

Time Management in the Nigerian Workplaces as an Example of the Struggle for Everyday Life in Contexts of Uncertainty

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Uncertainty and instability is a characteristic phenomenon for most African countries today. Civil wars, government corruption at a national and a local level, natural disasters, diseases, lack of infrastructure, economic underdevelopment, internal and external migrations, these and many other factors contribute to uncertainty everyday life. However, people produce certain patterns of behavior and actions within the chaos. Individual social actors in their private lives as well as professional organizations scheme developed to respond to this instability. Planning for the future, the desire to develop, the desire to improve living standards mean that people in this unstable situation, show a lot of creativity in managing their everyday life. Routinization of behavior begins to provide some antidote to the chaos outside. An important factor in this process is the issue of the management of private time in personal lives as well as time management styles in professional institutions. Analyze the role of time in social functioning for the multilayer reality, assuming that the form of political and economic system is changing the time perception and that the local culture, its religion and moral code shapes the attitudes of individual people. Micro-level of these interactions are employee relations and working style observable in state institutions, NGOs and private entrepreneurships. I will present patterns of time management in public sector on an example of Lagos metropolis. In this paper I will try to show the mechanisms of interaction between the external instability system and styles of organizational cultures in public institutions. I will concentrate on a comparison of local organizational structures and introducing new management systems drawn from the professional practices of the European institutions. I will punish the split between private perception of time of residents of Lagos and their ability to adapt to market requirements within the time management. These differences will serve me to interpret the functioning of the principle of cultural relativism and the interface between different organizational cultures in African institutions. The paper will refer to my field research from Lagos, Nigeria (2008) as well as to interviews on these issues conducted with Nigerian students residing in England (2010).