



## A STUDY ON TIME MANAGEMENT: CASE OF NORTHEAST NORMAL UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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### **Abstract:**

This study was carried out to investigate the issues of time management by the international students in Northeast Normal University (NENU) Hostel in terms of what activities were done as a schedule of daily life in priority order and how much time was allocated and spend in each prioritized activities as sealed in five Linkert scale basis ranging from never to more than fifteen hours. The research design implied for the study was a phenomenological study where time was taken as a phenomenon. The data was collected via purposive participatory observation. The time duration of the study was one week. The data was analyzed qualitatively but the presentation was made in pyramid diagram to some extent. There were three Research questions led by two research objectives. The result revealed that study, social media, Sleeping/Rest, Eating and Drinking, Travelling, Grooming, Leisure/sports and Working for job-related activities as the top priority activities as the perception of students. The core activities were divided into the time interval series scales including Never, 1-5 Hours, 6-10 Hours, 11-15 Hours and above than 15 Hours. The above table shows that more than 80% of students have the time allocation to study in the range of 6-10 hours and 20% of students enjoy the time less than 6 hours. Maximum students have reported having the time utilization on the use of social media from 1-5 hours' time allocation. 80% of students were founded to use the time to have the talk with teachers and friends in the range of 1-5 hours whereas 20% student consumed the time for communication about the range 6-10 hours. Almost all students were reported to have not regular physical exercise for their health and 20% students have used about 1-5 hours of time for physical exercise. During the campus hours and the days all students have used about 1-5 hours on campus and in the days of off-campus, more than 80% of students were allocating their time in off-campus activities in the range of more than 11 hours. The

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time allocating for Television Watching for 50% student was zero and other 50% student they were found to watch TV as 1-5 hours range time period. All students were found in the use of social media tools in the time 1-5 hours daily. Maximum students have utilized the 6-10 hours for the daily rest.

**Keywords:** time management, off-campus, activities, international students

## 1. Introduction

The secret to achieving success or failure in life is effectively managing this resource that everyone possesses equally and paying sufficient emphasis to planning (Macan, Shahani, Dipboye & Phillips, 2000). Though effective and efficient use of time varies with respect to the tasks performed, the further increase in the level of knowledge and skills expected from modern employees has further increased the necessity of time planning. The road to success in social life passes through effective and efficient working which is only possible via time management. The competitive environment we live in today encourages people from as early as their elementary education to plan and manage time effectively. The high performance required by competitive conditions forces organizations and directors to use time effectively and stipulates the search to control time (Alay & Koçak, 2003).

Time management plays a vital role in improving student's academic performance and achievements. Each and every student should have time management ability which includes setting goals & priorities, using time management mechanism and being organized in using time. Here time management is only possible through self-motivation; performance, ability and motivation (Brigitte, Claessens, Eerde, & Rutte, 2005). These are the few activities performed by today's university students, which act as a barrier between them and their academic performance. Due to miss management of time, they gap behind. This study will help to analyze the positive or negative impact of time management on academic performance of students. It will also help to make some decision about changes we would like to make to use our time more effectively (Noftle, Robins & Richard, 2007). There is no one right way to manage our time; however; it is important to get to know our self, so we can make good decisions about how to use our time. Likewise, in the process of providing educational services, this issue has been a subject of interest discussed and emphasized in several platforms and an attempt has been initiated to assess and analyze time and the time management attitudes and behaviors of students in educational institutes (Denlinger, 2009).

In developing countries where students have a lot of issues during academic journey have a new story for the researcher to dig out much more interesting results. Time management practices have an impact on the results of students as empirical studies done by past researchers. In spite of knowing about the impact of time on academic achievement, this relationship is not given importance by the students (Sevari & Kandy, 2011). At higher education level the study schedule must properly planned, implemented and controlled for better results. Emphasizing time also helps

to develop cost effective educational policies by the authorities especially at higher education level (Kaushar, 2013). Ongoing problem of scarcity of knowledge in connection with time management and academic outputs is due to lack of easiness and of costly ways of collecting data. Driven by this fact, particular emphasis has been paid in the modern education system to time management issues by evaluating students' attitudes and behaviors related to time and its management (Karim, Sevari, Mitra & Kandy, 2015). Based on the necessity of effective time management required from students during their academic and professional life, field research has been conducted in the present paper towards the aim of designating their position with respect to effective time management and determining the effect of their time management skills on their academic achievements.

### **1.1 Problem statement**

Time management has a significant impact on the lives of the students commonly for those who are studying in the higher education institutions where there is no direct existence of parent and teacher supervision. The issue of time management of students needs to be answered in terms of what are the major activities in which the students are spending their time and in what extent. This statement was taken as a problem statement in this study.

### **1.2 Research questions**

The study was focused to find the answers of the following questions:

What is the condition of time management of international student living in NENU hostel?

How they are managing their daily life in terms of time management?

What are the major activities as perceived by students in context of time management?

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The following objectives were the keys of the research:

To find out the priority areas of activities as perceived by students while managing time.

To analyze the extent of time they are using in particular activities.

### **1.4 Limitations**

The research was carried in the closed environment and limited boundary with small number of samplings including the short span of time duration only in NENU hostel.

### **1.5 Operational definitions**

- Students: In this study, the foreigner students who were admitted in the master degree program in educational management in the academic year 2017 and who stay in the international students apartment in NENU.

- Time management: The time allocated and spends in the activities on and off campus was collectively termed as time management.
- Priority Activities: The activities taken as a must as the perception of student.
- Extent of time: The time spent in each activity.

## 1.6 Conceptual framework

First of all, it is important to note that *“in spite of all popular attention to managing time, relatively little research has been conducted on the process involved in using one’s time effectively (e.g. by using “prime time” to carry out important tasks) and completing work within deadlines”* (Claessens et al, 2007, p.256)

According to Fleming (2011) an effective time management is closely associated with an understanding the difference between efficiency and effectiveness. Fleming (2011) clarifies that while efficiency involves completing specified tasks in a right manner, effectiveness relates to identifying the right tasks to be accomplished in the first place.

A similar viewpoint is expressed by Fleming (2011) as well, who argues that the practice of identification of strategic tasks in an appropriate manner, and the selection of appropriate tools and techniques for the completion of those tasks can be considered the most basic conditions of effective time management.

Singh (2008) points to two fundamental aspects associated with the concept of time:

- a) The sequence, and more precisely, the order of the changes;
- b) The duration of the changes or of the period between them.

Felton and Sims (2009), on the other hand, closely associate the concept of time management with one’s self- management. The authors assert that *“the focus of time management is priorities and stems from self-management. Self-management is the powerhouse of time management”* (Felton and Sims, 2009, p.21).

Zeller (2008) expands this idea and stresses the importance of having an effective personal system of time management along with a comprehensive Specifically, the author reasons that *“effective time management requires more than good intent and self-knowledge”* (Zeller, 2008, p.14), and a good system consisting of specific processes need to be put in place in order to engaged in time management in an efficient manner. The specific processes involved in time management are specified by Downs (2008) as setting priorities, analysing, filtering, scheduling and executing.

The importance of environmental factors in effective management of time has been mentioned by Singh (2008), Forsyth (2010), and Silvis (2011). All of these authors give credit to Schematic Model of Factors Affecting Time Use proposed by Robinson (1977) in terms of classification and presentation of environmental factors affecting use of time in an effective manner. Moreover, Singh (2008) argues that despite the fact that more than three decades have passed from the introduction of Schematic Model of Factors Affecting Time Use the importance of the model has not been compromised.

The following framework is cited and adopted for this study as a conceptual framework.

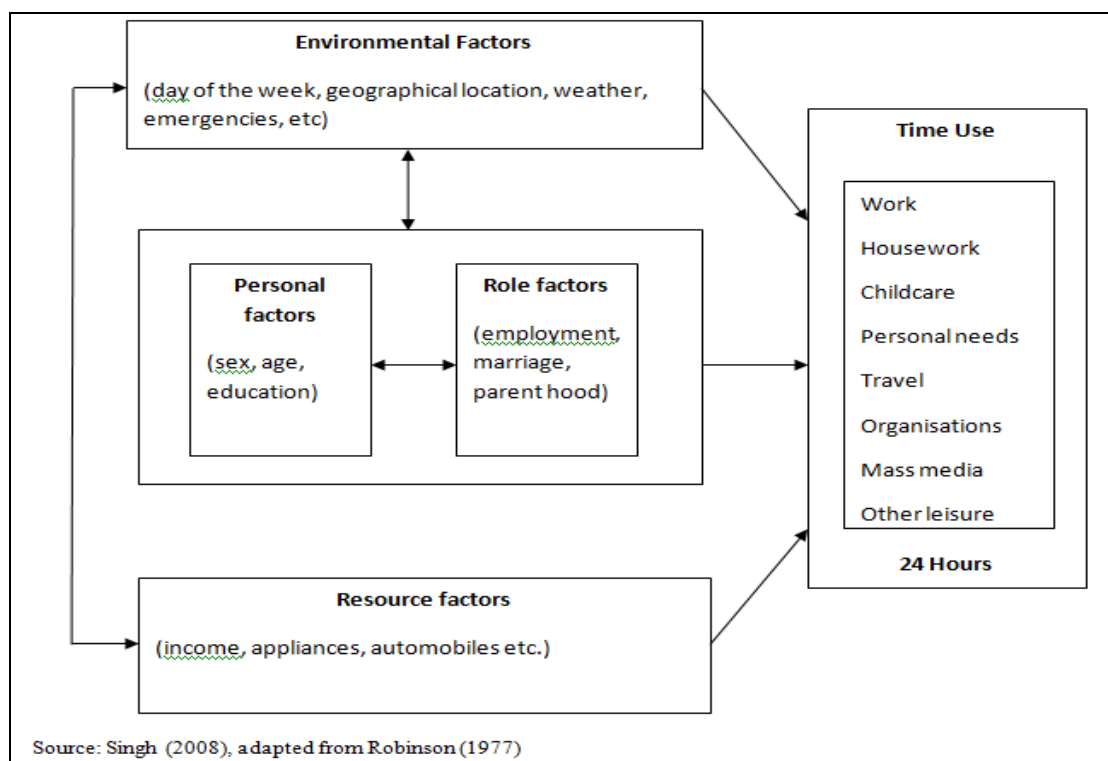


Diagram 1: Conceptual framework

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Time management

Time management is a skill that every student should not only know, but also apply. A lot of university students complain about running out of time when asked to do a certain task they get frustrated because they are not able to make it before the deadline. Time management is extremely important, especially when it comes to university students because it will boost their grades and enhance their productivity (Laurie & Hellsten, 2002).

However, most of the time students face problems like task aversion and uncertainty, so they start to procrastinate because they lack organizational skills. As a result, students will not be able to organize duties according to their priorities, so they get distracted easily, ending up procrastinating. As we can see, time management is quite essential to any university student, and it is one of the keys to higher academic achievements (Kelly, 2004). In the relevant literature, there are great number of academic studies focusing on the relation between time management and academic achievements. The related literature showed that the time management attitude and skill levels of university students and the effects of these skills on their academic achievement. The research revealed that a majority student possesses moderate level

time management skills and only a significantly small portion has high level time management skills (Yilmaz, Yoncalik & Bektaş, 2006).

The literature revealed that the students' time management skills affect their academic achievement at a significant level and the skills are one of the predictors of academic performance. The relevant literature suggested that students should start to acquire time management senses on their own in their primary school years by reading materials on the issue or via the framework of psychological counseling and guidance studies applied in schools and adopt effective time management attitudes and techniques to determine how and where they spend their time (Lisa & Robert, 2008). The various group of students who exploited time-saving proficiencies notably had rich academic achievement. They accomplished those students who do not use time saving techniques in their educational surrounding having significantly lower academic as compared to results students who employ time-management tactics have considerably higher achievement (Mercanlioglu, 2010).

To calculate the cumulative time spent working during a week, these objects were also added. Time management practices have been proven to be some of the top indicators toward achieving a high level of academic success and performance. They not only influences on the achievement but using time management techniques also serve only one reason meaning that there are multipurpose fulfilled by time management (Fazal, 2012). Taking part in proceedings and being engaged in other outside class activities, not inevitably a job, but being energetic in institution also has a strong correlation to reaching high academic achievements. Various studies showed that time management practices serve for many purposes not only for challenging performance of the students. Time management practices show the way not only to a high level of academic performance, but to good physical condition and lower levels of stress. The foremost purpose of the present study was educational competency, using time managing techniques, test pressure, and test proficiency (Faisal, Miqdadi, Abdulla & Mohammad, 2014). Academic competence scores were established to some extent improved in the current sample indicating that students found course material/content encouraging and enjoying their classes.

## **2.2 Dimensions of time management**

The effectual utilizing of time and managing time requires procedures and good quality planning behaviors. One can make use of time effectively and competently by keeping time logs, setting immediate and long-standing goals, prioritizing responsibilities, constructing to-do lists and arrangement, and organize one's workspace, as studies of earlier period and plentiful how-to books proposed (Sabelis, 2001). Time saving techniques and behaviors can be categorized into numerous groups and be liable to contribute to a number of fundamental qualities in general. There are three surfaces of time management behaviors: short-range planning, long-range planning and time attitudes (Laurie & Hellsten, 2002). Short-range planning is the capability to set out and systematize responsibilities in the short period of time. Long-range planning

competence is to handle everyday jobs over a longer time perspective by keeping follow of significant dates and setting objectives by putting adjournment (Alay & Koçak, 2003).

a. Long Range Planning

Long-range planning means to have long-range objectives and having disciplined routines. Various researchers named it as having perception of a preference for organization and it is comparable to long range planning. To acquire a summary on the everyday jobs that necessitate to be executed, time limits and priorities which increases the perception of having control over time so, in the long run, planning enables one to deal with all activities (Kelly, 2004). It directs to have less perception of control over time because it may be tackling to be familiar with how much effort requires to be completed within hours, days or weeks; it may even be the immediately measurable effect of planning. This gives the impression to indicate that time management practices accomplish to have an influence on educational achievement, but that's not all they affect (Brigitte et al., 2005). It was also found that the students had advanced overall academic achievements who accounted using goal-oriented time management practices.

b. Short Range Planning

Short-range planning was defined as time management activities surrounded by daily or weekly time structure and cover the activities such as setting objectives at the commencement of the day, planning and prioritizing daily behaviors and creation work contents (Yilmaz et al., 2006). Numerous studies invented that short-range planning behavior, forecasting of time in the short run, surrounded by the time enclose of a week or less, established a constructive relationship to grade point average. Short range planning in interface with accomplishment determined was optimistically associated to dealing performance as well (Nofle et al., 2007). Likewise, most of the studies that control for the student time do so by determining total time committed to the course, a variable normally found to be unimportant. Academic achievement means the educational objective that is accomplished by a student, teacher or institution realize over a definite short period (Lisa & Robert, 2008). In a different research, finding it has been demonstrated that there exists a positive significant relation between students' grade point averages and the time attitudes and the short-range planning.

c. Attitude

Time management demands a key shift in emphasis: concentrate on results, not on being busy. There are a lot of cases with people who waste their lives in discolored doings and attain very small since they are placing their labors into the incorrect responsibilities or weakening to focus their activity successfully, established that two time management workings directly affect the collective academic achievements (Mercanlioglu, 2010). The perception of how their time requires to be used up or planning including utilizing short and long period goals and time attitudes or students accomplished that both planning and encouraging time attitudes initiated that they had much more time to finish their everyday jobs because they experiences more in control of how their time was exhausted therefore knowing when they had to state no to

activities (Kaushar, 2013). The literature revealed that time management practices that connected to the individual's awareness and attitudes about time management and is comparable the perception of having control over time. Therefore, time attitudes comprise the perception that the individual is in control of time the perception that the person is efficiently managing his time and the perception that the individual is making constructive utilization of time (Karim et al., 2015).

The literature on time management was found a massive especially in organizational management and individual case studies. There were not more studies in the specific cases like this study. The literature of time management was reported the focus on long term time planning issues. But there was the gap in case of the day to day activities of students about what do they do. There was no any study reported on the NENU hostel time management in documented form. Thus, the topic was carried out for the further study.

### **3. Research design**

As a part of qualitative study, I employed a descriptive phenomenological research design. Finlay (2009, as cited in Kafle, 2011, p.181) states that phenomenology is the study of phenomena; their nature and meanings. It provides a rich textured description of lived experience. In this study, I took time management by students as a phenomenon and selected 10 international students living in the Northeast Normal International student hostel as it was convenient place for me. I delved their experiences, in particular seeking their daily life activities and experiences. The information was collected using a set of semi structured observation. The observation was participatory, sampling was purposive, and time coverage was one week.

#### **3.1 Population & sample**

All the foreigner students living in the foreigner students' apartment hostel were taken as a whole generalization pollution whereas the sampling population of the study was the total number of foreign students living in the same hostel and studying the master degree in educational management. Only 10 students were taken as a sample by using purposive sampling method with the one week duration limit of observation.

#### **3.2 Data collection methods**

In the study, the participatory observation was used to collect relevant data as a primary source of data collection. Besides than some secondary materials like the documents, publication, documentaries were also reviewed and consulted.

### **4. Analysis and findings**

The data collected was analyzed in the qualitative and quantitative way for the finding and making the recommendations and conclusions.



#### 4.1 Time management concern

The students were reported in the matters of the materials that indicates time either they had watch on wrist or the clock or the cell phone .All students were found to have the cell phone as the time indicator for their use. Students were found without any written formal time schedule for the daily performance of time management.

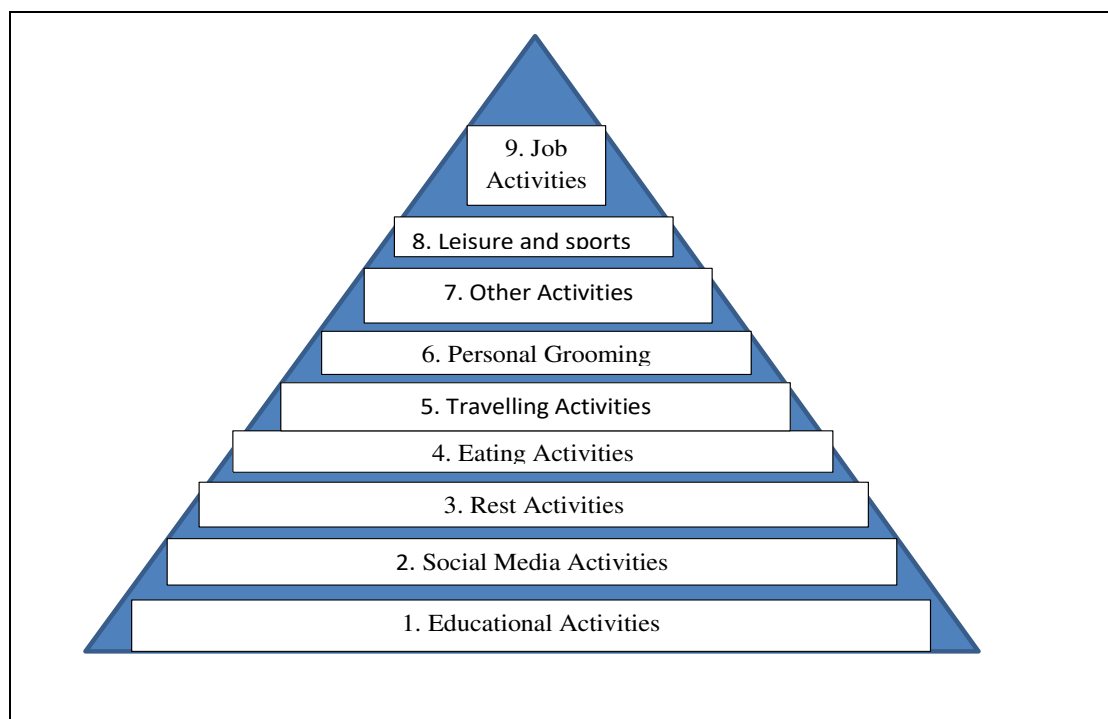
#### 4.2. Priority of activity as perceived by students

The main activities with the priority as perceived by student were found as:

The students prioritized their daily activities as follows:

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Educational Activities              | First Priority   |
| 2. Social Media                        | Second Priority  |
| 3. Sleeping/Rest                       | Third Priority   |
| 4. Eating and Drinking                 | Fourth Priority  |
| 5. Travelling                          | Fifth Priority   |
| 6. Grooming                            | Sixth Priority   |
| 7. Others                              | Seventh Priority |
| 8. Leisure and sports                  | Eighth Priority  |
| 9. Working for job related activities. | Ninth Priority   |

The serial order of the activities as perceived in priority order is presented in pyramid.



**Figure 1: Priority of Activity as perceived by students**

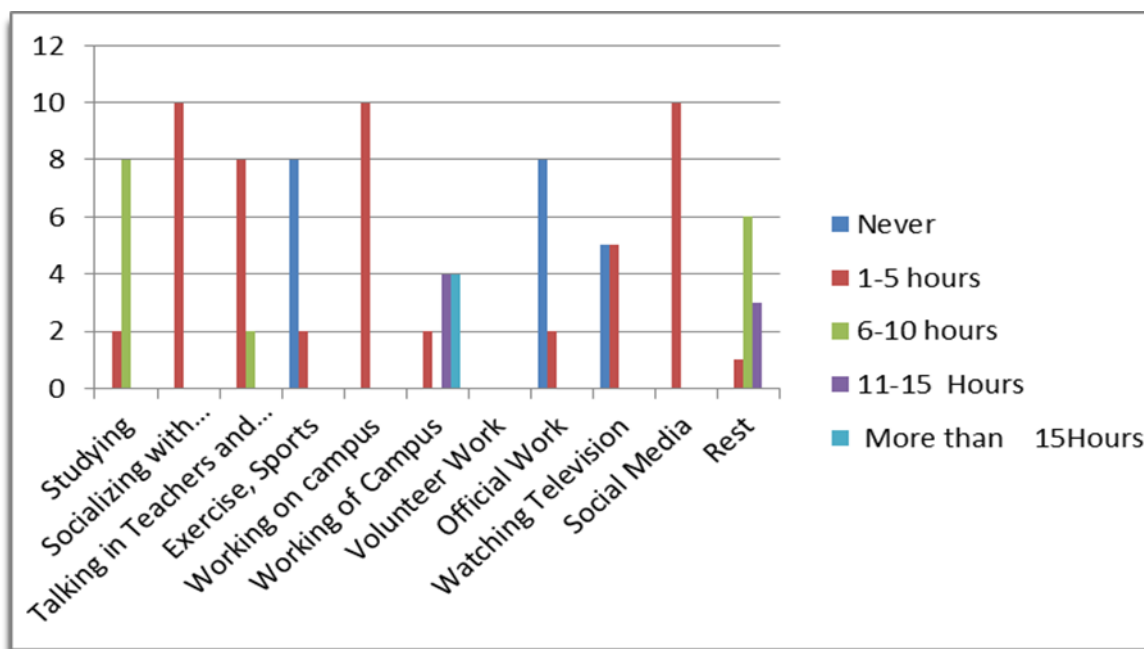
As the perception of students, the time allocated for the educational activities was found at the top with highest priority and the job related activities was found the least prioritized action. The educational activity was regarded the top most priority of the

student which has 27% coverage. Similarly, the use of social media was ranked as the second priority. All students give sleeping/rest as the third priority activities. The task related to their job was ranked as a least priority.

### 4.3 The extent of time spent in different activities

Activities	Extent of time Allocation				
	Never	1-5 hours	6-10 hours	11-15 Hours	More than 15Hours
Studying	0	2	8	0	0
Socializing with friends(Informal)	0	10	0	0	0
Talking in Teachers and friends	0	8	2	0	0
Exercise, Sports	8	2	0	0	0
Working on campus	0	10	0	0	0
Working of Campus	0	2	0	4	4
Volunteer Work	0	0	0	0	0
Official Work	8	2	0	0	0
Watching Television	5	5	0	0	0
Social Media	0	10	0	0	0
Rest	0	1	6	3	0

The given bar-diagram shows the time allocation on the activities by the students.



**Figure 2: Time spent in different activities**

The core activities were divided in the time interval series scales including Never, 1-5 Hours, 6-10 Hours, 11-15 Hours and above than 15 Hours. The above table shows that more than 80% of students have the time allocation to study in the range of 6-10 hours

and 20% of students enjoy the time less than 6 hours. Maximum students have reported to have the time utilization on the use of social media from 1-5 hours' time allocation. 80% of students were founded to use the time to have talk with teachers and friends in the range of 1-5 hours where as 20% student consumed the time for communication about the range 6-10 hours. Almost all students were reported to have not regular physical exercise for their health and 20% students have used about 1-5 hours of time for physical exercise. During the campus hours and the days all students have used about 1-5 hours in campus and in the days of off campus more than 80% of students were allocating their time in off campus activities in the range of more than 11 hours. The time allocating for Television Watching for 50% student was zero and other 50% student they were found to watch TV as 1-5 hours range time period. All students were found in the use of social media tools in the time 1-5 hours daily. Maximum students have utilized the 6-10 hours for the daily rest.

As the first priority observed by the students in the study was sub sealed down in the specific 5 category .The 80% Of students were found to have allocated time for study in the line with 6-10 hours of time for study in a day where as 20% student have found less than 5 hour allocated for the study daily.

#### **4.4 Examination of research questions**

NENU international hostel has so many rooms and there are many international students living in the hostel studying from master to doctorate level. They have several cultural and religious backgrounds which has direct impact on their daily life and time management. The students even they were not found with the written daily time schedule for the activities but they all were found worried about the time management. They were even cutting the time of unnecessary areas due to weather. Everything and all activities of each student were going well and smooth. The condition of time management was satisfactory. Students in NENU Hostel were found busy in their own activities according to time and their priority. The students had managed their time as usual.

#### **5. Recommendations**

As time management is the most vital task for the student to get the success. Students who love in the NENU hostel have given the top priority for the activities related to study. Almost the students have not any specific routine of the daily activities to be done. So it is strongly suggested that living in hostel, the students should enjoy the wide range of activities including the exercise and fitness. So, in addition to study physical exercise should be done as a great emphasis. The time allocated to study is limited to 6-10 hours in daily. It means that students spend almost of their time in the study related affairs. This time should be specified and practiced for certain activities related to it. Short time planning of the students is for the certain time and task. So, the culture of planning and utilizing of time should also be given a great importance. For

students in NENU it is necessary to increase time for the study and minimize the other activities as they are less prioritized. For this, the time should be managed as core time and flexi time by all students and should be followed strongly.

## 6. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to find out the priority areas of activities as perceived by students while managing time and to analyze the extent of time they are using in particular activities. All in all, it was found out that time management is taken seriously by the university students. The students have the priority in terms of the activities what to do and in what extent of time.

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