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Article *in* International Journal of Business and Management · July 2010

DOI: 10.5539/ijbm.v5n8p65 · Source: DOAJ

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The Impact of Colonialism on the Development of Management in Nigeria

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Abstract

This theoretical paper traces the reasons for the slow development of 'home-grown' management principles and practices in Nigeria to the effects of the internal conflicts that were generated by the policies of colonialism up to the mid-20th century. It argues that these conflicts had negatively affected the attitude of the local people within the social, economic and political institutions of society. As a way forward, it proposes that emphasis should now be focused by management scholars on modernizing and fitting into contemporary context, some of the indigenous management practices that preceded the advent of colonialism, such as the Calabar House system. Appropriate management principles and theories are likely to evolve from this effort to the benefit of modern business and other organizations.

Keywords: Colonialism, Conflict, Nigeria, Management principles, Management practices, Management theory, Calabar

1. Introduction

To a large extent, the style or method used in managing an organization at any given time reflects the general level of development of the society in which that organization operates. Expectedly, as a society experiences economic, socio-political, infrastructural and other progress, the organizations existing within it improve or grow by way of capacity, performance and general efficiency. Similarly, significant societal conditions usually exert some impact on the attitude and behaviour of people at the workplace. It is in this way that the systematic usurpation of the sovereignty of the various peoples living in the west, east and north of the River Niger by the British during the 19th century; ultimately culminating in the colonization of the entire area, came to influence, condition and pattern the political, economic and social systems of the eventual Nigerian state. Colonialism has arguably therefore informed the fundamental culture of modern Nigerian organizations – especially in the way they are organised and operated, and also how the human elements within such settings behave in the process of achieving organizational objectives.

Using the conflict theory as the basis, this paper seeks to examine the effect colonial policies have had on management in Nigerian institutions. The specific objective of the paper is to examine the role that the internal conflict generated by colonialism has played on the development of indigenous Nigerian management practices and principles, and how this has affected the growth of local institutions and business organizations. The paper further attempts to provide an understanding of the behaviour of workers in Nigerian institutions and organizations against the backdrop of their colonial past.

2. Theoretical Background

The nature of colonialism served to produce conflicts within the society and organizations in ways that impacted significantly on the performance of the various local social, economic and political institutions. Conflict describes a process where a party within a system (an organization or society) perceives that another party has negatively affected an issue that is important to it, such as its goal(s), expectations, results, method of operation, etc (Robbins & Judge, 2009). A conflict therefore involves a person or group creating, exercising or exerting influence and control over others in a way that re-orders or disrupts the existing arrangement(s). Underlying all conflict situations is a struggle for supremacy or dominance in a way that assures narrow or personal economic and/or political benefit to the party exercising the control.

The theory of conflict has received wide treatment in several works including that of Collins (1994). However, a good analysis of the impact of conflict is underpinned by an understanding of the concept, which has its foundations in the critical theory of Karl Marx (Wikepidia, 2009). Marx centred his theory on the struggle between the bourgeoisie and workers, where the economic interests of the ruling class was at the centre of the

conflict. He argued that any relationship based on exploitative economic arrangements is bound to self-destruct as the conflict always drives instability within the system. The ensuing internal physical and psychological struggles therefore will ultimately result in negative outcomes for all parties involved, even if the exploiting party may seem to enjoy immediate or short-term benefits from the circumstance.

Marx identified a number of the basic conflicts under his broad conflict theory. Three of these conflicts fit within the scheme of colonization in Nigeria. The first is the conflict created by the class distinction generated by the arrogation of greater power to the colonial operatives and their agents over the local peoples - where the first group belongs to the upper class and the second, the lower classes. Under the arrangement, the upper class maintained control, even if through surrogates, over all economic property. For as long as this arrangement subsisted, there is bound to be conflicts that will not permit sustainable organizational or societal progress. The second relevant type of conflict under the theory is that which is based on race. Under the colonial system, the British administrative officers, missionaries and merchants were considered to belong to a race that was superior to the local population. The presumption was that the British were more advanced in terms of education, elocution and civilization. The prestige and power that underpinned this taxonomy similarly created a race-based conflict within all facets of systems where these two groups had social intercourse. The third type of conflict is that which was created by religion. While the local population had their indigenous religious beliefs and practices, British missionaries who became an important feature of the colonial structure, sought to secure power, dominate and restructure the society with Christianity. The ensuing disturbance of existing religious arrangements equally created resistance and further deepening of the social conflict.

Because of its disruptive tendency, the traditional view is that conflict is harmful and therefore must be avoided at all cost. However, from the human relations point of view, conflict must be recognized and accepted as a natural and inevitable outcome of any interaction at group, organizational or societal level. Conflict therefore is not necessarily a negative thing; rather it can be positive as it has the potential of engendering competitive behaviour, which itself is an important driver of superior group performance. Absence of conflict, therefore, may lead to complacency and lack of enthusiasm for positive change, enterprise and innovation. A more contemporary view, the *interactionist perspective*, even identifies conflict as a central element that is critical or essential for effective accomplishment of group goals (Robbins & Judge, 2009).

Conflict, in a different sense may be viewed in terms tasks, relationship or process (Jehn, 1997). The conflict relating to task centres on incompatibilities regarding content and goals of work; while relationship conflict concerns problems of interpersonal relationships between people within the organization; and, process conflict relates to inconsistencies in work methods and processes. There is evidence that supports the traditional view that conflict is dysfunctional, especially those that arise from relationships. This is because relationship conflicts are often negative as they tend to hinder cooperation and reduce mutual understanding and trust (Yang & Mossholder, 2004). Studies, as shown in the IPMA-HR 2006 survey (as cited in Robbins & Judge, 2009) reveal that approximately 20 percent of organizational resources are often used up in resolving conflicts arising from interpersonal relationship issues. The types of conflicts described under Marx's conflict theory relate to class, race and religion. These conflicts are more likely to lead to relationship problems within an organization. For task and process conflicts, in so far as they are kept at a low-to-moderate level, their outcomes are likely to be functional and supportive of organizational progress (Robbins & Judge, 2009).

It is therefore important to determine, within the context of conflict, whether colonialism has either been functional or dysfunctional towards the development of management principles and practices in Nigeria. Where the conflict generated by colonialism is found to be constructive and supportive of the development of effective management practices, and thereby achievement of organizational goals for all stakeholders, it will be considered to be functional. Conversely, where it is found to be destructive, or at best, unsupportive of the development of effective management practices, it will be described as dysfunctional.

3. Overview of Colonialism in Nigeria

Just like most other countries in Africa, Nigeria came under effective colonization around the 19th century. The British, having established a foothold in the areas surrounding the River Niger, after years of extensive trading and Christianization, began actively putting in place formal structures of colonization by way of government institutions and other political arrangements, starting first with Lagos in 1861. By 1914, the Colony of Lagos and the Protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria had systematically become consolidated into a contiguous geo-political entity christened Nigeria.

To administer Nigeria, the British colonialists adopted a policy of indirect rule, which had earlier been successfully rehearsed in the Northern Protectorate. Indirect rule involved the use of influential and resourceful

members of the various communities, who were made Warrant Chiefs and native Political Agents with mandates or warrants which empowered them to obtain the cooperation of the natives for the furtherance of the objectives of colonialism. The key objectives of British colonialism included: the opening-up of the country to British trade - through diplomacy, but where necessary, military force; the enforcement of the ban on or abolition of slave trade; and, the maintenance of law and order in society. The centres of colonial administration at the time were: Lagos city, for the Lagos Colony; Calabar city, for the Southern Protectorate; and, Kano, for the Northern Protectorate (The National Commission For Museums and Monuments, 1986).

Upon unification of the Southern Protectorate with Lagos Colony into the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, and its subsequent amalgamation with the Northern Nigeria Protectorate in 1914, Lord Lugard was appointed the first Governor of the unified Nigerian entity. Lord Lugard built a system which blended the British-style machinery of government with a grassroots administrative instrument in the form of a hybrid strategy that combined British officials at the top of the executive, legislative and judiciary wings of government on the one hand and the native chiefs and prominent members of the local society at the lower rung of the ladder on the other hand.

At this point, the administrative style of the British was gradually being insinuated into the governance of the Nigerian state, and it became the main influence on the local way of organising things – politically, socially and economically. It is in this way that political domination of the society, through colonization, permeated government, trade, religion and the social life of the peoples of Nigeria, with structural and attitudinal implications for the existing public and private organizations. The stiff conditions of colonialism also had implications for the application, cultivation and development of contemporary management practices, as the existing institutions, particularly those owned by the state, had to operate within the ambits of the rigid style preferred by the British colonialists. Colonialism essentially became the tool that was deployed in relegating and decimating the local institutions and management practices while these were supplanted with western-style administrative structures that were invariably regarded as superior to the indigenous ones (Kiggundu, 1991).

4. Colonialism and Nigerian Institutions and Systems

The economic structure of society arguably moulds the superstructure, including ideas. It also influences the social, political, educational and other institutions that support the class structure of society (Wikipedia, 2009). Colonialism presented a number of impediments to the development of functional principles upon which management practices could be founded in Nigeria. These issues are hereunder examined against the background of the existing administrative, educational, Economic and Socio-political institutions and systems.

4.1 The Administrative System

The administrative system adopted in managing the Nigerian state by the British essentially organised government apparatus (and its state-sponsored trading enterprises) along a centralized and hierarchical structure. This system emphasised direct and strong control, as it required that all personnel remain unquestionably subordinate to the top (colonial) authority, personified by the High Commissioner and his executive lieutenants – the Resident, Divisional and District Officers. The local content of the administration – the native Political Agents, Warrant Chiefs, clerks, messengers and constables – were merely subordinate field executors or foot soldiers of colonial policies and decisions of the top hierarchy.

While a hierarchical structure normally suggests organizational tidiness and order, it nevertheless creates an 'iron cage' of control that reinforces red-tape and inflexibility, which are the very anti-thesis of innovation, pro-activity, enterprise and 'processed-thought'. The net effect of this was the blunting of personal initiative, creative thinking and innovation at the work place and a retardation of development of management thought and practices among the local people – who basically formed the workforce of national institutions and establishments.

Secondly, the colonial machinery operated a philosophy of small and low-cost administrative structures, which mostly used ad-hoc instruments and the 'man-on-the-spot' strategy for managing its institutions. This meant that little investment was made on developing an elaborate and well-funded administrative structure, with the implication that minimal resources were allocated to the development (through training and research) of the human capital used in running the colonial administration. The impact of this low investment in human resources was the eventual creation of a workforce only good enough to carry out routine, and non-creative, tasks or functions. Also, the authoritarian manner in which work was organised ensured that the Nigerian personnel of the colonial institutions were not at liberty to experiment management ideas that were outside 'the box' or dictates of their colonial bosses.

4.2 The Educational System

At the core of the education policy of the colonialists was the objective of producing a literate, but junior clerical and mid-level manpower cadre fit to work at government offices, trading companies and sub-tertiary educational institutions. This meant that the authorities spent limited resources on the creation and development of educational institutions that would normally produce a workforce equipped with high level technical, innovative and managerial skills. Specifically, the policy emphasis was on primary or elementary school education. Grammar and secondary schools were few and far in-between. Technical or industrial schools were even fewer. For instance, there were 900 primary schools with a pupil population of 40,000 in Calabar Province as at 1931. However, out of this number, there were only three technical schools and two visible secondary schools. There were no tertiary institutions whatsoever within the province during the period. (The National Commission for Museums and Monuments, 1986).

The colonial government deliberately abandoned the education sector to the religious missions and private individuals, with no clear or systemic policy in place. The result was that given their limited resources, the missionaries were only able to provide functional grammar schools that turned out a mass of people literate enough to sustain employment in clerical, teaching or instructional jobs, but with insufficient managerial or technical competence/capacity. The educated workforce was therefore ill-equipped with the depth of rigorous scholarly or academic skills required for developing a body of organized principles and theories that could facilitate the management of institutions and organizations.

4.3 The Economic System

The economic system was highly regulated and the colonial policy was aimed at protecting British interests (both of the government establishments and their sponsored trading firms). This policy was perhaps best reflected in agriculture – where all activities were directed at subsistence farming and the only commercial production was meant basically for export. No genuine effort was made towards developing the technical and managerial capacity of the local farmers beyond that of being mere producers of primary products or raw materials. This implied that little or no research work was encouraged – which could have provided the platform for the local farmers to improve their technical knowledge and develop better farm management practices and administration in their business.

On a different economic front, the colonial policy ensured that only the European trading firms were in a position to do large scale business on a sustainable basis. In this regard, UAC, Lever Brothers, PZ, Pamol, CFAO and SCOA were the only firms patronised and protected by government. With this policy in place, these firms emerged as the only ones with the wherewithal to organise large and formal entities capable of experimenting emerging management practices. However, being European-owned, they more of less transferred the business policies and practices that were prevalent in their home countries to the management of these firms. Again, under such circumstances, it was difficult for any development of Nigerian-originated or inspired management principles and theories to take place and flourish within such establishments. Similarly, in banking, the colonial administration promoted and sustained the business interests of British Bank for West Africa (now First Bank Plc), Anglo-African Bank and Colonial Bank (now Union Bank Plc) to the exclusion of all indigenous banking initiatives, prominently including Industrial Commercial Bank (established in 1929) and Nigerian Mercantile Bank (established in 1931) – both squeezed out of business and into premature liquidation by unfavourable market conditions. As in the trading firms' case, these foreign banks simply based their management policies on theories developed in their home countries (cited in Duke, 2004).

4.4 The Socio-Political System

The British operated a system which largely created and enforced an attitude of servitude on the part of the indigenous population. There was a deliberate segregation policy which was unambiguously expressed in the creation of separate European housing settlements, recreational clubs, medical facilities, etc. This obnoxious practice, with its attendant demoralizing effect on the local populace, characterized virtually all human interaction under the colonial system. The policy of open segregation unfortunately contributed significantly towards curbing the exchange of ideas and free expression between the colonialists and the local people. Under the situation, it obviously became difficult for germination of cross-fertilized ideas to occur and spread among a large section of Nigerians. Development or progress of home-grown management principles and practices naturally suffered in the process.

The policy of social segregation stood in sharp contrast to some indigenous management systems that were practiced by sections of the local population. A key example is the *House* system of management that was perfected in the southern parts of Nigeria by the Efik people of Old Calabar. The *House* system was founded

originally on a family grouping or clan with a common ancestor who is considered its primogenitor and patriarch. The *House* was made up of a number of sub-families composed of all persons related, connected or associated, one way or another, with the founder, and subsequently principal members, of the house – whether as descendants, servants or persons who have done homage or seek protection. These sub-family groups were organized into cohesive machinery that could serve as a land and other asset-owning business corporation or trading organization. The Efiks of Calabar were able to carry out extensive trade with European merchants successfully for over three centuries mainly using the *House* system as the basic platform for organizing the trade. Although headship or chief executive position of the house was reserved for a lineal descendant of the founder of the house, all elements within the *House* had a sense of common kinship or paternity which facilitated full participation, cooperation and exchange of ideas and knowledge regarding all matters of importance to the corporate existence. The fact that the *House* system has survived till date, even in the face of changing socio-political circumstances of Calabar indicates the efficacy of the management philosophy that promotes inclusion, free exchange and cooperation of all members.

Whereas the house system described above promoted the continued search for, and application of, management principles that facilitated the full cooperation of a large number of people operating under a common organization towards the achievement of the set goals, the class segregation in European sponsored social organizations on the other hand served to discourage exchange of ideas and innovation of management practices, and ultimately development of management principles and theory in Nigeria.

5. Conflict and the Development of Management Principles, Practices and Theory in Nigerian Institutions

Against the foregoing background of colonial policies and their implications for some of the important aspects of life, it can be argued that the smooth and orderly development of Nigeria suffered serious impediments during this period. Conflicts generated by the strictures of colonialism may have deterred the smooth development and articulation of modern Nigerian theory of management which could be applied across organizations. However, the fact of the cultural, racial and religious diversity of the peoples of Nigeria may have complicated the situation. This diversity made it difficult to describe common or unified local philosophies that could cut across the various ethnic peoples of nation, and which may be applied broadly in modern Nigerian organizations. As Uwa (2004) observed, the absence of such indigenous philosophies poses a real challenge to the development of management solutions or theory that best fits the Nigerian system.

The direct result of a lack of home-grown management theory has been the wholesale importation of theories cultivated and developed in the western world, under foreign environmental circumstances. The colonial administration-sponsored/supported organizations had practised (and, their survivors continue to practice) management policies and strategies based on theories perfected in their home or headquarters' countries. These business organizations are essentially still tied to the 'apron-strings' of their parent companies, and as such, management policies as practiced therein are predictably based on foreign theories. Although Nigerians now form the bulk of the top-management personnel in such establishments, they are often required to strictly observe or abide by the processes prescribed by their overseas parent company.

5.1 The Nigerian Civil Service and Educational Institutions in the Development of Management Practices and Principles

The Nigerian civil service is arguably the institution that perfectly reflects the legacy of colonialism. It was conceptualized and designed as the British machinery for promoting, implementing and defending the administrative and economic policies of the colonialists. The civil service therefore essentially sought, in its operations to ensure: the maintenance of law and order; payment of taxes as a form of loyalty to the Queen/King of England; and, delivery of local raw materials for exportation and onward processing into finished products abroad and subsequent importation back to Nigeria for purchase and consumption. Given this background, the colonial civil service, from the outset, was built on the bureaucratic tenets of centralization and hierarchical control, with little emphasis on initiative, innovation and competition. The doggedness with which the principles of centralization and hierarchy were applied (and, are still applied) to the operation of the system has made experimentation with alternative ideas difficult. In view of this, the Nigerian civil service, despite several attempts at modern reforms, has hardly provided a fertile ground for the cultivation of indigenous management principles and theory, the various reforms carried out over the years not withstanding. Indeed, these reforms which have mostly been targeted at addressing issues of inefficiency, red-tape and lack of prudence have failed to deliver quality services as a result of obsolescence, lethargy and lack of enthusiasm on the part of operators. The reforms that have been carried out since the establishment of the Nigerian Civil Service are presented in Table 1.

The reforms carried out in the civil service mainly centred on form, structure, tenure and compensation rather than issues of efficiency and delivery - which would have provided the necessary platform for generating appropriate principles and practices for management of the service. Accordingly, they may not have offered any visible impetuous to the development of unique management principles and theory suited for the Nigerian environment. Furthermore, the continued gap between the goals of public organizations and actual delivery confirms that an effective set of functional principles has not yet been arrived at within the scope of the civil service. On the other hand, it is the tertiary institutions (specifically the universities, polytechnics and institutes of technology that have management science schools) and the human resource development centres that can be considered the active arena for management studies in Nigeria. However, in most of the local business schools, the curriculum is still solely based on the study of foreign management concepts and theories.

While several works, including Eze (1995) and Inyang (2008) have made attempts at identifying the need for the development of such theory, no new and significant theories or tools can verifiably be said to have been perfected and widely implemented arising from these works. At best, initial building blocks have been set for the formalization of management principles based on African culture such as the *Ubuntu* (Mangaliso, 2001) However, a framework consisting of 15 management techniques was suggested by Eze (1995) as the platform for developing indigenous management theory in African settings such as Nigeria. This framework consisted of the following:

1. *Management by Self-Revolution*

This involves a critical examination of the weakness of the black race in order to develop in Africans the qualities of self-acceptance, self-knowledge, self-trust, self-pride, self-protection and self-reliance, so that the African will be free from foreign manipulation and become independent, inventive self.

2. *Management by Ethnic-Groups Integration*

This would be achieved through workshops, to break down ethnic differences, hostilities and prejudices, and to narrow the workers' social distances by forging new cultural elements at national and organizational levels. Without ethnic integration, national unity and stability, successful adoption of management may not be feasible.

3. *Management by Attitude Change*

Again, this would be achieved through workshops in order to develop a more positive attitude and the willingness and determination to change.

4. *Management by Patriotism*

This involves instilling a patriotic pride and esteem in the workforce through series of orientation activities, laboratory exercises, and successful leadership acts.

5. *Management by Incentive Conversion*

In this case workshops are designed to re-orient the African workers away from spiritual-world incentives to material world incentives; away from religious-social motives to scientific and factual goals.

6. *Management by Non-Corruption*

The attitudinal change programmes aimed at changing African managers' bribery and corruption practices by re-orienting to corporate and national goals. Corruption is antithetical to management.

7. *Management by Impartiality and Meritocracy*

This is to counter autocratic management and inculcate fairness, equity and recognition in management practices through impartiality in personnel matters.

8. *Management by Accountability*

This means encouraging managers to be accountable.

9. *Management by Performance Appraisal*

This involves using objective methods of appraisal.

10. *Management by Free-Zone*

This is to encourage the free transfer of indigenous knowledge by creating foreign, expatriate and multinational free zones for African mangers to act themselves, engage in trial and error ventures and practice creative and innovative management. He suggests that other nations like Japan, Korea, Taiwan and India have applied this, and this could be applied in Africa.

11. *Management by Risk-Taking*

To overcome one of the main sources of Africa's underdevelopment, which is unwillingness to take risk, African managers must be trained to develop risk-taking attitudes, which are crucial to effective management transfer. This is related to the activity of creating foreign-free zones.

12. *Management by Research and Development*

This is to counter the reluctance of multinational companies in Africa to establish R & D departments. Indigenous talents can be encouraged and developed by developing capabilities for continuous discoveries, innovations, transformations and invention in African managers.

13. *Management by Basic Revolutions*

These basic revolutions should be aimed at the self, psychological, nationalistic, language, cultural, agricultural and educational aspects. These revolutions are necessary to prevent another "partition of Africa" by foreign creditors and international financial institutions, and to bring about an effective African management.

14. *Management by Planned Adaptation*

This is an encompassing management device by which modern management can be transferred. To be successfully in this exercise, all the above management techniques must be systematically applied and effected in black African countries.

15. *Management by Human Relations*

This technique is to overcome the authoritarian management system imposed by the colonial regimes and multinational companies in Africa. MBHR will develop a more human relationship-based management philosophy that reflects patriotism, nationalism, equal participation, full delegation, human rights, belongingness, ownership, and humanness.

6. The Effect of Colonialism on the Behaviour of Nigerian Workers

In this section, an attempt shall be made, from a behavioural perspective, at examining the attitude of Nigerian workers against the background of colonialism. This work behaviour will therefore be best understood against the background of the effects of the extant social conditions in the society (which is an external environment to the organization) on the one hand, and the general management policy of the organizations (the internal environment) on the other, as they affect the attitude of the worker.

And, as has earlier been highlighted, the policies of colonialism generally had negative consequences on the Nigerian workers' psyche. The importance of understanding the worker in the light of his external and internal environment cannot be overemphasized, in order to fully appreciate his attitude and behaviour at the workplace (Schein, 1979).

6.1 The External Environment

Because organizations are essentially open systems, they have a continuous exchange cycle of interaction with the external environment. This is typified by the organization's reliance on the external environment for its human resources, investment capital, equipments, technology, raw materials, market and information – the factors of production. The organization processes these factors, which it imports from the external environment, into services or finished products, and exports same back into the external environment. In this way, the exchange is perpetual or continuous.

However, the organization will have to deal with the demands and constraints the environment imposes on these factors of production, especially the human resources. It will in this regard specifically have to contend with the expectations, values and norms of the people who work for and operate the organization (Rice, 2003). Each of these people normally brings to the organization the pressures and demands foisted on them as a result of their involvement in other organizations within the society – family, associations, religious organizations, etc. In sum, the environment will normally condition the worker's capacity (on account of the educational/training facilities available to him), his values and norms (as a reflection of the society's social milieu).

Colonialism unambiguously endorsed and actively promoted a policy of class system that required the segregation of the colonial masters from the native population. This meant that the local people were firmly placed in a servile and subservient position vis-à-vis the colonialists. Under such conditions, it is natural that a significant level of resentment builds-up and dominates the psyche of the average person. Accordingly, the Nigerian worker carried this mental state of demoralization everyday to his work place. The corollary of this was that, he 'cautiously' displayed a resenting attitude. Therefore, while he may be seen to be punctual at work and

polite to his colonial master, he nevertheless would normally seize every opportunity at sabotaging genuine efforts aimed at higher productivity. It is reasonable to conclude that a dehumanized workforce is less likely to be as productive as a well-treated or respected one.

6.2 The Internal Environment

This is the organization, in which the person works, consisting basically of the workforce, physical facilities used in operations and management policies. The colonial style of administration, especially as applied in the public service, was premised on the bureaucratic principles of strong, centralized and hierarchical control. While some level of centralization and hierarchical control may be considered necessary for organizational orderliness and regulation, it nevertheless carries with an intrinsic threat to entrepreneurial freedom, as it demands strict observance and enforcement of organizational rules handed-down from the top.

Strong control is a motivational strategy that is based on the Scientific Theory/School of Management, which essentially neglects the human factor, while placing emphasis on maximum output from the worker. This administrative style assumes that (the native) people do not want to work or, at best, will do as little as they can get away with. As such, it is necessary to coerce, closely supervise and strictly direct them on what to do, always (Strauss & Sayles, 1980). Furthermore, it assumes that workers are hired to work and not think. Accordingly, workers should be treated as just another factor of production. Some of the work rules may even have been be put in place just to inflict further psychological trauma on the workers. This policy of administration also suggests non-participation of workers in decision-making. And, as Likert (1961) found, a free-flow of communication under a participative atmosphere elicited better mutual understanding, reciprocity and cooperation between the organization and workers.

The immediate consequences of the policy of strong control and centralization are multiple, but a few are cited here. For one, it provided the Nigerian worker with no motivation to perform beyond the basic work expectation or level. It similarly created a situation where workers set artificial standards of output which were deliberately below their capacity. Also, it pressurized and frustrated the people into fighting back at the system, through any means necessary. This may have, among other things, provided the impetus for the long-drawn struggle for the actualization of national independence.

Finally, the 'minimal' investment policy in the administrative machinery of the colonialism meant that the instruments of physical operation (work tools and equipments), staff training and development and workers' incentives/rewards were always going to be inadequate. Again, the corollary of this was low morale, low worker expectations and consequently, low productivity (as characterized in Figure 1, *Colonialism and work behaviour*).

7. Conclusion

It is clear that the conflict generated by the policies of colonialism has not had a positive impact on the development of management principles and practices in Nigeria. And, this has made it difficult for a coherent management theory of Nigerian origin to emerge. The colonial administrative, educational, economic and socio-political policies all contained elements that were designed to curb intellectual depth and vibrancy of ideas among the Nigerian people. Indeed, the public service gained notoriety for inefficiency and low-productivity, arguably on account of the principles it was established upon by its original designers - the colonialists. It has been a Herculean task to reverse this situation despite the several well-intended reforms carried out on the system over the years.

The typical Nigerian workers' attitude and behaviour, especially in the public service, has been a direct reflection of the negative influences of the colonial policy of strong, centralized and hierarchical control. As has been demonstrated, workers are likely to be rebellious, while offering only the barest minimum of what is required for their job under such conditions of work.

8. Recommendations

It is important to reflect on the fact that the Nigerian peoples had perfected their own management strategies which they effectively used in managing the existing local organizations. A typical case such as the Calabar *House* system, enabled the organization and management of large numbers of individuals and vast agricultural resources, based on a common family groupings and the use of paternalistic principles. This House system was devised prior to the advent of colonialism and was so successfully employed in the management of business, on a commercial scale, between the natives and the Europeans. It is noteworthy that the *House* has survived well after decolonization, a fact which attests to its resilience and indeed suggests that virile management principles and theories of indigenous origin can evolve from within Nigeria. This confirms the suggestion of Uwa (2004)

that the native associations, fraternities and organizations had guiding philosophies which management scholars in Nigeria could examine, with a view to developing theories out of.

It is therefore recommended that further research efforts be made in examining and structuring such indigenous management policies and practices as the Calabar *House* system with a view to modernizing and fitting them appropriately into today's organizational settings.

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Table 1. Nigerian Civil Service Reforms

S/N	YEAR	NAME OF REFORM COMMISSION	ISSUE(S) ADDRESSED	REMARKS
1	1946	Haragin Commission	Divided the service into junior and senior service	-
2	1954	Gorusch Commission	Restructured the service into clerical, sub-clerical, administrative, professional and super scale cadres	-
3	1959	Mbanefo Commission	Review of Salaries	-
4	1959	Newns Commission	Integrated then existing departments headed by Directors into Ministries to be headed by Permanent Secretaries	-
5	1964	Morgan	Review of Salaries	-
6	1966	Elliot Grading Team	Review of Salaries	-
7	1970	Adebo	Review of Salaries	-
8	1972	Udoji Commission	1) Introduced a uniform salary grading system 2) Advocated new management techniques to make the service more developmental and result oriented 3) Introduction of the Open Report System as against the Confidential Reporting system 4) Re-graded all posts based on job evaluation and accordingly recommended salaries	A very significant and thorough-going public service review
9	1975	Williams and Williams Panel	An adjunct to address complaints arising from the Udoji salary structure and therefore undertook a review of the grading and salaries	-
10	1985	Dotun Philips Panel	Made recommendations leading to the 1988 reforms	The service had deteriorated following the loss of manpower to the 1975 and 1984
11	1988	Koshoni Panel	1) Abolition of the post of Head of Service 2) Ministers/Commissioners became Accounting Officers 3) Directors-General replaced Permanent Secretaries and their tenure ended with that of the administration that appointed them 4) Civil service was professionalized, an officer was expected to spend his entire career in one ministry 5) Each Ministry was made responsible for the recruitment, promotion and discipline of its staff. The service	The 1988 Civil Service Reforms was codified by Decree 43 of 1988

			Commissions became only advisory and were to provide uniform guidelines and ensure compliance. 6) Introduced the Audit Alarm System 7) Emphasized training 8) Departmentalized Ministries	
12	1994-1997	Ayida Panel	1) Ministries were to be restructured according to their functions and objectives 2) Return of the Permanent Secretary as Accounting Officer 3) Restoration of the post of Head of Service 4) Examination of the factors inhibiting the effectiveness and efficiency of the service as well as low morale in the service 5) Maturity period for promotion put at two years for junior staff and ¾ years for senior staff 6) Return of the pool system 7) Retirement age put at 60 years irrespective of length of service	-

Source: Obikeze, O. S. & Anthony O. E. (2004)

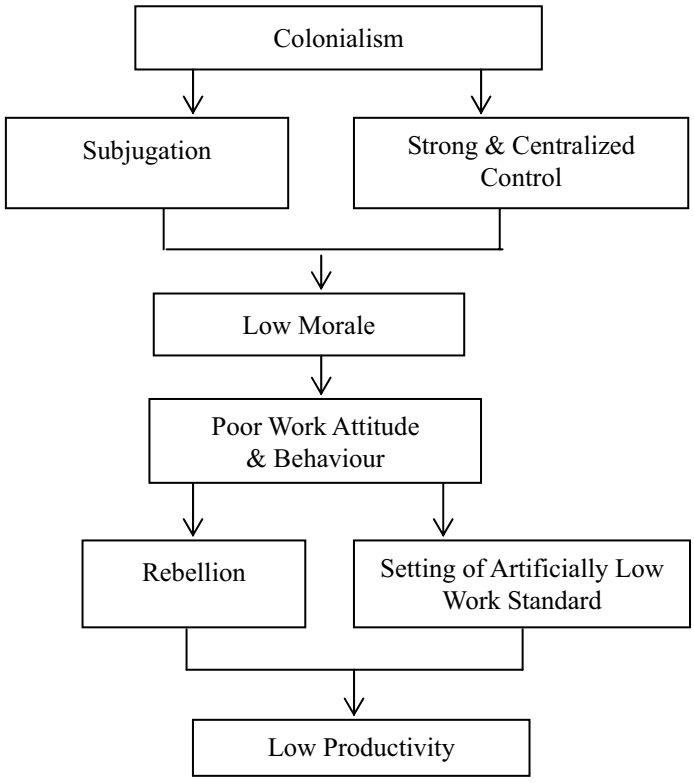

Figure 1. Colonialism and Work Behaviour

Source: Author's work (2010)

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