

Time Management: An Effective Tool in the Management of Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Bakwaph Peter Kanyip^{1*}, Jemiseye Oluwabunmi Josephine¹

¹ Department of Educational Foundation, Veritas University, Abuja, Nigeria

Email Address

bakwaph@yahoo.com (Bakwaph Peter Kanyip), josebummy@yahoo.com (Jemiseye Oluwabunmi Josephine)

*Correspondence: bakwaph@yahoo.com

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Abstract:

This paper examined time managements an effective tool in the management of Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. Management being a set of practice that is meant to work together to help one get more value out of one's time with the aim of improving the quality of life and that of Institution. This work is based on qualitative design using secondary data from books and journals for the conceptual clarifications and literature review. The Works showed that some Tertiary Institutional managers had no clue for organizing a successful programme that march with accurate time and Institutional calendar and most often do not utilize time judiciously as expected to attain Institutional goals. This work concludes that one must always plan in advance, to avoid multitasking and reduce the uncertainty, distractions and make sure the environment around is working to strengthen the focus and willpower.

Keywords:

Time, Management, Administrator, Tertiary Institution

1. Introduction

Time is the most crucial resource to be considered in the performance of any activity. Time determines the imperativeness of any other resources in accomplishing organizational set out objectives and goals [13]. It is an essential resource every manager needs to achieve the goals and objectives of an organization [2]. It is so delicate that it cannot be saved but can only be spent and once misused it can never be regained. Time management starts with the commitment to change [2]. According to Shirley (2008), better time management can be achieved if goals have been set and then all future work is prioritized based on how it moves the individual or organization towards meeting the goals. The value of time management lies in the fact that people have too many tasks they need to do but not enough time for the things that they want to do. Time management helps identify needs and wants in terms of their importance and matches them with time and other resources (Ezine2008) cited in ugwulashi [14].

It also brings about orderliness and enables one to be more productive and fulfilled [2]. Without time management the efficient and effective use of all resources will be impossible most especially in the tertiary institution, it is crucial to take into consideration the impact of time management while planning the activities both curricular and extracurricular in the tertiary institution. Therefore time management stands as an effective tool necessary for organizational effectiveness in realization of set out objectives and goal, [13]. Saeidian and Paktinat [11] also observed that the application of time management strategies create awareness in an individual on the available time allocation, the extent to which such time are utilized and committed to, and how far such time are effectively utilized before the time lapse. The authors stated that if the students or individuals did not do what they ought to do before the time lapse, it may lead to individual's frustrations and such individuals will lag behind his colleagues in all styles of life.

Abimiku [1], supported the authors that for effective students academic performance to be enhanced both the students and the staff need to commit themselves towards effective management of the allocated time, utilization of such time towards enhancing administrative effectiveness in such a school organization.

The planners take into cognizant the available resources both human and material resources how he can manage so as to be able to achieve the set goals of the institution within the time limit.

This paper therefore view the following areas of concern in time management in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria: What is time and time management, Importance of time Management in tertiary institution, principles for effective time management in the tertiary institution, time management challenges of in Nigeria Tertiary institution, recommendation and conclusion.

2. Conceptual Clarification

Time: Is the continuing progress of existence measured in seconds, minutes and hours. It is a measure of units to which everybody has equal opportunity, i.e. everyone gets the same amount every day, such that individual's efficiency as a function of time is measured by his ability to efficiently manage the time available to him. Time is very unique in any particular time zone. The difference in time is its allocation to activities according to ones priority. According to Ailamaki&Gehike, cited in Egbewole [15], time is the quality of nature which keeps events from happening all at once. It is a unique resource which is available to all at equal amount. **Management:** An act of running or controlling a business or similar organization. It is also the act or skill of dealing with human and material resources or situations in a successful way.

Tertiary Institution: This is the third level or stage of education following the completion of a school providing a secondary education. It can also be referred to higher education that is provided by a college or university.

Administrator: Administrator of Tertiary Institutions such as University, Polytechnic and colleges of education comprises of Vice Chancellor, Rector and Provost. They provide direction and day – day management of Institutions.

Statement of the Problem:

Time is very essential for effectiveness and efficiency in the school administration because an effective time management will surely enhance students' academic performance. However, there is the need to utilize the allocated time effectively and

committed to the program and tasks at the right time before the time lapse. Time management is as important as human and material resources in any organization. Higher institutions in Nigeria have issue regarding time management where school calendar and time table is distorted either by strikes, demonstration or unnecessary public holidays. When such situation comes up, institutions seem to be faced with low productivity, inefficiency, ineffectiveness and low morale, stress and frustration with themselves. Time management in this perspective has been considered one necessary tool for higher educational improvement. Encouraging proper use of time enables passing academic knowledge by the teacher to the learners appropriately without obvious danger. Considering the element of time in discharging the academic substance makes the process more democratic. Time management as a tool for the management of tertiary institution saves resources, space and conflict and also enables the managers to solving school pressing needs. Lecture time schedule is the instrument in achieving complete execution of school activities without conflicts among staff and students by the tertiary institutional manager because time determines ability to accomplish activities. For instance, to cover the syllabus in a semester each courses must be allocated with an appropriate time, but when certain course were not assigned with time, certainly those courses scheme of work will not be covered in the semester. Therefore, it is necessary to distribute this singular resource equally amongst activities intended to be covered by the syllabus. Classrooms are assigned to particular courses and lecturers in given periods, duty roles are assigned to different lecturers to perform respectively and periods assigned to other extra-curricular activities like sports, devotion, and other social gatherings all require effective time management process.

The main issue in this work is since our Nigerian Higher Institutions of Learning have time management problem in terms of keeping to academic calendar and lecture time, how can time be properly utilized for effective teaching and learning in higher institutions of learning. Time is very important administrative tool in carrying out daily duties by the tertiary institutional manager, lecturers, students, community and government. Managing time appropriately leads to achieving results easily with limited resources when management techniques like Management Information system (MIS), Management by Objectives (MBO), Critical Path Method (CPM), and Programme Evaluation Review Techniques (PERT) are properly used. A time management plan enables effective Tertiary institution management to identify if he/she is using his time effectively and doing important activities with the highest energy levels in the system.

3. Time Management As Effective Tool in The Management of Tertiary Institutions

Time Management is the efficient and effective utilization of a lecturer's or an Administrator's corporate time to achieve institutional goals. It is the art of arranging, organizing, scheduling and budgeting one's time for the purpose of generating more effective work and productivity (Sandberg, 2001). It also involves identifying tasks to be performed, planning and scheduling organizational activities, prioritizing such activities, allocating time to the tasks according to their degree of importance in enhancing productivity (Obi, 2003). Balduf [5] defined time management as an act process of coordinating planning, directing and controlling the amount of the time devoted for specific activities, programmes, tasks in order to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the organization, such which will bring about effective goals

achievement of such organization. The author went further to state that effective time management in the school system dictate high success rate in such a school. It should however be noted that in the Tertiary Institutions time are allocated to every task, activity and both the academic and non-academic staff are made to commit themselves to the allocated time in order to meet up with the time lapse of the Institutions.

Time management is important for effective inspection and supervision of tertiary Institutions in bringing the much needed quality. Effective time management ensures unambiguous objectives, proactive planning, well defined priorities and actions; participatory and successful delegation of activities. Time management facilitates the symbolic relations between the Institutions and society in efficient and effective use of available Institutional resources. Without this mutual relationship realization of Institution needs would be difficult, untimely and other resources wasted as the community may starve it of facilities and assistance required from them. Hence the Institutional success is made easy or destroyed by extension of relations and services timely or untimely from the wider society.

Time management tools appropriately adopted by Administrators helps to improve standard, save costs, remedy poor situations, leads to value and above all, harmonizes organization focus. Improving Institutional Administration requires time to provide all it takes to make a quality Tertiary Institution (administrators, teaching and non teaching staff, classrooms, libraries, furniture , environment and entire school plant management etc). It upholds the principle of Just-in-Time approach in managing Institutional process for quality assurance at various levels of education. Improper use of time has been attributed to poor administrative styles by most administrators in handling organizational task.

4. Principles for Effective Time Management in the Tertiary Institutions

This involves the formulation of goals and definition of practical ways or steps to be taken to achieving same. Planning involves adequate patterning of time according to activities in order to enhance role performance and accomplishing tasks within a set out period.

Planning helps to avoid conflict among use of resources based on the fact that resources are limited including time. Time is planned in such a way to enable easy goals achievement with the Available limited resources to the administrator. Planned work schedule therefore means a designed way by which all activities are arranged for efficient and effective role performance in realization of results.

Planning can either be short-term covering daily, weekly, monthly tasks or long-term. Assigned job schedules and to-do-lists should serve as a plan of how time can be spent productively at work. Planning is important to avoid failure, an administrator committed to bridging the gap between potential and performance, should make better time management a lifestyle choice.

Richard [6], states that the time we have depends on the time we use. As a result, in order to manage time successfully, administrators must have self knowledge and set out goals to achieve. Such an awareness of what goals to be achieved helps to prioritize activities. Administrators should plan effective use of their time and should not perform tasks by chance.

4.2. Organization

Organizing is the next stage after successful planning. Organization means putting all resources into plan to achieve goals. Organizing involves ordinary arrangement of all planned activities; this stage of time management has to do with bringing all the required resources together [13]. It deals with assembling of resources for facilitating the easy realization of set out goals. Organizing time in its simplest meaning relates to putting time into jobs according to people, place or needs. In this regard, administrators must in this process assign roles and responsibilities to all lecturers accordingly with targets of the institution. There must be timelines for any administrators to have target met. Time management provides an opportunity to create work schedules for easy goal accomplishment. It involves developing and maintaining a corporate, flexible schedule which leaves room to include the things that are most important to the institution.

4.3. Implementation

Time planned and organized helps to accomplish not only set out objectives and goals but enables its operators to go extra mile in achieving what necessarily would have not been achievable. Planned and organized time is easily implemented, and engenders facilitative actions. For example time table indicates planned and organized time for classes, recreation labour, examination, opening and closure of school to mention but a few. One greatest importance of time table is creation of space for simultaneous activities which helps activities to be implemented without conflicts like classroom allocation to various periods and subjects. Implemented time ensures complete mobilization of all planned activities according to schedule. Educational planners and administrators must ensure use of time appropriately in the school through team work. Implementing planned time requires collaborative efforts by staff or quality implementation of school activities.

4.4. Evaluation

Time cannot only be planned, organized and implemented but must also be evaluated to show its efficient use in accomplishing set objectives and goals. This helps to find out the workability of planned activities whether they can be accomplished within the time allocated to them. A review of allocated time to activities indicates where deficiency exists. Evaluated time also helps to determine saved periods at the end of each session, the problem encountered as well as the capabilities of staff. Efficient time management is an assurance for accomplishing activities in time. Time evaluation serves a lot of purpose by seeking answers to the following questions:

Whether time plan worked for the accomplishment of goals? Did it help in accomplishing school result? What next needs to be done? Are there any changes to be made? what will be the future of the system?

5. Challenges of Time Management in Tertiary Institutions

Despite the fact that what administrators do on a given day may be determined in part by advanced planning, scheduled responsibilities, certain factors play a major role in influencing time management tertiary institution in Nigeria higher education.

Some of the factors include:

5.1. Financial constraint

This is very important in implementing any set plan within a limited period of time, goals can only be achieved within allocated time if there is fund to finance the particular activities or programs for instance, if any faculty is to begin within a given time human and material resources must be available to carry out necessary arrangement for the establishment of the department in the institution.

5.2. Reactive Mode of Working

Some administrators are only concerned about what is happening at present in their organization. They do not take time to act to events that come their way rather they react and keep complaining.

5.3. Failure to Think Correctly before Acting

Taking action without prior correct thinking is a cause of time management failure. Some tertiary institutions seem not to believe in or find it difficult to put into practice of effective time management which states that 10% of time that it takes to plan your activities carefully in advance will save you 90% of the effort involved in achieving your goals later.

5.4. Failure to Acquire New Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

Some managers of Nigeria tertiary institution fail to update themselves in terms of attending seminars and lectures that will increase their horizons instead they feel they know all things and do not need to be updated and continue to be operating in an archaic manner

5.5. Procrastination on Hard Challenging Works

Some managers in the tertiary institution adopt procrastination on hard challenging programme. Instead of getting started on them and allocating good time thereto, they adamantly refuse to take the risk. The most injurious aspect of this approach is that such hard challenging are not in the bottom 80% but in the top 20% of the activities which add most value to the tertiary institutional managers' work. Procrastination is the action of delaying or postponing the task due to one reason or other which needs to be accomplished. Some institutions often postpone or ignore tasks or program which has to be completed to deal with it later which results in poor time management.

5.6. Interruptions and Distraction

Interrupted or distracted can emerge from any angle in the institution it may be from members of staff, students, (riot) government parents and society at large during the implementation of set programs. other area of interruptions and distractions may include phone calls, meetings, sudden visitors, mails, social media etc this can lead to set back in achieving set objectives in a particular time allocation

5.7. Improper Planning

This may be as result of administrators' lack of Team leadership spirit which results in lack of efficient time management.

6. Importance of Time Management

6.1. Decision Making Tool

Decision making tool is crucial part of management of resources. Institutional resources need appropriate decision in putting it into effective use. Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert, JR (1995) on the relevance of time pointed out that time and human relationships are crucial elements in the process of making decisions. School administration must consider proper time management in regulating their decision making apparatus [13]. Decision making is important for managing resources in an organization especially, the higher institution that requires careful handling because it involves knowledge building. Hence, taking proper decision is managerial ability to efficiently and effectively use resources in the system to plan, organize, direct and control the work of others to achieving results and Babalola, et.al. (2008) cited in Ugwulashi [14], supported this idea when he says managerial ability requires time management to achieve result especially educational institutions that deals on knowledge within a given period.

6.2. Harmonizing different structures

In successful accomplishment of any activity and refers to a “particular period”. The realization of educational goal in the tertiary institutions despite the amount of resources involved remains ineffective without good time management [14]. The institute administrator finds it as an essential tool to harmonizing different structures in avoiding waste of resources through the time table schedule. For instance, periods assigned to activity must be relevant to institutional needs, such the administrator can only devote day for activity which is considered unavoidable or critical, while specific classes may hold before or after an activity is accomplished. Again a resourceful manpower within the time frame must spend about 16 or 17 years in the school (primary, secondary and tertiary).

6.3. Useful for Educational System Analysis

According to Babalola et al (2008), Educational planners need relevant information to enable effectively plan for the future growth of the national, state and local educational systems. He enunciated some indices of student flow (entry rate or admission rate, intra-system students flow rates, students flow rate between levels of education) all are calculated based on time. Therefore analyzing educational system in tertiary institution ordinarily may involve accounting for what happened between given periods. For instance, an analysis is conducted within given period of time: - 1970 –1975, 2006 – 2010 or in quarters, bi-annual or budget year respectively. With this time breakdown system (TBS) a clear analogy is made on the achievements in that given period (6 years primary, 6years secondary and 4 or 5 years tertiary).this helps to improve teaching and learning targets.

6.4. Useful for Planning School Activities

In the Tertiary institution, time is a tool use to manage through the use of time allocation. Time allocation is a specific arrangement of time scheduled according to specific activity. It is used to show the uniqueness of activity in every formal organization [13]. Time differentiates performance period unless simultaneous activities can be performed in the same environment at the same time. The classroom arrangement makes class periods to go on simultaneously. In Tertiary institution activities can easily be achieved through the use of time allocations which enable activities to be simultaneously carried out without conflict in roles, space and tool by

different actors. That is two tasks cannot go on in the same classroom if not handled by the same lecturer, the same class of students and the same course. Time allocation provides allowance for merger of classroom, course and time by the same lecturer for the particular course and class. In achieving good result, Institutional Administrators must ensure that Institute activities are planned in line with the given resources (space, facilities, personnel, and finance) available. Planned Tertiary Institute time involves designing best ways by which Institution is undertaking its activities efficiently and effectively within the limit of its resources in realization of Institutional results [14].

7. Suggestions and Recommendation

In other to ensure effective time management in the tertiary institution, the following are suggested tools that;

- a. Administrators should concentrate on important task to save time, reduce the cost. more competent and confident personnel is encourage to increase their productivity.
- b. Administrators should try and avoid Procrastination do what is suppose to do and stop complaining postponing important activities.
- c. It is also important that before starting the day's work or embark on any project or program administrators need to set up the Work area to be comfortable, attractive and conducive to Working for long periods.
- d. While prioritization of your tasks remains supreme, different administrators need to determine what time of the day they are most efficient. They should use such a period of time to work on the hardest and most complex tasks.
- e. The activities of tertiary institution is demanding important to develop a sense of urgency as every minute counts, being proactive and dynamic, being committed to team building and effective delegation of duties.
- f. Avoid management by crisis: Lack of planning and contingency planning allows time for the unexpected. Accept mistakes so you can learn from them and avoid them next time. Do not over react.
- g. Set deadlines. Again, there is no point in setting deadlines if you make executive decisions to always push them back. Set a deadline and try your best to stick to it. Set your deadline a few days before the task absolutely have to be done. This allows for the possibility that other things will get in the way, but also allow for you still to get the task done.
- h. Stop multi-tasking. Multi taskers often seem to think they get more accomplished, but it's not always the most productive or efficient route. our minds work better when we are truly able to focus and concentrate on one thing.
- i. Delegate responsibilities, the truth of the matter is that no matter how good one is, one can't do everything. Sometimes we take on more than we can handle. Delegation is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of intelligence. Delegate to competent, reliable and share some of the responsibilities it will allow one to be less stressed and more productive.

8. Conclusion

Time management is very important in every organization, institution and for every individual.

Time management enables administrators, staff and students in the tertiary institution have some choices in their teaching and learning strategies for successful accomplishment of education goals. Time management principles encourage proper classroom management through planning, organizing and reviewing teaching and learning techniques, situations and proffer possible solutions since the classroom is the teachers' clinic. Effective time management can have positive effect on the institutions program if well utilized. This work shows that time management should always be considered by any administrator and management of tertiary institution for effective management of institutional resources.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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