

## ASSESSMENT OF TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS AMONG STAFF NURSES

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**Abstract:** Time management is an essential skill in the nursing profession, directly impacting individual performance, patient care quality, and the overall efficiency of healthcare organizations. Despite its importance, many nurses struggle with effective time management, leading to increased stress and reduced job satisfaction. **Objective:** This study aims to assess the time management skills of staff nurses in tertiary care hospitals and identify areas for improvement. **Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in selected wards of tertiary care hospitals. A total of 142 staff nurses participated in the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which included 22 Nurse's Time Management Inventory items. Responses were scored on a 3-point Likert scale, and nurses were classified into low, moderate, and high time management categories. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS software (version 25), with descriptive statistics used to summarize the data. **Results:** The study found that 64.8% of the nurses demonstrated moderate time management skills, while 31.0% had low time management abilities. Only 4.2% of the participants exhibited high time management skills. Most nurses were in the 31-35 age group, predominantly female, and had 6-10 years of work experience. The study highlighted a significant need for improvement in time management skills among the nursing workforce. **Conclusion:** The findings indicate that while most nurses possess moderate time management skills, a substantial portion struggle with effectively managing their time. These results underscore the necessity for targeted interventions, including structured training programs, to enhance time management abilities among nurses, thereby improving both job performance and patient care outcomes.

**Keywords:** Cross-sectional studies, Nursing Staff, Pakistan, Patient Care Management, Time Management.

### Introduction

Time management is a critical component of nursing, influencing individual performance and healthcare organizations' overall efficiency. Time is a vital element of work for nurses, impacting every aspect of patient care and professional responsibilities. (1). Time, as a resource, is irreplaceable once lost, emphasizing the importance of effective management. (2). Time management refers to the strategic process of planning and allocating time between various tasks, which includes setting goals, organizing, prioritizing, and scheduling activities to optimize productivity. (3).

For nurse managers, effective time management is about completing tasks on time and achieving organizational goals, making it a fundamental skill in the healthcare setting. (4). This process involves exercising judgment in fulfilling responsibilities and controlling the time spent on tasks to enhance effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity. Nurses face numerous challenges in managing their time, such as unexpected interruptions, attendance at non-essential meetings, and the inability to delegate routine tasks. (5). These challenges can lead to inefficiencies and reduced quality of care.

Strategies for effective time management include planning, prioritizing tasks, estimating the time required for each task, and learning to say "no" to avoid overcommitment. (6). Effective time management in nursing is closely linked to the quality of patient care, patient safety, and the overall work performance of nurses. (4). For instance, in a study conducted in Pakistan, only 30% of nurses reported using time management techniques, highlighting a significant gap

in this critical skill area. (7). Similar challenges were identified in the United Arab Emirates, where 56% of nurses lacked essential time management skills such as planning, prioritizing, and organizing their work. (8).

In Egypt, a time management program revealed that 45% of head nurses who adopted time management techniques experienced improvements in their work output and performance evaluations. (3) These findings underscore the need for nurses to receive systematic time management training to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in delivering patient care.

Given the critical importance of time management in nursing, this study aims to assess the time management skills among staff nurses.

### Methodology

A descriptive study was conducted to evaluate the time management of nursing staff in selected wards of tertiary care hospitals. The study included 142 participants and gathered information about their socio-demographic profile, including their name, age, educational qualification, religion, and marital status.

The 22-item questionnaire was designed to assess how nurses manage their time in the workplace. The responses were scored on a 3-point Likert scale: 2 for 'always,' 1 for 'sometimes,' and 0 for 'never.' Nurses who scored between 27 and 44 were considered to have high time management effectiveness, those scoring between 22 and 26 were considered to have moderate effectiveness, and those



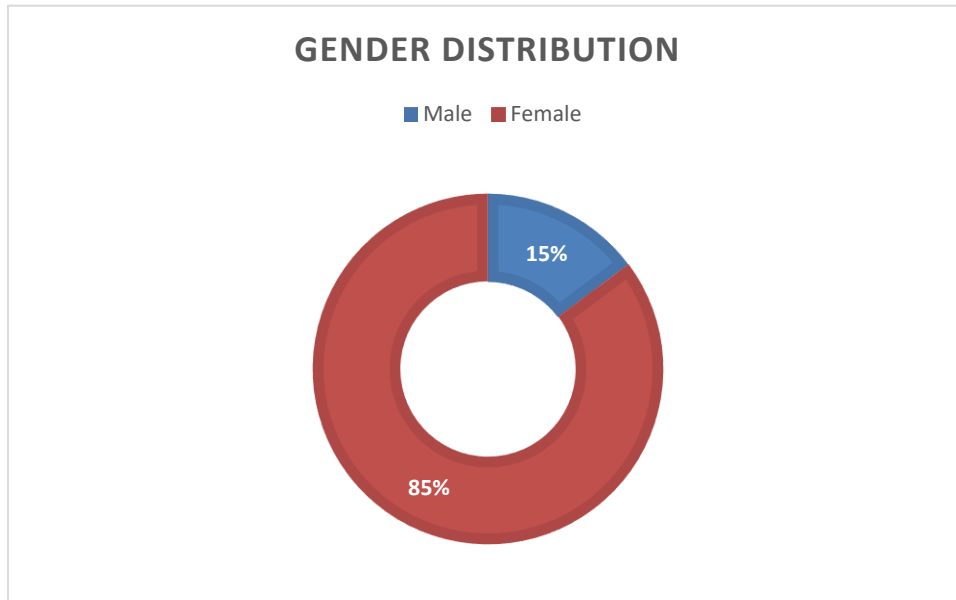
scoring less than 22 were considered to have low time management effectiveness. The data was analyzed using SPSS software (version 25).

**Results**

The socio-demographic characteristics of the 142 nurses who participated in this study provide a comprehensive overview of the workforce. Regarding age distribution, most participants (40.8%) were between 31-35 years old, making this the most represented age group. This was

followed by the 21-25 age group, which constituted 30.3% of the sample, and the 36-40 age group, which comprised 21.8%. The smallest age group was 26-30 years, comprising only 7.0% of the participants.

Gender-wise, the nursing workforce was predominantly female, with 85.2% of the participants being women. Male nurses represented a smaller portion of the sample, accounting for 14.8%. This gender distribution reflects the common trend in nursing, where the profession is typically female-dominated. (Figure 1)



**Figure 1: Distribution of gender among the study population**

When examining marital status, most nurses were married, making up 71.8% of the sample. In contrast, 28.2% of the participants were single. This demographic detail highlights the personal backgrounds of the nurses, which may influence their time management skills and responsibilities. Regarding educational qualifications, a significant majority of the nurses held a diploma in nursing, representing 70.4% of the sample. A quarter of the participants (25.4%) had pursued further education and completed Post RN (Registered Nurse) qualifications, while a smaller percentage (4.2%) held a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). This distribution indicates a strong foundational level of nursing education among the participants, with a portion having advanced their qualifications.

The departmental distribution of the nurses shows that 26.1% worked in the surgical ward, the most common

department among the participants. The Intensive Care Unit (ICU) employed 11.3% of the nurses, while only 2.1% were assigned to the medical ward. The remaining 60.6% were distributed across other departments, indicating a broad range of specializations and responsibilities within the nursing staff.

Finally, regarding work experience, most nurses (59.9%) had 6-10 years of experience, suggesting a relatively experienced workforce. Additionally, 24.6% of the participants had more than 15 years of experience, indicating a substantial portion of seasoned professionals. Nurses with 11-15 years of experience comprised 8.5% of the sample, while those with the least experience (1-5 years) constituted 7.0%. (Table 1)

**Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Nurses**

Demographic Variables	Frequency (n=142)	Percent (%)
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
21-25	43	30.3
26-30	10	7.0
31-35	58	40.8
36-40	31	21.8
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	21	14.8
Female	121	85.2

<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	40	28.2
Married	102	71.8
<b>Qualification</b>		
Diploma	100	70.4
Post RN	36	25.4
BSN	6	4.2
<b>Department</b>		
ICU	16	11.3
Medical Ward	3	2.1
Surgical Ward	37	26.1
Other	86	60.6
<b>Duration of Working Experience</b>		
1-5 years	10	7.0
6-10 years	85	59.9
11-15 years	12	8.5
>15 years	35	24.6

Table 2 presents the classification of nurses' time management skills based on their scores from the Nurse's Time Management Inventory for Professional Life. The data is categorized into low, moderate, and high time management.

Of 142 nurses, 44 (31.0%) had low time management skills, indicating that nearly one-third of the sample struggles with effectively managing their time in professional settings. This group may face challenges in organizing, prioritizing, and completing tasks efficiently, which could impact their overall job performance and patient care.

Most of the nurses, 92 (64.8%), had moderate time management skills. This suggests that most nurses possess a reasonable ability to manage their time but may still have room for improvement. These nurses can balance their responsibilities but occasionally struggle with prioritization or handling unexpected tasks.

A small portion of the sample, six nurses (4.2%), demonstrated high time management skills. These individuals are likely proficient in planning, organizing, and prioritizing their tasks, which enables them to manage their workload effectively and potentially serve as role models or leaders in their work environment.

**Table 2. Nurses time management for professional life**

Scoring of Classification	n (%)
<b>Nurses Time Management Inventory for Professional Life</b>	
Low Time Management (0-16)	44 (31.0%)
Moderate Time Management (17-32)	92 (64.8%)
High Time Management (33-48)	6 (4.2%)

**Discussion**

The results of this study highlight significant variations in time management skills among nurses. Most nurses (64.8%) demonstrated moderate time management skills, while 31.0% had low time management abilities, and only a tiny fraction (4.2%) exhibited high time management skills. These findings are consistent with recent studies that emphasize nurses' challenges in managing their time effectively, particularly in high-pressure environments. Similar research conducted among nurses in North West Ethiopia also revealed that many nurses struggled with effective time management, attributing this to heavy workloads, inadequate staffing, and frequent interruptions. These issues are not unique to Ethiopia; they are reflective of broader global challenges in nursing, where time management is often hindered by organizational and environmental factors (3).

Another study by Kaliraman AR et al. indicates that most nurses (55%) had moderate time management skills. In comparison, 44% had low time management, and only 1% demonstrated high time management abilities. (9).

Compared to the study conducted by Mohammad et al. in Hebron Hospital, where 69.5% of nurses exhibited high time management skills, it is evident that the nurses in the current study struggle significantly more with managing their time effectively. This stark contrast suggests that time management may be a critical area that needs improvement within the nursing workforce, as examined in this study. (10).

The importance of time management in nursing cannot be overstated, as it directly impacts the quality of patient care, job performance, and overall efficiency within healthcare settings. Effective time management is crucial for nurses to prioritize tasks, delegate responsibilities, and manage their workload, especially when they are frequently interrupted or required to multitask.

Our findings underscore the need for targeted interventions and training programs to improve nurses' time management skills. These programs should focus on strategies such as goal setting, prioritization, delegation, and the efficient use of available time. Nurses can reduce stress, improve patient care, and increase job satisfaction by enhancing these skills.

## Conclusion

After conducting this study, it was evident that most nurses possess moderate time management skills. However, a notable percentage of nurses struggle to manage their time effectively. Providing structured training and support to address these challenges can improve outcomes for nurses and their patients.

## Declarations

### Data Availability statement

All data generated or analyzed during the study are included in the manuscript.

### Ethics approval and consent to participate.

Approved by the department concerned. (IRB/SCN-0320/23)

### Consent for publication

Approved

### Funding

Not applicable

## Conflict of interest

The authors declared an absence of conflict of interest.

## Authors Contribution

**SHAROON SHAUKAT (Student BSN Generic)**

*Final Approval of version*

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*Revisiting Critically & Data Analysis*

**SYEDA SIDRA TASNEEM (Director of Nursing)**

*Drafting, Concept & Design of Study*

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