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## Managing the Seemingly Unmanageable Enterprises

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MANAGING THE SEEMINGLY UNMANAGEABLE  
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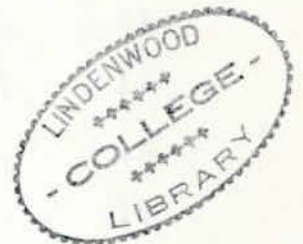
by Michael Daramola

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirement for the Degree  
of Master of Arts,  
The Lindenwood Colleges

Faculty Administrator: Dr. J. McClusky

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. N. Fenger

Winter Trimester 1979



Thc 010  
D24m  
1979

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project is: (1) to demonstrate my knowledge of Nigeria and its social, cultural, and political environment; (2) to prove my capability in recognizing managerial problems in a system; and (3) to analyze one of the many unsuccessful projects handled by the Nigerian government, through determining the cause of the failure of the project and suggesting alternative managerial solutions, based on management theory and practice.

Nigeria is a country blessed with mineral, agricultural, and human resources; yet it always appears that Nigerians continue to groan everywhere and live in dire need. Nigeria has vast fertile lands; yet it imports rice even from America and minerals from Germany, Japan, and the U.S.S.R. Nigeria is one of the OPEC nations; yet the supply of gasoline and diesel oil to its citizens is at best haphazard and irregular.

There are many factors which are responsible for these conditions. First, the planning efforts in both the public and private organizations in Nigeria in the past have been externally oriented. Agricultural production, based on a few primary commodities, has been geared towards the markets of the industrially advanced countries. Second, while the

capacity to plan has improved significantly since independence, the planning processes have in most cases not taken cognizance of the nation's social and cultural milieu. Third, the capacity to implement these plans has lagged very much behind the planning capacity itself.

One of the most serious weaknesses in the planning processes is the neglect of the pluralistic nature of the society. This is no doubt due to the fact that the planners and most policy-makers lack knowledge of the culture of this multi-ethnic society. A prerequisite of effective management is a sensitive awareness of the diversity of cultural situations within any country.

Nigeria's objective is self-reliance. If by self-reliance it means, among other things, that its development must be indigenous and not a carbon copy of that of another society, and that it must be internalized, self-sustaining, and not grafted, then Nigerian managers need to exploit the multi-ethnic nature of the society to their best advantage.

Nigeria has instituted several developmental plans. The current trend in its economic and social development leaves one with some doubt about how perceptive and realistic national development planners are in their approach to the basic problems of the country's public and private institutions.

The planners have all along regarded development as a kind of benefit to the rest of Nigerians. Instead of involving various communities in the planning and executing stages,

they have always chosen to import foreign agents to diagnose and prescribe cures for the nation's managerial ills.

The major problem which has always cropped up from the reliance on foreign expertise to advise the government and industries on national development is that these expatriates usually do not have enough knowledge of the political, social, and cultural background of Nigerians. Since they are little informed about the basic social problems, their evaluation of such problems is usually unrealistic.

The effect of this on the Nigerian economy has been negative. By this, I mean the solutions prescribed by the expatriate advisers are not only partly but in most cases wholly non-Nigerian. For example, despite the nation's oil boom, Nigerians are still living in want. The cities are getting filthier; inflation is on the increase; unemployment is soaring; the quality of education leaves much to be desired because there is not enough money to finance the education of the citizens; food is hard to get (this I will explain later in the paper); there is not enough water of good quality to drink; hospitals are always short of medicine; and where there is electricity, frequent power failures discredit this amenity.

Instead of getting to the grass-roots of the problems, the planners think prestigious projects (such as building skyscrapers for office spaces and blowing international trumpets) will accelerate national growth and development. This does not improve development. In some cases the results have been

disastrous. The attempt in Bendel State to improve transportation problems in the early 1970's illuminates this point. On the advice of foreign experts, the state government provided its cities with luxurious town service buses (like the Greyhound buses).

These buses were left unmaintained for a number of reasons. These included lack of spare parts, lack of competent mechanics, and the poor condition of the roads and streets throughout the state. Most of these buses which cost the state millions of dollars to purchase are today abandoned in junkyards. Traditionally, mini buses, small VW buses, have done excellent jobs on these rugged roads. Therefore, just increasing the numbers of these small buses could have saved the state millions of dollars and been a worthwhile project.

The manifestation of Nigeria's problems exists not only in the infrastructure but also in agriculture. Nigeria is an agricultural nation, but it does not have enough food to feed its citizens. Instead of researching various ways of helping the rural farmers to improve their farming techniques (as I will mention later in the paper), the government was noted for the importation of farming techniques which use heavy machinery. It is very unlikely that the local farmers will be able to own, much less know how to operate, this heavy farming machinery.

Lack of socio-cultural knowledge of Nigeria by foreign experts is not the only factor that can be blamed for management failures in the country. Another important factor is that



many managers are hindered by their submission to certain cultural beliefs (such as voodooism), as will be explained later in the paper.

In summary, this paper will deal mainly with organizational problems in a society characterized by poor management. It will deal with the main factors that caused the poor management. And it will reveal the effects of such poor management on the society, specifically showing how it hinders the moral and economic standing of the community. Since most corporations are either partly or wholly controlled by the government in Nigeria, references will often be made to the government in the paper.

The next section is meant to explain that Nigeria possesses the resources needed to make it achieve its goal of self-reliance if it has competent managers to run its corporations. I intend to explain the complex multi-ethnic groups in Nigeria and the problems posed by multiple cultures for management. I also intend to demonstrate in the section that most Nigerians are blessed with artistic abilities which could easily be transformed into better technological ability if there are better managerial encouragements.

## II. HISTORY OF NIGERIA

Nigeria is a republic within the Commonwealth of Nations in West Africa. It is bounded on the North by the Republic of Niger, on the East by Chad and Cameroon, on the South by the Gulf of Guinea, and on the West by Dahomey. The country extends between about latitude 4°30'N. and latitude 14°17'N. and longitude 2°30'E. and longitude 14°30'E.<sup>1</sup> The area is about 356,669 square miles.<sup>2</sup>

### Natural Resources

More than half the area is forested. Nigeria has a large waterpower potential, producing some 1,574,000 kw hours annually. It has rich mineral resources which include petroleum, coal, tin, columbite, gold, iron, lead, silver, and tungsten.<sup>3</sup>

### Plants and animals

Along the coast the swamps and mangrove jungles are populated by hippopotamus, rhinoceros, crocodile, and many species of monkey, parrot, and snake. The oil palm, the wild rubber plant, and mahogany, ebony, and other hardwood trees

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<sup>1</sup>Giant Colorprint Map, American Map Company, Inc.

<sup>2</sup>Nigerian Tribune, February 4, 1976, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

are the dominant species of the adjoining rain-forest region. In the North, in the savannah grasslands, locust, shea, and tamarind trees are found. Animals of the forest region and savannahs include the buffalo, gazelle, elephant, and gorilla. Giraffes, lions, hyenas, and antelopes live in the North.

### The People

The indigenous population of Nigeria consists primarily of Africans belonging to four principal tribes: the Yoruba in the West and Central areas; the Hausa and the Fulani in the North; and the Ibo in the East. A large number of smaller tribes add to the variety of customs and languages of the country, making this very heterogeneous. Nigeria is a country of about 85,000,000 people,<sup>1</sup> with 19 states.

### Religion

Religious beliefs and practices vary widely from tribe to tribe. People in the Northern states are predominantly Muslims and the Southerners are predominantly Christians. In between this, adherents to tribal and family cults persist.

### Culture

The tribes of Southern Nigeria have a long, rich tradition in art and literature. This is particularly true of the Ibo and Yoruba people. Masterpieces of Yoruba portrait sculpture in bronze and terra-cotta dating back as early as

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

the 12th Century<sup>1</sup> have been discovered at Ife in Western Nigeria. Yoruba poetry, inspired by religious tradition, is now being written by Yoruba and European scholars, and a quarterly magazine of new poetry is published in Ibadan in Western Nigeria.<sup>2</sup>

Ibo artists create strikingly original wood carvings used for religious and decorative purposes, and their painted masks of ebony and other hard woods have long been world famous. A more recent development is the use of concrete in the making of impressive funerary monuments. In the late 1960's clothing inspired by Yoruba designs (Danshiki) became very popular among young people here in the United States. Nigerian statuary and carvings are contained in the National Museum at Lagos, and the Ife Museum contains several bronze and terra-cotta heads.

The traditional Nigerian tribal artist has always been part of the mainstream of his society. Economically he is part of the farming community; morally he affirms the values of his society. As a participant in his particular culture, he expresses its concepts within the formalized traditions of the tribal domain. His attitude toward his work is being influenced occasionally by his belief in a universal essence derived from natural traditional forces surrounding him. His work reflects the attitudes and values of his society rather than those of himself.

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<sup>1</sup>W. Shoyinka, Nigerian Culture, Ibadan Press, 1968, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Religious and cultural beliefs influence the daily behaviors of Nigerians both at work and at play regardless of their socio-economic background. The ideas of Christianity brought along to Nigeria by the British during their dominance of the country which began in 1795 have not succeeded to date in ridding the people of their beliefs in voodoo, black magic, and witchcraft. They have feelings of deep occult secrets, secrets that they believe can make their lives better. That is, many believe witchcraft, for instance, can bring their hearts' desires: that they can use it to heal someone, to influence the boss to give raises or promotions, or to make someone stop bothering them.

Witches have been known in Nigeria for centuries. People are afraid of them and their powers. This still holds true today. It is believed, generally, that they have literally life and death control over others. They are believed to fly through time and space on astral wings, go wherever they wish, do whatever they wish without being detected, and watch the antics of others behind closed doors.

The above-mentioned cultural patterns are some of the factors affecting managerial duties in Nigeria. Many managers adhere so much to the beliefs of voodooism and others stated above that they totally ignore their duties while preoccupied with these traditional fears. This has totally paralyzed the economy of some sectors of the society, as will be seen in this paper. Until now, the use of the reward-punishment

approach to management has not existed. If the idea of voodooism sounds so ancient, hear what is going on in an institution of higher learning in Nigeria:

A Vice-Chancellor has said that some university professors resorted to despicable means in their lust for the vice-chancellorship.

Professor Emmanuel A. Ayandele of the University of Calabar said some candidates used black magic and voodoo. . . .

He was full of regrets for the behaviors of some university professors in the country. He said the office of a vice-chancellor would be vacant early in 1979. Already, in early 1978, the competition for the post was so keen, . . . some of the more than 15 candidates have resorted to voodoo power.<sup>1</sup>

For someone to be an efficient manager in Nigeria, he must first realize that these conditions exist in the community. He must design a system for dealing with them so that they will not affect his performance.

### The Economy

The Nigerian economy is primarily agrarian, although the industrial sector has expanded greatly since independence, aided in part by special tax incentives and investment guarantees offered by the government to foreign investors. The economy of the country declined during the civil war of 1967 to 1970. With the return of peace, however, the annual output of the country began to return to more normal levels. The government has embarked on many developmental projects such as agricultural development, traffic control, instructional television,

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<sup>1</sup>Editorial, "How Lecturers Seek Office," Daily Times, November 4, 1978, p. 38.

and the like. But for reasons I will discuss later, most of these projects have proven to be failures adversely affecting the economy.

### Agriculture

Before the oil boom of the 1970's, agriculture was the prime basis of the economy and provided almost 80 per cent of the country's exports. The exports included cocoa, groundnuts (peanuts), cotton, palm oil, and palm kernels. Livestock raising has been and continues to be important, principally for hides. As of the late 1970's, cattle numbered about 11,500,000 and sheep, 8,000,000. Other livestock include pigs, cows, and chickens.

The forests of Nigeria are an important segment of the economy, providing major export commodities. Among the species of timber are obeche wawa, abura, African mahogany, agba, sepele, and African walnut.

### Mining

Mining industries are of growing importance to Nigeria, which is one of the leading tin producers in the world. Large oil reserves, located mainly in the Eastern sector, are being exploited so that Nigeria is ranked fifth among the oil producing nations.<sup>1</sup> In addition to oil and tin, the principal mineral

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<sup>1</sup>"A Jewel of Many Facets," Ebony, Johnson Publishing Co., Inc., 1976, p. 148.

resources are coal, columbite, gold, iron ore, limestone, lead, and zinc.

### The petroleum industry

Petroleum was produced in Nigeria as early as 1958, but it became a dominant factor in national life only in the 1970's. Oil now accounts for nearly 98 per cent of the nation's export earnings, 75 per cent of foreign exchange earnings, 87 per cent of total government revenues, and 45 per cent of the Gross National Product. By contrast, agriculture employed 85 per cent of the population and accounted for 80 per cent of the value of exports prior to the civil war.<sup>1</sup>

Nigeria clearly depends on petroleum demand in the advanced industrial economies in order to finance its economic development plans. Nigeria is rated first among African nations and eighth in the world as a source of import of all products into the United States in 1978<sup>2</sup> and is the second largest supplier of its oil.

### Other aspects

Industry is diversified, with present emphasis on processing consumer goods. Industrial production includes soap, cigarettes, beer, margarine, peanut oil, metal containers, plywood, textiles, ceramic products, cement, and automobiles.

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<sup>1</sup>Lubeck, "A Political Economy," Africa News, Vol. IX, No. 20, November 14, 1977.

<sup>2</sup>Editorial, "Biggest U.S. Trade Partner," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, February 20, 1979, p. 12A.



## Economic Problems

Nigeria's most basic economic problem is how to control the raging inflation of the mid-seventies, generated by the oil boom and the general salary increase (known as Udoji salary increase), without stopping the nation's growth. In the agricultural sector the challenge is to provide the producers and labor force with an adequate return, while restraining soaring food costs for the rest of the population. Despite the fact that Nigeria produces raw materials, most companies find it difficult to obtain raw material to operate with. For example, both foreign-based and Nigerian-owned rubber factories have complained about raw material supplies in recent years.<sup>1</sup> The domestic textile industry has a rising need for the raw material, cotton.<sup>2</sup> The ban on importation of many commodities to boost foreign exchange and the value of Nigerian Niara (Nigerian currency) seems to me to represent a short term planning strategy that does not take into account the long range effect on Nigerian corporations and other businesses. This was meant to satisfy all domestic demands through local production. The import ban, however, inhibits efforts to fight inflation by causing domestic cotton and other raw materials' prices to rise, thereby increasing the cost of the finished product to consumers to an inflated level.

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<sup>1</sup>D. Smith, "Prospects and Problems," Daily Times, November 7, 1978, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Nigeria's effective role in international commodity negotiations is diminished by economic policy dilemmas occasioned by its disappearance as a supplier to the world oilseeds market and by the stagnation in its production of other agricultural commodities. Nigeria faces a dilemma with cocoa. To keep its marketing board solvent Nigeria needs a strong international cocoa agreement which could ensure an international price stabilized at a high level. Nigeria's share of the world market has declined, and this has diminished its influence on international cocoa decision-making.

I have taken a brief look into Nigeria, its cultural and economic affairs, in this section. The understanding of these factors I believe is vital to successful execution of managerial activities in Nigeria. In the next section, I will explain ethnic relations in Nigeria and the country's regional economy as a factor of poor management. I will also take a look at the effect of poor management on moral values in the society.

### III. FACTORS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO POOR MANAGEMENT

#### Ethnic Relations and Regional Economy

The regionalism that has characterized Nigerian culture and politics has its roots in the colonial era. Under British domination it developed distinct cultural, political, and economic systems in three major regions.

#### The West

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century cocoa was introduced on a large scale in Western Nigeria, the area inhabited primarily by the Yoruba people (see appendix). Not a locally consumed food, cocoa possesses only an exchange value overseas, and its cultivation precludes the growing of food crops in the same field. Thus cocoa farmers became largely dependent on the world market. Despite vagaries in the cocoa price, the profits made from cocoa exports led to the emergence of an agrarian bourgeoisie in the West, including cocoa farmers and particularly land owners.

#### The North

Isolated from colonial contact for most of the nineteenth century, the vast Northern region held onto much of its Hausa-Fulani culture and fiercely resisted British conquest. Under colonial rule, the North was able to negotiate more

autonomous terms of incorporation, with Britain upholding the legitimacy of Islamic institutions and making salaried functionaries of members of the ruling class.

Groundnuts (peanuts) formed the basis of the Northern economy. Unlike cocoa, the groundnut was used locally for food and oil, so its value did not depend as heavily on the world market, although sizable quantities were exported. The peasants who grew groundnuts and the other Northern staples were heavily taxed by their overlords and did not fare as well as their farming counterparts in the West.

#### The East

Exports of palm nut oil together with peasant subsistence agriculture was the core of the Eastern economy. Inhabited largely by the Ibo, the East was penetrated thoroughly by the colonial trading firms by the end of the nineteenth century. The Ibo remained a rural farming people until Catholic mission schools produced a surplus of trained Ibos for clerical and other wage labor positions in cities around the country.

Towards the end of British colonial rule in Nigeria, the three regions were given certain powers of self-government under constitutions promulgated around 1954. As part of the plan, each regional government was granted control over the marketing board surpluses from its primary export. Consequently there was little incentive for national integration, since the elite of one region needed no cooperation from the other in order to gain access to these revenues.

After the independence of 1960, the continuation of these three semi-autonomous regions with their ethnic and economic differences contributed to the various political crises leading up to the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70. After the war Nigeria was divided into nineteen different states. The nation, which has been under military rule since the political crisis of 1967, hopes to return to civilian rule in late 1979.

### Other Factors

Poor ethnic relations are not the only cause of poor management. Other factors which contribute to it include the following.

#### Tribalism

This is the counterpart of racism in American society. Tribalism was so widespread in Nigeria before the civil war that it was referred to as one of the reasons the nation went to war, because most Nigerians believed that one tribe dominated the government establishments. It was believed that the Hausa tribe was most favored because of its political power. This tribe controlled more than two-thirds of the entire population. This factor was believed to be used in securing employment, promotions, and awards of government contracts.<sup>1</sup>

#### Nepotism

This is like tribalism; the difference is that favors

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<sup>1</sup>Personal observation.

are given to relatives other than members of the same tribe. Here employment and promotions are solely based on the employee's relationship to the recruiter.

### Corruption

Corruption is the most threatening social problem which results in poor management, because it can obstruct the attainment of organizational objectives and thereby create more hardships and frustrations to millions of Nigerians. The malaise is so widespread that it is practiced in many government institutions and by functionaries at every level of society.

Corruption is practiced at various levels. At the village level it may be less sophisticated than at the state level, but it is equally common. For example, a village farmer may take a keg of palm wine and some of his farm produce to the local administrator or chief in order to influence him for a favor. The entire community may "dash" the district administrator with a goat or other valuable to influence, say, the location of a business or institution in its area.

At the state level corruption is much more institutionalized. It pervades the entire network of private and public institutions. Corruption ranges from the wrong use of company property, the abuse of public office for private gains, and diversion of huge sums of public funds to private ends, to the exaction of bribes for the award of company or government contracts.

Dismissal from public employment in 1975 of over 11,000 managers including state governors, heads of federal and state ministries and departments, army officers, customs officials, university administrators, and even laborers, illustrates how widespread corruption is in Nigeria and partly explains the reason for the ineffectiveness of most public and private institutions.<sup>1</sup> Ten out of twelve state governors of the ousted General Yakubu Gowon's regime<sup>2</sup> were found guilty of appropriating a total of \$16 million for their private use.<sup>3</sup> The former administrator of the Northwest state was found guilty of receiving bribes and awarding contracts worth several million dollars without the knowledge of the state tender's board.<sup>4</sup> Also 189 officials were dismissed from the customs department for poor management.<sup>5</sup>

Corruption directly and indirectly affects the execution of private and public programs. It also affects the management/employee relations within an organization. Besides, given the spiraling rate of inflation in Nigeria, the time spent by officials in negotiating "kickbacks" increases the cost of whatever projects they may be working on. Corruption

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<sup>1</sup>"The Purge of Public Institutions in Nigeria," New York Times, Sunday, February 15, 1976, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>The ousted military government.

<sup>3</sup>Daily Star, Wednesday, February 4, 1976, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup>Daily Times, Wednesday, September 24, 1975, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Daily Times, Monday, August 25, 1975, p. 1.

lowers the morale of subordinates who work under corrupt managers. It leads to a "paint up" behavior which is described in Nigeria as "eye service." Subordinates engage in an eye service when they pretend to work hard before a supervisor but relax to idleness on his departure.

The prevalence of corruption in government and private industries leads to organizational goal displacement. In pursuit of private goals, several officials in the public institutions, for instance, form cliques and informal groups in order to maximize their benefits at the expense of the attainment of institutional goals. In effect public institutions which are characterized by a network of patron/client relations and which steadily suffer goal displacement can hardly be expected to be efficient. Only the eradication of such social ills as corruption within a system can enhance efficient management. This corruption which was one of the primary reasons for the ouster of Gowon's regime in Nigeria has not been entirely eliminated within the system. It will take a new generation of effective managers to turn the system around.

Not only is corruption decreasing the moral value of Nigerian society, its existence explains why many national projects failed. Many managers devote most of their official hours to negotiating kickbacks and give less attention to their jobs and subordinates.



#### IV. FAILED PROJECTS

There have been a number of projects among those set up by Nigerian government for development whose failures can be directly traced to poor management in some form. These projects include traffic control signals, communication, electricity, and instructional television.

The government spent millions of dollars installing traffic control signals in major cities like Lagos. But due to poor planning and inefficient management this process ended in failure with all the installations dismantled within a year. Now, Lagos is rated high among the cities with the worst traffic congestion in the world.

Like the traffic control project, Nigeria spent millions of dollars to improve its telephone system. The result to date has not been very encouraging. For example, a person to person call within the same city may take 15 to 30 minutes to be put through.

To improve the electrical system in Nigeria, many "dams" were built together with other systems to produce electricity. But poor management at the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria makes "blackouts" a common problem in most cities.

Before taking a look at the analysis of instructional television, the project whose failure will be most fully

diagnosed as a case study in this essay, let's take a look in the next section at some of Nigeria's major corporations. We will see how poor management has affected their developmental projects and how the problems created by this are affecting the entire economic community.

## V. DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS

Following the oil boom revenue of the early 1970's, Nigeria initiated a five-year (1975-80) development plan. This was a program of industrial, agricultural, and social development to be financed with about 48 billion dollars in federal and private aid. This was a plan designed to convert Nigeria from an economy almost entirely dependent upon oil for revenue to a more broadly based industrial nation with a nearly self-sustaining agriculture.

Plans which appear excellent have often been drawn up with expert assistance from international bodies.<sup>1</sup> The expansion of industrial and social development which the plans in theory were to make possible has not often been realized. Most of the projects involved were planned to conform with the patterns of developed nations without bearing in mind the cultural differences between Nigeria and such nations. Therefore, the implementation of most of the plans poses more problems and complexities than the planners expect.

A few of the problems encountered which made management a difficult profession have been in the areas of infrastructure, organizational resources, and outmoded agricultural technology.

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<sup>1</sup>H. Nwosu, Nigeria Development Plan (Nsukka: University of Nigeria, 1978).

## Infrastructure

The overall success of a development project may largely depend on the effectiveness of the services rendered by the system's physical infrastructures such as the roads, railways, ports, and other transport systems. The Nigerian transport system is characterized by poor coordination, mis-investments, operational deficits, lack of maintenance, inadequate utilization of human and natural resources, and most important of all, poor management and operational control.<sup>1</sup>

As a result of lack of effectiveness in coordination and poor management, the use of some branches of the transport system is somehow on the increase while others are steadily declining. For example, the road transport is increasing while the railroad and water transport are suffering management chaos and declining. I will analyze only the declining sectors here, to see what went wrong with these systems.

### Railways

The Nigerian Railway Corporation was established as a governmental department in 1898 and was made a statutory corporation in 1959. As a statutory corporation, it was expected to operate as a commercial concern, although the government retained powers over broad policies.<sup>2</sup> The corporation has so

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<sup>1</sup>Federal Republic of Nigeria, Third National Development Plan 1975-80, Vol. 1 (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Economic Development, 1975), p. 199.

<sup>2</sup>International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, Nigeria, Options for Long-Term Development (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 88.

far not justified the early expectations placed on it to ease traffic problems. Despite heavy traffic demand, long haul routes, spare track capacity, and regular subsidies from the government, the corporation has operated in deficit in all but one of the past 15 years.<sup>1</sup> Its freight liftings have substantially declined, from 850,000 tons in 1958-59 to 350,000 tons in 1970-71.<sup>2</sup> Operations deteriorated further between 1971 and 1974 and deficits increased substantially.

A loss of over \$186 million was sustained in the five years ending in 1974.<sup>3</sup> A number of reasons can be cited. First is that the corporation was hit hard during the civil war with a loss of employees of various skills. Second, it has an obsolete track system. The route is characterized by extensive track curvature, lightweight rails, weak bridges, and obsolete signalling systems. Train speeds at times are as low as five miles per hour.<sup>4</sup> There are other problems such as defects of diesel engines, heavy backlog of repairs and maintenance work, extensive detention time at stations, and poor facilities for passengers.

The most important of all is the problem of management. A long history of management/employee conflicts, lack of

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<sup>1</sup>Third National Development Plan 1975-80, op. cit., p. 213.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

understanding of the cultural environment by some managers and excessive submission to cultural beliefs (such as voodooism) have impaired operational efficiency. This poor management is mostly responsible for the underutilization of human and material resources. Empty wagons (coaches) are not always available where they are needed. Nor can the corporation guarantee regular and scheduled service. Unreliable and unpredictable service has diverted several railway customers to road transport even though it is more expensive. This is one of the causes of the worst traffic jams on Nigerian roads. The inefficiencies in this corporation also impose extra costs to the economy of the country as a whole.

These inefficiencies pose severe obstacles to successful implementation of development plans. The corporation does not meet its economic share of total transport demand in the country. Given the unreliability and unpredictability of its operations, goods and construction materials are not always taken to places at the time they are needed. These delays not only increase transport costs but also result in noncompletion of projects according to the programmed schedules, ultimately raising the cost of implementation.

#### The Ports Authority

Another branch of the transport system whose services have fallen far below heavy traffic demands is the Nigerian Ports Authority. The Authority was established as a statutory

corporation in 1955 to operate and manage the nation's ports along commercial lines. The Authority owns and manages 6 harbors with 29 berths--Lagos, Port Harcourt, Calabar, Warri, Burutu, and Kobo. Lagos and Port Harcourt are the largest with 18 and 8 berths respectively.<sup>1</sup> Owing to its management problems, the Authority has in recent years demonstrated inability to cope with the heavy traffic demands at Lagos and Port Harcourt ports. The congestion at the ports reached a crisis point in 1975, when in the month of October alone there were over 400 ships awaiting offloading at Lagos.<sup>2</sup>

The consequences of the inefficiency of the ports on the economy are quite obvious. Port delays which averaged five to six weeks for cargo ships imposed staggering difficulties on all Nigerian importers, exporters, and customers alike. Long waits of ships at the ports are accompanied by increases in shipping charges which the Authority transfers to import costs as part of its social overhead. Thus the cost of all imported commodities is unduly expensive, because of the congested ports. Goods held up for unpredictable periods of time at the ports create artificial scarcity in the local markets, accelerating inflationary pressures.

The operational problems of the Nigerian Ports Authority are not helped by the "lame" services of the Nigerian

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>2</sup>Editorial, 400 Ships Wait for Several Weeks In Nigerian Port, August 27, 1975, p. 1.

National Shipping Line which was established in 1958.<sup>1</sup> Despite government subvention, the shipping line operates at financial loss.<sup>2</sup> This is due to mismanagement which creates high tardiness, absenteeism, and rapid turnover of personnel.

#### Outmoded Agricultural Technology

In Nigeria, more than 64 per cent of the entire labor force is engaged in some form of peasant farming. Only about 7.8 per cent of the labor force is engaged in wage employment, with most others serving as household workers and apprentices. Nigeria thus remains essentially an agricultural country despite the increased contributions of petroleum to its Gross National Product. Agriculture will continue for a long time in the future to provide a means of livelihood to millions of Nigerians in spite of Nigeria's effort to accelerate the pace of industrial development.

Despite the important position it occupies in the economy, Nigerian agriculture has experienced a sharp decline in production of both export and food crops, a shortage of skilled manpower, an underutilization of labor, and above all an outmoded production technology. The bulk of agricultural production is done by peasant farmers whose average land holdings are between three and seven acres. The machinery used for production consists mainly of hoes, cutlasses, and other

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<sup>1</sup>T.N.D.P., p. 224.

<sup>2</sup>I.B.R.D., op. cit., p. 89.



primitive hand tools. Given the outmoded farming technology, the area under cultivation represents only 11-15 per cent of the land potentially suitable for agriculture.

The most significant constraint is the one which is related to "technology transfer." A majority of Nigerian farmers, whose existence depends on their meager farm products, are ignorant of modern farming techniques. They are not taught to experiment with new methods of farming or improved varieties of crops. Instead, following the advice of foreign experts, the department in charge of agriculture bought thousands of heavy farming machinery which later became idle because the farmers lacked the experience needed to operate them. This problem is exacerbated by lack of a sufficient number of agricultural extension staff to transmit the available knowledge and distribute the improved crop varieties to the farmers.

Apart from the shortage of personnel mentioned above, the role of government was almost entirely confined to fundamental research on cash crops such as cocoa, palm oil, groundnuts, and cotton, rather than on food crops, such as cassava, yams, and rice, which form the staple food for most Nigerians.

Projects of agricultural modernization are also inhibited by the inadequate supply of credit institutions. Though commercial banks extend credit to some medium and large scale private farmers, they are often unwilling to do the same to small scale farmers which make up the majority of the nation's farmers. The farmers that enjoyed this credit benefit represent only about 5 per cent of the farming population.

Another important factor that is overlooked by the planners of agricultural development projects is the lack of technological knowhow for the preservation of the harvested crops. If farmers are taught how to store their crops, this will eliminate the wastes during plenty and prevent shortages during bad seasons. Introduction of colleges of agriculture in the country would increase the numbers of experts available to go to rural areas and educate farmers on modern farming and ways to improve their outputs. At present there is only one such institution in the country.

I have explained in this section how not understanding a community's social and cultural background may ruin even the best of plans. The plans so chosen may achieve their objectives if priorities are given to the community's hierarchy of needs. For example, improved irrigation may take priority over heavy machinery. In the next section I will analyze the instructional television project, state why the previous plan failed, and suggest alternative proposals.

## VI. PROBLEM ANALYSIS: INSTRUCTIONAL TELEVISION PROJECT

The potential advantages of motion pictures as an educational medium have been extensively documented by researchers in the field of education both in the United States and in some other parts of the world. In the United States, such names as Wesley C. Meierhenry,<sup>1</sup> Mark A. May,<sup>2</sup> and Collin Cherry<sup>3</sup> are prominent among a long list of such researchers.

In most parts of the globe, the motion picture has been put to effective use in instruction as early as the 1950's. It was not until late 1960 that Nigeria introduced this into its educational system. With an unpredicted haste, the administrators of Lagos, the most modern city and the capital of Nigeria, started educational television programs, but without adequate comprehensive planning. Lagos is also one of the few Nigerian cities with most homes having access to television. This

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<sup>1</sup>W. C. Meierhenry, Enriching Curriculum through Motion Pictures (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1952), p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>M. A. May, Planning Films for Schools, American Council on Education, 1949.

<sup>3</sup>C. Cherry, On Human Communication (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1957), p. 85.

television program introduced to Lagos schools in January 1968 came to an untimely end that August.<sup>1</sup>

### Problem

Many problems, especially managerial ones, plagued this project to the extent that it became economically unwise to continue despite a growing interest on the part of the public. Planning, organizing, and controlling aspects of this project all were faulty from the start. Teachers and parents were not brought into the planning process; therefore, the planners received less cooperation from these groups. The employees of the network handling this program were not motivated as well as they should have been. The recruitment of employees bearing such social customs as tribalism and nepotism made the enforcement of corporate regulations difficult in most instances.

The fault was to a great extent that of the planners as well as the administrators responsible for the management of the whole project. Most of the latter had no training of any kind in the administrative field. The regular staff of the existing government-owned television station was fully responsible for the administration of the school program. This was a great mistake as a separate, well-trained staff could have been recruited to handle this important project while making use of only the existing technical staff.

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<sup>1</sup>Nigerian Federal Government Report, Audio-Visual Commission, 1969, p. 1.

Another contributing factor was the absence of a standard to be used in evaluating the effectiveness of the program before its total failure. Such a standard should have been determined during the planning process of the program. Because of this, the project administrators, unlike their American counterparts, did not care to verify how successful the programs they aired were. They did send program guides to participating institutions and thought the whole process would automatically adjust itself. They were wrong, for the whole project collapsed for not adhering to the management principles with regard to the functions of planning, organizing, and controlling. The teachers, who were supposed to assist in making this project successful, did not support it and pointed out its wastefulness in time and money simply because they were not brought into the planning process. There was nothing done on the part of the administrators to motivate the teachers to encourage the utilization of instructional television in their classrooms. Parents were also totally overlooked in this project. No effort was made to see how important the role of parents is in making a success out of this kind of project.

Another factor that also led to the downfall of the project is the fact that most of the managers here, like many other corporations that I have mentioned so far, did not have a good understanding of the cultural environment they operated in. This led to inadequacy not only in the operations but also in the maintenance of the facilities and equipment that

were being used, including maintenance of the sets given to the participating institutions.<sup>1</sup>

### Alternative Proposal

The need to prepare Nigerian students to meet managerial roles in their complex society is essential and urgent. Unfortunately the institutions of higher learning in the country do not possess the required resources needed to meet this demand. Therefore, the use of instructional television may fill this gap and bring students close to what is going on in a modern society. The quality of education would thus be greatly improved from grade schools through colleges.

The process of using instructional television if well developed will lead to the benefits outweighing the costs. All that is needed is to obtain efficient results. The plan I will propose, if carefully followed, will not only save money but also arouse the interest of the potential audience and help tremendously in eliminating the poor standard of education existing at present in Nigerian schools and colleges. The main objective is to stress instructional television's importance as an educational system if well administered. To establish an effective proposal, management concepts such as planning, organizing, and controlling processes must be understood and well administered.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

Planning. Planning is generally considered the first function performed in the management sequence of planning, organizing, and controlling. The planning function includes all managerial activities which result in a definition of goals and the determination of appropriate means to achieve these goals.<sup>1</sup> This planning process can be broken down into at least three interrelated phases:<sup>2</sup>

1. Establishing goals, time frames, and fixing their priority.
2. Forecasting future events which can affect goal accomplishment and estimating their impact.
3. Making the plans operational through budgeting.

The planning function begins with analyses of the goals which management seeks to accomplish. In the case of the instructional television project, the goals may be stated as: (1) having three or more educational institutions in the first year participate in the program and an additional three in the second year, and (2) introducing at least five previously unavailable courses to Nigerian institutions in the first year.

Once goals are set they must be implemented. The critical step in implementation is that of forecasting the future, the second phase of the planning process.<sup>3</sup> The two basic issues that must be resolved through forecasting are: (1) what

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<sup>1</sup>Donnelly et al., Fundamentals of Management, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

level of activity can be expected during the planning period, and (2) what level of resources will be available to support the projected activity. For example, consideration must be given during the planning process to the availability of human and financial resources to support the instructional television project. And the future availability of major resource components including material (TV sets, etc.) and capital must be forecast.

The need for planning is not limited to the development of plans for the attainment of organizational objectives. Planning is also necessary to determine the methods and types of controls as well as the kind of direction best suited to an organization. Although the success or failure of an enterprise or of specific projects may depend on the way in which the other two functions are performed, the quality of the planning function still plays a major role.

During the planning process, an initial investigation of the feasibility of the plan would be undertaken. This would include the survey of the institutions around the community concerned to find out how many schools, colleges, and universities there would show interest in the program. Also the support of teachers and parents alike would be advocated.

A great quantity of study guides and special workshops should be designed whereby attention is given to teachers' problems and suggestions made about the use of instructional television in their classrooms. Hopefully, this would also



convince the teachers that they should use instructional television as an educational tool. For example, largely because of the information contained in handsome study guides that were being sent out free to teachers in the U.S. by ABC, thousands of them asked their students to watch "Roots" on television as class assignments.<sup>1</sup> Special reading enrichment guides would be made available to the Lagos school system to help the teachers build students' vocabularies (which need to be improved greatly) and raise topics for class discussions.

When planning is required in an organization, this is indicative that the company is not completely meeting its objectives. Because if it did, there would be no need for additional or new plans. The problem then would be the discrepancies between the present performance and desired performance. The problem to be resolved by the planning process must then be clearly stated. In the instructional television project, thorough consideration was not given to personnel recruitment. The principles of personnel management as related to employee selection were not being followed. This personnel selection should be given careful consideration for the project to succeed.

Selection of program manager. In the hands of the wrong manager the instructional television project will be a monumental waste of money as was true of the former project.

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<sup>1</sup>M. Pines, "Home Screen's Education Value," TV Guide, December 16, 1978, p. 7.

But in the hands of an efficient manager, it can be a great project. The following items should be considered by the personnel director in selecting an effective manager.

1. Define what you want the manager's specific duties to be. State what problems he may face initially and in the foreseeable future. The standards he is to meet must be clearly defined.

2. Look for a person who can manage change. A good manager doesn't just manage. By the nature of his job, spearheading change is one of his most important responsibilities. Look for his record in handling change.

3. Match his personality with that of the subordinates he will deal with. "Opposites attract" may be true in romance but is seldom the case in business. The personnel director must see if the applicant will function in a structured environment. He must be compatible with the two or more subordinates with whom he will work most closely.

4. Look for managerial, not just technical, knowhow; that is, a person with managerial training rather than just technical education. He must be a manager in the fullest sense. A little knowledge of the operations of instructional television may be an advantage. Putting narrow specialists in charge of such technical operations will be one of his duties.

5. Look for someone who is service oriented. Nigerian government had recently fired most of its departmental managers for providing poor services. Therefore, one who will be willing

to put his job ahead of his other social responsibilities will be good for the position.

6. Check candidates carefully. Use the phone or go in person to check references; letters tell next to nothing. References are not infallible, so weigh their comments carefully and try to cross-check with other references.

7. Look for a candidate with knowledge of the cultural and social environment. Most important of all, the chosen manager must have a thorough understanding of the cultural, social, and political environment of the community, because this may determine the success or failure of his performance.

In the selection of other employees, only those who are experienced in the field and recent graduates with hard work potential should be considered. The accomplishment of the instructional television objective may mostly depend on the ability to attract, develop, and retain employees whose qualifications as to competence, training, and integrity will be appropriate for the responsibilities assigned to them.

This selection process would eliminate the fear of tribalism and nepotism, and also lessen the possibility of employing incompetent managers and employees. What this would do is increase employees' morale, which would increase motivation. Other motivational factors such as increasing two-way communications (manager/employee) and satisfying employees' physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," Psychological Review, July 1943, p. 40. For definition see page 45.

needs would be encouraged.<sup>1</sup>

Organizing. The planning function refers to those activities of the managerial process which determine, in advance, goals and the means for achieving them.<sup>2</sup> These, in turn, must be accomplished in definite ways and sequences in order to accomplish the overall goals and tasks, which is the major function of organization. Organizing, therefore, refers to the process of achieving coordinated and sequential effort.<sup>3</sup> This process for achieving coordinated efforts can best be implemented with well-defined programs.

The program - There are many advantages of instructional television depending on the programs and particular form of broadcasting adopted. Calven Gross, Superintendent of Schools in Pittsburgh, lists some of these as:<sup>4</sup>

1. Bringing to the classroom courses that are otherwise not available in that institution. This will help a lot of business schools because lack of access to them is one of the reasons causing thousands of Nigerians to seek overseas training annually.

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<sup>1</sup>For more discussion on planning, see Planning Theory by Breton.

<sup>2</sup>Donnelly, Fundamentals of Management.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Brown et al., Administering Educational Media, p. 276.

2. Satisfying certain special schools' needs, such as management courses for which the institutions may not have instructors and other resources.
3. Enriching courses already offered by bringing outstanding experts' works and unusual experiences to the attention of the students.
4. Supplying quality instruction.
5. Providing in-service training opportunities for instructors and audio-visual technicians who will produce the programs.
6. Stimulating students' interest in much greater activities as a result of projects assigned during and after viewing television instruction.

A parent-participation TV workshop should be organized. Here, parents, teachers, and students would meet to discuss the effectiveness of the program and discuss special programs that were televised, such as "Roots," "Long John Silver," and locally produced programs under the guidance of an experienced coordinator. This would certainly arouse the interest of the participants. The job of the coordinator at such a workshop would be to demonstrate to the participants how instructional television could be used to improve learning and communications. This would eventually build larger audiences for the program.

Since TV is now widely available in the private home in Nigeria, TV-based pamphlets, records, cassettes, magazine inserts, scripts, film strips, and study guides from advanced

nations on various subjects could be a helpful study aid for teachers. The teachers who receive these would probably show added interest and view them as teaching aids, rather than threats to their profession. The main concern here is to launch a major drive to show instructional television as an ally rather than a competitor with teachers.

The kind of guides that will be received with enthusiasm because of their aid to students' learning, therefore, are those that are of utmost importance to their learning experience such as the Shakespeare plays (which were acted by a British cast) and other locally produced educational programs by actors like Wole Shoyinka and Ogunde. An enormous package of these types of educational materials could be purchased from advanced nations. Items made available to teachers would include introductory records, viewing guides for each play or act, and teachers' guides prepared by experts on the subjects. Teachers would generally welcome such help in bringing difficult subjects to life and thereby increasing the success of the entire project.

Research has shown that the attitude of the class teacher plays a substantial role in the final result of any instructional television project. A televised program that does not meet the approval of the viewing teacher has little or no chance of effectiveness,<sup>1</sup> just as company policies and

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<sup>1</sup>R. Diamond, A Guide to Instructional Television (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 204.

procedures that do not meet the approval of the manager concerned are bound to be set aside and rendered ineffective. Therefore, efforts would be made to promote frequent teachers' workshops. At these workshops, teachers would be reminded of the benefits to their profession and their students when instructional television is well utilized. These workshops would also be the best place to solicit teachers' suggestions on how the project could be improved.<sup>1</sup>

Controlling. Controlling is focusing attention on the problem of preventing deviations in the quality and quantity of resources used in the organization.<sup>2</sup> Human resources must meet the job requirements as defined by the organizational structure; employees must have the capability, whether physical or intellectual, to perform the assigned tasks.<sup>3</sup> Methods must be designed which will enable management to implement control in the establishment.

Standards, policies, and procedures should be well developed and communicated as to selection, training, appraisal, and compensation of the employees. The regulations concerning the operations of the department should be spelled out to potential employees during interviews. Communications should be

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<sup>1</sup>For more discussion on organization, see Management and Organization by Henry Sisk.

<sup>2</sup>Donnelly et al., Fundamentals of Management (Business Publication Co., 1975), p. 101.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

designed to assure that the employees understand the extent of their authority, their assigned responsibilities, and the consequences of performance. A uniform "yardstick" should be designed to measure the performances of all employees.

Control should be implemented by the supervisory activities of managers. Through personal, on-the-spot observation, the manager would determine whether or not the work of his subordinates is proceeding in the manner defined by the company's policies and procedures. The use of monetary and non-monetary incentives to affect the performances of subordinates would be encouraged.

Since the main duty of the manager would be the coordination of the efforts of his department with that of the entire television network, he may delegate some of his authority to a supervisor to supervise the employees within the department. His duties would include seeing that most of the social ills, as mentioned, are totally discouraged within the department. Some of these include absenteeism, tardiness, laziness, and other such behaviors that paralyzed the former project.

It has been a general policy in Nigeria's economic community that when an employee is hired, he is retained and that is it. Regardless of how he performed his duties, he does not enjoy the benefit of a "reward/punishment" policy that should have been associated with whatever he does. Under this proposal, the use of a "reward/punishment" policy would



be highly recommended. Hardworking employees would be encouraged to keep up hard work by rewarding them for their performances, while the tardy ones would be dealt with accordingly.

A tight internal control system would be designed. It would comprise the plan of the organization and all of the coordinate methods and measures adopted to safeguard the assets of the organization, promote operational efficiency, and encourage adherence to prescribed managerial policies.

An effective communication system within this establishment would be instituted that would help provide assurance that plans are implemented, that cooperation is received from employees in carrying out all those planned activities, and that those activities are carried out with reasonable efficiency. Weaknesses in the communication of the institution's objectives, policies, or standards of control likely would show up as deficiencies in the entire program and may most likely signal a failure of the project. The formulation of these objectives and how to communicate them would be the major responsibilities of the supervisor. Also an external communication system would be instituted by prescribing flows of communications between the company and the community in which it operates.<sup>1</sup>

Motivation. "All those inner striving conditions described as wishes, desires, drives, etc. . . . It is an

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<sup>1</sup>For more discussion on controlling, see Management and Organization by Henry Sisk.

inner state that activates or moves."<sup>1</sup> Maslow identified five levels in his pyramid-like need hierarchy. They are, from bottom to top, physiological needs, safety needs, love or belongingness needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs.<sup>2</sup>

Physiological needs - The classic examples of physiological drives are hunger and thirst. These needs are satisfied easily in most industrial economies but in Nigerian society these may be what most employees are looking for. Once satisfied, they cease to operate as primary motivators of behavior and are replaced by motivational forces of a higher order. There is no one best way to satisfy these needs because the physiological needs of employees vary considerably. But recognizing these needs and trying to deal with individual cases as they arise will be advisable.

Safety needs - These comprise physical safety which includes needs for clothing, shelter, and protection from attack, and psychological needs, which take the form of ordering the environment into a predictable pattern and attempting to cope with anticipated difficulties of the future.<sup>3</sup> Introduction of pension plans and other forms of economic insurance will help satisfy these needs.

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<sup>1</sup>Bernard et al., Human Behavior (Harcourt, 1964), p. 239.

<sup>2</sup>Maslow, A Theory of Human Motivation, p. 370.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Belongingness needs - These are the needs to belong as a member of small groups such as work teams. Loyalty to these groups and need to belong to them may often outweigh the financial incentives and the logical appeals of management. Employees should be given the freedom to belong to these groups without constraints.

Esteem needs - These are the needs for self-respect, for accomplishment, and for achievement. Attaining goals leads to feelings of self-respect, strength, and confidence.<sup>1</sup> Praising employees for their achievements may satisfy these needs.

Self-Actualization needs - These are an individual's motivation to transform one's perception of self into reality.<sup>2</sup> These include self-fulfillment and the realization of one's potential.

In trying to motivate employees at this instructional television network, the understanding of these human needs is essential because they have a significant bearing on the ways employees behave generally. Since human needs are not the same, regardless of their socio-economic background, the supervisor would be encouraged to study his environment first to know what the needs of his subordinates are before designing motivational systems. Before designing this system the following points should be noted:

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

1. Better education. To be a leader (supervisor), one needs to be better educated in the field of human relations. It is the awareness gained through such education that the supervisor can apply successfully in working with his subordinates.

2. Treatment of employees. The manager must deviate from the concept that employees are only "economic beings." This could be a better step towards effective management. Instead, they (employees) should be treated as members of the entire organization as this would boost their sense of belongingness, and increase their motivation.

3. Flexible adherence to company policy. The supervisor would be encouraged to understand that company policies and procedures are designed not as rules to be followed step-by-step but as a guideline for execution. Too much rigidity could be a demotivating factor on its own. It should be noted that there is no conflict between the "flexibility" mentioned here and the "reward/punishment" policy discussed earlier or the use of a standard "yardstick" for measuring performance. What this flexibility would do is give the manager concerned the sense of really having authority to deal with situations as they may arise within his department. A manager may be flexible in handling individual cases in his department and still adhere to the company's policies and procedures.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The following are recommended for a more complete discussion on motivation: H. V. Vroom, Work and Motivation and F. Herzberg, The Motivation to Work.

A supervisor fails to meet his responsibilities when he gives inadequate consideration to the facts of any case, jumps to conclusions, or is hasty in action. He must understand the mainsprings of human behavior so that he can work more effectively and efficiently with his associates and subordinates.

If the employees chose to unionize, the dissatisfactions that were felt by them would likely be expressed promptly and forcibly. For this reason, the supervisor should develop skill in case analysis. He also needs to know how to be a good listener when an employee has something on his mind. All these are important points that should be recognized and applied effectively in order to motivate employees.

One of the major problems in providing competent managers for the Nigerian economy is the fact that among the twelve universities in the country, only one offers courses in business administration. No immediate effort is being made by the government to expand these offerings to other universities there. The well-established system of instructional television may assist in filling the gap between supply and demand for business education by making available tapes and lecture materials from distinguished overseas colleges to Nigerian local universities.

In this section, I have taken a look at why instructional television failed when first introduced in Lagos. I have also suggested an alternative proposal, based on my training in management, which took into account a well-formulated

planning process, a better way to run the entire program, a well-organized personnel selection process, and employee motivation procedures. Since the failure of the former project could be blamed on poor management, if this proposal is adhered to the result certainly would be encouraging. This proposal would not eliminate corruption, nepotism, and tribalism in their entirety, but if carefully followed may drastically reduce them and thereby increase the success of the program.

Most of the time, the abilities of these managers to operate effectively and efficiently were impaired by either not understanding the community's social, cultural, and political background or submission to the beliefs of forces that operate within the country. The results created by such inefficiencies have had disastrous consequences for the national economy.

Many sections of the economy have since we hope of finding solutions to their managerial problems. For example, the Railway Corporation tried everything from using military trained managers to the use of military personnel to the incorporation of its managerial staff. This nothing seemed to work. Fortunately, however, the government has recently corrected the management of this corporation to state Railways. For we want of these and other related projects.

Inclusion of the Wiggle, African Report, January-February 1975, p. 18

## VII. CONCLUSION

Nigerians live in a very complex society with numerous ethnic groups, where many forces like the power of voodoo, black magic, and witchcraft operate in contradiction to the known laws of science. Regrettably, many managers were unaware of these factors, while others have been victimized by excessive belief in these concepts.

Most of the time, the abilities of these managers to operate effectively and efficiently were impaired by either not understanding the community's social, cultural, and political background or submission to the beliefs of forces that operate within the society. The results created by such inefficiencies have had disastrous consequences for the entire economy.

Many sectors of the economy have given up hope of finding solutions to their managerial problems. For example, the Railway Corporation tried everything from using specially trained managers to the use of military personnel to rid the corporation of its managerial dilemma. Alas! nothing seemed to work. Perplexed by these failures, the government has recently contracted the managing of this corporation to India Railways.<sup>1</sup> From my point of view, this latest solution of

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<sup>1</sup>Business Briefs, Nigeria, African Report, January-February 1979, p. 38.

contracting the managerial duties to a foreign firm may not solve the problem. The mere fact that the experts that this foreign firm will send to Nigeria are not likely to totally understand the people and their cultures may complicate issues the more.

While I recommend a manager who understands the culture of the community he operates in, I do not suggest he share these beliefs with the people to the extent that it will eliminate his ability to manage. I do recommend a critical study of the social and cultural environment of the community to determine whether or not such forces really exist. Many developmental projects undertaken by Nigerian government have failed. Among those hit the hardest are the Nigerian Railways, traffic congestion control (air, land, and sea), instructional television, and agricultural development.

In the agricultural sector, for example, the planning process was given improper priority. The planners through the advice of foreign experts bought thousands of heavy farming machinery worth millions of dollars. What is wrong with this? Nigerian farmers are 90 per cent illiterate and poor. Therefore, they cannot afford the purchase and maintenance of this machinery. Government research in the field of agriculture is devoted mainly to export crops ignoring the locally consumed foods. Until the late 1970's, Nigerian farmers did not have the technological ability to preserve their products beyond each fiscal year. Making storage technology one of the main



priorities in the agricultural sector would ensure regular availability of food to consumers and reduce waste. All that is involved here is trying to achieve efficient management through a proper planning process.

Inefficient handling of their working environments by most managers adds more to the social ills existing in Nigeria, such as corruption. Notorious corruption undermines the economy as a result of poor management. Elimination of these shameful practices has been one of the goals of Nigerian government in its development plans. This is so widespread that businessmen and most managers consider it as part of the cost of doing business.

This scandal, which is only one of the results of poor management, was somehow being encouraged by some foreign corporations. For example, a representative for one American-based multinational corporation said that to avoid a potential scandal, his company turned over the distribution of goods to local managers who disguise bribes as operating expenses.<sup>1</sup> The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977 that makes it illegal under U.S. law to offer, pay, promise to pay, or authorize payment of money or anything of value to foreign officials may help alleviate this problem a bit. But America is only one of the many nations doing business with Nigeria. The only solution to this problem, then, would be improved managerial

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<sup>1</sup>Plummer, "Nigeria Goes for Boom or Bust," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 22, 1975, p. 3D.

practices, with strict systems of internal control within the Nigerian economy.

If this internal control system is well developed, it would guard against waste and inefficiency. It would also enable the performance of an enterprise to be measured against plans for achieving objectives by providing "feedback" about the progress of the enterprise and its degree of success. The lack of this internal control system in most Nigerian public and private corporations makes it at the present almost impossible to assess individual or group activities as to their relative importance within the overall corporation control systems.

With good planning, better personnel selection procedures, well-defined operations, and strict internal control systems, most of the social ills that plague Nigerian corporations today could be reduced or eliminated. The implementation of the proposals suggested for the instructional television program could give Nigeria a successful project.

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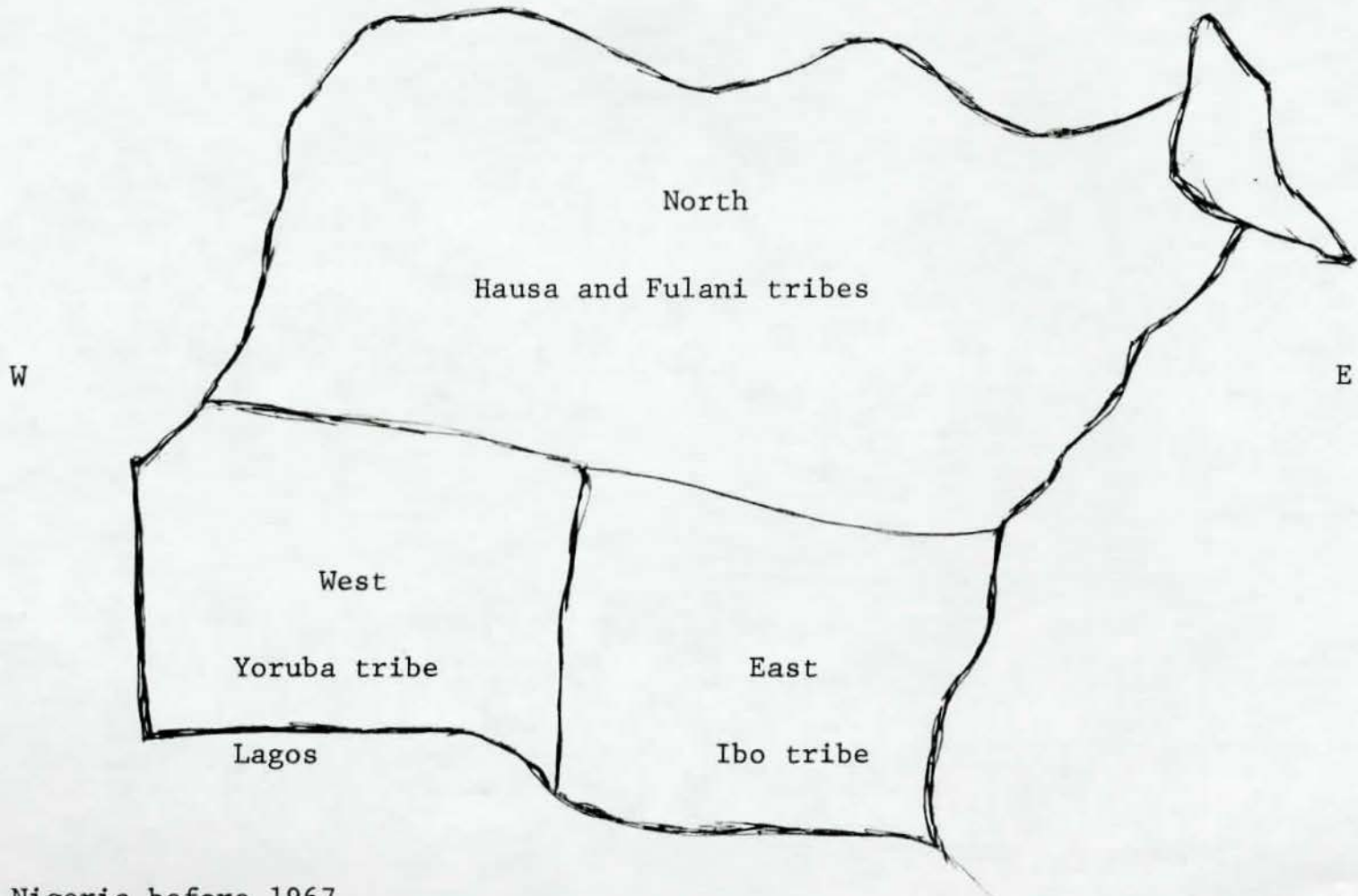
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APPENDIX

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Nigeria before 1967  
Civil War

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