STATE, CAPITAL AND LABOUR IN NIGERIA:

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE PRODUCTIVITY PROBLEM

by

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ABSTRACT

That low productivity is a crucial problem in the Nigerian economy is well supported by empirical evidence. Industrial factories fail to produce at optimum. Agriculture, once the prop of the economy, has decreased in importance. Food, consequently in short supply, has become disproportionately imported. Hence, food trade debts now increase already huge national debts to foreign creditors.

Yet the combined volume of imported and local food does not sustain the increasing population. This, sometimes, is at the very basic level of subsistence. Therefore, malnutrition and low life expectancy do occur in the economy. These have combined with unemployment, excessive inflationary trends, and low investment rates. The economy, thus, is clearly one under stress. This is basically because it is an under-producing economy.

The stress on the economy has lingered for a long time. However, it has been most marked in the three decades beginning from the Independence year, 1960. Several attempts have been made to analyse the problem. Most of these, however, have been neither conclusive nor convincing. Sometimes, factors in the innate personality of the worker have been posited to account for this problem. At other times, indigenous management skills have been criticized. Additionally, what often is described as Nigeria's 'Economic environment' has been regarded

as the primary factor responsible for the problem.

The present study provides a distinctly sociological explanation of the problem. Generally, ill-motivation among Nigerian workers has become widely regarded as the prime factor that explains the problem. Ill motivation among the workers is seen to be due to perceived discrepancies between the satisfaction of the workers' needs and the attainment of the goals of their workplaces. It is deemed imperative, therefore, to cut a path ensuring that workforce needs and workplace goals are simultaneously met. Productivity, thus, would rise.

This Path-Goal hypothesis is a point of departure for the approach adopted here. The former is regarded as reductionist in maintaining that the problem, in all its complexity, could be solely understood by reference to the human need-satisfying nature of Nigerian workers. In contrast, the present study emphasizes the need to trace the roots of the problem to its structural sources. It locates these in the conflicts between the State Government and Private Capital in Nigeria. It holds the contest between the State Government, Private Indigenous Capital and Private Foreign Capital for control over the Nigerian economy chiefly responsible for low productivity in the economy. Labour, it maintains, contributes to this problem through its resistance against attempts to impose control over it by the protagonist State and Private Capital. Therefore the problem, it holds, is not primarily one of an ill-motivated workforce.

In this frame, Chapter I defines the problem in greater detail. It also discusses some earlier approaches to the problem. Chapter II examines various general intellectual approaches to the overall productivity question. These date from the early productivity studies initiated in the U.S. and Britain before the First World War to the recent attempt to resolve the problem in Nigeria on the basis of social psychology. Chapter III is a critique of this social psychological approach.

An alternative approach based on an emphasis on the structural sources of the problem is given in Chapter IV. This Chapter examines some general elements in the Nigerian social structure including: Geography, Politics, Religion, and Ethnicity. It stresses the important role played by these factors in the Nigerian social structure. However, Chapter V argues that the contradictions between the State Government and Private Capital are more important than these in understanding the Nigerian social structure. Chapter VI underlines the significance of structural contradictions particularly for productivity in the economy with an analysis of the relations between the State and labour. What is concluded is that these conflicts and contradictions cause and exacerbate low productivity in the economy. Labour is not seen to be primarily responsible. Chapter VII is a brief summary of this conclusion.

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THE PROBLEM OF LOW PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIA

A. INTRODUCTION

Human productivity through work has been, for long, a subject of much controversy. Fredrick Taylor's[1] emphasis on the instrumental relations between the worker and work tools; Elton Mayo's[2] and Frederick Roethlisberger's[3] counter-emphasis on the social relations between the worker and other workers; as well as Joan Woodward's[4] emphatic concern with the role of technology in productivity give a few of the highlights of this seemingly endless controversy. And, contemporary economic thought, even in most advanced industrialised societies, is still marked by discussion of such phenomena as: the British Worker Question; perceived loss of social production impetus in the US; and, Japan's purported overtaking of both Britain and the US in its 'peaceful conquest of the world economy.'

One prominent focus in this controversy persists the worker and work-behaviour. And on the agenda are such vexed questions as: the cumulative effects of management control on the workers; the possible effects on productivity of workers' collective attempts to resist this control through unionisation; the value-loaded relationships between such workers' dissent and patriotism/national interests; and often, the perceived necessity to goad the worker into specific kinds of required behaviour through variants of motivation techniques, into higher rates of productivity.

B. NIGERIA: A SPECIAL REFERENCE

Essentially a developing economy, Nigeria is characterised by even lower rates of productivity than the industrialised economies in which the issue of productivity has been so widely debated for so long from Taylor to Braverman and beyond. Of the three countries in the sub-Saharan Africa classified as Middle Income Oil Exporters by the World Bank (Nigeria, Cameroon, and Congo People's Republic) for instance, Nigeria currently has the least income per capita of $890. Cameroon has $1010 while the Congo People's Republic has $910. In life expectancy, Nigeria, again, has the lowest of 51 compared to Cameroon's 56 and Congo's 53. On the other hand; of the three countries, Nigeria has the highest average annual rate of inflation of 11.6% compared to Cameroon's 7.0% and Congo's 10.8%.[5] In 1982, there was a negative balance of payments of $1298 million which in 1987, however, showed a positive balance of $3465 million. This, of course, would be due more to improved sales in crude oil and, possibly too, to the State Government's post 1982 fiscal measures aimed at curtailing imports rather than increased productivity. Indeed, if anything, productivity was found to decline by 3.5% annually on average between 1983 and 1985.[6]

The incidence of low productivity is, perhaps, most clearly demonstrated in the Agriculture Sector which in 1960 had contributed

63% of the GDP. This fell to 22% in 1982. Hence, of the three middle income oil exporting countries of sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria has a lower index of food production per capita average of 92 compared to Cameroon's 102, for instance. This means that the Nigerian economy has had to rely more increasingly on food imports in the face of a growing population coupled with frequent drought and crop failure. In fact, the International Food Policy Research Institute (Washington) projects an approximate 21 million metric tonnes of staples imported by 1991 if the calorie and protein requirements of Nigeria are to be met.(7) This food trade deficit could, in turn, worsen the balance of payments which present estimates place as a positive $3465 million. Indeed, in anticipation that this positive estimate would turn negative because of current food trade deficit, the World Integrated Model (WIM) projects a deficit cumulative balance of $210 billion for the country by the year 2001.(8) Besides, at the end of 1985, Nigeria's outstanding medium and long-term external public debt amounted to $11.5 billion (excluding converted trade arrears of $1.7 billion). This amounted to 25% of the GDP and because of the rather unreliable outlook of the world oil market and the country's consequently unfavourable repayments profile, much of these debts have had to be rescheduled. The significance of this is that the consequences of past and present low rates of productivity have, even now, been moved forward into the future.

Not much can, therefore, be written in favour of productivity rates in Nigeria. This, nevertheless, is in spite of the country's relatively abundant natural and human resources. For, its 923,773 square kilometer land mass, though subject to leaching in the rainy southernmost extremes and drought in the sub-desert northern fringes, yet is generally suitable for primary crop production. Barring the interruption of natural causes, the cocoa, palm produce, cotton, groundnuts, and rubber particularly suited to the soil types, could be so highly produced for export that much of the economy's import bill could be met thereby. Also though oil markets have been recently weakened, higher production continues to raise export revenues. Tin, coal, diamond, silver, lead and columbite, also contained in this land mass, albeit in lower deposits than crude oil, are also additional resources. Thus, natural resources are relatively abundant in the economy. So also are human resources which with a population of over 105 million[9] makes it the largest country in Africa. Larger than the other 16 West African countries, all in one, and one of the eight most populous in the world, its large population is its added strength.

But of greater significance to the potential productive capability of the country would be the evident advantageous age distribution of this large population. By the World Population Profile estimates (1980), out of a then population of 84,732,000 in Nigeria, 48,933,000 (i.e. 48%) were below the age of 20 years. Examined with the comparable proportions of 28% for the UK and 32% for the USA, what is indicated is a relatively large reservoir of potential productive labour in the Nigerian economy.[10] But of equally great significance is the indication in these estimates that the remaining proportion (i.e. 52%) constitutes a large active labour force in Nigeria. When the elements comprising retired persons, post secondary students, and non-participating members of the female population are subtracted, what would be available in the economy as an active labour would be a force of about 60 million strong. This surpasses the total populations of the UK (56.5m); France (55.6m);

seven times that of Sweden (8.3m); and just slightly less than the total estimate for West Germany (60.3m).

However, the teasing question remains why in the face of this relative plenty Nigeria has for so long remained essentially a low producing, undeveloped economy. The low productivity problem must be addressed if Nigeria's essentially undeveloped status is to be understood. And as it happens, most previous attempts to explain this undeveloped status have linked it with low rates of productivity as will become evident in what follows.

C. PREVIOUS APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

(i) Early Government Reports And Studies

Probably as early as the nineteen thirties, occasional probes had been initiated into the problem of low productivity in Nigeria and, indeed, African economies generally.[11] Constituted mainly of Government reports and a few individual studies, these probes chiefly dwelt on the image of an African worker who was characterised by "an absence of conscious need (and) contentment with little."[12] Being, in consequence, prone to high rates of absenteeism and turnover, he was seen to be inept at the workplace where he, thus, produced minimally.

A stigma of imperfect performance appeared therefore to have been cast on the Nigerian workforce that early. Interestingly though, these early reports and studies found little scientific basis for explaining this perceived imperfect performance on inherited imperfections. Rather, it was stated to be a factor of several primordial arrangements prevalent in the Nigerian society among which were:

(a) Traditionally, work aimed at making individual gain was unknown.

(b) Wage labour was targetted towards achieving immediate ends.

(c) Division of labour was limited to the two factors of age and sex.

(d) The organisation of work was exclusively dictated by the rhythm of the seasons.

Consequently, the earliest understanding of the problem of low productivity in the Nigerian economy was causally related to perceived unsatisfactory labour performance. As elaborated by the African Labour Survey:

> It is a fact that by tradition and background, the African is singularly ill-adapted for assimilation as an effective element in wage economy on modern pattern, that the reason that leads him to seek wage-paid labour heavily influences his attitude to work and his reactions differ widely from those of the European worker whose background and aims are so different. It has also emerged that the African's work performance is at present unsatisfactory in many respects by European standards; that in quantity and quality, it is often inferior; that the African sometimes lacks pride in his work; that he is often unstable and restless and prone to absent himself apparently without valid reasons.**(13)**

Obviously, this line of thought had major shortcomings. Foremost, this traditional image of the African worker appears to have been primarily based on studies which were limited to the period before 1940. They were also largely confined to only two regions - the then Union of

South Africa, and the then Central African Federation. Besides, they were equally limited to plantation and mine labour. Thus, the construct of the 'African worker' emerging from them and subsequently applied to generalise on the Nigerian workforce was based on rather inadequate fieldwork. Though as an extrapolation, it was of some heuristic value. Yet, given the expanse of Africa and the impact of social change on the continent, it is very likely that these findings as Peter Kilby, for instance, pointed out, were only of limited validity.[(14)]

Remarkably, the organisation of wage labour in Nigeria showed some marked differences from the organisation of wage labour in Central and Southern Africa - the bases of these early studies. Mine labour was dominant in Nigeria during the period as it was in these areas. But plantation labour was virtually non-existent. The labourer in the Nigerian coal mines was, nevertheless, quite a different category from the labourer in the South African mines. Work behaviour of an African in a racist South Africa would be expected to be influenced by the conditions there. For residential segregation, abject living and working conditions (including a colour bar to promotion beyond the semi-skilled level) would hardly be any incentives to efficient work performance.

Even so, that these early studies were inordinately reliant on management opinion is a methodological flaw that further undermines the validity of the traditional construct of 'African worker' extrapolated to the Nigerian. This would be so since such management opinions were largely based on views of expatriate officers who were often racially insulated from the Africans in separate communities. Being, in consequence, limited by difficulties of communication and by social distance, they could easily have misunderstood the conduct and behaviour of the African.

(ii) Inefficient, Indigenous Supervisory Roles

In a major sense, therefore, Peter Kilby's 'Reconsideration' of the productivity problem along lines akin to the above criticism in 1961 was both timely and unique. Fundamentally disagreeing with the traditional construct of a restless, imperfect worker, Kilby's conclusion that working conditions were a far more important variable than the attitudes and capabilities of workers was a major contribution towards understanding the problem. For, based on evidence from 29 establishments in Nigeria with a total of 30,935 workers, he was persuaded that a positive correlation existed between wages, hours of work, and distance from work, on the one hand, and absence and turnover, on the other. But, perhaps, of more importance was his finding that voluntary absence and voluntary turnover were low in these establishments. Where, however, they appeared high, he maintained, this was either because of low wages or far distance from work. On this evidence, therefore, emerged Kilby's important conclusions that Nigerian workers' performance at work was more dependent on working conditions than on inherent work attitudes.(15)

What is significant is that by making wages, conditions of work, and managerial behaviour his primary foci, Kilby had introduced elements of scientific management thinking into the understanding of the low productivity problem in Nigeria. Thus, in a sense, he had advanced the discussion by de-emphasizing those internal factors in the Nigerian cultural environment which, hitherto, had served as a primary basis for explication. These factors he now (correctly) considered in the first approximation as independent variables.

Kilby's consistency with scientific management understanding is further demonstrated by his preoccupation with indigenous supervisory roles in his approach to the problem. Through his studies of workers in the Nigerian Ports Authority; a privately owned soap factory; and a rubber-processing firm, his findings remarkably informed the productivity problem in a new way. According to him:

(a) When the proper financial reward is given, Nigerian workers maximally exert themselves in the workplace.

(b) The workers excel in simple repetitive operations perhaps becasue of their cultural disposition towards rhythm. This transforms repetitious work into a mildly satisfying experience.

(c) The workers perform badly in a complex work that requires co-ordination.

(d) They perform badly in work that requires specific technical training.

(e) The Nigerian is a poor supervisor. This is partly explained by past patterns of forced dependence on the European and by poor training.(16)

With a subsequent study of work performance in the West African Institute for Oil Palm Research, came Kilby's reinforced view that managerial behaviour was a more crucial determinant of productivity in

Nigeria than attitudes and capabilities of workers. As a buttress to this viewpoint was his argument that the gains in productivity found in the Institute were proximately due to:

(a) A continuing increase in supervision in both its extent and intensity. This was achieved by management pressure on the overseers and promotion opportunities of the latter to artisan pay-scales when their performance so merited.

(b) In the Institute, tasks were enlarged.

(c) Greater incentives, both positive and negative, were given to the workers including: promotion, to junior supervisory positions; clearer enforcement of penalties for failure to complete tasks; and selective dismissals during times of seasonal redundancy.

(d) Improved work methods and better control which contributed to increased efficiency.

Above all, however, was Kilby's insistence that the above causes were contingent on the more general cause that the management of the Institute had accumulated experience and had gained an increasing awareness of the importance of labour productivity, and in consequence had paid greater attention to the problem at the upper level. Hence in the final analysis, was Kilby's conclusion that:

> Low labour productivity cannot be attributed to the attitudes and capabilities of the African worker. On the contrary, where low levels of output/man prevail, the burden must fall on those responsible for management and supervision of the enterprise.**(17)**

And finally,

> Thus in the final reckoning, it is not the African labourer but his employer who must bear the stigma of imperfect performance.**(18)**

Remarkably, both the traditional construct of an inept workforce and Kilby's opposition to it indicated the existence of constraints against labour productivity in the Nigerian economy. However, the singular insight emerging from the Kilby studies was that these constraints were less due to workers' inefficiency or lack of skill endowment than to faulty supervisory management roles. This new thrust of course was an echo from W. Hudson's earlier finding in the Nigerian economy that, with possibly only few exceptions among firms employing over 25 workers, the adequacy of supervisory performance was poor.**(19)** These supervisors, according to Hudson, were often guilty of arbitrary and inconsistent treatment of subordinates and showed favouritism concerning discipline and promotion along tribal and village lines. Consequently, the work performance of the subordinate workers would be sadly wanting. Thus, poor work performance chiefly was a function of poor supervisory roles. Apparently, Kilby had followed this clue. And after adumbrating it, he largely succeeded in rescuing the low productivity problem in Nigeria from its traditional understanding to a more robust explanation based on faulty indigenous supervisory roles. This thrust, nevertheless, equally focussed on the personality of the Nigerian.

(iii) <u>Managerial Incapability</u>

Soon, still following the scientific management tradition to a large extent, explanations of this problem went beyond a focus on indigenous supervisory to more general indigenous management skills which were adjudged incapable of enhancing productivity.

Concerning the local building industry for instance, G. Akin Ogunpola observed that:

> Most Nigerian contractors are still to adopt similar efficient management control and it is not until they do this that they will gain parity with their expatriate counterparts. Most of the contractors lack managerial ability, business acumen, and integrity; all of which are prerequisites of a successful enterprise.**(20)**

Again, concerning local entrepreneurship, indigenous management skills were equally indicted for instance by S.I. Edokpai thus:

> A typical Nigerian businessman is a man with many weak parts. He is inadequately equipped with capital and technical know-how. He is apt to imitate known skills and methods but is least ingeneous in innovating new ones. He is invariably conservative in the ideas of economic change. He is low in business morals, greedy for quick returns and pompous in living habits. As an entrepreneur, his greatest weakness is his organisational inertia.**(21)**

Even Kilby, too, appeared to have up-dated his initial focus on faulty indigenous supervisory roles to accommodate the wider generality of Nigerian indigenous maangement. Hence, eight years after his

African Labour Productivity Reconsidered (1961), he subsequently wrote:

> With few exceptions, Nigerian industrialists are unwilling to provide continous surveillance of their business operations in terms of both physical supervision in the factory shop and in utilizing the principal instruments of management control - written records. This disposition is combined with a general lack of interest in production efficiency and in possibilities for improving product quality. Nigerian entrepreneurs are generally slow to move when their operations hit a snag.....Nigerian businessmen are typically unaware that their managerial performance is in any way wanting.**(22)**

Clearly, therefore, the low productivity problem in Nigeria had become explained on the basis of incapable indigenous management skills. Against this background, it becomes easy to understand why the Indians were invited over to help manage the Nigerian railways, for instance, in the mid-nineteen seventies. And, also, the similar invitation to the Dutch to manage the Nigerian Airways in the same period.

(iv) The 'Economic Environment' Factor

Though clearly prevalent as a mode of explication, managerial incapability was not the sole explanation of low productivity in the Nigerian economy as the debate unfolded. Sayre Schatz's attempt to explain the problem through an environmentalist approach provided an alternative view. For, while he granted that the managerial incapability factor of the conventional view was important, Schatz also held that its importance tended to have been exaggerated. Therefore, there was the necessity to examine the role of Nigeria's 'economic environment' in the productivity problem.

Emerging from Schatz's emphasis on the Nigerian 'economic environment' are a number of interesting points. Primarily, Nigeria's 'economic environment' was highly unfavourable to productivity. This, according to him, involved such problems as the requirement on the part of the Nigerian manager to make what he termed, technological, organisational, and marketing 'leaps' if he would attain any increases in productivity. To Schatz, the level of technology required in Nigeria often changed dramatically; sometimes entailing the adoption of an entirely different set of qualitative standards. Problems of this kind, of course, are very real if the changes in the production process of palm oil, for instance are taken into consideration. In this, a change from the rudimentary hand-press operations to the more technologically complex oil mills required the Nigerian manager involved in the production of palm oil to make the kind of dramatic leap identified by Schatz. This possibly could lead to an inhibition of productivity; more so, at the initial stages of transition. Also, the case of Nigerian saw milling in which sawing for export demanded greater control of quality and an ability to fill large orders in a relatively short notice would similarly involve the problem of switching to a different set of qualitative standards highlighted by Schatz.

In addition, was Schatz's point that an 'organisational' leap was also often necessary. This often involved a change from an enterprise personally supervised by an owner on a basis of close personal familiarity with all the firm's operations, to a more complex establishment requiring the use of more modern impersonal management techniques and devices.

Furthermore, a leap to new marketing methods also was often necessary, according to Schatz, for an expanding firm. The Nigerian manager, however, was handicapped in making these leaps by such problems as the difficulty of obtaining suitable capital equipment and other inputs; the scarcity of competent personnel; the inadequacy of social overhead capital, and the limited size of markets, for example.(23)

Inherent economic environmental disabilities, therefore, appeared to Schatz chiefly responsible for low productivity in the Nigerian economy; not managerial incapability. Indeed, in his view, most Nigerian managers possessed a high degree of pure personal qualities of management; especially, in business. They tended to be highly responsive to the possibility of gain, and to pursue economic advantage vigorously and strenuously. They were often willing to seek far and wide and to take risks in the quest for profit. And actually, a few of them had developed the ability even to organise at a faster rate than the economy allowed their enterprises to expand. This view, incidentally, was shared by Joseph Stepanek.(24)

Notwithstanding the apparent cogency in Schatz's environmentalist approach to the low productivity problem, the conventional managerial incapability thesis, nevertheless, generally retained its prominence in the debate for much longer. G.K. Helleiner, for instance, reinforced the conventional position by underlining that since expatriate-managed firms appeared to thrive in the same economic environment in which indigenous-managed firms produced poorly, "managerial ability and experience may after all explain the difference."(25)

Of course, this was not an entirely novel conflict. For long in the history of industrial sociology, the effects of the environment on the productive capability of organisations in the economy have attracted considerable interest. Max Weber (1968) for instance, showed interest in this discussion in his historical and comparative studies of the effects of social structure on bureaucracy. Also, the work done by Bendix (1956) on the relationship between entrepreneurial and managerial ideologies and social structure is largely in this vein. And notably, the theory of the firm in economics has also shown interest in the relationship of an organisation to its environment and posits that organisational decisions concerning price and output are the results of market forces (Stigler, 1966).

Herbert Spencer, in a sense, seems to have provided the philosophical background on which the net effects of the task-environment of an organisation on that organisation's survivability/productivity were based. He had perceived a universal law pervading inorganic, organic, and superorganic structures by which organisms were naturally selected either to survive or to atrophy by their environments. Environments, therefore, differentially selected organisations, as superorganisms, for survival on the basis of the fit between each organisation and its environment characteristics.(26) This viewpoint particularly emphasised by M.T. Hannan and J.H.

Freeman,[27] probably prompted Schatz to account for Nigeria's low productivity problem using environmental, not managerial behavioural factors.

However, even before the conventional explanation of the low productivity problem in Nigeria based on managerial behaviour, this factòr had gained some attention elsewhere, especially as an alternative to the environmental factor. Indeed, it would appear it had taken environmental selection as a point of departure. To its proponents, organisations were active systems quite capable of changing as well as responding to their environments. And, administrative behaviour (especially concrete administrative decision-making) were seen as the vehicles of productive change in organisations.[28] Besides, administrators according to them, manage their environments as well as their organisations. And, in fact, the former activity could be more important than the latter. The environment, therefore, did not constitute a major impediment on productivity since it could be managed the same way as the organisation.

In consequence, the managerial behaviour perspective drew attention away from the environment to the various criteria by which decisions were made as well as the various observable patterns of management style within organisations. Essentially within this framework, the Kilby studies on productivity in the Nigerian economy seem to have been cast. The Survey Research Centre's (Michigan, USA) emphasis on the precedence of managerial behaviour over environmental factors in influencing productivity similiarly appears within the same framework. But of importance is that the major correlate of productivity identified in these studies was the quality of leadership (calibre of management) available to organisations. In a summary provided by Katz and Kahn, some of the major conclusions of the studies were that the level of productivity achieved in an industry was directly related not only to the amount of time spent on supervision by the foremen but also on the extent to which the style of leadership was:

(a) general rather than close;
(b) democratic rather than authoritarian;
(c) employee-oriented rather than production-oriented;
(d) non-punitive rather than punitive.[29]

Thus, arguments emerged against the determinant role of environment in productivity. John Child,[30] for example, raised three such arguments, namely: First, that managers had more autonomy than might be inferred from the environmental determinist perspective. It would remain true, according to him, that managers could both select from a range of viable alternatives compatible with the niche which they occupied and also choose the type of environment in which they could operate. Nigerian businessmen, for instance, could choose to enter or leave markets. Thus to Child, there were often a variety of structures in a given environment which organisation managers could decide to utilise to their best advantages. Secondly, he pointed out that organisations were not always passive recipients of environmental influence but also had powers to reshape their environments - a point also emphasized by P.M. Hirsch.[31]

Child's third argument against environmental determinism was that the theories stressing the importance of environment frequently blurred the distinction between the characteristics of the environment and the perception and evaluation of these characteristics by persons within the organisations. This distinction, Child stressed, would not be crucial if people always accurately perceived environmental dimensions. This, of course, was unlikely and as J.M. Pennings noted, there are only minimal correlations between objective and subjective measures even of dimensions of organisational structure.(32) Child, besides, pointed out that since selection was made by the environment according to some dimension of fitness, a theorist using this model could, in explaining only long-run changes, safely neglect intra-organisational managerial processes.

These general arguments against environmental selection notwithstanding, the managerial behaviour perspective, in turn, was found to contain flaws. While, for instance, managers might be able to select and manage their environments, this selection process was found open to constraints. Industrial policies, for instance, might constrain managers from selecting and managing environments of their organisations to the best advantage of such organisations. Besides, the expanding role of the government, especially in developing economies, might render some environments less manageable than others. Thus in Nigeria, for instance, the Federal Government through what has often been described as 'federal might' might create the situation in which industrial managers could no longer effectively manage their organisations or their environments. This would be largely due to the government's sometimes unduly patronising attitude toward some organisations. Moreover, with particular reference to business organisations, potential environments could be excluded by law because of funding restrictions or legal barriers to entry.

The controversy between these two approaches apart, both the managerial behavioural factor and the economic environmental factor evidently addressed the low productivity problem in the Nigerian economy with greater lucidity and conviction than did the preceding traditional construct of an inherently inept indigenous workforce. Besides, being based on relevant empirical studies, both approaches were also, unlike the earlier approaches, backed up by specific theoretical bases. Roughly situated, these would be scientific management and environmental determinism. By providing the earliest systematic views on this problem, both approaches rightfully have become landmarks in the interpretation of Nigeria's social-economic world. This would be especially so since they provided the bases from which emerged the current social psychological explanation of the low productivity problem. For analytical convenience, this latest approach would be discussed in the next chapter. But it could be pointed out at this stage that this latest approach was, once again, focussed on the 'human nature' of the Nigerian workforce.

D. CONCEPTUALISATION DIFFICULTIES

For as long as the discussion of low productivity in Nigeria has existed it has been difficult to conceptualise the problem appropriately.

It has been often unclear whether it is wage labour alone that is unproductive or whether it is the generality of Nigerian labour, including the peasantry.

In the past, in a strictly traditional sense, Nigerian labour was principally deployed in subsistence-agriculture. Some was deployed in some form of cottage industry though. The institution of wage employment, however, was introduced at the onset of colonialism. This in itself was initially resisted for reasons not separated from the slave trade of the recent past. Thus, the colonial government, for instance, was constrained to resort to the policy of forced labour to recruit the workforce for its railroad constructions. This marked the beginning of wage employment in Nigeria since the recruits, though conscripted, were paid wages.(33)

In time, by 1926, the Government had enlisted as many as 5,800 employees as established staff. In addition, there were 5,533 skilled artisans who also worked for the Government as well as 32,728 unskilled daily paid labourers.(34) By 1938, 6,784 clerical workers and teachers had been enlisted along with 900 artisans and 50,000 unskilled daily paid labourers.(35) These formed the core of employed labour in Nigeria whose primary responsibility, generally, was to maintain the *pax colinica* and to promote trade and commerce. This labour core has since expanded to include over a million public employees who are paid by the respective governments. They include the bureaucratic staff who man the ministries and parastatals, the teachers, the nurses, the doctors, technicians and artisans and a host of unskilled staff.

As Nigeria's economy became increasingly monetised and some elements of the peasantry and craftsmen became proletarianised, the industrial wage-earner duly emerged. Employees in this cadre were expectedly relatively few in the beginning. Out of an active labour force of 8 million in 1953, for instance, only 6.7% could be regarded as industrial wage-earners.(36) With a greater degree of industrialisation, nonetheless, this cadre of workers has multiplied many times over and diversified into manufacturing, processing, construction, mining, quarrying, and others.

When, thus, labour productivity is described as low, the need to specify the type of labour in reference becomes necessary. But this has never been done. The implication is that low productivity, which indeed is a reality in Nigeria, is blamed on the entirety of Nigeria's active labour force irrespective of sector and period. This low productivity, however, does not seem so absolute. For, as has been remarked by G.K. Helleiner, it is a fact that productivity in pre-colonial and early colonial Nigerian economy was relatively low and stagnant.(37) However, this was followed by a pronounced economic expansion in the first three decades of the twentieth century due, largely, to increasing British influence. Thus, just before the great depression, Nigeria's economy had attained an annual growth rate of 8%.(38)

Behind this growth was an expanding export of cash crops which were produced mainly by the Nigerian peasantry using mainly the peasant tools of hoe and matchet. A look at what this peasant economy produced and exported would make it unjustifiable to describe its productivity as low. Below are tables showing its exports of crops during the first half of this century.

TABLE 1.1

Palm Products Exports: Nigeria to Britain 1900-44 (Tons)

Year	Total Exports	
	Palm Oil	Palm Kernels
1900-04	53,729	120,778
1905-09	65,177	130,241
1910-14	77,771	174,236
1915-19	80,485	184,567
1920-24	90,352	203,021
1925-29	124,716	255,469
1930-34	141,702	274,584
1935-39	139,000	334,000
1940-44	134,377	320,613

NB: Figures have been averaged for each quinquennium.

Sources: (1) **Nigerian Handbook**, 1936.
(2) **Nigerian Trade Reports 1939-45**, Lagos, Government Printer.

TABLE 1.2

Cocoa Exports: Nigeria to Britain 1900-44 (Tons)

Year	Total Exports
1900-04	305
1905-09	11,67
1910-14	3,857
1915-19	13,887
1920-24	27,276
1925-29	45,483
1930-34	62,948
1935-39	96,000
1940-40	102,376

NB: Figures have been averaged for each quinquennium

Source: (1) **Nigerian Handbook**, 1936.
(2) **Nigerian Trade Reports 1939-45**, Lagos, Government Printer.

TABLE 1.3

Cotton Exports: Nigeria to Britain 1900-44 (Tons)

Year	Total Cotton Exports
1900-04	132
1905-09	1,383
1910-14	1,884
1915-19	2,112
1920-24	3,980
1925-29	6,038
1930-34	4,594
1935-39	8,332
1940-44	9,913

NB: Figures have been averaged for each quinquennium

Source: (1) **Nigerian Handbook**, 1936.
(2) **Nigerian Trade Reports 1939-45**, Lagos, Government Printer.

TABLE 1.4

Groundnut Exports: Nigeria to Britain 1900-44 (Tons)

Year	Total Exports
1900-04	475
1905-09	531
1910-14	8,195
1915-19	41,300
1920-24	44,278
1925-29	109,068
1930-34	188,744
1935-39	249,600
1940-44	181,901

NB: Figures have been averaged for each quinquennium

Source: (1) **Nigerian Handbook**, 1936.
(2) **Nigerian Trade Reports 1939-45**, Lagos, Government Printer.

Even the most casual glance at these tables would reveal that the volumes of these cash crops consistently increased with the years. With particluar reference to the global depression years of 1930-34, the export of palm oil rose by 16,986 tons against the volume of the previous quinquennium. This was in defiance of the depression. The corresponding increase in the volume of cocoa was 17,494 tons while that of groundnuts was 79,681 tones. It was only the export of cotton that fell by 1,444 tons.

This notwithstanding, the general impression of productivity levels that emerges of the incipient Nigerian economy is a relatively high one. Clearly, as argued by Schatz, the price offered by the foreign trading companies for the peasants' crops as well as the accompanying demand for imported goods induced in those peasants the spirit of hard work to the extent that they were willing to sacrifice leisure.(39) The consequence was the boom in the export of cash crops which Table 1.5 (overleaf) showing the cargo vessels from Europe into Nigerian ports about that period would substantiate.

That this peasant economy continued to produce highly up to the eve of Independence in 1960 is, even so, indicated by the annual growth rate of that economy averaged at 5.1% in the nineteen fifties.(40) It would become easier to reckon the peasant group as the main source of this growth when it is recalled that large-scale industries were virtually non-existent in that economy. Hence, W.A. Lewis' description of that group as the 'prime movers' of Nigeria's economic growth in the period.(41) However, of all evidences suggesting a relatively high

TABLE 1.5

Cargo Vessels Entering Nigerian Ports, 1914-38

Year	Total Number	Total Tonnage ('000)	Vessels Registered In UK Number	Vessels Registered In UK Tonnage ('000)
1914	411	722	284	502
1915	290	548	243	521
1917	253	403	196	386
1918	193	310	155	303
1919	269	435	223	400
1920	343	676	245	565
1921-22*	369	741	215	514
1922-23	484	1,010	288	670
1923-24	449	1,027	254	610
1924-25	471	1,260	279	757
1925-26	542	1,476	293	838
1926-27	597	1,615	309	907
1927-28	784	1,900	370	969
1928-29	795	1,942	373	985
1929-30	775	1,813	399	916
1930-31	664	1,578	325	733
1931-32	561	1,281	282	635
1932-33	583	1,332	290	643
1933-34	652	1,493	291	669
1934-35	786	1,770	351	838
1935-36	777	1,844	388	863
1936-37	870	2,090	357	960
1937-38	732	1,871	317	903

*Financial year ending 31st March.

NOTE: Figures for 1916 were not available and shipping returns were not released during the war period, 1939-45.

Source: Nigerian Blue Book, 1914-38.

productivity amongst the peasants of Nigeria's incipient economy, the sterling reserves accruing for Nigeria in London between 1954 and 1960,provides the strongest conviction. These had been accumulated through the Marketing Boards and for those years, stood at £243.7m; £263.1m; £256m; £243.1m; £231m; £216.5m; and £171.8m respectively.(42) These reserves would underline, even more, the productivity of those who were responsible for them when it is, again, recalled that they were created largely independent of external aid. For, apart from a £10m loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for the extension of the railway line to Bornu from Jos in 1959, the UK was Nigeria's virtual source of external aid providing a total sum of £27m through the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts between 1946 and 1958.(43) Therefore, in examining the question of productivity of labour in Nigeria, it becomes difficult to speak in absolute terms. Evidence suggesting that the peasants and, indeed, the bulk of those in self-employment produced relatively highly makes it mandatory to distinguish this group when characterising the wage-earning labour as low producers. Thus, a more rigorous conceptualisation of low productivity as it occurs in Nigeria is called for along these lines.

Of importance, nevertheless, is that the analysis of the low productivity question in Nigeria so far has all along emphasized the wage-earner. The earliest studies and government reports on the productivity of the African worker in general were largely based on this cadre. Those studies and reports now appear only to have made the best out of a difficult situation by approaching the concept of productivity through incidents of absenteeism and turnover of the workforce. This approach evidently was an indirect one probably due to the difficulty of operationalising what productivity would mean, say, in a clerical assistant or in a court messenger. Thus, it was claimed that absenteeism represented an impairment of the early Nigerian wage-earner's efficiency and, hence, lower productivity. Substantial turnover also was taken to mean that the worker could only accumulate minimal experience and skill in each job before abandoning it. Hence, also, lower productivity. It was not considered, however, that absenteeism and turnover could themselves have been caused by other conditions in the workplace like low wages, long distance from work and long hours of work. Besides, these assumed indices of productivity could well have been quite limited in scope - specially confined to the very unskilled and non-essential workers.(44) There was, therefore, inadequacy in employing them even if they were used compulsorily in an attempt to explain a rather difficult concept. It is worthwhile to point out though that in the subsequent Kilby studies, these indices were found low amongst the Nigerian Workforce: *"very low when the conditions of work are taken into account."*(45) The fault in using them as indirect indices, all the same, suggests the difficulty involved in conceptualising the problem these early studies had sought to understand.

When Kilby, in his studies, applied the more direct methods of quantifying output as a measure of productivity in the oil palm plantation and the rubber processing firm, he could not be said to have totally resolved the conceptualisation problem thereby. For, he had concentrated on wage-employed labour. The low productivity which he found among these workers was, according to him, largely due to employment conditions. In this instance, management and supervisory functioning.(46) However there remained yet other segments of Nigerian labour who were subject neither to other management nor external supervision. These included for instance, the peasantry who the attempt has been made to establish, were chiefly responsible for the boom in export crops up to the eve of Independence. The low productivity that was found to characterise the wage employees could, therefore, hardly apply to them as well in any logical sense. A distinction between wage employment and non-wage employment, thus, becomes necessary in conceptualising productivity in Nigeria.

This would be equally so when the productivity of self-employed craftsmen is considered too; especially prior to the incursion of more advanced industrialised production. The very diversity and utility of these crafts tend to suggest a reasonably high rate of productivity amongst those that practised them. Cloth weaving and dyeing among the Yorubas, for instance, took care of the clothing requirements of the economy before cloth became imported. Ironworks of Awka, Bida, and Illorin similarly provided the iron components of agricultural hoes and matchets. Leatherworks among the Hausas and Fulanis of the North were also 'large-scale' enough to meet clothing and ancillary needs in conjunction with local ginning, spinning, and weaving of cotton. The argument, nevertheless, is not made of the degree of sophistication of these crafts. For, if anything, hindsight underlines their essential elementariness. Yet reports from early missionaries and colonial officers agree that these local crafts were relatively diverse and served useful local purposes. Though production statistics are difficult to summon in defence of the relatively high productivity of those craftsmen, yet the magnitude of difficulties which they had to overcome in pursuit of their crafts do indicate productivity in the contribution they made to the economy. Communication and transport problems, for instance, were real in that economy. The primary means of transport was the 'canoe' in the coastal and riverine areas; the foot in the forest belt, and animals in the grass belt. Various constraints associated with these means of transport were many, ranging from drowning in the precarious canoe journey to savaging by wild animals in foot journies. These notwithstanding, the pre-industrial, non-wage workers generally attained a satisfactory ratio between the resources available to them and the resulting social outputs in the form of agricultural crops and artisan products. These workers, therefore, should be spared the blight of low productivity which the wage-earning group, rightly, have deserved. The concept of low productivity, thus, needs some modifications in the Nigerian context.

E. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK/METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

Productivity itself as a concept, of course, has not been universally clear in usage. Perhaps because of the general tendency to view it as obtaining only in a wage employment situation, several attempts in defining it have laid particular emphasis on the employee. Robert Sutermeister, for instance, defines it as *"output per wage employee-hour."*[47] Focussed in this way, the concept obviously would ignore the productivity of categories like the peasant farmer or the local craftsman in Nigeria whose production is characterised neither by wages nor by strictly regulated hours of work. The definition, thus, reflects the tendency that has been noted above always to perceive production in

Nigeria from the point of view of wage-employed labour.

But of greater significance in conceptualising productivity is the continuing controversy especially among Economists, on where the boundary of what is production should be drawn. Thus, the services of a wayside Nigerian barber or even those of a University lecturer could sometimes become suspect as aspects of the economy that contribute to national production because they are intangible in nature. On the other hand, the cocoa and groundnuts of the peasant farmer as well as the hoe and matchet of the artisan craftsman, being visible goods, could be seen to make tangible contributions to national production. Hence, the farmer would appear to be a producer and the barber, a non-producer. This controversy ultimately would affect how productivity is conceptualised. It would call to question the inclusion of the various activities of a whole lot of workers which are of a service nature while considering productivity. This would be so with the services of those who staff the Public Service under Government employment. The case of the court messenger mentioned earlier may represent an extreme case, yet it would serve to highlight the problem of conceptualising productivity peculiar to the tertiary sector of the economy.

Besides, there is often the additional problem of the treatment of quality change in productivity. In a typical illustration, Sutermeister argues that:

> When twenty units were produced by one person in one hour last month and 22 identical units are produced by one person in one hour today, productivity has risen ten per cent. If 20 units were produced last month and 20 units of higher quality are produced today, productivity has also

> risen although the measurement is more difficult.**(48)**

Arising, therefore, is the problem of viewing productivity in qualitative as well as quantitative-incrementalist terms. The former, nevertheless, would appear less measurable. This problem would become even more tractable in the case of workers in the tertiary sector whose activities are already qualtitative in nature. Of course, it may not be difficult to recognise a good yield of cocoa, rubber, or cotton as quantitative evidences of increasing productivity. But it is certainly difficult to perceive qualitative changes in the productivity of the court messenger who has been cited earlier. But that any advances made in quality are recognised when considering productivity changes is important. Otherwise, biases could arise in judging rises and falls. In Nigeria today, long-wear ceramic containers are now produced replacing less durable ones of yesteryears. More efficient textile machineries now turn out better quality clothing materials. And, modern hoes and matchets have become better finished than ever before. Thus, there evidently have been qualitative changes in the country's social products over time. In analysing productivity, the recognition of these changes, of course, would render productivity an even more difficult term to conceptualise. This contributes to its inherent conceptual unclarity.

Face to face with these difficulties, the present study adopts a broad conceptualisation of productivity that goes beyond a focus on the wage-employee to include the entire Nigerian producers and how they adjust to productive changes in methods and organisation of work in Nigeria. This would accommodate not just wage-employment but also non-wage employment. It becomes a measure of the total efficacy of manpower utilisation in Nigeria over time which itself, is taken to result from the combined effects of a number of interrelated elements. These include skill and effort of Nigerian workers; quantities and qualities of equipment they use; efficacity of management and supervisory functioning; issues of control, dissent, and labour relations generally, and the role of the bureaucratic state in national production in Nigeria. Essentially, this approach to conceptualising the problem is an indirect one. This is a result of the inherent difficulty of defining the concept which Theo Nichols, in particular, has underlined in **The British Worker Question** (1986: pp.95-144).

The cumulative output of goods and services is considered to depend largely on the intensity with which Nigerian producers exert their organic abilities at work. This means their ability and preparedness to exercise effort.

Traditionally, this ability and preparedness were considered low in the past largely because of several constraints which the Nigerian cultural inheritance was perceived to bear against wage labour. Hence, the African Labour Survey's image of the Nigerian wage earner who is *"singularly ill-adapted for assimilation as an effective element in a wage economy on the modern pattern."* Significantly, that Survey perceived minimal effort only in Nigeria's employed wage labour category; not in the entirety of Nigeria's workforce.

In contrast, the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry perceived the industrial effort of the same labour category as good on the basis of findings from a number of industries ranging from cement to tyres. On the intensity of work-effort that Nigerian employees put into the cement industry, for instance, it argues:

> At the cement works in Ewekoro in Western Nigeria, it has been reported that the filter press machine was the same in Nigeria as that in an associated company in the UK. In both countries, 4 presses are run by 4 operators and each operator undertakes 16 processes. Most of the operators in Nigeria are illiterates who were trained in Yoruba for a period of 3 weeks. It was observed that their productivity was exactly equal to and sometimes better than that of their UK counterparts, in a timed operation requiring regularity of sequence rather than skill.(49)

The two conclusions though contradictory, nevertheless, leave the difficulty of determining the extent to which the 'minimal effort' or the 'good effort' of Nigeria's employed wage labour could be extended to cover the generality of Nigerian producers who are affected by differing conditions of work. Effort, therefore, clearly is dependent on the other factors earlier outlined including equipment of work used, management and supervision, issues of control and dissent and most importantly, the role of Government.

It is true the Government's chief economic role in the country has often been characterised as merely compradorial.(50) This has created the image of a government whose primary economic role has been the facilitation of foreign capital influence in the economy. Therefore, the best it could ever do would be to establish, where it could, profitable niches within the foreign dominated economy for relatively less important indigenous public and private investment. Its role in the crucial question of productivity would, therefore, appear peripheral.

This is, nevertheless, incorrect. Indeed from its acceptance of the Report of the Advisory Committee In Aids to African Businessmen of 1959 to its present-day attempts to 'structurally adjust' the Nigerian economy in line with IMF recommendations, the Nigerian Government has been largely at the centre of Nigeria's low productivity problem. Besides, as the largest single employer of the most important single factor of this low productivity, its relationships with this factor (i.e. labour) do influence the latter and its conduct of social production. Thus, Government's role in the low productivity question is a vital one which the present study takes as a particular point of interest. The patterns of control and dissent that characterise the Government's relationship with labour in the business of social production are factors of productivity which though ignored in past analyses are so crucial that they are highlighted by the present study.

Importantly, too, the subject of low productivity is a shared concern amongst the social sciences. In economies, besides the problem of defining the concept, production generally is a major concern. Psychology also has attempted to understand the issue generally by reference to human nature; the needs associated with that nature, and motivation. The present study freely draws from the strands of thought associated with these disciplines. From labour economics for instance, it draws attention to F.H. Harbison's classification of labour in developing economies in its classification of the Nigerian labour. And in psyuchology, it critiques the need paradigm associated with Abraham Maslow and Fredrick Herzeberg.

In spite of this interdisciplinary character, however, the study lays emphasis on a sociological understanding of the problem. This is based on the conflicts and contradictions amongst categories in the Nigerian social structure. While acknowledging the particular relations which the governments in the respective 21 states have with private capitalist classes, the focus in this thesis is on the relations between these classes and the Nigerial Federal Government. The term 'State' as used in the study, therefore, pertains to that government.

CHAPTER ONE: NOTES

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4. J. Woodward, **Management and Technology**. London: HMSO (1958).

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6. See D. Ghai, **Successes and Failures in Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa: 1960-1982, Development Policies and the Crisis of the 1990s**. OECD Papers, Paris (1987), p.106.

7. International Food Policy Research Institute, Food Needs of Developing Countries: Projections of production and consumption to 1991. Research Reports, No. 3, Washington (1979).

8. See B. Hughes and P. Stauch, 'The Future of Development in Nigeria and the Sahel: Projections from the World Integrated Model'. In **Alternative Futures for Africa**, Timothy Shaw (ed), Westnew Press, Colorado (1982), p.188.

9. Accurate Census figures for Nigeria have continued to prove elusive. However, this estimate seems reliable and appears in the **United Nations Monthly Bulletin of Statistics**, Statistics Office, UN Vol. XLIII, No. 7, July 1989, p.4.

10. These deductions are based on estimates of the World Population

Profile, US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census (1984), p.34.

11. Examples are:
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    (b) J. Heigham, **Productivity of Labour in the Gold Coast**, Accra (1953).
    (c) C.H. Northcott, **African Labour Efficiency Survey**, London (1947).
    (d) International Labour Organisation, **African Labour Survey**, Geneva (1958).

12. See Inter African Labour Institute, **The Human FActor of Productivity in Africa**, Bamako (1956), p.35.

13. International Labour Organisation, **African Labour Survey**, Geneva (1958), p.169.

14. See P. Kilby,'African Labour Productivity Reconsidered'. **The Economic Journal**, June 1961, p.275.

15. Ibid, p.277.

16. Ibid, pp.279-80.

17. Ibid, p.288.

18. Ibid, p.291

19. See W. Hudson, 'Observations on African Labour'. **Journal of the National Institute of personnel Research**, March 1955, p.78.

20. G. Akin Ogunpola, 'The Pattern of Organisation in Building Industry: A Western Nigerian Case Study'. **Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies**, November 1968, pp.350-58.

21. See S.I. Edokpai, 'Economic Individualism: A Study of Nigerian

Entrepreneurial Problems'. Unpublished paper, Ibadan, Western Nigeria Ministry of Economic Planning and Community Development (1962), pp.1-2.

22. P. Kilby, **Industrialisation in an Open Economy: Nigeria 1945-1966**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1969), p.338.

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25. G.K. Helleiner, **Peasant Agriculture, Government, and Economic Growth in Nigeria**. Homewood Illinois: Richard Irwin Inc. (1966), p.265.

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29. See D. Katz and R. Kahn, **The Social Psychology of Organisations**. New York: J. Wiley & Sons (1960).

30. What follows is condensed from J. Child, 'Organisation Structure, Environment and Performance - the role of strategic choice'. **Sociology** (1974), 6, pp.1-22.

31. See P.M. Hirsch, 'Organisational Effectiveness and Institutional Environment'. **Administrative Science Quarterly** (1975), 20, pp.327-44.

32. J.M. Pennings, 'The Relevance of the Structural Contingency Model for Organisational Effectiveness'. **Administrative Science Quarterly** (1975), 20, pp.393-410.

33. See O.J. Fapohunda, 'Manpower Planning in Nigeria: A case study of the means of solving unemployment problems in developing societies'. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Economics, New York University (1970), p.26.

34. Cf. **Blue Book: Nigeria**. London: Colonial Office, Section 23, 506, 7 (1926).

35. Cf. **Blue Book: Nigeria**. London: Colonial Office, Section W2-W5 (1938).

36. See **The National Census**. Nigeria: Lagos (1953).

37. See G.K. Helleiner, (1966), p.374.

38. Cf. L. Schatzl, **Industrialisation in Nigeria**. Geissemer Geographische (1973), p.15.

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40. See W.A. Lewis, **Reflections on Nigeria's Economic Growth**. Paris: OECD, January (1957), p.25.

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42. See H.M.A. Onitiri, 'Nigeria's International Economic Relations: A survey'. **The Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies**, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Nov. 1961), p.37.

43. See Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Colonial Development and Welfare Acts: Reports on use of funds provided under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts and Outline of the Proposal for Exchequer loans to Colonian Territories, 672 (1958).

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45. P. Kilby (1961), p.277.

46. Ibid; pp.288 and 291.

47. See R. Sutermeister, **People and Productivity**. New York: McGraw Hill (1969), p.5.

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49. Report of the National Seminar on Productivity. Lagos (February 1963), p.4.

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PART TWO:

INTELLECTUAL APPROACHES TO THE PRODUCTIVITY QUESTION

CHAPTER II:

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

A. EARLY PRODUCTIVITY STUDIES

The difficulties surrounding the conceptualisation of productivity notwithstanding, considerable attention has been paid to its study. It is possible to date the earliest interests in it as a study back to the period before the First World War with the publication of Josephine Goldmark's **Fatigue and Efficiency** in America; and in Britain, with the appointment of the Committee on 'Fatigue from the Economic Standpoint'.(1)

During the war, enquiry into the limits of productivity was urgently pushed forward by the Health of Munition Workers' Committee appointed by Lloyd George in 1915 and in America (as soon as she entered the war) by the US Public Health Service. The results of these enquiries were published between 1916 and 1924 in two reports of the British Association, twenty one memoranda of the Health of Munition Workers' Committee, Bulletin 106 of the US Public Health Service, Vernon's Industrial Fatigue and Efficiency, and Florence's Economics of Fatigue and Unrest.(2)

However, these enquiries were mainly concerned with the effect of hours and physical conditions of work on particular kinds of jobs. Hence, their emphasis on fatigue, physical health, and the limits to the capacity of labour. Florence, for instance, gave separate hour by hour work and accident curves for different types of work and analysed all the jobs in a giant factory according to the part played by the human operator.

Between the wars, interest in productivity studies shifted emphasis from these concerns to the very nature of people as workers and the implications this had for their efficiency and productivity. Two strands of these attempts to analyse the productivity of the workman based on an understanding of 'human nature' include scientific management and self actualisation. Though both are quite opposed in underlying sentiment and assumptions about 'human nature', yet they represent a style of thinking about work which prescribes to managers how best to organise jobs based on what they understand the nature of the individual worker to constitute. However, before delving deeper into the impact of these strands on the productivity question, it is plausible to preface this with the various influences on the question from the key founding fathers of sociology.

B. LEGACIES OF CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT ON THE PRODUCTIVITY PROBLEM

I Emile Durkheim

Often described as the sociologist par excellence, Durkheim provides an invaluable basis for understanding productivity in the workplace. His key idea is his stress on the primacy of the community over the individual. Amongst a community of workers, therefore, the problem of productivity should be approached by examining the existing patterns of relationships rather than the individual worker and, perhaps, his needs. In this methodological opposition to psychological reductionism, Durkheim provides the theoretical underpinning for the human relations thinking and its emphasis on the social system of which individuals form only a part. Much of the factory social systems thinking on the productivity question therefore retains roots in Durkheim to whom industrialism with the associated rise of a whole new set of tasks represents a progressive force. This progression, to Durkheim, lies mainly on the basis which societal division of labour provides for new forms of social solidarity and cooperation. The ensuing harmony can, thus, promote industrial efficiency and, hence, productivity.

Furthermore, Durkheim's idea that a workplace organisation can be based on a 'web of rules' and consensus of values also influences the contemporary concept of harmonious socio-technical system which can also enhance productivity.[3]

However, excessive specialisation or egoism and self-interest which Durkheim saw developing in the European societies of his time can result in a disruptive loss of meaning. This would produce anomie which, if found in a workplace, can be detrimental to productivity. Through his ideas on division of labour, consensus, and rules, Durkheim has, thus, made a lasting impact on the understanding of productivity.

II Karl Marx

Marx assumes that human beings achieve the fullness of their humanity through their labour. Indeed to him, the human world is created through the labour process. Productivity is, of course, the goal of this process which under capitalism is dominated by the owner of capital to whom the worker sells his labour power. Resulting is an unequal relationship in which the owner of capital always has sufficient means of subsistence whilst the wage-worker is dependent on work being available to him.

Besides, the owner of capital requires the worker to do more work than he would need to meet his needs. Since he extracts surplus value in this way, the capital owner exploits the worker. In the end, work under capitalism would not allow the worker the creative fulfilment which labour could potentially give him. Again, since the worker does not use tools and materials which are his own, and since he neither controls the products of his labour any more than the methods which he applies in work, he cannot achieve his potential self-realisation. He is, thus, alienated.

Interesting in Marx's analysis, though, is that in the capital owner's compulsive search for profit, productivity is attained in the workplace. This, however, is at a cost to an expropriated, alienated labour. With these concepts of labour process, alienation, exploitation, and class, Marx makes a major contribution to social science understanding of productivity. There is little doubt that much of the discussion that has been contributed by Blauner and Braverman in particular and the whole range of reactions they have evoked have themselves been reactions to Marx. His contribution to the productivity question however appears problematic probably because of his rather ambitious attempt to merge theory and practice in social science in the bold political campaign for action.

III <u>Max Weber</u>

Generally, Weber attempts to fill out the one-sidedness that seems evident in some Marxian thinking. He especially attempts to separate scientific analysis from political interpretation and advocacy that Marxism entails. But his primary contribution to the productivity question can best be seen in his ideas on bureaucratization. To him, this process is endemic to industrialised societies. And, industrial efficiency indicated by high productivity is a function of the level of rationalisation of the bureaucracy.

Weber's insight on the efficient productive bureaucracy can, nevertheless, be best appraised by briefly examining his general theory of power and domination within which the former is lodged. Power to him, is the probability that an actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability lies. This concept of power can be distinguished from that of domination. The latter involves the use of power but can be really expressed as a special type of power relationship. This is the relationship in which the individual who is able to carry out his will (the ruler) feels and believes he has the right to exercise power. This concept further denotes that the individuals below the ruling individual feel and believe that it is their unquestioning duty to obey the wishes and demands of the ruler. In a power relationship of this kind, therefore, both rulers and ruled legitimate the actions of one another. In some situations, domination of one by another can be exercised in a conflict-free situation because of the legitimation of the actions of the ruler by the ruled. Placed in perspective, the productivity question becomes the central problem of legitimating the apparent domination of the workplace by management.

Weber, however, extends this logic by explaining that many situations of domination occur when a small number of individuals exercise power over a large number of individuals. When a situation like this arises, the need also arises for some kind of organisation to evolve. With this organisation, there must be what Weber calls an administrative class associated with it. This administrative class is responsible for carrying out the orders and instructions of the rulers at the highest level. Furthermore, it is responsible for acting as a communications link between the rulers and the ruled.

On the basis of these arguments, Weber produces a typology of domination. The types given, however, remain rarely found in pure form in the world of reality. Distinguished by three types of legitimation, each type corresponds to a particular administrative apparatus in which domination operates. These are the Weberian traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational types of domination.

It is Weber's legal-rational type of domination that brings into real focus the forms and functions of the bureaucracy which he explains (in its most rational character) engenders efficiency and productivity. Individuals in the light of this type of domination have a sense of rightness about the way things are conducted within the framework of an established legal system. In a workplace, for instance, laws and procedures are stated (ideally in written form) to ensure that methods of working, degree of authority, etc. are legitimated by both management and workforce. Both sides of the power relationship have to agree that the procedure for working with specified methods has been followed in the correct manner: that is, that the procedure has been legitimated. The manager himself is part of this legal procedure. He exercises power in the workplace as a result of going through the correct procedure. Bureaucratic rules also provide more than an indication of the way in which relations are to be conducted in the workplace. They also rationally lay down the hierarchy of the place in terms of the number of levels of control, the authority of each position in the hierarchy, and the span of control of each individual in the organisation.

This ideal type of bureaucracy, therefore, was Max Weber's proposition for confronting the problem of industrial inefficiency and low productivity. It is his primary input into the discussion of productivity in the workplace. His formulation of the problem comes under criticism especially from psychologists because of his apparent failure to take account of 'human needs' in his analysis. These needs seen to be expressed in the informal patterns of behaviour, form the central concern of some of the first systematic studies of productivity: for instance, the Hawthorne experiments. And by appearing to disregard these informal aspects of the workplace, Weber would seem to his critics to have considered only a fraction of the problem. In its most extreme form, W.G. Bennis expresses these sentiments by attributing to Weber a view of *"organisations as if they existed without people"*.(4)

These criticisms notwithstanding, Weber's emphasis on systematically ordered and routinized jobs placed under managerial control remains central to the discussion of the productivity question. Especially so, in respect of the vexed issue of control. But in neglecting this crucial issue, the various 'human nature' based approaches to the question have been inherently inadequate in providing sociological insight. These approaches are now briefly discussed below.

C. SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT

The nature of the workman captured by this strand is basically an economic man, a self-seeking, non-social individual who prefers management doing all the job-related thinking for him. Given this, the question of productivity essentially revolves round management functioning. Management simply has to work out the most efficient way of organising work and then tie the monetary rewards of the work to the level of output achieved by the individual. This approach would ensure a productivity that is beneficial to both employer and employee. In theory, therefore, it would represent a joint venture of management and workers to the mutual benefit of both. If production problems arise, they could be solved either by altering the technology of work or by modifying the wage incentive programme.

Evidently, scientific management focusses too narrowly on the psychology of the individual worker. Of course, there are reasonable bases to doubt the image of the manipulable, insular, reward-seeking worker that it presents. A worker in Nigeria, for instance, would not react to management's work incentives precisely in the manner of Skinner's pigeons. Such a worker would not simply produce highly because of economic rewards only. The various factors mentioned in the preceding chapter including: level of skill and effort, quality of equipment, labour relations, as well as the management factor (which has been emphasized) would clearly interact as determining factors for work-outcome. Thus, scientific management tends to ignore the various social, political, and cultural dimensions of work-life and the range of possible effects these may have on productivity.

However, it was singularly an innovation in the discussion of the productivity problem. For, against the backdrop of the traditional view on work (particularly in the 'home industries' before the Industrial Revolution) its prescriptions certainly are a classic. In the preceding patterns of organising work, the relationship between the worker and his employer, for instance, had been largely clientelistic. The 'patron' employer had ensured that his 'client' worker toiled hard and for long hours by using sheer physical and/or financial punishment. Productivity, thus, was forcefully ensured through intimidation.

With scientific management, however, workers or more specifically, 'good' workers are seen as pursuing their own best economic interests. By recognising the interests of the workers, the new system accords them a certain boom. This notwithstanding, the approach certainly rests on several questionable assumptions about the nature of human beings. It sees workers as typically lazy; often dishonest; dull; and most of all, mercenary. To get them into the factories and to keep them there, management has to pay a 'decent' wage thus outbidding alternative forms of livelihood like farming and craft. To get workers into maximum producitivity, tasks are to be simple and repetitive; output controls are to be externally set and workers are to be paid bonuses for beating their quotas. Management's task is, then, to supervise workers to ensure that they meet their production quotas and adhere to company rules. Therefore, for a price, workers are seen as prepared to tolerate the routinized, highly fractionated jobs of the factory. In this way, productivity according to scientific management would be ensured.

D. <u>SELF ACTUALISATION</u>

The self actualisation approach, however, considers the scientific management understanding of human nature and its implications for productivity as unenlightened. As labelled by a foremost proponent of self actualisation, Douglas McGregor, the scientific management characterisation of human nature is an X theory. Essentially unsatisfactory as an explanation of human nature, this theory is replaced by a Y theory in the self actualisation approach. The new theory takes the contrary view that human beings are not lazy; they naturally like work and, therefore, do not avoid it. They are capable of taking responsibility and, therefore, can participate in making and executing decisions at work. They prefer to exercise self-control and self-discipline, therefore, there is little need for management to coerce them into maximum productivity.

The new approach, besides, sees scientific management as over-emphasizing the economic seeking nature of workers, neglecting, thus, an essential social component. The approach points out the necessity of considering the 'whole person' on the job; particularly, a 'social man' who seeks satisfaction primarily as a member of a stable work group which has interdependent job roles. To routinize tasks as scientific management does, therefore, would reduce the possibilities of finding satisfaction in the task itself. Consequently, workers would begin to seek satisfaction elsewhere. This failure to treat workers as human beings would cause low morale, poor craftsmanship, unresponsiveness, confusion, and low productivity. The worker in Rose's assessment, would become *".....a monstrosity: a greedy machine, indifferent to its own pain and loneliness once given the opportunity to maim and isolate itself."*(5)

The new approach also argues that workers have other incentives that could generate productivity and when considered, money was seen as the least significant motivoator.(6) And since the 'carrot and stick' philosophy that forms the main basis of scientific management depends highly on a view of workers who are isolated individuals in search of economic ends rather than social beings engaged in and deriving satisfaction from their interaction with workmates, it becomes of doubtful validity.

Self actualisation, therefore, centres its arguments on the view of a 'social man' who primarily seeks satisfaction by membership of stable work groups. The lesson for management in worker productivity is thus quite clear: rather than operating on 'atomised economic automations', work through the small group by encouraging its members to develop favourable views of their situation and by avoiding creating a sense of frustration and threat.

In line with the above thought various techniques of enhancing worker productivity are suggested such as: 'expressive supervision' and 'worker-participation' which would promote a climate of good human relations in which work groups could usefully function. Emphasized, therefore, is a strong social consideration in the attempt to understand the problem of productivity among workers. Improved social skills of management thus become the missing key to efficiency and productivity. Management is seen to have a responsibility to make employees feel useful and important on the job, to provide recognition and generally, to facilitate the satisfaction of workers' social needs.

These social needs, in any case, represent only a part of the needs that Abraham Maslow arranges in a hierarchy of importance as cherished and pursued in human nature. The physiological one at the basal level, followed by the safety, the social, the esteem, and the self actualisation needs in that rank order.(7) The self actualisation approach adopts this model to stress that motivation factors (embodied in higher level needs like recognition and responsibility) in conjunction with 'hygiene factors' (embodied in lower level needs like salary and status) are crucial to the attainment of worker productivity.(8) Productivity at work, therefore, becomes dependent on a graded satisfaction of these needs.

Unhappily though, the self actualisation recommendations have not always been found to leave their desired effects on work satisfaction and productivity.[9] Factors like inter-worker communication which are particularly emphasized, would seem to be dependent on more basic structural and cultural factors which, in any case, are central to sociological analyses. Structured relations of power within the organisation, for instance, can affect the way inter-worker communication functions as a factor of productiviy. Self actualisation, however, de-emphasizes this factor. H.L. Wilensky, for instance, found hardly any evidence of the degree of union militancy, class identification, or mobility aspirations of the persons studied in the Hawthorne experiment. And, he was quite right in saying of the Hawthorne experiments, that

> The effect of participation programmes might be different with young rural girls on their first jobs in a small pyjama factory than on hard-bitten men with long industrial experience and identification with the working class and for a strong union.(10)

Besides, self actualisation retains the management bias of scientific management in spite of its recommended worker participation since the emphasis is on the creation of the social conditions through which management could successfully engineer the simultaneous attainment of productivity and the satisfaction of workers' needs. In its attempt to rectify the machine-centred recommendations of scientific management, though, it ignores the role of technology in productivity - a role which the technological implications approach emphasizes in yet another major contribution to the discussion of the productivity problem.

E. THE TECHNOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS APPROACH

In its attempt to come to terms with the basic problem of productivity, the new emphasis on the role of instruments of work would represent social science's first major breakthrough towards a distinctly sociological analysis. The previous approaches with a focus on the assumed needs of workers: sometimes concentrating on economic needs and at other times, on social needs, were largely psychological and seemed to presume that the satisfaction of workers' needs always would lead to increased productivity.

However, in realising that workers applying different types of technology are likely to think and act differently, the technological implications approach makes technology exert a crucial influence on productivity. These ideas though foreshadowed by Marx in the nineteenth century, are emphasized by investigators like L.R. Sayles (1959); R. Blauner (1964); and J. Woodward (1965), who all argue that workers' social relationships, the quality of their work experience, and their propensity to engage in conflict with management are factors heavily dependent on technology.

In an analysis of 300 primary groups in thirty plants, Sayles for instance, found the degrees of conflict in these plants linked to group patterns which were established by the technology of the plant. And in terms of the factory itself, he referred to the social system as being erected *"by the technological process."* **(11)**

In Blauner's study, work is seen as subject to structural differentiation related to changing technologies. By focussing on technology, alienation, and division of labour, he further argues that more advanced technologies like automated process production, for example, could be expected to bring about attitudes and work behaviour more in line with those of the traditional craft worker and away from those of the alienated and resentful mass-production operative. And, coinciding with a similar characterisation by Woodward, he isolates four basic types of work technologicy including: craft, machine-tending, assembly-line, and continuous process. With technology evolving towards the continuous process, he thus sees a reduction in alienation and an increase in workers' satisfaction and productivity.

The insight provided by these investigators cannot be underestimated. However, they have been taken to task by critics like Eldridge (1971); Kumar (1978); and Salaman (1981). The relatively direct causal link between technology being applied and work attitudes and behaviour of operatives that technological implications assumes has been strongly questioned by these critics among others. Generally, the argument has been raised that in practice, there often are differences in attitudes and behaviour between organisations which have similar technologies and that even within a given organisation, changes may occur which are the results of adjustments other than ones in technology itself. A useful illustration cited by T. Watson, on this, is the car industry studied by Turner et al, and R.H. Guest. In investigations on industrial relations in the car industry, Turner points out that the differences in strike records of different car manufacturers could not be put down to variations in technology. And Guest's American case study demonstrates the possibilities of changes in conflict and general interpersonal behaviour which can be achieved by changes in managerial policy and staff; not technology.

All told, in the productivity question, with the debut of the technological implications approach, work technology becomes the commanding feature of factory life. Psychological aspects of the workforce, however, retain some importance. With the job rotation and job enlargement that technological implications encourages, workers will be able to overcome the psychological starvation and loss of bonding that can result from the new patterns of technology associated with mass production. The technological implications approach, thus, slants the discussion on productivity away from psychology to technology and, indeed, represents early rumblings of the contemporary excruciating concern with what Tony Elger in a review article in **Work, Employment and Society** entitled 'New Technology and the Contemporary Transformation of Work'.(12)

F. SOCIO TECHNICAL SYSTEM

In its preoccupation with the technological aspects of workers' productivity, technological implications deemphasizes the human aspects. This shortcoming was recognised in the Tavistock Institute's later attempts to address the workers' productivity problem through the principal concept of socio-technical system. Basing its perspective on long-term research findings in the mines, the Institute attempts to modify Woodward's technologically determined management styles found in a workplace. It stresses that production systems require both a technological organisation (equipment and process layout) and a human organisation. Both relate to each other and as Rose would put it, *"the technological demands place limits on the type of work possible but a work organisation has social and psychological properties of its own independent of technology."* (13)

G. THE HUMAN RESOURCES APPROACH

With its renewed interest in the human aspects of work organisations, socio-technical system raises the ghosts of the managerial-psychologistic perspectives. These explain worker productivity based on an understanding of human nature assumedly circumscribed by economic and psychological needs. These ghosts are also revived by the human resources approach that explains workers' productivity by focussing on the psychological characteristics of workers instead of the social system. Approximately a variant of self actualisation, it emphasizes behaviour modification. Certain prescribed styles of management and conditions of work are seen capable of improving job satisfaction and workers' productivity. And, inherent social needs for self-fulfilment, status, and belongingness which though seen to arise from outside the workplace could be satisfied within it.

Significantly, nevertheless, is the need in the human resources approach to modify managerial practices also. The nature of workman that is captured is that of a 'complex man' - a man generally motivated by a complex set of interrelated factors such as money, need for affiliation, need for achievement, and desire for meaningful work. Assumed is the fact that different workers often seek quite different goals in a job and have a diversity of talents to offer. Workers, therefore, are seen as reservoirs of potential talent and management's responsibility is to learn how best to tap such resources.

Based on this knowledge, management should attempt to determine how best to use the potential resources available to it through its workforce. It should assist workers in meeting their personal needs within the organisational context. A greater degree of worker participation in relevant decision-making activities as well as increased autonomy over task accomplishment is implied.

In contrast, therefore, to both scientific management and human relations, management's task is seen not so much as one of manipulating employees to accept managerial authority as it is of setting up conditions so that workers could meet their goals while at the same time ensuring high productivity in the workplace. Largely prompted by these insights, proposals for participatory leadership, group decision-making, decentralisation of organisation power, and job enlargement gained prominence as strategies for stepping up workers' productivity in the nineteen sixties.

The apparent popularity of these insights notwithstanding, other investigations focussed research efforts on other angles. Through the strategy of participant observation, these efforts examined the traditional concerns of the work group with emphasis on restriction of output. Lupton, for instance, related production norms to real workgroup cultures in the garment and engineering factories he studied. He explained that restriction of output in the factory did not arise out of an irrational failure on the part of the workers to comprehend managerial logic. Rather, it was a means of surviving work, maintaining earning power and jobs, and a response to perceived managerial authoritariansim.(14)

H. THE REDISCOVERY OF THE LABOUR PROCESS THEORY

Beyond the attempts to understand productivity through work group norms, the publication of **Labor and Monopoly Capital**(15) carried the discussion into a quite different philosophical terrain. In this book, Harry Braverman infuses a distinct ideological content into the discussion. Drawing from Marx, he sees the capitalist labour process as one in which the interests of the capital-owning class are represented by management, whose basic task is to design, control, and monitor work tasks and activities so as to ensure effective extraction of surplus value from the labour of employees. His basic assumption, thus, is Marx's underlying insight that capitalist employment is essentially exploitative and attempts to take from working people the 'value' which they create through labour and which is properly their own. In managing the labour process in order to fulfil this function, managers are therefore following the logic of the capitalist mode of production whereby the need for capital accumulation demands employers' constant attention to subjugating labour in order to extract enough profit from it to enable the employer to survive within the capitalist market economy.

Consequently, Braverman argues that the pursuit of capitalist interests has led to a general trend towards deskilling, routinising, and mechanising of jobs across the employment spectrum, from manufacturing to retailing, and from design to clerical work. He sees industrial engineers as going from strength to strength as they apply the deskilling logic of scientific management to work tasks. They are helped along, in this way, by the personnel and human relations experts who act as fellow manipulators and as maintenance crew for the human machinery rather than as any kind of check upon or reaction to work degradation.

Braverman links these work design processes to class analysis by reference to Marx's argument that the working class will become increasingly homogeneous. He suggests that through the process of deskilling and work degradation, all employees are finding themselves in a more and more similar position and, distinctions between blue collar and white collar, technical and manual, production and service workers are becoming increasingly blurred. He sees scientific management as rampant in the later twentieth century as it is aided and abetted by more modern electronic techniques which are continually reducing the need for capitalist employers to depend on human skills and hence, reducing their need to reward employees in any but a minimal and straightforwardly economic way.

Since the appearance of **Labor and Monopoly Capital**, there has taken place what Littler and Salaman have characterised as Bravermania. This has centred upon the extent to which Braverman's claims of a single and universal trend towards the deskilling of work is true and about the implications of whatever structural changes are occurring. These criticisms range from accusations that Braverman perceived management as too omniscient and united and of exaggerating and romanticising the skilled craft worker of the past to charges of underplaying the role of organised labour in defending themselves against managerial strategies and of failing to recognise that managements may in certain circumstances, see it as advantageous to upgrade rather than downgrade jobs.

These and other criticisms are discussed usefully in S. Wood[16] and J. Storey.[17] Dan Clawson,[18] nevertheless, gives support to Braverman especially in his empirical studies which show the 'giant impact' which scientific management had in the evolution of modern American industrial bureaucracies. Similarly, Paul Thompson[19] comes to Braverman's defence and attacks those like Wood who adopt an 'agnostic' attitude towards the deskilling thesis. He maintains that deskilling remains the major tendency within the development of the capitalist process and that too much attention has been paid to the extent of deskilling and not enough to its consequences.

But a very significant development within labour process thinking since Braverman's seminal work has been a series of attempts to produce a more subtle 'dialectical' approach to analysing capitalist labour processes which affords much greater recognition of the challenge offered to employers by organised labour. In this way, some of the main criticisms against Braverman are seen to be overcome. It is argued that managerial activity should be understood not as straightforwardly imposing upon employees the work tasks 'required by capital' but as engaging in a 'competition for control' with employees, albeit in the same long term interests of the owner of capital.

An important analysis which goes beyond Braverman in its stress on the way some employees are better able than others to resist managerial control and, hence, deskilling, is that by Andrew Friedman.[20] In this analysis, Friedman puts emphasis on the longer term aspect of captialist profit motive and stresses that the managerial treatment of labour and the way jobs are designed may vary 'according to circumstances'. Working on the Marxian assumption that managements operate in the ultimate interests of long term profitability, he suggests that they may choose either a direct control strategy which is consistent with scientific management deskilling policies or a responsbile autonomy strategy in which employees are allowed a degree of discretion and responsibility in their work. This latter approach is followed where management fears that the introduction of scientific management controls would risk a loss of what they see as necessary goodwill. Workers who are 'central' to long term profitability in that they have skills, knowledge, or union power which renders their opposition dangerous, have to be treated carefully and are therefore candidates for responsible autonomy treatment. 'Peripheral' workers, on the other hand, who are less critical to longer term profitability can be more directly controlled. Their work is much more liable to deskilling and degradation.

Richard Edwards[21] offers a more fully developed and historically located analysis along similar lines to Friedman's. He suggests that the simple employee control strategies of early competitive capitalism were gradually found wanting as the trend towards monopoly capitalism developed. As class resistance towards 'simple managerial controls' grew and as the centralisation of capitalist organisation increased, various alternative approaches to control were tried. However, experiments with scientific management, welfare policies, and company unionism were not successful, as Edwards shows in his analyses of a selection of notable American companies. The shift instead was towards more 'structural' approaches to control in which there would be less dependence on the personal power of employees and managers and more on the effects of the physical and social structure of the enterprise. The first of these was a 'technical control strategy' which depended on the discipline of assembly line and similar types of technology. However, as problems appeared with this approach, initiatives were taken which produced 'bureaucratic control strategies'.

Edwards' conception of bureaucratic control structures emphasizes the role of internal labour markets within organisations. These involve career structures and relatively high levels of job security are offered to privileged sections of the labour force. The effect of this is to gain commitment of employees to employer purposes and to encourage 'reasonable' and predictable levels of performance.

It is clear, therefore, that the attempts in social science to understand the problem of productivity has been tortuous. The industrial engineer who formulated the problem in its early stage emphasized that management should conceive work, fragment it, and train workers to execute it with minimum effort and time. In this way, inefficiency would be minimized and productivity increased. The 'enlightened'

Chicago managers who seemed to have gained a sudden inspiration through perceiving the 'human side of an enterprise' reacted against the industrial engineer's 'ultra-rational' approach to the problem and indicated the necessity of considering informal social relations alongside formal relations in the workplace because these social relations were deemed to determine workers' productivity.

However, that management was considered the sole agency that could more or less veto these desirable social characters into existence in workplaces became the weakest point in the Chicago managers' analyses. With an increasing dissatisfaction with the understanding of the problem based on the social character of the factory, the implications of technology for productivity came into primary focus. This was followed by the sub-debate on alienation and the voluminous literature on restriction of output as a group work-norm that tended to impede productivity. And, the climax of the discussion was reached with the rediscovery of the labour process theory by Braverman and the reactions it has contemporarily triggered.

Certainly, considerable light has been produced by the heated discussion so far. The contemporary student of the productivity question is informed through these several approaches that three basic sets of factors may, at different cultural, economic, and social situations, largely influence productivity. First, are factors in the personality of the individual worker. Second, are factors in the workplace. And third, are a broad range of other factors found outside the workplace which, in any case, influence the level of productivity.

In the Nigerian context, the understanding of the problem typically has been in social psychological tradition. The crucial issue of control is, thus, not addressed. Nevertheless, the structure and dynamics of any industrial capitalist economy can hardly be adequately understood outside the terms of interests, power, and control. Nigeria could best be described as an industrialising capitalist economy though. Yet the incidence of low productivity inflicting it could better be understood by systematically examining the structured patterns of conflicting interests, powers, and control characterising it than by examining management functioning. Or the psychology of the individual Nigerian worker based on the worker's ability to satisfy certain needs.

However, previous attempts to resolve the problem have stagnated at the latter. The earliest systematic Kilby studies are essentially in the Taylorist tradition and explain the problem from the point of view of 'non-functional' managerial behaviour:

> The conclusion is unavoidable: low labour productivity cannot be attributed to the attitudes and capabilities of the African worker. On the contrary, where low levels of output/man prevail, the burden must fall on those responsible for management and supervision of the enterprise.**(22)**

In the main, however, Kilby's studies are a response to the previous largely unsystematised thinking on the traditional construct of an incapable African worker. But later attempts at resolving the problem have themselves been a response to the 'economic man' concept that it is inherent in Kilby's Taylorism. Seeking to project the 'complex man' image of human resources thinking, these attempts essentially pursue a social psychological resolution of the problem. This, of course, is without prejudice to the attention drawn to the role of Nigeria's economic environment in the problem by Sayre Shatz.

By perceiving the human nature of workers in Nigeria as basically 'complex' rather than economic these post-Kilby attempts at resolving the problem consider the managerial behavioural approach 'unenlightened'. To the new approach, Nigerian workers are not simply like Skinner's pigeons - rational calculators of economic ends. But are far more complex in nature. Probably because of the influence of similar thoughts in North America in the nineteen sixties, the new approach stressed the importance of meeting the workers' complex needs while the goals of the workplace are pursued. Productivity, thus, would be enhanced.

Based, for instance, on ethnographic data from the Portland Cement industry in Western Nigeria, Olatunde Oloko[23] argued that the low productivity evident there was chiefly due to a discrepancy between the goals of the firm and the needs of the cement workers. In order, therefore, to increase and maximize their productivity, it would be necessary to simultaneously meet both sets of goals and needs. For, if the workers perceive that they would meet their personal needs by pursuing the goals of the firm, they would produce maximally. Otherwise, they would not; especially if they perceive that pursuing the goals of the firm would frustrate the meeting of their personal needs. The panacea, then, was to <u>motivate</u> the workers and persuade them that the meeting of their needs and the attainment of the goals of the firm were not at variance.

This line of reasoning would represent a version of the Georgopoulos Path-Goal Hypothesis that characterises much contemporary understanding of the low productivity problem in the Nigerian economy. Evidently, it is hinged on the human nature, need-motivation theory which reaches out into Abraham Maslow. In the main, it recommends that to tackle the productivity problem, Nigerian workers, irrespective of sector, should be motivated into perceiving that their personal needs and the goals of their firms are not at cross-purposes. They should, therefore, closely identify with the firms, effectively.

The approaches discussed in this chapter do confront the low productivity problem and offer solutions in a straightforward, convincing, even if simplistic, manner. For invariably, human beings are constrained by needs. Nigerian workers come under this constraint. Ignoring for a moment the relatively tenuous Maslowian self-actualisation and social needs, Nigerian workers are confronted by the hard and real physiological needs of food, clothing, and shelter. And given the relative scarcity of the means available for satisfying these needs, the ultimate influence they may have on workers' general behaviour could be quite considerable. Therefore, if management could deal with these needs to the mutual benefit of both workers and the organisation, a positive approach could appear to be made towards resolving low productivity. Certainly therefore, the path-goal hypothesis presents a simple model for understanding workers; productivity.

CHAPTER TWO: NOTES

1. This Committee was appointed by the British Association for the Advancement of Science in its meeting in Birmingham, 1913.

2. This paragraph has benefitted from P.S. Florence's article, 'Past and Present Incentive Study'. In **Productivity and Economic Incentives**, J.P. Dabison et. al. London: George Allen & Unwin (1959), pp.17-34.

3. See G. Salaman, **Class and Corporation**. Glasgow: Fontana (1981), pp.126-30.

4. W.G. Bennis, **Organisation Development: Its Nature, Origins and Prospects**. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley (1969), p.66.

5. M. Rose, **Industrial Behaviour: Theoretical Development Since Taylor**. London: Allen Lane (1975), p.62.

6. See for instance, J.A.C. Brown, **The Social Psychology of Industry**. Baltimore: Penguin Books (1956), p.187.

7. Abraham Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs' is discussed in greater detail in Chapter III.

8. See F. Herzberg, **Work and the Nature of Man**. Cleveland: The World Publishing Company (1966), p.83.

9. Particularly so with the techniques of supervision.

10. See H.L. Wilensky, 'Human Relations in the Workplace'. In C.M. Arensberg et al, **Research in Industrial Human Relations**. New York: Harber & Row (1952), p.89.

11. See R. Sayles, **The Behaviour of Industrial Work Groups**. New York: Wiley (1959), p.93.

12. A sample of the recent deluge of literature on the influence of technology on work include:
    (a) David Clutterbuck (ed), **New Patterns of Work**. Aldershot: Gower (1985).
    (b) W.W. Daniel, **Workplace Industrial Relations and Technological Change**. London: Pinter (1986)..
    (c) Arthur Francis, **New Technology at Work**. Oxford: Clarendon (1986).

13. M. Rose (1975), p.4.

14. T. Lupton, **On The Shop Floor: Two Studies of Workshop Organisation and Output**. London: Pergamon (19630.

15. H. Braverman, **Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century**. New York: Monthly Review Press (1974).

16. See S. Wood (ed), **The Degradation of Work?**. London: Hutchinson (1982).

17. See J. Storey, **Managerial Prerogative and the Question of Control**. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul (1983).

18. D. Clawson, **Bureaucracy and the Labour Process**. New York: Monthly Review Press (1980).

19. P. Thompson, **The Nature of Work**. London: Macmillan (1983).

20. A. Friedman, **Industry and Labour**. London: Macmillan (1977).

21. R. Edwards, **Contested Terrain**. London: Heinemann (1979).

22. P. Kilby, 'African Labour Productivity Reconsidered'. **The Economic Journal**. June (1961), p.28.

23. See O. Oloko, 'Labour Productivity'. **Management in Nigeria**. Vol. 13, No. 4, April/May (1977).

CHAPTER III:

CRITIQUE OF THE NEED-MOTIVATION MODEL

A. INTRODUCTION

The straigthforwardness and apparent verifiability of the need-motivation model contributed to its attraction as an explanatory model. The insight it shed on the workers' needs was an innovation from the previous preoccupation with management functioning. Further, its modification of the human relations conception of the industrial worker as basically, a 'social man' to an expanded concept of 'complex man' who besides social needs, had other needs, was an additional credential. Beyond that, its other strengths included its tacit recognition that the workers had a diversity of talents to offer in the workplace. The prescription was that management should tap such resources to the ultimate end of assisting workers in meeting their personal needs within a maximally producing organisational context. Finally its other asset was the implied greater degree of participation by the workers in relevant decision-making activities as well as increased autonomy over task accomplishment.

However, the very concept of need on which it is pivoted appears presumptuous in the very least in seeing the satisfaction of needs as always inducing worker motivation towards increased productivity. The motivation of the workers could partially be dependent on the level of need satisfaction they are able to get through participating in the work process. But it ignores the possibility of conflict between the satisfaction of the workers' needs and the achievement of the goal of maximum productivity in the workplace. This presumes that whatis good for the workers is also good for the organisation. But this is by no means always so because high morale is not always associated with high productivity amongst workers.

Yet even if it were a crucial factor of productivity, any motivation that the workers would need to goad them into producing maximally would depend on other variables, perhaps in addition to that of need satisfaction. Two other variables, at least, could be isolated. The first would be the degree of equity that the workers observe in the distribution of rewards in the organisation. The second would be the possible effects of various sanctions on their subsequent work behaviour. Roughly situated, the first factor would correspond with the equity theory perspective on motivation while the second would correspond with the behaviour modification theory.

B. EQUITY

Obviously, this variable does determine the level of motivation amongst workers in Nigeria. The relatively wide differences in workers' incomes probably would account for this. Therefore, in explaining levels of worker motivation, it would be arbitrary to single out the isolated factor of need satisfaction as an exclusive factor. Such would be a narrow approach given, for instance, the range of contemporary wage differentials amongst the workers and the obvious influences of wages on work-behaviour generally.

Between the sectors, for instance, incomes in the public sector generally are less than those in corresponding positions in the private sector. The chief executive of a private bank for example would earn twice as much as his counterpart in a public corporation like the coal corporation. While incomes in the oil sector are much higher than those in the industrial sector or the tertiary sector, within the same organisation sharp differences are also evident. In the same organisation, the lowest paid worker (invariably, the cleaner) could earn as little as below one-tenth of the salary of the highest paid worker. In the most recently Revised Scale of Salaries for University Staff (1988) for instance, the lowest paid staff (who could be a newly recruited cleaner) would receive N1560 per annum. This represents only 5.7% of the N27000 per annum that the highest paid staff (a professor) receives. Perhaps, these would be extreme cases. But in spite of the corresponding differences in training, content, and description between the two jobs, the cleaner would hardly perceive the 94.3% chasm between his salary and that of the professor as fair. The salary scales are, of course, published in the newspapers. The differences between them being thus exposed do become causes of grievance and disenchantment amongst those workers who consider themselves deprived.

Thus even if the point is raised that there is little basis for comparing these two extreme cases which are very dissimilar in requirements and functions, the theoretical reasoning underlined is that one worker tends to perceive inequity in the work situation and that this perception may affect his work behaviour. Such a worker's level of motivation in the organisation would therefore be subject to these social comparisons as much as it would be to the degree of need satisfaction. Perception of equity in the organisation therefore is a motivational relevant variable in a work situation. In ignoring this variable, the previous studies neglected a vital aspect of the human nature of the workers on which their assumptions were principally based in the first instance.

Indeed as two related aspects of the human nature of the workers, perception of equity in the organisation possibly could represent a more relevant variable of motivation than need satisfaction. The latter is rather tenuous and imprecise as would be emphasized below. Worker's perception of equity in the distribution of work rewards on the other hand, represents a more visible internal logic of the work situation in Nigeria not only because genuine disparities exist in workers' incomes but also because of the general tendency for most workers to overestimate the salaries of others. These groups of influences on the behaviour of workers therefore are as important if not more important in motivating them than the need satisfaction variable. Besides, the perception of equity variable would represent a more dynamic approach to the motivation question than the relatively static need considerations. By neglecting these perceptual processes, the previous studies failed to provide an adequate framework for understanding motivation of workers in Nigeria. Neither did they provide a satisfactory approach to the general low productivity question.

C. WORK SANCTIONS

In addition to the need satisfaction variable, various workplace sanctions could also affect the level of motivation of the workers. At the positive angle, these would range from the simple letter of commendation for work well done to promotion to a higher position in the organisation. On the negative, would range sanctions like the verbal warning, the written query, and demotion to a lower position in the organisation. Evidently, these sanctions are motivationally relevant variables because they could reinforce on the one hand or could dampen workers' commitment to the organisation on the other hand. The workers, of course, would shun negative sanctions and naturally would desire the benefits from positive sanctions. In a large measure, therefore, these variables would be relevant to workers' motivation.

In paraphrase, these views would represent the Skinner behaviour modification theory which though largely applied to lower animals studied in highly controlled situations, would apply to the workers also. For, though the workplace is a much more complex world than Skinner's laboratories, yet it is probable that the workers would respond to sanctions in ways similar to Skinner's pigeons. The scarcity of the positive sanctions, for instance, makes the workers compete for them. And, at the very extreme, workers would hate to lose their jobs. This creates room for the shaping of their work behaviour through sanctions. These work sanctions, thus, are important motivationally relevant variables that are ignored by unduly emphasizing the need satisfaction variable.

D. NEED SATISFACTION

It was at the expense of social comparison and behaviour modification, amongst other variables, that the need satisfaction variable was assumed to play the most important role in motivating workers in Nigeria. A direct one-to-one relationship was assumed to exist between the satisfaction of workers' needs and their motivation to produce maximally at work. This represented probably the most fundamental principle of explaining the incidence of low productivity among the workers. Other corollary princples included the achievement of maximum productivity through workers' 'participative' approaches; the enriching of jobs by reducing the extent of supervision; and monitoring and developing open and authentic colleague relationships. Encapsulated within these principles were the conditions assumed capable of making the workers meet a hierarchy of personal needs whose acme was that of self-actualisation. This need category was assumed, therefore, to represent the arch motivation factor in the workers. A shade below it in potency of motivation were the slightly lower needs of achievement, advancement, recognition, growth, responsibility, and 'the work itself' that Fred Herzberg (1966) describes as 'satisfiers'. Lower on the scale, were the contextual needs of salary, status, security, working conditions, supervision, and company policy (dissatisfiers) that were mere 'hygiene' factors. Their differing prepotencies notwithstanding, they were collectively seen to contain the means of workers' motivation in Nigeria. That they were satisfied amongst the workers was regarded as leading to a motivated, highly producing workforce.

However, the whole question of Nigerian workers' needs and the inherent capacity of their satisfaction to induce motivation raises many more questions than it would settle about productivity. Foremost, is how 'real' these needs are. There is little doubt the workers have genuine needs in food, water, clothing, and shelter. In calorie requirement, for instance, the workers can barely meet the minimum needs from the available staples mainly made up of carbohydrates. The more expensive proteins are often priced beyond the reach of their salaries. Thus, it would not be uncommon for them to treat their families to the luxury of a chicken dinner only about thrice a year. These would be on special occasions like Christmas, Easter and New Year celebrations. Outside these occasions, meat and poultry would be quite rare on their menus. Besides, with inflation rates averaging between 20% and 24%, their salaries are grossly insufficient to cover expenses on rents, clothing, and bills. Nigerian workers, therefore are confronted by phsyiological needs perhaps more direly than Maslow had described in human nature. If, therefore, they can acquire the means for meeting these genuine needs through participating in work, they naturally would participate. However, participating in work and doing so effectively could mean quite two different things. Yet the need satisfaction thesis would seem to assume that the meeting of the workers' needs would invariably imply their effective participation in work. This one-to-one relationship, of course, can hardly be automatic especially in the light of the intervening variables previously noted. Thus, in spite of the genuineness of physiological needs and their ability to lead workers to workplaces, their satisfaction can hardly be seen to constitute all that is necessary to make the workers productive.

For the other higher sets of needs, however, there are a whole chain of problems. Beginning with the very next in the hierarchy - safety needs - it is difficult to interpret this need in the workers outside perhaps, in the sense of economic security. In this sense, the need would become as genuine as the physiological needs and could quite correctly be met in the workplaces like the physiological needs. However, if interpreted in the conventional sense, workplaces would hardly be venues for meeting the safety needs of workers. Traditionally, safety is a collective responsibility. In the most traditional sense, it would be handled at the village level where the services of experienced hunters and sometimes, renowned medicine men are harnessed to ensure the safety of all. Workers, thus, have their safety needs already met before they set out for the workplace. Therefore, they would not deliberately seek the satisfaction of these needs in a context of work. The proposition that they would be motivated to produce highly if their safety needs are met in the workplace would become, therefore, less valid.

The Maslowian social needs would equally pose similar problems. Workplaces, of course, are venues where various forms of social ties could be forged by workers who interact for upwards of six hours a day. In this way the social need of interpersonal association could be met in workers. This, however, could have been largely incidental consequences of work association which might in any case have been unintended.

Yet, given the relatively intense primary group relations that characterise social life in Nigeria, and the gregarious needs that are met through them, perhaps only few workers could set out for work consciously to meet social needs. These needs are largely met at the primary group level and less at the work group level. Evidence for this could be found in the common practice that obtains amongst townfolk who form kinship associations in the towns to which they have migrated and work in. That these workers seek membership in these social units suggests that the satisfaction of their social needs is deliberately sought in these primary group units rather than in the workplace. This unique sense of solidarity that unites members of a Nigerian primary group and the satisfaction of social needs that is derived from it would make it a less valid proposition to attempt to motivate workers through the satisfaction of their social needs in the workplace.

For the need of self-esteem, what is obvious is that in the Nigerian society, esteem generally does not repose on occupation. Working for a multinational, or an oil company, or a bank, or a university could attract relative prestige. This would be at least, moreso than being a farmer, a petty trader, or a carpenter. Yet self esteem generally is not inherent in these jobs. Rather, it reposes in the respective traditional titles that incumbents have been able to take. An individual would become a man of esteem only after taking the titles that are appropriate for his age grade. This remains particularly so in eastern parts of the country where the ozo, the ekpe, and the okonko are the most revered titles. Indeed a recipient of the ozo title amongst the Ibos is looked upon as a man of high honour, fame, and wealth. His self-esteem would surpass that of a non-ozo irrespective of other attainments in life. Most importantly, the ozo title would bestow on the recipient that cherished position of an individual whose views would be crucial in communal discussions. By that, he would have acquired an 'onu okwu' amongst his kin. On this revered position of respect and honour rests self-esteem; not on positions held in the workplace. Thus, even a university professor might have only a little self-esteem until he has taken the traditional titles appropriate for his age grade. Only then could he have attained a position of esteem in the community and be able to make a respectable input into various discussions on matters that concern the community. The application of the Maslowian need for self-esteem, therefore, would have to be modified by these cultural peculiarities in Nigeria if it should make sense.

Finally, with the self-actualisation need, it would be difficult to precisely place this category in Nigerian workers. The ambivalent and tenuous nature of this need would make it hazy to understand how it would operate in the workers. In academics, perhaps, the self-actualisation need could make some sense. The lecturer could visualise becoming a professor at which position he could appear self-actualised. But the same could not be said of a host of other positions. What for instance would a postal clerk self-actualise into? What would the industrial worker who packages confectionery? Or the railway engine driver? Clearly, the hierarchical arrangement of positions that is evident in an academic career would not be quite obvious in most other work positions. This would leave less room for incumbents of such positions to 'self-actualise' in the manner that Maslow wrote about. The self-actualising need, therefore, is of little relevance in motivating Nigerian workers. Thus the validity of the approach to the low productivity question in Nigeria on which it is based would become increasingly less tenable.

Again, because of the relative imprecision of these highest order needs as they apply to the cultural situation of workers in Nigeria, the general descriptive validity of the Maslow need satisfaction scheme becomes less founded. The Nigerian economy is characterised by relative scarcity. Thus, it remains basically a subsistence economy. The satisfaction of basic physiological needs, therefore, still preponders over the satisfaction of the higher order needs which, in any case, are not clearly defined. If anything, therefore, the Maslow hierarchy of needs would seem to have been operating in the reverse with the physiological needs at the apex. This would turn the whole scheme upside down and dramatically violate the model of understanding the motivation issue based on it.

However, based on general evidence, it would appear that higher order needs and their satisfaction can only make sense with the senior categories of the workers. Probably on account of their relatively high salaries, these categories can meet physiological needs with less difficulty than the junior categories. Hence, they can begin to ponder the satisfaction of the higher order needs. But for most of the junior workers, the central concern would be the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter. Higher order needs and their satisfaction would therefore be relatively unimportant. Regarding such workers, therefore, the Maslow two-level hierarchy of needs would not operate. Nor would there be real bases for the deprivation/domination/gratification scheme to hold.[1]

Thus, the difficulty of providing a valid explanation of the low productivity problem in Nigeria is more real than the previous studies had envisaged. Their underpinning in the need satisfaction model creates new problems. For one thing, most of the junior workers tended to show little concern for the satisfaction of any hierarchy of needs, beyond perhaps, the safety needs. Thus only a little sense could be made of the Maslow two-level hierarchy of needs. Yet, there was the additional problem of determining how each need was gratified out of existence in the face of a more dominant one. Besides, the manner in which the shift from one need to another took place did not seem quite clear. And, there was the further problem of determining whether there was an independent hierarchy of needs for each situation or whether the workers in general developed a general hierarchy for all situations.

The need-satisfaction thesis therefore creates a great deal more problems around the productivity problem in Nigeria. Thus, the 'enlightenment' that it has been seen to bestow on the understanding of worker motivation becomes suspect.

E. MOTIVATION FACTOR

Isolating the need-satisfaction variable as the prime variable for motivation is reductionist. But isolating motivation as the prime factor of productivity implies not only reductionism but also psychologism. These two traits would obviate the riches of a sociological explanation that would take into account crucial structural and dynamic aspects of the productivity problem.

However, as a concept, motivation could be linked with the principle of hedonism - a principle discussed even in early Greek thought.(2) Its very links with hedonism of course would disqualify it as the possible prime factor of productivity amongst workers in Nigeria. For the assumptions in hedonism are difficult to identify empirically in Nigerian workers. Generally these could be spelt out as:

(a) The workers are generally pleasure loving.

(b) They would choose to perform activities from which they would maximize pleasure.

(c) They would rationally avoid unpleasant activities.

Work must, therefore, be a pleasurable experience before workers are drawn into it. In this reasoning, thus, work experiences in Nigeria would appear not pleasurable enough to motivate the workers into producing maximally. Hence, the incidence of low productivity in the economy.

The philosophical significance of this reasoning cannot be down-played. However, the underlying assumption that the individual would deliberately seek pleasure; especially for its own sake is doctrinaire. There would be little evidence to substantiate the proposition that most Nigerian workers are pleasure-seeking or pleasure-loving. Besides, the hedonist prinicple could hardly be used to specify what types of events in workplaces in Nigeria are pleasuarable and whether such pleasurableness would be perceived so by all workers at all times. It is in the light of difficulties such as these that followng Victor Vroom, it is argued here that as an explanation of workers' behaviour, the hedonist assumptions in worker motivation basically have no empirical content.(3)

Another concept that has been linked with motivation is instinct. Indeed, the latter seems closer to the motivation concept than the principle of hedonism. Rather than being rational seekers after pleasure, workers in Nigeria would be seen to be motivated in the workplace by their instincts. Thus, they would be seen as possessing automatic predispositions to behave in specific ways depending on internal cues. In this reasoning, Freud, for instance, would argue that the workers' behavioural tendencies are not necessarily consciously determined. They would not always be aware of their desires and needs. Rather, a major part of their behaviour would arise from sources quite unknown to them. Such instincts as hunger, safety, and survival would therefore be interpreted as the unconscious motivators of desirable work habits.

Individual workers would naturally vary in strengths and intensities of motivation at work even if they all possess instincts. Moreover, what has often been described as instinct could, in fact, have been learned behaviour. The relationship between instincts and unconsciously motivated work behaviour, therefore, appears problematic.

Indeed, learned behaviour in the workers could account for their motivation better than instincts. For decisions concerning the present behaviour of an individual are largely based on the consequences of past behaviour. Thus a child who has had his finger burnt on a hot stove would often fear the stove. Where, therefore, the past actions of the Nigerian workers led to positive consequences, they would tend to respect such actions. Where, on the other hand, such past actions led to negative consequences, the workers would tend to avoid repeating them The relationship between motivation and productivity could therefore rest on the use of positive sanctions as reinforcement for desirable work behaviour. This would illustrate the law of effect which Thorndike has explained:

> Of several responses made to same situation, those which are accompanied or closely followed by satisfaction to the animals will other things being equal, be more firmly connected with the situation so that when it occurs, they will be more likely to occur; those which are accompanied or closely followed by discomforts, the animals will other things being equal, have their connections with that situation weakened so that when it recurs, they will be less likely to occur. The greater the satisfaction or discomfort, the greater is the strengthening or weakening of the bond.**(4)**

W.B. Cannon's**(5)** insight would probably help to understand the Thorndike law more clearly as an explanation of workers' motivation. In his concept of homeostasis, he reinforces this law by stating that the worker as an organism exists in a normal state of equilibrium. Disequilibrium would, however, occur whenever the worker feels hunger or threat of punishment. This stimulus would motivate him into working in such a way that would reduce the disequilibrium and make him return to the normal state. Hence, the worker is seen as existing in a dynamic work environment and the determining motives for his behaviour in the workplace would constantly change depending upon his internal drives. Thus certain drives or motives may move to the forefront of his attention and once satisfied, retreat while other drives may become paramount. This notion to a large extent is the one echoed in the later works of Maslow.

In this reasoning, therefore, the motivation of Nigerian workers would largely be a function of the changing drives and stimuli within and around them. It should be pointed out, however, that though drives and stimuli form an essential part of workers' physical and emotional world, yet workers would not be expected to respond exactly in the same way as the animals studied in very highly controlled situations did. Beyond this, the workers' social world would often moderate the influence of their drives and stimuli on their work behaviour. Their families, co-workers, and friends could, for instance, provide norms which may modify the ways they would normally respond to drives and stimuli. Besides, the possibility of conflicting stimuli sometimes would be there. For example, the use of the positive stimulus of higher pay to increase their productivity may at the same time stimulate their fears that increased productivity may lead to higher standards of performance being required of them. Drives and stimuli therefore pose yet another set of problems in the explanation they provide for understanding worker motivation.

It was on grounds such as the above that Edward Tolman(6) and Kurt Lewin,(7) among other theorists, criticized the Thorndike law of effect as 'Hedonism of the past'. For instance, Lewin who studied human behaviour, would see motivation from the point of view of human organisms that make conscious decisions concerning future behaviours. Such decisions as whether to produce maximally or to restrict output would be based, according to Lewin, on certain cues in the environment and would be determined by the workers' beliefs, expectations, and anticipations about future events in the workplace. Thus their work behaviour in this light would be purposeful, goal-directed, and oriented towards the future. Tolman, for instance, would argue that motivation to work would result more from changes in the workers' beliefs about the workplace than from changes in the strengths of their past work behaviour. To Lewin, however, the workers' past work habits and their expectations from the workplace would complement each other in shaping their present work habits. Generally, however, in this reasoning, it is the events of the day in the workplace that are considered largely responsible for the level of motivation that workers would demonstrate. Past events would be important only to the extent that they affect present and future beliefs and expectations. These views clearly recur in the more recent approaches to motivation that recommend the harmonization of the attainment of the goals of the workplace with the meeting of the needs of workers.

A consensual basis for understanding worker motivation appears, therefore, to have eluded much of the social science that has given attention to it. The earliest philosophically based hedonist explanation seemed lacking in empirical content. The more empirically verifiable Freudian explanation appeared reductionist and incomprehensive just like the later emphasis on drives, stimuli, and learned behaviour. However, the Tolman-Lewin explanation that saw human behaviour as determined by beliefs, expectations, and anticipation about future events and suggested that motivation was a purposeful, goal-directed process appears generally to have been adopted by the social psychological approach that currently provides the most widely accepted explanation of low productivity in Nigeria. The question could be raised, nevertheless, why the motivation factor was assumed the prime reason for low productivity in Nigeria.

F. ATTRACTIONS OF THE MOTIVATION FACTOR

A search for the possible reasons for the primacy of the motivation factor in the explanation of Nigeria's low productivity problem reveals an interplay of historical, psychological, and economic variables.

Historically, that Nigerian workers were drawn into industrial production rather unwillingly would suggest that the workers would require some amount of motivation to make them exert their organic abilities fully in the workplace. These historical facts seem to have provided the bases for the assumption that if productivity were low in the economy, then ill-motivation of the workers must have been the prime factor.

Historical evidence, of course, would tend to support this deduction. The recruits for the earliest construction works, for instance, were conscripted workers. For, during this initial period, the workers clearly had misgivings about wage labour which they somehow looked upon as another form of slavery. Indeed, this misgiving was even extended to schooling which because it was closely associated with wage employment was equally shunned as youngsters were encouraged to remain in the farms rather than go to school. However, only those who were considered unfit as farm-hands were released to attend school and, so, be able later to work for the white man! Wage labour thus was considered the white man's job (Olu Oyibo).

That wage labour was regarded as the white man's job perhaps provided the strongest psychological basis for explaining low productivity in the economy. There is little doubt that until very recently, virtually all economic life in the economy outside self-employment in farming, trading, and craft was considered Olu Oyibo. As an alternative to private employment, Olu Oyibo resembled an imposition, especially with its various regimented forms and practice. Thus, those who joined in it would expect to be supervised at work, disciplined for errors and sometimes rewarded for good performances. To such recruits who traditionally were used to unsupervised, unorganised work practices, the new requirements in Olu Oyibo were sufficient to dampen morale and lower productivity. Hence, the need to motivate such workers.

But that such workers who because they could not quite identify with Olu Oyibo would only regard it as a mere means for acquiring the white man's money provides the economic basis for regarding motivation as the prime factor for low productivity in Nigeria. The very vernacular for wages - ego Oyibo - would seem to suggest that participating in wage labour was largely a mercenary enterprise. However, motivation indeed would become indispensable if work is principally perceived in such instrumentalist terms. Work as conceived by Marx and Freud would have lost crucial aspects of its meaning. This nevertheless, represents the reality in Nigeria even in most recent years. Recent attempts to effect changes in this mentality are encouraging. The attempts made by

State Governments in the Eastern states to reconstruct the Olu Oyibo concept to that of Olu Obodo (public service) would be a case in point. Another would be the later efforts on the part of the Federal Government to mobilize the masses towards greater national consciousness and economic revival. Yet the apparent harm resulting from the influence of these historical, psychological, and economic factors on work generally has formed the basis for regarding ill-motivation as the prime factor of low productivity in the Nigerian economy.

G. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Given the mode in which the Nigerian workers were drawn into organised work and the psychological dispositions as well as the economic orientations which they developed towards wage labour, ill motivation could, indeed, appear to be the prime factor of low productivity in the economy. Its case as the prime factor of low productivity, certainly, is strengthened by the role of bribes in the economy. As gratifications, these bribes would seem a welcome supplementary stimulant to work which wages appear insufficient to stimulate. In this sense, bribes in the economy would become instruments for inducing worker-motivation. Absenteeism and turnover similarly could largely be seen as workers' reaction against a low level of motivation at work. So also could the strikes and lockouts that characterise relations between labour and employers.

There is, therefore, a substantial merit in focussing on ill-motivation as the prime factor of low productivity in the economy.

Previous attempts at understanding this problem which have made motivation a primary focus have, thus, dealt with crucial aspects of the problem. By recognising the necessity of meeting the workers' needs, these approaches have dealt with the problem insightfully.

However, the explanation is reductionist in its assumption that understanding the problem is a matter of harmonizing the attainment of organisational goals with meeting the workers' needs. Beyond the physiological needs of the workers, of course, the need scheme that has been suggested is of limited concern to most of the workers. The self-actualising need in particular has been seen to be largely inapplicable in the workers' peculiar cultural and economic realities. Importantly also, the meeting of the workers' needs and the attainment of the goals of their workplace have been shown, sometimes, to be in genuine conflict.

These cultural and economic factors unfortunately have been ignored by the previous approaches. Yet, such factors remain central to any meaningful attempt to understand the problem. Understanding the Nigerian workers' behaviour at work would be more adequately reached by making their interests; their positions in relation to power and control in the workplace, focal concerns. Nigerian workers and their employers are what they make themselves. Thus, their work behaviours are highly socially mediated. Within limits, they very much mould themselves as well as one another in the workplace. These moulding processes could sometimes result in high productivity; at other times, they could result in output restriction.

Thus, any patterns of work-behaviour in the Nigerian economy would be susceptible to influences from the processes of social moulding in the workplaces. Consequently, there is a compelling need to introduce a way forward in the discussions. This new way recognises the centrality of structural variables in understanding the problem. It particularly holds that the power relations between the State Governments, Private Capital, and Labour in Nigeria provide the most useful basis for understanding low productivity in the economy. Confrontational as these relations have been, they generally have had negative implications for productivity.

For instance in 1978 alone, 153 incidents of strikes were recorded in the economy with a total loss of 448,335 man-days.(8) This would represent a major depletion. If multiplied to accommodate the numerous other incidents including lock-outs, a more compelling basis for understanding productivity rates in the economy would clearly emerge.

Besides, between the State Government and Private Capital, confrontational power relations also have persisted: leaving further negative implications for productivity. Relations between the State Government, qua Public Capital, and Private Foreign Capital (especially beyond the Second National Development Plan Period, 1971-74) suggest a contest between the two over the control of the Nigerian economy.

With the aid of the Second Plan, for instance, the Federal Government had urged Private Foreign Capital to:

> Perceive investment opportunities, to establish their commercial viability, and to undertake most

> medium or large-scale economic activities in the modern sector.**(9)**

That this charge apparently was well-executed is indicated by the enhancement of productivity officially acknowledged as resulting from the accelerated activities of Foreign Private Capital. The Federal Government, for instance, published an 11.7% annual growth in GDP for the period. Further, it announced that considerable expansion had occurred in Manufacturing and Construction; and that previous deficits in the balance on current account of an annual average of N300 million had been converted to an annual surplus of N400 million, on the average, in the period.**(10)**

Given these remarkable increases in productivity and general economic health, it becomes curious that the Federal Government would in the Third National Development Plan indict the architects of these enhancements in productivity thus:

> Experience has shown through history that political independence is but an empty shell...The interests of Foreign Private investors in the Nigerian economy cannot be expected to coincide at all times and in every respect with national aspirations...A truly independent nation cannot allow its economy to be distorted or frustrated by the manipulations of powerful foreign investors.**(11)**

However, it would become less curious when it is realized that what was at play was, to a large extent, a power-game in which concern with establishing firm control over the economy had become more important than productivity enhancement. A clearer meaning would, thus, tend to emerge from the Federal Government's assertion in the Third Plan that:

> The Federal Government will therefore occupy the commanding heights (of the Nigerian economy) in the quest for purposeful national development.**(12)**

Arenas such as these, marked by inter-class contests for power and control, dissent and resistance in the Nigerian economy hold commanding implications for productivity in the economy. They are, therefore, of more crucial relevance in understanding contemporary low productivity in Nigeria than the previous pre-occupation with the assumed human nature of the Nigerian manager or workforce. These arenas are a more crucial basis for understanding the problem chiefly because:

(a) The general situation of combat that prevails in the economy tends to de-emphasize the importance of national interests in favour of group interests.

(b) The State Government tends to be distracted by the confrontational relations from the important task of creating authentic productivity enhancement programmes.

(c) There has been a tendency for the economy's productivity base to diminish largely through labour resistance.

CHAPTER THREE: NOTES

1. This point is consistent with conclusions made by Mahmoud Wahba and Lawrence Bridwell in the Proceedings of the 33rd Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management (1973), pp.514-20.

2. See R. Seers and L. Porter, **Motivation and Work Behaviour**. New York: McGraw-Hill (1979), p.9.

3. See V. Vroom, **Work and Motivation**. New York: John Wiley (1964), p.10.

4. E. Thorndike, **Animal Intelligence: Experimental Studies**. New York: Macmillan (1911), p.247.

5. N. B. Cannon, **Wisdom of the Body**. New York: Norton (1932).

6. E. Tolman, **Purposive Behaviour in Animals and Men**. New York: Century (1932).

7. K. Lewin, **Principles of Topological Psychology**. New York: Century (1935).

8. See O. Sonubi, 'Trade Disputes in Nigeria'. **Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies**, XVI (1973), No. 2, p.232.

9. Federal Republic of Nigeria, Second National Development Plan, 1970-74. Lagos, Federal Ministry of Economic Development (1970), p.29.

10. Federal Republic of Nigeria, Third National Development Plan, 1975-80. Lagos, Federal Ministry of Economic Development (1975), p.20.

11. Ibid, p.289.

12. Ibid, p.32.

PART THREE:

AN ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER IV:

THE NIGERIAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE: Some General Considerations

The making of Nigeria essentially involved the amalgamation of disparate social groupings. This process created a largely amorphous entity in 1914. Because of this character, it is therefore not difficult to separate this entity into structural segments. The differences characterising them are distinct. The entire social formation is marked by strains.

Such structural strains are a handy criterion for 'destructuring' the country into its geo-political components. But other criteria on which it could also be segmented include religion and ethnicity. Together, these three criteria have become primary indices in most analyses of the Nigerian society. Particularly, regarding the twin problem of unity and stability.(1) However, the effects of these indices on work and productivity in the economy have not been directly addressed. Why is this so?

Probably, this is because Nigeria could further be structured along an important fourth criterion - production relations. This criterion impinges more directly upon productivity in the economy than geo-politics, religion or ethnicity - all commonly used in addressing the problem of unity/stability. Though a crucial criterion, production relations has, however, been unduly underemphasised in understanding the Nigerian society.

The underlying reason for this could be seen in the greater political concern generally shown for Nigeria's unity and stability. This has been at the expense of the equally important problem of low productivity in the economy. However, in this chapter, it will be argued that production-relations is as important as the other three factors in understanding the Nigerian social system. Beyond underlining this importance, an attempt will be made to show its impact on work and productivity in the Nigerian economy.

For, because it concerns the relationship between the two most important factors of production (capital and labour), it is highly probable that its influence on work and productivity in the economy would be greater than those of the other three criteria. These three criteria, of course, do make remarkable impacts on productivity in the economy as will be demonstrated below. Nevertheless, the relationship between capital and labour is more important in understanding the productivity problem. This is largely so because it concerns the principal factors involved in the production process. This relationship therefore will command primary attention in the analyses below. First, however, the preceding criteria along which Nigeria has often been structured are hereby analysed. This is in quest for the implications they have for productivity in the economy.

A. GEOPOLITICAL STRUCTURING

That Nigeria is "a mere geographical expression" is often credited to Obafemi Awolowo, a one-time Nigerian leader. Implied in that statement is a fluidity in association among the different Nigerian peoples. It also indicates the inherent difficulty in seeing the country strictly as a structured whole. The statement was, of course, prompted by the divisive tendencies in the country.

This notwithstanding, Nigeria as a geographical whole became a historical reality with Lord Fredrick Lugard's amalgamation of the southern and northern territories in 1914. Those northern territories had been made up of the dominant Hausa-Fulani emirates with their privileged elite groups. These groups had exercised a continuous administrative and judicial control over lesser politically influential groupings like the Nupes. Groupings who were organised in these large-scale statelike terms were later merged by the 1914 amalgamation to other groupings in the south. The latter, however, largely existed as dispersed societies or as small autonomous communities. The Yorubas in this latter grouping were somewhere in the middle because they were largely organised as centralized chiefdoms.[2] This merger created a conglomeration of over 250 ethnolinguistic formations. These have been subsequently bifurcated into a north-south divide by forces of national politics (see Map: Nigerian Major Ethnic Groups, Appendix I).

Clearly, the most extant structuring of Nigeria in recent times has been along these geo-political lines into a north-south dichotomy. This has created a north-south issue that highlights the country's unity/stability problem. However, this has largely been at the expense of other structurings that could illuminate the equally crucial productivity problem. Unity/stability as a national problem, nevertheless, reaches deep into the country's historical past. For, even in spite of the amalgamation treaty, the north and south were kept legislatively apart until the Arthur Richard's Constitution of 1946. Thus, as early as that, the north-south dichotomy had been initiated. It could, in fact, be argued that there was no Nigeria prior to 1946 because the amalgamation was anything but real.

Indeed, as David Williams observes, it merely produced "two different, to some extent, rival systems of administation: the northern and southern groups of provinces."(3) Besides, the idea of a separate north was generally, though cautiously, pursued by the British administrators all through colonial rule. In their approach to governance, for instance, the indirect rule system was a preferred political expediency for the north exclusively as against the more direct approach in the south. Besides, the north was generally protected from the various modernising influences that contemporaneously were gaining ground in the south. For instance, there was created an imbalance of education between the north and the south partly on account of deliberate governance of the two regions. Lord Lugard, for example, was known to have given an undertaking to the northern emirs not to allow Christian missionaries who were largely responsible for education in the south to infiltrate the north. Thus, the few government schools established in the north became poorly attended because colonial officers were not prepared to persuade, still less, compel Muslim parents to send their children to such places of learning. Hence, the predominance of Koranic education in the north during this period when formal education was preparing in the south a people who became largely different in worldview and outlook from the people of the north.

Again, probably because of its pursuance of a policy of a separate 'one north', the colonial administration declined to create new states out of that area in spite of violent agitations of the 1940s and 1950s from the northern minority groupings for separate states. Conversely, the south had been split into east and west in 1939. Therefore, the pattern of the historical development of Nigeria clearly favoured the emergence of a north-south structuring.

The emergent political organisations were closely to align with this largely geographical structuring. The Northern People's Congress (NPC) as its name implies, was the party of the Hausa-Fulani-Kanuri in the north and did not extend its membership to the south. The Action Group (AG) more or less represented the Yorubas in the west whilst the National Congress of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) drew its support largely from the Ibos of the east. The north-south dichotomy sharpened when the Northern Region, under the Macpherson Constitution (1951) received 50% of the seats in the central legislature because of its declared superiority in population.

Thus, in the 1st Republic, ruling northern politicians hardly needed to seek direct support in the south to remain in leadership. For, from its advantageous constitutional position, the NPC merely needed an alliance with one of the southern parties, more often the NCNC, in order to govern at the centre.

In the 2nd Republic, the pattern was basically the same only that the NPC had become the National Party of Nigeria (NPN); the AG, the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN); and the NCNC, the Nigerian People's Party (NPP).

It is the competition for political ascendency amongst these political organisations in the last three decades that probably has generated the sharpest visible conflicts in Nigeria. For example, the insurrections of the middle-belt minority groups of the 1950s, the controversial federal elections of 1959, the disputed 1963 Census exercise with its aftermath, the Western Nigerian crisis of 1964, and the first military intervention of 1966, all were off-shoots of this competition for political power. In the same way, the thousands of lives and millions of naira worth of property lost in similar conflicts in the Second Republic all at once would suggest unity/stability as Nigeria's preeminent predicament. By the same token, the north-south structuring which appears to be at the roots of these conflicts would similarly overshadow other possible structurings; capital-labour; Talakawa (the poor) Obokwu (the rich), for instance.

It should be stated, however, that it would be virtually impossible to understand issues in the Nigerian system outside an adequate reference to the strongly intense internecine contest for political control amongst Nigeria's political parties and their ancillary organisations. Even as they now regroup in preparation for the Third Republic hopefully to be introduced in 1992, the influence of this politicking is altogether immense. Principally, they are of importance because they threaten the very survival of the country. Previously, there had been shouts of Araba! (i.e. secede) from some Hausa-Fulami elements when in 1967, they thought this political ascendancy had eluded their own leaders. And if there is anything that unites the peoples of the south, it is their constant apprehension about being dominated by the north. Indeed, the frequent calls for a southern solidarity, in a major sense, represents an attempt to organise a united front against a more powerful opponent on the part of the east and the west.

Yet, though these geo-political issues threaten the very existence of Nigeria as a social entity, they have generally overshadowed the issue of the relationship between capital and labour. The latter issue, in any case, directly bears on the low productivity problem.

The implication of this situation for productivity may not be at once clear. However, what is discernable is that the focal attention of the nation has become fixed on the problem of national unity. But this has largely been at the expense of paying adequate attention to the equally important problem of low productivity.

It is apparent that for long the collective energy of the nation has been largely dissipated on attempts to forge a suitable political arrangement. Between them, the years of colonialism saw a total of four constitutional changes. These included major adaptations in regional structure and character.[4] The 1960-66 period similarly witnessed the major change to Republicanism in 1963 as well as the sequestration of another region from the south - the mid-west region. Then the military intervention of 1966 which became a landmark for three others in 1976, 1983 and 1985. Meanwhile, during the Second Republic, sandwiched within the military between 1979 and 1983, there was also a major change from the Westminster style of governance of the First Republic to a pattern that resembled the American presidentialism. Even now, elaborate agendas have been drawn up towards a possible return to, yet, another civil rule in 1992.

These preoccupations, are crucial and deserve the concern and urgency with which they have been treated. Yet, they have prevented present leaders from developing vision in respect of other problems. Probably if they had been adequately settled by earlier attempts, the national energy which they evidently continue to sap would have been channelled into solving the low productivity problem, for instance.

By occupying a position of primary focus, therefore, the political issue has overshadowed the productivity problem. In consequence, the practice of looking at Nigeria in its geo-political structural parts has, accordingly, reduced the importance of the necessity to look at it, too, in a capital/labour structuring. This tends to eliminate access to the crux of the low productivity problem.

B. RELIGIOUS STRUCTURING

Like geography and politics, religion apparently has offered a convenient basis for structuring Nigeria into a north-south divide. Again, largely because it has been as volatile as politics and has produced almost as many violent episodes in the country as the latter, the north-south dichotomy apparently produced by religion has assumed more importance than the contradictions between capital and labour in the country. It should be pointed out, of course, that these contradictions between capital and labour are no less important in understanding the Nigerian system than religious differences. Like politics, religious differences may threaten the structural base of the country. But the economic problems that have manifested most as low productivity threaten the very life of the society.

Demonstrably though, religious contradictions in the country have been remarkable. The north-south geo-political structuring is re-enacted in a dominantly Muslim north and dominantly Christian south dichotomy. The geo-political divide is, thus, reinforced by a corresponding religious divide. In fact, religion has been largely manipulated to sharpen the contest of the divide in the hands of politicians. Especially amongst the first generation of leaders, it became a constant tool for consolidating political support in religio-ethnic strongholds. In the 1959 federal elections, for instance, Chief Awolowo's helicopter-assisted campaign in the north was considered offensive to the Muslims with the Premier of the region, Sir Ahmadu Bello, constantly reminding the northerners that Awolowo was contemptuous of Islam and would ban it if he came to power.(5) Similarly in the south, the leadership of the country by the north was interpreted as the political expression of the jihad envisaged by Ottman Dan Fodio, founder of the Sokoto caliphate.

To illustrate the impact of these religious issues further during the Second Republic (1979-83), a modus vivendi was often sought between the two religions by 'balancing the ticket' between the presidential and the vice-presidential candidates of each party: if one was a Christian, the other would be Muslim. Further acts of balancing were consummated through the principle of 'federal character'. Thus, in spite of the seeming incompatibility between Christianity and Islam as practiced in some parts of Nigeria, the adherents of each faith continued to live side by side in reasonable harmony until a new danger to peaceful coexistence was ignited by the insurrection of the Maitatsine fundamentalists in December, 1980 when several hundreds were killed in Kano as a result of clashes with the army and police. Yet in spite of the ruthless response to the sects, wanton destruction, further outbreaks of violence took place in Maiduguri, Yola, and Gombe between 1982 and 1983.

But though the Maitatsine rebellion was largely an intra-Islamic confrontation, the fact that Christians were also at the receiving end of the violence emphasises the north-south religious contradictions. The fundamentalists had claimed that they primarily opposed corruption within Islam and sought a return to what they perceived to be a purer form of their religion. Yet, they attacked, maimed, and killed Christians and destroyed churches in the process.

The Maitatsine rebellion apart, a greater threat to the stability of the nation through religious differences came in 1987 in the northern states when mainly in Kaduna, Islamic fanatics went on rampage and burned down churches and other Christian properties. The rioting was clearly an embarrassment to the President who described it as "the equivalent of a "civil coup". In June 1987, he established an Advisory Council on Religious Affairs with a membership of 12 Muslims and 12 Christians as if to even out the north-south differences - differences which equally have resulted from fundamentalist beliefs and practices from the Christian south.

These differences have proved so threatening that on three important occasions, the issue of religion vis-a-vis the secularity of the state provoked heated public controversies that generally have transcended the basic geo-political north-south parameter. These surrounded first, the Sharia Court controversy. During 1978, the debates in the Constituent Assembly about a Federal Sharia Court of Appeal saw the Muslim leaders in the former northern region allying with politicians from the south. In the end, Section 242(1) of the 1979 Constitution provided for state Sharia Courts of Appeal. Secondly, in 1983, the then President, Shehu Shagari provoked a hostile reaction from Christians when he attempted establishing a Department of Islamic Affairs in his presidency. And thirdly, in 1986, the Babangida Government was taken to task over its decision to recognise Nigeria's membership of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

The north-south dichotomy, however, soon reshaped when the issue of Sharia once again heated up in 1988. This time, another Constituent Assembly with as many as 567 members met to discuss the Constitution that will create the expected Third Republic in 1992. Its Committee 16 failed to reach a decision about Sharia because the Muslim members wanted to upgrade its current state status by establishing a federal court of appeal while the Christian members wanted it to be expunged from the constitution. The acrimony generated by the heated debate was such that public peace was seriously threatened and the Government intervened by banning any further discussion since according to the President, "The issue had already been settled by the 1979 Constitution."(6)

Apart from the fact that the controversy surrounding the Sharia has been largely suppressed, not resolved, other disagreements have been deepening antagonism between adherents of the two major religions. The question whether or not to restore diplomatic relations between Nigeria and Israel has had Muslims and Christians pitching tents and their leaders have seldom failed to scrutinize with jealous eyes any officially granted privileges that might be thought to favour one camp or the other. For instance, the Christian Association of Nigeria has recently criticised the Government "on grounds that the country's newly established Pilgrim Commission caters for Muslims travelling to Mecca and discriminated against Christians wishing to visit Bethelehem."(7) Similar accusations of preferential treatment have been made in the past concerning subsidies to religious organisations for the construction of mosques and churches and especially, the appointment of officials to important posts. Also, several of the higher Institutions of Learning have suffered from fierce religious disputes on their campuses and various student organisations have tended to be divided on anti Muslim/Christian lines.

What is indicated in all these is that religious differences are, indeed, strong indices for structuring the Nigerian society. In fact, they are crucial factors as far as the political survival of Nigeria counts. To stress this point, in October 1987, Sheikh Abubaka Gumi, a respected Nigerian Muslim scholar, warned that future politics in Nigeria would be religionised. Appraising the proposed two-party system for the Third Republic, he predicted that it would lead to a Muslim/Christian divide. But most importantly, he expressed the view that Muslims would not tolerate a Christian leader of the federal government. Such a person, according to him, "could be appointed by use of force -by army coup - but by election, it would be difficult for a non-Muslim to be leader in Nigeria!" And when asked what would happen should Christians refuse to accept Muslim leadership, he was quoted as replying: "Then we have to divide the country."**(8)**

Herein, it is clear, the stakes lie. For Gumi, as observed by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Lagos, certainly had not merely expressed a personal opinion; but most probably, a deep-seated sentiment in the north. In a retort, the Bishop, Dr. A. Okojie, had to warn that Christians would 'burn the country'. In his words, "We just want to keep Nigeria because of peace (sic) but if anybody tried any nonsense this time, I don't care, we will burn the nation because it is going to be a religious war and nobody will dare stop anybody: No gun will stop it."**(9)**

Such is the acuteness of the religious controversy that the respected Bishop cast aside the decorum that normally would pertain to his person and position to display such belligerence. This suggests that the religious factor remains a crucial collective concern to the peoples of Nigeria. It would also largely justify the importance accorded to religion as a parameter for structuring Nigeria and for accounting for some of its system problems.

To do this, however, would continue to be at the expense of an equally important structuring based on the parameter of production relations. The almost obtrusive focus on Nigeria's religious differences like the focus on the effects of its geo-political differences has tended to push the differences between its capital and labour away from view. The differences which could help in the understanding of the low productivity problem have, thus, been relegated to an epiphenomenal status. Production relations, therefore, have been denied the attention that would have produced a more meaningful account of social conflict in Nigeria.

Yet the entire burden of religion and concern with its effects on the society just like the similar concern with national stability does also sap the energy and time of those in leadership who, if spared these preoccupations, probably would have made the economic burden of low productivity a primary focus. But an attempt at preserving the political unity of the country through first dealing with the religious differences appears now paramount. As explained by General Olusegun Obasanjo, former Head of State,

> By act of commission, we have raised the religious issue to a high pedestal. We can neither sweep it under the carpet nor ignore it. We must face the issue squarely and permanently lay it to rest.**(10)**

Again, the burden of permanently laying the religious problem to rest, though consequential, yet is in a sense another major digression. Effort funneled into this endeavour could be usefully deployed in combatting the, it appears, less avoidable economic burden. Nevertheless, there is a dilemma here. For, conjured up is an image of a patient suffering from multiple diseases. Before an inexperienced physician, it could be uncertain which of the diseases should be given principal attention. However, it is plausible to assume that any disease of the heart or other vital organs would receive the principal attention. In Nigeria, the economy - its life - it is clear, would represent the heart in the above analogy. The need, therefore, to give it preeminent attention as well as the corresponding need to emphasize the contradictions between its capital and its labour is crucial.

C. ETHNOLINGUISTIC STRUCTURING

The sheer diversity of Nigerian peoples and culture produces a variability that has often been used to structure the country along ethnolinguistic lines.(11) Nigeria is inhabited by a large number of ethnic groups ranging in size from a few thousand to many million. Speaking between them, over two hundred and fifty languages. Of these, however, the Hausas, the Ibos, and the Yorubas are clearly, major groups. Minority groups include, for instance, the Edo, the Nupe, the Ijaw, the Tsekiri, the Tivs, the Nembe, the Efik, the Ibibio, the Kalabari, and the Okrika.

What is evident is that the three major groups form a quasi-tripod on which the whole country seems to stand. The three props of this tripod, however, generally relate in constant antagonism. The preceding geo-political and religious differences highlighted earlier are, in the main, to be based on the differences within the tripod. To illustrate, in the First Republic, the NPC essentially was a Hausa Party; the NCNC, essentially an Ibo Party; whilst the AG esentially was a Yoruba Party. In the same way, the Hausas are mainly Muslims; the Ibos, mainly Christians; and the Yorubas, part Muslim and part Christian.

What also is evident is that these major groups generally have allotted to themselves the most important spheres of communal life in Nigeria. Of the eight leaders since Independence, Tafawa Balewa (October 1960 - January 1966) was from the Muslim Hausa-Fulani group. Agwiyi Ironsi (January 1966 - July 1966) was from the Christian Ibo group. Yakubu Gowon (July 1966 - July 1975) a Christian, comes from Pankshin, a minority group in the north. Murtala Mohammed (July 1975 - February 1976) was from the Muslim/Hausa-Fulani group. Olusegun Obasanjo (February 1976 - September 1979) comes from the Christian Yoruba group. Shehu Shagari (October 1979 - December 1983) comes from the Muslim/Hausa-Fulani group. Mohammed Buhari (December 1983 - August 1985) comes from the Muslim/Hausa-Fulani group. And the incumbent leader, Ibrahim Babaginda (August 1985 -) is a Muslim from Nupe, a minority group in the north.

Amonst these regimes, the longest - nine years - has been that of Yakuba Gowon who does not belong to the Muslim Hausa-Fulani group. And the incumbent leader belongs to a minority Muslim group.

Besides, Sheikh Abubaka Gumi's declaration that Muslims in Nigeria would not tolerate a Christian leader of the federal Government, a sentiment that appears quite widespread in the north, is indicative enough of the Hausa-Fulani resolve not to negotiate their stronghold on the Nigerian political leadership.

However, the Lagos-Ibadan zone, an enclave of the Yorubas, remains the stronghold of Nigeria's industrial activities. Sited in this axis are most of Nigeria's key industries, employment places, and businesses with the result that nearly 75% of the total circulation of the naira is estimated to be confined to this zone. Consequently, much financial and industrial control of the Nigerian economy is firmly held by the Yorubas. Even so, they also largely share the control of bureaucratic power with the Ibos who before the civil war, generally were in greater control of this sphere.

But this sharing of the national booty amongst the major groups has largely created discontent amongst the minority groups. Though in recent times, individuals from these latter groups have found important positions in the civil service, the police, and the judiciary, yet general discontent from their kith and kin has often been translated into overt political action. For instance, the yearning for the creation of more states through which, it was assumed, the interests of the minority groups would be safeguarded, symbolised the general anxieties shared by these groups that they would be dominated by the major groups When, however, it appeared that new states would not be created as early as they had desired, discontent on the part of minority groups galvanised into, for instance, the Tiv riots of 1964. Of importance, however, is that the current 21 states structure evidently took into consideration the anxieties and aspirations of minority groups. Cross River, Akwa-Ibom, Rivers, Benue, Plateau, and Niger are some of the newly created states that have generally mellowed down the anxious feelings of the minority groups. Yet the quest for more states still remains substantially unassuaged. Indeed, the state creation issue would compare in volatility with the religious differences issue (see Map: The Federation of Nigeria Since Independence, Appendix II).

Therefore, largely because of the intense heat that has been generated through Nigeria's ethnically differentiated character, there has been a strong compulsion to analyse it along ethnolinguistic lines. Of course structuring it along these lines is of some analytical importance concerning the productivity question. For, the filling of job positions largely has been influenced by ethnic considerations as much as by education and experience, for instance. When positions are ascribed rather than achieved in this way, inefficient work performance could arise. Also when promotion from one position is similarly partly determined by the incumbent's ethnic origin, performance generally could be mediocre. Hence, low levels of productivity.

Much of Nigeria's wage employment scene, however, has been characterised by these ethnic particularistic influences to the extent that these influences have been considered primary variables for understanding the Nigerian social system. There are reasons, nevertheless, for the importance attributed to these variables as factors of explication. For the Government of the Federation generally has elevated their importance as analytical concepts through for instance, its doctrine of 'federal character'. By this doctrine, school admissions, entry into the civil service, ministerial and ambassadorial appointments, and government scholarships, for instance, must all reflect the ethnic character of the federation. This of course de-emphasises merit and ability in the fulfilment of those roles. Again, its frequent manipulation by political leaders in pursuit of personal ends tends to heighten the cumulative effects which it is thought to leave on Nigeria's national life.

There is the remarkable case of one of the Presidential candidates in the 1979 elections whose candidature was threatened because he had failed to pay his taxes. When the candidate saw the chances open to him in the ethnic issue, he called a press conference to explain that he was being victimised because he was an Ibo! Of course, he was an Ibo. In invoking the ethnic sentiment, however, he had only underlined the potency of the ethnic factor in deciding important national issues. Though the annulment of his candidature was later rescinded, yet he lost the elections probably chiefly because he was neither a Hausa-Fulani nor a Muslim.

All the same, though of significant concern in Nigeria's national life, the ethnic factor like the geopolitical and religious factors, has largely been blown out of proportion. Like the latter two factors it has affected the perception of national issues so thickly that other possible crucial factors have been ignored. Specifically on the productivity question, it offers an explanation which is partly convincing as, for instance, the displacement of the merit criterion in recruitment of personnel for work positions and their eventual performance in such positions. Or, through the doctrine of 'federal character', the insistence that there must be an equal ethnic representation in the civil service and government parastatals could hinder levels of productivity. As valid as this proposition may be, a more fundamental impact on national productivity would largely arise more from the contradictory relations between capital and labour in Nigeria. It is to these relationships that the analyses now turn.

CHAPTER FOUR: NOTES

1. See for instance:
   (a) F.O. Schwarz, **Nigeria, The Tribe, The Nation Or The Race - The Politics Of Independence**. Cambridge, Mass (1965).
   (b) D.L. Horowitz, **Ethnic Groups in Conflict**, Berkely: University of California Press (1985).
   (c) C. Ake, 'Towards A Stable Third Republic'. In **The African Concord**, 10th May (1988).

2. These categories are drawn, in part, from D. Forde, 'The Conditions of Social Development in West Africa'. **Civilisations Vol. III** (1951), pp.471-489.

3. See D. Williams, 'Regional Rivalries Remain', in **Financial Times**, London, 24th February (1986), Nigerian Supplement, p.4.

4. These were:
   (a) Hugh Clifford Constitution (1922).
   (b) Arthur Richards Constitution (1945).
   (c) John Macpherson Constitution (1951).
   (d) Oliver Littleton Constitution (1954).

5. See F.O. Schwarz, op.cit., p.103.

6. See **West Africa**, 12-18, DEcember (1988), p.2353. For a detailed discussion of this issue, see 'Politics of Sharia' in **Newswatch** (Lagos), 24 October (1988), pp.9-16.

7. See G. Bourke, 'Link with Israelis Stirs Row in Nigeria' in **The Independent** (London), 14 March (1989), .12.

8. These extracts of Sheikh Abubaka Gumi's interview in **Quality** (Lagos) October (1987) were published in **West Africa**, 19 October (1987), p.2089.

9. Ibid.

10. **West Africa**, 7 December (1987), p.2389.

11. See for instance, M. Crowder, **The Story of Nigeria**. Faber and Faber: London (1978), pp.14-15.

CHAPTER V:

THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY:

Changes In Structure Of Production Relations

The relationship between capital and labour in Nigeria commands a position of primary Importance for understanding its low productivity problem. Universally, both capital and labour are crucial factors of production. Thus any lasting patterns of relationship between them will influence productivity.

The relationship between the two factors in Nigeria is largely antagonistic. Neither of the two factors, nevertheless, is strictly monolithic. Capital, for instance, exists in the forms of Public Capital, Private Indigenous Capital and Private Foreign Capital. Perhaps a uniting factor amongst these forms is that they provide employment for Nigeria's wage labour. And especially in the private form, they aim at maximizing profits for their owners. What, on the other hand, unites labour is that whether in public or in private employment, its services are for wages. Marx, of course, warned that wherever labour is commodified, the employers' attempts to produce a surplus value out of labour (valorisation) would lead to a resistance from the alienated labour. Continued and collective resistance from the Nigerian labour marks one important aspect of the contradiction between capital and labour that it is argued here, is one of the roots of the low productivity problem in Nigeria.

I CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN THE FORMS OF CAPITAL

Though labour's resistance against capital is a contributory factor to low productivity in the Nigerian economy, internal differences between the forms of capital tend to exacerbate the low productivity problem. Public Capital, represented by the State Government, Private Indigenous Capital; and Private Foreign Capital, all are locked up in a contest for control over the Nigerian economy. This contest, in its ramifications, ultimately adds a critical dimension to the low productivity problem.

The overall picture appears blurred though. For the relationships between these forms of capital cannot be strictly described as combatant. For instance, the State Government, as Public Capital, has been generally variable in relating to the other two forms of capital. With Private Foreign Capital, in particular, it forged relationships that varied from subtle opposition to cautious promotion between 1960 and 1985, for instance. And between it and Private Indigenous Capital, relations were less oppositional and less cautiously promotional within the same period. This is broadly indicated by the indigenisation exercises of 1972 and 1977. It is argued here that these shifting orientations (represented in the table on page 124) reveal a laxity on the part of the State Government. By being inconsistent it has been essentially disabled from laying down consistent, reliable, and confident bases for organising social production in the economy. Consequently, this has taken a vital toll on national planning for productivity enhancement.

These periods are now analysed in an attempt to show the influences of these changing orientations of the State Government on productivity.

A. PROMOTION OF PRIVATE INDIGENOUS CAPITAL (1960-69)

Because this period immediately followed the 1960 Independence, it was marked by some degree by ebullient nationalist feelings that mainly characterised the pre-Independence period. These remnants of nationalist feelings, thus, were probably most chiefly responsible for the State Government's overt promotion of Private Indigenous Capital as an agency of enhancing productivity during the period. By creating National Development Boards, though, the Government attempted also to undertake the development of State capitalism in the same period. Thus, as C.R. Frank[1] describes, this was a pattern of involving emphasis on Private Indigenous Enterprise combined with the use of National Development Corporations and other quasi-governmental bodies. The pivot of this strategy, nevertheless, apparently rested on the development of Private Indigenous Capital.

TABLE V.1

SHIFTING ORIENTATIONS OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT BETWEEN 1960 AND 1985

Period	State Government's Orientation
1960-69	Promotion of Indigenous Private Capital with some State Capitalism and Welfarism
1970-74	Cautious promotion of Foreign Private Capital with some Welfarism
1975-80	Reversal to the promotion of Indigenous Private Capital with some State Capitalism, some Welfarism, and tendencies towards accelerated productivity
1981-85	Promotion of Public (State) Capital; dwindling Foreign and Indigenous Private Capital

Source: Direct Tabulation

Public Capital yet was diffused and too weak to pilot productivity enhancement. The public corporations set up to engage in direct productivity enhancement as from 1950 evidently had failed in this role, for instance. To a large extent, this probably was due to the relatively high degree to which they had become politicized. Thus, the constraint was on the State Government to lay emphasis on Private Indigenous Capital as an agency for productivity enhancement.

However, this was an agency that would not usually be expected to be altruistic. The logic of its existence based on private accumulation of capital, would reduce any chances that it would pursue collective aspirations like productivity-enhancement programmes. It was, therefore, a tragedy that the State Government relied on this largely self-servicing Private Indigenous Capital to pilot its productivity enhancement programmes in this period. Perhaps, this was a case of misplaced trust or faulty judgement. Possibly, too, it could have been a case of inexperience. The State Government, after all, had hardly emerged from colonial tutelage. It had yet to settle in. Inhibited by a paucity of alternatives, it was constrained to use this group which, in any case, was the most obtrusive. For, back in 1949, this group had persistently sought for increased participation in the economic life of the country. Its importunity had made the Colonial Department of Commerce in that year to declare as its aims:

> To develop secondary industries on the widest possible scale by methods that will ensure the maximum participation by Nigerians themselves in industrial enterprise and to provide all possible opportunities for Nigerian businessmen to take an increasing share in the trade of the country.**(2)**

And by fiat of instruments like the 1959 Report of the Advisory Committee on Aids to African Businessmen, the group had consolidated as the most articulate segment of the Nigerian economy during the period. Initially, thus, there existed deep sentiments between it and the State Government.

The question, however, is the plausibility of basing the enhancement of national productivity programmes on sentiments rather than rational judgement. This was, yet, another tragedy of the State Government's policies. But by doing so, the State Government clearly had 'poured its new wine into an old wineskin'. Logically, this ruptured as failed plans and unattained productivity enhancement goals. The pattern taken by these consequences is illustrated below.

Between 1960 and 1969, the reliance on Private Indigenous Capital to enhance productivity in Nigeria in the main, yielded the manufacture of consumer goods. What was expected from this stratagem probably was the profit that would quickly accrue from the sale of consumer goods. Following the capitalist strategy, of course, such profit was expected to be ploughed back as quickly as possible to create further profit. From the outset, however, the State Government had nursed reservations about the credentials of Private Indigenous Capital as a reliable agency of productivity enhancement. Hence, it had led the way by establishing the first large-scale industries.

But Government's pioneering role in industrialisation had obviously taken off on a wrong foot. For, breweries and cigarette factories certainly are a questionable basis for propping the industrialisation of an economy. But this was done as the State Government set up its first industries as large breweries at Aba and in Lagos and its cigarette factories in Ibadan and Port Harcourt.

The rationality in this pattern of industrialisation is questionable. Besides, the stated goals of productivity enhancement could hardly be attained through the establishment of breweries and cigarette factories. Probably if that first thrust had been directed into producing small-scale capital goods, a modest enhancement of productivity would have been initiated. Then, an important lesson would have been learnt from Lenin's caution that:

> To expand production, it is first of all necessary to enlarge that department of social production that manufactures means of production.**(3)**

Thus, the productive capacity of the economy would have been put, this early, into a positive formative shape. The vital conditions for the reproduction of capital, however, were not initiated. Rather, what were readily reproduced were, largely, consumer goods which, moreover, were mainly non-essential.

Nevertheless, this preference for consumer goods production had, at least, two negative consequences on national productivity. First, it restricted the market in the economy to, largely, consumer goods. Production of capital goods would have encouraged a more rapid growth of the market. Even so, the beer and cigarettes that formed the nucleus of industrial production generally were not essential goods for which a majority of the population would benefit from. Clearly, they were goods targetted at the new elites who could indulge such luxuries. Thus, bounds were set on the Nigerian market in this way. Consequently, the State Government, therefore, had begun, quite early to rely, for the growth of the economy, largely on the foreign demand for its agricultural products. In this light, it becomes less surprising that productivity during this period was unable to grow any faster than was determined by agricultural exports. Between 1960 and 1965, for instance, it was estimated that the productivity rate was about 1% lower than the rate of export growth which was 5.2% per annum.(4)

The production of capital goods, of course, was not totally neglected. The incipient artisan crafts were still a reminder of the opportunities open for enhancing productivity through the development of manufacturing. It could be argued, though, that a few institutional obstacles in the economy resisted the development of manufacturing. Indeed, J. Mars, P.T. Bauer, S.R. Smith and C. Liedholm at different times raised the argument that manufacturing was discouraged in the colonial situation because the colonial regime's priority was to protect interests in trade.(5) Thus, the State Government inherited this inhibition.

However, other structural factors conducive to the development of manufacturing could have been utilised especially, after Independence. The continued existence of the artisan crafts apart, the competition generated by foreign enterprise could have stimulated productivity generally. This would have stimulated further investments from foreign enterprise in order to gain a firmer foothold in the expanding economy. These factors, among others, could have neutralized the effects of any 'institutionalised obstacles' in the economy. Thereby, productivity would have been enhanced through the development of manufacturing.

But the marginalisation of this sector in the wake of the emphasis on consumer goods is shown by the relatively insignificant share of the GDP in its favour during the period.

TABLE V.2

ANNUAL SECTORAL SHARES OF NIGERIA'S GDP

SELECTED YEARS (1962 FACTOR COST)

Sector	Sectoral Shares		
	1960	1966	1967
Farming, Forestry and Fisheries	64.6	54.9	55.9
Mining	1.3	7.2	3.5
Manufacturing	1.6	1.3	1.4
Electricity and Water Supply	0.3	0.7	0.7
Construction	4.4	5.1	5.0
Marketing Boards	0.4	0.4	0.6
Other Distribution	11.9	12.3	12.7
Communications	4.3	4.0	3.9
General Government	4.0	3.3	3.3
Education	2.4	3.6	3.2
Health	6.4	0.6	0.6
Other Services	2.0	2.6	5.2
GDP	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Computed from **Digest of Statistics** (Lagos) October (1970). The 1967 figures were computed from the Second National Development Plan 1970-74 (Lagos) 1970, p.50.

From the table we can see that manufacturing was marginalized, for instance, by the negligible 1.3% of the GDP that was its share in 1966. Compared to the 54.9% share in favour of Farming, Forestry and Fisheries in the year's GDP and the corresponding 12.3% in favour of the Commerce sector, the case for the marginalisation of manufacturing is clearly established. Yet, the irony of the situation would become clear when it is recalled that Nigeria reputedly has had the largest industrial sector in Black Africa. In terms of the percentage share of GDP claimed by manufacturing, however, countries like Zambia, Kenya, and Uganda have had higher proportions.[6]

Though the manufacturing sector was marginalised at the expense of productivity enhancement in this way, it is remarkable that what little was done towards developing that sector was achieved with relatively unimportant indigenous participation. Thus, the 1.3% share of the GDP in 1966, for instance, essentially came from Private Foreign Capital participation in the economy as would become clear from the table overleaf.

From the table, we can see that out of a population estimated at 63 million with an active labour force of over 20 million, only 13012 were employed directly in capital goods production. The 0.07% of the active labour force represented by this would underline the more, the neglect of that vital sector, a neglect which partly would explain the inhibitions on productivity. Besides, from the paid-up capitals in that sector in 1963, Private Foreign Capital accounted for an

TABLE V.3

INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO MANUFACTURING IN NIGERIA (1963)

Manufacturing Groups	Number Employed		Paid-Up Capital		
	Nigeria	Expatriate	Private Nigeria £	Private Foreign £	Nigerian Government £
Wood, Wood Products	10287	120	128691	1852650	463571
Paper, Paper Products	5154	81	423083	692413	1741096
Non-Metalic Mineral Products Except Petroleum and Coal	2870	83	1163270	1976785	3593920
Basic Metals	526	39	97075	365925	175000
Fabricated Metal Products, Machinery, Equipment, etc.	13012	517	597521	15692111	543102

Source: Extracted from **Industrial Survey of Nigeria 1963** (Lagos 1966), Tables 1, 5, 7 and 8.

overwhelming £15,692,111. Compared to the £1,140,623 accounted for by both Public and Private Indigenous Capitals, the very limited interest shown by indigenous concerns in the manfuacturing sector becomes obvious.

Possibly, of course, the apparent neglect of this vital sector could have been due to some of the structural constraints noted earlier.(7) It could also have been due to the dictates of international division labour by which the Nigerian economy was deemed to gain more by producing primary export crops which could be exchanged for imported capital goods. Whatever merits there are in the latter argument, in the light of the character of contemporary world exchange trade, there was a lack of foresight in neglecting manufacturing in the economy.

However, the theoretical point underlined here is that in relying on Private Indigenous Capital for productivity enhancement in the Nigerian economy soon after Independence, the State Government had chosen an agency whose interests were neither national nor altruistic. This agency would deemphasize capital goods production in its preoccupation with consumer goods. In practical terms, therefore, the inducement of growth in productivity had become seriously handicapped.

B. CAUTIOUS PROMOTION OF PRIVATE FOREIGN CAPITAL (1970-74)

Perhaps, the subsequent reliance on Private Foreign Capital for productivity enhancement in the economy that followed in the 1970-

1974 period was largely due to the failure of Private Indigenous Capital to do so. Through the Second National Development Plan, Private Foreign Capital received the enabling charge "to perceive investment opportunities, to establish their commercial viability, and to undertake most medium or large-scale economic activities in the modern sector."(8) Thus, the foreign investor had become the pivotal agency for productivity enhancement in the economy.

In 1973, for instance, the volume of direct investment in the economy by Private Foreign Capital amounted to $878.26 million. This represented 16 times the similar volume in 1960 which was $53.20 million.(9) This rapid increase underlines a heightened vigour in Private Foreign Capital participation in the economy. Besides the generous reliance on this capital to enhance productivity in the economy is reinforced by the encouragement it received to operate freely in the vital spheres of Mining, for which it controlled 51.4% investment; Manufacturing, 22.4%; and Trading and Business Services, 20.6%.(10) And whereas until 1964, Private Foreign Capital participation in Agro-Industrial activities was nil; by 1972, it had controlled 11.2% investments in these activities.(11) Other evidences of the central role assumed by Private Foreign Capital as a result of the apparent failure of Private Indigenous Capital include the phenomenal rise of its total investment in manufacturing from $110.6 million in 1963 to $580.6 million in 1972.(12)

These burgeoning activities of Private Foreign Capital left distinct effects on national productivity. According to official reports a considerable growth in productivity was attained through the primary role that Private Foreign Capital had begun to pay in the economy. Real Gross Domestic Product, for instance, was estimated to have risen by 30.5% in 1970 above the average for the years between 1964 and 1966.[13] And, average annual growth of GDP for the three years up to 1973 was given as 11.7%. The perceived enhancement in productivity, however, was particularly officially buttressed by a considerable expansion recorded in manufacturing and construction. From a relatively small base, the former was estimated to have grown by 10%. Construction output, in turn, was seen to have increased by 41.2% in 1971 and 15.6% in 1974, for instance.[14] But of these supporting data, improvements in Nigeria's balance of payments which were due to the new reliance on Foreign Capital perhaps, is the most crucial. For, deficits in the balance on current account ranging between N242 million and N325 million from 1970 to 1972 were estimated to have been converted to a surplus of N402 million in 1973.[15]

Therefore, based on these statistics, it is correct to describe the period of national reliance on Private Foreign Capital for productivity enhancement as one of general economic growth. However, that much of the growth so attained could be attributed to the fortuitous oil boom which set in in the period is indicated by the fact that the growth in GDP in 1972 given as 7.3% was entirely due to crude petroleum sales.[16] The boom, of course, imparted a significant stimulus to the rest of the economy as is evident in the volume of construction work within the period. The magnitude of productivity enhancement resulting from the reliance on Private Foreign Capital was, therefore, less than was officially credited to it.

Even so, this new reliance on Private Foreign Capital left some negative effects on the productivity it had been targetted to enhance. For its activities also implied some degree of net capital loss to the economy. This, of course, could not have been a deliberate design. Rather, the situation obliged the Nigerian economy to a number of conditions which meant a net loss of capital. Some of these conditions were:

(a) Paying fees for consulting and other special services to outside groups.

(b) Paying fees to skilled foreign construction and administrative personnel.

(c) Costs of buying raw materials, tools, and other production aids from the home countries of Foreign Capital.

Besides, the reliance on Private Foreign Capital to enhance productivity in the economy apparently was not conducive to the development of indigenous productive forces. The clearest impact this had on productivity in the economy is mostly in the development of indigenous crafts and skills. Largely because these crafts and skills were rudimentary, their leather, textile, and iron products could not compete in quality and price with their imported equivalents. There is little surprise, therefore, that the domestic market inclined to the better-finished foreign varieties.

The resultant neglect of these crafts was generally widespread as craftsmen turned to other opportunities in the economy. To illustrate, local brewing had made beer from corn and millet (burukutu) dating back to 1860.[17] The subsequent undermining of the demand for this local brew was largely due to the establishment of Private Foreign Capital beer enterprise in 1949 in the economy. This undermining is indicated by the virtual loss in demand for the local brew in the midst of the almost 2.5 million litres of foreign beer per annum in the economy. In the same vein, cotton, once locally spun, hand-woven, and dyed with colours obtained from local plants into textiles that provided most of the clothing of the indigenes currently cannot compete with the several million square yards of fabric imported into the economy by private Foreign Capital. Likewise, the laterite mud compounds that for long had formed the primary building materials cannot now compete with over 2 million tones of cement annually introduced into the economy by Private Foreign Capital. Thus, increased Private Foreign Capital activity, though apparently productivity-enhancing as shown above, was also partly responsible for reduced productivity in the economy in the long run.[18]

Arguably, though, the effects of Private Foreign Capital on indigenous crafts and skills are not as devastating as presented sometimes. Some rural segments of Nigeria, of course, still build houses with laterite mud compounds. Some also still patronise the locally spun and woven fabrics.[19] And some customers, indeed, still prefer the local burukutu to the foreign brew. Different markets in the economy serve different brands of the same product. This segmented character of the Nigerian market has been pointed out by Peter Kilby thus:

> This phenomenon of market segmentation flows from the level of per capita income. With severely limited purchasing power, the community's poorest members will often choose inexpensive low-quality products such as tyre-sandals or household utensils beaten out of scrap by the tinker in preference to the higher quality, more durable

dearer alternative.(20)

Thus, income differentiation in the Nigerian economy has tended to assure indigenous crafts a share of the local market. However, these crafts generally have been besieged by the better quality, foreign capital manufactures.

Yet, another impact of the reliance on Private Foreign Capital to enhance productivity in the Nigerian economy is the propensity inherent in it to inhibit the development of indigenous entrepreneurship. It was, of course, to correct the apparent failings of the latter that reliance was placed on Private Foreign Capital in the first place. But the logic of its existence in the form of large-scale firms would dictate that such firms strive to become monopolies. Hence, any bid to keep local firms out of the industries in which they were the first party to initiate productive facilities would be easily understood. Though in the interim, the consequences of the reliance on them for productivity enhnacement were hugely positive, in the long run this was not strictly so. This is largely so because the prominent role they played in the economy has tended to minimize the chances available to local entrepreneurs for improving their knowledge, experience and abilities. This, clearly, has hardly been in the interests of long-term productivity enhancement.

C. REVERSAL TO THE PROMOTION OF PRIVATE INDIGENOUS CAPITAL (1975-80)

Mainly because of the perceived negative implications of its cautious promotion of Private Foreign Capital into productivity enhancement roles in the economy, the argument subsequently emerged that

> interests of Foreign Private investors in the Nigerian economy cannot be expected to coincide at all times and in every respect with national aspirations.**(21)**

The Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1977 reinforces the previous 1972 Decree. Thus, there was a reversal to the promotion of Private Indigenous Capital into productivity enhancement roles between 1975 and 1980.

However, the State Government still relied on Private Foreign Capital to enhance productivity while promoting Private Indigenous Capital influence in the economy. This posed a curious mixture of nationalism and an internationalist dependence character. Private Foreign Capital presence, of course, remained vital for the establishment of new techniques especially in the Government's huge projects in liquefied natural gas, petroleum products, and fertilisers, for example. In retaining its reliance on Private Foreign Capital for these roles while promoting Private Indigenous Capital influence in the economy, the State Government's position was equivacatory and ambivalent.

These traits, clearly, could hardly be in the interest of national productivity for a number of reasons. Primarily, through these unstable predilections, the State Government inadvertently played itself into a position of weakness in interacting with Private Capital. From this weak position, it would have been difficult for it to exert any meaningful control over those interests it had attempted to protect through decrees.

Attention has, for instance, been drawn to the 'carelessness' in design and 'sloppiness' in implementation of the Government's indigenisation exercise.(22) It would be unfair, though, to describe the designing of the enabling decrees as careless. Jumbled, would be a fairer description because the decrees were not, in the first place, firmly dictated by the State Government alone. They were muddled by influences from both Indigenous and Foreign Private Capital. If Private Indigenous Capital had drafted the decreees, they would possibly have been consistent with its objectives. Similarly, if the State Government had not been substantially influenced by either Private Indigenous Capital or Private Foreign Capital, its draft would have been more consistent with the stated objective of enhancing productivity. The differing objectives of each of these actors in the economy had vied for primacy in the decrees. Hence in promulgating the decrees, the State Government was caught in the cross-fire of the other principal protagonists.

That the decrees had been aimed at transfering proprietary interests in business organisations from expatriates to indigenes, of course, was not merely to assuage the thirst of nationalism. The economic independence thus advocated was no end in itself. Rather, it essentially was a process aimed at attaining the desired goal of productivity enhancement. In the exercises, it would be difficult to see the Government's classification of all business enterprises in the private sector into three groups as careless.(23) By the 1977 Decree, Nigerian participation, to the respective tune of 100%, 60% and 40% in each of the emergent three categories, had become mandatory. This classification in 'schedules' corresponded with the perceived importance of the economic activities based upon the principles of size and technical sophistication.(24) It would be wrong to describe as careless the State Government's inclusion of small scale, low technology activities in Schedule I which demanded 100% Nigerian equity participation. The retail trade, jewelry, newspapers, garments and singlets included in that Schedule were correctly placed. For, those were activities which were almost already wholly controlled by indigenes. The further inclusion of bakeries, electrical assembly, rice-milling, and tyre-retreading in this schedule was also proper. So also advertising, forwarding, hair dressing, road transport, laundry, buses, taxies, and radio/television broadcasting.

In the same way, the State Government's grouping of largely intermediate scale activities into Schedule II could hardly be faulted in design. These activities included the more technically sophisticated areas like construction, coastal and inland shipping, real estate agencies, internal air transportation, travel agencies, paper conversion, screen-printing on textiles, manufacture of tyres, etc.

By means of this 'scheduling process' the State Government had evidently aimed at reinforcing the position of Private Indigenous Capital in the on-going contest for control over the economy. Thus, Private Indigenous Capital had been granted an additional inducement, through the indigenisation exercise, to enable it to accelerate the enhancement of productivity. However, whether the State Government was capable of implementing the exercise was the real concern.

Evidence indicates that the State Government showed a practical weakness in implementing the exercise. Foremost, that the original decree had to be modified in 1977 implied that there was an obvious dissatisfaction with its results. This is borne out by relevant statistics. For instance, by the middle of 1975, only 209 out of a total of 357 affected firms in Schedule I had complied with the first decree. The resultant 40% default rate indicated weakness in implementing the decree. However, this weakness is not firmly indicated in Schedule II where the default rate was only 10%. 533 out of 595 affected firms had complied with the decree by the same date. Table 5.4 overleaf gives further details.

The general impression, therefore, is that the State Government was not well prepared for the various antics adopted by Private Foreign Capital as strategic devices of escape. Thomas Biersteker[25] has provided a graphic presentation of some of these antics summarized below:

Step One: Attempt reclassification
Appeal to NEPT
Rename Existing
Incorporate new company
Bribe
If successful, go to Schedule II
If not, try Steps Two through Five.

Step Two: Take out Nigerian citizenship
If successful, sell shares to self
If not, try Steps Three through Five.

Step Three: Front
No purchase; no share certificate; bogus purchase; single

TABLE V.4

EXTENT OF COMPLIANCE BY FOREIGN FIRMS

	Multinational Capital	Indian Capital	Levantin Capital	Other Capital	Total
Schedule I					
Compliances	52	17	98	42	209
Defaults	14	22	77	27	140
Compliance Rate	79%	44%	56%	61%	60%
Total Affected	66	39	175	69	349[a]
Schedule II					
Compliances	342	66	89	36	533
Defaults	27	9	15	11	62
Compliance Rate	93%	88%	86%	77%	90%
Total Affected	369	75	104	47	595
% of Total	62%	13%	17%	8%	

Source: Compiled from Report of the Industrial Enterprises Panel 1977 Vol. II.

a - Does not equal 357 because of some cases pending via arbitration.

purchaser with questionable involvement.
Sell to reliable employee or distributor.
If successful, carry on business as usual
If not, try Steps Four or Five.

Step Four: Stall
Overvalue assets to deter buyers
If successful, try Steps One through Three again or repatriate capital
If not, go to Step Five.

Step Five: Overvalue assets and sell privately
Sell commerical activities only
Sell existing business and diversify
Sell enterprise and leave Nigeria.

Thus, reclassification, naturalisation, fronting, stalling, and overvaluing of assets were some of the devices adopted by Private Foreign Capital to frustrate the State Government's attempts to weaken its position in the economy.

To a large extent, the State Government failed to realise the objectives of the indigenisation exercise. Private Foreign Capital's position in the economy, therefore, remained defiant. Its aim of improving the country's balance of payments position through indigenisation, for instance, was a failure.(26) Also, the exercise made affected foreign firms alter the productive structure of their Nigerian subsidiaries. This generally enabled them to relocate their control over these subsidiaries away from economic and management functions to technological functions. This had adverse effects on the labour absorption rate in industry.(27) Therefore, the principal instrument fashioned by the State Government in an attempt to enhance productivity through Private Indigenous Capital was largely a failure.

D. PROMOTION OF PUBLIC CAPITAL (1981-85)

With the apparent failure of the indigenisation exercise, the State Government became roused to the reality that the enhancement of productivity in the Nigerian economy was its responsibility. Hitherto, this responsibility had been shoved to either Private Indigenous Capital or Private Foreign Capital. However, neither of the two had attained an enduring success in this task.

The Third National Development Plan coinciding with this period of Government self-realisation, reveals the Government's attempt to alternatively enhance productivity in the economy through the promotion of Public Capital. The Plan, for instance, stressed the need for 'self-reliance' and the involvement of the generality of Nigerians in developing productive forces in the economy. Thus, the need for the development of grassroots energy for productivity enhancement became, for the first time, addressed.

Remarkably, it was emphasized that investment would henceforth be largely financed from domestic savings. This certainly was a positive development. Positive also was the Plan's recommendation for the development of technology and reduction in rural-urban drift. So also was the intention to promote a new orientation conducive to greater discipline, better attitude to work and a cleaner environment. That cost-consciousness was also emphasised, indicated the arrival of a new era in which the State Government had become productivity conscious. For, the drafters of the Plan had been enjoined to 'think small' instead of 'big' as had been done in the grandiose projects of the previous years. Besides, they had also been instructed to use existing project designs where possible so as to minimize consultancy fees. Generally, therefore, effort was made toward simpler, more functional, and more economic projects that could be executed using more direct labour and local resources than hitherto.

This positive inclination, of course, reflected the general trend towards a self-reliant and self-sustained development which, like a wind, had blown across sub-Saharan Africa during these years. By adopting the 'Lagos Plan of Action' in 1980, the Organisation for African Unity had endorsed the fact that African countries must be their own saviour and must pull themselves up from undevelopment. Its prevalent vision of a developed and prosperous Africa by the year 2000 probably was a principal stimulus that awakened in the Nigerian State Government the need to fashion its own programme, craft its own policies, mobilize its own material and human resources towards a genuinely prosperous Nigeria. This, generally, was a bold and challenging vision towards attaining enhanced productivity in the economy. At least, the debacle for control over the economy of the past years had become de-emphasized.

That the State Government began to lay emphasis on the domestic production of goods previously imported indicated its awakening to the importance of productivity enhancement through self-reliance. It also indicated its new awareness that an indiscriminate importation of finished products might throttle the development of local productive forces. But perhaps of greater importance, is the additional indication that the State Government had awakened to the reality of basing productivity enhancement initiatives on a broad mass basis rather than the narrow basis founded either on Private Indigenous or on Private Foreign Capital.

But that it now endorsed the domestic production of goods previously imported meant that the State Government had chiefly adopted import substitution as a strategy. As a strategy import substitution, of course, was not a novelty in the economy. Peter Kilby had observed the hesitant steps taken towards it in earlier years.[28] And, as an industrialisation strategy, W.F. Steel[29] and T.L. Killick[30] had studied it in the neighbouring Ghana in 1972. A. Seidman[31] also provided a useful critique of this strategy as it was applied in Zambia in 1974.

Therefore, in adopting the import substitution strategy, the State Government subscribed to an approach adopted elsewhere on the continent towards tackling low productivity and underdevelopment generally. The dictates of this strategy spelt out by Raj and Sen,[32] for instance, were problem-solving enough to attract the sympathy of the State Government. In brief, these dictates exposed Nigeria, according to Raj and Sen, to three basic options. First, it could use its foreign exchange to import investment goods (e.g. looms), raw materials, fuels, etc. to manufacture consumer goods (e.g. cloth). Or, it could use its foreign exchange to import capital goods (machine tools) to make investment goods which, in turn, produce consumer goods and to make intermediate goods (e.g. steel) and develop raw material supplies. Or still, it could use its foreign exchange to import capital goods to make capital goods which, in turn, make other capital goods, investments goods, etc.

The dictates of this strategy would immediately compel attraction - its provision that 'production' would actually happen locally. Investment goods, raw materials and capital goods could be imported, though. Yet their salience is that they all in turn would serve to produce use goods at home. Besides, as a strategy, it could conserve foreign exchange which, in turn, could improve Balance of Payments. Again, since the market of any product would be largely local, it would be fairly well-known and established. Above all, the strategy could satisfy the desire to demonstrate an ability to produce for the local economy rather than import into it. Greater employment opportunities could also be created. Thus, general benefits of technical progress could, all told, be derived from it. Seen in this way as a positive, deliberate, and conscious development strategy and a 'cause' to economic growth, little wonder it appealed to the State Government in Nigeria especially in the early 1980s.

The above attractions of import substitution which apparently influenced its adoption by the State Government as a deliberate policy towards productivity enhancement, however, were also open to objections. Critics inclined to neo-classical thought, like the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), saw the State Government's position as an economic blunder. The Bank, for instance, pointed out that the entailed deliberate imposition of protective tariffs could force the transnational corporations to reduce domestic production facilities in order to protect their market position. This precisely is Kilby's reading of the situation in his market protection hypothesis (1969). Thus, these tariffs could, in the final analysis, be counterproductive. Indeed, a study of net effective protection arising from trade policy across 54 industrial groups carried out by the IBRD in 1977 in the economy indicated disincentives to export-oriented industries as well as import-substituting intermediary industries based on local raw materials. Besides, the State Government's protective tariffs and discriminatory attention to industry was also seen to be a bias against agriculture. This was a lopside which would mean that productivity could be enhanced only through industry with the resultant possibility of over-using this sector.[33]

Even so, the State Government's orientation to import substitution as a means of productivity enhancement was considered unreasonable in neo-classical circles as a planning instrument. Under the strategy, it was pointed out, the planner would usually consider a product suitable for domestic production if the domestic market, as given by the value or volume of imports of that product was equal to or greater than the minimum economic output of a single manufacturing unit. Protection would, then, be given to the domestic producer so that the price of the imported product (assuming that imports are permitted) will be equal to, or greater than the price of the domestic product. This argument, of course, raised one or two issues which, in turn, questioned the advisability of the State Government's adoption of the strategy as a means of productivity enhancement.

First, the market for imported goods, it was pointed out, is not likely to represent the demands of the population as a whole. Import substitution accepts the pattern of demand and the underlying distribution of income as given whereas it may be both necessary and desirable to alter radically consumption patterns and distributional profiles, both aspects of the economic and socio-political structure which industrialisation is intended to alter. Again, it was pointed out that the State Government's subscription to import substitution was wrong because it is not necessarily the case that products which enter the country do not merit domestic production nor does it mean that because certain products enter in large amounts, domestic production is desirable since industrialisation may well require the domestic production of goods previously neither imported nor (of necessity) consumed. Finally, it was argued that through import substitution, the State Government had given priority to consumer goods production leading to what could be regarded as a timid industrialisation strategy which although it could generate rapid growth in the short run, yet would be unable to maintain this momentum either in the medium or in the long run. Since therefore, through this strategy, these negative consequences were left on the Nigerian economy, it was argued that the State Government's subscription to import substitution was generally counterproductive to productivity enhancement.

This argument is of utmost importance in the discussion of the low productivity problem because the period beyond 1985 has been chiefly characterised by the State Government's subsequent inclination to its viewpoint. Thus, the Government has generally made a detour from the Lagos 'Plan of Action' to the World Bank 'Agenda for Action' in the period beyond 1985,. Interestingly, though, both options are action-oriented. At least, in principle.

E. BEYOND 1985

The neo-classical economic advice which the State Government has generally heeded to beyond 1985 is chiefly encapsulated in the IBRD's 'Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action' (1981). The World Bank had - using this medium - cautioned that if the Government took the issue of productivity enhancement serious, certain measures were imperative. These included:

(a) Rationalization and lowering of protective tariffs:

(b) Devaluation of the naira.

(c) Encouragement of free play of market forces.

(d) Encouragement of exports.

(e) Removal of the disincentives suffered by other sectors of the economy; particularly agriculture.

(f) Reduction of the degree of the State's direct intervention in the Nigerian economy.

These measures largely represent the structural adjustment strategy of tackling the productivity problem to which the State Government currently subscribes. This new twist of course reflects global currents in international economics with special reference to the development of the Third World. It reflects a general shift, on the part of Third World countries, from the question of development to the more specifically directed problem of adjustment. Thus, Richard Feinberg argues: "If development was the dominant theme and aspiration of the Third World in the 1950s and 1960s, adjustment is the painful necessity of the 1980s."(34)

This need for adjustment has, now, been heightened no longer simply because of the low productivity problem but also by a number of cataclysms in the global economic structure. These include the all related phenomena of higher costs of capital, global recession, and retrenchment in international financial markets. These phenomena have meant that Nigerians have had to accept lower standards of living to off-set these costs. Secondly, the incidence of rising costs of food in particular has called on the State Government to adjust investment priorities and relative prices. Thirdly, Nigeria's productive structures generally have been battered by the accelerating pace of technological innovation, especially in electronics. Finally, Nigeria has also been under an increasing pressure to expose itself more fully to a liberalised economy.(35) This liberalisation which according to Feinberg would mean, "freeing prices to reflect international cost structure" with its concomitant stabilisation which demands of the government to bring expenditures into line with available resources makes up, indeed, a formidable agenda for any State Government in the Developing World.

It is true the naira has been drastically devalued through first, a Second Tier Foreign Exchange Market (SFEM), and a simple Foreign Exchange Market (FEM). This, clearly, is a bold measure adopted by the State Government to stem what could have been a major economic catastrophy. The naira had mainly appreciated, in the first instance, because of the huge oil sales of the early 1970s. Thus it was backed by neither agricultural nor industrial products but by crude oil whose stability in terms of price and volume could not be relied on. To be placed on almost exchange parity with more adequately backed foreign currencies was economically unwise. That it was permitted to float to its own level through the SFEM and FEM was a positive step by the State Government.

Again prior to structural adjustment, petroleum was heavily subsidized by the State Government. A litre sold for 20k and it was perhaps correctly argued that Nigeria was one of the few countries where a litre of fuel sold cheaper than a bottle of Coca Cola. Petroleum subsidy has been withdrawn to the chagrin of university students, workers and other pressure groups. And possibly in an attempt to curtail direct government involvement in the economy, government ministries and parastatals have undergone rationalization. Privatisation also now is well received by the State Government. Through it, Government would appear not only to seek to reduce its 'direct intervention' in the economy as cautioned by the IBRD but also to encourage the 'free play of market forces'. Besides, there now is a deliberate tilt by the State Government towards emphasis on export-oriented industries vis-a-vis the import substitution industrialisation preference of the previous years.

These measures add up to the State Government's willingness to 'try out', as it were, the recommendations of the IBRD which have their roots chiefly in neo-classical economic theory. These recommendations do provide some insight into the productivity question and economic development generally. Reasonable exchange rate of the naira; home prices which reflect international costs; stabilised Government expenditures; and the stimulation of exports are all fiscal and economic measures which may enhance productivity and induce output expansion. This argument could hardly be challenged.

The recommendations, however, oversimplify the productivity problem just like most of the other approaches. They do not, for instance, address the issue of the ownership and control of the means involved in the production process. Some correlation should be expected between productivity on the one hand and ownership and control of the major means of production on the other. Again, they overlook the possible influences of conflicting interest groups on productivity in the economy. These influences are of paramount importance in understanding the problem. Even so, the fragmented nature of the Nigerian market may not provide a useful basis for an adjustment programme based on the operation of market forces alone. Though evidently useful recommendations, all told, a more useful approach would be to incorporate them into a more broadly based structural option which takes into account the gaps noted above.

Thus, in summary, the task of enhancing productivity in the Nigerian economy has been quite formidable. But as an agency to accomplish this task, the State Government has been inconsistent in its policies. Its plans have generally been uncordinated in execution. They have been largely experimental; often incoherent. Paul Collins has reached similar conclusions by arguing that the role of the State Government at the very least, has been a variable one. Sometimes he underlined it has served 'technocratic' or more productive interests against Foreign Capital - as for instance, over share pricings in the indigenisation decrees. Yet paradoxically at other times, it has favoured Foreign Capital in certain sectors of the decree's schedules.(36) Therefore, there has largely been an element of uncertain indecisiveness in the State's role. This has preyed upon its ability to direct productivity enhancement in the economy.

The overall picture that emerges is that of a State Government caught between the webs of class, or more generally speaking, group dynamics. Its perception, thus, has been characterised by unclarity for the webs. In this frame of thought, the similarly placed State Government in Kenya was described by C. Leys as "essentially a register of the balance of class forces."(37) He went on to differentiate this perception of the role of the State Government from the 'neutral' or 'dependency' theorists by arguing that the central point is the fundamental coincidence of 'capital-indigenous' and 'alien'; and that what are in conflict are the interests of different elements of the bourgeoisie differentially affected by the form the conflict takes.(38) Similar conflicts in interests of similar class formations characterise the Nigerian example and they prey upon the development of forces vital for productivity enhancement in the economy.

At the very least, circumstantial evidence suggests that they do. For, when a State Government entrusted with the responsibility of piloting the development of an economy becomes more principally concerned with power-broking than economic development, the latter would be neglected. Since Independence, the Nigerian State Government has been preoccupied with sorting out the equation on the balance of power between Private Indigenous and Private Foreign Capital on the one hand, and its own position in that equation on the other. Consequently, there were occasions when it sought to place Private Indigenous Capital in a position of control in the economy. This presumably was to enable the latter to enhance productivity in the economy. Realising, nevertheless, that Private Indigenous Capital's abilities could not be vouchsafed, it called in Foreign Capital into the task. Yet not confident of the intentions of this substitute, the State Government on occasions declared it had resolved 'to control the commanding heights of the economy'. This, clearly, has been a 'muddling through' process.

Nevertheless, economic development has suffered neglect and productivity has generally remained low as standards of living have been impoverished. But meanwhile, the Nigerian labour gets blamed for ill-motivation and low productivity.

It would be conceded that the motivation of Nigerian labour is indispensable for enhanced productivity in the economy. Yet what is underlined here is that low productivity in the Nigerian economy has been essentially caused by the ambivalences of the State Government in its economic development programmes.

CHAPTER FIVE: NOTES

1. C.R. Frank, 'Public and Private Enterprise in Africa'. In Gustav Ranis (ed), **Government and Economic Development**. New Haven: Yale University Press (1971), p.96.

2. See Nigerian Federation Annual Report of the Commerce and Industries Department 1949-50. Kaduna: Government Printer (1951).

3. See H. Alavi, 'Imperialism Old and New'. **The Socialist Register** (1964 London), p.107 for this quotation from Lenin.

4. See OECD, National Accounts of Less Developed Countries (Paris 1967) preliminary.

5. See:
   (a) J. Mars, 'Extra-Territorial Enterprise', in **Mining, Commerce, and Finance in Nigeria**. M. Perham (London 1948).
   (b) P.T. Bauer, **West African Trade** (Cambridge 1954).
   (c) S.R. Smith, **The Industrial Development of Nigeria**, M.A. Thesis (California University 1957).
   (d) C. Liedholm 'The Influence of Colonial Policy on the Growth and Development of Nigeria's Industrial Sector'. In **Growth and Development of the Nigerian Economy**, C.R. Echer and C. Liedholm (eds) (Michigan State University Press, 1970), pp.56-61.

6. Cf. P.P. Kilby, **Industrialisation in an Open Economy: Nigeria 1945-1966**. Cambridge (1969). Also, the U.N. Year book of National Accounts Statistics, New York (1965) shows the manufacturing share of the GDP at current factor cost in Kenya as 11.1%; Uganda, as 7.6%; and Zambia, as 9.3%.

7. See footnote 5 above.

8. Federal Republic of Nigeria, Second National Development Plan

1970-74 (Lagos, Federal Min. of Economic Development and Reconstruction, 1972), pp.245-6, 231-233.

9. Cf. G.K. Helleiner, **Peasant Agriculture, Government, and Economic Growth in Nigeria**. Homewood, Illinois: Irwin (1966), p.540. Also Central Bank of Nigeria, **Economic and Financial Review**, 11, 1, June (1973).

10. Central Bank of Nigeria, **Economic and Financial Review**, 11, 1, June (1973).

11. See Federal Office of Statistics, Industrial Survey of Nigeria (Lagos) 1972.

12. Ibid.

13. Federal Republic of Nigeria, Second National Development Plan 1970-74, First Progress Report (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Economic Development and Reconstruction, 1972), p.50.

14. Federal Republic of Nigeria, Third National Development Plan, 1975-80, (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Economic Development, 1975), p.20.

15. Ibid, p.60.

16. Ibid, p.19.

17. Cf. O. Ekundare, **An Economic History of Nigeria, 1860-1960**. London: Methuen & Co. (1973), p.44.

18. This assessment is endorsed by, among others:
(a) R. Muller, 'More on Multinationals: Poverty is the Product', **Foreign Policy**, 13 (1973-74).
(b) B.V. Schmidt, 'Dependency and the Multinational Corporation'. In Bonilla and Girling (eds), **Structures of Dependency** (Standford University, 1973).
(c) O. Sunkel, 'National Development Policy and External Dependence

in Latin America'. In Yale Ferguson (ed) **Contemporary Latin American Relations**, Englewood Cliffe: W.J. Prentice-Hall, (1972).

19. See G. Williams, 'Nigeria: A Political Economy'. In Gavin Williams (ed), **Nigeria - Economy and Society**. London: Collins (1976), p.22.

20. P. Kilby, **Industrialisation in an Open Economy, Nigeria 1945-1966**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1969), p.33.

21. Federal Republic of Nigeria, Second National Development Plan, 1970-74, Lagos, Federal Ministry of Economic Development and REconstruction (1972), p.287.

22. See A. Hoogvelt, 'Indigenisation and Technological Dependency' **Development and Change**, vol. II (1980), p.259.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. See T. Biersteker, **Multinationals, the State and the Control of the Nigerian Economy**. Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press (1987), p.118.

26. Ibid.

27. Cf. A. Hoogvelt (1980), p.271.

28. P. Kilby (1969).

29. See W.F. Steel, Import Substitution and Excess Capacity in Ghana, Oxford Economic Papers, 24, 2 July (1972).

30. T. Killick, **Development Economics in Action: A Study of Economic Policies in Ghana**. London: Heinemann Education books (1972).

31. See A. Seidman, 'The distorted growth of Import Substitution in Industry: The Zambian Case'. **The Journal of Modern African Studies**, 12:4.

32. See K.N. Raj and .AK. Sen, Alternative Patterns of Growth Under Conditions of Stagnant Export Earnings, Oxford Economic Papers, 13, 1 February.

33. Cf. T. Forrest, **Recent Developments in Nigeria's Industrialisation, Industry and Accumulation**. Martin Fransmann (ed) (1982).

34. R.E. Feinberg, 'The Adjustment Imperative and US Policy in Admistment Crisis in the Third World' Feinberg and Kallab (eds), Policy Perspectives No. I, Washington (1984), p.3.

35. Some of these pressures have come from the Bretton Woods Institutions which are advising policies of austerity and liberalization and also the IMF which refuses to fund programmes that merely postpone adjustment.

36. Cf. P. Collins, 'The State, Foreign Enterprise and Industrial Capitalism in West Africa', Manchester Papers on Development, Issue 9, May 1984, p.45.

37. See C. Leys, 'Kenya: What does Dependency Explain?'. **Review of African Political Economy**, Vol. 17 (1980), p.11.

38. Ibid.

CHAPTER VI:

STATE/LABOUR RELATIONS IN NIGERIA

At a glance, the terminology, 'Nigerian Labour' would seem a bogus description. In a broad sense, it could include all the employed elements of the human factor of production in Nigeria. From the agricultural farm to the manufacturing industry and from the private to the public sector, this aggregate non-management human factor of production could be described as 'Nigerian Labour'. However, any singleness of category thereby connoted would be deceptive since Nigerian labour actually is as variegated as there are divergences in sector, cadre, industry and firm.

The semi-skilled technician in a car assembly plant, for instance, would be quite a different worker categroy from an assistant executive officer in the civil service. Similarly, the bank clerk would vary from the post office clerk. Thus, the technician in the car assembly plant and the bank clerk, both of whom are employed in the private sector where conditions of work are generally better than in the public sector, could show different patterns of work behaviour from the assistant executive officer or the post office clerk, both of whom work in the public sector.

Nevertheless, in an attempt to demystify the terminology, 'Nigerian Labour', F.H. Harbison's classification of labour in developing economies becomes helpful. Attention is drawn to this classification for illustrative purposes only. The intention is not to apply it. Rather, it is to illustrate the variegated nature of the Nigerian labour. Following his cue, it could be distinguished into urban and rural fronts. These could then be isolated into:

(a) a modern urban sector;

(b) an intermediate urban sector;

(c) an informal urban sector;

(d) a modern rural sector;

(e) an intermediate rural sector;

(f) an informal rural sector.(1)

(a) The modern urban sector would consist of the large manufacturing and commercial enterprises, the Government ministries and corporations, and wholesale businesses. To a large extent, this represents a sector that is relatively most capital intensive. It would, however, make up a small proportion of the urban labour force with workers who are relatively highly educated, highly paid, and unionised. Generally, this sector maintains the most direct relations with the State Government. It is mostly on workers in this sector that the State's policies on labour make the most pronounced impact. On account of their urban and educated status, also, workers here generally are the most articulate group to confront the State Government on such policies they adjudge detrimental to the interests of labour generally.

(b) The intermediate urban sector would include workers in small family enterprises, retail trade shops, garages and repair shops, handicrafts, and small-scale transport businesses. This sector would be characterised by less capital intensiveness than the former. It manufactures and sells chiefly to the low income population. Since available labour for this sector is relatively surplus, wages are relatively low and chances for meaningful unionisation are few. But of technical importance is that workers in this sector would not be in direct labour relations with the State Government.

(c) The traditional or informal urban sector would consist of intermittent part time workers, side-walk barbers, casual construction workers, handicraft workers, and such like. These workers use very little capital and their income streams vary in worth and regularity. Although technically employed, many of them are actually underemployed. These would represent the urban poor who are the most minimally affected by the State Government's policies on labour.

(d) The modern rural sector would include the salaried workers in the large state-owned plantations, federal, state and local government staff including school teachers, Community Development officers and health workers.

(e) The intermediate rural sector would consist of casual intermittent workers like bricklayers and carpenters.

(f) The traditional rural sector would mostly include share croppers and subsistence farmers who could be more appropriately classified as peasants.

Thus, the proportion of 'Nigerian labour' with whom the State Government most directly relates is relatively small. Hence, the probability that Government's policies on labour would be limited, in effect, to only a small proportion of workers. The 1986/87 Labour Force Sample Survey, for instance, estimated that 71.7% of the Nigerian labour were farmers; 12.9% were sales workers primarily engaged in commerce; and 10.9% were craftsmen or product processing workers concentrated in manufacturing and construction. These proportions fall outside direct Government employment. However, only 4.5% comprising professional, technical, administrative and clerical workers were estimated to have been directly employed by Government.(2)

Because Government apparently deals with only a small proportion of labour, its policies would appear to bear minimally on general labour productivity. However, the Nigerian economy essentially is an interlocked entity. Therefore Government's policies targetted at its direct worker population have consequences on the total workforce. This would include even the seemingly remote peasant farmers.

The State Government's switch over from labour-intensive to capital-intensive production in the 1970s amply illustrates this point The production crisis of that period had been blamed on the peasant farmers' assumed failure to provide sufficient quantitites of cheap food and export crops for the urban and foreign market. Thereby, foreign exchange necessary for investment, Government spending, and consumer imports was limited. When in an attempt to redress the situation, Government substituted capital-intensive production methods, the peasant farmer, as a result, became displaced as an important factor in national production.(3)

A. THE STATE AND LABOUR RELATIONS: EARLY CONFLICTS (1897-1959)

Though the State Government is in direct labour relations with a relatively small worker population, its overall relationship with Nigerian labour has been historically characterised by conflicts and disputes. Why has this been so? We can point to the manner in which labour was generally recruited by the colonial Government. Recruitment was often by conscription (that is, forced labour). The conscripts were paid low wages, often below subsistence levels. This laid the earliest bases of future conflicts.(4) Since, however, the primary reasons for recruitment evidently were the maintenance of conditions conducive for the promotion of trade and commerce, the nucleus of Nigerian labour was formed not to generate social wealth. As A.G. Hopkins points out, it was brought into being to service the needs of a capitalist state apparatus.(5) Therefore, the development of the Nigerian labour shows that what was created was a subservient corps of workers geared towards service, not production.

These initial conditions had a number of implications for the Nigerian economy. Foremost, the intrinsic value in work became debased. By commanding a position which enabled it to conscript labour, arbitrarily set the rules and pace of work, and dictate wages, the Government diminished the intrinsic value in work. From this beginning, the incipient Nigerian labour became psychologically and economically abused. In consequence the workers became gradually socialised into perceiving work in the public service principally as one for acquiring the 'white man's' money.

This conscious mercenary attitude became externalised in the 'Olu Oyibo' attitude towards public service - a syndrome which, as previously argued, tended to diminish the natural commitment of the workers to work. Largely, this was on the incorrect assumption that public service is the white man's work - a job to be carried out perfunctorily. What effects this disposition had on productivity in the public service are not difficult to imagine. A part of the absenteeism and labour turnover recorded by the early studies on the productivity question could be explained along these lines (see Chapter I, Footnotes 7 and 8).

Besides, recognising that workers preoccupied themselves with monetary concerns the Government encouraged those conditions of work which were specifically aimed at exacting maximum productivity from workers at the expense of their welfare. The workers later felt deprived. Employment relations became infected as labour began to confront the Government.

Indeed, the first hesitant steps towards this confrontation were taken by the workers at these stages. These early demonstrations of grievance represent a fault-line in labour/government relations which later deepened into the present rift between the two. But of theoretical importance is that these early grievances naturally undermined productivity rates in the economy given their scope and diversity exemplified below:

(1) 1897 - Large scale strike by artisans and labourers in the Public Works Department, Lagos (see A.G. Hopkins, 1966, Appendix).

(2) 1899 - Strike of government-employed canoemen at Badagri (see A.G. Hopkins, 1966, Appendix)

(3) 1899 - Warders in the Lagos hospital came out on strike (see A.G. Hopkins, 1966, Appendix).

(4) 1902 - A strike involving clerks working in the railways (see A.G. Hopkins, 1966, Appendix).

(5) 1904 - A second and more widespread strike involving railway clerks which spread to other employees (see A.G. Hopkins, 1966, Appendix; also Public Record Office, C.O. 147/174: **Lagos Weekly Record**, Dec. 31, 1904).

(6) 1913 - 83 Government Printers came out on strike (see **Lagos Weekly Record**, June 21, 1913).

(7) 1919 - Strikes and other labour disturbances at Lagos docks (see **Nigerian Pioneer**, January 31, 1919).

(8) 1919 - A strike by engineers employed by Elder Dempster over inadequate war bonuses (see **Lagos Standard**, May 14, 1919).

(9) 1919 - Widespread strike action undertaken by railway employees at Iddo, Lagos (see **Nigerian Pioneer**, January 23, 1920; **Lagos Weekly Record**, Jan. 31, 1920).

(10) 1920 - There was an extensive strike in Port Harcourt (see **Nigerian Pioneer**, Feb. 27, 1920).

(11) 1920 - A strike in the marine Department, Lagos (see **Lagos Weekly Record**, Nov. 6, 1920).

(12) 1920 - A strike at the Enugu Colliery (see Nigerian Archives, 1920).

(13) 1920 - A strike in which all the daily-paid workers in the employment of the railways and the Public Works

Department were involved (see Nigerian Archives, 1920).

(14) 1921 - Railway artisans were involved in strike action (see **African Messenger**, November 24, 1921).

(15) 1924 - 'Pit boys' at Enugu coal mines went on strike.

(16) 1926 - 'Tub boys' at Enugu Colliery went on strike.

(17) 1933 - Disaffection among the fire brigade and police (Public Record Office, 1933; **Nigerian Pioneer**, April 28, 1933).

(18) 1934 - A strike by bus drivers against Zarpas (see **Lagos Daily News**, July 24, 1934).

(19) 1935 - Industrial unrest in the Eastern section of the railway (Legislative Council Debates, December 20, 1935).

(20) 1935 - Strike initiated by lorry owners but supported by drivers in protest against Government measures to protect railways from competition by road transport (Legislative Council Debates, September 21, 1936).

(21) 1937 - Continuing strikes and unrest among coal miners at Enugu (Legislative Council Debates, March 25, 1937).

(22) 1937 - Produce labourers at Ijebu Ode refused to work in protest against ill-treatment (Legislative Council Debates, July 12, 1937).

Source: **Compiled by the author.**

Therefore, it was the tragedy of Nigerian labour that workers were socialised into wage employment by a government that functioned in conditions unfavourable for the development of creative labour. With the emphasis on the provision of services at low wages, a creative orientation towards work was not available for Nigerian workers. This was not conducive for the development of a productivity conscious wage workforce. Rather what was primarily nurtured were workers who were principally concerned with material considerations. This clearly was a faulty beginning in the development of organized work in Nigeria.

B. THE STATE AND LABOUR RELATIONS: LATER CONFLICTS (1960-1987)

If labour productivity had been diminished in the initial period largely because the mode by which Nigerian labour had been socialised into organised work had bred government/labour conflicts, these conflicts have been intensified by similar conflicts between government and private capital in succeeding years. Nigerian labour, thus, generally functions in a situation of conflict.

In a strict sense, though, conflicts between government and private capital really are conflicts with foreign private capital. The relations between it and indigenous private capital, at worst unstable, have been largely protectionist. This is generally indicated by the two indigenisation exercises created in favour of indigenous private capital.

In its protectionist role favouring indigenous private capital, the State Government however offends, the more, the already sour relations between it and Nigerian labour. In consequence, labour reinforces its perception of itself as a deprived group - a perception that had taken root in previous years. Its subsequent efforts to unionise are, perhaps, best explained in this light. But the State Government's attempts to oppose such efforts heighten the conflicts that mark relations between the two.

The State Government's opposition to labour's efforts is a relatively recent phenomenon though. Before 1968, the form of relations between the two was largely based on the Doctrine of Voluntarism that Peter Kilby describes as an 'Anglo-Saxon model'.(6) By this model, Government had abstained from direct relations with labour. Its adopted ideology was one of 'free collective bargaining' between the 'representatives of labour' and the 'representatives of management'. Thus, the Federal Minister of Labour addressing an International Conference on Labour in 1955 said:

> Can the various types of collective bargaining familiar to older industrial societies thrive in different conditions of underdeveloped countries today? This is an important question which in the view of my Government permits of only one answer. We have followed in Nigeria the voluntary principles which are so important an element in industrial relations in the United Kingdom..... Compulsory methods might occasionally produce a better economic or political result but labour-management must, I think, find greater possibilities of mutual harmony where results have been voluntarily arrived at by free discussion between the two parties. We in Nigeria at any rate, are pinning our faith on voluntary methods.(7)

Having started from this stand-offish posture towards organised labour, the State Government's subsequent direct interventionist attitude towards labour becomes intriguing. Was it primarily to promote the development of industrial relations in the economy? Or were there, perhaps, underlying political-economic dimensions to this remarkable shift in orientation described by W.A. Warmington thus:

> The Labour Department has in fact departed very considerably from the pattern it is trying to impose..... It has given Government greater influence and has on occasion interfered in much more detailed aspects than would ever be contemplated in Great Britain.**(8)**

However, in committing itself into direct interventionist relations with Nigerian labour, Government appears largely to be responding to the logic of its essentially capitalist character. Especially so, one that is in competition with Foreign Private Capital and suspicious of Indigenous Private Capital. A demonstration of these relations becomes obvious when the Government's policies towards labour, soon after Independence, are examined. At that time, though the struggle for Independence had ended, the embers of nationalism still glowed. This was particularly in the direction of economic independence. Meanwhile, some ex-leaders of the nationalist struggle who had turned industrialists, transporters, commercialists - private employers of labour generally - kept the economic nationalist feelings aflame as well as regulating labour in the best way that would ensure maximum profits from their investments.

Government's initial direct interventionist relations with labour could be seen to have been framed to suit the interests of this emergent indigenous capitalist employer class. At least two evidences suggest this. First, is the administration of the Labour Code (1945) in the period before Government's interventionist relations with labour and during the period of this intervention. In the first period, employers who contravened the Code were generally prosecuted. 7 out of 8 such employers, for instance, were convicted in 1956 according to the Morgan Commission.(9) However, in the latter period, none of such employers was convicted.(10)

Secondly, the privileged position enjoyed by the Association of these employers (Nigerian Employers Consultative Association) suggests the preferential status they were accorded in the economy. For the State Government's policies on labour generally were influenced by this body. S. Tracy, for instance, argues that even matters directly related to the civil service like the five-day working week and vacation system of the public sector were discussed with the Employers Association rather than the representatives of labour.(11) Besides, both the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce and the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (organisations formed chiefly by the same private indigenous employers of labour) enjoyed similar statuses.

When the State Government, therefore, deliberately kept labour's wages low, its reason given as "to promote economic development" becomes highly suspect. Deliberate low wages were specifically aimed at maximizing employers' profits as a primary measure. It remains true, though, that deliberate low wages are a legacy of the Colonial Office Document of 1905.(12) However, the justification for low wages then, namely: that the workers would prefer leisure to income once they had achieved a certain standard of living was based on the incorrect assumptions of 'target working'. Such faults that are evident in these assumptions adequately highlighted in A.G. Hopkin's Critique of the Backward Sloping Supply Curve of African Labour thesis need not be repeated.(13) What needs emphasis, however, is that a policy of deliberate low wages generally has been a dynamic for capital accumulation whether in past or in present relations of the Nigerian Government with labour. Of course, labour's general fight against low wages and resistance to capital accumulation are evident in the 234 strikes recorded within the first three years of Independence. These were estimated to have cost the economy 3.65 million lost days of production.(14) The peak national strike of 1964 is estimated also to have cost 1.3 million days.(15) These losses in man-days, of course, meant a cumulative deterioration in productivity.

C. THE STATE GOVERNMENT'S SELF ASSERTION

The Government's wage commissions which followed could therefore look like means set up to check deteriorating productivity. This deteriorating productivity, of course, was perceived as resulting from labour's dissent in the economy. Elliot Berg, though, would argue to the contrary that "labour unions had little effect on wage commissions."(16) According to him the causal factors for the setting up of the wage commissions ranged between:

(a) Ideological or moral sentiments connected with social justice which motivates government to meet the minimum needs of workers.

(b) A response to unorganised dissatisfaction manifested by rioting or demonstrations.

(c) A preemptive increase designed to assuage possible dissent or undercut the labour movement.

(d) An attempt to win friends for the Government.(17)

In a similar line of thought, John Weeks would also argue that:

> One can build a model of wage determination in the Nigerian context which is consistent with union weakness.....For humanitarian, institutional, and ideological reasons, the Government commissions a major wage review about every five years.**(18)**

To Berg and Weeks, it would be conceded that there are good chances that Government's wage commissions are set up partly for humanitarian or moral reasons. At least, the creation of a Social Welfare Unit of the Federal Ministry of Labour that "oversees conduct and safety at the workplace" suggests this altruism. But it would become difficult to argue this point to a logical conclusion in the absence of a corresponding supporting social philosophy. What social philosophy that has guided the Government all along is capitalism with its primary orientation to profit. Besides, were morality or humanitarianism the primary motivation for the establishment of wage commissions, then real wage increases would have been awarded labour before its organised dissent took shape. Thus, the commissions were largely aimed at enhancing productivity.

But beyond serving as a means of checking deteriorating productivity perceived as resulting from labour's dissent, the wage commissions were also instruments set up by the Government to assert itself politically in the struggle for control over the economy. The first of those post Independence commissions, the Morgan Commission (1964) gives a strong suggestion of this essentially political character of the commissions. Because wage levels in the private sector have been hooked with those in the public sector under Government's direct control, Government apparently used the Commission to regulate wages both in the public and private sectors.[19] For none of the pre-Independence commissions[20] had paid any direct attention to the private sector. However, to the Morgan Commission, the charge was given to provide recommendations on the following issues that ran across both public and private sectors:

(a) A general upward revision of salaries and wages of junior employees in both Government and private establishments.

(b) The abolition of the daily wage system.

(c) The introduction of a general national minimum wage.

By extending the Commission's frame of reference beyond the public sector, Government used the Commission as a means of asserting its influence more positively in the economy. This political dimension of the Commission, previously overlooked, is of utmost importance in understanding these issues. For, they reveal the character of Government that has been impeded from confronting the productivity problem by political distractions.

(i) The Adebo Commission (1970)

Like the preceding Morgan Commission, the Adebo Commission of 1970 was also an attempt by Government to reinforce its political position in relating to labour and private capital. For if anything, the end of the civil war in that year took off the lid from the pent-up grievances of dissatisfied but repressed labour. With the nightmare of the civil war over, however, labour could then make demands and go on strike if they were not reasonably met. Indeed, 124 such strikes were recorded in the 1970/71 year alone with a total loss of 224, 470 man days.(21)

Thus by setting up the Adebo Commission to review wages and salaries in July 1970, the State Government may seem to have tried to assuage strident demands from labour. These were previously dormant in the war years but released at the end of hostilities. However some other structural conditions in the post war economy also played equally significant roles in compelling Government to set up the commission.

Foremost of these conditions is that following the 30 month long hostilities, the Nigerian economy had become seriously distorted and depleted. Business confidence had plummetted and there was the necessity for Government to open up new areas for the deployment of foreign investment capital. Production levels in several manufactured goods like soap and cement had fallen. And inflationary pressures became so hard that Government was constrained to set up price monitoring and control agencies. Generally, what emerged from the civil war was an out-of-hand economy.

In setting up the Adebo Commission, therefore, Government attempted, through it, to regain control over an economy that had been distorted by a civil war. This is evident in Government's own expressed view that:

> A wage and salary review was therefore seen not only as a means to assuage discontent but as an opportunity to stimulate the national economy and reorient the supply of consumption goods and services from the constraints of a war economy.**(22)**

Thus, the Adebo Commission after all, was not aimed only at assuaging the discontent of labour but also, importantly, at regaining control over the economy by the State Government. In this sense, the political context of the commission becomes as obvious as it was in the preceding Morgan Commission. Because politics became more important than economics in the Government's consideration this minimized the effectiveness of the Commission.

The Government, for instance, used the Commission as a forum for initiating political attacks on the indigenous private capitalist class:

> The increase in the cost of living is a reflection of that sacrifice that has to be made in the interest of national secutiry. Such sacrifices would be easier, however, if they were seen to fall equitably on all sections of the population such that the least sacrifice was made by those in the lowest income group.....From some of the representations made to us, it is clear not only that there is intolerable suffering at the bottom of the income scale, but also that the suffering is made even more intolerable by manifestations of affluence and wasteful expenditure which cannot be explained on the basis of visible and legitimate means of income.(23)

Thus by recognising that this group showed manifestations of affluence and wasteful expenditure whilst labour suffered intolerably "at the bottom of the income scale", Government, through the Commission, ordered that "The private sector should make adjustments (wage increases) to its workers in comparable circumstances."(24)

Therefore, the State Government's interests in overseeing the private sector first witnessed in the Morgan Commission is reinforced in the 1970 Adebo Commission. But the question arises whether in ordering the private sector to pay higher wages to its workers, Government showed genuine interests in protecting labour. This would seem hardly so given the number of strikes recorded amongst its own workers over wages and salaries given as 52 for the 1970/71 year against 84 in the private sector.(25) Therefore Government could not have been protecting workers' interests. Rather, its directives for better conditions of work in the private sector chiefly were a strategy for consolidating its influence beyond the public to the private sector.

(ii) The Udoji Commission (1974)

If the State Government's interest in superintending the private sector was demonstrable in both the Morgan and Adebo Commissions, in the succeeding Udoji Commission this interest began to wane. As its third major incursion into labour relations in Nigeria, Government would have ben expected to pursue this interest to a more logical conclusion. With Udoji, however, Government relapsed to its pre-Morgan preoccupation with the public sector. Thus, it appeared to have lost grounds for greater control of the economy to the private employer. In respect of wage increases recommended by this latest Commission, Government, for instance, maintained that:

> Employers may negotiate with their respective employees appropriate increases in salaries and wages to compensate increases in the cost of living since the wage freeze.(26)

Such sudden twist in Government's interest is surprising. However, a set of factors could explain Government's Udoji peculiarities. One factor is ideological. The Government's ideological position at that stage was not quite clear. Though it showed capitalist tendencies, yet it was hesitant to be freely committed to an unfettered market economy as its intervention in direct labour relations through Morgan and Adebo indicate. But by intervening through these last commissions, Government probably sensed that it had strayed too far in a socialist direction. The Udoji Commission, thus, offered a worthwhile opportunity for fence-mending and putting the necessary checks on State intervention in the economy. Secondly, the previous two commissions in the interest they had shown in the private sector, had triggered a spate of strikes in that sector. Resulting from these two commissions, strikes in the private sector had multiplied surpassing those in the public sector by the ratio 2:1.(27) Thus, in relaxing its interest in the private sector, Government must have taken into consideration the incidence of strikes after both Morgan and Adebo.

Along this line of thought, Government's Udoji peculiarities become easier to understand. Yet, the evidence from Morgan and Adebo strongly point to the political context of Government's wage commissions generally. This political context, it is argued, makes Government's intervention in labour relations not purely a measure aimed at ensuring a stable economy in which labour was producing maximally. Equally too, it was a Government's attempt to politically consolidate itself in the economy. However, since this attempt would mostly be resisted by labour as by the private capitalist employers, the resulting situation became one of general conflict marked by discontent and dissent.

D. LABOUR'S RESPONSES

As we have noted, the pattern of Nigerian labour's responses to the political dimensions of Government's direct intervention in its affairs has been characterised by a primary concern for increases in wages and salary. It has even been argued by Arrighi and Saul for instance that the Nigerian labour has become a labour aristocracy:

> The higher wages and salaries foster the stabilisation of the better paid section of the labour force whose high incomes justify the severance of ties with the traditional economy. Stabilisation, in turn, promotes specialisation, greater bargaining power and further increases in the incomes of this small section of the labour force which represents the proletariat proper of tropical Africa. These workers enjoy incomes three or more times higher than those of unskilled labourers and together with the elites and sub-elites in bureaucratic employment in the civil service and expatriate concerns constitute what we call the labour aristocracy of tropical Africa.**(28)**

Though a relevant aspect of labour's general responses to Government's direct intervention, the thesis of a Nigerian labour aristocracy is inconclusive. For, it is correct that Nigerian workers generally have won quantitative increases in salaries and wages since Independence. A university graduate teacher, for instance, who earned an average monthly salary of the equivalent of N120 in 1972 now earns a monthly average of N400. When, however, adjustments are made for inflationary trends, these increases are not increases in real wages. They represent a decrease. The N120 of 1972, for instance, was worth about £60 while the N400 of 1990 is worth only about £28. Thus, using sterling as an index, current salaries of graduate teachers have depreciated by more than 50%.

To describe this workforce as an aristocracy, nevertheless, is a different matter. Probably this characterisation chiefly emerged by magnifying the perceived divergences between the workers' incomes and those of the largely unskilled workers including the peasantry. What, however, is overlooked are the additional responsibilities the workers often bear in high rents and bills and in meeting the expectations of the extended family. When these and other expenses are taken into account, income differentials between the workers and peasants would tend to narrow considerably.(29)

Even so, any quantitive gains that labour has won have been on the battlefield of strikes which invariably has left its impact on productivity. Tabulated overleaf are examples of such strikes between 1960 and 1978 showing the number of strikes for each year; workers involved; and total man-days lost.

Between Independence and the civil war, labour had organised 550 strikes. This fell to 247 during the civil war and rose again to 1290 between 1971 and 1978. Of importance is that the monetary factor was

TABLE VI.1

STRIKES (1960-1978)

Year	No. of Strikes	Workers Involved	Man-Days Lost
1960/61	65	36667	157373
1961/62	58	18673	57303
1962/63	45	n.a.	53039
1963/64	62	45409	96621
1964/65	195	73447	253460
1965/66	125	n.a.	238679
1966/67	70	41344	100000
1967/68	83	11767	70955.5
1968/69	29	11551	35028
1969/70	46	18357	71894.6
1970/71	124	78474	224470
1971/72	85	31915	63254
1972/73	71	43676	105415
1973/74	105	41527	148130.1
1974/75	354	126818	357028.2
1975/76	264	122546	439296.3
1976/77	130	83126	225709.6
1977/78	153	97802	448335.7

Sources: Fed. Min. of Labour, Annual Reports.
Peter Kilby, **Industrialisation in an Open Economy**, p.275.
O. Sonubi, 'Trade Disputes in Nigeria, 1966-71', **Nigerian Journal of Econ. and Soc. Studies**, XV 2 July 1973, p.232.

primarily the cause of these strikes. In the 1966/67 year, for instance, out of 70 recorded strikes, 28 were for wage levels; and 11, for irregular payment of wages. Thus 55% of this total was on account of wage-related problems while the rest were for similar problems of promotion, grading, and removal of management. Similarly, in the 1977/78 year, out of 153 recorded strikes, 33 were for wage level; 20, for allowance and bonus; and 8, for irregular payment of wages. This adds up to 61 or 40% of the total that were organised for wage-related matters. The table overleaf provides further details.

It is evident, therefore, that whilst there has been a contest for the control of the Nigerian economy between the State Government and the private capitalist classes, labour's main preoccupation has been with increases in wages and salaries through strikes. It is probably on account of its relative political apathy that it seems to fit into Frantz Fanon's criticism of workers in post-Independence African nation states generally:

> The workers now that they have 'Independence' do not know where to go from there. For, the day after Independence is declared, the trade unions realize that if their demands were to be expressed, they would scandalize the rest of the nation; for the workers are in fact the most favoured section of the population. and represent the most comfortably off.**(30)**

The Fanon embourgeoisement thesis, like the labour aristocracy thesis, however, is a different discussion. Its justification, perhaps, stems from the seeming preponderant interest shown by the Nigerian

TABLE VI.2

STRIKES AND ISSUES INVOLVED, 1966-69, 1972-77

Issue	1966/67	1967/68	1968/69	1972/73	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76	1976/77
Wages	18	20	3	3	9	6	11	23
Conditions of Service	9		9	10	9	25	21	26
Discipline & Termination	7	6	1	3	15	11	5	8
Hours of Work & Overtime	5	5	-	2	1	8	3	6
Allowance & Bonus	5	4	-	3	6	57	11	8
Anti-Union & Union Recognition	6	3	-	1	4	4	9	8
Irregular Payment of Wages	10	3	12	2	-	8	5	-
Refusal to Bargain	-	1	1	1	4	4	4	6
Violation of Agreement	1	-	-	-	4	1	2	-
Promotion & Grading	2	-	2	1	2	3	-	2
Removal of Management	5	8	-	4	8	5	4	3
Commission Award	-	-	-	-	2	-	24	8
Benefits	-	-	-	-	6	-	5	6
Others	2	2	1	3	1	5	5	6
Total	70	61	29	32	87	133	90	90

Source: Compiled from the Records of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Lagos.

workers in wage and salary increases at the expense of organising themselves towards winning political control. However, in any system of industrial employment, wages and working conditions are the centre of trade union activities. Thus, in preoccupying itself with wage increases, Nigerian labour had pursued the first principles of trade unionism.

However, labour's pursuit for wage and salary increases, mainly through strikes, left an impact on productivity. Of significance is that these strikes were organised most frequently in the Manufacturing and Construction/Engineering industries. There were 252 and 163 recorded strikes, respectively, in these industries between 1967 and 1978. The greatest losses in man-days were in the Government Services, though, where there were 42 recorded strikes in the same period.

So a pattern emerges in which strikes in Manufacturing and Construction/Engineering were shorter with less man-days lost than strikes in Government Services where strikes lasted longer. Nevertheless, in whatever industry they occurred, these strikes generally interrupted production and services. In the short term this would naturally have had effects on productivity. Given the number of strikes and the working days lost it would not be easy for productivity losses to be made good. This, of course, is only a working assumption since there are no statistics available to confirm or refute the claim.

Thus, out of 696 recorded strikes in the period, 415 were recorded in the two vital industries of manufacturing and construction/

engineering. The 59.6% of the total number of recorded strikes represented by these figures indicates the effects that labour's strikes have on productivity in the Nigerian economy.

TABLE VI.3

STRIKES BY INDUSTRY (1967-78)

Industry	Strikes	Workers Involved	Man-Days Lost
Manufacturing	252	101171	282353
Agriculture	30	17160	58044
Construction/Engineering	163	110079	350522
Dock	14	26210	106266
Printing/Publishing	19	8573	25158
Transport	44	27884	84204
Educational Services	24	50578	211705
Petroleum	43	12976	40284
Government Services	42	32436	434604
Commerce	36	10579	35229
Service	29	26539	83418

Source: Compiled from the Records of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Lagos.

E. IMPLICATIONS OF GOVERNMENT/LABOUR CONFLICTS ON PRODUCTIVITY

In Nigeria, strikes are detrimental to productivity growth since they occur most frequently in the vital industries. However, these strikes are not direct and absolute consequences of workers' lack of motivation to produce highly. For, though the workers have organised strikes largely on account of wage-related issues, their conditions of work are not so stringent that they have been absolutely denied the motivation to produce highly.

Perquisites attached to work in the Nigerian economy range from the essential to, sometimes, the ludicrous. There is, for instance, 'the annual leave with pay' varying in duration for the different cadres of both the public and private sectors. By offering an opportunity for rest and recreation to workers, this leave clearly is essential. Also the 'study leave with pay' which prepares beneficiary workers for more challenging duties in the organisation is of mutual benefit to both the worker and the work organisation. Similarly, the subsidized (sometimes free) medical treatment received by most of the workers. Rent and transport subsidies also paid as work incentives equally are essential in cushioning their salaries from the effects of inflation.

However, 'incentives' like 'double pay at Christmas', car loans, housing loans, entertainment allowances, driver and gardener allowances which some of the senior cadre workers receive, suggest that generally the attempt has been made to motivate the workers with incentives. For it is uncommon to find (even in developed economies) a head of department of a university who is given similar work incentives as one in Nigeria. In most Nigerian universities, a head of department receives a loan from the university with which he would buy a car. Such a car would be locked up in a garage while the head gets chauffered in his official car as departmental head. The same official car could additionally be used to give his children a ride to and from school or take his wife to the local market.

That these situations obtain in the Nigerian economy suggests that Nigerian workers (whether in the senior or in the junior cadre) are to some extent motivated with work incentives. Since, however, their productivity generally remains low, any correlations between their level of motivation and their level of productivity would, therefore, be less important than other factors. The roots of their general low levels of productivity, nevertheless, could always be traced to the strikes noted above. But these strikes are more a consequence of political conflicts characterising the economy than non-motivation at work. Thus, the conflicts through which they are mediated are more responsible for the resultant low productivity in the economy, than ill motivation.

CHAPTER SIX: NOTES

1. See F.H. Harbison, **Human Resources as the Wealth of Nations**, Oxford University Press (New York, 1973), pp.20-21.

2. National Manpower Board, Labour Force Sample Survey 1986/87, Lagos: Federal Ministry of Economic Development and Reconstruction (1988), p.50.

3. See for instance:
   (a) I.J. Ebong, 'Nigerian Social Objectives and the Rural Sector' Rural Development in Nigeria, Procedings of the 1972 Annual Conference of the Nigerian Economic Society, Ibadan (1973), p.180.
   (b) A. Fayemi, 'Problems of Agricultural Production in Nigeria and How to Solve Them'. Inaugural lecture, University of Ibadan (1972/73).
   (c) D.W. Norman, 'Initiating Change in Traditional Agriculture', Procedings, Conference of the Agricultural Society of Nigeria (1970).

4. Cf. O.J. Fapohunda, 'Manpower Planning in Nigeria: A case study of the means of solving unemployment problems in developing societies'. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Economics, New York University (1970), p.26.

5. See A.G. Hopkins, 'The Lagos Strike of 1897: An Exploration in Nigerian Labour History'. **Past and Present**, December 1966, p.135.

6. P. Kilby, **Industrialisation in an Open Economy: Nigeria 1945-66**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1969).

7. Cited in R. Cohen, **Organised Labour in the Nigerian Political Process**. London: Heineman (1974).

8. W.A. Warmington, **A West African Trade Union**. London: Oxford University Press (1960), p.130.

9. Report of the Commission on the Review of Wages, Salaries and Conditions of Service of the Junior Employees of the Governments of the Federation, 1963-64. Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos (1964), para. 109.

10. Ibid.

11. See S. Tracy, The Nigerian Employers Consultative Association. Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos (1966) (mimeograph).

12. See A.G. Hopkins (1966), pp.145-46.

13. Ibid. See also A. Byl and J. Whyte, 'The End of Backward Sloping Labour Supply Functions in Dual Economics'. **Cahiers Economiques et Sociaux**, March 1966 4(1), pp.33-42.

14. See Annual Reports of the Ministry of Labour 1960-63. See also P. Kilby, 'A Reply to John F. Weeks Comment'. **The Journal of Developing Areas**, October 1968, 3(1), p.21.

15. See T. M. Yesufu, **An Introduction to Industrial Relations in Nigeria**. London: Oxford University Press (1962), p.57.

16. E. Berg, 'Urban Real Wages and the Nigerian Trade Union Movement 1939-60: A Comment'. **Economic Development and Cultural Change** (1969), 7(4), p.608.

17. Ibid.

18. J. Weeks, 'A Comment on Peter Kilby: Industrial Relations and Wage Determination'. **Journal of Developing Areas**, October 1968 3(1), p.12.

19. See W.M. Warren, 'Urban Real Wages and the Nigerian Trade Union Movement'. **Economic Development and Cultural Change**, October 1966, 15(1), p.24.

20. These commissions include the Miller Committee (1947); The Gorsuch Commission (1954); and the Mbanefo Commission (1959).

21. See Federal Ministry of Labour, Annual Reports and P. Kilby (1969), p.275.

22. See First Report of the Wages and Salaries Commission, 1970. Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, Printing Division (1970), p.11.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid, p.15.

25. See O. Sonubi, 'Trade Disputes in Nigeria, 1966-71'. **Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies**, XV(2) (1973), p.11.

26. Udoji Public Service Review Commission, First Report on the Nigerian Public Service, p.11.

27. See O. Sonubi (1973), p.25.

28. See G. Arrighi and J. Saul, 'Socialism and Economic Development in Tropical Africa'. **Journal of Modern African Studies**, 6(2) (1968), p.149.

29. For a more detailed critique of the labour aristocracy thesis, see A. Peace, 'The Lagos Proletariat: Labour aristocrats or populist militants?'. In **The Development of an African Working Class**, Richard Sandbrook and Robin Cohen (eds). London: Longman (1975), pp.281-301.

30. F. Fanon, **The Wretched of the Earth**. London: MacGibbon & Kee (1965).

CHAPTER VII:

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The principal position of the present study is that the contest between the State Government and Private Capitalist classes for control over the Nigerian economy is at the root of the low productivity problem in contemporary Nigeria. Before systematic knowledge was applied towards understanding this problem in Nigeria, as in the rest of Africa, its roots had traditionally been traced to certain assumed innate characteristics of the African worker. These characteristics, as observed in the study, primarily bordered on various innate characteristics which the worker was assumed to have.

Thus listlessness, lack of determined endeavour, lack of familiarity with the process of organised industrial work, lack of familiarity with machines and other industrial tools, as well as other assumed innate disabilities were used to explain low productivity in Nigeria. Nevertheless, from the evidence gathered by the present study, especially from the pre-Independence peasant economy, it is clear that Nigerian workers operating in a situation with fewer political-economic constraints could produce effectively in relation to available resources. Therefore, the perception of general group inadequacy amongst such workers could best be seen as an inaccurate judgement. Of course, since much of this judgment originated from expatriate opinion limited by insufficient knowledge of the character, norms, and customs of the Nigerian, we should not be too surprised.

Later, scientific management theory was to trace the roots of this problem to a faulty indigenous management functioning. Kilby, in particular, stressed his thesis of 'non-functional foremanship' as the principal correlate of the apparent inability of the Nigerian workers to fully exert their abilities in the work-place. His arguments were buttressed with his study of the five oil palm and one rubber plantations in the former Western Nigeria in the 1960s. It was only in the expatriate-managed firm where marked progress in production was found in the Kilby study. This may indict the managerial capabilities of the Nigerian of that age. This, all told, may have been quite true of the situation given the very modest educational attainments of the Nigerian in the early 1960s. Before 1960, for instance, there was only one university college in Nigeria, the University of Ibadan, which, for that matter, was affiliated to a British university - London. The other colleges were few and far between and they were mainly arts students. Therefore, if Kilby failed to find first class managers in the sixties, this should evoke little surprise given these circumstances.

Indeed, the Wells and Warmington study, spanning Nigeria and parts of the Cameroons, was to underline this educational attainment factor. They had stressed that productivity was low in both countries largely because of relatively low educational qualifications of their workers. The three: Kilby, Wells, and Warmington no doubt provided the platform for discussing this problem in a systematic fashion for the first time. Their contributions, in spite of Taylorist overtones, were informative and forceful enough to illuminate the Nigerian productivity problem especially at this early state. However, the difficulties that marred scientific management as a mode of explication of the productivity problem in Europe and North America also cast doubts on it as a satisfactory explanation of the problem in Nigeria. In particular, its isolation and analysis of the Nigerian supervisory manager who apparently was seen as caught in the dilemma of not knowing which to observe: the rational rules of his firm, or the ethnic sentiments of his kin-group. This predicament was, indeed, present in the Nigerian work scene. To the indigenous supervisor, it may have been quite a dilemma. He may also not have been well acquainted with how to train his supervisee to fit perfectly into his work in the spirit of scientific management, or to enable him to master the scientific management 'THERBIGS' plan of increasing worker productivity. However, this approach to the question is fragmented in its exclusive focus on the manager or supervisor. The manager/supervisor, after all, is only but one of the actors (albeit an important one) that is to be found in the work-place. Indeed, by losing sight of the entire structured work conditions and by limiting the discussion of the problem to the supervisor, scientific management as discussed by Kilby in the Nigerian situation had even neglected the crucial role of the worker (the supervisee) in the whole issue.

Not that the subsequent emphasis laid on this worker by the succeeding Human Resources Theory advanced the discussion sufficiently to provide a satisfactory explanation of the productivity question. Drawing from Georgopoulos et al, Olatunde Oloko had very strongly argued in favour of aligning the goals of the firm to the needs of the worker. Thus according to him, if the Nigerian worker would perceive that he would meet his personal needs by pursuing the goals of his work-place, then he would produce maximally. Oloko, thus, had cut this path-goal hypothesis towards understanding the productivity question in Nigeria.

This hypothesis seemed quite illuminating. In all its simplicity, it also seemed quite practical. In logic, it was straightforward and convincing. Yet its preoccupation with the assumed 'need' of the Nigerian worker, which need had to be tied to the 'goals' of the workplace diminished its apparent practicality and logic. For in analysing Maslow who clearly provided the principal influence on this hypothesis, the present study has opposed the idea that the Nigerian worker would 'self-actualise' in the workplace, or seek to satisfy his 'social needs' mainly in the work-place. It was argued, on the contrary, that what needs such worker would primarily seek to satisfy in the work-place at best would be the Maslowian basic physiological needs of food. Beyond these, it was emphasized that the workplace could hardly be seen as a forum for need-satisfaction.

However, there were fundamental attractions in going beyond the scientific management as well as the human resources understanding of the problem. It was not simply to fashion a new fad that would replace these hitherto well-received viewpoints. But a principal reason for the search for a new understanding of the problem in this study is that in the last decade, Nigeria has been host to forces that, to say the least, have been momentous. These forces have been of greatest effects in the political and economic realms.

Politically, the shift between military and civil rule seems to have reached a peak in the last decade with the military once again ousting the civilians in the dying hours of 1983. More than that, a segment of the same military, yet again, ousted the incumbent segment less than two years later in 1985. However, the main worry is that this agency that has undergone such rapid changes is the primary organ vested with the responsibility of directing the general economic development of the country, including the enhancement of worker productivity.

The State Government, as has been noted, has been further disturbed by perennial conflicts with powerful social formations at home and powerful economic interests from abroad. At issue has been the ultimate control of the country's economy. Coveted both by the powerful social formations at home and the powerful economic interests from abroad as well as by the State Government itself, the quest for this control has been turned into a contest. And the role of the State Government in that contest, this study has argued, has been essentially vacillating and indecisive.

Between 1962 and 1968, for instance, the Government chiefly involved itself in promoting Indigenous Private Capital. That was soon after its preliminary adventures in industrialisation through cigarette factories and breweries. In this way, therefore, it promoted the cause of Indigenous Private Capital in the contest over the control of the economy.

However, between 1970 and 1974, the Government that emerged was one that promoted the interests of Foreign Private Capital in that contest. It reserved for itself residual welfarist measures during the period though. But between 1975 and 1980, the same State Government reverted its support to Indigenous Private Capital while still retaining some welfarist measures. And between 1981 and 1985, it intensified its support for this Indigenous Private Capital while Foreign Private Capital subsequently dwindled in importance as a result of the State Government's economic stabilisation policies of the period.

The consequences of these Government shifts have been ambiguous. Primarily, however, they have reduced the effectiveness of the State Government as an organ of meaningful development change. In its changing character, it lost clarity of direction and purpose for the economy. During its First Developmental Plan period (1962-8) nonetheless, recognition is given to, for instance, C.R. Frank's assertion that the State Government's 'direction' was one of involving emphasis on private enterprise combined with the use of national development corporations. If with Frank we allow that this was some kind of direction-following by the State Government towards economic expansion and productivity enhancement, the chief problem would remain that this principally arose from private enterprise pressurising which could be dated right back to 1949. The State Government, thus, was brow-beaten into following that 'direction'. Therefore, it was not a truly rational decision on the part of the State Government to enhance productivity and expand the Nigerian economy through private and public enterprise. Because the State Government accorded principal consideration to proddings from Indigenous Private Capital in its choice of a direction for national economic development, the ensuing strategies, therefore, were more political than economic.

There would, in fact, have been no objections against this choice if its political character also contributed to economic development and productivity enhancement. This, however, was hardly so. The indigenous capitalists, as chosen agents of productivity enhancement in the economy were, in the study, found to have been more prone to consumption than to investment which would have paved the way for general economic expansion. The fact that between 1960 and 1963, consumer goods accounted for 56.9%, 54.8% and 51.9% of Nigeria's imports, respectively, attests to this. Beyond that, mainly because of the influences of indigenous capitalists' interests in commerce and consumption, most of the Government's investments were wrongly located. For the 1966/67 fiscal year, for instance, that the Commerce Sector accounted for up to 12.3% of the GDP against the corresponding 1.3% accounted for by the Manufacturing Sector indicates misplacement of investment priority. This was largely because the State Government was more interested in pleasing the indigenous capitalist group which was more interested in Commerce and Consumption than in social production.

Not that the State Government generally was ignorant of the necessity of activating manufacturing if productivity was to be enhanced in the economy. For in an attempt to evaluate its performance in this period, through the Second National Development Plan, it had claimed that 'remarkable progress' had been attained in the Manufacturing Sector (p.137). The present study found, in any case, that this 'remarkable progress in this sector was distributed as: £20,452,884 foreign contribution, and £6,516,639 indigenous contribution for 1963. The State Government, therefore, had shown more interest in promoting the Commerce Sector than Manufacturing. The opportunity costs of these choices could be seen in dwindling outputs which the period and subsequent periods witnessed.

Misplaced investment priority apart, the State Government's 'Guided Promotion of Foreign Private Capital' in the subsequent Development period (1970-74) could not be expected to generate grassroots concern for productivity. When we see that for the year 1970, the aggregate volume of foreign investment in the economy amounted to the colossal sum of £899.2 million, the indication is that indigenous investment potentialities were, indeed, overwhelmed. However, issues would not be taken with colossal foreign investments if such investments were geared toward productivity enhancement as an interim measure. When dormant local productive forces have been developed, such overwhelming foreign investments could then gradually accommodate indigenous investments. The foreign investments of this period on which the State Government leaned, however, were not aimed at preparing grounds for indigenous investments. Rather, they seemed to have been largely used as a battle weapon by foreign economic interests for gaining greater control over the Nigerian economy. Thus, they were highly adventurist and could not be counted on for long-term productivity enhancement. Once again, therefore, the hidden political content of its reliance on foreign investments in the Second period diminished the usefulness of these investments as instruments of productivity enhancement.

However, it was quite amazing that while leaning on foreign investments for productivity enhnacement during the 1970-74 period, the State Government also made its presence felt on the scene by directly championing some projects. When it made its earliest attempts at industrialisation in the sixties, it was remarkable that this was through cigarettes and beer. In this later period, however, it apparently widened its horizon to include such 'development projects' as palm-kernel crushing plants; pulp and paper mill; a chemical complex; and fertiliser plant; and, even, a car assembly plant. The present study insists that while launching these grandiose projects, the State Government was largely flexing its political muscles on the scene. Its aims were hardly the enhancement of productivity in the economy in any rational way. This is largely so because those projects were manifestly out of place in the economy at the time. In that economy, there was a clear low capital to output capacity ratio, for instance. Therefore, the grand total of N188.4 million sunk by the State Government into those projects were more an attempt to assert Government presence than development-oriented measures. It is the view of the present study that they should have been de-empahsized in favour of smaller industrial ventures. These would have involved a greater amount of grassroots participation in developing the economy along higher productivity lines. But again, one witnesses the State Government's economic strategies being mitigated by hidden political calculations. Once again, the logical opportunity costs were an enhancement of productivity and increases in output.

Besides, the economic nationalism shown by the State Government in the 1975-80 period, the Indigenisation Decree of 1977, also had a questionable political character. The Decree possibly had been aimed at transfering greater control of the economy to indigenes. In principle, this aim was a wholesome national aspiration. Nevertheless, in pursuit of this aim, the State Government permitted features of the contest, that has been thus far emphasized, to affect the drafting of the Decree. In this way, influences from both Foreign Capital and Local Capital turned the Decree into the confusion it became. If the State Government had not yielded to these influences, the Decree, probably, would have been more consistent with the national targets of productivity enhancement and output expansion through indigenisation. But the contest for control over the economy ultimately mitigated these economic expansions.

Perhaps a comparison between these turbulent periods and the relatively calmer period of 1981-85 would serve to emphasize the harm caused. By 1980 when oil sales had fallen, foreign loans had mounted, and unemployment and poverty had become real, and reason dawned on the economy, the State Government appeared exorcised of its previous preoccupation with who was in control of the economy. The present study noted that with this liberation, the State Government now realized the need to switch away from eye-catching physical infrastructures to real targets directed at economic expansion. Within this period also, we saw that the State Government began to lay emphasis on domestic production of goods largely previously imported. And, most importantly, it awakened to the reality of basing development initiatives on a wider grassroots pattern. This was a necessary change from the previous practice of courting either Local or Foreign Capital as agencies of productivity enhancement. This period thus, in our view, marked the beginning of the State Government's real attempts to enhance productivity in the economy. Evident, therefore, is that inverse relationship between the contest for control over the Nigerian economy and expansions in productivity and output. Whenever the contest was intensified, chances for expansions in productivity and output were minimized.

By 1981, therefore, it was evident that the State Government had begun to withdraw from the battle it had hitherto fought against Private Local and Private Foreign Capital. This, the present study holds, was a healthy development. Yet, that it abandoned the Import Substitution Industrialisation that marked the 1975-80 period in favour of the Export-oriented Industrialisation recommended by the IBRD, further reflects the presence of major inconsistencies. These were possibly derived from its running contests against Private Capital. This change to Export-oriented Industrialisation as well as the devaluation of the naira, the encouragement of free play of market forces, and the reduction of the Government's direct intervention in the economy are some of the measures in the new productivity enhancement pack - Structural Adjustment. The view taken here is that this new programme has rightly diverted the State Government's attention from its political contests against Private Capital to a more meaningful economic expansion programme. Beyond 1985, therefore, as we observed, the State Government's energies were channelled into Adjustment. Richard Fergerg, thus, is justified in the Nigerian case when he argues that if Development was the dominant theme and aspiration of the Third World in the 1950s and 1960s, Adjustment is the painful necessity of the 1980s.

But although the State Government was diverted from its political contests against Private Capital, this does not imply that the battle is over. Hence, the bane of the Nigerian economy has been removed. Thus, productivity and output can now expand. Private Foreign Capital is even more ready than before to perpetuate the contest. Between 1950 and 1972, the rise in foreign private investment was from $29.40 million in 1950 to $2.1 billion in 1972. This represented a satisfactory progress report for Foreign Capital. In the oil sector, in particular, it enjoyed absolute monopoly of investment even ten years after Independence. And in the vital sector of Manufacturing, by 1970, it still owned as much as 57.3% of the total investment. Similarly, in the Trading Sector, it owned as much as 94% of the total number of enterprises by the same year, 1970. On the strength of these data, the indication is that Private Foreign Capital had a head start in the contest for control over the economy.

It, therefore, has had an edge in winning the contest. However, in the beginning, this Foreign Capital could hardly withstand the combined local forces in the contest. Yet, by strategically raising most of its capital in the Nigerian economy; by limiting its subsidiary firms to the local Nigerian market; by underpricing its exports and overpricing its imports; and by restricting linkages to the local economy to a minimum, it was able to assault the economy from the flanks, as it were. This has been with substantial success.

But this, also, has been at the expense of productivity enhancement in the local economy. For instance, the $11,760,000 net annual outflow of capital from the economy calculated by Thomas Biersteker at the instance of 42 foreign-owned companies in 1976 would represent a major drain of source materials necessary for productivity enhancement in the economy. Hence, the colossal deficit of $7324 million in the country's Balance of Payments in 1982, for instance, could be partly accounted for along these lines.

Besides, in its attempt to consolidate its control over the Nigerian economy, Foreign Capital tended to throttle the development of indigenous crafts. This is a strong reason to conclude that some indigenous productive forces were inhibited. The resultant de-emphasis of these crafts, it is argued, robbed the local artisan of vital experiences in Manufacturing which had been accumulated (albeit on rudimentary scales) in earlier years. More so, is the occurrence of a 'manufacturing gap' created as the artisan was made to adapt to alien manufacturing skills and tools. The present study holds that these indigenous crafts should have been allowed to develop alongside the alien manufacturing technology chiefly mediated by Foreign Capital. In this way, the chances of the occurrence of a manufacturing gap or a time-lag witnessed in practice would have been largely obviated.

But probably more injurious to productivity than the lulling of the development of local crafts were the incidents of displacement of comparable indigenous firms. This was a result of the reliance placed by the State Government on Foreign Capital for productivity enhancement. With competition from comparable goods produced by the more efficient

Foreign Capital, such goods as were produced by the indigenous firms tended to suffer from glut in the market. Resulting from this was the discouragement of indigenous production. This led to the gradual destruction of indigenous productive forces which has contributed to low productivity in the economy. Destruction of indigenous productive forces, nevertheless, could not be described as an end-purpose. Rather evidence from the study suggests it is a major strategy by Foreign Capital to gain an edge in the contest for control over the Nigerian economy. This contest, therefore, has been deleterious to productivity in the economy.

Notwithstanding this, the study was not persuaded to view Foreign Capital as a villain that must be excised from the Nigerian economy if productivity would be enhanced. This is because, in spite of its apparently injurious mechanisms aimed at consolidating its control over the economy, it usefully performs productive functions in the economy. Recognised among these functions include: reducing unemployment; providing some amount of healthy competition for comparable local firms; and diffusing some amount of production technology and managerial skill in the economy. The chief concern about it, however, continues to remain that its presence in the economy has been that of a predator. We would argue for a diffused Foreign Capital presence in the Nigerian economy which seeks the mutual benefit of both host and guest. There would, therefore, be less need for any of the parties to concern itself with acquiring hegemony in the economy. Productivity levels could thereby be spared some deleterious effects.

Furthermore, production technology was yet another important issue in which the study noted additional negative effects resulting from the State Government's reliance on Private Foreign Capital for productivity enhancement in the economy. In the pre-Independence peasant economy there had been a fruitful emphasis on land and the peasant as the principal factors of production. Logic seemed to have dictated the choice of this factor-combination because of the distribution of the respective factors of production in the economy. Our study views this chosen factor combination as essentially fruitful given the advances that were attained in the economy in the period. It could be recalled that this was a period of relative plenty and high productivity. The relatively high productivity in the economy had led to vibrant trade between Nigeria and the UK for instance. During the period, the volume of palm produce shipped from Nigeria to the UK had reached an average of 1,260,294 tons per annum. That of cocoa, had reached an average of 66,823 tons per annum. And, that of cotton, 6,563 tons per annum. These had balanced the correspondingly large volumes of salt and cotton manufactures imports from the UK which had reached an annual average value of £300,133. The study also noted that this peasant economy was chiefly responsible for the groundnut pyramids, themselves an evidence of a highly producing economy. It is true that these pyramids were subsequently reduced by the occurrence of a groundnut disease in subsequent years. Additionally, Nigeria was ranked second and third positions in the production of cocoa and palm produce respectively at the world level. The factor combination between land and peasant labour, thus, was an arrangement that engendered a relatively high productivity

The study discovered, nevertheless, the official disparagement of this factor-combination in the 1970s when dwindling productivity levels were (quite incorrectly) blamed on the peasant farmers and their 'fragmented' land units. However, this factor-combination was not the cause of low productivity in the succeeding economy. This is demonstrably so because of the failure of the latter day large farm settlements and the even larger River Basin Authorities to improve levels of agricultural productivity in the economy.

But that this factor-combination was displaced with one that employed capital machinery and land (both in large scale) would represent a transplant which is questionable. Principally, this is because the new factor combination was adopted without proper cost-benefit analyses. With the benefit of hindsight derived from the experiments with large farm settlements, which have all been a failure, the conclusion is clear that large-scale machinery and large-scale farm units have not enhanced productivity in the Nigerian economy.

The theoretical point underlined, however, is that the adoption of this factor-combination in the Nigerian economy was largely influenced by the presence of Foreign Private Capital. Foreign firms had been used to this factor-combination as, in fact, 'the production technology' in their home bases. And it was chiefly on such large-scale production techniques that they attained what economies of scale they enjoyed and desired to consolidate in the local economy. Finding, therefore, the existing factor-combination apparently primitive, they persuaded the State Government to effect the new changes to a capital-intensive factor combination.

It is emphasized, nevertheless, that this new arrangement is, by no means, an inherently unsuitable factor combination. Indeed, the study recognizes it as the essence of the industrial revolution through which the developed highly-producing societies were industrialised. Evidently too, it is also a primary factor accounting for the enhanced productivities found in the newly industrialising countries. But, however, its suitability as a preferred production technology would depend on the relative distribution of the various factors of production in each economy.

For Nigeria, however, the study observed that the factors of labour and land are more predominant than capital and entrepreneurship. Thus, a rational production technology to adopt would logically be one that is hinged on any of the dominant factors. In the circumstances, the fact that its preferred production technology was hinged on a factor that was in short supply suggests that other factors beyond economics had come into play. And, after examining the relationships between Private Foreign Capital and Capital Intensive production technology, the study thought Private Capital generally stood to gain if large-scale machine formed the pivot of Nigeria's preferred production technology. It, thus, becomes easy to understand why capital intensive production so easily displaced the orthodox production technology based on land and the peasant farmer. Correlations between this technological displacement and the quest for control over the Nigerian economy, in any case, are quite distinct. Private Foreign Capital, as a primary contestant for this control would be able to tighten its grip on the economy if the production technology with which it was most familiar and with which the other parties were most unfamiliar prevailed. Its familiarity with the tools and practices of such technology would enhance its position, even the more, in the contest. Therefore by inducing the conditions which promoted the displacement of orthodox land/peasant production technology, Private Foreign Capital largely sought to consolidate its position in the contest for control over the Nigerian economy.

At the root of the whole issue of labour intensive production versus capital intensive production, of course, remains the old discussion of Traditionality versus Rationality discussed by Max Weber. To Weber, the quintessence of modern industrial life was increasing rationality with all the gamut of advantages it assumedly brought to bear on efficiency in production. The universalism and automation in process involved in capital intensive production made it more rational and efficient than the more traditional labour intensive production technology. This Weberian insight could hardly be assailed. But even before Weber, Hume had emphasized that a country would be rich by building on a capital base while it would be poor by building on a labour or peasant farmer base. Thus, it would be ill-advised to insulate the Nigerian economy from what Rosa Luxembourg described as *"the triumphal march of the machine across the nations"*.

The present study does not recommend the insulation of the Nigerian economy from the Luxembourg prophetic march of the machine. But its fundamental concern is that the adopted capital intensive production technology did not emerge as a rational, thought-out strategy for productivity enhancement. Evidently, it was essentially a battle strategy contrived as a means of strengthening control over the Nigerian economy by the parties who favoured it. However, being imbued with this inherent belligerency, the study found it partly suspect as an effective production technology capable of enhancing productivity. Even so, the contest for which it served as a strategy, was a primary factor of the low productivitiy which a useful production technology should, in fact, have improved. As a production technology, therefore, it has been problematic in Nigeria's peculiar conditions. And such low productivity that is currently evident in the economy is inherent, to a large extent, from the existing production technology. This would be more so because it served partly as a strategy for strengthening control over the economy to one of the principal contestants.

Thus, the contest for control over the Nigerian economy should be held chiefly responsible for low productivity in the economy, not labour. The Nigerian labour force, the study observed, has been a force only in name. Far from constituting a force capable of reducing productivity in proportions conceived by previous analyses, the study observed its role as a non-essential factor in the process of social production in Nigeria. Even so, it played this role in the inherently unstable conditions generated by the conflict between public and private capital. Besides, it was introduced into the prevalent crisis-prone capitalist mode of production as a subservient group whose primary role was to service the needs of an embattled state apparatus. Later, its primary concern became the pursuit for increased wages and improved working conditions through strikes.

The most widespread of its collective moves to win greater benefits, of course, cost the economy 1.3 million man-days in 1964 alone. Similarly, the spates of industrial action resulting from each Government Wage Tribunal proved even more disastrous on productivity than this. Yet this collective dissent on the part of labour resembled only leakages in productivity when compared to the cumulative effects of the conflict between the State Government and Private Capital on productivity in the economy.

The study underlined, for instance, how several aspects of this contest even preceded the major labour strike days. It was observed, to illustrate, how soon after Independence, some affluent seemingly unaccommodated elements of the capitalist class influenced their colleagues in Government to skew national industrial relations policies in their favour. This, for instance, led to a deliberate policy of low wages which partly was responsible for labour's subsequent strikes.

Even so, the State Government's gradual shift in industrial relations matters from a role of non-interference to one of intensive participation in later years demonstrated a policy of political self-assertion. This change in role, the study argued, was an attempt by the State Government to extend its hold on employed labour beyond the Public to the Private sector. This brought into the forefront, once again, the role of the contest for control over the economy that was emphasized as basic in the discussion. It was underlined that the State Government's moves to assert its influence in the economy were probably made most clear by the terms of reference of the various Wage Review commissions.

The Miller Committee (1947); the Gorsuch Commission (1954); and the Mbanefo Commission (1959); all pre-Independence, were characteristically confined to the Public sector. Up to this point, the State Government's interests were limited. With the 1964 Morgan Commission, however, those self-imposed restrictions loosened and the State Government, stimulated by the contest, began to reach out for the control of the Private sector also. The study interpreted this Government action essentially as an attempt to assert itself politically more positively in the economy. The study, thus, was of the view that the Morgan Commission, in particular, was largely political-economic motivated. Through it, the State Government sought to expand what control of the economy it could command.

Further, the study argued that Government's attack on segments of the local capitalist class through the subsequent Adebo Commission of 1970 represented, even more clearly, the sharpening conflict between it and these segments. Using the Adebo Commission, the State Government had castigated them for "affluence and wasteful expenditure which could not be explained on the basis of visible and legitimate means of income." The intention was for it to be seen as a benevolent State Government who showed concern for "intolerable suffering at the bottom of the scale". Behind this apparent concern, however, the study saw the State Government's interest in winning workers' support. But this was patronising; and more importantly, one of the State Government's tactics in its contest with Private Capital.

Surprisingly, however, the study found that with the Udoji Commission (1974), the State Government's battle energy began to flag.

This, all told, added to the general picture that consistently emerged of the State Govenment - one suffering from a great deal of inconsistency. However the tardiness it now showed towards going the full hog of socialism (by too much state interference!); the general terms of reference of this Commission; and the spates of strike generated by preceding Commissions were sufficient reasons to explain the State Government's change in position in the 1974 Commission.

But the preference for Wage Commissions to collective bargaining generally was not treated in this study as a paternalistic measure on the part of the State Government to protect workers in industries where wages where low or where no adequate machinery existed for effective regulation of conditions of work. It was found in the study that the same State Government had deliberately paid low wages to workers. This, often, was on the pretext of encouraging economic development or even in order to retain the productive capacity of workers as was particularly the case in the colonial regime. The study was, thus, left with a major contradiction when the same State Government that deliberately paid low wages to workers in the same breath, turned round to set up commissions aimed at improving conditions of work. Partly on the strength of this obvious paradox, it was argued that these commissions were partly designed as political instruments by a State Government attempting to consolidate its measure of control in the economy.

Nevertheless, the crux of the matter is that these measures tended to produce low ratings in productivity of the economy. The Nigerian labour, as is evident in the study, responded to these political schemings in a curious way. Rather, than aim at acquiring political control for its rank and file, it chiefly showed greater concern for the economic betterment of its members. And the relatively substantial quantitative increases in wages it won through strikes made Arrighi and Saul describe it as a labour aristocracy. Yet insofar as these strikes generally tended to distract the workers from efficient production at work they tended to result in lower productivity. Between Independence and 1978, for instance, the study computed a total of 2087 of these strikes which told on the economy as lost man-days. Moreover, the finding that Manufacturing, Construction and Engineering were particularly susceptible to these strikes increased the vulnerability of productivity in the economy since these form the most vital industries in any economy.

Notwithstanding this, the study did not conclude that because Nigerian workers often went on strike in the most vital industries, the whole question of low productivity in the economy could be basically reduced to the issue of motivating 'the strike-prone workers'; or, motivating 'the self-seeking workers'; 'the listless workers who were unfamiliar with working in an industrial setting'.

Motivating the workers as a basis for confronting low productivity in the economy is, of course, crucial. But at the same time, it is epiphenomenal. For, to blame the workers as the prime factors of low productivity in the economy implies an over-simplification of a complex issue. Besides, the study's discovery that over the years, Nigerian workers generally have been supported with work incentives and, yet, productivity remains relatively low in the economy, would imply that any correlations between motivation and productivity probably are overshadowed by stronger correlations between other factors.

This chiefly accounted for the search by the present study for other elements in the explanation. These, it found in the contest between the State Government and Private Capital (Indigenous and Foreign) which has characterised the economy and has impinged on its productivity. Theoretically, of course, the motivation-derived explanation with its roots in the need paradigm contained some inadequacies. The study was, for instance, concerned with the problem of defining what the self-actualising need meant for Nigerian workers. The teasing question was what such workers were utlimately self-actualising. Besides, it was strongly held that workplaces in Nigeria were hardly appropriate venues for satisfying workers' social needs, at least, as a first option. These needs were largely satisfied in the primary group. Again, the discovery that even the basic needs (dissatisfiers) did not strongly induce motivations for producing highly discredited the overall need paradigm as a basis for explicating work behaviour in Nigeria. Thus empirically too, the need-based explication proved to be only minimally significant. It was, therefore, necessary to depart from the prevalent Path-Goal Hypothesis, with its emphasis on uniting the meeting of workers' needs with the attainment of organisational goals, to a more structurally relevant understanding of the problem.

The contest for control over the Nigerian economy became the primary focus of this attempt to understand the problem of low productivity in Nigeria from a structural approach. This was so for compelling reasons. Primarily, this approach provided the crucial bases for examining the problem in its inter-relational character. The various social formations, in the economy who acting with specific interests impinged on the problem, thus, came into the limelight. The study, hence, attempted to demonstrate the effects of these largely conflicting interests on productivity in the economy. A distinctive feature of this approach was the vital international aspect of the problem which previous approaches had not discussed. The interplay of conflicting interests between Private Foreign Capital, the State Government, and Private Indigenous Capital presented a significant insight to the problem that was hitherto generally neglected.

But the principal argument was that in relating with these powerful formations the State Government's attempts to enhance productivity in the economy have generally been blurred and ambiguous. Bluntly stated, its general unclarity on what direction to follow towards productivity enhancement or whom to rely on as the principal agents of these desired changes in the economy has been primarily responsible for low productivity in the economy. On the other hand, influences from Private Indigenous Capital (self-serving as principally they have been) have chiefly been responsible for blurring the State Government's vision. Thus, it was rendered more unable to cope with the various measures adopted by Foreign Private Capital. But the latter who, therefore, gained an edge over the other contestants could only generate changes in the economy that are foreign in content and character. They are, thus, deprived of vital grassroots local props capable of generating a sustained long term enhancement in productivity.

Beyond bringing these structural aspects of the problem into the limelight, the contest that has been emphasised, also created room for incorporating essential historical factors into the discussion. Using the colonial era as a springboard, the approach examined the problem in a historical stage-form that roughly corresponds to the national development plan periods. And with projections into the period beyond 1985, the problem was thus examined in its historical character.

In the end, what emerged was that productivity in the peasant colonial economy was relatively high. In the last six years of colonial rule, for instance, it was recorded that the economy held impressive sterling reserves in London. These stood at £243.7m (1954); £263.1m (1955); £245m (1956); £243.1m (1957); £231m (1958); and £216.5m (1959). These surplusses were generated on an economic productive base yet to be marred by the debilitating contest between the State Government and Private Capital in subsequent years. It was on the basis of such economy that the country attained the staggering £165.6m it did in the export of domestic goods just before Independence. It also produced the 4.1% average growth in GDP the study noted during the same period.

However, at the dawn of the contest soon after Independence, economic confusion set in to constrain the State Government. In its indecision and unclarity of purpose, the Government's plans for enhancing productivity in the economy became affected.

Furthermore, the contest as the primary basis for an attempt to explain the productivity problem in Nigeria allowed a more holistic approach to the problem than previously attempted. It drew more factors into consideration than a need-based appraoch, for instance, would have. It particularly emphasized the issue of control and its relationship to social production in the economy. It brought into bearing Indigenous Private Capital's attempt to win greater control over the economy by instigating measures of economic nationalism which, in the end, back-lashed against productivity. This was so because most of the indigenised industries showed a greater concern for consumption than for investment. Particularly underlined was the preference given to the production of beer and cigarettes in the economy. It also brought into focus the attempts by Foreign Private Capital to introduce several mechanisms as measures of increasing its control over the economy. Some of these measures, the study noted, were not totally helpful to productivity enhancement in the economy. Furthermore, it brought into focus the State Government's apparently ostensible use of the Wage Tribunals as instruments of strengthening its own political position vis-a-vis the other contestants in the economy. But perhaps of the most crucial importance was that the contest also brought into focus labour's organised dissent against the attempt to impose control over it by employers. This dissent cost the economy millions in lost man-days which, in the final analysis, lowered productivity.

Among others, these matters made the contest for control over the Nigerian economy more compelling to investigate in analysing Nigeria's low productivity problem than other factors. Previous attempts had chiefly tried to ground this analysis on the assumed strong relationships between Work and Motivation in the economy. Hence the overlabouring of the worker motivation factor. These approaches were clearly reductionist. Yet ill motivation became generally regarded as the prime factor responsible for low productivity in Nigeria. The present study has questioned this. This, we hope has advanced the discussion of the problem to more relevant premises.

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APPENDIX I

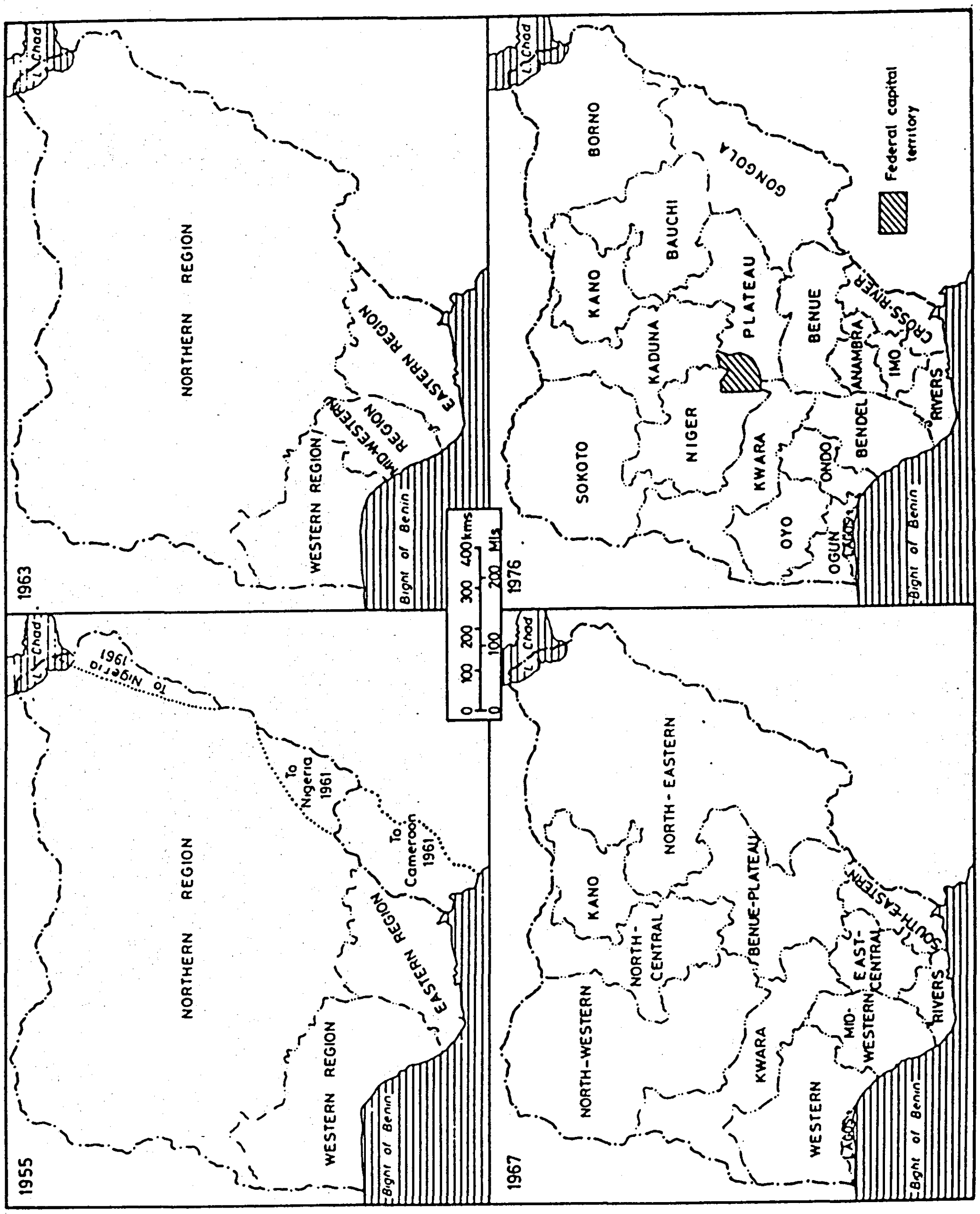
NIGERIA

Major Ethnic Groups and Pre-1967 Regional Boundaries

Source: Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria (London: Faber & Faber 1973), p.25 with permission

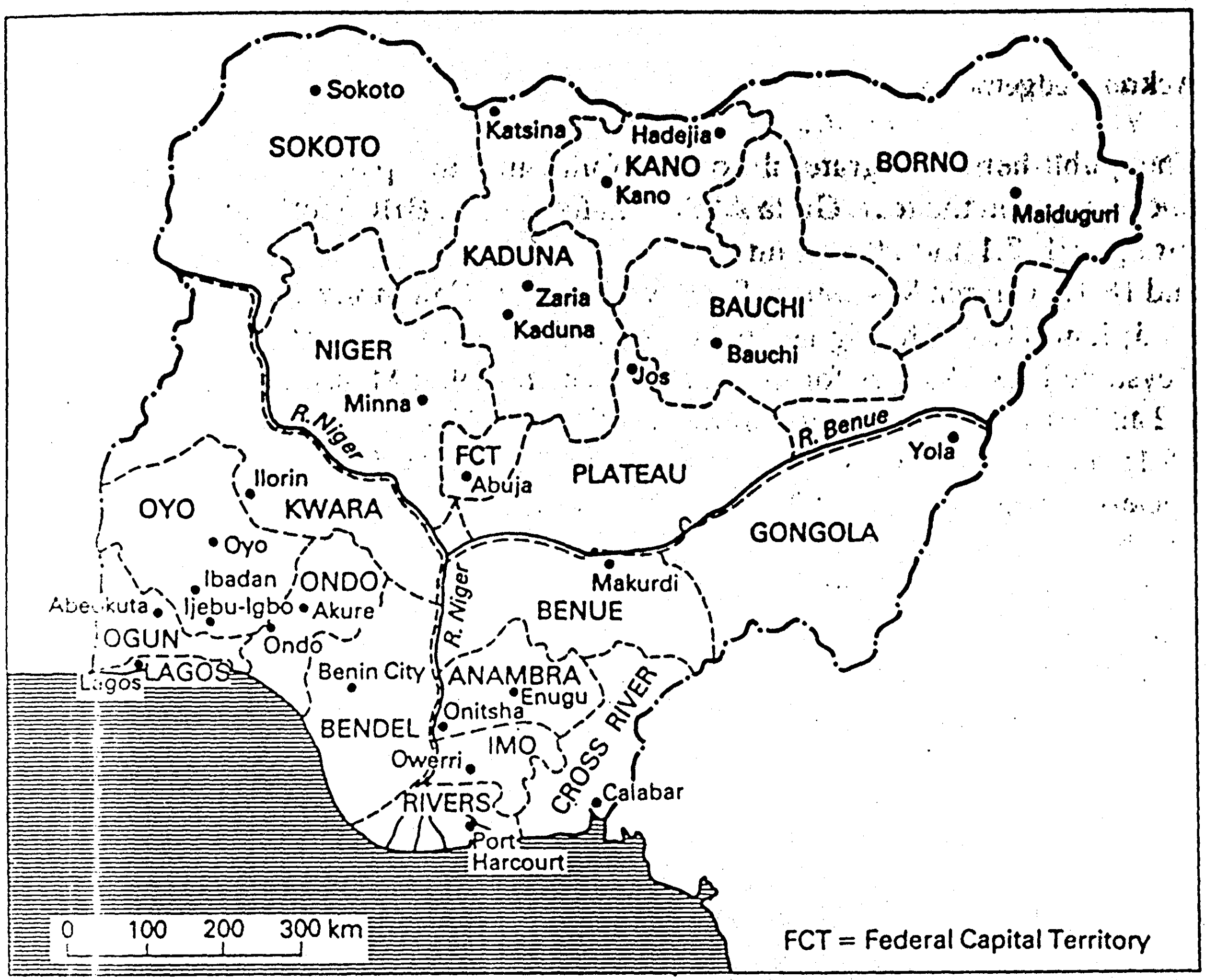
APPENDIX II

Map: The Federation of Nigeria since Independence



Source: K. Michael Barbour et al *Nigeria in Maps* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1982) p. 39 with permission

APPENDIX III



Politi:al map of Nigeria
Source: R. Olaniyan, Nigerian History and Culture (Essex: Longman 1985), p.VII, with permission

APPENDIX IV

AN OUTLINE CHRONOLOGY OF NIGERIA FROM 1960

1960	October	Independence Day
1961	February 11-12	Second Cameroons plebiscite
1962	April 1	First National Development Plan inaugurated
	May	State of Emergency in Western Nigeria
	May 13-31	Abortive population census
1963	July 13	Plebiscite in favour of creating a Mid-West Region
	October 1	Nigeria becomes a republic
	November 5-8	Population re-count: results in total of 55.67 million
1964	May 31	Joint Action Committee of trade unions calls general strike
	December	General Election crisis
1965	October-December	Crisis deepens after Western Region elections.
1966	January 15	Coup d'etat, end of First Republic, Ironsi regime
	May 24	Federal system abolished in favour of unitary state
	July 29	Second coup d'etat, Gowon regime
	August 8	Federal system restored
	September-October	Ad Hoc Constitutional Conference
1967	May 27	Abolition of 4 regions in favour of 12 states
	May 30	Eastern Region secedes as 'Biafra'
	July 6	Start of civil war
	August	Secessionist invasion of Mid-West
	November	OPEC terms effective in petroleum industry
1968-69		Agbekoya riots in Western State
1969	April	Report of (Dina) Interim Revenue Allocation Committee rejected
	November	Petroleum Decree foreshadows

		government participation in oil industry
1970	January 12	Surrender of 'Biafra', end of civil war
	April 1	Second National Development Plan inaugurated
	October 1	Gowon announces 9-point plan for return to civilian rule
1971	May	Nigerian national Oil Corporation established
	August 6	Final report of (Adebo) Wages and Salaries Review Commission
1972	February 23	Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree (first indigenisation decree)
1973	January 1	Naira currency introduced
	February	Marketing Boards reform announced
	October	OPEC quadruples oil prices by January 1974
	November	Population census results in total of 79.76 million, but later annulled
1974	September 25	Report of (Udoji) Public Service Review Commission
	October 1	Gowon postpones return to civilian rule
1975		Congestion acute at Lagos port
	April 1	Third National Development Plan inaugurated
	July 29	Third coup d'etat, Murtala Mohammed regime
	October 1	Murtala Mohammed announces 5-stage programme for return to civilian rule
	October 18	Inaugural meeting of (Rotimi Williams) Constitution Drafting Committee
1976	January 1	Wartime inhibitions on right to strike maintained in new Trade Disputes decree
	February 13	Murtala Mohammed assassinated, Obasanjo regime
	April	12 States replaced by 19
	September	Programme of universal primary education launched
	September 14	Constitution Drafting Committee reports
	September-December	Local government reforms
	October 1	Appointment of Federal Electoral Commission
1977	January	Second indigenisation decree

	April 1	Marketing boards reconstituted as national boards
	August 31	Elections to Constituent Assembly
	October 6	Constituent Assembly begins sittings
1978	January	Nigeria begins borrowing heavily in eurocurrency market
	January	Report of (Aboyade) Technical Committee on revenue allocation
	February	Trade union reform, Nigerian Labour Congress established
	March	Land Use decree
	April 6-24	Constituent Assembly proceedings held up by boycott
	June 5	Constituent Assembly adjourns *sine die*
	July 14	Reposting of state military governors to military duties
	August 29	Constitution presented to Head of State
1978	September 21	Constitution promulgated, ban on political parties lifted
1979	January	Further rapid increases in oil prices begin following Iranian revolution
	July 7	Elections to the Senate
	July 14	Elections to the House of Representatives
	July 21	Elections to the State Houses of Assembly
	July 28	Elections of state governors
	August 11	Presidential election
	October 1	Withdrawal of the military from government, installation of Shehu Shagari as President, inauguration of Second Republic
1980	June	Report of the (Okigbo) Commission on Revenue Allocation
	August	Report of the (Irikefe) Tribunal of Inquiry into Crude Oil SAles
1982	March	Economic Stablisation Programme
1983	December 31	Fourth coup d'etat, Mohammed Buhari regime
1985	August 27	Fifth coup d'etat, Ibrahim Babangida regime
1987	March	Structural Adjustment Programme
1990	April 22	Sixth (attempted) coup d'etat, Major Orka.