

# Time Utilization by Hospital Attendants and Housekeeping Staffs in a Tertiary Level Hospital

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Time management refers to the deliberate and conscious management of one's time to effectively allocate it to specific activities, with the aim of enhancing productivity and efficiency. Efficient time utilization can lead to improved employee productivity, streamlined job performance, and effective task completion. Additionally, it enables employees to accomplish necessary tasks and assists organizations in achieving their goals by effectively recording and guiding their activities. The objectives of this study were to assess how hospital attendants and housekeeping staff members in a tertiary care hospital utilize their time. **Methods:** The study employed a descriptive research design to carry out the investigation. 20 observations of hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs were made by the investigators. An observation checklist was prepared and utilized by the researcher to assess the time utilization by hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs. The data were analyzed by descriptive statistics. **Results:** The mean time taken by hospital attendants for sweeping and mopping is 184 minutes and helping in patient care is 68 minutes. Total time spend for working is 587 minutes as compared to 720 minutes as standard. The mean time spent by housekeeping staff in toilet and bathroom cleaning is 132 minutes and leisure time is 92 minutes. **Conclusion:** Education is an essential part of care and an effective method for improving the knowledge about the importance of time management and helps in improving the quality of patient care. The findings of the study could be utilized in clinical areas in improving the effective evidence-based care to patients.

**Keywords:** Time utilization, hospital attendants, housekeeping staffs

## INTRODUCTION

Efficient utilization of time is a crucial aspect of job performance, which can ultimately impact an organization's profitability. Engaging in effective time management practices, especially through proactive planning, can enhance group performance. On the other hand, inadequate time management has been linked to increased stress, emotional exhaustion, and health problems. Claessens and Eerde define time management as the employee's behavior that involves making productive use of their time to accomplish specific tasks. Time management encompasses being mindful of time, setting objectives, prioritizing tasks, and evaluating outcomes. When time is effectively utilized in the workplace, it contributes to reduced stress, a sense of balance, enhanced

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productivity, and the pursuit of personal goals. Adopting this broader understanding, individuals can recognize the significance of time management in enriching various aspects of life [1].

The significance of time management is rapidly growing in both personal and organizational contexts, encompassing individuals at all levels of management. Efficient time management brings about cost savings in projects, operations, and various services. It focuses on maximizing the utilization of available time. The role of hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs in maintaining the suitable environment in a hospital is vital.

The time utilized by them in maintaining the ward has become an important aspect which has brought into focus the great importance of time management. To perform the work more effectively the worker should organize his/her time most effectively. Time is a valuable resource and the first step is to treat time as a unique resource that needs to be carefully managed [2-5].

In most of the hospitals today in India, there are not enough hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs for existing workload. This will undoubtedly have an impact on the quality of services provided. The hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs were also utilized for doing other works which are not prescribed in their job description.

Due to the limited availability of studies on time utilization among healthcare personnel, the researchers recognized the importance of conducting scientific research in this area. It was crucial to gather evidence-based data to guide potential changes in staffing patterns, roles, and responsibilities of nursing personnel within healthcare institutions. Additionally, the findings of this study have significant implications for enhancing the quality of patient care and, consequently, improving patient satisfaction, both directly and indirectly [6].

## METHODS

The research initially commenced with an extensive review of existing literature, which served the purpose of defining the research objectives and formulating relevant research questions. Descriptive study design was employed to assess the time utilization by hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs. The study was conducted in a tertiary care hospital. A total of 20 observations of hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs were made using a purposive sampling technique. The study's objective was clarified, and informed consent was obtained from every participant involved. An observation checklist was prepared and utilized by the researcher to assess the time utilization by hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs which has two parts. Subsequently, the validity of the tool was assessed, and the instrument demonstrated favorable reliability and validity. The collected data were quantified and analyzed using appropriate statistics.

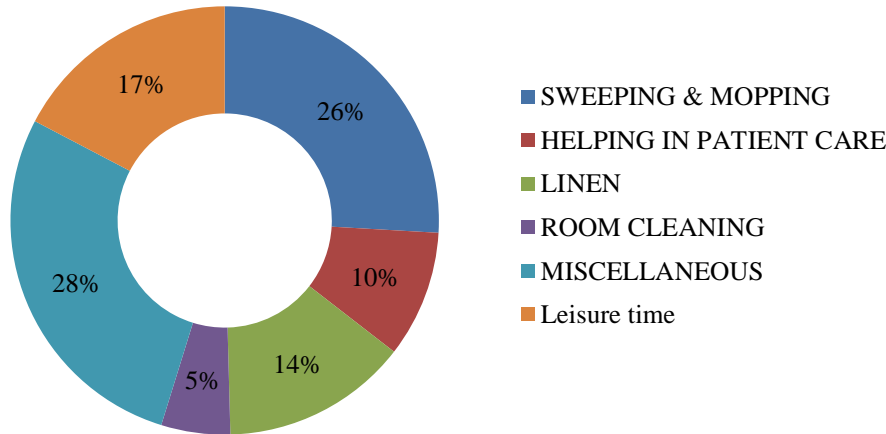
## RESULTS

Table 1 shows that the mean time taken for sweeping and mopping is 184 minutes and helping patient care is 68 minutes. Total time spend for working is 587 minutes as compared to 720 minutes as standard.

**Table 1.** Time utilization of hospital attendants.

Activities	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Mean time taken (minutes)
Standard time (minutes)	720	720	720	720	720	720
Sweeping & mopping	200	180	210	150	180	184
Helping in patient care	60	90	70	50	70	68
Linen changing	90		90		120	100
Room cleaning	45	35	30	45	30	37
Miscellaneous	240	180	240	180	150	198
Total working time in minutes	635	485	640	425	550	587

Lunch & break	50	50	50	50	50	50
Leisure time	35	185	30	245	120	123



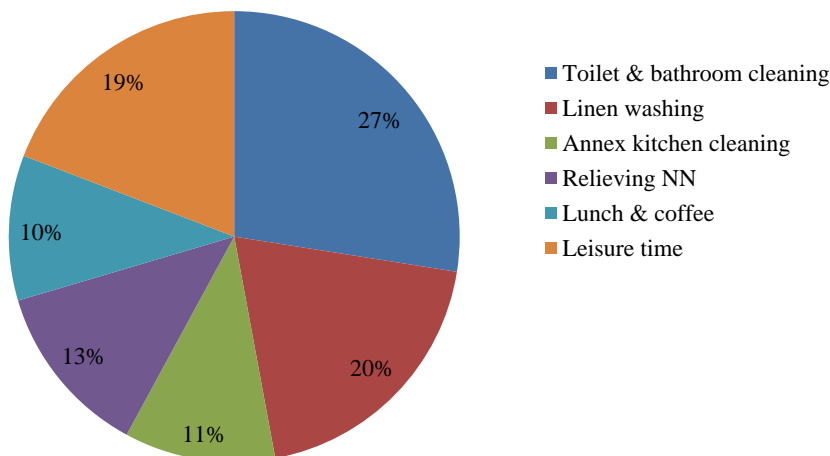
**Figure 1:** Distribution of time based on activities of hospital attendants.

Figure 1 shows that 26% of time was spend for sweeping and mopping and 5% for room cleaning.

**Table 2.** Time utilization of housekeeping workers.

Activities	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Mean time taken (minutes)
Standard time (minutes)	480	480	480	480	480	480
Toilet & bathroom cleaning	120	150	130	140	120	132
Linen washing	120	100	60	90	100	94
Annex kitchen cleaning	45	60	45	50	60	52
Relieving staffs	60	60	60	60	60	60
Lunch & coffee	50	50	50	50	50	50
Total working hours (in minutes)	395	420	345	390	390	388
Leisure time	85	60	135	90	90	92

Table 2 shows that the mean time spent by house keeping staff in toilet and bathroom cleaning is 132 minutes and leisure time is 92 minutes.



**Figure 2:** Distribution of time based on activities of housekeeping staff.

Figure 2 shows that 27% of the time was spent for toilet and bathroom cleaning and 20% for linen washing.

## DISCUSSION

The scarcity of available evidence found in this review suggests a deficiency in original research conducted on time utilization in general. Specifically, there is a lack of studies examining the time spent by healthcare workers on cleaning tasks, with only estimates from studies conducted in Canada and the USA being available. To achieve effective time management, certain skills similar to those required for personnel management, such as planning, organizing, delegating, directing, and controlling, are essential. Time management has a direct impact on self-management, as the ability to effectively control one's time is crucial for success in any role. The mean time taken for sweeping and mopping is 184 minutes and helping patient care is 68 minutes. The mean time spent for working a day is 587 minutes as compared to 720 minutes as standard. The mean leisure time spend by the hospital attendants is 123 minutes a day.

More than one fourth (26%) of the time were spent for sweeping and mopping, 28% for miscellaneous activities and 14% for linen changing. This is consistent with the study findings of Hendrickson (1990) who showed that within typical 8 hour shift, staff in 6 speciality units averaged on 31% (2.5 hours) of their time was directly involved with prescribed job. Staffs that were self aware and with clearly identified personal goals and priorities had great control over how they expend their energy and over what they subsequently accomplish. According to a study conducted by Saito et al, it was found that healthcare workers who had multiple job responsibilities, such as registered nurses, tended to spend less time and perform cleaning and disinfection tasks less frequently. Specifically, housekeepers spent nearly twice as much time on equipment cleaning (23 minutes per shift) compared to registered nurses (13 minutes per shift). Additionally, housekeepers spent over nine times longer cleaning fixed surfaces (94 minutes per shift) compared to registered nurses (10 minutes per shift) [7-9].

The mean time spent by housekeeping staff in toilet and bathroom cleaning is 132 minutes and spending mean leisure time is 92 minutes per day. More than one fourth (27%) of the time were spent for toilet and bathroom cleaning. 20% of the time were spent for linen washing and 19% of the time were used as leisure time.

The study findings reported that the class IV workers, who are always under tremendous amount of pressure to carry out multifaceted activities, need to have concern about effective time management. There are no/few studies undertaken to assess the time utilization among the hospital attendants and housekeeping staff. Though they are not directly involved in patient care, their indirect contribution towards it is not well addressed elsewhere in research studies [10].

## Limitations

The presence of the investigator might influence the findings of the study.

## CONCLUSION

A detailed understanding of time utilization of hospital attendants and housekeeping staffs is the necessity of the time. Education is an essential part of care and an effective method for improving the knowledge about the importance of time management and helps in improving the quality of patient care. The findings of the study could be utilized in clinical areas in improving the effective evidence-based care to patients.

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