

# The Study of Time Management in Civil Service Institutions in Ghana: A Case of Accra Metropolitan Assembly

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## Abstract

The effective exploitation and utilization of time has a positive effective on the regular function and development of an organization. Individuals waste time through many reasons. It is therefore important to understand these habits and replace them with new ones. Poor time management practices impact on the operations of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (A.M.A) in a negative perspective though the good aspect cannot be denied. Time management which is the greatest organizational tool in catapulting productivity is not just an individual affair but a collective responsibility in as much as the civil service institutions in Ghana are concerned. Individuals as well as organizations, do not prioritize, schedule and pay attention to time in respect of carrying out daily activities and administrative duties respectively. This in effect, sometimes gives rise to low productivity. It is in line with the need for effective time management that this study seeks to assess time management techniques used in civil service institutions, to further examine the causes of non-judicious waste of time and finally to identify activities that waste time. This study is also compelled to find out whether they have adequate knowledge about time management and familiarize it with typical time wasters. This meticulous research compelled the researchers enumerates recommendations so as to enable the management of AMA and other individuals improve upon their ways of dealing with time in an effectively manner.

**Keywords:** Time Management, working efficiency, performance, Accra Metropolitan Assembly, Civil Service Institutions

## 1. Introduction

Many civil servants in Ghana find themselves overwhelmed when looking at the amount of work needed to be accomplished in any given day or week. The feeling of this overwhelming could be as a response to lack of balance, increase work load, or a number of other things. All of these overwhelming sagas are coupled with time management.

The study "Time is money while effectiveness is life" has being accepted by many people especially a lot of authors. Time is a special and rare resource (Drucker, 1985), therefore, is a close relationship between how to use time effectively and every one's work, study and life. Time is a major organizational weapon in so far as the Accra Metropolitan Assembly is concerned. The effective exploitation and utilization of time has a positive effect on the regular functioning and development of all civil service institutions in Ghana.

Much activities of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly consist of five main factors. Thus; goals, human, environment, time and information. Time management is a major element of the AMA's operations in so far as the individual civil servants are concerned in Ghana. How to effectively exploit and utilize time resource and even down to every grass-roots worker is the duty of the AMA's Mayor to facilitate. What is more, the crucial importance of the Mayor and the typical characters of their work- diversity, complexity and flexibility, give special importance to time management of different levels within the AMA and makes it the premise of the whole management activities and the base for working effectively.

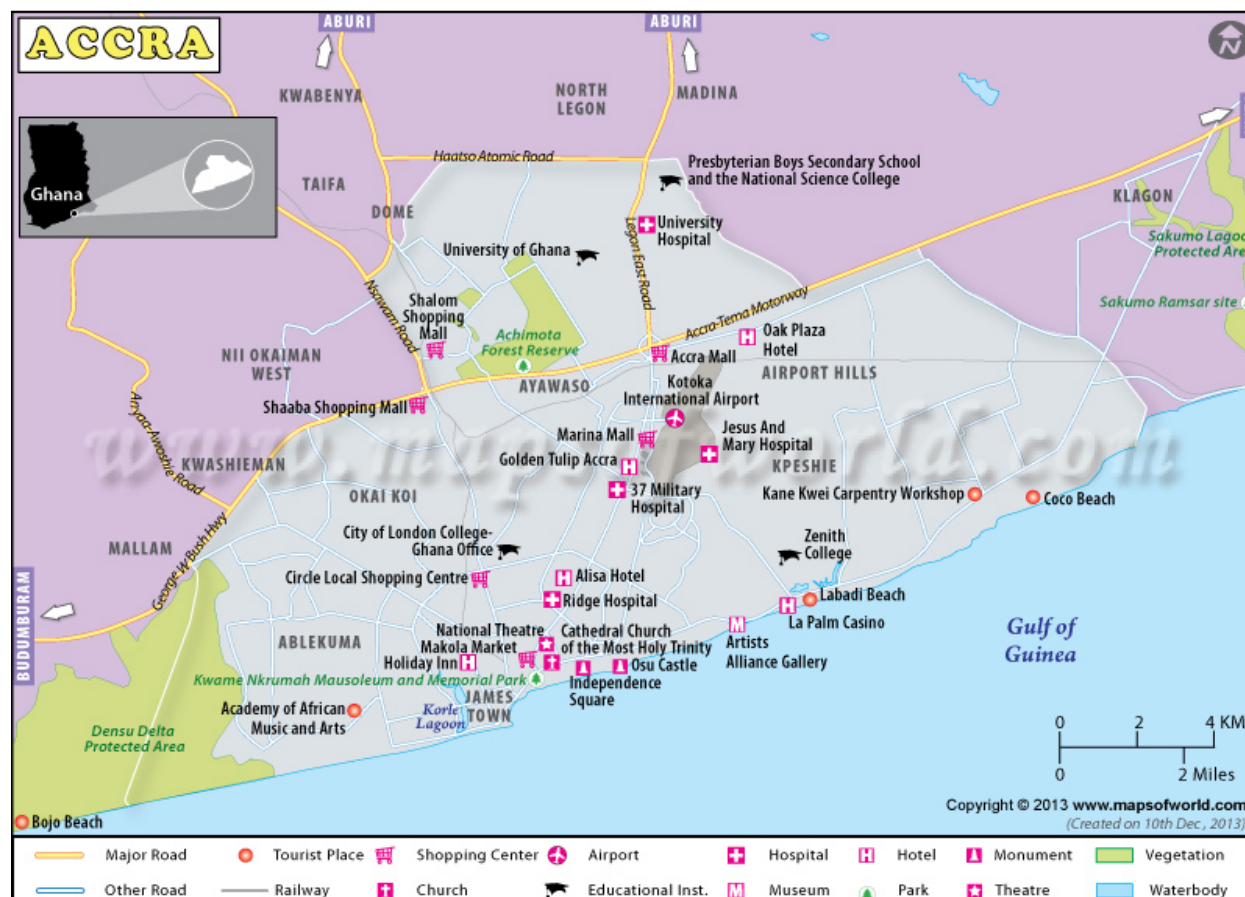
Effectiveness of the AMA Mayor, work plays the most important role in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly's existence, development, growth, reputation and fruitfulness. The scope will therefore be limited to issues or challenges relating to time management within the civil service institutions in Ghana where special attention will be paid to the AMA which is the focus of the study.

### 1.1 The Study Area

The study area, in as much as this piece is concerned is the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The Accra Metropolitan Assembly like any other District Assembly is a corporate body and the highest political and administrative arm of the Government at the local level. The full membership of the Assembly is 104; of this, 70% are elected and 30% are government appointees.

The Assembly through the Local Government Act 1993 462 (Section 10 Subsections 1,2,3,4 and 5) carries out the legislative, deliberative and executive functions of Government. The functions of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly are outlined in the Legislative Instrument (L.I. 1500) which established the AMA.

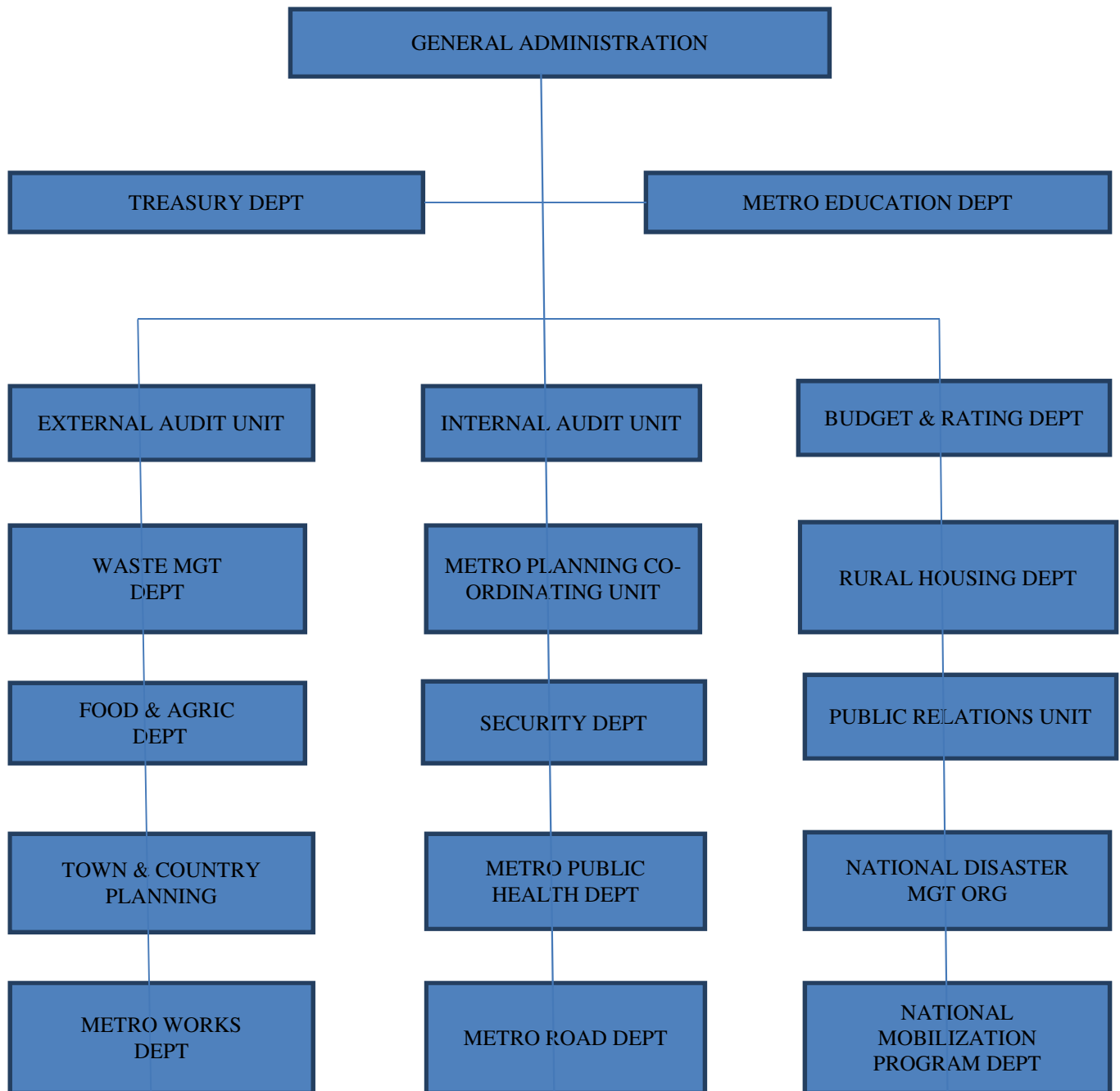
Functionally, Provision of a sound sanitary and healthy environment; Provision of educational infrastructure for first and second cycle schools; Provision of markets and lorry parks within the Metropolis; The planning and development control of all infrastructure within Accra; Activities bordering on the maintenance of peace and security within the Metropolis and Provision of public safety and comfort. Inevitably, the poor time management practices impacts tremendously on the operations of the AMA in spite of the above outpoured summarized functions of the assembly which are loud and clear for all and sundry to execute within the metropolis.



Source: (Google Map)

*Accra city map showing major landmarks, roads, rail networks, airports and significance places of Accra.*

## 1.2 The Structural Hierarchy of The AMA.



Source; Field Survey August, 2015.

To assist the Assembly in performing its functions effectively in so far as efficiency is concerned, the Assembly is supported by a number of functional Departments in respect of their duties and responsibilities. The structure above depicts the functional departments.

## 2. Literature Review

There is no deny of the fact that, the phrase “Time Management” is well comprehended by the developed countries than the developing countries. This is evident by the rate at which their economies grow and how their individual businesses flourish. They conduct their activities by prioritizing, scheduling and allocating time to their tasks in an effectively manner. The researchers have taken recognition of the fact that proper research could

only be conducted in a systematic and methodological format in order to arrive at conclusions that can reasonably be generalized. In view of this recognition, the researchers endeavored to follow appropriate laid-down methodology in modern research, convincing themselves that their conclusions would bear very little margin of error in so far as they are prone to fallibilities as a humans.

The notion of time management is nothing new to the universal domain and this compels whole lots of researchers cum authors to write in diverse ways on time management. Below are the classifications of some researchers who delved into the researching of time management differently. They wrote in diverse perspectives about time management in respect of the collectivity, individually and concerning organizational perspectives.

Collectively, (Sam Bennett & Keegan-Michael ,2014) .Get It Done: Creative people tend to see the world a little differently than everyone else, (Jim Loehr & Tony Schwartz, 2011).The Power of Full Engagement: Managing Energy, Not Time, is the Key to High Performance and Personal Renewal. "We live in digital time. Our pace is rushed, rapid-fire, and relentless.

Individually, (Julie Morgenstern, 2011) Time Management from the Inside Out, The Foolproof System for Taking Control of Your Schedule, (Richard Koch 2010). He shows how to maximize success in one's career and life, (Neil Fiore, 2010) A Strategic Program for Overcoming Procrastination and Enjoying Guilt-Free Play. (Stephen R. Covey, A. Roger Merrill & Rebecca R. Merrill, 2012) First Things First provides you with a compass, because where you are headed is more important than how fast you are going" , (Hersey, 2000) Time management requires task –oriented behavior, (Abiodun Olusoji, 2012) 'Take Time' According to this Nigeria author, Time is the seed of every desired harvest in life. And whatever you do with time today will determine your placement in life tomorrow. (Heller &Hindle, 1998) assert that attitude towards time are complex and variable. They note that the use of time in order to be time conscious is by prioritizing, scheduling and respecting time in all aspects of life.

Organizationally, (Philip Kotler & Gary Armstrong 2012) In their principles of marketing, they assert that, time is a major organizational tool in catapulting productivity, (Wood, 2006) Time management is the set of skills and techniques used to manage time used to complete task and goal, (Shadare&Hameed 2009) Time management has a positive influence on the success of an organization and the most common challenge faced at work is time management, (Claessens. B.J.C vanerde, W,&Rutte ,C.G 2007), Time management training seems to enhance time management skills , but this does not automatically transfer to better performance.

Managers need to rest their mental clocks when doing business across cultures. Timing of communication can arrest in problems for management. Some messages need to be released so that everyone will receive them simultaneously; other messages should be timed sequentially so that receivers will not be confused.(Massie, 1973).

Time management is a collective responsibility of all organizational members. According to management guru, Peter Druker (1990) one major factor in every management problem, every decision, action, not a 4th function but a dimension is time. The concept of time squeeze is cited there. Time is keeping entrepreneurs running today, in order to enjoy the future. Manager's action on present result directly determines the future. The heart of effective time management is in weekly time organization. Schedule time requires having clearly defined goals. This gives guidelines to patronize activities, to motivate one to weekly schedule lies in having a daily list of things to be done. An hour by hour weekly schedule allows time allocation to be realistic. Man's most perishable resource is time. Whether resources, equipment are used at times makes a difference in productivity.

Everyone has the problem of time; it is the scarcest of all resources, most perishable and most exclusive. (Hersey 1993). His concern was on having short reports and meetings. Some managers waste time trying to save time! Managers who know how to use time very well achieve results by planning.

In another aspect, Bateman (1996) asserts that good managers spend many more hours on their communication up than their communication down. Balunywa (1998) puts it straight that today some companies are using time to compete against others rather than other resources. Time lost cannot be regained. It takes certain of time to produce a competitive, not forever. According to Taylor (1991), in practical office skills time spent on the telephone must be kept a minimum.

In summary, in spite of the fact that, the above mentioned authors together with their propagation or researches on time management, none of them was able to write about time management within civil service institutions in any given country but not Ghana per se. Interestingly, despite the fact that, lack of time management is a naked canker within the civil service institutions in Ghana, Ghanaian authors like (Kojo Polley-Kwofie 2012) Accra, (George Barfi 2008), Treasure Land Publications, Accra, (Naa Otua Cudjoe-Swayne 1994), Afram Publications, (Newton Attigah 2010), (Newton Attigah and S. K. Dapaah 2007), Accra North, (Albert Ocran 2008), (Kanda-Accra, Albert & Comfort Ocran 2011), (Kanda-Accra., Jesse Besseh 2005), etc. They all wrote creditably on time management in different dimensions. Thus; they wrote about life situations coupled with how the individuals deal with time in line with executing their duties, while some also came out with time management encompassing collectivity as well as firms or organizations. But interestingly, none of them researched into the civil service institutions. This alone gives this research work the specific innovation point since it has become the researching blank space or vacuum left ajar.

### 3. Characteristics of Time Management

Time is either invested or wasted. There are two classes of people in the world with regards to the use of time. There are those who invest their time and those who waste theirs. You are either investing your time by doing something valuable or wasting it by doing nothing. Time is what we want the most but what we waste the best.

If time is not respected, it will disgrace you as individual and if time is against you, everything else will be against you. If you allow somebody to waste your time, you will end up losing part of your investment and if attention is not paid to time, you will always be seen in queue with multitude of tortoises and that makes you late in life.

*“If you inject time as an antidote in your daily dealings, you will always have healthy moments cum fruitful results”*

Time is an invaluable aspect of life while time management is life management. Those who manage their time well are always on top, ahead and in charge of their lives. To be in charge of your life, be in charge of your time that makes the living superb and palatable. Twenty hours in a day is enough to plan, prepare or carry out an activity.

*“Healthy circumstances will always be your hallmark if you pay heed to time by investing it well”*

Be informed that; time is unstoppable, it is an intangible resource, universal, time is equitable, inseparable from activities, not possessed by anyone, fixed in supply, scarce in relation to the demand for it and time is irreplaceable. Time is a precious resource that cannot be recovered once lost. Employers in all fields recognize this and know that people, who effectively use time, effectively use money. This makes time management one of the most valuable skills to have in the job market. For more than simply not being lazy, successful time management is a discipline that requires patience, humility and intelligence to master.

Henceforth, whether you are doing something with your time wisely enough or not, the aforementioned characteristics of time ought to be adhered.

#### 3.1 Key Factors and Considerations In New Public Development (NPD)

Due to the complex and dynamic nature of the environment of late, with respect to the New Public Development changes in response to time, has made a whole lot of changes within the public domain and these changes ought to be adhered so as for productivity to prevail hence, making time management be recognized, prioritize and respected within the public domain in so far as the individual dealers of time are concerned. Below are the factors which ought to be considered in streamlining the New Public Developments.

**Public Interest:** Public interest is a common concern among citizens in the management and affairs of local, state, and national government. It is a broad term that refers to the body politic and the public weal. A public utility is regulated in the public interest because private individuals rely on such a company for vital services. In the perspective of time management in as much as the interest of the public is concerned, the individuals ought to be time conscious so as to benefit the public or the citizenry at large. Therefore, anything affecting the rights, health or finances of the public at large are all in the interest of the public.

**Consistency:** The quality of achieving a level of performance which does not vary greatly in quality over time or the degree of being firm, togetherness and most importantly, uniformity in behavior or conduct in respect of what the individual does in so far as time management is concerned. The consistency in managing time ought to show at all times.

**Reflective:** When you practice good time management or invest your time well, it will show on you. In the domain of NPD, managing time as a civil servant, reflects on you the individual for all onlookers to see. Hence, good time management is advisable because, it brings comfortability in behavior portrait.

**Politically Viable:** Most politicians are not time conscious at all. If you are a politician and always time conscious in your daily dealings in respect of your electorates, your choices of words will all the time be convincing and others will always repose their trusts in you. Therefore, you will always stand tall amongst the lots and the viability will always be guaranteed.

**Efficiency:** Efficiency is all about doing things right. Thus more output from a given input. When you do the right thing as an individual, it results in you being efficient thus, when the available resource which is time is used and used well in the most effective way. The most effective way to plan your work is to put your tasks in order of importance and prioritize time to them accordingly.

**Effectiveness:** Doing the right thing is what is termed effectiveness. One becomes effective when he or she works well and produces the result that was intended within the specified time frame.

**Socially Acceptable:** In order to be accepted within your confine especially as a civil servant, your behavior or demeanor should not be a departure from the societal norms. This should be attested to in respect of your usage of time.

### **3.2 Arguments in Favor of Time Management in the Eyes of the Individuals.**

As the saying goes, every individual is entitle to his or her opinion, really holds true within every individual. They exhibit their opinions differently in response to time. Some live up to expectation in respect to time management, others also live beyond the expectation in line with the payment of attention to time management and the remnants also mar and thwart the smooth efforts of those who really fathom time management and conduct themselves as such.

A question of personal evaluation by the individual civil servants as well as other readers of this piece, is as to whether they are always running out of time, while the tasks assigned them to execute keeps compounding? Even as it happens with most people of whom we are not left out, owing to our fast-tracked lives, not many people realized the significance of managing their time, in making their lives organized and balanced.

Time is a valuable resource come what may. Those who learn to value it go much ahead in life. Whereas, the people who take time for taking sake often end up losing much in life. Prioritizing well is the key to time management and proper management of time can improve the quality of one's life.

Time is most vital thing in your life. Even though it is given equally and freely by our Heavenly Host, you will be held accountable for how well you invest or waste it. What are you doing with your time now? Have you invested your time intelligently? They are questions to which we ought to answer by our own selves. We ought to be aware that the best time in our lives is now and if your time is being invested well, it will show on you. If you do not want to be late in life, begin part of tomorrow's schedule today. This research portion is about delving into the arguments in favor of time management in general perspectives which could be applicable to you, me, them or those.

The main goal of time management is the enhancement of work productivity. A relying management of time permits the individual to be more productive. It is good taking a stock of how much time one has in hand for a given task and complete it within the stipulated time frame. Much to do in less time is a chronic problem and only those who can manage their time in an effectively manner, will be able to deal with it in a fruitfully manner and directions.

Each and every individual continues contemplating about how life is beyond their control. While certain things really are, it is still possible to take command of most of the things in life with much ease. Time management is

therefore, the key. The habit of procrastination should be gotten rid of, work ought to be done on time so as to achieve your expected goals and try to exercise control over your life and once it is done, you will never miss your steps in life. Actually, it is as easy as it is heard and dancing to it calls for uniformity in our daily dealings.

The most valuable resource is time and yet, eschewed the most. But when attention is paid to time, it helps in the reduction of stress and frustration in ones' daily activities. In managing one's time well, it assist you the individual to attend to your activities in a chronological order and this reflects positively on your temperament. Good time management helps the mind to be at peace without any predicament or much cogitation.

When we do manage our time well, however, we are exceptionally productive at work, and our stress levels drop. We can devote time to the interesting, high-reward projects that can make a real difference to a career. In short, you as the individual become the happiest person.

To add to the above, sense of accomplishment is felt on being able to fulfill all your responsibilities. Hence, it boosts the individual's confidence level and self-belief when a task is being accomplished within a specific time frame. The transformation will surely be felt within when your time is managed in the right perspective.

### **3.3 Arguments Against Time Management In The Eyes Of The Individuals.**

Many individuals know that it is prudent to manage time more effectively; but it can be difficult to pinpointing the lapses that they are committing, and to know how they could improve upon it. One of the most effective ways of improving productivity is to recognize and rectify time management mistakes. When you take the time to overcome these mistakes, it will make a huge difference in productivity at work and the individual worker will also be blissful, and encountering stress will be minimal.

To commence with, one of the mistakes the individuals of which am not spared, commit is our inability to keep a To Do List. This actually makes us be on top of situations but of the failure, work becomes cumbersome to most of us to execute within a stipulated time frame. In spite of the fact that, some have but just that, they have not being using it effectively hence, the canker. One way of overcoming this is by using Action Programs (AP) which is industrial strength version of To Do List. This should be used to manage work when many vast projects are at one's disposal at a go.

Further, some are not aware of their personal goals simply because, they fail to set it. When it happens like that, one does not know his left from the right. Such individuals often refer to the saying, "Tomorrow will take care of itself" which is absolutely abysmal and unhealthy. Such people are always late in life due to their inability to setting their personal goals. Personal goal setting is very significance in managing one's time well because goals give the individual a destination and vision to work toward in life. You can easily manage your priorities, resources or your pocket and time to get there. If you have a goal directed behavior, you can easily decide what is worth spending your time on and what just a distraction in your dealings is.

Failure to prioritize is another dominating argument against time management. It is undeniably true that prioritizing is quite cumbersome more especially when you as an individual have a lot of urgent tasks to execute within a stipulated time frame. If you want to manage your time better, then learning how to prioritize should be your priority in life.

More so, distraction is another drawback on productivity and to individuals. Most staffs fail managing distractions when they come in different ways so much so that, it ends up taking their greater time at the office rather than their assigned work they are supposed to do in a day. It is good to manage and minimize distractions at work so as to enable you achieve a given result in or on time.

The thief of time is termed procrastination. This sometimes happens when an individual discards the idea of attending to a task at that particular moment but left it ajar unattended to. Also, delay between working ours in executing a task within a specified time is another problem of the individual and institutions at large. At times, they feel overwhelmed at the beginning of the work and that results in procrastination. The bottom line is to start now or never.

Up next is the inability of the individual workers and other individuals to off load too much work on them. Some feel like doing the work all alone instead of inviting other hands to help in completing the task at hand on time. When it happens that way, the individual becomes stressed up and in a state of anomie. This sometimes happen

as a result of the mistrust for those who are supposed to be delegated the work to, hence the delay in executing the job on time all alone.

Most workers are often found multitasking their activities which is highly unethical and undesirable practice. For instance, a typist in her office, typing and at the same time making a phone call in the name of the firm and at that same period parking files. How possible? Work will never be done completely but rather be done haphazardly. Further, the performances of all the tasks are done poorly due to lack of concentration.

Interestingly, break between working hours is often seen as time wasting activity to most people but that is absolutely not true. The brain also needs rest and so, if it works to a certain level and the individual feels reluctant in resting or going for break so as to relax the brain for some time, what happens is that, the person only ends up committing mistakes. Rest!

Further, it is very disheartening to note that, some individuals within an organization, in spite of the hundreds of people giving time management workshops every year and yet people generally avoid the whole idea of even implementing the slightest technique into their world as responsible workers. The reason is the particular time management system they have adopted fits. It fits what they do, in respect of their lives. The naked truth is that, not every time management system fits everyone. So whatever the individual chooses to do with his time is quite personal and needs no inhibition.

Also, some people perceive time management as never associated with fun. It is always associated with getting more out of us rather than giving them something higher productivity, scheduling, prioritizing, planning, etc. By the time you have finished planning, prioritizing and scheduling, the day is over and your work is still to be done. Time management looks like imprisonment to them.

Some also resist the idea of time management because, it is based on their psychological needs to be free and their needs to have a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day. Actually, time management can free you to have more fun, more money, greater success in relationships, helps you relax when having sex with no rush and more “kick the can” type of days.

If we choose to spend time and energy hating what we are doing, hating bosses, people with whom we work, customers we deal with, our closest allies, husbands and wives etc., it is then not an external affair, but rather internal point of view to deal with. Hate is a choice. Learning to get along with people and life circumstances is also nothing but a choice.

#### **4. Research Methodology and Data**

Theoretical and methodological basis of the research is a systematic and comparative analysis, which allowed based on documentary and scientific sources of information, statistical data, as well as conceptual development of scientists, propagators, researchers, psychologists and specialists to examine the objects and subjects of study in the complex and dynamic ways, so as to identify the most important elements and their interrelationships

The target data of the study was limited to the Accra Metropolitan Assembly as to the way they respond to time in tune with discharging their duties as civil servants.

The researcher has taken recognition of the fact that proper research could only be conducted in a systematic and methodological format in order to arrive at conclusions that can reasonably be generalized.

In view of this recognition, we endeavored to follow appropriate laid-down methodology in modern research, convincing ourselves that our conclusions at the end of the day would bear very little margin of error since we are humans and prone to fallibilities.

#### **4.1 Research Design**

The purpose of conducting this research is to get a holistic picture of relations and situations in which a base is on situations from an “insider” perspective. This is to say that the focus is on the study of time management within civil service institutions in Ghana, whereas the aim is to get authentic insights through studying how phenomena are constructed, while as for preferred data is open-ended interviews with an observation and texts. (Silverman 2005, 11)



Therefore the methods used to conduct this research are both quantitative research method and qualitative research method whereby the empirical part of the research was covered by interview questions to the top management together with the questionnaires distributed to all personnel within the AMA. Also a good observation of office employees' on how they use and manage their time together with the documentation was used in completion of this study.

In this case quantitative research method is used to design good questionnaires which are answerable to the research problem. The questionnaires are aimed to focus on the whole organization since it is not a big one whereby each personnel together with the top management gave their clear mind opinion on how much they are aware of time management issues and how they manage situations within the AMA.

For the case of qualitative research method, short interview questions were asked to the most concerned people who are directly subjected to the main problem. The main idea is to hear out their experiences with the problem and how much they have tried to tackle the problems so that it could be easy to develop strategies on how to improve the canker.

#### **4.2 Research Area And The Population Of The Study**

This study was conducted at (AMA) Ghana. The reason behind this selection was based on the question of availability of organization to conduct the study, also on the matter of cost reduction in the entire process of conducting the study, still more; the researcher has done the work placement in the same area. The entire process of conducting this study, a number of employees from different departments, sections and top management of AMA were consulted

The whole population studied was taken from the whole organization. Therefore study was able to be conducted in all eighteen departments of AMA, such as General administration department, Budget and Rating department, Treasury department, Metropolitan Education department, Department of Rural Housing, Public Relations Unit, Internal Audit Unit, Security Department, Waste Management Department, External Audit Department and the rest.

#### **4.3 Sampling Methods And Data Collection Process**

In quantitative research, sampling is always part of research whereby different forms of sampling can be used. The study was deploying the method of random sampling technique which is one of the probability sampling plans. The reason of using this method is to ensure that the middle and operating employees whose are more than fifty in number has to participate and have the equal chance of being selected in the sample.

The study used various methods of data collection; these include interview, questionnaires and observations. The reason for adopting all these instruments is based on complementarities and investigation of the weakness of using only one research method in the course of data.

#### **4.4 Interviews And Questionnaires**

Interestingly, whenever qualitative research work is at play, interviewing individuals is the phenomena way of collecting data. Interviews are taken as topic rather than resources as in interview maybe studied as an object itself. Interviews are regarded as potential tools to provide certain bunch of information to which they are supposed to have privileged access. Actual interviews can be regarded as activity in which abilities, responsibilities and rights are put into terms. (Paul 2004, 56-57)

Questionnaires represent the vital part in the research. Before questionnaires are designed the sample must be defined, together with the sampling method and data collection. Also a researcher has to determine that will need to be asked for analysis purposes. Therefore questionnaire is an integral part of the research process, however, which can affect the research process and what was to happen in the research process. (Jan 2004) Close-ended questionnaires were administered to the appropriate sample for data collection. There were 50 questionnaires which were distributed to AMA staffs. This method was simple and safe to the respondents as their names are not required in the questionnaire. Questionnaires were basically designed to meet objectives of the study; the language used was predominantly English because it is the lingual franca (official language) of Ghana.

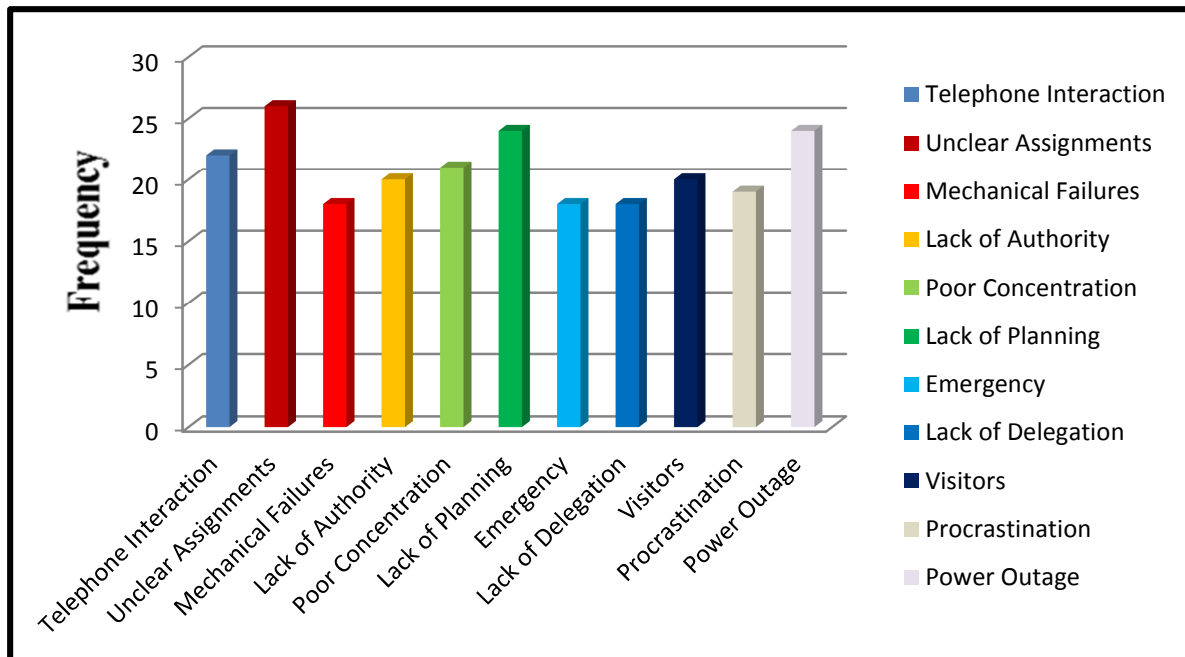
#### **4.5 Data Analysis Technique**

In this study of ours, we applied both quantitative and qualitative techniques in the process of data analysis. we used qualitative techniques so as to hammer more on the explanation based on the data relating to the topic of discussion whereas the interview questions answered to the researched problem and the theory used to complete

the study, while for quantitative techniques, questionnaires were given to the civil servants of the AMA in respect of the targeted population.

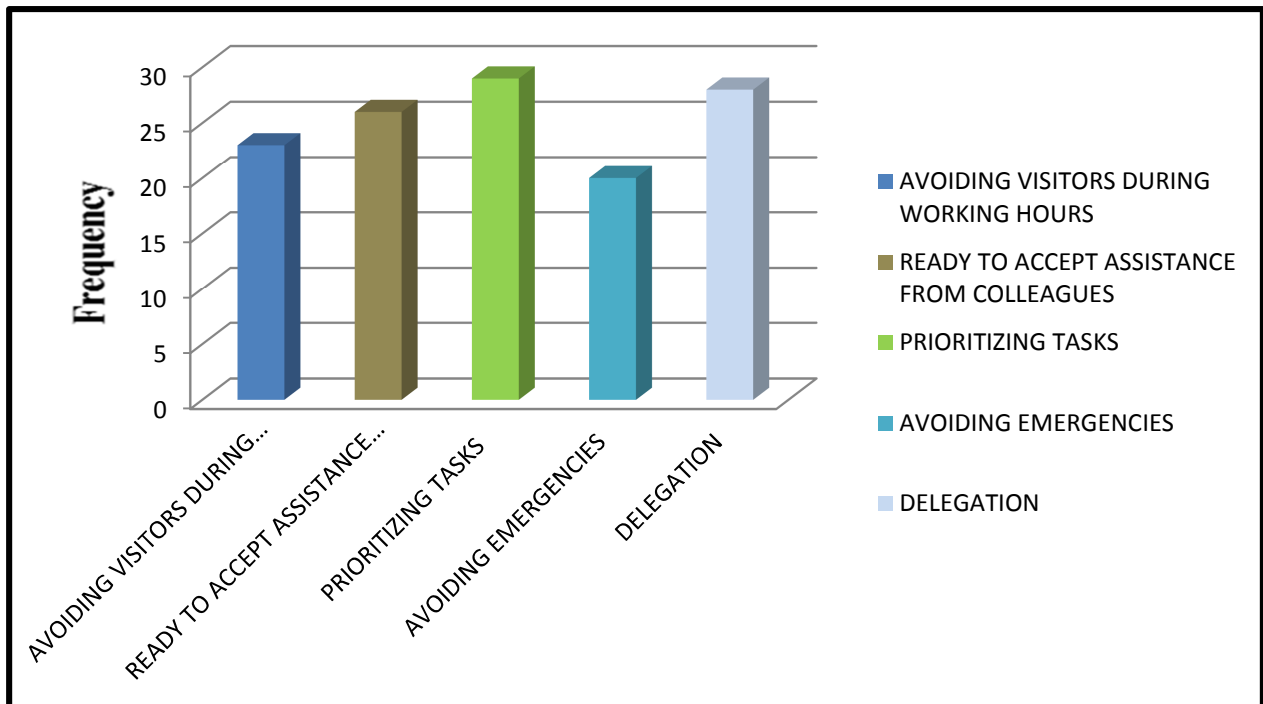
Nevertheless, we made our analysis as the researcher based on what were gotten per hand been the outcome of the questionnaires filled by each individual civil servant of the AMA. The motivation was to enquire how much know how they have about time management cum work deadlines crises within the AMA. The validity of the data is that of correctness and reasonable aspect of it. The validity is concerned with case studying successfully at measuring what the researcher set out to measure. Validity of the research is interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers. (Silverman 2005, 210)

### Some Typical Time Wasters Within The (AMA).



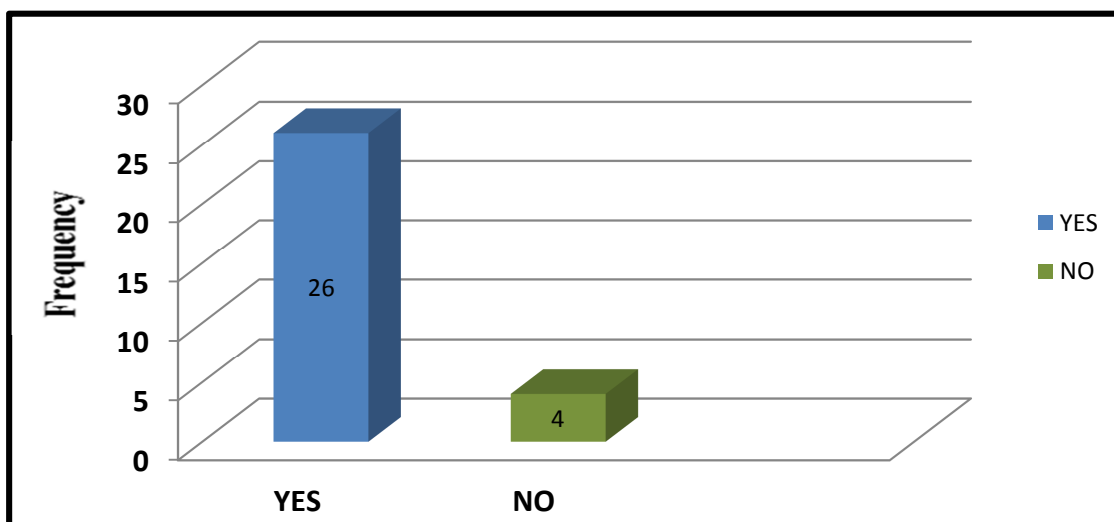
It was realized in this study therefore that, most occurring time wasters in an institution was the unclear assignments of both superiors and subordinates. The responded bar graph above recorded 11.3% of responses to this. In association, lack of planning, power outage also had equal responses of 10.4% meaning that failure to plan and frequent electric power fluctuations delayed working time and therefore draws an institution back from progress. Also, it was identified that frequent telephone interruptions as well as poor concentration on work could possibly delay useful time and this was responded to by 9.6% and 9.1% as responses respectively. Further, lack of authority cum visitors were responded to equally with 8.7% as responses as some of the time wasters identified. In furtherance, procrastination, emergencies and lack of delegation which had 8.3% as well as 7.8% equal responses respectively had also indicated that time wasters cut across both authorities and subordinates in an institution. Therefore, all the responses indicated that all the time wasters identified in the above graph work in an institution.

### Identification of Some Time Management Techniques.



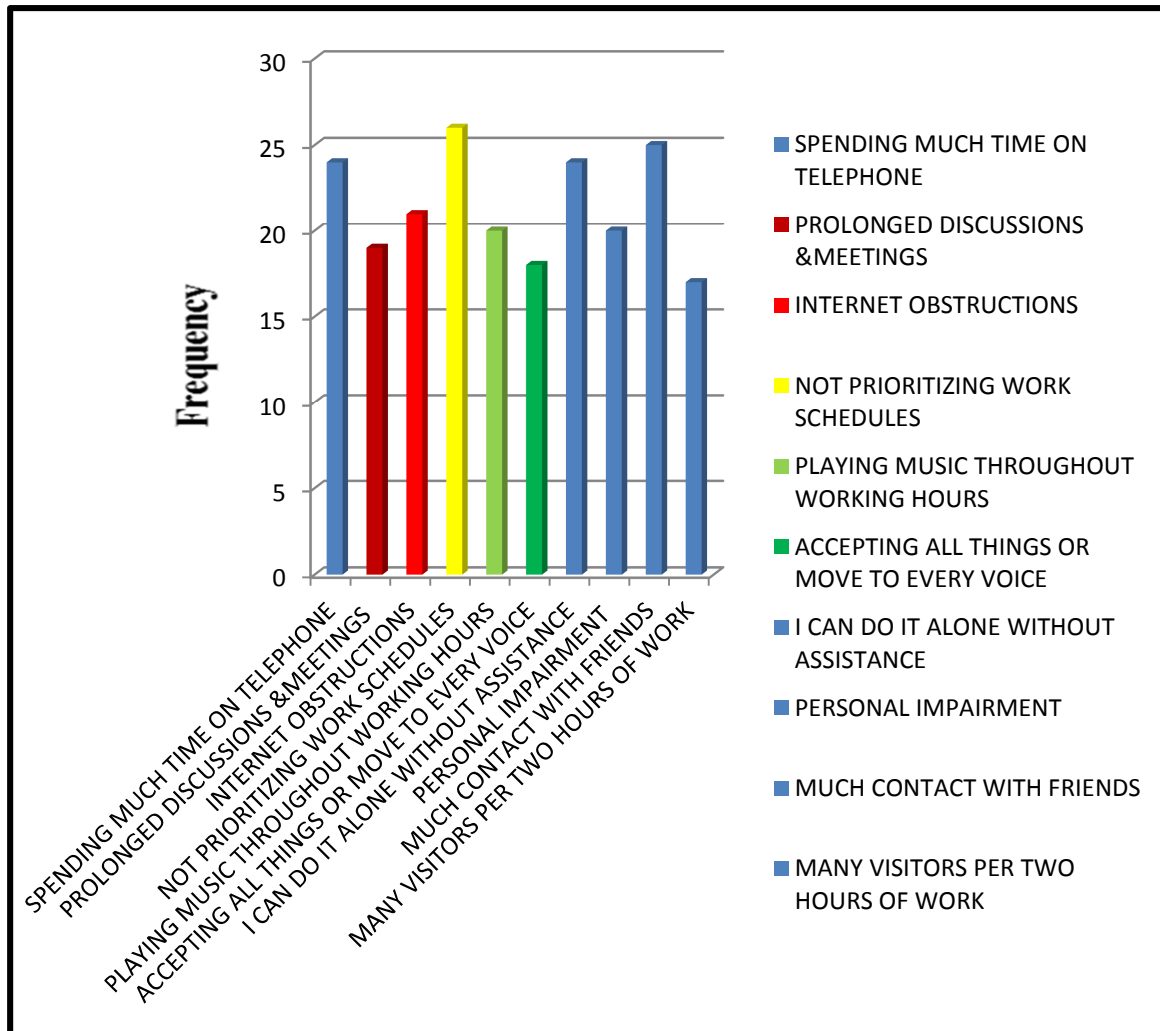
In order to achieve optimal productivity in an institution the above listed time management techniques were adopted to curb emergent occurrences of the listed time wasters. From the graph above, the most advantageous technique among the rest was prioritizing tasks which recorded 23.0% of responses. Delegation had 22.2% of response to be the next most important technique in preventing some of the time wasters. Ready to accept assistance from colleagues, avoiding visitors during working hours and avoiding emergencies which had 20.6%, 18.3% and 15.9% of responses respectively. Therefore, time wasters could be best prevented in an institution both at management level and operational level.

### Knowledge About Time Management



From the bar graph above 96.7%, marked (26) of respondents had some idea of time management which was indicated as yes while very few of the respondents did not have any idea of time management which was also indicated as no and marked (4).

**Causes of Non Judicious Waste of Time Within The (AMA).**



Also, in similar sphere, non- judicious use of time to be classified as time wasters occurred due to some reasons and these were recorded in the response histogram. In the specimen above, the most causative factors of non-judicious use of time were not prioritizing work/schedules, spending much contacts with friends spending much time on telephone and the act of doing work without assistance with equal responses, internet obstruction and playing music throughout working hours and personal impairment which recorded 12.1%, 11.7%, 11.2% equal, 9.8% and 9.3% equal responses, respectively. Others said prolonged discussions and meetings, accepting all things /move to every voice and many visitors per two hours of work. These were possibly found in this study to have been causes of non-judicious use of time which intend could be time wasting. These recorded 8.9%, 8.4% of responses respectively.

**5. Findings Conclusion And Recommendations**

The central theme of this study was to study time management within civil service institutions. This jurisdiction is designed to give point of views in forms of findings, conclusion cum recommendations on possible actions to be taken to ensure time goes “paripasu” (hand in hand) with administration and management in the performance of the organizations and individuals at large.

## 5.1 Findings

In this research, it was found out that, Knowledge of Time management in the institution was much adequate yet they lack a lot about it. That is how to conduct themselves in the right perspectives so as to achieve optimal results.

Attitude of some workers towards work were somehow inadequate. Thus, in spite of the fact that, they are most knowledgeable about time management, the attitudinal aspect of their lives towards time is that of inadequate.

Time management techniques were not enough in the administration. Therefore, this piece will help them realize their lapses and compel them to sit up so as for fruitful results to prevail. Time of reporting at work was appropriate but they still perform abysmally in some departments. This is due to the fact that, some departmental heads refuse to delegate.

Time wasters were realized more than managers of time. The benefits of time management were few as compared to the flip side. This is as a result of lack of planning, scheduling and goal setting. Some workers had somewhat busy work schedules/increased workload and makes them to perform below expectations. Unclear assignments also misled most workers. Some staff members do not understand clearly what is assigned them before they start executing them.

## 5.2 How Some Staffs of AMA Waste Time As Civil Servants Based On Disparity In Behavior.

Humans as we are, the civil servants of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), discharge their duties differently due to the disparity in behavior.

Procrastinating, perfectionism, interruptions, most meetings, disorganization, distractions etc. are just a few of the common major time wasters that we all have to deal with, usually on a daily basis. Time wasters in the general sense are the various activities that draw back productive activities.

From, the free encyclopedia, timewasters (in the sport context) refers to the actions of one team which expend time, but do not otherwise have tactical purpose. This is usually done by a team that is winning by a slim margin near the end of the game, in order to reduce the time available for the opposing team score. Therefore time wasting can also be caused by someone else. Some of the drawbacks or adverse effects of AMA are; overlong visits, phone interruptions, Waiting Delays, Unclear assignment, too many demands, Mechanic failures and Lack of authority.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, the more general meaning to time wasting is procrastination which intend is an activity which waste time at the workplaces. Procrastination, in psychology, refers to the act of replacing high- priority actions with task of low-priority, and this putting off importance task to a later time. Psychologist often view such behavior as a mechanism for coping with the anxiety associated with starting for completing any task or decision.

Procrastination may result in stress, a scene of guilt and crises; severe loss of personal productivity as well as soil disapproval for meeting responsibility or commitments. These feelings combined may promote further procrastination.

Although it is regarded as normal to some people to some staffs of AMA to procrastinate to some degree, it becomes a problem when it impedes normal functioning. Chronic procrastination may be a sign of an underlying disorder psychologically.

Other activities that waste time within the AMA by some individual staff members are the ability of an individual talking on the phone for so long a time whiles at the office working. Regrettably, such calls are not done to benefit the Assembly neither do they talk to clients but rather, their individual calls which absolutely brings nothing beneficial to the AMA.

Further, listening to music during working hours is another time wasting activity realized within the AMA. Some member of staffs prefers playing music whiles at the office working. Most of them see it as a source of motivation but in the actual sense, it is not. It rather derails the individual's attention from the work at that particular point in time and also disturbs others within that confine. This is because; playing music is tantamount to dancing. Hence, they do the right thing at the wrong time.

Another necessary but wasting activity is watching television whiles working on a computer, games and electronic mail (Internet). When this occurs, the focus of attention in respect of one's role or duty is lost at that instant.

More so, the inability of the individual to say 'No' to some offers is another time wasting activity. In spite of the fact that, the individual is busy doing his or her work before another task is brought before her, she accepts it without saying No! This is because, she wants to please the latter or do not want to be seen as disrespectful or not polite.

Notwithstanding, the inability of some AMA staffs to follow instructions is another way of wasting time in their various offices within the Assembly. When it happens that way, the individual instructions courier ends up doing different thing entirely due to the inability to follow the instructions. Therefore, restarting the work is the order of the day.

Making avoidance mistakes was another time wasting activity realized. There are certain mistakes that are easy to be prevented or averted but due to lack of focus at times results in such circumstances which compels the individual to start afresh. By so doing, time is being wasted.

Poor concentration is not left out of the witness box when accounting for time wasting activities within the AMA, in as much as the civil service is concerned. Due to the inability of the individual to have a focus of attention in discharge of his or her duties as civil servant, payment of attention on other less important things takes the focus away.

Furtherance, planning which is a formalized procedure, thus to produce a result and this result must be articulated. Once it becomes articulated, it becomes integrated as well. That's putting all other things together to achieve aims (as a system). Lack of planning is therefore, another time wasting activity within the metropolis. We do not choose unconsciously but rather consciously and that makes planning a decision making. Thus; basing on fundamental choice or fundamentally choosing a situation that you desire or suit oneself so as to arrive at a merit or a set target.

Lack of prioritizing and focus is also, one of the important tools they are missing. Time takes priority over other vehicles on the road. Prioritizing time and having a focus in respect of the individual's discharge of duties is very vital but once it goes the other way round, then it is referred to as time wasting activity.

Interruption is another time wasting activity within the AMA cum the civil service. Doing something that stops someone when they are speaking or concentrating on something is interruption. Individuals are sometimes interrupted by their colleagues at the office so much so that, it makes them lose concentration and stop for a period of time before rejoining the fray.

Prolong meetings is not abandoned in the ditch when accounting for the time wasting activities within the AMA. Sometimes, meetings are held for so long a time that, going back to their various offices to continue working is forgotten. At times, such meetings are unnecessary.

To add to the above, receiving visitors at odd hours at the office also waste time. Some receive visitors and forget about their work simply because; they ought to attend to their visitors. Interestingly, an individual can receive three to five callers in a day where each caller spends at least one hour before departing.

Last but certainly not the least is lack of delegation. Delegation is the process of assigning part of total work load by manager or supervisor to a subordinate for their performance. For instance, a class prefect sharing part of his work with the assistance simply because of the work load on him. Some managers fear to delegate authority because, organizational culture has failed to reward or recognized effective delegation by superiors. Some also lack the understanding of what is actually involve in delegation. They also have low confidence and trust in the ability of the subordinate and the desire to stay in touch with the department or team in terms of staff or workload.

From the foregoing discussed, time wasters can be from personal attitude and organizational behavior, the functions of management , as lack of planning , prioritizing focus , telephone calls between working hours, Unnecessary meetings/prolonged meetings lack of delegation among others which are evident in every

institution which delays work and hinders high productivity and progress hence, slurring the reputations of such institutions. These problems can best be solved through proper time management.

The term time management is a misnomer. People cannot manage time; People manage the events in their life in relation to time. People often wish for more time. Some only get 24 hours 1440 minutes or 86,400 seconds each day. How people use that time depends on the skills learned through self-analysis, planning, evaluation, and self – control. Just like money, time valuable and limited: it must be protected, used wisely, and budgeted for.

### **5.3 How Some Civil Servants Spend Their Time Effectively As Well As The Staffs Of AMA.**

There is no denying of the fact that, some AMA staffs as civil servants use their time effectively at work through one on one conversation by the researchers. They avail themselves a gift of time in working on a project. They do not answer the phone or door for an hour or two. If someone calls, they ask the person if he or she could wait so as to be gotten back to in an hour or so time. By so doing, they are taking control of the situation at hand.

Also, some do not fear speaking up when they have so much on them. They either ask for assistance due to work over load or they tell others to excuse them when they feel that they are being perturbed in the process of working. This enable them have control over the work and full concentration.

They further spend their time effectively by attending to most important tasks available first, not just the "Urgent" ones. But those that are very vital on the list and which need important attention.

Using reward reminder is another way the civil servants of AMA use their time effectively. They do set an alarm on their phones or computers to sound off at regular intervals. This is actually done to remind them of the benefits of completing a task within a specific time frame or an allotted time.

Recognition of prioritizing is another effective way of using time effectively by the AMA staffs as civil servants. It has become their responsibilities and commitments. The key to accomplishing one's priorities is not to prioritize what is on the schedule, but to first establish your priorities and then schedule your priorities. Some do not know how to set priorities, and so they delay important tasks and then panic when time gets short. But others know the inside outs of setting priorities and that makes them effective users of time.

Some learnt how to device subtle ways to politely say "No" and now a habit to them. Thus when the individual is busy at the office executing his or her duty assigned before another offer is brought from nowhere to her to do in addition to hers. Saying "no" frees up time for the things that are most important and helps you feel in control.

### **5.4 Conclusion And Recommendations**

In the course of conducting this study, weaknesses were noted in the way time was managed at AMA, which if not dealt with meticulous focus and immediate effect, it may do more harm than good to the metropolis where efforts of AMA will derail.

Effective time management is a panacea to organizational effectiveness and not a placebo. Effective time management will improve staff productivity, make scheduling of jobs easier, make staffs to perform tasks at their highest skill level, helping staff to prioritize and accomplish important task, recording and guiding the organization towards achieving its set goals.

From the findings, it was obvious however, that effective time management is a tool for organizational performance. Thus, it is recommended that organization should adhere strictly to effective time management in order to provide quality services to their customers.

After a critical analysis of the situation about time mismanagement at AMA, the following are suggestive comments from study point of view for rectifying time mismanagement which were observed during the study:

Managers should learn how to delegate their tasks or workloads to their subordinates since it helps junior managers in gaining experience, gives jobs satisfaction to employees because they are involved in decision making. Also, discretions and innovation emerges as a result from delegation. This eventually speed up work and reduces stress.

Assertiveness can contribute to the better usage of a person's time by enabling him to deal more effectively with interruptions. Turner (Developing Interpersonal Skills, 1983) defines assertion as the capacity to express our ideas, opinions or feelings openly and directly without putting down ourselves or others.

The right to say "no" is difficult for most people to accept. They feel that they ought not to say "no" because it is uncooperative, selfish etc. Assertiveness training attempt to emphasize the importance for individual rights of the capacity to say "no" without feeling guilty about it, and points out that in saying "no" we are rejecting the request not the person. Making better use of one's personal rights can enable a manager to fend off certain of the interruptions inflicted on him by others, and thus create more space for himself at work.

Similar considerations apply to the right not to feel obliged to take responsibility for other people's problems. In this case the manager can learn by assertiveness training to improve his ability to tactfully, but firmly, pass back to colleagues, subordinates and even boss, problems which are the other person's responsibility.

Managers should have a reward system for those who accomplish their work on time. It could be monthly, quarterly or annually. This will serve as a motivation factor in driving individuals to change their time wasting activities and do what is expected of them in time.

AMA management should arrange a seminar of time management to equip the employees with right and enough knowledge of time management. Workers should start to recognize time as important resource and beware that once misused, can never be gotten back.

Restructure hours for meeting and minimize discussion hours as well.

Encourage assisting colleagues. Do not feel reluctant in helping colleagues at the office if they seem to be overburdened with work related cluster and need your help.

Adequate support for work to be done well through supervision should not be left into oblivion when accounting for the recommendations for this study.

A common time management mistake is to try to use memory to keep track of too many details leading to information overload. Using a to-do list to write things down is a great way to take control of projects and tasks and keep organized. Hence, each worker is advised to write things down so as to make easy to be remembered. Another way of overcoming this, which was mentioned earlier, is by using Action Programs (AP) which is industrial strength version of To Do List. This should be used to manage work when many vast projects are at one's disposal at a go.

If it is hard for you to stop working, then schedule breaks for yourself, or set an alarm as a reminder. Go for a quick walk, grab a cup of coffee, or just sit and meditate at your desk. By so doing, you are recharging the mind and massaging it as well for the next step of the work to proceed. (You will not produce top quality work if you are hungry) Will you?

If you want to gain control of your day and do your best work, it is vital to know how to minimize distractions and manage interruptions effectively. For instance, turn off your IM chat when you need to focus, and let people know if they are distracting you too often. You should also learn how to improve your concentration, even when you are faced with distractions.

Additionally, the best thing is to forget about multitasking and instead, focus on one task at a time. That way, you will produce higher quality work at all times.

Being well organized in respect of the use of time does not necessarily mean a fixed state of quality. It can be acquired through learning and developing through consistent practicing and experience. Time will only work if the person is committed fully to it thereby removing any shred of doubts. The most important and crucial ingredient is "confidence", this is split into two aspects.

Firstly, one needs to believe and have the full confidence that learning is possible and also the development of the skill(s) is possible as well.



Secondly, the time management techniques must be trusted because if not, there is no way it can work. If the two aspects can be achieved, then the level of effectiveness will be immense.

At the end, data collected and tested showed a relationship between the two variables in the research work. Thus, it is obvious that the effective time management for high performance in organization cannot be ignored because it may result in a costly decline in organization performance. As such, organization must take effective time management with all seriousness for high organization performance. We can therefore, easily fathom from the perspective that, the first step in improving one's personal use of time is to become aware that there is a problem, then it is possible to isolate the time-wasting activities, and finally tackle them in a systematic way by improving the planning of daily activities and by improving communication and assertiveness skills to achieve expected results.

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