

Impact of Time Management and Decision Making Processes on Effective Management of Trade Union Offices in Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract. This study investigated the impact of time management factors (planning, priority setting, goal setting, time allocation and scheduling) and decision making processes (task identification, goal identification, finding alternatives, identifying implications, selection of decision path and monitoring outcomes) on effective management of trade union offices in Ogun State, Nigeria. The survey research design of *ex-post facto* type was adopted. Stratified and purposive sampling techniques were used to select 200 respondents (50 each from four unions used in the study). Data were collected using Time Management and Decision Making Processes Scale ($r=0.86$) Two research questions were answered tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data were analyzed using multiple regression. Time Management factors variables made significant prediction in the following order: planning ($\beta=0.27$, $p<0.05$); priority setting ($\beta=0.14$, $p<0.05$); goal setting ($\beta=0.12$, $p<0.05$); scheduling ($\beta=0.12$, $p<0.05$), and time allocation ($\beta=0.06$, $p<0.05$). The relative predictions of the decision making process factors variables were as follows: selecting decision path ($\beta=0.22$, $p<0.05$); tasks identification ($\beta=0.16$, $p<0.05$); finding alternatives ($\beta=0.11$, $p<0.05$); goal identification ($\beta=0.11$, $p<0.05$); identifying implications ($\beta=0.10$, $p<0.05$); and monitoring outcomes ($\beta=0.03$, $p<0.05$). Time management and decision making process factors effectively enhanced the management of trade union offices in Ogun State. Therefore, it is recommended that union leaders, managers of union offices and all stakeholders in union matters should employ

appropriate time management and decision making skills for the achievement of union goals and objectives.

Key words: Time management, Decision making processes, Trade Union Offices, Operational effectiveness, Ogun State, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Organizational management denotes the judicious utilization of available resources towards achieving the set goals. In essence, effective management of goal – oriented unions in changing industrial and labour relations system requires adequate application of one or more forms of managerial skills and styles which tend to involve the managerial skills time management and union members' participation in the determination (decision-making) of how union resources could be maximally mobilized and utilized towards achieving union goals and objectives. Meanwhile, the efficiency and effectiveness of the manager in leading the unions towards achieving its goals has been attributed to supportiveness of the working environment (Baridam, 2000; Armstrong, 2002; Oribabor 2002).

2. Management of Union Offices in Nigeria

Management of trade unions in Nigeria is structured in such a manner that Central Labour Organizations which is also called Labour

Centres (represented by Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC) are at the peak of the structure. These bodies have their offices located at the nation's capital in Abuja. They also maintain offices at the state capitals across the country. Each Labour Centre's National Executive Councils (NEC) and National Administrative Councils (NAC) are the main bodies responsible for the administration of the labour unions at this level. The same is replicated at all the state capitals in the country. In addition to this, each union that makes up of these labour centres also have their headquarters located in Abuja while they maintain state offices at various state capitals across the country. National Executive Councils and National Administrative Councils of these unions are also replicated in the nation's capital for all the unions. At the state level, the administrative machinery of the unions are left with State Executive Councils (SEC) and State Administrative Councils (SAC) of these unions. At the lowest level are the house unions located at the various organizations across the country. These structures are replicated with almost all the unions in the country following the same trend. Ngwama (2016) while working on National Union of Food, Beverage and Tobacco Employees (NUFBTE) confirms that the union maintains three structures – the house union, the federation/nationwide union which is the umbrella union and the trade union centre. This assertion underscores the almost rigid structure maintained by almost all the unions in Nigeria. The scope of this study is the running of these state offices of the trade unions with particular reference to Ogun State of Nigeria where almost all the unions maintain offices at the state capital in Abeokuta, Ogun State.

3. Time Management

Nevertheless, the use of management techniques or approaches predicated the issues of time management and decision making processes in managing organizational resources; especially in Nigerian industrial and labour environment. Any union, whatever its aims, mission statement or vision, objectives and expectations depends on management with certain degree of emphasis on time management and decision making

processes. Thus, a union is established with a vision and a mission to fulfill certain objectives under which management becomes very relevant. To achieve this laudable goal, it must have efficient time management strategies and sound decision making processes in addition to effective co-ordination, constant evaluation and adjustment to environmental pressures and demands.

In carrying out their respective managerial functions, management of unions in Ogun State need to undergo the vital process of decision-making and time management. Therefore, the management approaches or styles to be employed at a point in time are a matter of decision. The decision of course must be based on the situation, since the unions are running a multi-level administration where decision may be needed to be taken at each level without necessarily referring to the centre in matters relating to local issues at chapter or branch level.

Time management refers to a range of skills, tools, and techniques used to manage time when accomplishing specific tasks, projects and goals. This set encompass a wide scope of activities, and these include planning, allocating, setting goals, delegation, analysis of time spent, monitoring, organizing, scheduling, and prioritizing. Initially time management referred to just business or work activities, but eventually the term broadened to include personal activities also. A time management system is a designed combination of processes, tools and techniques.

Covey (1994) offered a categorization scheme for time management approaches that they reviewed as follow:

First generation: reminders based on clocks and watches, but with computer implementation possible can be used to alert of the time when a task is to be done.

Second generation: planning and preparation based on calendar and appointment books includes setting goals.

Third generation: planning, prioritizing, and controlling (using a personal organizer, other paper-based objects, or computer or PDA-based systems activities on a daily basis. This

approach implies spending some time in clarifying values and priorities.

Fourth generation: being efficient and proactive using any of the above tools places goals and roles as the controlling element of the system and favors importance over urgency.

Some of the recent general arguments related to "time" and "management" point out that the term "time management" is misleading and that the concept should actually imply that it is "the management of our own activities, to make sure that they are accomplished within the available or allocated time, which is an unmanageable continuous resource", Fiore (2006).

Most scholars often quote Lakein (1991) when defining time management. According to Lakein (1991) time management involves determining needs, setting goals to achieve the needs, prioritizing the task required, and matching tasks to time and resources by planning, scheduling and making lists. It is instructive to note that aside from the above definition, many other definitions have been put forward. (Macan, 1994; Jex & Elacqua, 1999) see time management as a set of techniques for managing time while Varlamova (2008) refer to time management as self-regulating strategies aimed at discussing plans, and their efficiency.

It is also instructive that time is an important element in human organizations and because of its limited nature, it must be used judiciously. Time management has been connected with organizational efficiency and profitability (Britton & Tesser, 1991) while poor time management has been associated with poor academic performance and low productivity.

This brings about the concept of personal time management. According to Morgenstern (2004), time management strategies are often associated with the recommendation to set goals. These goals are recorded and may be broken down into a project, an action plan, or a simple task list. For individual tasks or for goals, an importance rating may be established, deadlines may be set, and priorities assigned. This process results in a plan with a task list or a schedule or calendar of activities. Authors may recommend a daily, weekly, monthly or other planning periods,

usually fixed, but sometimes variable. Different planning periods may be associated with different scope of planning or review. Authors may or may not emphasize reviews of performance against plan. Routine and recurring tasks may or may not be integrated into the time management plan and, if integrated, the integration can be accomplished in various ways.

4. Decision Making Processes

A decision making process is a phased approach, or step-by-step decision method of making a decision. There are many decision making models that can be applied to test the decision making steps along the way, but most decision making processes involve a set number of steps and many decision factors. The most simple of decision approaches may have only three steps, and these will be very high level or generic, such as define problem, gather data and list alternatives. More sophisticated decision frameworks will include more decision making process steps, and the most sophisticated will include how-to-guides for setting up the parameters, decision factors, or boundaries of the area in which the decision is to be made, describe decision making models and decision making tools to be used to analyze the data and choices, and loop back procedures to test to alternatives. We often think that we use the best decision making method every time. It turns out that even great decision makers often use different decision making models to make actual decisions than they think they do.

Since we may base the criteria for decision making on our most recently used theory, rather than our planned or intended theory, we are not consistent with what we think we should be doing. Each time you make a decision, you might weigh the criteria's importance differently, which makes for ineffective decision making or decision making mistakes. This also complicates learning from our decisions, as the basis for judging the outcomes changes each time.

According to Varlamova (2008) the activities of an organization can be a sequence of successful

and unsuccessful decisions. Based on this, decision making process have become central to the overall organizational functioning and an unavoidable aspect of employment in many jobs. Researches on decision making processes has typically attempted to offer suggestions for improving decision making processes and various researchers in the decision making field have attempted to clarify the distinctions between choice, decision and problem solving. Varlamova (2008) quoting Etzioni (1988), posited that the term choice should be used to encompass the sorting out of options, whether conscious or nonconscious and as such deliberate choices are referred to as decisions.

Wise decisions may or may not follow external influences and expectations. Sound decisions are right for you, based on what you know at a given point in time about your options as well as yourself. What we have observed, is that Good Decision making is not an accident. It is a repeatable process. Good decision makers take a systematic approach to their decision making. They know or understand what situation they need to resolve and why they need to resolve it. They eliminate distractions, anxiety, subjectivity, and individual bias from the process. They generally create multiple potential solution options from which to choose. They make their choices based upon relevant facts and information, not on partial or conflicting data.

5. Statement of the Problem

It is a fact that trade unions in Nigeria maintain at least three structures which may make the management of the unions offices complex and cumbersome and the role which time management and decision making processes have been playing in the effective operation of all organizations call for a study into how union manage their offices at state levels consideration the fact that most major decisions of unions are centrally made. Trade Unions are formal organizations with complex tasks and certain goals orientation. They operate a definite structure and have specialized, delimited objectives often emanating from outside the structure. The degree of effectiveness with which unions tasks are carried out and its goals

would largely be dependent on time management skills and decision making capabilities of the union leaders and managers of union office.

In spite of the attention given to time management, little or no research have been carried out on the impact of time management and decision making process on the operation of union offices at state level. Against the foregoing, the study sought to examine the impact of time management and decision making processes on effective management of union offices in Ogun State, Nigeria.

6. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- Ascertain the relative impacts of decision making processes on effective management of union offices in Ogun State;
- Determine if time management have any impact on the effective management of union offices in Ogun State;

7. Research Questions for the Study

This study was guided by two main research questions. These were designed to measure the specific impact of the factors of the independent variables on the dependent variables.

RQ 1 What are the relative impacts of time management factors (planning, priority setting, goal setting, time allocation and scheduling) on effective management of union offices in Ogun State?

RQ2 What are the relative impacts of decision making process factors (identifying goals, identifying tasks, finding alternatives, identifying implications, selecting decision path and monitoring outcomes) on effective management of union offices in Ogun State?

8. Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study consisted of union leaders, managers of

union offices and members of the four unions used in this study.

The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. This was on account of the different categories of participants that constituted the population of this study. The stratified and purposive sampling techniques were finally adopted to select 50 union leaders, managers of union offices and members of the four unions (Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT), National Union of Local Government

Employees (NULGE), Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) and National Association of Academic Technologists (NAAT). The main instruments used for data collection were set of questionnaires tagged “Time Management and Decision Making Processes Scale” (TMDMPS). The data collected were analyzed, using Multiple Regression Analysis at 0.05 alpha level.
Results of Analysis

RQ 1: What are the relative impacts of time management factors (planning, priority setting, goal setting, time allocation and scheduling) on effective management of union offices in Ogun State?

Table 1: Relative Contribution of Time Management Factors on Effective Management of Union Offices

Factors	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	78.275	10.148	-	7.713	.001
*Planning	6.309	.510	.271	12.364	.000
*Priority Setting	3.562	.593	.142	6.010	.000
*Goal Setting	2.985	.549	.116	5.438	.000
*Time Allocation	1.628	.576	.060	2.826	.005
*Scheduling	3.092	.576	.119	5.366	.000

*Significant at P <0.05

Interpretation

Table 1 is explained below by writing the regression equation.

$$Y = 78.27 + 6.3X_1 + 3.5X_2 + 2.9X_3 + 1.6X_4 + 3.0X_5$$

Where Y = Effective management of union offices.
(dependent variable)

X₁ = Planning.

X₂ = Priority Setting.

X₃ = Goal Setting.

X₄ = Time Allocation.

X₅ = Scheduling.

It is obvious that all the five independent variables have significant t-values. Moreover, from table 1, it is also obvious that time management factors contributed significantly to the effective operation of union offices. All the other five time management factors contributed significantly to the achievement of the dependent variable (effective management of union offices).

Given the order of hierarchical relative impact, it is evident from table 1 that: planning (Beta= .271; P<0.05); priority setting (Beta= .142; P< 0.05); scheduling (Beta= .119; P<0.05); goal setting (Beta= .116; P<0.05); and time allocation (Beta= .060; P< 0.05) all contributed significantly to the effective management of union offices.

RQ 2: What are the relative impacts of decision making process factors (identifying goals, identifying tasks, finding alternatives, identifying implications, selecting decision path and monitoring outcomes) on effective management of union offices in Ogun State?

Table 2: Relative Impacts of Decision Making Process Factors on Effective Management of Union Offices

Factors	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	78.275	10.148	-	7.713	.001
Identifying goals	2.114	.996	.108	4.567	.002
Identifying tasks	3.537	.435	.163	8.135	.000
Finding alternatives	2.985	.549	.116	5.438	.001
Identifying implications	2.566	.473	.100	5.426	.000
Selecting decision path	5.978	.509	.220	11.756	.000
Monitoring outcomes	1.104	.661	.038	1.670	.005

*Significant at P <0.05

Interpretation

Table 2 is also explained by writing the regression equation as shown below.

$$Y = 78.27 + 2.1X_1 + 3.5X_2 + 2.9X_3 + 2.5X_4 + 5.9X_5 + 1.1X_6$$

Where Y = Effective management of union offices. (dependent variable)

- X₁ = Identifying goals.
- X₂ = Identifying tasks
- X₃ = Finding alternatives.
- X₄ = Identifying implications.
- X₅ = Selecting decision path.
- X₆ = Monitoring outcome.

Table 2 shows the impact of six independent variables of decision making processes to sustain effective management of union offices. The six factors were significant in their contribution to the effective management of union offices. In order of hierarchy, the analysis shows that, selecting decision path (Beta = .220 P <0.05), identifying tasks (Beta = .163; P <0.05), finding alternatives (Beta = .116; P <0.05), identifying goals (Beta = .108; P <0.05), identifying implications (Beta= .100, P<0.05) and monitoring outcomes (Beta = .38; P <0.05) had significant relative impact on effective management of union offices in Ogun State.

9. Discussion

From the result presented in tables 1 and 2 above it is obvious that the impact of decision making process and time management on effective management of union offices was significant. The result is supported by the submission of Fiore (2006) who submitted that it is the management of our own activities, to make sure

that organizational objectives are accomplished within the available or allocated time, which is an unmanageable resource. Time management for union officers is a tool that cannot be over emphasized; the mere fact of different location of the offices which sometimes may involve hundreds of kilometers is very potent.

Labour leaders, managers of union offices must also take into consideration the importance of personal time management which is a sub-set of time management. This finding is supported by Morgenstern (2004) who submitted that personal time management are often associated with the recommendation to set goals. These goals are recorded and may be broken down into projects, an action plan, or a simple task list. For individual task or for goals, an importance rating may be established, deadlines may be set and priorities assigned. Khodaveisi, et al (2015) assert that significant relationship exist between time management variables such as goal setting, planning, performance evaluation and job stress.

The finding also implied that time management has a way of affecting decision making process. Decisions should not be delayed unnecessarily in the management of union offices. The Union Chairman at the state level, who is the head of the union in the state, does not run the union like a typical chief executive officer of other organizations who may give directives outside the recommendations of committees within the union hierarchy. He runs the union using committee system as a veritable tool for the smooth operation of the union.

According to Fiore (2006) there are many decision pitfalls that we can experience when

taking decisions. We have developed techniques and a decision making process to help enhance our ability to make decisions. These are decision making tools, templates and guides to enhance what we do well, which is to connect concepts we know, to new ideas.

10. Summary

From the above results, it becomes obvious that time management and decision making processes were found to have predicted significantly on effective management of union offices in Ogun State, Nigeria.

11. Conclusion

In conclusion, management as it has been variously conceptualized and contextualized is a dynamic process. Very essential to the functioning of the process are people and the degree of discretion they have in the running of such organization. However, the extent to which effectiveness is achieved in management is also a function of the managerial skills and ability of the managers. It is against this backdrop that management depicts the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish predetermined goals and objectives. Thus, different individual must work in groups by designing methods or techniques which align with environment so maintained for the achievement of the selected aims or goals. (Wierhich & Koontz, 2005)

12. Recommendations

Arising from the above, it is therefore recommended that leadership of the unions and managers of union offices should be equipped with adequate time management and decision making skills and techniques in order to create room for effectiveness and thus ensure commitment to the realization of the goals and objectives of the unions thereby making union leadership to be balanced and all embracing.

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