



A CASE STUDY ON TIME MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN HOME MANAGEMENT PRACTICUM AT COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, LAFIA

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Abstract: *This paper identified factors that lead to time wastage in home management practicum. The population comprised of students who were offering home management practicum in College of Agriculture, Lafia in 2014. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Frequency and percentage were utilized in data analysis. The findings include the following; inadequate equipment, buying and preparation of meals, other factors are washing, clearing of grasses in the residence, scrubbing and cob webbing the rooms and entertainment of visitors as some of the factors that lead to time wastage and ten strategies for time wastage were highlighted.*

Keywords: *home management practicum, Agriculture, wastage*

Introduction

Home management is the process of using the family resources to meet the family's need (Anyakoha and Eluwa 2008). It involves the use of many resources both human and material to attain the needs of home living.

Home management is unique and all-embracing aspect of Home Economics which incorporates knowledge and skills from all areas of Home Economics such as food and nutrition, clothing and textiles, housing, childcare, consumer education etc (Ode and Anyakoha, 2001).

Home management in College of Agriculture is made of both theory and practical components. The practical

aspect affords the students the opportunities to apply the theories learnt in class room in a simulated home environment. Home management living in practicum or residence is a requirement for all home economics students. They are expected to live in the home management residence for a specified period (Okpe and Onyeka, 2009). Home management practicum is aimed at equipping the students with the following skills

- Meal management
- Home care
- Clothing management
- Child care
- Human relation (Ode and Anyakoha 2001)

Each student is expected to act as

- Meal manager and assistant responsible for menu planning, meal preparation and service
- The house keeper and assistant are responsible for general administration of home. They see to the safety, cleanliness of both the inside and surrounding of the home and orderliness in the established home garden (NCCE 2008)

Every student is expected to go through the entire process of planning, organizing, implementing and evaluation of the use of the available resources to meet identified needs (Ode and Anyakoha 2001) To facilitate the student's acquisition of the necessary skills, there must be a good usage of time. Time is one of the resources available to the family. Everybody has the same amount of time but how this time is used affects each person's goal attainment and the use or development of other resources (Anyakoha and Eluwa 2008). Time like money, can be made to meet needs and desires, if its expenditures is planned. The person who looks after a home and a family should, like all other persons be able to strike a balance work, rest and leisure.

However, the home manager has to do more planning and coordinating of various activities of family members and arrange for the sharing of the household facilities (carpenter, 19800. It is especially difficult for students in home management residence to use their time effectively, they are subjected to many interruptions from guests and inmates, they are faced with the roles of buying and cooking meals, setting tables, washing dishes, scrubbing of the rooms, sweeping the compound, fetching water etc and attending their lectures because the lecture time table does not change in order to accommodate them (Nwabara 1986). Odo (2004) commenting on the usage of time stated that the rigidity of lecture time made it impossible for students to prepare and eat lunch as expected. Therefore, for meaningful learning to be successfully carried out in home management practicum a well-managed time is necessary. Jacob (2011) refers to time management to making the most productive use of a set period of time be it days, hours, weeks, or months. In business, the principle of time management is to less the time available to complete a project wisely and to work "smarter, not harder" in order to get more accomplished within that fixed period. Management as explained by Clayton in Emelue and Igbo (2008) as using what you have to get what you want; people who manage well accomplish more with greater ease. In time management practices, the students in home management residence need to follow the management component to make students in home management component to meet their needs.

The components are as follows; planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating. Planning according to Thompson (1998) is a method or procedure for doing something or design scheme, or intention. Time management as explained by Anyakoha and Eluwa (2008) is the process of planning for time need of an individual or entire family. Planning time for students in home management practicum entails listing all the activities to be done in a day. This include those that must be done and those that may or may not be accomplished, estimate the amount of time that will be used to accomplish each task, compare total estimated time for all the task listed with time not allocated to any task and determine the exact time when each job will be accomplished. After planning, the next step is to organize what has been planned.

Organization involves arranging the activities within the plan in a logical sequence (Michelle, 2002). In organizing the activities within the time plan involves an orderly arrangement of planned events. At

this stage of time management, the manager assigns responsibilities to other students who are involve in the activities considering the rate at which each student carries out activities within a given time.

Implementation involves checking to ensure that activities are being carried on at the planned periods. There is need for flexibility in case of accident, delays and interruptions etc.

The final state in management is evaluation. The stage is explained by Anyakoha and Eluwa (2008) as involving the appraisal of the entire management procedure. Evaluation in time management involves finding out, the extent to which the activities in the plan have been accomplished, how much time wasted or how successful was and the problems encountered in the entire management process so doing better plans will be made for future. Despite the importance of time management by students in home management practicum in College of Agriculture, Lafia appears not to pay much attention to their time usage. This is seen in how much time they waste in chatting, entertaining visitors, watching television etc.

This inability to plan the use of time could lead to attainment of the learning objectives, truance and imperfection of the necessary skills that are required of the students to be successful home makers. This is really a problem since they are expected to enter into the labour market will sellable skills acquired in the school. There is therefore need to evolve strategies that will enhance time management practicum

Objectives of the study

The main objective was to evolve strategies that will enhance time management in home management practicum in College of Agriculture, Lafia. Specifically, the study;

- Identify causes of time wastage in home management residence
- Determine strategies that could reduce time wastage in home management practicum

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide the study

1. What are the causes of time wastage in home management practicum?
2. What are the ways time wastage can be reduced in home management practicum

Methodology

Population of the study: the study adopted was survey research design. The population of the study consisted of all students offering home management practicum in College of Agriculture, Lafia in 2014. The population of the students was 50 at the time of the study.

Instrument for data collection: The instrument was based on the objectives of the study and consisted items eliciting **yes/no** responses. The questionnaire was face validate by experienced Home Economics Lecturers in the tertiary institutions which teach home management.

Data collection and analysis techniques: Fifty copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents by hand and collected back after the respondents had given their responses.

Frequencies and percentages were to analyze the data

Findings of the study: the following findings were made;

- Sixteen causes of time wastage as shown in table 1
- Ten strategies for reducing time wastage as shown in table 2

Table 1: Percentage responses of the students on the cause of time wastage in home management practicum

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Inadequate equipment	50	100

2	Buying of food items	50	100
3	Preparation of meals	50	100
4	Washing of dishes	25	50
5	Clearing of grasses	50	100
6	Scrubbing and cob webbing	33	66
7	Too much watching	50	100
8	Not storing items where you can get them easily	50	100
9	Too much movement	28	56
10	Fetching water	50	100
11	Not implementing time plan	25	50
12	Entertainment	50	100
13	Laundering	45	90
14	Setting and serving meals	33	66
15	Sweeping the compound	33	66
16	Playing and chatting	50	100

Table 1 shows that a large proportion of the respondents (100% and 90%) indicated the causes of time wastage in home management practicum are inadequate equipment, buying of food items, preparation of meals, clearing of grasses, watching of television, not storing items where they can get them easily, fetching water, entertainments and playing and chatting. While 66% and 56% and 50% indicated that scrubbing and cob webbing, washing of dishes, too much movement, not implementing time plan, sweeping of the compound fairly causes time wastage.

Table II: Percentage response of students on ways/strategies reducing time wastage

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Provision of adequate equipment	50	100
2	Using shopping list	25	50
3	Preparing drinks in large quantity and cooking different types of soup on Saturday and store in deep freezer	50	100
4	Using soapless detergent in washing, leaving dishes in drainer	33	66
5	Division of portions and clearing on Saturdays only	25	50
6	Scrubbing and cob webbing should be done during weekends	17	34
7	Having visiting hours	50	100
8	Use detergents for dirty clothes and launder only on Saturday	25	50
9	Use tray in serving	33	66
10	Use refuse bin and sweep once in a day	42	84

11	Use leisure time for playing and chatting only	42	84
12	Buy non-perishable food in bulk	50	100
13	Store items in place of first use	42	84
14	Arrange the kitchen layout to avoid too much movement	42	84
15	Use time plan strictly	45	90
16	Storage of water in the tank	33	66

Table II indicates seven strategies earned the highest scores with 100%, 90% and 84% respectively. These are provision of adequate equipment, preparing drinks in large quantities and cooking different types of soup on Saturdays and store in the deep freezer, having visiting hours, use refuse bin and sweep once every day, use leisure time for playing and chatting, buy nonperishable food items in bulk, store items in the place of first use, arrange the kitchen layout to minimize too much movement, using shopping list, using soapless detergent in washing and leaving dishes in drainer, division of portions and clear only Saturday, use detergent for dirty cloths and launder only on Saturdays, use tray in serving, storage of water in water tank scored 66% and 50%. Scrubbing and cob webbing during weekend scored 34% which shows that it is not accepted as a strategy for reducing time wastage in home management practicum

The results from the data on table I reveal sixteen causes of time wastage in home management practicum. These causes of time wastage include; lack of adequate equipment, buying food items, preparation of meals, washing of dishes, clearing of grasses in the compound, scrubbing and cob webbing, excessive watching of television, not storing things where it can be reached easily, too much movements, fetching water, not implementing time plan, entertainment, laundering, sweeping the compound and chatting.

These findings are in line with Odo (2004), Okpe and Onyeke (2009), Carpenter (1980) and Thompson (1998)

Table II shows 10 strategies for time management for time management practicum, the result of the findings revealed that the provision of adequate equipment will aid in reducing time wastage in home management practicum. This finding is in agreement with the opinion of Anioke (2001), who posited that equipped instructional centre is one of the basic requirements for a successful vocational programme.

Purchasing food items in bulk and using shopping lists was also rated highly by the respondents. This is in line with the study carried by Osia (2004) who said that families alienated through giving healthy nutritious diets, that mothers should purchase, plan and prepare nutritious diets.

The respondents agree that preparation of drinks in large quantity, cooking of different type of soup, and store in deep freeze on Saturday without adding vegetables will help students in home residence reduce time wastage. This was confirmed in the work of Jean in Nwankwo (2004) which pointed out that food should be put into the refrigerator as soon as possible. Jones also in Nwankwo (2004) also stated that it is important to cool foods quickly and keep them refrigerated.

Division of labor and clearing of grasses in the compound on Saturday only was accepted as a strategy for reducing time wastage by the respondents. This is in line with the study conducted by Takahashi, Kuramoto, Kubo and Kusono (2008) who opined that wives whose husbands participated in home chore rated division of labor as what causes marital satisfaction in the home.

Use of labour-saving device, use of tray in serving was rated high by the respondents. This was confirmed by Anyakoha and Eluwa (2008) who listed this equipment as work simplification device.

The findings of the study also revealed that visiting hours should be Saturdays at a particular time. This agreed with Deacon and Firebaugh (2001) who stated that family achieves goals through planning and use of resources.

Storing items in the place of first use was one of the strategies for reducing time wastage in home management practicum. This is in line with Pettigrew, Duncan and Berry (2008)

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the recommendations were made;

- This study should be made available to students in Home Economics in higher learning
- Rule governing the operations of activities in home management residence should be strictly adhered to. Example time to wake and visiting hours
- Schools offering Home Economics can use students to help in equipping the home management residence by making it as a rule that the graduating student submit at least one equipment before graduation
- Impromptu check should be done by supervisors to discourage truancy

Conclusion

This study had investigated the strategies for enhancement of time management by students in home management practicum in College of Agriculture, Lafía, it identified the causes of time wastage in home management practicum as well as strategies that could reduce time wastage. From the findings of the study, time wastage is caused by the following; lack of adequate equipment, buying of food items, preparation of meals, too much movements, excessive watching of television, planning and chatting etc.

The study also revealed that, provision of adequate equipment, purchasing of food items in bulk and using shopping list, preparation of drinks in large quantity, cooking different types of soups on Saturday, arrange the kitchen in such a way to prevent retracing of steps, division of labour on clearing of the grasses in the compound among others as strategies for reducing time wastage. If students in home management practicum implement the findings of this study, it will go a long way in facilitating their acquisition of skills in their home management.

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