

The Examination of Time Management Skills of Healthcare Professions

Yasemin Özel* Ergün Hasgöl Tuğba Duzcu

Tosya Vocational High School, Kastamonu University, PO box 37300, Tosya, Kastamonu, Turkey

Abstract

Effective and at the same time efficient time management is a key area of management at which healthcare professionals must be proficient. Today, having the ability to manage and use the time effectively and efficiently is highly important. Taking into consideration that healthcare service is a process and the effectiveness of this process mostly depends on good use of time, it can be said that healthcare personnel assuming the responsibility for health care services should be proficient in time management. The aim of this study was to examine the adequacy of time management skills of healthcare personnel working in public institutions providing health care services. All healthcare personnel working in Tosya State Hospital and who agreed to participate in the study were included in the sample group. Personal Information Form and Time Management Inventory (TMI) were applied to participants to collect data. Four main theme were viewed, Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Study Group, Difference between the Work Experience of Participants and Time Management Inventory Scores, Difference between the Work Experience of Participants and Time Traps Sub-Dimension Scores, Difference between the Age of Participants and Time Traps Sub-Dimension Scores. Women obtained better scores in methods of effective time management than men, personnel working only during the day received higher scores than personnel working in shifts, mean scores increased with experience in the field, healthcare personnel used time more efficiently with increasing age, and married participants obtained higher scores than single participants.

Keywords: Time management, Effective use of time, Time traps, Healthcare personnel

1. Introduction

The concept of "time" is a process in which events happen beyond the control of the individual and continue from the past to the future uninterruptedly. Also, the concept of time is relative. In this context, it is not possible to make a clear and general definition of time (Akatay, 2003:282). Time is one of the most important resources that people have and the good use of this resource brings success and happiness. However, most people continue their daily lives without realizing this. It is necessary to have good management skills in order to be aware of the concept of time and to use it effectively and efficiently (Özer, 2010, p.24). Time management is one of the most important keys used on the road to success. Correctly planning time, using the day effectively and creating free time slots by completing all the tasks in a day are effective time management skills (Başak, et al., 2008, p.429; Erdem et al., 2004, p.167; Satılmış, 2018; Gözel and Halat, 2010, p.74).

Time management is also defined from a personal perspective as the process of applying management functions to one's own activities to increase productivity and efficiency so that individuals can realize their goals in social and business life, or in other words, the ability to consciously control time. Time management is one of the most important elements of success in business life (Kocabaş and Erdem 2003: 204). Efficient use of time is a tool that helps people achieve their individual and professional goals in life (Satılmış, M., 2018: Kıdak, 2011, p.162). Today, the chances of individuals achieving success by using time effectively are diminishing, as there are factors such as the rapid tempo of life, keeping up with constantly developing and changing technology, and frequent use of social media. In this framework, it is necessary to complete tasks correctly with appropriate scheduling in a short time, instead of making mistakes by completing the task as quickly as possible. For this reason, people should manage themselves and how they use their own time (Başak et al., 2008, p.429; Erdem et al., 2004, 168; Gözel and Halat, 2010, p.75).

Time management is particularly important for hospitals, as they are one of the institutions that provide services on a 24 hour basis. All healthcare personnel in the hospital have some responsibilities, such as managing and using time effectively to satisfy the client and enable the clients to happily leave the hospital in the shortest time possible. Healthcare services are very sensitive about time management. This sensitivity makes the concept of time very important in the management of healthcare services and providing quality service (Eroğlu and Özgür, 2016, p.13; Kıdak, 2011, p.164). Today, institutions providing healthcare services prioritize the use of physical environments in terms of equipment and medical technologies in accordance with expectations, the quality of individuals providing healthcare services, and the effective use of time as criteria that determine the quality of healthcare services provided (Ministry of Health, MoH, 2009). Time management is using time as best as possible and fitting more work and activity into a limited time frame. Hospitals are institutions that have to perform daily healthcare services in specific areas within a certain time period. Individuals who apply to hospitals should receive care and treatment services in the shortest possible time, under appropriate conditions,

with reliable diagnostic tools and appropriate diagnoses under the best circumstances.

While poor management of time in institutions other than those providing healthcare services only result in material and financial loss, ineffective management of time in healthcare institutions can cause loss of life together with material and financial losses (Eroğlu and Özgür, 2016, p.13; Hartley and Kramer, 1991, p.308). For this reason, all employees in healthcare services should be knowledgeable about effective and efficient use of time, determine the goals and objectives required by their professional roles, and take advantage of effective time management practices in performing their roles and providing care to the patients (Kıdak, 2011, p.164). The concept of time management has a strong influence on quality of healthcare. For this reason, this study was conducted to examine the time management skills of healthcare personnel working in public institutions and organizations providing healthcare services.

2. Method

2.1. Population and Sample

Population of this study consisted of healthcare personnel working in Kastamonu Province Tosya State Hospital. When the sample of the study was determined, the study was announced to all personnel working in the hospital using simple random sampling and 121 healthcare personnel who volunteered to participate were included in the study.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

Literature was screened for data collection tools, and personal information form including descriptive information of healthcare personnel was developed, and used together with time management statements used in the thesis study of Ardiç (2010). Out of 40 statements, 13 statements aim to determine Effective Time Management Methods and 27 statements aim to identify Time Traps (factors that prevent effective use of time). 5-point Likert type scale was used for the statements between 1 and 30. "Completely disagree" was scored 1, whereas "Completely agree" was scored 5. 5-point Likert type scale was used for the statements between 31 and 40. "Too much" was scored 1, whereas "never" was scored 5. Negative statements were inversely scored. Based on the scoring, it was considered that individuals with high scores were less affected by time traps that prevented effective use of time, and they had more knowledge on methods of effective time management (Ardıç, 2010). In our study, "rotated (Varimax) Principal Component Analysis" was performed to check the validity of the questionnaire form. As a result of the analysis, questions that measured the same and different factors were determined, and item factor loads were investigated to identify questions located within the same structure. An item factor load of 0.30 and above was accepted to be satisfactory (Köklü and Büyüköztürk, 2000; Büyüköztürk, 2002). Accordingly, 5 items with an item factor load below 0.30 were excluded from the scale. The internal consistency coefficient, Cronbach Alpha, which shows the reliability of the scale, was found to be 0.716.

2.3. Data Analysis

Based on the characteristics of the variables, t-test and ANOVA were used to test for the difference between the variables and the significance levels. Tukey and LSD tests were conducted to determine the relationship between the variables. The quantitative information obtained was analysed with the help of SPSS 16 package software program. Significance levels were taken as .05, .01 and .001.

3. Results and Discussion

121 personnel working in Tosya State Hospital volunteered to participate in the study. 60.3% of the participants were female (73), 39.7% were male (48). 64.5% were married (78) and 35.5% were single (43). 41.3% (50) had undergraduate/graduate degrees, 39.7% (48) had associate degrees, and 19% (23) were high school graduates. 37.2% were between 31 and 40 years old, 28.9% were between 26 and 30 years old, 14.0% were between 41 and 50 years old, 13.2% were between 20 and 25 years old, and 6.6% were 51 years old and over (Table 1). In terms of occupation, approximately half of the participants (43.8%) were nurses, 17.4% were officers, 12.4% were healthcare officers, 9.1% were emergency medical technicians, 6.6% were doctors, and 10.8% were midwives, dentists, laboratory technicians, anaesthesia technicians and dieticians (Table 1).

In terms of work experience, one third of the participants (33.9%) were in the first five years of their professional life, one third (33.9%) had 11-15 years of work experience, 9.9% had more than 21 years, 14.0% had 6-10 years, and 8.3% had 16-20 years of work experience. Half of the participants (51.2%) stated that they worked only during daytime, 34.7% had hospital watch duty and 14% worked both daytime and had hospital watch duty (Table 1).

A significant difference was found between participants' work experience and Time Management Inventory (TMI) mean scores ($P = 0.000$). Accordingly, as work experience increased, mean TMI score also increased (Table 2). In his study, Fidan (2011, pp. 47-74) reached the conclusion that an increase in seniority and work experience increases the sensitivity to time management. On the other hand, Akyüz et al. (2015, p.110) found no

significant difference between work experience and time management skills.

There was no difference between the gender, age, manner of work, marital status, educational status and occupations of the personnel and total TMI scores ($P > 0.05$). Several studies found that marital status, educational status, and age were not significant in terms of time management (Kıdak, 2011, p.168; Eldeleklioğlu, 2008). In contrast to these studies, some studies found significant differences between age and time management skills (Misra and McKean, 2000; Başak, Uzun and Arslan, 2008; Akyüz et al., 2015, p. 100).

When the difference between the gender of healthcare personnel and the scores obtained in methods of effective time management sub-scale was examined, a significant difference was found in the scores obtained between male and female participants ($P = 0.010$). It was found that women obtained higher scores ($\bar{X}=44.31$, $SD=9.30$) in methods of effective time management than men ($\bar{X}=39.71$, $SD=8.99$). There are many studies in the literature reporting that women use time more effectively than men (Macan et al., 1990; Saketi and Taheri, 2010; Kıdak, 2011, p 168; Kaushar and Mehnaz, 2013; Al-Khatib, 2014).

In terms of manner of work, it was found that personnel working only during daytime obtained significantly higher scores in methods of effective time management sub-scale ($\bar{X}=44.13$, $SD=9.32$) compared to personnel working in hospital watches ($\bar{X}=39.93$, $SD=8.99$) ($P = 0.029$).

It was seen that as work experience increased, mean scores obtained in methods of effective time management sub-scale also increased. However, this increase was not statistically significant ($P > 0.05$). No significant difference was found between age, educational status, marital status, occupational status and methods of effective time management sub-scale scores ($P > 0.05$).

There was a statistically significant difference between work experience and time traps sub-scale scores ($P = 0.000$). Accordingly, as work experience increased, mean scores obtained in the time traps sub-scale also increased (Table 3). There are similar studies in the literature reporting consistent results (Akyüz et al., 2015, p. 101)

There was a statistically significant difference between healthcare personnel in different age groups in terms of the mean scores obtained in time traps sub-scale ($P = 0.000$). Accordingly, it was seen that the mean time traps sub-scale scores of participants between the ages of 26 and 30 ($\bar{X} = 61.11$, $SD = 8.17$) were significantly lower than those of participants between the ages of 31 and 40 ($\bar{X} = 67.93$, $SD = 6.88$), 41 and 50 ($\bar{X} = 69.94$, $SD = 6.89$), and 51 and above ($\bar{X} = 70.25$, $SD = 8.79$) (Table 4). As age increased, mean scores obtained in time traps sub-scale also increased. As participants grow older, their awareness of time traps also increases and they can use time more efficiently. In his study, Sökmen (2012, p.134) also found that older people were less likely to fall into time traps. Öncel et al. (2005, p.205) found that those who were 45 years old or above were aware of time traps and used time more efficiently than those who were between the ages of 25-34.

A significant difference was found in mean time traps sub-scale scores of healthcare personnel in terms of marital status ($P = 0.048$). It was found that married participants obtained significantly higher scores ($\bar{X}=67.02$, $SD=8.21$) than single participants ($\bar{X}=64.00$, $SD=7.54$). Similar results were found in several other studies (Örücü, Tikici ve Kanbur, 2007, p 28; Sökmen, 2012, p.133). There was no significant difference between the participants' mean Time Traps sub-scale scores in terms of gender, manner of work, educational status and occupational status ($P > 0.05$). Contrary to this result, in some studies, it was seen that women's time traps sub-scale scores differed significantly from that of men (Gözel, 2010, p 75; Kıdak, 2011, p.169)

4. Conclusion And Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained in this study, it was seen that majority of the sample group consisted of females (60.3%), were married (64.5%), had undergraduate/graduate degrees (43.8%), approximately half of the participants were nurses (43.8%), most participants were in the first 5 years of their professional life or had 11 to 15 years of work experience, and approximately half of the participants were working only during the day. It was found that as the work experience of healthcare personnel increased, mean scores obtained in Time Management Inventory also increased, women obtained better scores in methods of effective time management than men, personnel working only during the day received higher scores than personnel working in shifts, mean scores increased with experience in the field, healthcare personnel used time more efficiently with increasing age, and married participants obtained higher scores than single participants. Based on these findings obtained in this study, following recommendations were made:

- In-service trainings on time management should be provided to healthcare personnel who are starting to work in a hospital and personnel working in shifts.
- Effective time management surveys should be periodically conducted on healthcare personnel, and their awareness of this issue should be increased.
- Daily work programs/schedules should be established in work areas to reduce workload and increase

productivity.

- This study should be repeated on a larger sample to investigate factors that affect the effective use of time.

References

- Akatay, A. (2003), "Örgütlerde Zaman Yönetimi", Selçuk Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Konya: Selçuk Üniversitesi Matbaası.
- Akyüz, B., Ünal, Ö.F., Mete, M. & Doger, F. (2015), "İnşaat Sektöründe Zaman Yönetimi: Irak'ın Kuzeyindeki Türk Şantiyeleri Üzerine Bir Araştırma", *Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, **21** (1), 85-106.
- Al-Khatib, A.S. (2014), "Time Management and Its Relation to Students' Stress, Gender and Academic Achievement among Sample of Students at Al Ain University of Science and Technology, UAE", *International Journal of Business and Social Research (IJBSR)*, Volume **4** (5), 47-58.
- Ardıç, C. (2010), "Zaman Yönetimi ve Zaman Yönetiminde Dönüştürücü Liderlerin Davranışlarını Belirlemeye Yönelik Bir Araştırma", *Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi*, Gazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Başak, T., Uzun, Ş. & Arslan, F. (2008), "Hemşirelik Yüksekokulu Öğrencilerinin Zaman Yönetimi Becerileri", *TAF Preventive Medicine Bulletin*, **7**(5), 429-434.
- Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2002), "Sosyal Bilimler İçin Veri Analizi El Kitabı", Ankara: Pegem A Yayıncılık.
- Eldeleklioğlu, J. (2008), "Ergenlerin Zaman Yönetimi Becerilerinin Kaygı, Yas, Cinsiyet Değişkenleri Açısından İncelenmesi", *İlköğretim Online*, **7**(3), 656-663.
- Erdem, R., Pirinççi, E., & Dikmetaş, E. (2004), "Üniversite öğrencilerinin Zaman yönetimi davranışları ve Bu Davranışların Akademik Başarı İle İlişkisi", *Manas Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, **7** (14), 167-177.
- Eroğlu, S. & Özgür G. (2016), "Bir Üniversite Hastanesinde Çalışan Servis ve Yoğun Bakım Hemşirelerinde Zaman Yönetimi", *Gümüşhane Üniversitesi Sağlık Bilimleri Dergisi*, **5**(1), 12-22.
- Fidan, Y. (2011), "Özel Sektör ve Kamu Yöneticilerinin Zaman Yönetimi Davranışlarının Karşılaştırılması", *Adıyaman Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, **4**(6), 47-74.
- Gözel, E. (2010), "İlköğretim okulu öğretmenlerinin zaman yönetimi hakkındaki görüşlerinin bazı değişkenler açısından incelenmesi", *Muğla Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi (İLKE)*, **24**, 67-84.
- Gözel, E., & Halat, E. (2010), "İlköğretim Okulu Öğretmenleri ve Zaman Yönetimi", *Pamukkale Üniversitesi sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, **6**, 73-91.
- Hartley, H.J. & Kramer, J.A. (1991), "Time Management And Leadership Styles: An Empirical Study Long Term. Health Care Administrators", *Journal of health administration education*, **9**(3), 307-322.
- Kaushar, M. (2013), "Study of impact of time management on academic performance of college students", *Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, **9**(6), 59-60.
- Kıdak, L.B. (2011), "Hastane Yöneticilerinin Zaman Yönetimi Tutumlarının Belirlenmesi: İzmir İli Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastaneleri Uygulaması", *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, **25**, 159-172.
- Kocabaş, İ. & Erdem, R. (2003), "Yönetici adayı öğretmenlerin kişisel zaman yönetimi davranışları", *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, **13**(2), 203-210.
- Köklü, N. & Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2000), "Sosyal Bilimler İçin İstatistiğe Giriş", Ankara: Pegem Yayıncılık.
- Macan, T. H., Shahani, C., Dipboye, R. L. & Phillips, A. P. (1990), "College students' time management: Correlations with academic performance and stres", *Journal of Educational Psychology*, **82**, 760-768.
- Ministry of Health in Turkey, MoH, 2009 Retrieved on <https://dosyamerkez.saglik.gov.tr/eklenti/3460,skshastanesetiv5r1pdf.pdf?0>. 19.04.2018
- Misra, R., & McKean, M. (2000), "College Students' Academic Stress and its Relation to their Anxiety, Time Management, and Leisure Satisfaction", *American Journal of Health Studies*, **16**(1), 41-51.
- Öncel, C., Büyüköztürk, Ş. & Özçelikay G. (2005), "Serbest eczacıların zaman yönetimi", *Ankara Eczacılık Fakültesi Dergisi*, **34** (3), 191-206.
- Örücü, E., Tikici, M. & Kanbur, A. (2007), "Farklı sektörlerde faaliyetlerini sürdüren işletmelerde zaman yönetimi üzerine ampirik bir araştırma: Bursa İli Örneği", *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, **6** (20), 9-31.
- Özer, A. (2010), "Verimli Örgüt Yönetimi İçin Zaman Yönetimi", *Çimento İşveren Dergisi*, **1** (24), 16-35.
- Saketi, P. & Taheri, A. (2010), "The relationship between time management and academic achievements among bachelor and master students of Shiraz University and Shiraz University of Medical Sciences", *Iranian Journal of Medical Education*, **10** (3), 293-300.
- Satılmış, M. "Zaman Yönetimi ve Zaman Yönetiminde Pareto Kuralı", Retrieved on <http://obilir.com/zamaninizi-yonetmek-icin-pareto/> 12.03.2018.
- Sökmen, A. (2012), "Yöneticiler Zamanı Nasıl Yönetiyor? Ankara'daki Hastanelerde Bir Uygulama", *İşletme Araştırmaları Dergisi*, **4** (4), 126-140.
- Yılmaz, A. & Koçak, M. (2009), "Hastane Rollerini", Sağlık Bakanlığı Tedavi Hizmetleri Genel Müdürlüğü, <https://dosyasb.saglik.gov.tr/.../1031,020-hastane-yatak-ve-rolleri-tescil-kriterleridoc>. 12.03.2018.

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Study Group

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	N=121	%
Gender		
Female	73	60,3
Male	48	39,7
Marital Status		
Married	78	64,5
Single	43	35,5
Age		
20-25	16	13,2
26-30	35	28,9
31-40	45	37,2
41-50	17	14,0
51 and above	8	6,6
Educational Status		
High School	23	19,0
Associate	48	39,7
Undergraduate/Graduate	50	41,3
Work Experience		
0-5 years	41	33,9
6-10 years	17	14,0
11-15 years	41	33,9
16-20 years	10	8,3
21 years and above	12	9,9
Occupational Status		
Nurse	53	43,8
Officer	21	17,4
Healthcare Officer	15	12,4
Emergency Medical Technician	11	9,1
Doctor	8	6,6
Midwife	4	3,3
Dentist	3	2,5
Laboratory Technician	3	2,5
Anaesthesia Technician	2	1,7
Dietician	1	0,8
Manner of Work		
Shift Structure	42	34,7
Only Daytime	62	51,2
Daytime and Shifts	17	14,0

Table 2. Difference between the Work Experience of Participants and Time Management Inventory Scores

Work Experience	N	\bar{X}	SS	P	Significant Difference
0-5 years	41	100,37	8,59	,000	1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 2-5
6-10 years	17	105,94	9,34		
11-15 years	41	111,78	8,06		
16-20 years	10	117,90	8,24		
21 years and above	12	120,25	7,97		
Total	121	108,44	8,55		

Table 3. Difference between the Work Experience of Participants and Time Traps Sub-Dimension Scores

Work Experience	N	\bar{X}	SS	P	Significant Difference
0-5 years	41	58,27	3,59	,000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 2-1, 2-3, 2-4, 2-5, 3-5
6-10 years	17	64,35	2,49		
11-15 years	41	69,41	2,40		
16-20 years	10	74,00	3,07		
21 years and above	12	75,92	3,03		
Total	121	65,95	2,85		

Table 4. Difference between the Age of Participants and Time Traps Sub-Dimension Scores

Age	N	\bar{X}	SS	P	Significant Difference
20-25	16	64,56	7,02	,000	2-3, 2-4, 2- 5
26-30	35	61,11	8,17		
31-40	45	67,93	6,88		
41-50	17	69,94	6,89		
51 and above	8	70,25	8,79		
Total	121	65,95	8,08		