

Global Perspectives in Education



A Book of Reading in Honour of
Late Prof. Mobolaji Ogunsanya



Edited by
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**GLOBAL
PERSPECTIVES
IN EDUCATION:**

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Olaniyan David Akinola**

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GOAL SETTING, TIME PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT AS LIFE PREREQUISITES FOR SUCCESS - THE PERSPECTIVE OF A COUNSELLOR

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Introduction

The greatest independent creature of God in the world is human, but who unfortunately, is also the one who often lives in perpetual bondage throughout his life based on his choice of utilization of resources around him. He is the most free but who often drags himself into the barb-wire and entrapped for life based on the irrational choices he has made. He has always forgotten that He who created him also gave him rules and regulations for survival in the world. The genesis of man's problem centres on goal setting, the choice and uses of his time as well as management of resources around him. That is why talking about goal setting, time planning and management are important issues that worth discussing for proper life guidance and lasting success.

Success

Success means one thing or the other to different people of diverse background, orientations and callings. Some definitions from literature by Akinboye (2002) include: Achievement of intention; Attainment of fame, wealth or power; When something turns out well or as planned; The result of commitment, toughness, endurance, persistence, effective management of pressing demands made on the individuals; Having money all the time; Knowing what you know how to do best and finding people to pay you for it; An evident improvement or progress; Getting up just one more time than you fell; A good result that removes insult; Being at the desired and right place at the right time, and doing the desired and right thing; Doing something highly rewarding to oneself and beneficial to mankind in general; Influencing other people's life positively; Continuous accomplishments in worthwhile goals; Luck; Feeling satisfied and fulfilled; Being happy with just enough money to cater for one's needs. However, he personally defined success as "setting out to do something and being able to initiate action steps in

realizing such set goals" pp 132. Nevertheless, a consensus opinion holds it that success remains the ultimate goal of human endeavour.

This paper examines goal setting, Time planning and management as prerequisites for success, from the perspective of a Counselor.

Goal Setting

A goal can be described as a target, the main pursuance, a desired attainment towards which conscious and active behaviours are directed. Therefore, a goal gives definite direction to an individual's behaviours in order to achieve the desired success. In fact, goal setting is an integral aspect of success potential (Animasahun, 2007). Peter (2009) opined that the first essential requirement for getting whatever you want in life is to know what you want. What you want in your life is the goal or your life target. The main reason why people do not succeed in life is that they do not know what they want. Hence, the basic reason for failure is the failure to set goals. It is sufficed to say then that a goalless person is a purposeless, idle, frustrated, accidental and dangerous individual (Animasahun, 2009).

While Rand (2008) defined goal-setting as self-generated action, Animasahun (2009) defined it as a plan of action for accomplishing the desired result. He stressed further that goal setting is highly motivational. It does not allow an individual to be idle or stagnant. It prevents distraction, and it leads to goal pursuit by committing oneself to attainment of the goals. However, it is pertinent to say that individuals should adopt desirable and feasible goals to achieve success. Therefore, before an individual sets his goals, he needs to know himself inside-out, knowing his capabilities and handicaps, and set goals suitable for a balance between his psychic energy and environmental demand.

Animasahun (2009) postulated that the only difference between a dreamer and a goal setter is adding a deadline to the dream. He therefore recommended goal setting for a lasting success. There are both short term and long term goals. However, a would-be-successful individual suppose to set daily, weekly, monthly, termly, quarterly, annual, periodic and life goals for himself. Massoras, Sahinidis and Polychronopotos (2014) found the following to be the most important purposes of goal setting:

- a) Goals guide and direct behaviour
- b) Goals provide clarity
- c) Goals provide challenges and standards
- d) Goals reflect what the goal-setters consider important
- e) Goals help improve performance
- f) Goals increase the motivation to achieve
- g) Goals help increase individual's pride and satisfaction in his/her achievements
- h) Goals improve self confidence
- i) Goals help decrease negative attitude.

Goal setting theory was developed by Locke and Lathan (2002) within the industrial psychology and could be applied to any other field. Their study shows that specific, high goals lead to top performance than low and vague goals. Locke and Lathan (2006) as well as Wigfield and Cambria (2010) concluded that as a person is committed to the goals, he has requisite ability to attain it, and when there are no conflicting goals; there is a positive, linear relationship between goal difficulty and task performance. For an effectual goal setting however, the principle of SMART developed by Conzemius and O'Neil (cited by Akanbi, 2016) can be employed as basic characteristics:

S	Simple	: The goal must be simple
M	Measurable	: It must be measurable
A	Achievable	: It must be achievable
R	Realistic	: It must be realistic to avoid frustration
T	Time bound	: It must have time-bound.

The second area of concern in this presentation is Time Planning.

Time Planning

Time can be defined as divine resources equitably given to creatures by the creator to utilize for survival, progress and success on the terrestrial world, on the basis of which an account will be made later on (Animasahun, 2009).

The concept of Time, according to Duncan (2001) also embraces the following.

- 1) It is an economic resource. Time is money.

- 2) It cannot be expanded or contracted.
- 3) It is irrecoverable and irreplaceable.
- 4) It is expensive and precious.
- 5) It is highly perishable.
- 6) Most of what is called "cost" is the cost of time.
- 7) It is a flow from past to present to future in the context of experience.
- 8) It is a flow from future to present to past in the context of planning.
- 9) The flow is one way and irreversible.
- 10) It is quantifiable (seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years).
- 11) All processes that we manage are time processes.
- 12) Time is the dimension in which change takes place.

Based on the above concepts of time, it suffices to say that the way an individual spends his/her time is exactly the choice he/she has made on how to live his/her life which definitely is just once. No second chance (Emmanuel, 2003).

The Law of Divine Timing

"There is a time for everything and season for every activity under heaven" Ecclesiastes 3:1-2. This is a biblical opinion about time. Time is one thing God has given to everyone equally. There is a time for everything as the above Scriptures tell us. One great thing in which we must learn to invest is time. I do not have more hours in a day than you have. The only difference between us is how we invest our time and be in control of the time. Only God is timeless, that is why (II Peter 3:8b) says that **".....one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (KJV).**

Everyone has equal amount of time; some invest theirs, while some expend theirs. How do we spend our time? This is a question people usually ask one another. But the counsel here is- do not spend time, invest it. Be time-conscious; if not, you will be timed out. Whatever you spend is gone but what you invest comes back to you with dividends. God is an excellent time manager. That is why there is time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven. What makes the difference between a successful person and a failure is time

management. What makes the difference between distinction and extinction is time management. Also, what makes the difference between celebrities and nonentities is time investment. Unfortunately, time does not wait for anybody; if you do not invest it, it goes (Emmanuel, 2003).

Planning

Planning on the other hand, according to Fayol (1949) refers to the application of logical, rational and analytical thinking to one's objectives or programmes. Planning is putting first things first, prioritizing those factors that are necessary for your success (Gerald, 2004). Put simply, it is "if I do it this way, and put this one that way, and add this one to it this way, what will it become? And you step back to look at it, if not yet satisfied, you continue to do something about it" (Emmanuel, 2003: 75).

Management

Management indicates being in control. There is no generally accepted definition of 'management' as an activity, although the classic definition is still held to that of Henri Fayol. His general statement about management in many ways still remains valid after more than eighty years and has only been adapted by more recent writers, as shown below:

To manage is to forecast and plan, to organize, to command, to coordinate and to control (Koontz & O'Donnell, 1984). Management is a social process... The process consists of.....planning, control, coordination and motivation' Management therefore, is an operational process initially best disserted by analyzing the managerial functions... The five essential managerial functions are: planning, organizing, staffing, directing, leading and controlling (Fayol, 1949; Peters, 1988).

Taking the three concepts together therefore, one can say that Time planning and management refers to the divine resources given to man which must be carefully cherished and planned for and which man must control for his own benefits, survival, progress and life success on the basis of which an account is made later on.

Animasahun (2009) identified some time-wasting outlets which if prevented, would enhance the success of the individual. These include:

- 1) Failure to set goals of pursuance leading to lack of purpose in life
- 2) Inability to be yourself (poor self-image) Then you can be tossed to and fro.
- 3) Failure to determine who you are now.
- 4) Poor reasoning faculty.
- 5) Lack of planning for daily activities (Then, anybody or anything can use you).
- 6) "We still have time" mentality.
- 7) "Carry over" syndrome.
- 8) Procrastination and/ or indecision.
- 9) Harboring professional time wasters.
- 10) Doing everything by yourself – No division of labour.
- 11) Lack of courage to say "NO"
- 12) Inability to distinguish between important and urgent.
- 13) Procrastination and/ or indecision.
- 14) Over reaction to issues and unconsciously involved in unplanned activities.
- 15) Impulsivity – physically energetic and therefore greatly involved in a lot of unplanned activities.
- 16) Socially warm – Gregarious – People – oriented rather than task- oriented.
- 17) Feeling bored with routine – Not a team worker
- 18) In an attempt to please and satisfy all – you run yourself down.
- 19) Unnecessary interruptions at the work place and even at home.

Interruptions are the greatest stress generators. We frequently interrupt ourselves in the following ways.

- i. By losing concentrations (psychological disturbances).
- ii. By going to find out what's going on in the other office or around our house.
- iii. Inbox curiosity.

The Three (3) major interrupters are:

- a. Use of telephone - being a slave to the telephone.
- b. Internal visitors – Lacking control access to your office/ workplace/ home. – Maintaining open door policy all the time.

- c. External visitors- Meeting unknown visitors who had no previous appointments all the time as well as inability to use "stand-up meeting" at times.

1. Wrong priorities.

Suggestions for life success

To succeed in life, therefore, the author offers the following suggestions cited from Emmanuel (2003), Oyedepo (2006) and Animasahun (2009):

1. **Revisiting your dream:** What is that thing you have always dreamt of accomplishing? Don't lose the dream. According to Eleanor Roosevelt (wife of former U.S. President), the future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams. Believe in your dreams and pursue it.

2. **Setting life goals and being focused:** A goal is a target to accomplish. Your goal will enhance concentration and motivation to achieve in life. A goal-less person is an aimless, purposeless, miserable and dangerous person who could be tossed to and fro. A goal is like a project for which a serious minded person must be totally committed. It keeps you busy and prevents you from unreasonable ventures. It brings out the seriousness in you to beat the deadline. The only difference between a "dreamer" and a "goal setter" is adding a deadline to the dream. It takes to be a dreamer and a doer before you can become an achiever.

3. **Hardwork/Businesslike:** There is no short-cut to success. Hardwork is the ideal way to a lasting success. Hardwork does not kill, it only removes hard life. According to Bertrand Russel, no great achievement is possible without persistent work. Marden added that nothing so strengthens the mind, enlarges manhood and widens the thought as the constant effort to measure up to high ideal, to struggle after that which is above and beyond us. If you are lazy or idle today, you are sowing a seed. On the other hand if you are hardworking, you are also sowing a seed. However, today's seed is the fruit for tomorrow's harvest. While the harvest of hardwork is breakthrough,

success and life; the harvest of laziness and idleness is poverty, bankruptcy, backwardness, frustration, redundancy, retrogression, regret and death. Note that the heights that great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flights but while others slept, they kept on toiling and toiling.

4. Preparation for problems: Problems are normal obstacles, hindrances and blockages that propel us into greater achievement. There are always ups and downs. You must prepare to attack the problems that would confront you in future. Every good step would be subjected to trials. It is just an attempt by the devil to distract your attention from pursuing your goals; so as to steal, kill and destroy your vision and future. Prepare to resist him. Always expect tests and trials at some major junctions of breakthrough in life. You must be tested before being promoted. In fact, the darkest part of the night is just before the dawn. When it is toughest, just know that a major life breakthrough is imminent. The greater the destination, aspiration or position, the tougher the position, opposition, tribulation and persecution. However, don't be bitter to be better. Handle your challenges prayerfully, confidently and with wisdom.

5. Mind your Association: Who are your friends? Whom do you associate with? Many times, association determines destination. Your company determines what accompanies you in life. Wrong company is a trap and impediment to success. In fact, they are agents of distractions, so mind the greatest enemy.

6. Do not procrastinate: Procrastination kills time. It prolongs your afflictions. Get ready to kill every spirit of procrastination in your life. Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is not certain, the only day you have is today, use it well. Do not postpone the assignment you ought to carry out today till tomorrow. Each day in life is different from the other. Each day has its own peculiarities and its own challenges, when you shift what ought to be done today till tomorrow, you compound tomorrow and tomorrow compounds the next day and so on. This is how life and destiny are wasted. Solve every problem each day as they come. A question you fail to answer becomes a problem, a problem you fail to solve becomes a mountain; and a mountain you fail to move

becomes an impossibility. Our lives are made up of days. Each day contains 24 hours and by our body make-up, an average person spends eight (8) hours on sleep each day, 6 hours on real sleep and about 2 hours to rest. If you live up to seventy (70) years, you would have spent 20 hours on sleep. Think about it. You cannot therefore afford to waste your active hours during the day. Do not let a day pass without you making a recording progress. Each day that passes without something achieved is a waste, never to be recovered.

Life is made up of years, years are made up of months, months are made up weeks and weeks are made up of days. Each day that passes without a recordable progress is a loss. Therefore, plan your daily assignment with all seriousness. When a day passes, it can no longer be recalled. Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is not certain, all you have is today, so do what you ought to do now.

Now, now, the only cure to procrastination is to start now.

- Do you have something to do? Do it now.
- Do you want to start a new project? Start it now.
- Do you want to write a book? Write it now.
- Do you want to compose a song? Compose it now.
- Do you want to start your dieting program? Start it now
- Do you want to go into a ministry? Go into it now.
- Whatever programs or project you have in mind – start it

now.

Some people procrastinate until they stagnate, if you do not quit procrastination, you are heading for stagnation, you will never get anything done until you do it before you are ready. Nothing is easily done. There are always reasons to put things forward to a time you think is favourable but that is illusory. A better time to start than now will never come.

7. Time Planning Table – Plan your day: Plan your day in a serene atmosphere each morning. Whatever you leave unplanned will destroy your plan. Have a daily schedule of programme of all achievable activities for the day and allocate time for each. Plan your day and schedule in advance. What are the activities you could not probably finish in the day which must be carried till the next day? The places you

must visit, people you need to see, letters to write, meetings to attend, lectures to attend, mail to send, telephone calls to make, appointment to keep, e.t.c. write them down as you plan your days

8. Set out early on your daily schedule: Morning hours are your optimum strength period. Embark on your assignment when you are still fresh in the morning, before the sun comes up and your body becomes weak. Do not allow anything or anyone to waste your morning hours, do not allow distractions. Distractions can come in various forms, for instance, visitors at odd hours, e.t.c.

9. Sleep Less: Cut down on your sleeping hours, invest at least the first one hour each day before God, in meditation and prayer. Knowing that there are 24 hours in a day, you must be cognizance of the hours you spend sleeping.

10. Avoid the thief: There are thieves of time, guard against wasting time as well as other distractions.

11. Review your List: Review your list before you retire to bed at night, tick the programmes accomplished and the ones to be revisited.

12. Delegation of duties

13. Develop the habit of saying No nicely.

14. Don't be a slave to telephone.

15. Control access to your office/workplace/home by having visiting hours and adhering strictly.

16. Maintain close door techniques at times.

17. Use Stand up Techniques at times.

18. Order your priorities in the right and most beneficial manner.

19. Never dwell on past misfortune: It is natural to have set back at times, but quickly summon courage to rise again after a fall, the longer you dwell on your misfortunes, the greater their power to control you and prevent you from moving forward. If you waste today lamenting yesterday, you will also waste tomorrow lamenting today.

20. Don't accept defeat for what you can still repeat. Those who stay in the pit of defeat can never live to repeat what they can defeat. That is the law of victory against stagnancy.

Conclusion

Goal-setting is highly motivating. Set your goals early and be in full control of your life. Time is money, they say; wasting or losing time is like losing a fortune. Many people are low achievers and are not successful because they have never learnt to value and manage time effectively. Lost time is never found again, procrastination is a thief of time, don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today. Any opportunity lost may never be regained. Don't spend much time on flimsy and unnecessary things. You can form the habit of time accounting. For instance, get a note book and keep an accurate record for a month on how much time you spend sleeping, dressing, eating, drinking, strolling, visiting, gossiping, attending to visitors, partying, praying, studying, shopping, e.t.c. You will be amazed at some of your hard factual findings.

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