

# Assessing the Factors Affecting Management Systems in Nigeria and Mitigating the Negative Effects

Egbuwe Titilola I. & Amah Edwinah

## Abstract

The aim of this paper is to assess the various factors affecting the management systems in Nigeria and how to mitigate the negative effects. It reconnoiters the origin and development of contemporary management in the country and the challenges today managers face in a multi-cultural and multi-lingua society. Nigeria is assailed by factors of disunity and snaillike development which alter the essentials of management theories. Leveraging Geert Hofstede's six cultural models and its empirical studies on Nigeria's cultural conditioning and its practical insinuations. Geert Hofstede's models provide a framework for understanding the impact of cultural differences of management of different countries, the comprehensive studies evaluate how corporate management is influenced by culture. This paper builds on academic contributions on comparative management, comparing the western management culture of United States of America and United Kingdom systems to that of Nigeria. It reveals the extent to which culture limits the effectiveness of practical managerial concepts in corporate Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Management, System, Culture, differences, society.



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## INTRODUCTION

Management is a structural process that embraces tactical planning, setting realistic objectives, managing resources and deploying the financial and human resources required to accomplish set objectives and validate the outcomes (Lanc, David & Mackinnon, Lachlan, 2009, p.4). Management systems are not restricted to corporate entries but stretches to other aspect of human interface. A management system distinctively defines the style and process of management employed as visible in the 1909 scientific theory of management by Frederick Taylor and the evolved Systems Management Theory of Mele et al (2009) and the sixties Fiedler' contingency theory of management. These theories commonly cite strategic planning, systemic process and human resources as the fundamental principles of an effective management system. Management systems task managers to acquire suitable knowledge of the field. Though different researchers have tried to understand the mutual measures between the diverse theories, nevertheless Martinet (1996) postulated a model that homogenizes the fundamental logics. Management is normally tied to the concept of effective performance, the degree to which tasks and targets are accomplished in organizations with the aim of incorporating an effectual productivity and efficiency. In management research, academics favour four theoretical perspectives, the scientific theory of Fredrick Taylor, the Hawthorne effect behavioural theory of management of Elton Mayo, the bureaucratic theory of management of Max Weber and the administrative management theory of Henri Fayol.

From the twenty first century, corporate organizations in Nigeria became industrialized and adopted more technical systems of management, though according Taylor's (1909) scientific management theory of responsibilities this method only rewarded organizations with regimented activities (Carter McNamara, 2009). Another employable theory of management is of Hoffman and Hegarty (1993) who posited that the divergent view of management divulges the dissimilarities in cultural resources and the development that magnifies countries variances in organizational processes and structures. However, while these theories are relevant and effective in most developed countries, Nigeria being a multi linguistic, multi-cultural and a very religious institute, has its management peculiarities. Also, being a British colonized country, Nigeria managers and leaders would tell who ever cares to listen that they are disciples of the British system of management. The management empirical enquiry has been consistent in the backing of theories that posit that the statistics proposing that differences in management exist between clusters of nations having analogous geographic and cultural physiognomies. However, the convergent view postulated the knowledge of management and its administration as being transferable among countries having analogous echelons of industrialization. For the Hofstede (1983) management theory, the assertion is, due to the inherent cultural dissimilarities among countries, no universal management system can be considered universally valid. So, for a management system that deals trans nationally, Hofstede theorize that the difference between the success or failure of the management system relies on the managers' abilities to optimally utilize its multi-cultural workforce. This paper therefore aims to assess the factors affecting management systems in Nigeria work environment and mitigating the negative effects to ensure the challenges are reduced to as low as reasonably allowable in an organization.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Weber's (1864-1920), theory of bureaucracy expressed the emergent systems of organization as having far-reaching inferences for managers. Conforming to a perception that the society is increasingly becoming rational and that organizations would become tools of

efficiency if designed around effective strategies. Weber divided organizations into hierarchies, implementing detailed outlines of authority and control. He proposed that if organizations can develop clear and standard functional procedures for all catalogued tasks, its management system would become more effective (Carter McNamara, 2009). The constraint in the application of this theory is the absence of flexibility with regards to teamwork and multi-tasking which is an essential ingredient in the present knowledge economy based era. On the other hand, Fayol (1841-1925) principles of management segmented management system into a few pragmatic areas which are adopted in corporate development plans. The pragmatic areas are planning, coordinating, organizing, directing and controlling. Fayol's guidelines for explicit principles for practicing managers to adopt. Having found these principles valuable during his years as a manager, Fayol proposed that the principles could be adopted for corporate organizations and government administration. He specified that his management models can provide managers with the essential building blocks to ensure productivity, stability, effective line of command, and equality. The botheration with Fayol's principles of management is knowing the organizational structure that fits the model (Hahn, 2007). Though most organizations still engage Fayol's principles of management for its team dynamics, there is however less practice of the hierarchical structure of command as most employees report to more than one supervisor (Wren and Bedeian, 2009). Frederick Taylor (1911) posited scientific management theories of an organization with the aim of lessening management by procedures and processes and substituting it with scheduled observations leading a best fit practice. According to Taylor, managers were projected to direct while employees execute their respective duties. This boosted the separation of tasks and commands into sub-tasks and sectional supervisors to enhance performance of organizational tasks and targets. The disadvantage of this is that the model enables an overly bureaucratic management system. Fiedler (1993) Contingency theory of management system purports that managers must evaluate all outcomes when making decisions, this theory propagates that there is no best way to achieve effective result but an interplay of approaches where a lot of variables in an organization may influence decisions (Pindur, Rogers and Kim, 1995). The criticism of this theory is that it failed to clarify an empirical model and provide explanation for its leadership's effectiveness in various situations. With the endless management theories or according to academics "management theory jungle" (Redding, 1994; Koontz, 1980), it can be inferred that managers work better using the organized scientific management knowledge. It is nevertheless, essential to note that managers deal with diverse complexities and these variables might be in either be demographic, cultural, environmental, socio-political, legal or cultural

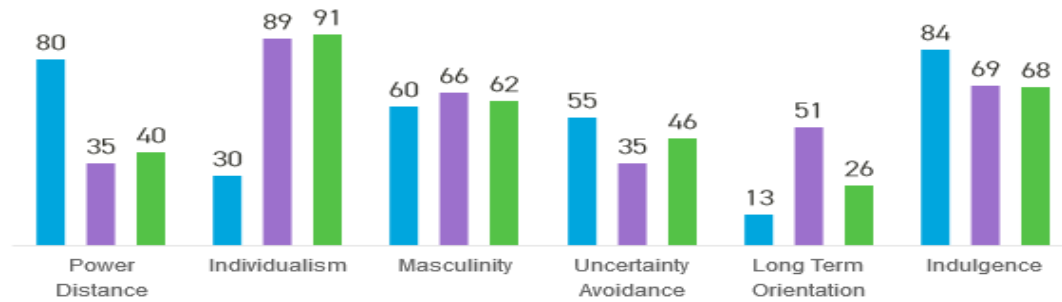
### **The Factors Affecting Management Systems in Nigeria**

Comparative management and administration studies of Nigeria's managerial systems have been carried out by different scholars against other developing and developed countries. Ogundele (2003), management study was based on the disorderliness of the educational system in comparison with Ghana. Munene and Okoh (1986) posited that the organizational dynamics in Nigeria is affected by its environment, demography and managerial values in a comparative study with other organizations in the continent. Fajana (1991), study of industrial relations practice, unearthed the decision to espouse an ethical practice, using factors like labour practice complexity, testability, compatibility, and observability as analyses, to understand the Nigerian labour management system in comparison to Japan. Nigeria management system could be defined as hierarchical with wide spans of control, organized communal work force, highly structured, male-dominated with long-term

oriented-resource administration (Iwuji, 1968). Though being a colonial influenced system the resulting impact of the widening of the power distance sprouting a less fostering and masculine gender driven culture (Peterson et al, 1995). Nath (1988) comparative management theory utilized an open system approach. He cited the environment as one of the factors impinging effective management system in Nigeria. He further segmented it into seven subsystems, the socio-political milieu, the economic, legal, cultural system, technology, transportation, communication and the industry structure. While all these scholars have aptly defined the problems of Nigeria managerial system, Hofstede (1983), model of Nigeria pre and post-colonial management system depicts a clearer picture. According to Hofstede's organization culture system "the culture of any organization depends on how employees interact with one another or with the external parties and also determine their involvement in productive tasks". He also stated that "regional factors dictate the culture of an organization and ultimately influence the employees' behaviours".

**Table 1: Hofstede's Cultural dimensions Model of Nigeria Management system**

Hofstede's Dimensions	Descriptions	West: UK/USA	Nigeria: Traditional	Nigeria: Post-Independence
<b>Power-Distance</b>	<i>The degree to which power is distributed equally in an organization irrespective of ranks and all personnel enjoy rights</i>	Low	High	High
<b>Masculinity</b>	<i>Extent to which gender plays a dominant value in a workplace. Wanting to be the best is a sign of Masculinity or liking what you do is Femininity</i>	High	High	High
<b>Indulgence</b>	<i>Degree to which individuals control their needs and impulses, based on the way they are raised. Comparatively, weak control means "Indulgence" and relatively strong control indicates "Restraint".</i>	High	High	High
<b>Uncertainty-Avoidance</b>	<i>Extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to install structures to avoid these situations</i>	Low	High	High
<b>Long-termism</b>	<i>Describes how a society maintains links with its past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future. These societies focus on two experiential goals, normative or pragmatic</i>	High	Low	Low
<b>Individualism</b>	<i>Degree of interdependence a society maintains among its populace. It is defined in terms of "I" or "We". An Individualist society will look after one another and their direct families only. While a Collectivist society belongs to the 'in groups' that take care</i>	High	Low	Low



Nigeria × United Kingdom × United States ×

Source: Hofstede (2019), <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/> Accessed 15 June 1325hrs

### Power Distance

Nigeria score of 80 indicates the managers practice a hierarchical order of management in which individuals have a place and needs no further justification. Hierarchy in a management means reflecting inherent inequalities, centralization of power and subordinates are expected to be told what to do while the ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat. Britain at 35 and United States 40, power index means that the society believes that inequalities among its people should be minimized. According to Hofstede's research, the power distance index is lower among its higher class in Britain than the working classes, the power distance score indicates a sense of fair play drives a belief that people should be treated in some way as equals (Peterson et al, 1995). This measurement deals with the fact that all individuals in societies are not equal, and it expresses the attitude of the culture toward these power inequalities among us. Power distance is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of an organization within a country assume and accept that power is not distributed evenly.

### Individualism

Nigeria individualism management score of 30 indicates a collectivistic society. The society fosters strong relationships where not only the managers, but everyone takes responsibility for fellow members of the group. In collectivist organization, the manager to employee relationships are seemed as a family union. Recruitments and promotions take account of the employee's input. In the managerial system is the management of groups. UK score of 89 indicates that children are taught at an early age to be independent so they individually can enrich the society. While American's 91 is evidenced by an obvious emphasis on equal rights, managers are reachable and rely on individual employees and teams for their proficiency. Both managers and employees are expected to contribute their quota. Also, employments and promotions are based on merit or evidence of what one has done or can do and not "godfatherism" like Nigeria.

### Masculinity

The essential subject here is personnel motivation, wanting to be the best is a sign of Masculinity or liking what you do as Femininity. Nigeria scores 60 as a Masculine society. In a Masculine organization, managers are autocratic and aggressive, indicating emphasis is on evenhandedness, conflicts, rivalry and performance. Britain at 66 indicates a Masculine



corporate organization, highly driven and success oriented. and driven. The British has the culture discernment and therefore have a clear performance ambition. the US Masculinity is high at 62, and this depicts a mixture of a high Masculinity drive with the Individualist in their work environment.

### **Uncertainty Avoidance**

The level at which employees in an environment feel vulnerable by unclear or unfamiliar conditions and have certain perceptions, which they will often try to avoid. It also measures organizations preparedness to assist employees adjust well in all conditions. Nigeria's intermediate score of 55 does not show a clear preference, It means there is a slight degree of acceptance for innovative products and new ideas At 35, UK and US 46, the managers in these countries are more opened and are more willing to try new ideas or technology.

### **Long Term Orientation**

This measurement describes how *management relate with culture and business and the challenges of* prioritizing these two existential goals inversely. Normative management systems score low on this dimension, due to preference in maintaining customary traditions and behaviours. Managers that adopt effective managerial style score high and take a more pragmatic approach. Nigeria scores a low grade of 13, meaning its culture is normative in place of pragmatic. Managers in Nigeria have a strong concern with resolving challenges, they are normative in their actions. They show great respect for traditions; a relatively small inclination focuses on achieving speedy results. An intermediate score of 51 in this dimension, a dominant preference in British managerial culture for long term orientation cannot be determined. However, the United States is normative with a low score of 26. This is echoed by the Americans managers' abilities to analyze new information and ideas though this does not indicate that most American managers are pragmatic, but instead practical. The American long term orientation management style drives employees to go all-out for quick results in the work place.

### **Indulgence**

This measures the extent at which management control is based on desires and emotions. Relatively weak control system is referred to as Indulgence while strong control is called Restraint. Management style is either Indulgent or Restrained. High score of 84 for Nigerian managerial culture is said to be one of Indulgence. Managers with high score in Indulgence mostly exhibit a willingness to fulfill their urges and wants regarding the pleasures of life, they place a premium on leisure time(Iremeka, 2012). At British 69 and American 68, their managerial culture is also Indulgent but in combination with their normative scores, it reflects contradictory attitudes and behaviours (Hofstede, 2019),while in the developed countries, the indulgent managers believe in work hard and play hard in Nigeria the managers are prone to indulge organization resources in their indulgences.

## **DISCUSSION ON MITIGATING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS**

The above measurements indicate that Nigerian managers practice participatory style of management that is people-oriented style of management though the managers exhibits extrinsic behaviours which are from individual behavioural cultures. These behaviours prompt the formation of norms and informal codes of conduct that suggest how people should act in certain situations such as doctrines or values (George, 2009, p. 82). Managers have individual outlooks and expectations from their organizations and jobs, and these

expectations dictate their attitudes and efficiency. Essentially, the important bearings are organizational commitment and job satisfaction which are directly linked to organizational culture's norms, values and work routines that impact employees relate to one another and work together to achieve organizational goals. A managerial style that installs commitment to organizational cultural values and are likely to accomplish set targets and goals and a strong and loyal workforce. (George, 2009, p. 84- 91). Realizing the emergence of a knowledge based generation with new perceptions of management has presented a systematic shift in managerial styles in Nigeria and leaning towards the result ant effects is a must.

## CONCLUSION

Nigerian culture is one of the main factors affecting the country's managerial system. Most multi-national organizations in the country often embrace the stratagem of infiltrating its culture by sending their staff on foreign trainings, while such employees have at various levels try to adopt these managerial styles, the people and the environment have different orientations and often frustrate these plans. It might be expedient to also develop concepts and theories of management to suit the Nigerian culture and the environment, the reality of this according to Donne's Devotions (1624) is that "no man is an island and no country by itself", this might create problems for Nigerian managers on cross-postings. The fact is, every manager whether in a developing or developed country must learn to adopt a best fit management strategic style irrespective of the organization, the culture, the people or the environment. Nigerian managers must possess a strong sense of accountability as a key performance indicator to measure their management styles.

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