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Research Article

Time Management Challenges among Head Nurses of Public Hospitals Lahore

Mujahida Sultana[1]*, Muhammad Afzal[1], Kousar Perveen[1]

[1]Lahore School of Nursing, The University of Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract

Time management has been acknowledged as a vital work element for all nurses. Consequences related to ineffective time management such as decline in the quality of care, job dissatisfaction, stress and burnout, role overload, and role ambiguity are potentially serious, not only for nurses and head nurses, but also their clients, colleagues, families and the entire organizations where they are employed. The study aimed to explore time management challenges among head nurses of public hospitals and explore any relationship between the participants' demographics and their abilities to manage time effectively. A quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional research design was used to achieve the goals of this study. A total number of 174 head nurse who agreed to participate in the study from selected public hospitals, Lahore, The children Hospital & The Institute of Child Health, Lahore and The Jinnah Hospital Lahore constituted the study sample. A modified questionnaire was used to identify time management issues among head nurse. Head nurse had showed low frequencies and feel difficulty in schedule and technique dimensions. However, the current study results indicate that demographic characteristics of the participants showed no significant statistical association except for the marital status of head nurses and time management (p=.000). The current study concluded that head nurses had deficiency in the schedule and technical skills for time management.

Keywords: Time management; Head nurses; prioritization; delegation; Planning; Technique

Introduction

Nurse is a skilled person which offers care to the sick and injured people particularly in the hospital. All health institutes need skilled, punctual and competent nurses who deliver the effective care to the patients (Brassard & Smolenski, 2011). The term "time management" is in reality misleading. Strictly speaking, time cannot be managed, because it is an unapproachable factor. Only the way a person deals with time can be influenced. Time management can be viewed as a way of monitoring and controlling (Button, Harrington, & Belan, 2014).

In nursing profession time is more profitable as a head nurse is the one who accepts accountability for dealing the human and material resources of a nursing unit and takes lead in grooming up the staff to give quality of patient care and a decent conductive environment to help staff development and contentment (Ebrahimi *et al.*, 2014). As everyone recognizes that time is a vital part of human life. "Time management" is the training of organizing and planning how to distribute your time between particular activities (Janeslätt *et al*., 2017). Moreover, head nurses have four kinds of resources: people, equipment, money, and time of these the time is imperative, which indicates the time management skills are important for progress (Nizar, 2013). Management of time could be possible by managing the time intelligently, which leads to holding human resources, reducing anxiety and improving job satisfaction among nurses (Nasri *et al*., 2013).

There are many studies which discuss the challenges in time management. In this current study the five most common challenges of time management for head nurses of public sector hospitals have discussed: priorities, workload, delegation, schedule and technique (Ahmed, 2012). According to Zampetakis *et al*. (2010) the prioritization of

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[1]*Corresponding author
Mujahida Sultana,
Lahore School of Nursing, The University of Lahore, Pakistan
Email: mujahida299@gmail.com

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responsibilities and exercises, delegation, proper organization of meetings, and planning for occupational and personal matters are solid factors which affecting on time management. Another study defines prioritization is an issue in time management since prioritization is the action that arranges activities by significance and to make targets and the use of accessible resources to accomplish temporary and long-standing objectives (Bahadori *et al*., 2015).

According to another study of Ahmed (2012) workload is also one of the challenges for head nurses in time management meanwhile workload cause to increases stress and also effects on performance. Because workload is the measure of work allocated to a specific employee, normally in an itemized time duration, when nurses have overwhelming workloads, they leave basic assignments uncompleted, and there are bad nurse and patient outcomes (MacPhee *et al*., 2017).

A study which shows that delegation is also a problem for head nurses for time management because delegation has been characterized as 'the exchange of responsibility regarding the execution of a movement starting with one individual to another while holding responsibility for the results (Magnusson *et al*., 2017). Delegation is related to responsibility, accountability and authority (Evans, 2015).

According to the study of Lal *et al*. (2015) schedule is another challenge in time management, it is to plan an activity at a specific date or time in the future. Scheduling is an daily timewasting management job with various rules from scheduling Poor rescheduling decisions can have quality, cost and morale consequences (Clark *et al*., 2015).

In this current study technique time management challenge which are interruptions and procrastination as the delay due to “the avoidance of the implementation of an intention” (Van Eerde, 2015). The purpose of the study is to assess the time management challenges like priorities, workload, delegation, schedule and technique for nurse mangers to analyze which challenge is more effecting the performance of nurse managers. Because in nursing profession time is very precious thing for head nurses and nurses but especially for head nurses because they are responsible for utilization of available resources, to improve the client care and staff satisfaction.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study was used to explore the time management challenges among head nurses of The Children’s Hospital & The Institute of Child Health, Lahore and The Jinnah Hospital Lahore.

Setting

This study was conducted in the two Public hospitals of Lahore.

Population

All head nurses of Public hospitals namely The Children’s Hospital & The Institute of Child Health, Lahore and The Jinnah Hospital Lahore.

Inclusion Criteria

All female Head Nurses of The Children’s Hospital & The Institute of Child Health, Lahore and Jinnah Hospital Lahore having experience greater than one year and age group from 25 to 60 years were included. All Head nurses those were willing and available at the time of data collection were included.

Exclusion Criteria

All female Head Nurses of The Children’s Hospital & The Institute of Child Health, Lahore and Jinnah Hospital Lahore having experience less than one year were excluded. All Head Nurses who were not willing and not available at the time of data collection were excluded.

Sample Technique

Convenient sampling technique will be used to gather the data.

Sample

The total population of The Children’s hospital & The Institute of Child Health, Lahore 16 head nurese and The Jinnah Hospital is 113 head nurses. The sample size was calculated by applying following formula.

$$n = N/1+N(e)^2$$ (Gusen, 2016).

Ethical Consideration

Permission was taken from the Principal, Lahore School of Nursing, The University of Lahore. Permission was taken from nursing superintendent of The Children Hospital Lahore and the nursing superintendent of the Jinnah Hospital Lahore. participants was well informed and written consent was taken. All respondents had open opportunity to participate in research. The study would not be harmful and voluntary. Participants can involve in the study, if any participant want to withdraw from study then would not be objection.

Data Collection Tool

Questionnaire was adopted by the study of Ahmed (2012) “Time Management Challenges among Jordanian Nurse Managers”. A well-constructed 3 point Likert Scale questionnaire was used in this study. It was consisted of five portions, first portion was consisted on priorities with six items, second workload with four items, third delegation with four item, fourth Schedule with four items and technique with five items.

Data Analysis Methods

Data was analysed on SPSS version 21. Discriptive statistics mean, median, mode and SD was applied on individual item.chi-square test was used to determine the relationship between demographic characteristics and time

management challenges among head nurses. Regarding the scoring system for the current study a mean score of ≥1.5 was considered as an indicative of satisfactory time management skills.

Study Duration

The duration of study was 4 months from January 2018 to May 2018.

Result and Discussions

Part 1- Descriptive Analysis

Demographics (Table 1) depicts that the demographic characteristics of the participant. The table showed that (100%) participant of the study were female; age and mostly participant have age 32 years with 56(32.2%): education more than half 147(84.9%) participant were general nursing (Diploma): majority of participant 90(51.7%) were unmarried; around 165(94.8%) participants had no experience with time management programs and more than 63(36.2%) had 1-5 years.

Table 2 reveals the first challenge of time management which is priorities and its outcomes indicates that overall (68.3%) said "Yes", (22.9%) said "No" and (8.8%) said "Sometimes" in reaction to questions (1-6).

Table 3 reveals the second time management challenge which is workload and results of the workload related questions (1-4) showed that (62.3%) said "Yes", (27.9%) said " No", (9.8%) said " Sometimes" .

Table 1: Distribution of Head nurses according to demographics

Groups	Frequency *(f)*	Percent (%)
Gander		
Male	0	0
Female	174	100
Age		
25-30 Years	44	25.3
31-36 Years	56	32.2
37-42 Years	36	20.7
43-48 Years	26	14.9
49-54 Years	8	4.6
55-60 Years	4	2.3
Total	174	100
Education		
General Nursing (Diploma)	146	83.9
4- Years BSN (Generic)	6	3.4
2- Years BSN (Post RN)	21	12.1
Master of Science in Nursing	1	.6
Total	174	100
Marital Status		
Married	64	36.8
Unmarried	90	51.7
Widowed	12	6.9
Divorced	8	4.6
Total	174	100
Experience with time management Programs		
Yes	9	5.2
No	165	94.8
Total	174	100
Job Experience		
01-05 Years	63	36.2
06-10 Years	40	23
11-15 Years	44	25.3
16-20Years	27	15.5
Total	174	100

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Time Management Challenges among Head Nurses of Public Hospitals Priorities:

S.N.	Question	Yes *f* (%)	No *f* (%)	Sometimes *f*(%)
1.	Main tasks and responsibilities.	121 (69.5%)	23 (13.2%)	30 (17.2%)
2.	Time needed for each activity each day.	117 (67.2%)	45(25.9%)	12 (6.9%)
3.	Most important activity in your job.	129 (74.1%)	28 (16.1%)	17 (9.8%)
4.	Have enough time to consider most important tasks.	124 (71.3%)	39 (22.4%)	11 (6.3%)
5.	Spend more time on routine than unusual tasks?	118 (67.8%)	40 (23.0%)	16 (9.2%)
6.	Activities for next year for 3 to 5 years?	104 (59.8%)	64 (36.8%)	6 (3.4%)
	Total	713 (68.3%)	239 (22.9%)	92 (8.8%)

Table 3: Workload

S.N.	Questions	Yes *f* (%)	No *f* (%)	Sometimes *f* (%)
1.	Feel stress or anxious about performing tasks on time.	93 (53.4%)	57 (32.8)	24 (13.8%)
2.	Feel have more tasks than you can do.	74 (42.5%)	81 (46.6%)	19 (10.9%)
3.	Sacrifice your social activities for your job.	148 (85.1%)	15 (8.6%)	11 (6.3%)
4.	Say yes for extra tasks when you are busy.	119 (68.4%)	41 (23.6%)	14 (8.0%)
	Total	434 (62.3%)	194 (27.9%)	68 (9.8%)

Table 4: Delegation

S.N.	Questions	Yes *f* (%)	No *f* (%)	Some times *f* (%)
1.	Consider task delegation when make plans.	145 (83.3%)	29(16.7%)	0
2.	Consider task delegation is an important part of your job.	148 (85.1%)	15 (8.6%)	11 (6.3%)
3.	Perform tasks yourself than delegate them.	118 (67.8%)	41 (23.6%)	15 (8.6%)
4.	Feel pressured by deadlines even when delegate tasks.	119 (68.4%)	29 (16.7%)	26 (14.9%)
	Total	530 (76.1%)	114 (16.4%)	52(7.5%)

Table 4 exhibits results of the delegation which is a time management challenge and in reaction of (1-4) items (76.1%) respondents said “Yes”, (16.4%) said “No” and only (7.5%) said “Sometimes”. Whereas in the response of first item of delegation “Consider task delegation when make plans”, 145(83.3%) participants said “Yes”, 29(16.7%) said “No” and nobody said “Sometimes”.

Table 5 depicts that majority (47.3%) participant’s respond was “No” and (43.7%) “Yes” and (9%) “Sometimes”. But they said most of the participants 137(78.7%) said “No”, 25(14.4%) said “Yes” and only 12(6.9%) in reaction to “Arrive late for your appointments.”

Table 6 showed statistics regarding technique and results showed that respondents had showed high response in form of “Yes” in reaction to (3, 4) items because (58.6%) said “Yes”, (31.6%) said “No” and only (9.8%) said “Sometimes” that they feel difficulty to finish work-related conversations but majority of respondents showed low response in form of “No” in reaction to (1, 2, 5) as (63.2%) said “No”, (21.3%) said “Yes” and (15.5%) said “Sometimes” they feel that they have to leave their task uncompleted.

Table 5: Schedule

S#	Questions	Yes *f* (%)	No *f* (%)	Some times *f* (%)
1.	Awareness of having time for extra tasks.	120 (69.0%)	43 (24.7%)	11 (6.3%)
2.	Feel unable to finish daily schedule tasks in one day.	79 (45.4%)	75 (43.1%)	20 (11.5%)
3.	Arrive late for your appointments.	25 (14.4%)	137 (78.7%)	12 (6.9%)
4.	Bring work home or stay late after work.	80 (46.0%)	74 (42.5%)	20 (11.5%)
	Total	304 (43.7%)	329 (47.3%)	63 (9%)

Table 6: Technique

S.N.	Questions	Yes *f* (%)	No *f* (%)	Some times *f* (%)
1.	A lot of documents waiting to be read?	67 (38.5%)	99 (56.9%)	8 (4.6%)
2.	Meetings are a waste of time?	58 (33.3%)	113 (64.9%)	3 (1.7%)
3.	Difficulty to finish work-related conversations?	102 (58.6%)	55 (31.6%)	17 (9.8%)
4.	Your telephone conversations stop your work?	106 (60.9%)	36 (20.7%)	32 (18.4%)
5.	Leave your tasks uncompleted?	37 (21.3%)	110 (63.2%)	27 (15.5%)
	Total	370 (42.5%)	413 (47.5%)	87 (10%)

Table 7: Relationship between Demographic characteristic of participants and the time management challenges

Variables	Time Management			
Age in classes of head Nurses	**Low**	**Satisfactory**	**Total**	**P-value**
25-30 Years	23(52.30%)	21(47.70%)	44(100%)	
31-36 Years	23(41.10%)	33(58.90%)	56(100%)	
37-42 Years	12(33.30%)	24(66.70%)	36(100%)	.398
43-48 Years	13(50.00%)	13(50.00%)	26(100%)	
49-54 Years	03(37.50%)	05(62.50%)	08(100%)	
55-60 Years	03(75.00%)	01(25.00%)	04(100%)	
Total	77(44.30%)	97(55.70%)	174(100%)	
Education of Head nurses				
General Nursing (Diploma)	65(44.50%)	81(55.50%)	146(100%)	
4-Year BS Nursing (Generic)	02(33.30%)	04(66.70%)	06(100%)	
2-Year BS Nursing (Post RN)	09(42.90%)	12(57.10%)	21(100%)	0.666
Master of Science in Nursing	1(100.00%)	00(0.00%)	01(100%)	
Total	77(44.30%)	97(55.70%)	174(100%)	
Marital Status				
Married	49(76.60%)	15(23.40%)	64(100%)	
Unmarried	19(21.10%)	71(78.90%)	90(100%)	
Widowed	06(50.00%)	06(50.00%)	12(100%)	.000
Divorced	03(37.50%)	05(62.50%)	08(100%)	
Total	77(44.30%)	97(55.70%)	174(100%)	
Experience with T/M Programs				
YES	06(66.70%)	3(33.30%)	09(100%)	
NO	71(43.00%)	94(57.00%)	165(100%)	0.187
Total	77(44.30%)	97(55.70%)	174(100%)	
Job Experience of Head Nurses				
1-5 Years	24(38.10%)	39(61.90%)	63(100%)	
6-10 Years	22(55.00%)	18(45.00%)	40(100%)	
11-15 Years	20(45.50%)	24(54.50%)	44(100%)	.391
16-20 Years	11(40.70%)	16(59.30%)	27(100%)	
Total	77(44.30%)	97(55.70%)	174(100%)	

Mean score ≥1.5=satisfactory *p≤0.05*

Part 2: Relationship Analysis

Table 7 indicates association between Demographic characteristics and time management. Regarding the scoring system for the current study a mean score of ≥1.5 was considered as an indicative of satisfactory time management skills. That's way, there is statistically no significant association between age and time management (p-Value 0.398) and same condition is found between education and time management (p-value 0.666). Whereas, a statistically significant association is found between marital status and time management (p-value .000). But again results showed that no association was found between

head nurses experience with time management programs and time management (p-value 0.187). There is also no association between job experience of head nurses and time management (p-value0.391).

This study was a quantitative, descriptive study that designed to find out time management challenges among head nurses of public hospital, Lahore, Pakistan and explore any relationship between the participants' demographics and their abilities to manage time effectively. All of the identified problems (challenges) were found in Head nurse, schedule dimension and in the technique dimension. Troublingly, head nurses are accountable for making important decisions that affect the whole organization, which makes this finding a very authentic. The challenges were all together not having the capacity to complete dialogs in the ideal time alongside being always hindered by phone calls will prompt not having the capacity to achieve assignments in a favorable way. This problem can be solved by focusing on a single task at a time, this will be helpful for better time management skills, which in response will promote work efficiency, on the other hand, having the capacity to finish the tasks (Kiefer, 2011). According to Collins & Collins (2004), the spirit of effective time management is performing the right task at the right time. From the findings of this study, to be able to do so requires a reduction in telephone conversations to as many as possible and for work related conversations to end as scheduled (Collins & Collins, 2004). Hills (2008) reported that having a clear objective in life and removing activities that distract the mission are very important for effective time management. It is important to say that having general aims is not the same as planning. Planning should take place in a very particular manner and before to the work day, not at the spot (Thomack, 2012). There is a suggestion that to note down all activates of a day and highlight that activities that waste time, and after that make strategies to minimize these activities (Collins & Collins, 2004). Knowing where time is being utilized is the initial step to manage time properly (Thomack, 2012). This will inevitably help into making a productive arrangement which is vital for effective time administration (Collins & Collins, 2004). Interruptions can spoil a careful planning. So minimizing interruptions is as important as having a comprehensive and well-established plan. A key factor for reducing interruptions is by modifying the practices of troublesome employees and making a work arrangement that reacts quickly to change (Kenner & Pressler, 2006). Another way to do so is by identifying employees' capabilities and use them by delegating responsibilities (Birla, 2008). Head nurses may have long unscheduled work-related chats because they have some kind of hesitations when they have to make a major decision, such as the ones that head nurses usually take. Ghoshal & Bruch (2004) suggest that head nurses should trust their own decision-making ability to be able to manage time more effectively. The only demographical factor that affected time management abilities was marital status, with more effective time management in the unmarried participants than the married ones. According to Agha (2016) unmarried people's life is not as full of responsibilities and difficulties as married people which lead to mismanagement and poor management of time and it affect the productivity level. In other terms, we should not jump that marrieds could not manage their time So, this finding should be further investigated. What was interesting in the results is the lack of a significant statistical difference between head nurses who took time management courses and those who did not. This really questions the effectiveness of these courses.

The current study concluded that head nurses had poor time management skills regarding the schedule and technique dimension as statistics of time management challenges among head nurses showed that majority 68% participants had positive response regarding priorities, workload and delegation, whereas 22% showed negative response and only 8.7% showed neutral response. But regarding and schedule and technique most of the respondents showed 47.4% negative, 43.1% positive and 9.5% neutral response. Developing effective time management programs, courses and not merely repeating the previous courses should be done to all head nurses. Head nurses who were unmarried had batter time management skill than those head nurses who were married because a statistically significant association is found between marital status and time management (p-value .000), which is a recommended for future researches.

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