

# TIME MANAGEMENT: ESSENTIAL TOOL FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IMPROVEMENT IN CHALLENGING RESOURCE PERIOD IN NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

*Every event is time dependent. Eventually, successfully completed events are measured from total time expended. In school organization, curricular and extracurricular activities depend on the time scheduled like other organizational tasks. Also, the existence of man is evaluated by the total time spent measured in daily, weekly, term and yearly. School activities are enormous while the resources to get them done are obviously scarce, even when assumed to be sufficient, school needs remained insatiable. Considering the nature of economic resource, its appropriation and management one wonders the possibility of meeting the enormous needs of the school. Our school administration have characterized by different social vices stern from examinations malpractices, exhortion, cultism, prostitution, truancy and even embezzlement of funds for educational facilities development thereby leaving the schools look like monsters. Time management has been considered as one factor that can lead to efficient and effective educational improvement in challenging period of economic doom in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Time Management, Essential Tool, Educational Improvement, Challenging.

## INTRODUCTION

The Nigeria educational system is one that has faced many challenges and have passed different odds in face of dwindling economy in presence of natural resources with a population over 140 million and about 60 million people are been challenged educationally. The country natural endowments are enormous but lack prudent management as well as faced with colossal challenges. The resultant effects have been an emerging trend that affects the national economy because of high rate of unemployment, high rate of school dropouts, crimes and large percentage of the educated persons leaving out for greener pastures outside the country (brain drain).

All these have exerted big blows on the economic wheel of the nation as much as having greater impact on the entire developmental agenda. The big task is how the educational system can improve all things being equal given the required resources to operate which is absolutely impossible due to the political and economical bastardization coupled with nepotism and ethnic inclusive conceptualizations. The nation economy that would have supported functional and safe educational system in no small has been exchanging hands in small circles only. Education being vital tool for national development is given no proper attention comparative to the nation endowed natural resources.

Resources available in any system are greatly insufficient to meeting the needs, but it becomes enormously clear that for a system to maintain status quo on existing meager resources there must be prudent management through appropriate use. Adopting good time

management approach in resource application is an appropriate method in efficient and effective utilization and monitoring of resources for corporate goals achievement.

Achieving group goal requires time allocations to individual set out objectives that are collated into organizational goal. If time is not appropriately allocated to different tasks conflict may arise that stifles the realizations of set out objectives and goal (Hoy and Miskel, 2008; Obasi & Oluwuo, 2008; Ugwulashi, 2011) and the resultant effects may consume more resource planning than ever. Organization like the school cannot risk the scant resources because of uncoordinated time. Time must remain paramount to propel efficient and effective administrative process.

Time management in this perspective has been considered one necessary tool for 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. In addition, Redd, Boccanfuso, Walker, Princiotta, Knewstubb and Moore (2012) evidently carried the reviewing study report state that

"some 80 studies of initiatives to lengthen the school day or year or offer learning opportunities outside of school hours opined that most of the studies lack the rigor needed for firm evidence of the impact of expanded time efforts on children, the report emphasizes. But the slim evidence available suggests that extending school time can help raise academic achievement, while out-of-school opportunities can boost "precursors" to achievement, such as educational expectations".

All education stakeholders have important roles to play in improving the educational system threatening the economy. Ugwulashi (2011) sees time to be effective must be planned, organized, implemented and evaluated by any administrator in suitably utilizing school resources available at his disposal.

Just as Drucker in his assertion notes that "**time are scarcest resources available to man**", time determines ability to accomplish activities. For instance, to cover the syllabus in a term each subject must be allocated appropriate time, but when certain subjects were not assigned time, certainly those subjects scheme of work will not be covered in the term. Therefore, it is necessary to distribute this singular resource equally amongst activities intended to be covered by the syllabus.

Time management saves resources, space and conflict resolutions in use of scarce resources, enabling the administrators to solving school pressing needs. Time table schedule is the instrument in achieving complete execution of school activities without conflicts among staff and students by the administrator. Classrooms are assigned particular subjects and teachers in given periods and duty roles are assigned to different teachers to perform respectively and periods assigned to other extracurricular activities like sports, labour, prep, devotion, debate and other social gatherings all require effective time management process.

Considering the dilemma our educational system is facing today, Olagboye (2004) cited by Fasasi in Babalola, et al (2008) emphasized that "educational managers are seen as the ones who should ensure the achievement of educational objectives". Also Fasasi (2008) points out that "manager who is supposed to head members of his school organization is working diligently and appropriately, could engage in bad practices, thus, constitute a cog in the wheel of progress leading to national hope in education be a mirage". The implication is that instead of planning, organizing, evaluating and utilizing limited time in improving the school, the effort is channel to unproductive activities that will not yield result. Therefore, school managers who are supposed to be time managers are wasting the available and other

resources to the organization without recourse to probity and accountability. Time management practice is the best way to manage resources appropriately especially now that quality and cost of education are time dependent.

In light of this, Fadipe and Adepoju in Babalola, et al (2008) cited Griffiths (1975) "that outstanding characteristics of organization viewed over longer time is stable rather than changing". This implies that time obviously determines the state of any event and that change is easier to occur in shorter period than longer time because organization tends to stabilize its resources over long period to survive rather than changing. In otherwords, time is maturity which every system strives at to accomplishing over time. Other importance of time management includes:

### **Decision making tool**

is a crucial part of management of resources. School resources need appropriate decision in putting it into effective use. Stoner, Free man and Gilbert, JR (1995, p. 239) 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 (Ugwulashi, 2012). Such decisions are time related to assure quality. Quality decision is time sustainable to avoid mistakes. And decision making is important for managing resources in an organization especially, the school 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. Babalola and Ayeni in Babalola, et.al. (2008), notes that "this managerial ability requires time management to achieve result especially educational institutions that deals on knowledge within a given period". Improvement of education involves time as educational managers and administrators rely on society resources (students, staff, fund and educational facilities) to process and develop manpower for national survival within given period (six years primary, six years secondary and four or five tertiary).

**Time is an indispensable element** in successful accomplishment of any activity and refers to a "particular period". The realization of educational goal despite the amount of resources involved remains ineffective without good time management (Ugwulashi, 2012). The school 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 school need, 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).

**Time management is used for educational system analysis** for required improvement. Ayodele (2008) in Babalola and Ayeni (2008) pointed out that "educational planners need relevant information to enable effectively plan for the future growth of the national, state and local educational systems". This is time dependent too for this task to be accomplished. 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 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.

## Used For Planning School Activities

In school organization, time is managed through the use of time table. Time table is a specific arrangement of time scheduled according to specific activity. It is used to show the uniqueness of activity in every formal organization (Ugwulashi, 2011). 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.

School activities can easily be achieved through the use of time table which enables 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 teacher, the same class of students and the same subject. Time table provides allowance for merger of classroom, subject and time by the same teacher for the particular subject and class. In achieving good result, school administrators must ensure that school activities are planned in line with the given resources (space, facilities, personnel, and finance) available.

Planned school time involves designing best ways by school organization in undertaking its activities efficiently and effectively within the limit of its resources in realization of school results. In addition, Amadi in Babalola et al (2008) in this regards notes, that planning is relevant to improve student performance. This implies that planning is necessary tool for effective time management in improving proper teaching and learning.

Planning ensures that school resources are not wasted, goals realized, resources well organized towards particular task. For instance, an SS3 Physics class may coincide with SS2 Physics class handled by the same subject teacher. With time table schedule conflict of time will be avoided as the subjects will consider the subject teacher and schedule specified for each class and period.

When school administrators shrewdly apply the time management principles, results are achieved because the idea of procrastination is killed. When once schedule is drawn it becomes everyone responsibility to follow the school planned time of activities in all events (sports, labour, classes, devotions, social trips, free periods etc) except otherwise reviewed or emergency situations.

**Table 1. Typical Planned School Subject Time Table**

CLASS	0745 0815	0820 0900	0900 0940	0940 1020	1020 1100	1100 1140	1140 1200	1200 1240	1240 0120
MON	DEVOTION	Math	Maths	Economics	Geo	-	English	LUNCH PERIOD	Commerce
TUE		Physi	Chem	Biology	History	Agric			
WED		cs	Math	Physics	English	Sports	Sports		CRK
THU		s	Engli	Geo	-	Chem.	Chem.		Biology
FRI		sh	CRK	Commerce	Econs		Agric		Labour

## Used For Organizing School Activities

Organization of time is the next activity after planning. Without planning organization of activities cannot be possible. As we plan we organize to timely accomplish task. Thus, Ugwulashi (2011) notes that organized time helps in (i) analyze allocated time to events (ii)

evaluate time for each event (iii) cost time for total events (iv) pressing events to be identified (v) coordinate all events (vi) improve standard (vii) team participation process (viii) easy task implementation.

However, since school resources are limited, its efficient and effective organization helps in achieving positive results. School resources must be planned and organized because of the necessity to prudently manage the enterprise considering the bureaucratic orientations in public enterprise. If meager resources are wasted because of lack of organization in a social service system (school), results may be denied or not achieved accordingly in meeting the expected goals of education.

### **Used For Implementing School Activities**

Despite the fact that time is organized to accommodate specific tasks as to efficiently and effectively manage resources. In other words, school tasks are enormous that the limited resources available are grossly inadequate, so organizing activities moderates the efforts for easy achievement of tasks. Therefore, time organized must be implemented which depicts that activities leading to goal achievement is realistic. Achievement cannot be realistic when activities are not executed, time scheduling helps for easy follow up of activities avoiding conflicts in use of resources. The school administrator to be effective, time management is a necessary way of soliciting the cooperation and efforts of students, staff and community towards higher performance.

How well time is implemented depends on how it is planned and organized always. In this way resources are gained from the pool. The total amount of implemented time in a school schedule also depends on the dispensable resources, considering the nature of our school system today faced by poor infrastructural and instructional facilities decay, poor salary and welfare package; demonstrations, strike actions, understaffing and overpopulated classes makes it completely impossible for all the time to be implemented. For instance, school time table specifies lesson periods according to classroom availability and subject teachers. Other activities have their assigned time (devotion, classes, games, labour, social gathering, prep, dining, siesta). Effective implementation of these activities relies on how well the time table is planned and organized to avoid clashes.

Considerably all these activities cannot be given equal time during implementation. Implementation therefore, sets the tone for priority and only important activities are given proper attention first. For instance, due to insufficient subject teachers for particular subjects, junior classes may be merged to give senior classes more time for those subjects. Hines (2012) advised that we must avoid unfinished tasks because it is a "self-sabotaging attack on your productivity". Implementation is an actual stage of determining operability of the scheduled time. In other words, without the appropriate resources available there is limit to success. Unaccounted time is not easily determined because school tasks are not like other production sector as time is apportioned differently to activities throughout the given day.

### **Used For Evaluating School Activities**

The success of any school administration is how effective school activities are planned, organized and implemented. To ascertaining this level of effectiveness depends on evaluation for the particular activity at a given time. For instance, school academic performance may begin from the first day the school starts. There exists a general time table broken down into classes, subjects, subject teachers, devotions, labour, sports, opening and closure periods etc which the administrator with the staff maintain in coordinating the internal affairs of the school. Wallace, (2013) emphasized that "as one support for **school leaders on the job is to**



enable principals to devote sufficient time to improving instruction and to making the best use of that time". Put differently, time is all it takes to improve in any activity if judiciously used especially teaching and learning.

The teacher performance depends on the class group or subject allocated to him, and the level of performance of that class group in examination depends on amount of time allocated for the subject to be taught to them. If in a term only five periods (200 mins) alone was given to a particular subject to be taught, performance will not be exceedingly great. The failure rate of students may be very high; therefore, time is a sufficient factor in improving performance of teaching and learning.

In essence, time is used to evaluate progress and maturity in learning process as Hines (2012) puts it that "frustration and failure creeps in when we embarked on unfinished tasks". School administrators cannot go lending resources for tasks they cannot accomplish. It is better managed at a reasonable level than unmanageable level, because school is a critical industry that requires effective management in a safe environment and manner to avoid damage of knowledge.

### **Delegation of Responsibility and Authority and Time Management Process**

A good leader must know when to delegate to next in position responsibility and authority or other staff. Timeline is very necessary for efficient and effective control of organizational members. Based on this, Olaleye (2007) warned that "a school leader should be conscious about organization accountability for the overall progress or failure of his school". Even while obeying the principles of delegation, administrators must not indefinitely leave important tasks on their subordinates. Delegation should not be abused because of administrators' incompetence. School administrator is absolutely responsible to show accountability for the school resource.

According to Peter's principle of incompetence, most school teachers promoted as administrators may not be well grounded on the job. Instead of learning the job may decide to adopt delegation principle as best tool to achieving school result which is obviously an abuse of the principle. Even though, it works most times in accomplishing school performance, the process must not be used all the time. This too does not give an administrator stance to do everything himself. Delegation of responsibility reduces workload or job stress of an administrator and can concentrate on other activities.

Administrators have to understand that the principle of delegation is an extension of time management principle requiring accountability for the resource used. This Mount (2011) states that

"The optimal time management techniques guide on time-task duality. The duality directs the individuals how tasks are linked, directly and indirectly, with multiple time durations. The ultimate goal during some activity is to attain maximum return from each and every unit of time-spent. The guidelines provide a set of generalized directions on multiple life-efforts. However, a customized solution of time-management for everyone can be deduced, as well".

He added that time is a machine that is always moving from the present, into the future, creating the past such must be properly planned, organized, implemented and evaluated. Thus, Qadri (2010) points out that management is the ability to create organize and utilize resources efficiently and effectively and the greatest challenge to a manager is optimal utilization of time which is precious, unique, perishable, and irreplaceable natural resource.

To this assertion, time management becomes a determinant for increased productivity by putting timely the scarce resources into use especially the school.

### **Merits of Time Management**

Time management is an important principle effective for day to day operations by an individual, group or organization. Time is used in different ways including:-

- 1) It helps in setting out goals: For instance, the Dakar 2000 when UNESCO set out Six internationally agreed education goals aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015 (UNESCO, 2000). These goals were graduated into periods 2005 and 2015. The obvious is that these goals cannot be achieved without proper time management as to meeting the final set out target of 2015.
- 2) It helps in gaining in the ordinary sense time not utilized for another activity although the time may be. That is enables easy planning and implementation.
- 3) It helps to motivate individuals, group or organization in forecasting and accomplishing goals. When a school is managed without proper time management approach it means there is no direction to achieving quality education goals (Ugwulashi, 2012).
- 4) It helps to limit resistance when time is set as required for particular activity.
- 5) It helps in evaluating activity progress. The period of teaching and examinations must be timely.
- 6) It helps to remove fear and anxiety because time set is known for that particular activity before its organization and implementation.
- 7) It helps in setting appointments.

### **SUMMARY**

Effective school administration is one whose actions are prompted by good time management process, because time is amply required to facilitate school activities correctly, else, school environment becomes chaotic. A chaotic school environment is unsafe for proper teaching and learning. The school administrators and managers use time allocation to discharge their statutory functions of both instructional and supervisory roles. When once an administrator or manager complained of time failure has crept in, it becomes impossible to achieve certain set objectives and goals.

To ensure also that scarce school resources (human, material and financial) are prudently managed in this period of economic recession world over, scheduling of activities provides the helping hands in efficient and effective management and realization of results.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

School administrators and managers should always encourage time management idea in the school. School resource is very tiny and cannot sustain all the school needs. To ensure realization of proper output from the society inputs, time must be properly planned, organized, Implemented and evaluated in carrying out school activities for positive results. School administrators must consider that school resources is very tiny as such using time management principles will ensure efficient and effective use of these resources in promoting a proper culture for teaching and learning in the school.

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