



# Time Management: An Effective Tool for the Survival of a Business Organization

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of time management with a focus on effective tools for the survival of a business organization. Based on this, three specific objectives, three research questions and three null hypotheses were formulated. Theoretical and empirical literature related to the study topic were extensively reviewed and survey research design was adopted by use of questionnaire for data collection. 560 employees which was the population of study were the survey respondents. Due to the small size of population, the entire population was used in the data analysis. The survey responses have been studiously analyzed and ascribed to the tenets of the theories. The methodology applied was the quantitative approach. Simple percentages were used to analyze research data while one way analysis of variance was used to test the null hypothesis. The study found that the overall regression model is statistically significant. The findings of the study show that the case study companies already implement time management in its daily routines. However, this is not adequately effective. The study, therefore establishes the fact that effective time management is an essential factor and a great tool that enables a business organizations manage its financial future and improve productivity.

**Keywords:** Organization Psychology; Time Management; Quality Service; Organizational Performance; Employees Productivity; Efficiency; Motivation

## Introduction

Organizations must manage time efficiently to survive and succeed in today's increasingly hostile and fast-paced business environment. Proper time management is essential for motivating employees and thus improving organizational performance [1]. The competitive environment we live in today encourages people to plan and manage their time effectively from elementary school. The high performance demanded by competitive conditions forces organizations and directors to use time wisely and necessitates the

pursuit of time control. As a result, time is essential for every organization to achieve its goals and objectives. Time management entails keeping track of the tasks and activities that have been prioritized.

Using a calendar or daily planner can help you stay on track, but you must also be self-disciplined. The most efficient "to-do" list in the world will not help someone who does not review or adhere to his daily [2]. Time management is the efficient use of time to make life easier. It is a tool that consists of a diverse set of rules and personal skills that have

a direct impact on stress reduction in workplaces, families, and social settings. It is also the key to high-performance levels, affecting not only employee productivity but also helps to cope with stress more effectively.

It is instructive to note that time management is one of the necessary conditions for managers' efficiency, as well as one of the strategies for improving organizational survival conditions, and it can be successfully implemented in an organization if the appropriate cultural backgrounds are already in place for the system. As a result, organizations must be able to establish an appropriate culture for effective time management execution and progress. Time management skills enable managers to better utilize their limited time resources and focus their attention on matters of the highest priority, resulting in improved job performance. Despite the importance of time management, organizations do not consider it a necessary component of survival [3]. There is a positive relationship between time use and key outcomes such as physical health, psychological well-being, job satisfaction, productivity, and effectiveness, according to empirical evidence Chang & Nguyen [3]. The primary goal of this research, however, is to discover a link between organizational survival and time management.

### Statement of the Research Problem

Ghana's civil service is a colonial creation. The system left to Ghana by the British colonialists was narrow in structure and objectives, intending to successfully extract financial and material resources [4,5]. Civil service is currently plagued by inefficiency, ineffectiveness, indiscipline, red tape, and bureaucratic bottlenecks, among other issues [6]. Despite various government reforms, the Ghanaian civil service remains slow in responding to technological changes and modern organizational methods, as evidenced by poor work arrangement, highly hierarchical operational structure, un-streamlined organizational structures, inadequate remuneration of civil servants in comparison to their counterparts in other -sectors in the face of ever-increasing inflation, and a lack of basic work materials, tools, and equipment. In the public sector, lots of man-hours are wasted on unproductive activities. This problem of wasted man-hours seems to have been taken for granted in Ghana and it has not been deliberately addressed in our reform agenda. Despite the importance of time in the accomplishment of goals, all the past reforms have not addressed the issue of time management in the Civil Service [7]. The challenge of time management seems to be a missing link in the reforms.

This study, therefore, examines time management among civil servants and by implication justifies its inclusion in future reforms. Also, several studies on time management have focused largely on organizational effectiveness,

efficiency, and performance, and mostly in developed countries, little has been written about effective time management in developing countries and most especially in Ghanaian literature. Although scholars like Ojokuku, et al. have conducted studies on time management, the results from such few studies remain inconclusive. Most of these studies did not attempt to empirically analyze time management as a tool for organizational survival in the public sector. Previous attempts focused particularly on character development, organizational culture, employee productivity, and organizational performance. It is on this premise that this study will try to address the identified gap in the literature 999.

### Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine time management as an effective tool for the survival of a business organization in the Ghana Public Sector. Other specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the relationship between time management practice and employee efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector.
2. Determine whether time management is related to public service delivery in the public sector.
3. Determine the relationship between time management and organizational performance in the public sector [8,9].

### Research Questions

In this study, an attempt is made to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between time management practice and organizational survival in the public sector?
2. Is there any relationship between time management practice and employee efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector?
3. Is time management related to public service delivery in the public sector?

### Statement of Research Hypotheses

This research is geared toward testing the following hypotheses;

1. Ho: There is no significant relationship between time management and organizational survival in the public sector.  
H1: There is a significant relationship between time management and organizational survival in the public sector.
2. Ho: Time management practice is not related to employee efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector.  
H1: Time management practice is related to employee

efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector.

3. Ho: Time management is not related to public service delivery.

H1: Time management is related to public service delivery.

4. Ho: There is no significant relationship between time management and organizational performance in the public sector.

H1: There is a significant relationship between time management and organizational performance in the public sector.

## Literature Review

**Time Management: Historical Evolution:** The practice of time management dates back to the days of the Industrial Revolution in Europe. Before the industrial revolution, most people led simple one-dimensional lives as small-scale farmers, artisans, etc. [3]. The concept of time management at this time depended on the weather, seasons, daylight, etc., For example, daylight hours determined work hours. The sun and the moon determined timekeeping and time management. Adebisi [3] argued further that the industrial revolution, however, popularized the use of machines in factories and electricity rendering the concept of daylight hour insignificant. The invention of mechanical clocks further made it possible to manage time more effectively.

This development was further strengthened as a result of the shift from agrarian to industrial economies, and the popularization of the views of scholars and popular politicians such as Isaac Newton and Thomas Jefferson. Benjamin Franklin's statements 'Time is Money' and 'time is the stuff of which life is made' no doubt inspired people to take time more seriously. The Scientific Management Theory as popularized by F.W. Taylor further established the practice of time management. Taylor opined that the cause of inefficiency was due to workers' tendencies to work slowly and lack of incentives to work fast. He, therefore, advocated for the establishment of specific work targets and payment of workers for the tasks and goals met. This mandated better usage of time and became the basis for modern time management approaches [10].

Stephen, et al. in his popular book, 'First Things First' identified four generations of time management approaches that are in use since World War II: (i) first generation: the use of traditional and rudimentary approaches based on clock-based reminders and alerts; (ii) second generation: the use of planning and preparation of work schedules and events, including setting time-based goals; (iii) third generation: prioritization of various tasks and events, and controlling tasks using schedulers; and (iv) fourth generation: the fourth generation of time management approach is the contemporary approach. This approach, like the third-

generation approach, aims at prioritizing various tasks and events but aims at prioritization based on the importance of the task rather than the urgency. This approach also concentrates on the efficient and proactive use of various time management tools.

Moreover, time management was introduced as a method for effectively coping with time issues on the job. The method consists of tips and techniques to determine which goals to pursue in the short term, how to translate these goals into tasks and activities to be performed immediately, how to plan and prioritize them daily, and how to avoid work interruptions that distract from executing these tasks [11]. He argued further that since its introduction, there has been tremendously popular attention for the implementation of time management techniques at work and time management training programs.

## Conceptual Framework Time Management:

To Abd-el-Aziz, et al. time management is a set of certain skills and methods to achieve targets, goals, and objectives such as setting goals, analyzing, allocating, and organizing the available time is known as time management. In the same vein, El-Shaer, et al. describes time management as a set of principles, practices, and systems that help to use your time to accomplish what you want. It is the art of planning, organizing, scheduling, budgeting, and evaluating when and how long it takes to perform an activity and control time rather than letting time control us. It is the key to high-performance levels and affecting not only the productivity of employees but also helps to cope with pressure more efficiently [12,13].

Odumeru also sees time as the most precious asset available to man, this is because time is a myth; an asset that cannot be recovered stored, or transferred. In his view, 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.

## Organizational Survival

The concept, of organizational survival, has been defined by different scholars from different perspectives. Larsen, et al. assert that organizational survival involves a organization becoming increasingly vulnerable to challenges by innovations, technology, customers, and growth. Hence, the organization should be progressively responsive to these challenges and can take advantage of new market realities and opportunities [14].

Osibanjo, et al. also see organizational survival as a primary goal or objective every organization should have.

They further stressed that the goal of organizational survival underpins all other goals [15]. Paying attention to this goal contributes to the satisfaction and execution of other organizational goals. This suggests that every organization should see survival as an absolute prerequisite for its serving any interest whatsoever.

### Theoretical Framework

Several theories could be applied to the understanding of the concept of time management. However, this study is situated within the context of the Pareto Principle (80-20 Rule). Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923) was an Italian economist and philosopher who formulated the 80-20 rule. His observations were based on the fact that 80% of the land in Italy was owned by 20% of the population. His research work became the thumb rule of many business organizations, where 80% of productivity came from 20% of working employees. This 20% comprised the most efficient people who conducted their work within a specific period, thereby contributing to a high rate of productivity. Based on this theory, business, and quality management pioneer, Dr. Joseph Juran said that 'vital few, trivial many' build organizations [16].

The 80-20 rule could be applied everywhere where time plays a major role to uplift the productivity and success of organizations. The key element of this theory is the 20% that matters the most. If you consider all the things that you are doing the entire day, you will find out that it is 20% of your work that produces the net result. Thus, you should try different ways that will allow you to effectively manage the minor portion [6]. Moreover, the relevance of this theory to time management is that it allows an individual to manage his or her limited time daily productively, as you have to categorize your work and activities for achieving the goals.

Time Management, Organizational Performance, and Employee Productivity: What Nexus?

The need for time management has gained popularity and thus its importance not only as a motivating element behind employees' performance and productivity on the job but as the bases for the overall performance of the organization. Thus, in the business world, time is one of the most important assets for any organization. Unfortunately, many businesses fail to keep up with or realize the "time" factor [2]. However, proper management of time is also important for managers, employees, and the organization. A manager's work is closely related to time as he has to fulfill numerous working demands in a limited time. Effective leaders manage time, and the more likely opportunities exist to resolve issues and complete projects promptly, which could result in organizational success, better performance, and increased productivity [17].

Time management skills help managers to better utilize their scarce time resources, allowing them to put their attention on matters of the highest priority that results in improved employees' job performance and productivity. Today's competitive world requires various demands to be accomplished in a limited period. Organizations must also ensure that they meet the demands and requirements of customers, and are adaptable to specific requirements, responds to the changes in the external environment and the demands of the situation [18].

Scott, et al. made it clear that one of the fundamental challenges in effective time management is remembering the difference between "urgent" and "important". Urgency alone cannot make a task important [19]. It is a connection to our principles and business priorities that determines the importance of a task. With a clear personal mission and objectives, time can be scheduled with a definite purpose in mind. Good time management is essential for coping with the pressures of modern life without experiencing too much stress. Time management makes you important and respected, and organizes things around you that result in optimal performance and productivity [3].

Oddey, et al. posited that brilliant leaders with vision, determination, and focus build such high-performing organizations that deliver effective services and products to their clients at all times [20]. Such organizations are good time managers and instruments of change through efficient and effective management of time and resources. In such a potential organization, there is renewed rigor and a yearning for continuous learning, application of new growth strategies through research and development, and growth taking into consideration the value and essence of time.

Time is tied to every activity of the organization. It sets smart goals and measures its successes and failure taking into consideration time. This clearly shows the importance of time and its positive or negative impact on organizational performance. For effective time management for organizational performance, managers as well as employees can decide which tasks fall into the categories of essential tasks, important tasks, and low-value tasks by asking which tasks are most valuable to the organization [21].

The effectiveness of organizations depends upon the effectiveness of their time utilization. According to Philpot, et al., To make more efficient and effective use of your time, you must be able to plan for the future and prioritize the present. Time increases productivity and thus productivity increases profits. Despite its high significance, Adebisi observed that organizations do not treat it as the essential ingredient of survival [22,23].



Burke et al. refer to several studies where the time management and work motivation of employees increased customer loyalty and employee performance. Adejo [4] also revealed that effective time management is an important key to organizational performance. His findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between adequate time management and organizational performance. Time management is key to achieving organizational objectives regardless of location, size, and nature of the business.

### Time Management and Quality Service Delivery

Proper time management is widely recognized as key to effective service delivery and customer satisfaction [24,25]. Service Quality is defined by the relationship between the expectations of customers and how they perceive their experience [26,27]. Service quality can be measured in terms of five main dimensions namely; Tangibles, Assurance, Responsiveness, Reliability, and Empathy [28]. Tangibles refer to the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials. Assurance refers to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence. Responsiveness refers to the timely willingness of employees to help customers and provide prompt service. Reliability refers to the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. Empathy refers to the timing, caring, and individualized attention that organizations provide their customers [29].

Schneider, White, et al. maintain that employees can only deliver a quality service if the organization supports them through motivation, resources, training, management practices, assistance, and time management. In particular, talent practices such as skills, continuous training, time management, competence development, career development plans, and sound performance appraisal systems are keys to the enhancement of the service quality of an organization [30]. Other researchers also highlighted talent attraction and retention practices as important determinants of quality service delivery in an organization [31].

### Empirical Review

There are few previous works carried out by scholars on time management, employee productivity, organizational growth, service delivery, and organizational survival. Channar, Shaikh, et al. examined the impact of time management on employee productivity and the overall performance of the organization. They assessed the level of time management in public and private sector organizations. Close-ended questionnaires were administered to 260 male and female faculty members and students of public and private universities of Hyderabad and Jamshoro districts.

Data were analyzed through independent sample T-test and correlation. The results of the test indicated that employees of both types of organizations act on time management almost equally. The result also indicated that females are more time conscious as compared to males. The result also showed that time management increases employee productivity and motivation and also increases the performance of the organization [32-35].

Mamman, et al. evaluated time management and public service delivery in the Ghanaian Civil Service. The research was conducted based on evaluation and survey research designs [36]. The results showed that there is a low appreciation of the process of time management and its principles among the civil servants in Ghana. There are also traces of time wastage or mismanagement by the civil servants during working hours which hinder effective public service delivery. The study recommended the inclusion of time management issues in all subsequent civil service reforms.

Adebisi [3] investigated time management and its effect on the survival of the business. Forty-three (43) small and medium-scale enterprises were selected for the study. Data were collected with the aid of a questionnaire administered to 120 personnel of the enterprises. Findings revealed that time management enables most of the businesses studied to survive the competition and get more business. The study, therefore, concluded that there is a significant and positive relationship between time management practices and the survival of the business. The study also recommended that businesses and including individuals should cultivate the habit of time management so that they become successful and survive in what they do.

Ojokuku, et al., using an econometric approach and a sample of one thousand five hundred (1500) civil servants randomly selected in South-West Ghana, assessed the impact of time management on organizational performance with great emphasis on government parastatals. The findings revealed the existence of a positive relationship between adequate time management and organizational performance because time management is essential in all human activities and serves as a good tool for the attainment of any organizational objectives and goals irrespective of the volume [37,38].

It is instructive to note that the adoption of a theoretical framework in the management and social sciences greatly helps in the analysis and even understanding of concepts from some theoretical point of view and/or orientation. Therefore, the theoretical framework of analysis adopted in this study is the Pareto Principle (80-20 Rule). The Pareto

Principle (80-20 Rule) posited that 80% of productivity came from 20% of working employees. This 20% comprised the most efficient people who conducted their work within a specific period, thereby contributing to a high rate of productivity. The 80-20 rule could be applied everywhere where time plays a major role to uplift the productivity and success of organizations [39].

### Methodology Research Design

Survey research design was employed for this study as a model of investigation out of which collection of data was possible [40].

### Population of the Study

The study area bases in three (3) business organizations in Accra Ghana. The study population was 574 people inclusive of both managers and lower level staff.

**Sample Size:** A total of 574 sets of questionnaire were distributed to the staff of the business organizations, 560 were returned and the entire population of 560 was used as sample size [41].

**Reliability of the instrument:** The reliability of data collected was checked using –Test, Re-test|| method of checking reliability of instrument. 50 employees each were selected randomly from the selected business organizations and retested two weeks after administering the first questionnaire. The test results were in correspondence with the initial survey results [42,43].

### Data Presentation and Analysis Test of Research Hypotheses Hypotheses One

**Ho1:** Prioritization of tasks does not significantly affect the productivity of business organizations.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (P)
Between Groups	1863344666.602	6	53238419.046	114.067	.008
Within Groups	397198.932	554	397198.932		
Total	1863741865.534	560			

**Table 1:** Prioritization and productivity of business organizations ANOVA

Source: SPSS Version 20, 2022

The test table reveals the differences between significance level (F. sig<.05) and p (0.008). The F- value 114.067 which has a significance of 0.008 is less than 0.05 (i.e .001<.05), this shows that a significant difference exists among the variables. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis, which states that

Prioritization of tasks significantly affects the productivity of business organizations, is accepted [44,45].

### Hypothesis Two

**Ho2:** Delegation has no significant effect on the productivity of business organizations.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (P)
Between Groups	18816621102816.195	3	537617745794.748	211.295	.000
Within Groups	64810152397.620	557	64810152397.620		
Total	18816621102816.195	560			

**Table 2:** Evaluation on Delegation and productivity of business organizations in Nigeria ANOVA

Source: SPSS, Version, 20 2019

The small significance value (F.sig<.05) indicates that there is a group difference. Since the F-value of 211.295 has a significance value p(.000) which is less than .05 (i.e 000<.05). This implies rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of alternate hypothesis which states that Delegation has significant effect on the productivity of business organizations.

### Summary of Findings

The basic objective of this study is to critically and empirically examine time management with focus on effective tool for the survival of a business organization. The hypotheses of study were tested individually to determine the contributing effects of the selected variables on business

productivity. The result of the estimates stated in section three (3) of the study reveals the following.

- Prioritization of tasks has a significant positive effect on the productivity of business organizations
- Delegation has a significant positive effect on the productivity of business organizations.
- Multitasking positively and significantly influences organizational productivity of business organizations

## Conclusion

This study examines the three major time management practices; Prioritization, delegation and multitasking, and their corresponding effect on the productivity of business organizations. The researchers focused on selected business organizations in Ghana as case study. The idea behind using business organizations is based on the fact that they are business entities conscious of time. In various organizations, time such as production time, arrival time, service delivery time, can be measured [46-48]. This means that managing business also means managing time. The researchers established a positive relationship between time management practices and organizational productivity. During the study, the researchers deduced that productivity can be measured in relation to time, and effective time management reduces failure. The researcher therefore concludes that there is a direct link between effective time management and productivity in the business sector generally. Business managers are therefore encouraged to implement new strategies and revamp old time management practices in their organizations in order to survive in a competitive industry.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, we will recommend the following:

- Organizational records should be in standardized formats to save time and should include time management tools such as; time logs, schedules, and Gantt charts which help employees to manage their time effectively. There should be clear policies, rules, and regulations for employees to save time and prevent time wasters. Employees at all levels should realize the time management practices and develop habits such as; setting goals, prioritizing activities, using to-do lists, delegation, and avoiding procrastination through outperforming competitors.
- Proper time management also requires motivation for higher remuneration and a conducive working environment. Work motivation involves the setting of time for the accomplishment of all activities by governments at all levels, adequate provisions for the attainment of the organizational goals, a mechanism for monitoring the time attainment, and objective performance

appraisal should be conducted at the expiration of the time, and a commensurate compensation and adequate sanction should be adopted for any employees that meet set target and those that failed.

- Leaders should also avoid procrastination because it is the most time killer. Whatever needed to be done that will improve the performance of the organization should not be delayed. This will also reduce stress and last-minute rush as they judge people the way they handle their services.
- Organizations should train their employees in systematic time management to achieve productivity results in a progressive period. Civil servants should appreciate the process of time management practices and their principles through training and sensitization.
- Effective time management requires using certain facilities and equipment, such as computers, organizers, calendars, diaries, etc. These facilities and equipment should be available to facilitate time management practices in the Ghanaian Civil Service. They should minimize the waste of time during working hours by avoiding issues leading to time wastage, such as procrastination, gossip, prolonged meetings, etc.

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