Time Management Skills And Academic Stress Among Nursing students At the College of Nursing, ABHA, King Khalid University

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Abstract

Background: Good time management behaviours such as establishing objectives and priorities as well as monitoring the use of time can facilitate productivity, greater academic achievement and minimise depression, anxiety and stress in students. **The aim of this study** was to assess the relation between time management skills and stress level among nursing students. **Methods:** The study was conducted at the College of Nursing, ABHA, King Khalid University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, using a descriptive design. A convenience sample from 2nd year nursing students (n=60). Two tools were used for data collection: time management questionnaire and academic stress scale. **Results:** The study findings indicate that the highest percentage of nursing students had moderate level of time management skills (61.7%),and slightly more than half of nursing students had moderate level of stress (53.3%). **Conclusion and recommendation:** The results of this study add to the body of knowledge regarding students' stress and time management. There was a statistically significant negative correlation between time management skills and stress level among nursing students. Therefore, a time management preparation program and stress management training programs should be provided for nursing students during the orientation period.

Key words: Academic Stress, Nursing Students, Time Management Skills

Introduction

In an era of increasing competition in nursing field, nursing education is considered as one of the most crucial element for improving the quality of professional identity for the future nurses. Today's nursing students are the nucleus of the professional nurses of tomorrow, who will interact with their colleagues and other health care professionals on a daily basis and provide the care for patients, their families and society in the area of health and education in the future. Therefore, nursing students are faced with a lot of academic responsibilities that let them feel that 24 hours in day is too short time due to the nature of their study in nursing such as: assignments, and hospital and laboratory practice as well as the continuous practical and theory exams **(Shalaby & Aldilh, 2019).**

Stress in nursing education is acknowledged as one of the most important issues in the modern world. Stress refers to

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dynamic interaction between the individual and environment. In this interaction, demands, limitations and opportunities related to work may be perceived as threating to surpass the individual resources and skills **(Gomathi & Jasmindebora 2017).**

On the other hand, it should be noted that the dilemmas of academic life are increased due to the demands to fulfill a certain academic program associated with a certain curriculum and, on top of that, the goal of obtaining high grades is also paramount for students. All this generates stress in their academic life mainly because of a deficient or null perception of mechanisms to manage time during university life. Students are faced with an onerous responsibility to organize their study time from their personal and/or social activities (**Ribeiro et al., 2020).**

According to **Sagredo et al. (2020),** time management has been defined as the completion of tasks or activities in a given time, obtaining quality results, through procedures such as planning, organization or prioritization. The goal of time management among nursing student is to improve the quality of activities completed in a restricted amount of time. Good time management behaviours such as establishing objectives and priorities as well as monitoring the use of time can facilitate productivity, greater academic achievement and minimise depression, anxiety and stress in students (**Jenaabadi, etal., 2016; Adams & Blair, 2019),** There are five tips for the nurse students to manage their time effectively: plan for the activities of the day in advance, perform the most important activities first, control interruptions, As well as, determining the learning goals, scheduling realistic time to achieve the goals, prioritizing, using activity log or to-do list, keeping the learning track, liaising

appropriately with the teachers are some of the tips which student can adapt to manage the time effectively **(Bynes, 2018; Nayak, 2018).**

To establish the dimensions referring to time management, **Roblero (2020)** validated an instrument in which four dimensions are considered: (1) 'objectives and priorities', which refers to the establishment of the individual's life project, as well as the objectives to be achieved in long, medium and short term, thus success can be achieved through defined and well planned activities; (2) 'management tools', a set of planned activities that the individual will use to achieve his goals, thus avoiding the generation of possible stress due to poor time management., (3) 'stress generator' is related to the preference for disorganization, an aspect that is contrary to proper planning of activities and that, by default, tends to develop procrastination in people, and (4) 'perception of control', which allows the management of stress at appropriate levels, and avoiding possible crisis situations.

Significance of the study

Time management is a major issue among nursing college students which can affects how they view and use the time available to them, and how they adjust to their academic responsibilities. Some of nursing college students are very stressful by: busy schedules, midterms, final examinations, research papers, other assignments, and clinical experiences at hospitals. They often feel stressed by the many requirements of nursing curricula. In addition, they experience a clinical component, which is highly stressful. Also, all these elements combined with outside responsibilities such as family and hanging

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out with friends that can lead to unnecessary stress.

Despite the importance of time management skills for students there are limited studies were conducted among students in Saudi Arabia, specially nursing students. Therefore, the aim of this study was to assess the relation between time management skills and academic stress levels among nursing students .

Aim of the study:

The aim of current study was to assess the relation between time management skills and stress level among nursing students.

Research Questions

1) What are the time management skills among Nursing students?

2) What is the stress level among Nursing students?

3) Is there a relation between time management skills and stress level among Nursing students?

Subjects and Methods

Study design:

Descriptive research design was used to achieve the aim of the current study.

Setting:

This study was conducted at the College of Nursing, ABHA, King Khalid University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Subjects:

A convenience sample from 2nd year nursing students (n=60) out from 62 in the level four they enrolled in the Fundamental nursing course in the academic year 2022/2023, and who agreed to participate in the study. The highest percentage of nursing students were in the age group more than 20 years old with mean age 21 years(78%), and all nursing students were female and single. In addition more than

half of them (59 %) had 7-10 family members, and (69 %) of them were high house hold income.

Instruments:

Time management skills of the nursing students were assessed by time management questionnaire (TMQ), it included two parts; Part I: personal data: It used to collect data about nursing students. It included five items related to age, marital status, number of family members, and monthly household income. Part II: Time management skills questionnaire: This tool developed by **(Alay and Kocak, 2002).** It is a standardized questionnaire with 27 items in three sections (time planning=16, time attitude=7 and time wasters=4) with 5 point likert scale ranged as: (never=1, infrequently= 2, sometimes =3 frequently =4, always =5). The scores were reversed in the negative statements. The scoring system ranged from [27 to 135]. If the total scores were less than 50% considered as low time management skills. If the total scores ranged from 50% less than 75% considered as moderate time management skills, and if the total scores were 75% or more considered as high time management skills. The instrument was highly reliable with Cronbach's a coefficient of 0.87.

Academic stress was measured through academic stress scale, which was developed by the **(Nayak, 2019).** This scale was five point Likert scale with 26 items. The response for the item were: strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree with the scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Reverse scoring was done for the negative statements. The scoring system ranged from [26 to 130]. If the total scores were less than 50% considered as low stress level. If the total scores ranged from 50% less than 75% considered as moderate stress level, and if the total scores were 75% or

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more considered as high stress level. Established reliability for the tool by internal consistency and Chronbah's a coefficient = 0.87.

Validity of the instruments:

For all instruments of data collection: content validity was established by a jury of experts who assessed the instruments for clarity, relevance, comprehensiveness, applicability, and understanding.

Study procedure

An official letter was granted from the Nursing College Dean. This letter included a brief explanation of the objectives of the study. A group interview with the students was done by the researchers to explain the nature and purpose of the study. Data collection tools were introduced to students to be filled. Data was collected two days per week during the third semester of the academic year 2022-2023, and each interview consisted of ten to fourteen students and lasted for thirty minutes. The time required for filling the questionnaires were estimated after making of the pilot study, it was approximately 30 minutes.

Pilot study:

A pilot study was carried out on 10% of nursing students (6) to test the clarity of the questions, and determine the time needed to fill the tools of data collection. No modification were done so the students were included in the main study sample.

Administrative and ethical considerations:

Permission to conduct the study was Permissions obtained after explaining the nature of the study from the Dean of Nursing college, King Khlaid University, ABA and the ethical committee from King Khalid University, approval No: ECM#2021-5610.

Written explanation of the nature and aim of the study have been explained to all nursing students included in the study. They were given an opportunity to refuse or to participate, and they were notified that they could withdraw at any stage of the study.

Statistical Analysis:

The collected data were organized, tabulated and statistically analyzed using SPSS software (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 19, SPSS Inc. Chicago, IL, USA).
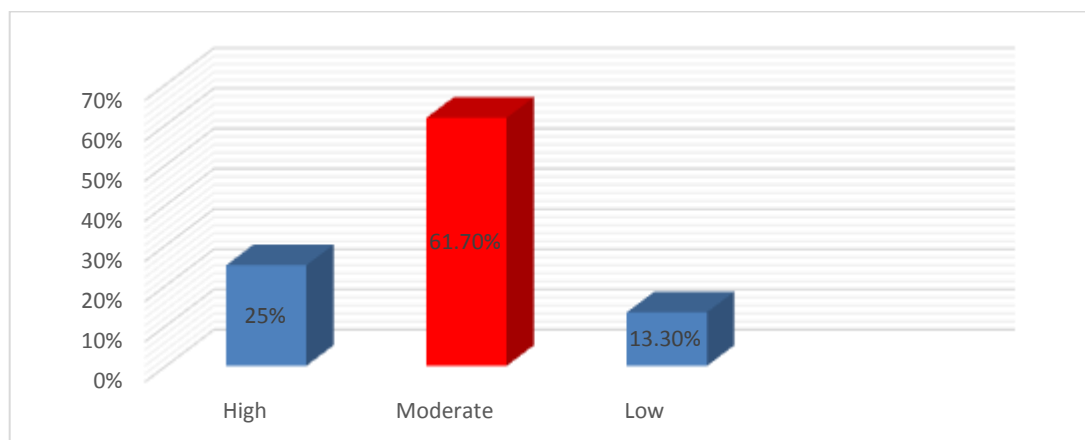
Results:

Figure (1): levels of time management skills among nursing students(n=60)

Figure (1) presented that the highest percentage of nursing students had moderate level of time management skills (61.7%), whereas (25%) of them possessed high level time management skills, and (13.3%) of them had low level time management skills.
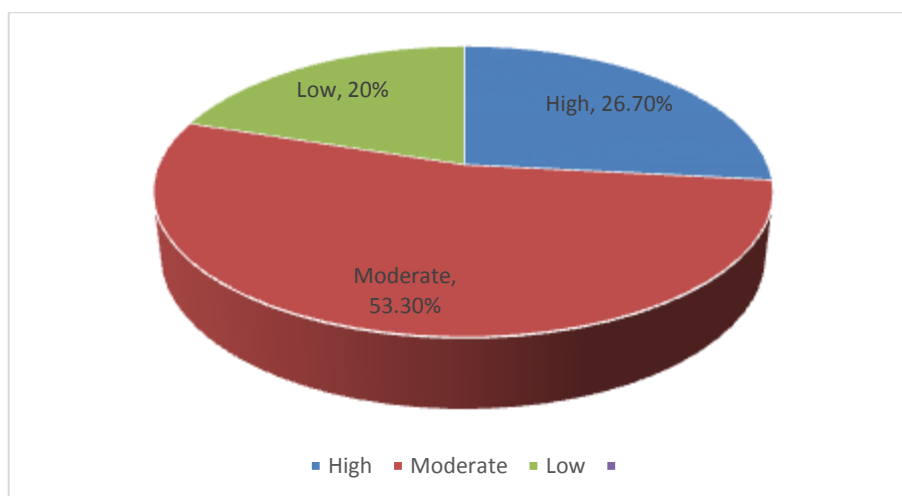
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Figure (2): Levels of academic stress among nursing students (n=60)

Figure (2) presented that slightly more than half of nursing students had moderate level of stress (53.3%), while (26.7%) of them possessed high stress level, and (20%) of students had low stress level.

Table (1): Correlation between time management skills and academic stress level among the nursing students(n=60).

Variables		Academic stress
Time management skills	R	0.372-
	P	0.000*
Academic stress	R	-
	P	-

Table (1) reported that there was a negative correlation (0.372-) between time management skills and stress level among nursing students.

Discussion:

Nursing students face immense stressors during the student life that affecting the physical and mental health leading to poor academic performance and the key causes of academic stress is long classes, regular examinations, over expectations from parents and teachers, different teaching methods and comparisons among the students **(Rathnayake & Ekanayaka, 2016)**. The levels of stress associated with academic activity could be attenuated if time management were used as a tool in such situations, since it would allow academic predicaments to be reduced by generating an improvement in academic efficiency and productivity **(Sagredo, et al., 2020).**

The aim of current study was to assess the relation between time management skills and stress level among nursing students.

The finding of the current study shows that the highest percentage of nursing students had moderate level of time management skills. The student were at moderate level might be due to curriculum of nursing management that contain time management topic; and not high level may be due to the increased time demands including busy schedules, midterm exams, final examinations, research papers, assignments, and practical training imposed upon nursing students which make them still in a need for having training about time management. However, students value their time; but they need to be more efficient

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when managing their time by giving more concern to factors that lower their total score of time management such as no short range planning, no goal setting, and procrastinate till the exam date.

This finding was agreement with the previous studies of **Ocak and Poyraz (2016) ; Gallardo-Lolandes et al, (2020)** They found that nursing students had a moderate level of their time management skills**.** However this finding was inconsistent with the results of **Babacan and Kucukosmanoglu (2015)** who found that majority of the nursing students had high-level time management skills. And the studies of **Eldeeb & Eldosoky (2016); Alshutwi et al, (2020)** they reported that the majority of nursing students have low levels of time management.

The finding of the current study shows that slightly more than half of nursing students had moderate level of stress and few percentage of them had low level. This might be due to nursing curriculum introduced to nursing students in the psychiatric nursing course which teach them how to cope with stressful situations. Also, students didn't have low level may be due to schedule courses load that can increase their feeling of stress. Findings of this study calls for a greater challenge for nurse educators in planning strategies to prevent academic stress among students while keeping them motivated to achieve for a greater learning. In this sense, **Alsaqri (2017); Ali & El-Sherbini (2018); Mohammed et al,(2019); Muliani et al, (2020)** stated that slightly more than half of nursing students had a moderate level of academic stress.

On the other side, this finding appeared to be irreconcilable with a study conducted by **Mahfouz and Alsahli (2016)** which showed that highest percentage of nursing students had high stress level whereas few of them had moderate stress, while no one of the students had low stress.

The finding of the current study reveals that there was a negative correlation between time management skills and stress level among nursing students. This could be interpreted in the light of nursing students were confronted with much responsibilities such as vast curriculum, exams, and different type of assignments which make them very stressful; but the stress level was moderate due to psychiatric nursing curriculum they mastered. Students who did not manage their time might not be able to balance their study time and their leisure time which increased their stress level. Conversely, students who managed their time might be able to balance their study life and work life which minimized their stress level.

This finding was consistent with previous studies of **Souza, et al., (2016); Aldana et al, (2020); Caldern et al. (2020); Gallardo-Lolandes et al, (2020); Palacios et al., (2020)**; **Quiliano and Quiliano (2020);** They found a negative correlation between time management skills and stress level among nursing students

Conclusion:

The results of this study add to the body of knowledge regarding students' stress and time management. There was a statistically significant negative correlation between time management skills and stress level among nursing students.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the current study, the following recommendations are suggested

-A time management preparation program and stress management training programs should be provided for nursing students during the orientation period.

-Nursing educators should have more workshop to develop their time management skills and coping stress strategies

-Curriculum designer should consider the optimization of curriculum to offer a less stressful

experience for students.

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