

TIME MANAGEMENT: AN IMPERATIVE FACTOR TO EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE NIGERIA PUBLIC SERVICE

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Abstract

Time is a special/worthy commodity that is given equally to everyone regardless of age, station, whether public or private sector. Time is always ever present to everyone, but no one ever seems to have enough of it. In Nigeria, the need for time management in organizations especially the public service cannot be over emphasized. Time management helps in achieving individual and organizational goals in view of the limited amount of time available to man. The article examines how time, which is available to all, yet scarce, can be managed to enhance effective and efficient service delivery in the public service. The article also beams a search light on organization of activities towards effective time management, as well as, the relationship between supervisors and subordinates as regards time management. The study discovered that Nigeria public servants are faced with time management problems which have become a hindrance to effective service delivery. Nevertheless, the article advances certain measures, which if adopted by the public servants will promote the virtue of time management that can lead to employee effectiveness and efficiency in the public service. Among others, employees in the public service should be encouraged to prioritize their activities, maintain a proper time audit in their work place, be prepared to adjust to the best use of time. They should be on guard against unscheduled visitors and telephone calls. Also meetings should be held during specific hours of the day, while other times should be devoted to work. These recommendations should be seen as strategies for effective work habit in the Nigerian public service.

Key Words: Organization, Management, Performance, Productivity, Efficiency

Introduction

Time is universally static irrespective of geographical location. There are 24 hours in a day all over the world. This has remained constant. However, our activities are numerous; so to achieve all our goals within the limited time depends on how we manage the time available for us. Managing one's time can efficiently and effectively lead to a better performance, both at work and at home. Time in an organization is an intangible factor of production that cannot be reclaimed once lost. Time is our most precious asset, yet we mismanage it.

Ultimately, the efficiency and effectiveness of any organization, whether private or public sector, largely depends on the effective utilization of the available scarce resources by its employees. It should be noted that one of the greatest challenges of the Nigerian bureaucracy is non-performance of the civil service. It seems that there is never enough time in a day. But, since we all have 24 hours in a day, a question that comes to mind is, why do some people achieve much more with their time than others, especially in the public service? The answer lies in good time management.

A popular musician – Mike Okri- in a music album titled “**Time Na Money**” emphasized the need to convert time to money. The phrase "time is money" is essentially true. Unfortunately, time doesn't always equal money. In the same vein, the musician further stated that “money don't fall from Heaven, if you do better things, money will come and don't spend your time in gossiping”. Time is continually passing but that doesn't mean one is continually making money or being productive, this depends on how one manages the available time and what one does with it. The highest achievers manage their time exceptionally well.

The perceived poor service delivery in the public service of Nigeria, due to poor time management, has provoked a series of studies geared towards ameliorating the ugly situation, which some scholars have attributed to the common challenges of the Nigerian federation (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon, 2012). It appears that in spite of efforts of previous administrations to transform the civil service, majority of the public servants spend their limited time attending to unproductive services, hence little or nothing have changed in the Nigeria public sector in terms of service delivery. The service still remains the same as their performance and productivity are still below expectations; efficiency and effectiveness are virtually absent (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon, 2012). Good time management requires an important shift in focus from activities to results. It is a truism that, being busy isn't the same as being effective. As important as time management is, within an organizational context, it has often been overlooked in analyzing organizational behaviour especially in the public sector. The article therefore, attempts to further investigate the challenges poor time management imposes on effective services delivery in the Nigerian public service.

Methodology

The article adopts a qualitative research design to gain an insight into the nature and attitude of employees in relation to time management and productivity in the Nigerian public service. The researcher used descriptive analysis to examine the issues and

challenges confronting public servants in this regard. The paper which is qualitative in nature draws its argument basically from secondary data, such as, journal publications, textbooks and internet sources. Statistical data were also used where necessary as empirical evidence to buttress the argument. To improve on the reliability and validity of the article, multiple secondary sources were used to minimize risk of error.

Conceptual Clarification

Time is a limited period during which an action, process, or condition exists or takes place. It is a period that one needs for a particular activity to be accomplished. Initially, time in this context, was referred to just business or work activities, but eventually the term broadened to include personal activities as well. In this view, “Time”, according to Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon (2012), is seen as all aspects of time which have relevance to appropriate management. They however, argued that treating time at work or business time in isolation of other time e.g. leisure time, break time, social time, holiday time among others, is unrealistic because of the reciprocal influence of one over the other. This is in view of the fact that mismanagement of any of the above time will definitely affect the time at work.

Pleasure time, break time, holidays, etc are periods created by an organization for its employees to have rest, replenish their lost energy – mentally and physically - in preparation for the next line of job towards improving employees’ performance. These times must be observed, in line with the saying that “all work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy”. Ojo and Olaniyan (2008), argued that time is a scarce resource and universal, which cannot be replaced by man. According to them, time cannot be accumulated like money, be stocked like raw materials nor be turned on and off like machine. Time passes at a pre-determined rate irrespective of whatever happens. Everybody is equally endowed with the same amount of time irrespective of his position. Time is an essential resource; it’s irrecoverable, limited and dynamic. Irrecoverable, because every minute spent is gone forever; limited, because only 24hours exist in a day; and, dynamic, because it is never static. In the same vein, Hisrich and Peters (2002), argued that “time is a unique quantity an entrepreneur (manager/supervisor) cannot store, rent it, and buy it. Everything in life requires it and it passes at the same rate for everyone.

Time management is the process of organizing and planning how much time you spend on specific activities. “Time management” refers to the way that you organize and plan how long you spend on specific activities. According to Lucchetti (2010), time management is the act or process of exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase efficiency or productivity. Time management may be aided by a range of skills, tools, and techniques used to manage time when accomplishing specific tasks, projects and goals. This set of activities, according to Allen (2001), encompasses a wide scope which includes: planning, allocating, setting goals, delegation, analysis of time spent, monitoring, organizing, scheduling, and prioritizing. According to North, cited in Adejo (2012), time management is the organization of tasks or events by first

estimating how much time a task will take to be completed, when it must be completed, and then adjusting events that would interfere with its completion to ensure it is reached in the appropriate amount of time. According to Allen (2001), time management is defined as the practice which individuals follow to make better use of their time. It also refers to principles and systems that individuals use to make conscious decisions about the activities that occupy their time. Time management is the management of our own activities to make sure that they are accomplished within the available or allocated time, which is an unmanageable continuous resource. In Ojo and Olaniyan (2008), time management is not about getting more things done in a day. It is about getting the things that matter most done. Time management is the ability to decide what is important in your life both at work, at home and even in our personal life. Time is that quality of nature which keeps all events from happening at once. To manage your time, you need to go through a personal time survey and estimate the way your time is being spent. In line with the above, every time at work must be managed effectively for improved service delivery. In support of the above assertion, Ojo and Olaniyan (2008) commented that effective time management is the key to high performance levels.

Effective time management not only affects the productivity of employees, but also helps to cope with stress, conflicts and pressure more efficiently. It also helps in maintaining a healthy work-life balance, and keeps employees motivated. Time Management refers to managing time effectively so that the right time is allocated to the right activity. Effective time management allows individuals to assign specific time slots to activities regarding their importance. Time Management refers to making the best use of time as time is always limited. Effective time management however demands a good sense of management and organization in the work life of both the managers and the employees.

The public service consists of the civil service – career staff whose appointment, promotion and discipline are under the exclusive control of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), at federal and state levels, the national assembly service, the Judiciary, public officers in the military, police and paramilitary services, employees of parastatals, educational and health institutions (Osawe, 2015). From the above, it could be said that the public service and the civil service are clearly different in concept. The public service is a broader concept that encompasses the civil service together with the Armed Forces, the Judiciary, the Police, Government Institutions, Parastatals; Government owned Companies and Statutory Agencies. While the Local Government Service Commission controls the local government staff. One cannot discuss the public service without talking about the civil service.

Civil service usually refers to the functionaries of state who are appointed to their government job through non-elective process (Ayeni, 1987). These functionaries work in the main government Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments. The Extra-

Ministerial Organizations are headed by Chairmen and not Ministers. Okereke (2003) reinforced this when he notes that civil service refers to government ministries and departments that are charged with the responsibilities of implementing policies. They are those in the service of federal, state and local government services primarily responsible for policy implementation and making inputs available for policy formulation. The Federal Government of Nigeria (1997), defined the civil service as “a body or organ which enjoys continuity of existence. Its members, unlike members of the National Assembly, are not limited to a short term office at the end of which they may not be returned to office When a civil servant relinquishes his office for whatever reason, his place is taken by another person who similarly enjoys security of employment”.

The service provided by the state is essentially 'public' in nature, hence the concept “public service.” The services to the public are of various dimensions: such as, services on behalf of the public; services providing public goods; services accountable to the public; etc. It can indeed be 'difficult to determine in what sense precisely the service in question was originally called public.

The public service is a catalyst for national development. It provides the required human and material resources needed to accelerate the growth and development. They are accountable for their own professional practice, for the professional practice of those under their supervision, and for their profession generally as part of their service to the society.

The terms "service of general interest" and "service of general economic interest" must not be confused with the term "public service". This term is less precise. It can have different meanings and can therefore lead to confusion. The term sometimes refers to the fact that a service is offered to the general public, it sometimes highlights that a service has been assigned a specific role in the public interest, and it sometimes refers to the ownership or status of the entity providing the service. It refers to specific requirements that are imposed by public authorities on the provider of the service in order to ensure that certain public interest objectives are met, for instance, in the matter of air, rail and road transport, and energy. These obligations can be applied at community, national or regional level. Public service is the agency of government saddled with the responsibility of implementing the community will. Arowolo (2012) argued that if delivery of social services is the chief reason why there is public service, and development is a function of amount of social services that a state can provide for its citizens, then public service is the tool by which development is attained.

Theoretical Analysis

Theoretically, the researcher anchored this work on series of theories based on the situation. He looked at the scientific management theory of Fredrick Winslow Taylor, which is considered relevant in examining the issue under investigation. Advancement on how to make workers maximize the use of time in a workplace is not new. It started as far back as 1947 with the scientific management theory propounded by Fredrick Winslow Taylor. See Dibia (2014), Maduabum and Gayya (2004). The scientific

management knowledge was aimed at the physical capabilities of the workers especially, with regards to time and motion study on the one hand, and reward for workers and time limit for payment of workers on the other hand. In order to determine efficient use of time at work, Fredrick Taylor undertook series of studies of the motion used in each one

Fredrick Taylor (1911), in his study of scientific management, breaks jobs into different units assigning specific time to complete each unit of the job. He arrived at the total time necessary to complete a job by totaling the unit times and adding allowances for brief rest and unavoidable delays. Taylor studied both the motions themselves and the tools employed, with a view to learning how shorter motions could be used to accomplish the job. These were to be reduced to laws and rules for workers to follow. Time and motion study which he carried out were to save workers energy to accomplish task. Taylor in his study concluded that with proper time management, task assigned to workers can be completed in line with management targets/objectives. Prior to Taylor's time and motion study, output and productivity were not measured. Management solely depended on initiative to accomplish a particular task(Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon, 2012; Maduabum and Gayya, 2004).Taylor wanted management to scientifically impose time and motions on workers to perform certain tasks, which invariably will assist management in measuring workers output.

Another theory for this study is based on the principle of effective management and organization. This is important because of its relevance to proper organization which is a requirement for time management. The theory advanced the philosophy that viewed administration as a technical problem basically concerned with the division of labour and specialization of functions, establishment of hierarchy of authority and span of control. Henri Fayol in his principle of Administration (1841-1925) and Max Weber in his bureaucratic theory (1864-1920) offered their perspectives on the growing interest in increasing productivity(Dibie, 2014). The problem, as Weber saw it, was how a large organization might function more systematically. The answer, he concluded, was bureaucracy, which meant management by the office or position rather than by a particular person (Parsons (1947) as cited in AMA Journal (2007). In his bureaucratic approach, Weber identifies hierarchical relationships position based on merit, authority derived from the position, specification of job responsibilities and standard operating procedures. Weber believed that for proper organization of activities to occur in a work place, there should be an authority - the power to hold people accountable for their actions and to make decisions in reference to the use of organizational resources.

In a bureaucracy, people should occupy positions because of their performance, not because of their social standing. Some organizations are still affected by social networks in which personal contacts and relations, not job-related skills influence hiring and performance decisions. Weber also wants managers to create a well-defined system of rules, standard operating procedures, and norms so that they can effectively control behaviour within an organization.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are specific sets of written instructions about how to perform a certain aspect of a task. Weber argued that if the above bureaucratic principles are put in place in an organization, time at work place will be managed effectively. Henri Fayol in his *Principle of Management* advocated division of Labour which leads to job specialization and increased efficiency. This is a potentially good practice for organizations whose workers deal with highly technical or repetitive tasks. He also preached unity of command in an organization. An employee should receive orders from only one superior. This leads to fewer opportunities for confusion or conflicting directives. Very appropriate as long as subordinate managers are able to interpret directions from their leaders and disseminate the directions to their subordinates.

Unity of Direction in a work place is another principle of Fayol. It argued that an organization should have a single plan of action to guide managers and workers. An organization that does not have a single purpose and plan becomes inefficient and unfocused. If managers and workers have a different focus or direction, not all of the organization's resources would be utilized towards the achievement of its legitimate goals (Maduabum and Gayya, 2004). Again, Fayol posits that discipline and order help in maximizing organizational efficiency by making sure that the right thing is done at the right time.

The attraction of this approach with special emphasis on time management is its participatory approach to organization of activities in a work place. As a result, the workers are involved emotionally and mentally in the application of themselves to official activities. This is the basis of the commitment which underscores efficiency. Efficiency and effectiveness theory of Service delivery in the public sector is measured in terms of effectiveness and efficiency; hence the paper also looked through the theory on effectiveness and efficiency as relevant to the issue under investigation. The theory of efficiency refers to the relationship between goods and services produced; and the resources used to produce them. According to Galbraith (1976), the ratio between input and output determines the efficiency of the employees. This theory is of the opinion that effective time management will help in manipulating the input – output ratio to the advantage of the organization. Note that time spent in the production process or service delivery is an important input factor. An efficient operation produces maximum output as well as having minimum input for any given quantity and quality of product.

Some Scholars have opined that proper time management can improve the maximum output or reduces minimum cost of input for a given quality and quantity of product and services. Effectiveness on the other hand is how well an activity is achieving its policy objective or other intended effects. According to Speight (1970) cited in Eneanya (2009), an organization is technically effective if it is adequate to the demand placed on it by the society. Adequacy here implies the competence and the capacity to deliver the expected services at a particular set time. According to Eneanya (2009), effectiveness measures the extent and the rate at which goals and objectives of an organization have been achieved. This school of thought believes that the realization

of an organization's effectiveness demands proper management/utilization of the limited time by the employees with the required skill, knowledge and attitude.

Reasons for Poor Time Management in the Public Service

Poor time management does not result from the public service employees' indolence, but from some other crucial factors. The article identified some factors as being responsible why people don't give the public service good time management. One of the factors as identified by the author is lack of participation and concern of most Nigerian citizens to civil governance and other bureaucratic institutions. Many of them belong to the group of people Gabriel Almond described as "parochial", that is, people who are apathetic to political and public administrative issues (Awosika, 2000). So, the corollary to this is a relaxed public service that entertains no questions from the legislators or the citizens. That relaxed atmosphere in which the bureaucrats found themselves automatically breeds the abuse of time, since the time itself is not programmed on any meaningful ventures.

Another factor is the rent seeking nature of the Nigerian State. Since, the Nigeria government depends on rent from crude oil for its survival and sustenance, and up to about 90%, the public service, therefore becomes redundant and unproductive, as it does not involve itself in any meaningful productive ventures because of the surplus rent from oil revenue (Amuche, 2016). Many of the public servants in the non-oil production sector see themselves as not productive. So, we cannot be talking about time management, when there is no need for productivity in the first place.

Again, what Professor Fred Riggs described as "universalism and particularism" also accounts for one of the reasons for time mismanagement in the public service. Universalism, according to Riggs (1973), simply means merit system in public administration, while particularism is the opposite. In the Nigeria public service, recruitment of fresh graduates and promotion of top bureaucrats are not always based on merit, but most times on quota system administered by a federal agency called the Federal Character Commission. This approach leads to placing round peg in a square hole, and sacrificing meritocracy on the altar of mediocrity. Nigeria operates a public service where an officer on Salary Grade Level (SGL) 12 is promoted to head an officer on Salary Grade Level (SGL) 16, not because of any unusual intellectual or professional skills, but simply because of his state of origin or ethnic group of origin. This was supported by Eneanya (2009) in his work "The Principle and Practice of Public Personnel Administration in Nigeria". This chaotic public service atmosphere in Nigeria naturally breeds low morale, corruption, apathy to assigned duties, of course, time mismanagement, as people begin to use their official time for unproductive services and to serve themselves instead of the public.

Also as in the Nigeria society, there exist two groups of publics; the Civil Public and the Primordial Public (Ekeh, 2013). The civil, he described as public service that emerges from colonial structure while the primordial public is the African Indigenous system and institution. Pilot study, according to Akhakpe (2001) has shown that, most public servants steal both the resources and time of the public service to the benefit of

the primordial institution. Most official time and resources are stolen or mismanaged for traditional ceremonies, chieftaincy ceremony etc, given little or no time for public service delivery.

Behaviours in Time Management

Effective time management depends on certain behaviours that must be upheld in every organization. Management must focus on the most important issues/tasks as there will never be enough time to do everything the civil servants has to do. The things that matter least must be at the mercy of the things that matter most. Time management behaviours have been viewed from three perspectives. According to Claessens, Roe and Rutte (2009), these three aspects of time management behaviour include: (1) time assessment behaviour, (2) planning behaviour and (3) monitoring behaviour. Several authors have described these behaviours in details. Kaufman (1991), states that time assessment behaviours are aimed at awareness of here and now, or past, present and future and self-awareness of one's time use and they cover or help to accept tasks and responsibilities that fit within one's capabilities. Here managers need to employ the principle of analysis. This means the individual needs to examine himself in order to know how his time is presently being spent. In this regard, Macan (1996) argued that setting of goals, planning tasks, prioritizing activities, making to-do lists and grouping tasks are aimed at effective use of time. For there to be effective time management, managers, supervisors and the entire employees in any organization should commit themselves to: effective planning; setting goals and objectives; setting deadlines; delegation of responsibilities; prioritizing activities regarding their importance and spending the right time on the right activity. While monitoring behaviours, focus should be on the observation of one's use of time, while performing activities, and generating a feedback loop that allows a limit to the influence of interruptions by others (Fox and Dwyer, 1996; cited in Claessens, Roe and Rutte, 2009). Scholars here are of the view that setting time for every task to be done is not enough, but rather managers must also be involved to see that subordinates performed their task in line with the time set by the organization. Another behaviour in time management is the act of teamwork. The manager needs to help other members of the management team and subordinates to become more sensitive to the time management concept, when dealing with other individuals and even in carrying out their activities in the organization.

Systemic Approaches to Time Management

Time management is the act or process of planning and exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity. It is a meta-activity with the goal to maximize the overall benefit of a set of other activities within the boundary condition of a limited amount of time.

A system as it is defined is made up of a variety of processes/parts that work together to achieve a goal. Time management involves a combination of skills, tools,

processes, methods and techniques put together to accomplish specific tasks, projects and goals. These series of processes as earlier mentioned include the following:

(1). Setting Goals and Objectives Goals and objectives setting are indispensable to effective time management because without a goal in any adventure, there won't be any direction. A public servant without clear objective will have no goal to achieve. According to Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon (2012), the guidelines for setting clear goals and objectives include: (a) An action verb that provides direction, action and accomplishments e.g. to develop, to maintain, to implement, to reduce, to increase etc. (b) The action words that should relate to a single key result such that achievement of objectives will be clear. (c) The instruction should be as specific and reasonable as possible. The more concrete and tangible the measures are, the more effective they will be in helping the manager to manage his time. (d) The action should be understandable. (e) The instruction should indicate a completion date. (f) The instruction should specify a priority for the person, job, goal and organization of which the person is a member. Setting too many goals or objectives may lead to conflict.

(2). Organization For an effective time management to take place there must be a proper organization of activities within the work place. Arhuidese (2004) sees organization here to mean the totality of the activities undertaken to give effect to plan at work. This means carrying out activities around those priorities and goals that have been set. In this context, the absence of proper organization will amount to wastage of business time. Proper organization according to Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon (2012) implies that:

all subordinates should be informed who is responsible for what and to whom, while the manager remains the ultimate authority in the branch through whom they are responsible to the highest authority in the company or organization; division of labour and areas of specialization should be clear and where there is fusion of responsibilities, co-operation should be the watchword to avoid conflict which constitutes precious time waster; channel of communication should be well defined to avoid wasting precious time in seeking for information; managers should not seek to supervise too many people otherwise the wide span of control will constitute time wastage. Delegate authority as earlier described; everything should have its own place and there should be a place for everything in order to retrieve information, documents, equipment, files or records as and where needed without delay. There should be unity of command by which is meant that a subordinate should receive orders from one superior at a time. The reverse brings conflict which is a time waster; and as a superior, set daily targets, maintain time log, and avoid attempting too much at once

Organization in this regard could also be viewed as establishing courses of action for self and others to ensure that work is completed efficiently and effectively in accordance with values of the work place and at specified time duration.

Skill and Behaviour in Organization of Activities

For proper organization of activities in a workplace, certain skills and behaviour must be employed. The Competency Development Planning Guide (2003) identifies these skills and behaviour as prioritizing activities, determining tasks and resources, scheduling work and staying focused.

Prioritize means to work with others to identify more critical and less critical activities and assignments, and also to coordinate project assignments, roles and responsibilities; adjusting priorities when appropriate.

Determining tasks and resources skill Here managers should be able to determine project/assignment requirements by breaking them down into tasks and identifying types of equipment, materials, and people needed and coordinating project assignments, roles and responsibilities.

Scheduling This is another important skill needed by managers in time management. Managers should be able to allocate appropriate amounts of time for completing their own and others' works, avoiding scheduling conflicts. They should develop timelines and milestones and prepare detailed project plans including timelines and objectives.

Leveraging resources takes advantage of available resources (individuals, processes, and tools) to complete work efficiently, coordinates with internal and external partners, delegate duties appropriately, while maintaining accountability for work, and management of resources within the framework of short and long-range budget plans.

Staying focused Managers and supervisors should use time effectively and prevent irrelevant issues or distractions from interfering with work completion, and they should maintain focus when faced with competing agendas.

Planning Planning is another deciding process in effective time management. Planning is sine qua non to management. Depending on the worth of the time available, manager must plan what to do at any particular point in time. Without proper planning of what to do at a time, an employee cannot coordinate his or her activities within the limited available time.

Creating an environment conducive to effectiveness In order to achieve effective management of time in an organization, supervisors' duty should not be planning or delegating jobs alone, but must create a conducive environment in which the employees carry out their jobs successfully.

Attitude of Public Servants to Time Management in Nigeria

The Nigeria public service, over the years, has been besieged with poor performance measurement, probably because it is a service sector that is not profit oriented. Due to the above, most public servants don't give their business time to their job (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon, 2012; Arowolo, 2012). Most employees see the public service as *the white man's job*, thereby giving little or no attention to the job which has resulted to employees in the public service indulging themselves in going to work late, spend most of their time in gossiping, attending to unproductive phone calls, buying and selling various commodities inside their offices and within working hours, and taking unnecessary break time and leave.

The attitude of most supervisors is also problematic to time management in the public service of Nigeria. In the public service, most jobs are not prioritized; hence the employees performing the jobs have no idea of the particular task to give more time, and the one to give less time. The subordinates who perform the task in most cases have no clear vision of what the objective or the goal of the task is all about, they are not captured in the picture of planning and organization of the activities to perform, hence the time required to perform the job cannot be maintained. In this public service, there exist lots of un-official relationship between the supervisors and the subordinates. These relationships have given birth to gossips, club meetings, and other sorts of un-productive/unstructured meeting/discussion during official hours.

According to Adejo (2012), failure to think correctly before acting is another attitude that has been affecting time management in the public service. Taking action without prior correct thinking is a cause of time management failure. Some managers seem not to believe in or find it difficult to put into practice the 10/90 principle 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 (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon, 2012),

Again, the attitude of the public servant that has affected time management in the public service is the poor environment under which the public servants carry out their task. Creating incentives to modify behaviour to ensure compliance with time-related deadlines is one of the factors that influence proper time management. However, in the public service, most supervisors don't give regard to the condition of the service of their subordinates especially the condition of their working environment. Most public offices are infected with poor lightening, heat, poor information and communication system (out dated computers), lack of proper and adequate logistic etc. All these affect the time set for any activity in an organization.

Procrastination is seen as one of the attitudes hindering effective time management in an organization especially in the public service. Procrastination is often said to be the mother of failure. All employees' effort at planning, setting goals and objectives, prioritizing of activities etc, will be a nullity if employees procrastinate at work (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon, 2013). Its effect as a time waster is direct and obvious. Some managers, according to Adejo (2012), adopt procrastination on hard

challenging jobs. Instead of getting started on them and allocating good time thereto, they adamantly refuse to work on these tasks. The fear of facing challenging tasks probably due to incompetence therefore, has been identified as one of the causes of procrastination in the public service.

Furthermore, Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon (2012) identified some personnel attitudes that run counterproductive to time management as: (1) Employees wasting time by making excuses or explaining past failures. A common excuse is —it did not work in the past, so how can it work now? (2) Seeking for perfection which may make the manager work on a project long after he has reached the point of diminishing returns. (3) Indecisiveness which leads to ineffective procrastination and inefficient shifting from one task to another. (4) Negative emotions such as hostility, frustration and worry which interfere with clear thinking and good judgment and divert energy that could be better spent in getting things done. (5) Excessive tension which can disrupt thought processes and interfere with accomplishments. Excessive tension also produces physical and mental fatigue, thereby shortening the time left for productive work. (6) Insecurity which tends to make a manager subservient and unduly defensive. The insecure person is inclined to waste time to impress others. Because such persons may take only activity which may create an outward impression, but not necessarily help in the actual work. Often, most employees give excuses of external factors as the primary sources of time wastage. But when a proper time analysis is made, you discover that the man within is the main source of generating such time wastage.

Conclusion

The concept of time management and service delivery in Nigeria public service has been analyzed with an attempt at x-raying the challenges facing effective management of time and its consequences in service delivery. The paper established that time management is a panacea to effective service delivery in the public service. Effective time management will improve staff productivity, make scheduling of jobs easier, make staff to perform tasks at their highest skill level, helping staff to prioritize and accomplish important task, recording and guiding the organization towards achieving its set goals, eliminating procrastination, strengthen cordial superior-subordinate relationship.

Furthermore, being well organized in respect of the use of time in a work place improves employee's competence in performing his tasks towards achieving organization's goals. The paper argued that the spirit of time management should be acquired through learning and developing consistent time management habit. However time management culture in Nigeria is so unethical that most of the work times in an organization within Nigeria society, especially in the public service are given to unproductive services such as gossiping, unnecessary phone calls, attending to friends and relatives etc. The article concluded that, supervisors and managers in the public service should prioritize their task, imbibing the principles of effective management and developing effective means of eliminating or reducing interruptions at work place.

They should also cultivate the habit of apportioning time to their various tasks in the work place.

Recommendations on Overcoming the Problem of Ineffective Time Management in the Public Service

In order to ensure effective time management in an organization, it is suggested that supervisors should organize and prioritize their jobs and concentrate on important tasks to increase their productivity and save time. Concentrating on important tasks also shapes and molds the manager's character to a superior, more competent and confident, happier and more productive person (Adejo, 2012). Supervisors need to make out a list of tasks to be attended to with specific times attached to them, taking a leave from time management grid. While prioritization of tasks remains supreme, different supervisors 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. It is also important that before starting the day's work, managers need to set up the work environment to be comfortable, attractive and conducive to working for long periods. Organizational goals should be set, and communicated properly to employees. Employees should be involved in the planning of strategies and time frame to achieve the organization's goal. This gives the employees the sense of belonging toward commitment to achieving the organization's goal.

Effective delegation of duty to competent and skillful staff should be encouraged in the public service. Task must be delegated to the right person with the right material. Difficult tasks should not be delegated beyond employees' skills. Managers should create a well-defined system of rules, standard operating procedures, and norms so that they can effectively control behaviour within an organization vis-à-vis managing time in a work place. It is therefore important for a supervisor to develop a sense of urgency as every minute counts, being proactive and dynamic, being committed to team building and effective delegation of duties. Procrastination in an organization should be avoided. It is destructive to work time in an organization. Task being performed by the right and qualified staff is also a great measure to solving the problem of procrastination in the public service. Most employees that are not competent in their job tend to procrastinate. For managers and supervisors to manage the organizations and individual time effectively when relating with their subordinates, Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon (2012) pointed out a number of hints that should be noted: Encouraging subordinates to ask questions and seek agreements on priorities; be prepared to compromise, if necessary in order to make the best use of their own time and that of their subordinates; use the open door policy appropriately; be on guard against unscheduled visitors and telephone calls; and do not mandate change without discussion and agreement. In consenting with the position of Igbokwe-Ibeto and Egbon (2012) the paper argued that, supervisors in the public service should seek adequate means of dealing with interruptions by; disallowing work places to be a reception for families and friends, attending to un-productive and unscheduled meetings, unnecessary phone calls (either making or receiving) as this consumes most of the

employees' time in work place; and again making sure that staff adhere strictly to receiving/attending to visitors only during visiting time.

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