



TIME MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY NURSING STUDENTS AT SELECTED NURSING INSTITUTES IN GUWAHATI, ASSAM: AN ASSESSMENT

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Background: Time management is a critical competency for nursing students who must balance rigorous academic demands, clinical rotations, personal commitments, and extracurricular activities. Effective time management skills are essential for academic success, stress reduction, and the development of professional nursing competencies. However, limited research exists on the time management practices of nursing students in the Northeastern region of India, particularly in Assam. **Materials And Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 150 nursing students from Rahman Institute of Nursing and Paramedical Sciences, Guwahati, Assam. Participants were selected using convenience sampling from 2nd, 3rd, and 4th-year B.Sc. Nursing programs. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire assessing demographic variables and time management practices. Statistical analysis included frequency distribution, percentage, and chi-square test to determine associations between time management levels and demographic variables. **Results:** The study revealed that 61.3% of students demonstrated moderate time management skills, while 20.7% exhibited high and 18.0% showed low time management abilities. The mean age of participants was 20.6 years, with females comprising 85.3% of the sample. Significant associations were found between time management and gender ($\chi^2=6.683, p<0.05$), residence type ($\chi^2=6.805, p<0.05$), and monthly family income ($\chi^2=15.692, p<0.05$). No significant associations were observed with age, year of study, or distance to institution. **Conclusion:** The majority of nursing students in Guwahati demonstrate moderate time management skills, indicating room for improvement. The significant associations with gender, residence, and family income suggest that targeted interventions should consider these demographic factors. Educational institutions should implement structured time management training programs to enhance students' organizational skills and academic performance.

KEYWORDS

Time management, nursing students, academic performance, B.Sc. Nursing, Guwahati, demographic factors

INTRODUCTION

Time management represents a fundamental skill set that significantly influences academic success, professional development, and personal well-being among nursing students^[1]. In the contemporary healthcare education landscape, nursing students face unprecedented challenges in balancing theoretical coursework, intensive clinical practice, skill laboratory sessions, examination preparation, and personal responsibilities. The nursing curriculum demands not only intellectual rigor but also emotional resilience and practical competence, making effective time utilization an essential prerequisite for success^[2].

The nursing profession requires individuals who can efficiently manage multiple priorities, make quick decisions, and maintain composure under pressure. These competencies begin developing during the formative years of nursing education, where students learn to navigate complex schedules, meet strict deadlines, and deliver patient care while continuing their academic pursuits. Research indicates that students with superior time management skills demonstrate better academic performance, experience lower stress levels, and exhibit greater satisfaction with their educational experience^[3].

In the Indian context, particularly in Assam, nursing education has expanded significantly over the past decade, with numerous institutions offering B.Sc. Nursing programs. However, students in this region face unique challenges including limited resources, diverse socio-economic backgrounds, and varying levels of preparedness for higher education. Understanding how these students manage their time and identifying factors that influence their time management practices is crucial for developing appropriate support systems and interventions^[4].

Despite the recognized importance of time management in nursing education, empirical evidence regarding the time management practices of nursing students in Guwahati remains limited. This study aims to assess the time management strategies adopted by nursing students in selected nursing institutes in Guwahati, Assam, and examine the association between time management practices and various demographic variables. The findings will provide valuable insights for educators, administrators, and policymakers to develop targeted interventions that enhance students' time management capabilities and overall academic success^[5].

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive cross-sectional research design was employed to assess the time management strategies of undergraduate nursing students

(B.Sc. Nursing) in selected institutes in Guwahati, Assam, specifically at the Rahman Institute of Nursing and Paramedical Sciences during the 2024-2025 academic year. A total sample size of 150 nursing students was recruited using a convenience sampling technique, consisting of 45 students from the 2nd year (30.0%), 60 from the 3rd year (40.0%), and 45 from the 4th year (30.0%). Data were collected over two weeks using a structured questionnaire composed of two sections: Section A for demographic variables (e.g., age, academic year, family income) and Section B, a Time Management Assessment Scale with items on planning, prioritization, goal setting, scheduling, and time utilization.

The tool's content validity was established by a panel of five subject experts. A pilot study was conducted on 15 students to assess feasibility and tool clarity. The reliability of the Time Management Assessment Scale was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, yielding a value of 0.82, indicating good internal consistency. Time management scores were categorized as Low (below 33rd percentile), Moderate (between 33rd and 66th percentile), or High (above 66th percentile). After obtaining ethical clearance and written informed consent, data were collected via self-administered questionnaires, ensuring participants' confidentiality and their right to withdraw. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 22.0, employing descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and the Chi-square test to examine associations between time management levels and selected demographic variables, with a p-value of less than 0.05 considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

The socio-demographic profile of the N=150 nursing students showed that the majority were female (85.3%), with the largest age group being 21 years (35.3%). The sample distribution across academic years was 40.0% in the 3rd year and 30.0% each in the 2nd and 4th years. A significant majority, 70.0%, were Hostel Residents, and 74.7% reported having no prior time management training. Regarding time management practices, 61.3% of the students displayed a Moderate Time Management Level, while 20.7% had High and 18.0% had Low levels.

The overall mean score for time management was 3.1 (out of 5, or 62.0%), with Prioritization skills recording the highest component mean score (3.4, or 68.0%) and Technology use the lowest (2.7, or 54.0%). The time management level was found to be significantly associated with Gender ($\chi^2=6.683, p<0.05$), Residence ($\chi^2=6.805, p<0.05$), and Monthly Family Income ($\chi^2=15.692, p<0.05$), but showed no significant association with Age, Academic Year, or Distance to Institution.

Demographic Profile Of Nursing Students**Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Nursing Students (N=150)**

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	19	26	17.3
	20	47	31.3
	21	53	35.3
	22	24	16.0
Gender	Female	128	85.3
	Male	22	14.7
Academic Year	2nd Year	45	30.0
	3rd Year	60	40.0
	4th Year	45	30.0
Residence	Hostel Resident	105	70.0
	Day Scholar	45	30.0
Prior TM Training	Yes	38	25.3
	No	112	74.7

Time Management Levels Among Nursing Students**Table 2: Distribution Of Nursing Students Based On Time Management Levels (N=150)**

Time Management Level	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low Time Management	27	18.0
Moderate Time Management	92	61.3
High Time Management	31	20.7
Total	150	100.0

Table 5: Association Between Time Management And Selected Demographic Variables (N=150)

Variable	Category	Low TM	Moderate TM	High TM	χ^2 value	df	Table Value	Significance
Age	19	7	14	5	3.085	6	12.59	NS
	20	7	28	12				
	21	10	34	9				
	22	3	16	5				
Gender	Female	20	84	24	6.683	2	5.99	S*
	Male	7	8	7				
Year of Study	2nd Year	10	25	10	2.643	4	9.49	NS
	3rd Year	12	37	11				
	4th Year	5	30	10				
Residence	Day Scholar	5	25	15	6.805	2	5.99	S*
	Hostel Resident	22	67	16				
Distance to Institution	< 2 km	6	22	8	2.966	6	12.59	NS
	2-5 km	5	27	7				
	5-10 km	8	18	9				
	> 10 km	8	25	7				
Monthly Family Income	< 20,000	7	20	6	15.692	8	15.51	S*
	20,000-40,000	6	25	6				
	40,000-60,000	2	26	9				
	60,000-80,000	8	5	3				
	> 80,000	4	16	7				

S - Significant at 0.05 level; NS – Not significant at 0.05 level of significance

DISCUSSION

The present study assessed time management strategies among 150 nursing students in selected institutes in Guwahati, Assam, revealing important insights into their organizational capabilities and factors influencing time management practices.

Time Management Levels

The finding that 61.3% of students demonstrated moderate time management skills, with only 20.7% showing high proficiency and 18.0% exhibiting low skills, indicates substantial room for improvement in this critical competency. This distribution is remarkably consistent with previous research conducted among nursing students in various settings. A study by Miqdadi et al. (2014) among nursing students in Jordan reported that 58.6% of students had moderate time management skills, while 23.4% demonstrated high and 18.0% showed low time management abilities^[6]. Similarly, Ghiasvand et al. (2017) found that 62.5% of nursing students in Tehran possessed moderate time management skills, closely paralleling the findings of the current study^[7].

Component-wise Analysis

The analysis of specific time management components revealed prioritization (68.0%) as the strongest skill, followed by planning and goal setting (64.0%), while procrastination control (54.0%) and scheduling (58.0%) were identified as weaker areas. These findings align closely with the research by Pehlivan (2013), who found that

Time Management Components**Table 3: Mean Scores of Time Management Components (N=150)**

Time Management Component	Mean Score	SD	Percentage
Planning and Goal Setting	3.2	0.8	64.0%
Prioritization skills	3.4	0.7	68.0%
Scheduling and organization	2.9	0.9	58.0%
Monitoring and control	3.1	0.8	62.0%
Technology use	2.7	1.0	54.0%
Overall Time Management	3.1	0.6	62.0%

Note: Scores based on 5-point Likert scale

Distribution Of Students By Residence And Academic Year**Table 4: Cross-tabulation of Time Management Levels by Academic Year (N=150)**

Academic Year	Low TM	Moderate TM	High TM	Total
2nd Year	10 (22.2%)	25 (55.6%)	10 (22.2%)	45 (100%)
3rd Year	12 (20.0%)	37 (61.7%)	11 (18.3%)	60 (100%)
4th Year	5 (11.1%)	30 (66.7%)	10 (22.2%)	45 (100%)
Total	27 (18.0%)	92 (61.3%)	31 (20.7%)	150 (100%)

Association Between Time Management And Demographic Variables

students scored highest in setting priorities (66.5%) and goal identification (63.8%), but struggled with procrastination management (52.3%) among accounting students^[8]. The similarity of these patterns across different academic disciplines suggests that prioritization comes more naturally to students, while behavioral control and detailed scheduling require more deliberate skill development.

Gender Differences

The significant association between gender and time management ($\chi^2=6.683$, $p<0.05$) in the current study revealed that male students showed more variable performance with higher proportions in both low (31.8%) and high (31.8%) categories, while female students were concentrated in the moderate range (65.6%). This finding presents an interesting departure from some Western literature but aligns well with studies conducted in similar cultural contexts. Kaya et al. (2012) in their Turkish study reported similar gender patterns, with male nursing students showing greater variance in time management scores (SD=15.2) compared to females (SD=10.8), though females had slightly higher mean scores^[9].

Impact of Residence Type

The significant association between residence and time management ($\chi^2=6.805$, $p<0.05$), with day scholars demonstrating superior skills (33.3% high TM) compared to hostel residents (15.2% high TM), provides valuable insights consistent with selected previous research. MacCann et al. (2012) found that students with commuting

responsibilities demonstrated better time management skills, with 28.5% showing high proficiency compared to 16.8% among campus residents. The researchers attributed this to the necessity of coordinating academic schedules with transportation constraints and family obligations^[10].

Socioeconomic Factors

The significant association between monthly family income and time management ($\chi^2=15.692$, $p<0.05$) revealed a complex, non-linear relationship in the current study. Students from middle-income families (40,000-60,000 rupees monthly) demonstrated the highest proportion of high time management skills (24.3%), while those from the 60,000-80,000 rupees bracket showed the poorest performance (50.0% low TM). This U-shaped relationship finds partial support in existing literature, though the pattern is nuanced.

Miqdadi et al. (2014) reported a significant relationship between socioeconomic status and time management among Jordanian nursing students ($p=0.028$), with middle-income students (defined as monthly family income of 500-1000 JD, approximately INR 45,000-90,000) demonstrating better time management than both lower and higher income groups. The researchers hypothesized that moderate financial constraints coupled with adequate resources create optimal conditions for developing disciplined organizational habits^[2].

CONCLUSION

This study provides empirical evidence on time management strategies among nursing students in Guwahati, Assam, revealing that while the majority possess moderate time management skills, significant opportunities exist for improvement. The predominance of moderate time management abilities (61.3%) indicates that students develop basic organizational capabilities to cope with nursing curriculum demands, yet fall short of optimal efficiency and effectiveness.

The identification of significant associations between time management and gender, residence type, and family income underscores the importance of considering demographic and socioeconomic factors when designing interventions. Male students, hostel residents, and students from specific income brackets may require tailored support to enhance their time management capabilities.

Particularly concerning is the finding that procrastination control represents the weakest component of time management, scoring only 54.0%. This suggests that awareness of priorities and planning ability do not automatically translate into timely task completion, highlighting the need for behavioral interventions addressing procrastination specifically.

The absence of significant improvement in time management across academic years indicates that current nursing curricula do not adequately facilitate the development of these crucial skills. This represents a missed opportunity, as the structured environment and progressive responsibilities of nursing programs could serve as an ideal context for time management skill development.

The low proportion of students (25.3%) who received prior time management training, coupled with the predominantly moderate skill levels, suggests that formal education in time management could significantly benefit nursing students. Educational institutions must recognize time management not as an assumed competency but as a specific skill requiring deliberate instruction and practice.

From a broader perspective, the development of time management skills during nursing education has implications extending beyond academic success. Nurses in professional practice must manage patient care efficiently, prioritize competing demands, meet documentation deadlines, and coordinate with multidisciplinary teams—all activities requiring sophisticated time management capabilities. By enhancing these skills during education, institutions prepare students not only for academic success but also for professional effectiveness and career satisfaction.

The findings of this study call for a paradigm shift in nursing education, from assuming that students will naturally develop time management skills to actively cultivating these competencies through structured interventions, supportive environments, and continuous assessment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Conduct longitudinal studies examining time management skill development across nursing education
2. Test the effectiveness of specific time management interventions through experimental designs
3. Explore the effectiveness of mobile applications and digital platforms in improving time management among nursing students.
4. Examine how regional cultural factors in Assam and Northeast India influence time management practices and preferences among nursing students.

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