Use of Time Management Techniques by Librarians in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Library Katsina for Effective Information Service Delivery

By

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Abstract

This paper is on the use of time management techniques by librarians in academic libraries, specifically in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University library Katsina State. The main objectives of the paper are to determine the time management techniques used by librarians in delivering information services in the library and to identify how the techniques do affects their performance in the library. The results of the finding shows that most of the librarians in the library used making to do list as a technique for information services delivery in the library with 12 out of 40 respondents which is 30% of the whole responses. On the effect of time management techniques on the performance of librarians, the results show that it increases their productivity with 11 out of 40 responses. The paper concludes with recommendations that librarians should adopt time management techniques to ensure effective information services delivery to users and also librarians should be educated on the need for the application of time management techniques in information resources and services provision through seminars and workshops

Introduction

Lewis & Weigert, (1981) view time as a social construction, a convenience that cultures agree on and that attempts to predict. Similarly Macan (1994), sees time as a mental construct which compares the perception of time to "clock". There is no doubt to the fact that time is very important to all human endeavour. It is because of that, Adeojo (2012), observed that time is an essential resource; it is irrecoverable, limited and dynamic. Irrecoverable because every minute spent is gone forever, limited because only 24 hours exist in a day and dynamic because it is never static. Thus, Ojo and Olaniyan, (2008) submitted the following as attributes of time:

- Time is a unique resource.
- It is the scarcest resource in the universe.
- Time cannot be replaced by man.
- Time cannot be accumulated like money.
- Time cannot be stocked like raw

materials.

- Time passes at a pre-determined rate whatever happens.
- Everybody is equally endowed with the same amount of it irrespective of his position.

Time like any other scarce resource must be managed and used judiciously. This idea gave birth to the concept of time management. However, Claessens, Roe, Rutte, Waller and Clegg (2009), noted that the term time management means different things to different people. They observed that, time management is a method for managers to increase work performance and effectiveness, arguing that time management is not about getting more things done in a day, but getting the things that matter most done. Therefore, time management is the ability to decide what is important both at work and at home.

Defining time management within organizational context, North (2004), describes it as 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 and reached in the appropriate amount of time. Therefore, according to Hirschman (1987), time management is a skill that takes time to

develop and lead to perfection; it is also a skill that is developing any organization. Randall (1979), saw it as a process by which managers can accomplish the tasks and goals which will enable them to be effective in their job and career. However, a much simpler and more encompassing definition of time management was later given by Claessens, Roe, and Rutte (2004), who noted that, time management means those behaviours "that aim at achieving an effective use of time while performing certain goal-directed activities" in an organization.

Managing time is a major stress reducing procedure. One learns to manage time in a way that fits your ways you will be able to overlook the obstacle that time had previously placed on them. Academic libraries are at the forefront of providing information services to their respective communities which comprises of students, lecturers, and researchers in order to support their teaching, learning and research needs. Scholars have emphasized on the crucial role of academic libraries in research and scholarship in institutions of higher learning. The researcher will outline some techniques that will help librarians in the effective time management for academic libraries. The conclusion and findings of this study will

serve as a useful base for further research in the area and also add to the existing knowledge.

This study focused on Use of Time Management Techniques by Librarians in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Library Katsina for effective information service delivery and the subject of the study will cover only professional and Para-professional Librarians in the selected academic library.

Problem Statement

Librarians and libraries today are working under considerable pressures, pressures that are unique to this period of time in institutional and national development. The roles of all institutions are in the process of change. Library and librarians especially those in large institutions must know how the library will be managed to move forward with these changes. This means that along with the new techniques of time saving devices, both library staff and management will need to become more productive in executing their tasks. One road to increase productivity in job execution in academic libraries is that of efficient time management.

Objective of the Study

The study is aimed to achieve the following Objectives

1. To determine the time management techniques used by librarians in delivering information services in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Library.
1. To determine how the techniques affect their performance in delivering information services to users in the Library.

Literature Review

High demands on time are characteristics of many professions. As Britton and Glynn (1989), put it, "intellectually productive people usually have more things that they would like to do, or need to do, than they have time". This description certainly applies to the service in most academic libraries that entails responsibility for the time-intensive tasks of managing library operations, overseeing library programs and services, building relations among staff members, and so forth. Library profession becoming more productive means finding ways to accomplish more given limited time resources, managing time more ably is one way to fulfill this goal. Most library managers in academic library are accustomed to managing a barrage of daily

activities in the form of endless services, all in the name of managing library collections, facilities, budgets, and personnel.

Time Management in Academic Libraries

Many literatures discussed the concept of time management in relation to library and librarians in particular. For example, Hines, (2010) noted that the task of librarians involve an emphasis of the importance of life balance over work output (quality, not quantity, in other words). In order to be the most productive, librarians must consider first what productivity really means to them, not only at work, but at home as well. This is because there is no "one size fits all" approach to time management; Hines provides useful self-assessments to help librarians determine their own approach to productivity.

Peterson (2010) states that working in academic library presents unique situations as they are service-oriented institutions and their clients mostly "drop in." as against what Hines observed that in most other professional environments clients are scheduled. This creates special time management challenges for drop in clients. Librarians in academic library also face unique time pressures because they interact with professionals and are expected to excel not only in job duties, but also in research and services. Therefore, Siess (2002) noted that, "surely academic librarians occupy a special place in any discussion of the importance of time management in academic libraries". Siess brings up an important point that is an issue to all librarians; Library budgets are shrinking, staff who leave are not being replaced as quickly (or at all), and everyone is being asked to do more with fewer resources. Faced with slim budgets and the desire to help patrons, gradually accept more and more work without having original work reassigned. This chronic overwork is one of the primary causes of burnout in academic library. To help control the dangers of overwork, Siess suggested such topics as the difference between efficiency and effectiveness, procrastination, organizing your work space, creating a strategic plan, and even making the most of your available time.

Brown (2001), emphasizes the value of a daily time log to accurately track how much time is being spent on various responsibilities; she also describes the process of keeping a time log over a period of seven years. Accumulation of such a deep

well of data exposed patterns of work that helped Brown synthesize the bases of her primary job responsibility, service and research, into a unified whole. As Brown states, "We do have time: not enough to do everything we would like to do, but nonetheless time to allocate as we see fit".

Time Management Techniques in Academic Libraries

Libraries and librarians are constantly facing deadlines and overloaded with appointments, assignments and projects. As reported by Siess (2002), the concept of multi-tasking has been implemented in most libraries and working individuals need to master time management and flexibility in order to succeed in the job. Effective time management in the library as earlier mentioned by Hines is closely linked to a number of other techniques, such as planning, goal setting, delegating, analyzing and prioritizing. The first step in the techniques of time management according to Adair (2003), is to examine an individual's daily process of work. Keeping a time diary or a time log is important as this will help develop an understanding of planning and actions patterns and enable an individual modified in order to save time. He states that having a daily to-do list is essential as it not only helps to visualize the tasks for the day but also provides a sense of control and direction, which in turn helps boost confidence. This is the same in libraries that tasks should be rated according to urgency and importance and a time limit for each one should be allocated. Another important aspect of time management techniques in academic library is to know how to make the best use of time. For example, depending on whether the librarian is placed on morning or night duty, it is best to plan tasks at different times of the day. Learning to say "No" is a key strategy in time saving. Being focused on the objective at all times helps achieve it faster, keeping distractions to the minimum.

Covey (1990), noted that there are seven steps to time management techniques. The steps that he suggests are:

- Proactive thinking
- Starting with the goal in mind
- Prioritizing
- Trying to achieve an all-win situation such as searching for mutual benefits
- Making sure an individual understands what is happening in a situation
- Synergizing by sharing problems and looking for advice from colleagues, or friends;

- Trying to always improve on skills and abilities.

Peeters and Rutte, (2005) noted that, there is no resource on earth more valuable than time. No amount of money can buy more of it, nor can it ever be replaced. As a result of that, knowing how to manage time properly in academic library is incredibly important when it comes to ensuring productivity, quality and overall efficiency of services. There are many different time management techniques that can be employed in academic libraries to make the best use of the time, each of which has its own unique benefits and purposes.

Hines (2010), also identified different techniques of time management that can be used on a daily basis to improve productivity and help librarians in academic libraries to better manage their precious time which include; Creating To-Do List, setting priorities and deadlines, meeting deadlines, goal-setting, putting time and effort into achieving goals, organize an efficient daily routine, decision making- efficiency without procrastination.

There are many benefits that are associated with using time management techniques in academic library. Using time management techniques greatly increases productivity and quality. This can be done in many different ways, such as organizing the entire day with goals settings, priorities and deadlines. On top of that, using time management techniques can also significantly reduce stress, making it very important both in and outside the academic library workplace.

Methodology

Survey research method was adopted for this study. This is because survey research according to Usuala (1983), is suitable for both large and small populations to discover the relative incidence, distributing and interaction of sociology and psychology variable". The populations and of this study consist of the entire professional and para-professional librarians in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Library Katsina. According to the data obtained from the office of the university librarian, the total population of the staff in the library is forty two (42), which comprises both professionals (8) and para-professionals (38). The instruments used to collect data for this study was Questionnaire.

Findings and Discussion

A total of 42 copies of the questionnaire administered to the Professional and Para-professionals in Umaru Musa Yar'adua

University Library, 40 copies were returned duly completed and found usable for the study.

Table 1 Response Rate

S/N	Name of Library	No. of Questionnaire Distributed			No. of Questionnaire Returned			Percentage of Questionnaire Returned
		Professionals	Para-Professionals	Total	Professionals	Para-Professionals	Total	
1.	Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Library	08	34	42	08	32	40	95.2

The first research question was raised to determine time management techniques used by Professionals and Para-professionals used in their job schedules in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Library. Table 2 shows the finding and discussion:

Table 2: Time Management Techniques used by Librarians for Information Service Delivery

Time Management Techniques	Frequency	Percentage
By Making to do list	12	30
By Proactive thinking	3	7.5
By Starting with the goal in mind	4	10
By Prioritizing	11	27.5
By Trying to achieve an all-win situation	2	5
By Understanding what is happening in a situation	2	5
By sharing problems and looking for advice from colleagues or friends	4	10
By trying to always improve on skills and abilities	2	5
Total	**40**	**100%**

Table 2 shows the responses on the techniques used by librarians to ensure effective time management in their information service delivery in the libraries under study. It was discovered that making to do list appear to be the most frequently used technique with 10 (30%). Prioritizing task is the next technique used with 11 (27.5%). This finding is in agreement with Hines (2010), who also identified different techniques of time management that can be used on a daily basis to improve productivity and help librarians in academic libraries to better manage their precious time

which include; Creating To-Do List, setting priorities and deadlines, meeting deadlines, goal-setting, putting time and effort into achieving goals, organize an efficient daily routine, decision making- efficiency without procrastination.

Time management techniques may have effect on performance of librarians in the library; this effect may be positive or negative depending on the technique. It is based on this that a research question was raised to identify the effect of time management techniques on the performance of librarians in information service delivery. In order to realize this, a list of options of possible effect of time management on the performance of librarians in information service delivery in the library was provided for the respondents to tick. Table 4 shows the different effects of time management in the libraries:-

Table 3: Effect of Time Management Techniques on the Performance of Librarians in Delivering Information Services to Users

Effect of Time Management Techniques	Freq	%
It enables self confidence	2	5
It increases productivity	11	27.5
It helps in completing complex jobs	3	7.5
It bridges the gap of communication among staff	2	5
It makes staff become more organized	3	7.5
It increases talents and skills for workforce	3	7.5
It reduces job stress	8	20
It allow multi-tasking	8	20
Total	40	100%

Table 3 shows the responses on the effect of time management on performance of librarians in the library. It was discovered that most of the respondents indicate that the effect of time management on their performance is that it increases productivity with 11 (27.5%) of the responses, while some respondents indicate that it reduces job stress with 8 (20%), it allowed multi-tasking also has 8 (20%) each. Therefore, it is clear from the findings that all options on the effect of time management on the performance of librarians in the library are related, but the effect with highest frequency across all the respondents is that it increases productivity. This finding correlate with the view of some scholars like Barling, Cheung, and Kelloway, (1996) who noted that, there

are many effects that are associated with time management on the performance of librarians in library. He said "Managing time in an efficient manner greatly increases productivity and quality of jobs executed. This can be done in many different ways, such as organizing the entire day, goals, priorities and deadlines".

Findings

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the following are the summary of major findings:

1. The most frequently used techniques by librarians to manage time in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Ktsina are making to do list, prioritizing, and starting with goals in mind

2. Time management has significant effects on the performance of librarians in the libraries, it discovered that time management increases productivity reduces job stress and allowed multi tasking.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that the academic libraries studied do not incorporate time management principles in their efforts to provide information resources and services to their numerous customers. This can be seen in virtually all their operations, processes and functions.

However, despite the importance of time management in the performance of routine task in library, most of the academic libraries in Katsina State do not exhaustively explore the advantages and opportunities offered or derived from time management techniques and strategies in the performance of routine task as well as effective information service delivery to the customers.

Recommendations

Arising from the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. Librarians should adopt more time management techniques and to ensure effective service delivery to users.

2. Librarians should be educated on the need for application of time management techniques in information resource and service provision through seminar, workshops and conferences in order to

increase their performance and that of the library.

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