

THEORIES OF MANAGEMENT: TOWARDS AN EFFECTIVE THEATRE (BUSINESS) MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Capital is an essential factor in any business organisation. But beyond this factor, businesses require human factors to thrive. Among other factors necessary for a successful business is managerial inputs and administrative know-how, management/administration then becomes the life wire of any business organisation. Like other businesses, the ¹theatre business requires the ingenuity of a creative manager who has a lion heart to break even. Profit and at least, sustenance in the modern business is on the decline today because most managers fail to apply the right principles of management. This paper then tries to explore the theories/principles of management in the light of effective theatre (business) management.

INTRODUCTION

Management is an activity that involves tasks and through which the actualisation of organisation's objectives are met. From this premise, there is no one style towards effective management. This will imply that the manager in a management position takes the credit of whatever he achieves which further implies that in any organisation, every failure or credit becomes that of a manager. The output of the organisation translates the vision, dedication and integrity of managers and further determines whether there is management or mismanagement (Drucker 1974). The manager in a management position then becomes two dimensional in "skill and performance" (Ogunsanwo, 2000, p.3) and propels management to denote "work study" or "task study". To this end Drucker (1974) notes that within half a century, our society has become a pluralistic society in which every major social task (from producing economic goods and services to health care, from social security and welfare to education, from the search for new knowledge to the protection of the natural environment) is entrusted to large and specialised organisations and it is the managers and management that make the organisations cum institutions perform. To this end, Langley (1980, p.283) opines that an ideal manager should not only be one with an idea but also one who embodies a technical know-how. A good business manager is interested in his work, as well as the work of the organisation, and he is willing and able to pay attention to the myriad details that make things run smoothly, establish financial soundness and make everybody's job easier and more secure.

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In this paper, frantic effort has been made to treat the basic principles/theories of management which foster planning, organising, staffing, leading, controlling, and directing business organisations for productivity. The basic knowledge and sound application of these principles make a management/organisation credible or not credible. These management principles are universally the same and applicable to all human endeavour and business organisation. The Nigerian theatre business manager, like his counterparts the world over, should be a great planner. The manager within a professional (theatre) company or institution must familiarize himself with the decision-making process and tools so that he can identify the objective of the institution. He should state the philosophy, define the goals and objectives, outline policies and procedures, analyse, evaluate and design jobs; prepare budget to implement his plans and manage his time and that of the organisation (Akomolafe, 1981, p.428).

MANAGERS OF THE THEATRE BUSINESS

The act of management ensures the proper harnessing of resources and coordination of individual efforts (in an organisation) to achieve goals or meet the objectives of the organisation. To this effect management becomes “the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims” Wehrich and Koontz (2003:4). If the Theatre is (a) business with set objectives, then, its numerous resources must be geared towards the actualisation and realisation of the objectives. From this end, the business of Theatre management becomes *inter alia*, “the careful organisation and coordination of the efforts of various people working together in order to achieve the theatre’s goals and objectives” Adelugba and Okhakhu (2001:152). Theatre managers therefore come to impose pattern and order several parts with the right technique to make the Theatre business a productive venture. Stephen Langley examines the Rockefeller Panel Report, *The Performing Arts: Problems and Prospects*, published in 1965 and observes that a good art (Theatre) manager is:

A person who is knowledgeable in the art with which he is concerned, an impresario, labour negotiator, diplomat, educator, publicity and public relations experts, politician, skilled businessman, a social sophisticate, a servant of the community, a tireless leader – becoming humble before

authority – a teacher, a tyrant, and a continuing student of the arts (Langley 1980:22).

The managers of a theatre include but not limited to the following:

Board of Directors/Trustees

Private non-profit corporation (the most common structure for ongoing resident theatres) must have a board of directors or trustees. “Trustees” is perhaps a more appropriate name for a person overseeing funds primarily meant for investment purposes. In New York State (USA), a board member of a non-profit corporation is legally required to act “with high degree of diligences, care and skill which ordinarily prudent men will exercise under similar circumstances in like positions” (Langley, 1980:33). The director is often expected not to realise any personal financial gain while discharging his job. He may receive honorarium or get a reimbursement for any official assignment or trip.

A person must investigate before accepting an offer in the board such issues as: general and specific obligations, the constitution, any by laws, fiscal history and current position, fiscal and legal management like who the auditor(s) is/are. He should also learn about the other board members and why each has been invited to join the board. This will be for his personal and security interests.

The directors and trustees hold positions that are just more than honorary even though they do not receive salary. Being there, they also concede personal liabilities (although they may be granted indemnity if they are vindicated of negligence) on the charges levelled against the theatre. The Musical Society of Nigeria (MUSON) centre, Lagos, is an example of a theatre company run by board of directors/trustees.

General Manager

In commercial theatre a General Manager is responsible to the producer. He is responsible to the Board of Directors/Trustees in a non-commercial theatre. Here, the General Manager is given full authority over the entire operation both administrative and artistic.

The General Manager oversees all business aspects including the preparation and control of budgets, accounts, staff and day-to-day running of the theatre. He is assisted by the theatre manager.

Managing Director

The Managing Director has overall authority in supervising an organisation; he may play a considerable part in artistic decision-making, though he is never the financier.

Artistic Director

The Artistic Director is responsible for programme structure and performance standard. The title may imply that he may not have much to do with the overall administration of theatre building.

Director

This title often represents the person who controls and coordinates the creative work of the actor(s) or production team. The director can also be a paid administrator who carries out the policies of the theatre's board. Here he serves as the liaison between the board and the other theatre staff. He is often called by the title "Executive Director". This title may also empower this manager to supervise the business and the administrative aspect of the theatre.

Producer

This title originally denotes the person who directed the actors. In the modern theatre practice especially in commercial theatre, it denotes a packager of a show. The producer brings together the script, the director, the designers and the actors. Above all, he finances the theatre. Often the producer originates the idea for a production.

Production Manager

The title is used often in large theatres to denote a person who oversees a multi theatre plant or busy repertory season. He supervises the use of space, maintenance, personnel and the like. He does not (often) have anything to do with the artistic. He is often called the "director of theatre operations".

House Manager

In a professional theatre, the house manager is the landlord's representative. He is responsible for upholding the terms of the producer's lease with the theatre owner. In institutional theatre, he supervises domestic arrangement of the audience areas. This includes cleaning and staffing. He pays particular attention to audience welfare.

Business Manager

He works under the General Manager or the Artistic Director. He is responsible for the fiscal details of the organisation.

Technical Director

He is the person that supervises the many aspects of assembling the physical productions. He at times manages a large (technical) staff and budget. The Technical Director (TD) may also double as master carpenter, lighting designer or electrician.

Marketing Officer/Manager

He is in charge of a coordinated publicity and marketing aspect of a production/theatre. It is basically a new area in theatre because of the new-face-theatre business.

Publicity Director/Manager

He takes charge of all advertising and publicity needs of a given production or the theatre organisation. This also includes prints.

Box Office Manager

The Box Office Manager is responsible for the sale of all tickets for a production including reservations. He prepares daily returns for all tickets sold for the current and advance performances. The Box Office Manager balances sales against all monies received.

An aspiring theatre manager must have great ideas and should possess a sound technical know-how to make things work. The ideal manager for any theatre business may not necessarily have a Ph.D. in arts administration or degrees in business administration/management but must be a business manager who loves the Theatre and his job with special interest. The type of interest he would possess should be that that is embedded/coated with the zeal to achieve for the organisation.

THEORIES OF MANAGEMENT

Wehrich and Koontz (2003, pp.14-15) observes the role of theory in the field of management as providing a means for classifying significant and pertinent management knowledge. They further note that techniques normally reflect theory and are a means of helping managers undertake activities. It is the search for ideal and credible management embedded in new and efficient knowledge to make institutions and business

organisations perform that scholars over the years have evolved theories for effective management. The theories that will be examined in this paper include:

1. Classical Theory of Management
2. Human Relations Theory of Management
3. The Behavioural Science Theory of Management
4. The Decision Science Theory of Management, and
5. Contingency Theory of Management.

CLASSICAL THEORY OF MANAGEMENT

The advances made in the Scientific Method of Management and the Administrative Management Theory gave root to the classical Theory of Management. The classical theory recognises the essence of workers or labour force in an organisation and advocates the welfare of the labour force.

The Scientific Management came to be in 1911 when Frederick Taylor (1856-1915) published his *Principles of Scientific Management*. Although Louis D. Brandeis, in the meeting of engineers in October 1910 coined the title “Scientific Management”, Taylor is being recognised as the father of Scientific Management (Ogunanwo, 2000, p.9). Ogunsanwo stresses the origin of Scientific Management and observes that Taylor spent more than two decades using scientific method on the shop floor to find out the ‘one best way’ for each job. Until 1911, the concepts and practices which engineers adopted had been identified variously as ‘efficiency engineering’, ‘Taylorism’, ‘rationalism’ and ‘the science of management’. Taylor rose to the post of a Chief Engineer having obtained a degree in Engineering in 1883 through evening study. According to Heyel,

In his [Taylor’s] time as a foreman, Taylor made a determined effort to change the system of management so that the relationship between the workman and management would become less antagonistic. He believed that the workers were holding back production, he felt that the greatest obstacle to harmonious relations between labour and management lay in management’s ignorance as to what really is a proper day’s work for a workman (1973, p.180).

To improve production, Taylor advanced what was regarded as revolutionary guidelines. Wehrich and Koontz (2003, p.33) observe these guidelines or principles which anchor the scientific theory to include:

1. Replacing rules of thumb with science (organised knowledge),
2. Obtaining harmony in group action, rather than discord,
3. Achieving cooperation of human beings, rather than chaotic individualism,
4. Working for maximum output, rather than restricted input,
5. Developing all workers to the fullest extent possible for their own and their company's highest prosperity.

Other management scholars who have helped channel the course of this theory include: Frank and Lilian Gilbreth, Moris Cooke, Harrington Emerson etc.

FRANK AND LILIAN GILBRETH

Frank and Lilian Gilbreth were known for their work in motion studies. Frank laid emphasis on the arrangements for work, for instance, reducing unnecessary hands and body movement, designing and using appropriate tools or equipment to maximize productivity in labour-intensive schedules. To ensure progress, continuity and productivity in management, the Gilbreths developed a three-position plan for promotion of workers. These plans include that

- i. a worker should train his successor,
- ii a worker should carry out his jobs efficiently and effectively, and
- ii. a worker should also prepare for a higher position in the organisation.

Frank Gilbreth further emphasised that in applying the science management principles, one must first look at the labour force and understand their personalities and needs. This is to increase productivity since it is not the monotony of work that causes heightened worker dissatisfaction but, management's lack of interest in welfare of the labour force (Wehrich and Koontz, 2003, p.36). This happens to be a major problem in the theatre business today where most directors (and producers) have failed to recognise the psychological and financial needs of their staffers. This is a major problem this writer identified when he took a survey of some theatres including the National Arts theatre, Lagos, Cultural centre Mokola, Ibadan and MUSON centre, Lagos.

MORIS COOKE

Moris Cooke who wrote *Academic and Industrial Efficiency* between 1910 and 1920 has been taken to be the first to apply scientific management techniques and principles to non-industrial sectors. Cooke advocated that the concept of efficiency, which had gained roots in profit-making organisations, could also be applied to service and non-service organizations (Ogunsanwo, 2000, p.12) including the theatre.

Henry L. Gantt, Harrington Emerson, and Franklin Bobbitt, were the other advocates of Scientific Management. Gantt advocates that Overall goals of a programme of organisation should be regarded as a web of inter-related supporting plans (events) which people can adopt to achieve desired goals.

Gantt's charts can be described as the precursor of 'Time-Event Network Analysis technique'. Stressing the contributions of Gantt, Weihrich and Koontz (2003, p.34) observes thus:

He (Gantt) emphasized the need for developing a mutuality of interests between management and labour, a 'harmonious operation.' In doing this, he stressed the importance of teaching, of developing an understanding of systems on the part of both labour and management, and appreciating that 'in all positions of management the human element is the most important one'.

HARRINGTON EMERSON

Harrington on his own propounded what he called twelve 'principles of Efficiency which are itemized as:

- i. A clearly defined ideal
- ii. Common sense
- iii. Competent advice
- iv. Discipline
- v. The fair deal
- vi. Reliable, immediate, adequate and permanent records
- vii. Dispatching
- viii. Standards and Schedule
- ix. Standardized conditions
- x. Codified operations
- xi. Written handbook of instructions
- xii. Efficiency reward. (Emerson, 1913, p.89).

The application of the Scientific Theory in the business of the Theatre will harmonise and improve the working relationship amongst the Theatre personnel.

Fostering mutual respect amongst all, this theory will further empower the actors (through whom the business of the theatre is mainly animated) when adequately motivated. The business of the Theatre involves chains of rehearsals and activities which range from individual to group efforts which are all geared towards an end product. The rehearsal sections, workshops, seminars attended by the theatre personnel are geared towards efficiency and improving productivity. The managers of the Theatre in their individual offices work towards this improved productivity. When these people involved in this chain of production activities are well motivated, there is no doubt that the theatre business like any other experience a boost.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT THEORY

Administrative Management Theory was also developing when Scientific Management Theory was at its apex in America. Among the advocates of the Administrative Management Theory were Henri Fayol, Luther Gulick, Oliver Sheldon and Lyndall Urwick.

HENRI FAYOL

Henri Fayol organised knowledge of management around managerial functions. Referred to as the father of what is called 'Administrative Process', Fayol breaks down the functions of management as – planning, organising, commanding, coordinating and controlling (Fayol, 1949, p.51). Wehrich and Koontz (2003, pp.38-9) lists Fayol's fourteen principles of management, which are also referred to as classical principles of management. These principles include:

1. Division of labour
1. Clear delineation of authority and responsibility
2. Discipline must be maintained
3. There must be unity of command
4. There must also be unity of direction (objective)
5. Individual/personal interest must be subjugated to over-all interest
6. Respectable remuneration must be guaranteed to workers
7. There must be a delicate balance between centralization and decentralization of authority and power

8. Order (material and social) must be maintained to avoid chaos and disaster
9. There must be a scalar chain of authority and communication ranging from the highest to the lowest position
10. Security of jobs must be ensured
11. Initiative: the use of initiative by staff should be encouraged
12. Equity: there should be equity (fairness and justice) in dealing with staff
13. Esprit de Corps: there must exist concentrated effort, total belonging and unity of purpose and direction.

In addition to the principles, Fayol also noted that industrial activities could be divided into six basic groups:

1. Technical (production)
2. Commercial (buying, selling, and exchanging)
3. Financial (search for, and optimum use of, capital)
4. Security (protection of property and persons)
5. Accounting (including statistics)
6. Managerial (planning, organising, commanding, coordinating and controlling).

The Administrative Management Theory is the heart of Theatre operations. The business of the Theatre centres on group of bodies or individuals (actors, directors, choreographers, designers, dancers etc) working together for a common objective/goal – theatrical production. For proper execution/actualisation of this objective, it becomes absolutely necessary to share the theatre job amongst its personnel with each managing the unit which he/she is most knowledgeable. Beyond this division of labour and specialisation, there exists a complete unity of purpose which Fayol appropriately termed Esprit de Corps. When administrative theory is conscientiously applied in the theatre, the business becomes a great “enterta-industrial” profit venture.

HUMAN RELATIONS THEORY

This theory emerged from about the early 1930s seeking to meet the defects of the classical theorists. Elton Mayo led the Human Relations Theorists. The report of the research on human relations on productivity carried by Mayo and others concluded thus:

- a). When special attention is given to workers by management, productivity is likely

to increase despite changes in working conditions.

b). Informal work group has great influence on productivity (Mayo, 1953, p.80).

Very outstanding in the Human Relations Theory is the X and Y principle propounded by Douglas McGregor while developing his ideas of leadership and motivation. McGregor seems to base his Theory X on four assumptions often associated with efficiency views of management (i.e. the classical theory of management).

These assumptions maintain that:

- 1). the average employee dislikes work and if it is possible will avoid it;
- 2). since these employees dislike work, managers have to coerce, control, manipulate and even threaten them with punishment in order to force them to achieve organizational goals and objectives;
- 3). the normal employee shirks responsibility and rather waits for formal direction whenever possible;
- 4). Most employees place security ahead of all work and often they display little ambition about work (McGregor, 1960, p.51).

While Theory X assumptions are negative, McGregor's other assumptions for Theory Y are as follows:

- i. Physical and mental efforts expended on work can be seen as natural as relaxation or play.
- ii. The employee will naturally exercise self-direction and control if he is committed to the objectives/goals of the organization.
- iii. The ability to be creative, imaginative and use initiative is widely dispersed among the population in the solution of organizational problems not limited only to those holding administrative functions.

Despite the efficiency of this theory, it may not always be effective in Nigeria, the situation here may demand a theory Y administrator with a theory X assumptions. The dictates of this theory seems to be considering what is today known as "Nigerian factor" where people seem to emphasise more what they will get instead of what they will put in. This also affects the theatre business especially when "passers by" are entrusted with its business in whatever capacity.

THE BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE THEORY OF MANAGEMENT

This theory focused on behavioural attitude of workers to work. The theory came up as the quest/search for organizational goals and deficiency. Most of the adherents who were social psychologists used experiments and research in their systems approach to effecting their goals. These adherents recognized that organizations are made up of human beings who are influenced by many variables both within and outside the organisation.

HUGO MUNSTERBERG

Wehrich and Koontz (2003, p.40) identify Hugo Munsterberg as “the father of industrial psychology” whose interest shifted to the application of psychology to industry in 1910. Hugo saw the need to apply behavioural science to the new scientific management movement. Hugo stated his objectives as to discover:

- (1) How to find people whose mental qualities best fit them for the work they are to do.
- (2) Under what psychological conditions the greatest and most satisfactory output can be obtained from the work of every person, and
- (3) how business can influence workers in such a way as to obtain the best possible results from them.

The behavioural theorists who advocated the introduction of democracy in organisations through participative decision-making laid more emphasis on input and output of an organisation. Their contributions include organizational change, motivation, conflict management and the integration of the goals of individual workers with those of the organisation. In the theatre business, this theory may have arguably given rise to the series of production meetings where ideas and instructions are shared and given.

CHESTER I. BARNARD

Another behavioural theorist was Chester I. Barnard who saw an organisation as a social system of cooperation that involves the conscious coordination of activities of persons within it. Barnard advocates personal experience and understanding of the job of administration to be implicit and adept in executive practice or in the leadership of organisation (Barnard, 1938, p.viii).

Barnard identifies 'effectiveness' and 'efficiency' as inevitable for the success of an organisation, which he described as a 'system of cooperation'. He saw effective communication as a life-wire of an organisation and thought that the personnel must co-relate. He observes that in an organisation, a person will only accept a communication as authoritative only when four conditions simultaneously occur. Barnard (1938, p.165) lists these conditions thus:

- A. He can and does understand the communication,
- B. At the time of his decisions, he believes that it is not inconsistent with the purpose of the organisation,
- C. At the time of his decision, he believes it to be complete with his personal interest as a whole, and
- D. He is able mentally and physically to comply with it.

MAX WEBER

Max Weber whose greatest contribution to management is the formulation of bureaucratic concept in an organisation is recognised as the founder of modern sociology. Weber identifies procedures of carrying out objectives effectively and efficiently in such bureaucratic organisations to include that:

- A. There should be a body of rules that would govern expected behaviour,
- B. There should be clearly specified division of labour, powers, and obligations,
- C. There should be a hierarchy of positions,
- D. There should be training in the rules and requirements of positions,
- E. There should be freedom to assign people to positions according to the needs of the organisation,
- F. There should be wide use of written communication to guarantee continuity of rules and decisions (Weber, 1947, p.115).

This theory forms one of the bases of theatrical business: the assuming and playing of roles. The understanding of this theory will empower each manager or personnel of the theatre to work effectively according to the demands of his office.

THE DECISION SCIENCE THEORY OF MANAGEMENT

The Decision Science Theory is identified simply as ‘decision-making’. Herbert Simon distinguishes between ‘programmed and non-programmed decisions’. Programmed decision denotes decisions made by following a pre-arranged set of instructions or conventions and traditions while non-programmed decision is often complex and unstructured. This is based on judgment, intuition, experience, training, and in-sight that allow individuals to arrive at different conclusions given the same subject and information.

The importance of this movement lies in its ability to help managers make decision. Decision-making is the process of planning, identifying problems, searching for alternate solutions, evaluating such solutions and arriving at a judicious choice of option. Peter Brook emphasised this theory when he spoke of “deadly theatre” which debatably encourages every theatre manager/practitioner to be creative, innovative as well as eclectic in his conducts. A “deadly” theatre manager may detrimental to the organisation.

The use of mathematical model(s) (an equation or set of equations that represents a phenomenon) is essential in decision science theory of management. Two examples can illustrate such models:

- i. A sample of a widely used model is the business model – EOQ (Economic Order Quantity) models.

$$EOQ = \sqrt{2AS/R}$$

Where A = cost of acquiring/Purchasing inventory items

S = annual sales

R = the retention or carrying cost

In effect, the model outlines that EOQ is the quantity of order which strikes the best (lowest) balance between purchasing and retention cost

- ii. There is also the balance sheet equation, with which model most business scholars were quite familiar:

$$A = L+P$$

Where A = total assets

L = Total liabilities

P = Total proprietorship

This equation is further elaborated to:

$$\begin{aligned} P_n &= P(n-1) + [1(n-1) \rightarrow E_n - E(n-1) \rightarrow n] \\ &= P(n-1) + [1(n-1) \rightarrow n - E(n-1) \rightarrow n] \end{aligned}$$

Where P_n = Proprietorship at the end “n” number of year.

$P(n-1)$ = income during the previous year.

$E(n-1)$ = expenditure during the previous year.

The development and practice of Management Information System (MIS), Decision Support System (DSS) and Expert Systems are greatly influenced by the Decision Science Theory of Management.

In the theatre, this theory to a great extent, will not only help the theatre access its progress but will also help the managers plan a better and more efficient ways of handling management hitches thereby achieving set objectives with the use of models. A model is often developed for each problem on hand which are relied on a set equations, which will highlight consequences of actions to be taken.

CONTINGENCY THEORY OF MANAGEMENT

Theorists group common characteristics into models of “X” and “Y” to make such characteristics stand the test of theory. This theory allows for flexibility in solving complex problems by managers and whatever success that may be achieved in the Theatre organisation are products of the situation of the organisation. The adherents of this theory see the major factor affecting management practice as the organizational environment, which preclude external influences like economic, political and social impact on the organisation or internal constraints, which anchor on the resources (including human/personnel) available to the organisation.

CONCLUSION

The practice of management or managing a theatre organisation obviously requires people with principles and technical know-how. The principles and theories examined in this paper are only guides to managers to know and adopt in applicable situations. It must be re-emphasised that it is only when managers combine expertise with disciplined character embedded in flexible management theories as well as transparent progressive communication that management by objectives (MBO) can be met and company’s goals achieved.

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