

## **THE ROLE OF EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

**\*BOT, LADI FRANCIS, MANAGAI DANJUMA\*\*HARUNA, JAMES HELE**

*\*Department Of Social Services, Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi, Plateau State, Nigeria*

*\*\*Bingham University Teaching Hospital, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria*

### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper on the role of effective time management for democracy and national development in 21<sup>st</sup> century aimed at discussing democracy and national transformation in Nigeria, some management techniques, the concept of effective time management, and to discuss the rule effective time management in democracy. The paper revealed that for this to be achieved there is need for effective management at all levels of institutions and organizations. In attaining the mission and vision of organizations, the employment of management skills are essential tools. Performance, based on management skills, constitutes the driving force for effective time management in coordinating strategy and target in order to deliver services. The study recommended the need to strengthen the electoral process through effective time management, effective time management strengthens the judiciary, facilities administration and dispensation of justice, the legislative and executive arms of government should effectively manage their time to hasten democratic process, government should give priority to poverty alleviation programs through effective planning and time management on policy implementation.*

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### **Introduction**

Democracy and good governance are the bases for legitimacy, social mobilization and development because of their responsiveness to the needs of the poor majority of the population. Effective time management in a democratic set up translates into provision of basic infrastructures, access to medical and health-care services, educational, industrial, and agricultural development of the society. For this to be achieved there is need for effective management at all levels of institutions and organizations. In attaining the mission and vision of organizations, the employment of management skills are essential tools. The imperatives of such skills in dynamic organizations suggest effectiveness and efficiency. Democratic societies and organizations are expected to possess skills in the management of their affairs (Elaigwu, 2011). It is not adequate for any organization to have the right leadership in the right place without the right management skills. In other words, it causes a lot of harm to organizations when individuals are contracted without the corresponding expected performance. Performance, based on management skills, constitutes the driving force for effective time management in coordinating strategy and target in order to deliver services. Effective governance in any democratic setting

therefore entails effective management and efficient output which requires management techniques of planning, organizing, leadership and control. According Odo (2015), the quest for democracy and good governance has been a major pre-occupation of the Nigerian state since her independence in 1960. This aspiration has remained elusive due to many challenges, which have continued to undermine the democratization process in the country. These challenges include failure of leadership; corruption; insurgency; insincerity of purpose; lack of political will; lack of proper vision by the political leadership; lack of accountability in governance; amongst others. This underscores the fact that most of our developmental challenges are rooted in lack of sound, visionary and in effective time management. The issue of effective time management accounts for the problem of Nigeria since independence more than all other speculative and assumed problems. Most Nigerian leaders have shown lack of commitment within their tenure for true nationhood. Instead, they allowed personal ambitions and ethnic, regional as well as religious persuasions to override effective time management in delivering the fruits of democracy (Abbas, 2014).

This paper aimed at discussing the following:

- i. Democracy and national transformation in Nigeria.
- ii. Time management principles.
- iii. Effective time management.
- iv. The role of effective time management in democracy.

### **Democracy and National Transformation in Nigeria**

There are various meanings, opinions, perceptions and definitions of the term by scholars and philosophers. Huntington (1996) stated that the concept “democracy” is alien to Africa and needs to be domesticated to Nigeria (Africa) local conditions and targeted to her peculiar problems. According to him democracy is a system of government that should be based on the acquisition of authority from the people; the institutionalization of the rule of law; the emphasis on the legitimacy of rules; the availability of choices and cherished values (more freedom); and accountability in governance. Huntington (1996) argued that a political system is democratic; if it’s most powerful collective decision makers are chosen through fair, honest and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which the adult population is eligible to vote. It also implies the existence of all those civil and political freedoms to speak, publish, assemble and organize themselves for political debate and the conduct of electoral campaign. Cohen (1971) contributed that democracy is a system of community government in which by and large the members of the community participate or may participate directly or indirectly in making decisions, which affect them. This means that democracy could be seen as any system of government that is rooted in the notion that ultimate authority in the governance of the people rightly belongs to the people; that everyone is entitled to an equitable participation and share in the equal rights; and where equitable social and economic justice are the inalienable rights of individual citizens in the society. According to Chafe (1994) democracy means the involvement of the people in the running of the political, socio-economic and cultural affairs of

their polity. Governance can therefore, be good or bad depending on whether or not it has the basic ingredients of what makes a system acceptable to the generality of the people. The ingredients of good governance include freedom, accountability, and participation. The basic features of good governance include the conduct of an inclusive management wherein all the critical stakeholders are allowed to have a say in the decision-making process (Sen, 1990).

### **Effective Time Management**

Time management philosophy tends to examine the importance and appropriate utilization of time as a resource in accomplishing organization objectives and goals. Managing time appropriately leads to achieving results easily with limited resources. Consequently, any productive system, whatever its structure, human, technology or financial support requires efficient and effective time management procedure. Improving quality of organizational activities require cooperative effort of all members in time management. Obviously, time is very important administrative tool in carrying out daily duties. A time management plan enables effective administrator to examine effective usage of time and doing important activities with the highest energy levels in the system.

The time required in accomplishing given a task is carefully analyzed; other resources are also mobilized with time to achieve the desired result. Mullins (2005) refers to time as one of the most valuable, but limited resources. It is important that managers (administrators) utilize time to the maximum advantage. For not realizing time as a scarce resource, most administrators run out of time before expected result is achieved. Time management is also important for effective inspection and supervision of bringing the much needed quality. Effective time management ensures unambiguous objectives, proactive planning, well defined priorities and actions; participatory and successful delegation of activities. Appropriate time management helps to improve standard, save costs, remedy poor situations, leads to value and above all, harmonizes organization focus.

Time however, is very useful for goal setting activities and helps in crisis management which ensures activities are measurably, realistically and specifically carried out. There is obvious need for administrators to be conscious of the value of time, and the need to timely apply administrative and interpersonal skills in planning and execution of programs. Time is a part of the measuring system used to sequence events, to compare the durations of events and the intervals between them, and to quantify rates of change such as the motions of objects. Time is an evolving thought and it constantly changes as we live and carryout our daily activities.

Basically, time management is defined as the planning, organizing, scheduling, and budgeting one's time for the purpose of generating more effective work and productivity. A time management schedule boosts job efficiency and reduces tension. Most often we embark on unimportant task and neglect the critical activities.

### **Time Management Principles**

The efficient and effective use of time is a prerequisite for accomplishing task easily. Ugwulashi (2014) suggested that the following principles could be adopted:

- I. Use of proper time schedule: This helps to avoid conflict among major actors carrying out activities and ensure each task is fully accomplished as planned.
- II. Avoid too much procrastination: All planned activities must be carried out according to specific time allocated.
- III. Adopt good method of task delivery: Planned activities can only be accomplished timely if the process of performing the task is well defined. This tends to put self- confidence on the people undertaking the task.
- IV. Initiate good democratic climate: Good democratic climate allow appropriate use of time. It refers to the favorable conditions prevailing for effective participation of members in realization set out goals. Where time is not organized there is bound to be poor relationship and wastage of resources.
- V. Delegation. Drucker (2003) lists some helpful guidelines on how to delegate to include:
  - Specify responsibilities clearly
  - Provide adequate authority and specify limits of discretion
  - Specify reporting requirements
  - Ensure subordinate acceptance of responsibilities
  - Inform others who need to know
  - Monitor progress in appropriate ways
  - Arrange for the subordinate to receive necessary information
  - Provide support and assistance, but avoid reverse delegation
  - Make mistakes a learning experience

### **Time Management an Instrument of Change**

In critically evaluating contingency approach, it has shown realistic instance of changes in variables that constitutes organization structure. It considers the situational variables rather than a number of classical and human relations propositions. Despite its limitations, contingency model depicts the idea of innovative changes in organization management. Uche (2010) contributed that an organization that lacks viability cannot hope to survive in the world of today and will never see the world of tomorrow. Change therefore is an instrument of time in organization development. It becomes imperative that for innovative changes to occur time use must be appropriate, else, the expected results may not be achieved. Planned change may not be accomplished in event of poor time management; else, other activities may overrun it. It is absolutely necessary that democratic practices follow the change processes through timing societal changes.

### **The Role of Effective Time Management in Democracy**

Good governance is the process through which a state's affairs are managed effectively in the areas of public accountability, financial accountability, administrative and political

accountability, responsiveness and transparency, all of which must show in the interest of the governed and the leaders. To achieve good governance, a democratic system should be put in place. This implies that where there is no democracy, good governance can hardly exist. This is democracy as a system of government commands such popular appeal among the countries of the world today.

Time management in a democratic setting places more emphasis on results and careful monitoring of progress through task delegation, team management and cooperative skills in accomplishing organizational goals. Time management skill is one of the most important tools for effective democracy. Good time management is essential for the success of an organization or state. Tasks and targets must be set and achieved within a time frame. Only good time manager can accomplish targets on schedule. Keeping Good time management is a sign of how disciplined a manager is. And strategic management is a directed by management to determine the fundamental aims or goals of the organization and ensure a range of decisions, which will allow for the achievement of those aims or goals (Cole, 1994).

Effective time management enables management in developing interpersonal skills in bringing people to work together as an effective team. To bring cohesiveness in the team, the leader and members need to develop interpersonal skills. These skills connote the special ability to relate and understand other people's presentations are skills that are required for effective management. In managing any group task, presentations are used as a formal method for galvanizing team members to plan, monitor and review the work progress. A presentation therefore puts things on display. Team members need to see evidence of decisive planning and leadership so that they are confident in their leader. It allows for questions and to initiate discussion and for issues to be raised, to present the problems and at least establish who amongst the audience could provide valuable input to decision making. An important observation is that the objective of communication is not the transmission but the reception. The whole preparation, presentation and content of a speech must therefore be geared not to the speaker but to the audience (Abbas, 2014).

There are skills which a leader must develop in order to be effective in democracy. Management issues such as ethical considerations in democratic settings, business, social responsibility, and effective management to be tackled with adequate management skills. As a result of the complexity of organizations and the rising global business competitiveness in democratic settings, there is need to employ strategic management skills in order to be effective and efficient (Abbas, 2014).

Effective time management also requires the art of delegating authority. Delegation is primarily about entrusting authority to others so that they can act and initiate independently; and that they assume responsibility with certain tasks it can be used as a dynamic tool for motivating and training team to realize full potentials. Delegation underpins a style of management, which allows team members to use and develop skills and knowledge to the full potential. Without delegation, there would be loss of the full value of team members.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In this paper, efforts were made to explain the concept and practices of democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Democracy is popularly referred as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. This implies that the people are fully involved in all levels of its practice, planning and implementation. It is expected that people participate in the process of governance in democratic settings from the political party, elections and process of governance. Since the process involves the people themselves, there is need for effective time management at all levels of practice. Time management enables and promotes effectiveness, efficiency and quality delivery of programs, resources and government projects to the people.

The role of effective time management for democracy and national transformation entails adequate and effective planning, target setting, delegating task, developing appropriate skills and scheduling of activities. These prospects can be enhanced if the following measures are taken:

- I. There is need to strengthen the electoral process through effective time management
- II. Effective time management strengthens the judiciary, facilities administration and dispensation of justice.
- III. The legislative and executive arms of government should effectively manage their time to hasten democratic process
- IV. Effective time management would enhance the process of political appointments leading to effective and representative governance
- V. Effective time management would help in the provision of infrastructural facilities such as good roads, safe drinking water and constant power supply.
- VI. Because of the rising level of poverty among Nigerians, the governing class should give priority to poverty alleviation programmes through effective planning and time management on policy implementation.
- VII. Democratic practices and good governance will be strengthened if the leaders are conscious of their time in office and work hard to achieve set goals.
- VIII. The media has important role to play in ensuring effective time management in democracy for sustainable development.

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