grown from virtually an insignificant theme in the previous centuries, to one of the most important field of study in this contemporary world and economy. It has become an important concept in not only business circles but also in social, economic and political spheres.

Management practice is not something novel. It has been practised in the ancient and earlier modern world. In the pre-colonial era, dating back 3000 BC, there were no large industrial firms. However, societies were organized, led and managed in all spheres of lives socially, educationally, politically, militarily and economically (Blun & Jones, 1997). Management has also developed into a dominant and innovative influence on which today's society depends for substantial support and national growth (Cole, 2004). Management has distinctly developed into numerous disciplines including marketing, organizational behaviour, operations research, human resources and strategic management (Olusoji & Ogunkoya, 2013). To survive in the various areas, theories has been developed to guides management decisions making that will encourage organisational productivity and quality service.

Most Management theories are based on the writings of 20th century Western scholars whose disciplinary orientations were heavily grounded in economics and classical sociology (Mangaliso, 2001). Their writings depict people as being individualistic, utility maximizing, and transaction-oriented. Theories of management based on these assumptions frequently lead to mechanistic portrayals of human behaviour that largely ignore cultural influences and social differences (George, Owoyemi & Okanlawon, 2012). The reality is that people are not just economic beings; they are also social and communal beings, and are often influenced more by emotions than presumed logic (George, Owoyemi & Okanlawon, 2012). As Mangaliso (2001) concludes, 'by acknowledging this, global management discourse can evolve more holistic and inclusive theories' of management practices. This revolution brought along with it new questions and challenges to which adequate attention was required. To find appropriate solutions to these problems, people began to recognise management as a separate field of study.

Further development in management theories kept coming up to address currently situations including incorporation of environment, culture, and technology into management process. The scientific management, being the first thought, initiated the systematic analyses of managerial aspect of organizations for practical application in the day to day running of organizations (Olusoji & Ogunkoya, 2013). Smith (2003) stated that the modern management theories have been traced back to the 1900 (Scientific Management); 1910 (Bureaucracy); 1920 (Administrative management), 1930s (Human Relations); 1940s (Quantitative Management); 1950 (Systems Theory); 1970s (Contingency Theory); 1980s (Total Quality Management); 1990 (Learning Organization); and 2000s (Reengineering). Today, the emergence of the information revolution and networking has shifted the paradigm focus of managers and academics to Knowledge Management, Team Work and the IMP (Networking) approach (Smith, 2003). They have evolved with time to suit the needs of organizations and the environments they operate in. In a bid to use management theories to increase organizational productivity and service quality, not many managers use a singular theory or concept when implementing strategies in the workplace: They commonly use a combination of a number of theories, depending on the workplace, purpose and workforce. Yet, there is no guarantee that application of certain theory (ies) ensures success. This supports the issue for discussion in this paper: The field of management transcends passive conceptualisations making it a theory jungle. All the same contemporary positions typify the inelasticity of the DNA of management thoughts. Contribute to this debate through echoing of the likely threads that expresses the functionality of the multiple theories. In 1961, Koontz had introduced the concept of management theory jungle to explain that so many theories have over flogged the

management world such that it becomes confusing and conflicting in application (Koontz, 1961). The present study is a theoretical review of the concept of management, theories, management theories and a discussion of the tenets of factors to makes management theories “not a one shot” mechanism for management processes.

Concept of Management

Different definitions of management has been proffered by management experts. As cited in Ali (2014) Taylor, defined “Management is the art of knowing what you want to do and then seeing that it is done in the best and cheapest way.” More so, Koontz and Donnell define management as the creation and maintenance of an internal environment in an enterprise where individuals, working in groups, can perform efficiently and effectively towards the attainment of group goals.”(Ali, 2014). Olusoji and Ogunkoya (2013) defined management in a conventional pattern as the act, practice and science of getting work done through people.

The above definitions provide the traditional view of management. In the modern day, the meaning of management is ever expanding. As organised groups have become enormous over the years, the role of management has also been increasing in importance and complexity. To tackle these new challenges, organisations are adopting new methods and philosophies of management. In the opinion of Abedi (2001), real management can be described as the development of human and non-human resources through work. This implies that in management practice, manager develop both human and non-human resources and capitalise on these developments to enhance productivity. Olum (2004) views management as the art, or science, of achieving goals through people. Since managers also supervise, management can be interpreted to mean literally “looking over” – i.e., making sure people do what they are supposed to do. Managers are, therefore, expected to ensure greater productivity or, using the current jargon, ‘continuous improvement’.

More broadly, management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims (Koontz & Weihrich, 1990). In its expanded form, 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 – to create surplus. Finally, managing is concerned with productivity - this implies effectiveness and efficiency. Thus, management refers to the development of bureaucracy that derives its importance from the need for strategic planning, co-ordination, directing and controlling of large and complex decision-making process. Essentially, therefore, management entails the acquisition of managerial competence, and effectiveness in the following key areas: problem solving, administration, human resource management, and organizational leadership.

Following from the above therefore, it is worth to appreciate that management is all about solving problems that keep emerging all the time in the course of an organization struggling to achieve its goals and objectives. Problem solving should be accompanied by problem identification, analysis and the implementation of remedies to managerial problems. Second, administration involves following laid down procedures (although procedures or rules should not be seen as ends in themselves) for the execution, control, communication, delegation and crisis management. Third, human resource management should be based on

strategic integration of human resource, assessment of workers, and exchange of ideas between shareholders and workers. Finally, organizational leadership should be developed along lines of interpersonal relationship, teamwork, self-motivation to perform, emotional strength and maturity to handle situations, personal integrity, and general management skills.

Development of Management Theory

There is a body of opinion that says that management theory evolved during and after Second World War; it has only been studied in-depth since then. The industrial revolution that brought in mass production, specialization, seeing people as critical resource, all intensified management as a critical area of discourse. The growth of management concepts was needed to guide the growth of industrial manufacturing in the United States and Europe. During these process of these growth, management theories were posited to explain means to solving organisational problems in order to increase productivity and service quality.

Principles in management are fundamental truths, explaining relationships between two or more sets of variables, usually an independent variable and a dependent variable. Principles may be descriptive or predictive, and not prescriptive. That is, they describe how one variable relates to another – what will happen when these variables interact. 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. In the field of management, the role of theory is to provide a means of classifying significant and pertinent management knowledge. Contemporary theories of management tend to account for and help interpret the rapidly changing nature of today's organizational environments.

Thus, this study explains several important management theories which are broadly classified as follows: the Scientific Management School comprising the works of Taylor & Gilbreth's motion study, among others; the Classical Organizational Theory School comprising the works of Fayol's views on administration, and Max Weber's idealized bureaucracy, among others; behavioural School comprising the work of Elton Mayo and his associates; the Management Science School, and recent Developments in Management Theory comprising works such as Systems Approach, Situational or Contingency theory, Chaos theory, and Team Building approach. Current views of management theory stress the changing nature of the external environment and the need to understand and address these external forces for change (Pine, 2002).

The Idea of 'Management Theory Jungle'

The development of management theories ignored the influence of culture and the environment, and solely centred on management of human being as the panacea of increasing productivity. Hence, in 1961, Koontz wrote in "The Academy of Management Journal published in December, 1961" where he developed a term called "management theory jungle". In the work he posited that there are different opinions about management theory which are still immature (Koontz, 1961). Koontz, however, divides various management theories into six schools: management process school, experience or case study school, human behaviour school, social system school, the decision theory school and mathematics school. In his observation he noted that these schools do not agree in the management style to follow. He thought people should go out of the management theory

jungle. The 'Management Theory Jungle' made the following observations about the environment in which it was written: The systematic examination of management was a product of a period of the two decades prior to the writing of the article; before this, little had been written on the subject of management theory; before this, management theory had been based on the observation of experienced practitioners; a deluge of theories had emerged within the twenty year period and this deluge of theories had brought with it "a wave of great differences and apparent confusion".

Koontz saw the 'Management Theory Jungle' as a symptom of the "unsophisticated adolescence" of management theory at the time. He further attributed the emergence of the jungle to recent interest in the subject matter by a wide range of scientists and scholars and particularly by enterprise managers. This, he proposed, had resulted in the generation and development of management theory as being both challenging and profitable. One of the most negative aspects of the jungle, observed Koontz, was that the great social potential for improved management had been frustrated by "... confused and destructive jungle warfare." This resulted as the various factions vied for acceptance of their theories as unique and "original".

The "Management Theory Jungle" thrived in the environment of a recent academic discipline with an abundance of related and unrelated theories available to feed confusion and conflict. Zhaochun (2011) further explained that the theoretical disorder derives from the disorder of management thinking. He noted that west especially America is rich in management thoughts and theories, but at the same time, America lacks a culture root deep enough to nourish them. When these thoughts and theories develop beyond the sense of a skill, their cultural root could no longer nourish them. This cultural root on which management thoughts and theories depend, refers to a national ethos. The absence of this national ethos brought the mess of the management theory jungle and the global financial crisis".

Theoretical Framework

This theoretical review is anchored on the Contingency Theory. Contingency theory suggests that management principles and practices are dependent on situational appropriateness. Luthans (1976) notes that "The traditional approaches to management were not necessarily wrong, but today they are no longer adequate. The needed breakthrough for management theory and practice can be found in a contingency approach." Different situations are unique and require a managerial response that is based on specific considerations and variables. The appropriate use of a management concept or theory is thus contingent or dependent on a set of variables that allow the user to fit the theory to the situation and particular problems. It also allows for management theory to be applied to an intercultural context where customs and culture must be taken into consideration (Shetty, 1974). Adapting theory to the context is extremely important to a new homeland security international context.

For management, the successful application of any theory or concept is greatly influenced by the situation. For example, a functional organization structure with many layers of management functions best in stable environmental conditions and routine operations. In emergency management, the operating environment is ever changing and must be flexible to accommodate the many different hazards that a community or business faces. Thus, understanding the business environment is essential to successful application of management theory. As a result, a more dynamic organizational structure could be

structured based on the nature of the problem and who needs to be involved and the actions taken (Kreps, 1991). Utilizing an organizational design that is rigidly structured regardless of the situation might not provide the appropriate basis for quick and comprehensive decision making in a critical situation.

The Management Theory Jungle and Functionality of Management Thoughts

The bred of many schools of management thoughts has affected the congruence of management theories. Many of the management theories that exist do not agree, thus Koontz (1961) posited that management theory is a jungle with no clarity. This study aims to explain why the field of management transcends passive conceptualisations making it a theory jungle. The following areas are considered:

Strategic Planning and the Changing Nature of the Organizational Environment

A major contribution of the strategic planning process to management is the need to monitor the nature and changing character of external forces and how they impact the operations of an organization. Environmental scanning clarifies how technology, the law, the press, elected officials, citizens, and the natural environment impact internal operations. It can be seen that these external environment can change management theory and practice.

The Role of the Manager

The view of the organization as a system suggests a very special role for managers in the management system. For many years, management theory has suggested a rational or economic technical basis for organizational performance. This is a closed system view and appropriate for the technical level but not for the organizational or institutional level. The view of the open system creates a more difficult role for management. It must deal with uncertainties and ambiguities and must be concerned with adapting the organization to new and changing requirements. Management is a process, which spans and links the various sub-systems.

The basic function of management is to align not only people, but also the institution itself including technology, processes, and structure. It attempts to reduce uncertainty at the same time searching for flexibility. Thus, management faces situations, which are dynamic, inherently uncertain, and frequently ambiguous. Management is placed in a network of mutually dependent relationships. Management endeavours to introduce regularity in a world that will never allow that to happen. Only managers who can deal with uncertainty, with ambiguity, and with battles that are never won but only fought well can hope to succeed.

Management Systems Theory and Management Practices

Systems theory evolved from the basic sciences but is utilized in the social sciences including management theory. A system composed of interrelated and interdependent parts arranged in a manner that produces a unified whole is critical in understanding all parts of the emergency management process. Viewing societies as complex open systems which interact with their environment provides such a critical view of the emergency management system (Barnard, 1938). Systems theory is based on the idea that everything is part of a larger, interdependent arrangement. It is centred on clarifying the whole, its parts, and the relations between them (Bertalanffy, 1972).

Some critical concepts that are applicable to management practices include some of the following: open system, subsystems, synergy, interface, holism, strategic constituencies, boundaries, functionalism, interface, strategic constituencies, feedback and a moving equilibrium. Management practice is composed of many parts including: local, state and national public, private and non-profit units. These units interact in many independent ways and each has their own constituencies, boundaries, function, and sub-units. The units may interrelate in management activities in an open environment with few organizational barriers or collaborative and cooperative efforts limited by specific organizational policies, rules and procedures. Managers acknowledge that effective response and recovery efforts require the cooperation of the entire community; managers do not operate in isolation but as a part of a large open system.

An *open system* involves the dynamic interaction of the system with its environment. This theory is fundamental to understanding management for it maintains that everything is related to everything else. Management has a dynamic relationship with the environment and receives various inputs, transforms these inputs in some way, and exports outputs. These systems are open not only in relation to their environment but also in relation to themselves; the interactions between components affect the system as a whole. The open system adapts to its environment by changing the structure and processes of the internal components. Systems are composed of *sub-systems*. That is, the parts that form the system may themselves be a system. The emergency management system includes police, fire, and emergency medical agencies; each agency with their own system (sub-system of the emergency services system). The emergence of homeland security makes this concept even more important in understanding how the parts relate and that each part has sub-parts that impact the functioning of the whole.

The combined and coordinated actions of the parts of the system achieve more than all of the parts acting independently. This concept known as “synergy” is critical to the field of management and equally to emergency management. The performance of an enterprise is a product of the interaction rather than sum of its parts, but it is entirely possible for the action of two or more parts to achieve an effect of which either is individually incapable. Synergy is characterized by the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. It explains why the performance of a system as a whole depends more on how its parts relate than on how well each part operates. Indeed, the inter-dependence of the parts is such that even if each part independently performs as efficiently as possible, the system as a whole may not. Synergy is an important concept for emergency managers in that it emphasizes the need for individuals, as well as departments to work together in a cooperative fashion (Bedeian, 1989). An emergency response is not just a single unit but many different parts that, when effective, understand how they work together to protect public safety and property.

The field of management is dependent on conceptual frameworks or models. As an example, management theory suggests that social organizations are *contrived* and constantly evolving and not static mechanical systems. They have structure, but the structure of events rather than physical components, cannot be separated from the processes of the system. The fact that social organizations are composed of humans suggests that they can be established for an infinite variety of objectives and do not follow the same life-cycle pattern of birth, maturity, and death as biological systems. Social systems are made of imperfect systems. The cement which holds them together is essentially psychological rather than biological. They are anchored in the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, motivations, habits, and expectations of humans.

Management systems theory notes that organizations are not natural as with mechanical or biological systems; they are contrived. They have structure or *boundaries*, but the structure of events rather than physical components. The human and organizational boundaries cannot be separated from the processes of the system. The fact that social organizations are contrived by human beings suggests that they can be established for an infinite variety of objectives and do not follow the same life-cycle pattern of birth, maturity, and death as biological systems. Social systems are made of imperfect systems. The cement which holds them together is essentially psychological rather than biological. They are anchored in the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, motivations, habits, and expectations of human beings. A systems approach does not provide a means for solving all problems. It is however, useful for viewing the relationships between interdependent parts in terms of how these relationships affect the performance of the overall system (Freemont & Rosenzweig, 1985). Systems theory provides emergency managers with a critical perspective to view and understand how to prepare for and respond to hazards and mitigate their adverse impacts. The systems perspective to emergency management integrates the diverse interdependent (or interconnectedness of the system) factors including individuals, groups, formal or informal organizations, attitudes, motives, interactions, goals, status, authority. The job of an emergency manager is to ensure that all parts of the organization are coordinated internally and with external organization that are involved in emergency management activities. The emergency management thus is leading and directing many activities so as to achieve established organizational and community goals. A systems view of management suggests that all parts of the organization are interdependent. For example, if a service unit functions well, but the personnel section does not replace retired staff in a timely manner, the system malfunctions.

The open systems approach recognizes that organizations are not self-contained. They rely on their environment (including the social, political, technological, and economic forces) for life sustaining inputs and as sources to absorb their outputs. No organization can survive for long if it ignores government regulations, the courts, outside interest groups, private service providers, or elected officials. An organization should be judged on its ability to acquire inputs, process these inputs, channel the outputs, and maintain stability and balance. Outputs are the ends, where acquisition of inputs and processing efficiencies are means. If an organization is to survive over the long term, it must remain adaptive. System concepts such as subsystems or units within units; synergy or that the group has greater outputs than each single unit, boundaries, holism or viewing the larger context rather than a narrow view, interface, and adaptive organizational mechanisms to change are crucial in marshalling community resources so critical in emergency management. The importance of leadership and adaptive behaviour are stressed by many writers (Toffler 1985; Garvin 1993; and Sugarman, 2001) who stated that today's leaders including emergency managers must discover ways of creating order in a chaotic world.

Finally, chaos theory suggests that even in general management systems theory, organizations must adapt to complex change and institutionalize institutional learning through feedback systems. Chaos theory states that just a small change in the initial conditions may have significant change in the long-term behaviour of the system. The classic example quoted by many to illustrate the concept is known as the butterfly effect. The flapping of a single butterfly's wing today produces a tiny change in the state of the atmosphere. Over a period of time, what the atmosphere actually does diverges from what it would have done. So, in a month's time, a tornado that would have devastated the

Indonesian coast doesn't happen. Or maybe one that wasn't going to happen, does (Stewart, 1989). Chaos theory thus provides the manager with a broad perspective for appreciating how other agencies and external organizations are interdependent with and impact emergency management operations.

Conclusion

The argument advanced by Koontz (1961) describing management theories as jungle is still factual. The management theory to adopt in management practice has remained a fiction. Managers are always presented with a plethora of theories on each problem; the one to adopt becomes a problem in itself.

Contribution to Knowledge

The study has shown that so many theories exist for single management problem. Thus, it is always a problem for the manager to know which of the theories best explains the problem he/she has at hand. It is usually a jungle when the manager is track in the mist of all these theories such that one disagrees with the other. One explanation as to why this happens is that management theories hardly consider culture. Theoretically, this study has shown that there is need to incorporate culture, environmental issues and political as well as the legal environment to the development of management theories. This implies that theories should be situational and environmental friendly.

References

- Abedi, H.A.(2001). *Real Management Development in Africa*. Quicy Press Co: Accra
- Ali, A. (2014). Management theory and practice. NMIMS Global Access - School for Continuing Education School Address. Retrieved from <http://distance.nmims.edu/uploads/docs/samples/management-theory-and-practice-eBook.pdf>.
- Blunt, P.& Jones, M. (1997). Exploring the limits of Western management theory. *Personnel Review*, 26, 6–23.
- Cole, G.A. (2004). *Management theory and practice -6th edition*. United Kingdom: Thomson learning.
- Freemont E. K.& Rosenzweig, J. E. (1985). *Management: Systems and Contingency Approach*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Garvin, David A. (1993). "Building a learning organization," *Harvard Business Review*, 71: 78-91.
- George, O. J., Onokala, U., Dawodu, A. A. & Olayemi,O.(2012). Economic democracy versus globalisation of capital mobility: A Replication of the Biblical Battle of David versus Goliath but in the Economic Arena: The Case of Kraft's Cadbury Worldwide. *Journal of Research in International Business and Management*, 2, pp. 110-116
- Koontz, H. (1961). The Management Theory Jungle. *Journal of the Academy of Management*, 4(3), 174-188. Retrieved from <http://salamisquad.free.fr/bordeldivers/MEMOIRE/the%20management%20theory%20jungle.pdf>

- Kreps, Gary A. (1991). Organizing for emergency management. *Emergency Management: Principles and Practice for Local Government*. International City Management Association. Washington, D.C.
- Luthans, F. (1976). *Introduction to Management: A Contingency Approach*. New York: McGrawHill p. 28.
- Mangaliso, M., (2001). Building competitive advantage from Ubuntu: Management lessons from South Africa. *Academy of Management Executive*, 15, 23–33.
- Olum (2004). Modern management theories and practices. Being a paper presented at the 15th East African Central Banking Course, held on 12th July 2004, at Kenya School of Monetary Studies. Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/theories.pdf>.
- Olusoji, J. G.& Ogunkoya, O. A. (2013). The evolution of management theories, philosophies and thoughts in Nigeria. *Economics and Management Research Projects: An International Journal*, 5(1), 1 - 9. Retrieved from <ftp://ftp.repec.org/opt/ReDIF/RePEc/por/emrpij/files/EMRPIJ.v5.is1.p1.9.pdf>
- Pine, J. C. (2002). The Contributions of Management Theory and Practice to Emergency Management. Retrieved from <http://www.risk.lsu.edu>.
- Shetty, Y. K. (1974) Contingency Management: Current Perspective for Managing Organizations. *Management International Review*, 14(6); 27 – 37. .
- Smith, C. (2003). Living at work: Management control and the dormitory labour system in Nigeria. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 20, 333–358.
- Stewart, I. (1989). *Does God Play Dice? The Mathematics of Chaos*, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, pg. 141.
- Sugarman, B. (2001). “A learning-based approach to organizational change: some results and guidelines,” *Organizational Dynamics*, 30: 62-75.
- Toffler, A.(1985). *The Adaptive Corporation*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Zhaochun, W. (2011). A Path Out of the Management Theory Jungle: From the Perspective of Chinese Management Philosophy. In: M. Dai et al. (Eds.): ICCIC 2011, Part II, CCIS 232, pp. 26–33. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/978-3-642-23998-4_5.pdf.