

Influence of Time Resource Management on School Improvement in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State

Gladys Ejimole Aleru¹, Maxwell Chidiebere Ejikem²

Rivers State University

Corresponding Author: Gladys Ejimole Aleru gladys.aleru@ust.edu.ng

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of time resource management on academic performance in universities in Rivers State. Guided by three research questions and three hypotheses, the study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of 532 principal officers from tertiary institutions, from which a sample of 272 senior officers was selected using stratified random sampling, comprising 134 respondents from private institutions and 138 from public institutions. Data were collected using a self-structured questionnaire titled Influence of Time Resource Management on School Improvement in Tertiary Institutions Questionnaire (ITRMSITQ), containing fifteen items. The instrument was validated by three experts from Rivers State University and achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.80 using Pearson's correlation. All administered questionnaires were returned and analyzed. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while hypotheses were tested using a t-test at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that time management strategies – task prioritization, goal setting, and time-based planning – significantly influence academic performance in tertiary institutions. Time-based planning enables proactive institutional development, goal setting supports achievement of performance targets within specified timeframes, and task prioritization enhances productivity. The study recommends that university administrators adopt structured time-based planning strategies to promote institutional improvement and academic performance.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of tertiary institutions is to inculcate the kind of values, beliefs, and expertise that are valued by society at large. Colleges and universities help students become contributing members of society by building on what they learn in elementary, middle, and high school. This helps them earn a livelihood and helps society advance. They absorb knowledge that is pertinent to meeting the requirements of their surroundings and the individuals they assist (Abali, 2018). The goal of school improvement is achieved via their establishment, maintenance, and sustainability. Increasing access to high-quality services is a primary goal of school improvement initiatives. If we want to enhance our schools, we need resources. When it comes to making improvements to schools, time is one of the most valuable commodities. Time is a precious commodity that everyone has in limited supply. It is also a key performance indicator for businesses and individuals because of the inextricable relationship between time and output. Maximizing efficiency in time management has several benefits for both individuals and organizations, including higher production, better performance, and more income and return on investment (Almoumani, 2020). The passage of time is a universal resource that should be made the most of by making full use of each individual's capabilities, skills, and potential. Since the degree of performance is dependent on workers' talents, abilities, and knowledge, time is crucial, and performance directly represents employees' efforts to attain school progress (Almoumani, 2020). The effectiveness and efficiency of higher education institutions are directly related to how well they manage their time. According to Oliver and Edema (2019), time resource management is all about making sure that school activities are planned out, tasks are assigned, controlled, and assessed in a way that leads to the achievement of goals. According to Akapo (2019), time resource management is all about making sure you regulate how much time you spend on certain tasks so you can get more done in less time. The capacity to accomplish goals without experiencing worry, tension, or a sense of not having enough time is a key indicator of a teacher's time management skills, according to Sainz, Ferrero, and Ugidos (2019).

When it comes to managing school resources, time-based planning is one of the best strategies. A planning session is one that looks ahead. Determination occurs before any action is taken. Planning entails figuring out, in high-level terms, what needs doing and how to do it. Reasoning, analysis, and decision-making are all part of it (Okoroma, 2019). According to Okoroma in Agreen and Akpomi (2018), planning entails choosing the path that a company and its many departments will take. It entails planning ahead to figure out when, how, what, and who will complete certain tasks. A time resource management technique, according to Akpan (2018), time-based planning lays out the timeline for a program's or plan's execution in detail. A teacher can use it to create lessons that are tailored to the needs of their varied student body. Time-based planning establishes long-term, intermediate-term, and short-term aims and objectives. In order to accomplish the goals that have been stated, time-based planning must be used. According to Merritt in Iheanacho (2023), this allows instructors to focus on things that will enhance their school.

One way to better manage time and resources in the classroom is to use task prioritization. A learning goal's job is an activity with a specific goal in mind. Objectives and, by extension, long-term goals can be broken down into more manageable tasks. In contrast, prioritizing is the process by which one assigns more significance and urgency to certain activities. An individual's top-to-bottom prioritizing of a task's energy, time, attention, and concentration is a hallmark of the prioritization process (Tamarishvili, 2021). Making a priority list will help you stay on top of your workload (Keep.meSAFE, 2019). A prioritization matrix is a method of organizing tasks such that the most critical ones are completed first (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.). It is impossible to get everything done without first deciding what is most important. Task prioritizing, according to Tumanishvili (2021), offers several advantages, such as improving workflow, making work more efficient when given the right amount of time and attention, and producing better outcomes overall. In order to finish activities on time and undistracted, a well-designed workflow is essential. A person's time and attention are better allocated when they are aware of the significance of a job. Additionally, staying away from stress, worry, physical fatigue, and mental breakdowns is made easier with work prioritizing. Consequently, in order to accomplish goals and create success, it is necessary to prioritize tasks. Task prioritizing is critical, as pointed out by Priority Matrix, since it enables you to concentrate on critical and pressing matters first, before moving on to less pressing ones. If you want to reach your objectives, you have to finish your work. One definition of task prioritizing provided by Middleton, Charnock, Forster, and Blakey (2018) is the capacity to rank the relative significance of one's allocated tasks. Working out of hours requires this non-technical talent more than any other. The following reasons for task prioritization were listed by Botta and Bahill in Iheanacho (2023): it helps to decide which requirements should be implemented first if the task is time-constrained, it helps to reduce discussion time at meetings and reviews, it allows one to spend more time and effort reducing risks associated with hard technical problems and key performance parameters, and it helps to identify the high-priority requirements for which technical performance measures should be created.

One way to better manage one's time and resources in the classroom is to establish attainable goals. According to Homby in Ugochukwu-Ihie (2024), a person has goals that they want to accomplish. According to Lathan and Locke in Houston (2019), a goal is something you work for in order to become better at something, often by a certain date. The levels of competence that individuals want to attain and the criteria they use to evaluate their present performance are defined by objectives, according to Houston (2019). New words. A goal, according to Com, is the reason for an endeavor or a strategy. Anyone or any organization can have a mission. Goals are the desired outcomes of an endeavor and the endpoint of actions taken to attain them. That is why one works so hard. People will exert more effort to achieve a goal that is both challenging and highly valued, according to Houston (2019), and they will feel more success when they have done so. Success and the good feelings it brings may do wonders for a person's self-esteem and belief in their own skills. Achieving one's objectives

requires the skill of goal-setting. Accomplishing one's objectives is what goal setting is all about. A lot of effort is required to accomplish what begins with thoughtful contemplation of goals (The Mind Tool Content Team, n.d.). In addition to giving one the power to steer their own life, creating goals also gives them something to measure their progress against. It has the ability to inspire. Choosing what to work for is an essential part of everyone's life (Locke, 2019). Employees are more invested in the company and their work when they have clear objectives to work toward (Latham in Houston, 2019). Schunk discovered in Houston (2019) that taking part in aims Setting goals inspires the pursuit of novel approaches that could improve performance. When executed properly, goal planning is useful and frequently crucial to success, according to Zimmerman et al. in Houston (2019). travel in the direction you want to travel by ignoring distractions and concentrating on actions that will get you closer to your goals. The three pillars upon which goal setting rests are as follows: first, that setting goals inspires individuals to put in the effort proportional to the challenge of the task at hand; second, that setting goals encourages people to keep at things even when the going gets tough; and third, that setting goals helps people focus on what's important and ignore what's counterproductive.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the critical importance of time resource management in educational administration, many tertiary institutions in Rivers State continue to struggle with inefficient utilization of time. Persistent issues such as irregular lecture schedules, delays in releasing examination results, poorly organized academic calendars and time wastage during staff meetings negatively affect both academic and administrative outcomes. Many lecturers face heavy workloads without proper time planning while students often experience frequent timetable clashes, unplanned lecture cancellations and limited access to academic support services due to poor time coordination.

Furthermore, administrative tasks such as registration, clearance and record-keeping are often characterized by long queues, delays and inefficiencies, suggesting that time is not being optimally managed. These challenges contribute to reduced teaching effectiveness, slow institutional processes, low staff productivity, poor student satisfaction and ultimately hinder improvement in institutional performance.

This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the influence of time resource management on school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, identify the specific time-related challenges affecting institutional performance and provide recommendations that can enhance academic and administrative effectiveness.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of time resource management on school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Specifically, sought:

1. Find out the extent to which time-based planning influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
2. Identify the extent to which task prioritization influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
3. Determine the extent to which goal setting influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does time-based planning influence school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does task prioritization influence school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does goal setting influence school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private institutions principal officers on the extent to which time-based planning influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public private institutions principal officers on the extent to which task prioritization influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private institutions' principal officers on the extent to which goal setting influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The research strategy used in the study was a descriptive survey. The study's population included 532 principal officers from various tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A total of 272 principal officers were selected for the sample, with 138 coming from public tertiary institutions and 134 from government-approved tertiary institutions, making up 10% of the total population. We used a stratified random sampling method to get our sample. The data was collected via a self-administered survey called the "Influence of Time Resource Management on School Improvement Questionnaire" (ITRMSIQ). Section A collected respondents' demographic information, while Section B contained research question items and scales for Very High Extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Moderate Extent (ME) = 2, and Low Extent (LE) = 1, respectively. The reliability index of the instrument was determined to be 0.80 using (PPMC) Statistics, after it had been evaluated by three experts. The research was able to receive full returns from all 132 questionnaires sent out. The study questions were answered using the mean and standard deviation, and the hypotheses were tested using a t-test at a significance level of 0.05. Decisions were

made in the process of grading the questionnaire. The range of values considered to be ME was 3.50–4.00, LE was 2.50–3.49%, LE was 1.50–2.49%, and VLE was 0.50–1.49%. When the computed t-value was below the crucial t-value of ≤ 1.96 , the null hypothesis was accepted; conversely, it was rejected when the computed t-value was higher than the critical t-value.

RESULTS

The results obtained in this study after data analyses were presented below:

Research Question 1: To what extent does time-based planning as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement

Table 1: Extent to which Time-Based Planning as a Time Resource that is Managed

Influences School Improvement in Tertiary Institutions								
S/N	Questionnaire Items	Public Institutions Principal Officers (N = 138)			Private Institutions Principal Officers (N = 134)			
		\bar{x}_1	SD ₁	Remarks	\bar{x}_2	SD ₂	Remarks	
1	Time-based planning enables administrators determine in advance what is to be done in achieving school improvement.	2.93	1.03	HE	2.86	1.02	HE	
2	It enables administrators specify clearly the time frame in the implementation of school improvement programmes.	2.70	1.05	HE	2.79	1.05	HE	
3	It enables administrators work out in broad outline the things that need to be done and the method of doing them within stipulated period of time for school improvement.	2.71	1.10	HE	2.57	1.08	HE	
4	It gives administrators the ability to think, to analyze in making decisions	2.54	1.08	HE	2.89	1.01	HE	
5	It enables administrators learn how to use new technologies and data reporting system.	3.14	0.89	HE	2.64	1.12	HE	
Aggregate \bar{x}/SD		2.80	1.03	HE	2.75	1.06	HE	

Source: Field Survey Data, 2025

The data on Table 1 showed that the respondents in their ratings insisted that items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 listed on the table are the extent time-based planning as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, hence the mean values fell within the range of high extent. The aggregate mean value of 2.80 for public institutions’ principal officers and 2.75 for private institutions’ principal officers attested to the finding that

time-based planning as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State to a high extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent does task prioritization as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2: Extent to which Task Prioritization as a Time Resource that is Managed Influence School Improvement in Tertiary Institutions

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Public Institutions Principal Officers (N = 138)			Private Institutions Principal Officers (N = 134)		
		\bar{x}_1	SD_1	Remarks	\bar{x}_2	SD_2	Remarks
6	Task prioritization enables administrators determine what should be focused on to achieve maximum productivity and accomplish more in improving the school.	2.87	0.98	HE	2.92	0.96	HE
7	It allows administrators to give attention to tasks that are important and urgent so that they can later focus on lower priority.	2.84	1.08	HE	2.71	1.13	HE
8	It allows administrators spend more time and effort reducing risks associated with hard technical problems and key performance parameters in school improvement.	2.77	1.04	HE	2.65	1.12	HE
9	It helps administrators reduce discussion time at meetings and school improvement reviews.	2.93	0.98	HE	3.04	1.05	HE
10	It helps administrators identify the high-priority requirements for which they should create technical performance measures in school improvement.	3.01	0.98	HE	2.95	1.06	HE
Aggregate \bar{x}/SD		2.88	1.01	HE	2.85	1.06	HE

Source: *Field Survey Data, 2025*

The data on Table 2 showed that the respondents in their ratings insisted that item 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 listed on the table are the extent task prioritization as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, hence the mean values fell within the range of high extent. The aggregate mean value of 2.88 for public institutions' principal officers and 2.85 for private institutions' principal officers attested to the finding that task

prioritization as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institution in Rivers State to a high extent.

Research Question 3: To what extent does goal setting as a time resource that is managed influence school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Public Institutions Principal Officers (N = 138)			Private Institutions Principal Officers (N = 134)		
		\bar{x}_1	SD_1	Remarks	\bar{x}_2	SD_2	Remarks
11	Goal setting enables administrators attain specific standard of proficiency within specified time limit ins school improvement.	2.95	1.00	HE	2.78	0.99	HE
12	It provides administrators the benchmark for determining whether they are actually succeeding in their school improvement endeavour.	2.72	1.11	HE	2.75	1.03	HE
13	It gives administrators direction by focusing attention on goal relevant behaviour and away from irrelevant tasks.	2.97	1.00	HE	2.77	1.06	HE
14	It motivates administrators to search for better strategies and to plan ahead in improving the school.	3.05	0.95	HE	2.95	1.03	HE
15	It energizes administrators' performance through the motivation to expend required effort in line with the difficulty of the tasks in school improvement.	2.92	0.92	HE	2.92	1.05	HE
Aggregate \bar{x}/SD		2.92	1.00	HE	2.83	1.03	HE

Source: Field 2025

The data on table 3 showed that the respondents in their ratings insisted that items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 listed on the table are the extent goal setting as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, hence the mean values fell within the range of high extent. The aggregate mean value of 2.92 for public institutions' principal officers and 2.83 for private institutions' principal officers attested to the finding that goal setting as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State to a high extent.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings public and private institutions principal officers on the extent which time-based planning as a tome resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 4: t-Test Analysis of the Difference in Mean Ratings Public and Private Institutions' Principal Officers on Extent to which Time-Based Planning Influences School Improvement

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	Level of Sign.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Decision
Public institutions' principal officers	138	2.80	1.03	270	0.05	0.39	±1.96	Ho ₁ Accepted
Private institutions' principal officers	134	2.75	1.06					

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 revealed that the t-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at 0.39 while the critical t-value stood at ± 1.96, using 270 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance since the calculated t-value was less than the critical t-value, the researcher accepted the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private institutions' principal officers on the extent to which time-based planning as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There no significant difference on the mean ratings of public and private institutions' principal officers on the extent to which task prioritization as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 5: t-Test Analysis of the Difference in Mean Ratings Public and Private Institutions' Principal Officers on Extent to which Task Prioritization Influences School Improvement

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	Level of Sign.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Decision
Public institutions' principal officers	138	2.88	1.01	270	0.05	0.24	±1.96	Ho ₂ Accepted
Private institutions' principal officers	134	2.85	1.06					

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 5 revealed that the t-test statistics calculated and used in testing the hypothesis stood at 0.24 while the critical t-value stood at ±1.96, using 270 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated z-value was less than the critical t-value, the researcher accepted the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private institutions'

principal officers on the extent to which task prioritization as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of public and private institutions' principal officers on the extent to which goal setting as a time resource that is managed influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 6: t-Test Analysis of the Difference in Mean Ratings Public and Private Institutions' Principal Officers on Extent to which Goal Setting Influences School Improvement

Respondents			N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	Level of Sign.	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Decision
Public institutions' principal officers			138	2.92	1.00	270	0.05	0.73	±1.96	Ho ₃ Accepted
Private institutions' principal officers			134	2.83	1.03					

Source: Field Survey, 2025

According to Table 6, with 270 degrees of freedom and a significance threshold of 0.05, the crucial t-value was 1.96 and the z-test statistics were 0.73 when testing the hypothesis. The researcher found no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals from public and private institutions on the extent to which goal setting influences school improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. This conclusion was reached because the calculated t-value was less than the critical t-value.

DISCUSSION

Based on the data shown in Table I, it is clear that time-based planning has a significant impact on the quality of education in Rivers State's universities and colleges. Administrators at higher education institutions can benefit from time-based planning in many ways: it helps them to plan ahead for school improvement, it specifies when improvement programs will be implemented, it lays out the big picture of what needs to be done and how to do it within the allotted time, it builds their analytical thinking and decision-making skills, and it teaches them how to use data reporting systems and new technologies. Okoroma (2019) agreed with this conclusion and said that planning is the process of deciding something before doing anything. Planning entails figuring out, in high-level terms, what needs doing and how to do it. The capacity to reason, evaluate, and settle on a course of action is essential. The time limit for a program's or plan's execution is defined explicitly in time-based planning, according to Akpan (2018). According to Meritt in Iheanacho (2023), instructors can get experience with new data reporting systems and technologies through time-based planning.

Table 2 displays the study's further findings, which show that work prioritizing as a controlled time resource significantly affects school development

in Rivers State's postsecondary institutions. School administrators can maximize productivity and accomplish more by prioritizing tasks. By addressing important and urgent tasks first, they can focus on lower-priority tasks later. By reducing risks associated with hard technical problems and Key performance parameters, administrators can spend more time and effort improving the school. By prioritizing tasks, administrators can also reduce discussion time at meetings and school improvement reviews and identify high-priority requirements for technical performance measures. This Finding concurs with the stance taken by Keep. According to meSAFE (2019), setting priorities is key when you're feeling overwhelmed by your workload. As pointed out by Priority Matrix (n.d.), prioritizing your chores enables you to concentrate on the most critical and pressing ones first, before moving on to less pressing ones. According to Botta and Bahill in Iheanacho (2023), prioritizing tasks helps make decisions about which requirements to implement first when time is of the essence, allows one to devote more resources to mitigating risks related to challenging technical issues and KPIs, and shortens the amount of time spent chatting during reviews and meetings.

Table 3 displays the study's findings, which further show that goal setting as a controlled time resource has a significant impact on school development in Rivers State's postsecondary institutions. When it comes to school development, goal planning allows administrators to reach particular standards of competency within given time limits. It gives them a yardstick by which to measure their progress toward their school improvement goals; it guides them by drawing their attention to actions that move them closer to those goals and away from those that aren't; it encourages them to think forward and seek out better strategies for making their school better; and it boosts their performance by encouraging them to put out effort commensurate with the level of difficulty of their school improvement tasks. In agreement with this conclusion, Latham and Locke in Houston (2019) argued that creating goals is the process of directing an activity toward the achievement of a certain level of competence, often within a given time frame. According to the Mind Tools Content Team (n.d.), goal setting is the process by which we accomplish our objectives, which begins with thoughtful contemplation of what it is that we want to do and culminates in significant effort to make it a reality.

Tables 4, 5, and 6 show the results of a t-test comparing the mean evaluations of principals from public and private schools on the impact of time-based planning, task prioritizing, and goal setting on academic achievement. The results show that there is a 0.39-, 0.24-, and 0.73-point difference. This would indicate that their mean evaluations are not significantly different. This result is in line with what Almoumani (2020) says: that time is one of the most valuable resources utilized to improve schools. Whether at the individual or organizational level, time efficiency is the key to higher income and return on investment (ROI), better performance, and more productivity.

CONCLUSION

Educationally speaking, this study's results suggest that administrators may keep their institutions running smoothly within the allotted time frame provided they implement effective time resource management strategies. Finally, there is a strong correlation between time-based planning, task prioritizing, and goal setting as aspects of time-resource management and educational advancement in higher education. Goal setting gives administrators a yardstick by which to measure their success in school improvement efforts, time-based planning allows administrators to clearly specify the time frame in which school improvement initiatives are to be implemented, and task prioritization helps administrators to reduce discussion time during meetings and school improvement reviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study's author offered the following suggestions in light of its results:

1. In order to effectively manage their institutions for enhanced productivity, administrators at tertiary institutions should make sure they participate in time-based planning.
2. In order to maximize productivity and accomplish more in developing their schools, staff at higher institutions should prioritize their jobs.
3. Heads of universities and colleges should prioritise goal planning so they can plan forward for how to enhance their schools.

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