

# Effective Time Management Practices: Awareness and Perceptions

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The purpose of this study was to compare the role of time management skills among academic and administrative staff in an institute

**Study Design:** Descriptive Study

**Place and Duration of Study:** This study was conducted at a Army Medical College, Rawalpindi from July 2015 to September 2015

**Materials and Methods:** Fifty participants were selected through random sampling. After the informed consent the questionnaire was given to the administration and faculty staff of the public sector medical college. Questionnaire based survey was conducted to collect data regarding demographic, awareness about time management and practices to manage time effectively at the institution. Does their organization observe active time management? Has time execution effectively been useful in the accomplishment of their set objectives? Does interaction with the difficult people, role of procrastination and appropriate scheduling effects the effective time management.

**Results:** Twenty-eight (fifty six percent) males and twenty-two (forty four percent) females with mean age of  $43.54 \pm 7.58$  participated in the study. Four (eight percent) were not married and 46 (ninety two percent) were married. Mean job experience of the participants was  $17.55 \pm 7.36$

**Conclusion:** The awareness and perception of the both the genders regarding the effective time management factors is important to plan and execute institute management

**Key Words:** Time management, Training, Effective tool, Work experience

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## INTRODUCTION

Time management training is the most operative tools to augment the efficiency of group work.<sup>1</sup> Time organization training provides participants an exceptional preparation and administrations schemes that help them to enhance performance and improve time management skills. As a director or a sales man, time is the most precious benefit.<sup>1</sup>

Effective time management cannot be twisted when suitable. This skill is an important component of one's life and can help to achieve life's goal. Time management helps to build imaginary chain reaction and enable us to accomplish and achieve our tasks more efficiently.<sup>2</sup>

"Time is a unique quantity that requires it and it passes at the same amount for everyone. Time management involves exploiting time to regulate what one wants out of his happenings."<sup>3</sup> It is important to differentiate between insignificant and significant and make the right decision at right time is the key of success and an important element of the efficiency.<sup>1</sup>

The literature suggests that excessive work load; administrative stress contributes towards difficulty integrating professional and personal life.<sup>4</sup> Studies have

been focused on individual interventions to give training on stress reduction rather than organizational interventions.<sup>5-7</sup>

Time management enables a person to be more productive and efficient. It is technical method for any organization to increase the efficiency and performance of their workers.<sup>8</sup> Though, practicing the time management is not a easy task and organization may encounter problems. The leading author defines time as events going after one another and defines management as the governing the activities'. Therefore, it becomes the act of regulatory.<sup>9</sup>

Research to observe and ponder the people about time includes sociological exploration that analyse time as a social structure. Psychophysical exploration shows time as a mental paradigm where perception of time compares with "clock" time. These explorations agreed that values and social behavior accomplish that how an individual might execute their goals and motivate themselves about time in a certain way and their related conduct.<sup>1, 10-12</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Fifty participants out of a probable population of 128 placed at the public sector medical college as managerial and academic staff were selected after random sampling for the survey based study during from July to Sep 2015. Questionnaire was distributed

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the academic and administrative staff of the public sector medical school after informed consent obtained. Closed ended questions with multiple choices like (Strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) were asked. The questions were carefully prearranged in line with the perseverance of the study. The questions were answered without any sort of pressure and the job experience of each participant accordingly. The data collected regarding demographic, awareness regarding the time management and effective time management practices in the institute. Has effective time management been supportive to attain their set objectives? Does interaction with the difficult people, role of procrastination and proper preparation effects the effective time management.

**Data analysis:** Data was analyzed by statistical software SPSS version 21. Categorical data was expressed in frequencies and percentages. Chi square test was used for the comparison of all the questions among the gender. A  $p$ -value  $<0.05$  was considered significant.

## RESULTS

Twenty-eight (56%) males and twenty-two (44%) females were a part of this study with an average age of

43.54 $\pm$ 7.58. Four (8%) were unmarried and forty-six (92%) were married. Average work experience of these members was 17.55 $\pm$ 7.36.

The response rates of the question no 1: Have you heard about time management before? Shows that 28 (100%) of the male and 22 (100%) of the females said yes. All the respondents are well aware of time management. Response shows that 27 males (96.4%) and 21 (96%) females strongly agreed to the question 2: do you think you need effective time management in your organization? statement. Responses show that participants strongly agreed on need of an effective time management in their institution. Data of 71% male and 63% females was in agreement of practicing effective time management in their organization. Most of the respondents also agreed that practicing time management has improve their achievement, efficiency and output.

Participant data gave an interesting finding that organization was lacking to hold seminar on time management. Most of participants were agreed that stay away from problematic people can enhance their time management skill. Strongly agree was 21(26.5%), agreed 7 (8.8%) undecided while 7 (8.8%) disagreed.

**Table No.1: Responses of both the genders to time management questions.**

| S # | Question   | Question Option | Male      |        | Female    |        | P-value |
|-----|--|-----------------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|---------|
|     |  |                 | Frequency | %age   | Frequency | %age   |         |
| 1   | Are you aware of effective management of time?   | Yes             | 28        | 100 %  | 22        | 100 %  | --      |
|     |  | No              | 0         | 0 %    | 0         | 0 %    |         |
| 2   | Is it your belief that effective time management is of significance at your workplace? | Agree           | 27        | 96.4 % | 21        | 96 %   | 1.000   |
|     |  | Disagree        | 1         | 3.6 %  | 1         | 4.5 %  |         |
| 3   | Is effective time management a common practice in your place of work?                  | Agree           | 20        | 71.4 % | 14        | 63.6 % | 0.558   |
|     |  | Disagree        | 8         | 28.6 % | 8         | 36.4 % |         |
| 4   | Do you achieve your targeted goals by effectively managing your time?                  | Agree           | 27        | 96.4 % | 22        | 100 %  | 1.000   |
|     |  | Disagree        | 1         | 3.6 %  | 0         | 0 %    |         |
| 5   | Do you agree that efficient management of time improves productivity?                  | Agree           | 27        | 96.4 % | 22        | 100 %  | 1.000   |
|     |  | Disagree        | 1         | 3.6 %  | 0         | 0 %    |         |
| 6   | Does the management of your company hold seminars on time management?                  | Yes             | 3         | 10.7 % | 5         | 22.7 % | 0.277   |
|     |  | No              | 25        | 89.3 % | 17        | 77.3 % |         |
| 7   | Does avoiding difficult people (time wasters) aid in managing your time?               | Agree           | 22        | 81.5 % | 19        | 86.4 % | 0.715   |
|     |  | Disagree        | 5         | 18.5 % | 3         | 13.6 % |         |
| 8   | Is procrastination a time waster?  | Agree           | 25        | 92.6 % | 20        | 90.9 % | 1.000   |
|     |  | Disagree        | 2         | 7.4 %  | 2         | 9.1 %  |         |
| 9   | Does having a record list of chores on daily basis help to manage time?                | Yes             | 26        | 92.9 % | 22        | 100 %  | 0.497   |
|     |  | No              | 2         | 7.1 %  | 0         | 0 %    |         |
| 10  | Is planning a major contributor to time management?                                    | Agree           | 27        | 96.4 % | 22        | 100 %  | 1.000   |
|     |  | Disagree        | 1         | 3.6 %  | 0         | 0 %    |         |

Most participant, 25 male 92.6 % and 20 females 90.9% strongly agreed that procrastination causes wastage of time. From the responses, most of the respondents 92.9 % males and 100% female strongly agreed that daily work plan helps in time manage. From the responses, most of the respondent's 96.4 % males and 100 % females strongly agreed that planning is pivotal for the efficient management of time. Table 1.

When the responses were compared statistically no significance was achieved. Male and female responses irrespective of their job and service duration shared the same knowledge and perceptions regarding the time management skills and factors.

## DISCUSSION

Performance can be gauged by constant positive outcome of various projects over a long time period. Performance is the litmus test for the stability and success of an organization which can only be achieved by constantly following a strict time management plan. An organization can only be marked excellent performer if it out performs its competitors without fail for a longer period.<sup>13</sup>

Some studies have paid attention to three types of behaviors in regard to time management, that is: time assessment behavior, planning behavior and monitoring behavior.<sup>14</sup> In our study participants were aware of the need to- maintain the things to do list to guide through a busy life and to help keep on track. In time assessment behavior one should have knowledge of past, present and the future and should be conscious of the proper use of time with an ability to take responsibility to fulfill the assigned task within the time limit adeptly. In planning behavior all the tools of setting goals, identifying the priorities, planning activities and group tasks must be followed with an aim of using the time effectually. The focus of monitoring behavior is to be alert of the use of time while going through all the planned chores. This can be done by creating such pointers that help to minimize the environmental interruptions.<sup>15</sup>

Successful time management is based on the key to plan ahead and then follow the planned schedule which only works if surrounding and the outlook of others is also changed. In our study respondents were aware of the purpose of effective goal setting to achieve successful and decisive actions in a lesser time frame. Successful people have in communal that they are extremely focused and goal oriented. The 80-20 rule can be the start of a successful time management by setting such goals that will provide 80 percent of the reward with an effort of only 20 percent. This can be achieved by planning the daily tasks providing time for interruptions as well. Pressing errands contain immediate penalties but important tasks contain objective-oriented results.<sup>16</sup> This can be avoided by setting a cutoff date or time for highlighted tasks.

Eliminating useless breaks also makes the task easier.<sup>17-19</sup> It also saves time if unplanned burning matters of family and friends be avoided. Giving importance to your goals and saying "no" to unimportant in life also helps.<sup>20</sup> Managing time wisely should become a personality trait for all the people working for an organization for it to be asuccessful.<sup>21</sup> It is possible by constant reminders by the management to its employees by conducting regular workshops to create awareness.

The respondents were aware that in order to overcome our procrastination, we must first understand what causes us to procrastinate. A majority of the time we procrastinate is because we find the task we are trying to complete hostile. We decide the job is too boring to harvest our full attention and resolve to spend time elsewhere. We fail to see the importance in finishing a task on time and often neglect deadlines. When our brains become scattered, all the attention we give to completing a task goes out the frame.<sup>22</sup> Multiple tasks can cause stress to crash down on our decision-making skills. It's important to remember that just because we forget about an important task doesn't mean it is going to disappear.

## CONCLUSION

The awareness and perception of the both the genders regarding the effective time management factors is important to plan and execute institute management

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**Conflict of Interest:** The study has no conflict of interest to declare by any author.

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