

# Effect of Negotiation Skills Training Program on Head Nurses' Time Management

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## Abstract

Negotiation is an essential skill for time management and it depends on the competence of the head nurse as a negotiator. Negotiation is an everyday experience and it plays a major role in all aspects of daily activities of the head nurses. Negotiation and time management are necessary management tools that head nurses utilized to organize the management activities reasonably, in addition to support their decision making. **Aim:** The current study aims to assess effect of negotiation skills training program on head nurses' time management skills at Main Mansoura University Hospital. **Methods:** A quasi-experimental research design was utilized. The study was conducted at all inpatient departments at Main Mansoura University Hospital (MMUH). The total sample was 100 head nurses (convenient sample). Three tools were utilized for data collection in this study, namely; Negotiation Knowledge Questionnaire, Negotiation Process-Style Scale and Time Management Questionnaire. **Results:** The major findings of this study indicated that the head nurses' had higher negotiation knowledge and skill at post and follow up program as well as higher time management skills. There was a positive correlation among head nurses' negotiation knowledge, skill and time management skills. **Recommendations:** Periodical assessment of head nurses' knowledge to detect the areas that need training to improve their negotiation and time management skills. Conduct continuous education and training programs for refreshing and developing head nurses' knowledge and skills about the negotiation. Encourage further application of this program not only for head nurses but also to all nursing staff at all levels to improve their negotiation knowledge and skills as well as to promote their time management skills.

**Key words:** Negotiation, Knowledge, Skills, Time management, Head nurses

## Introduction

Success in any health care organization depends not only on knowledge and practices, but also on the ability of the nurse manager to negotiate for the good of the organization and the health of the nurses (Abbasi, et al., 2017). Negotiation is a daily practice; whether it is an official negotiation at workplace or unofficial conversation to obtain something you need from somebody else, negotiation forms our employed and individual lives. Effective negotiation skills are crucial to success in any organization and the rapid change in nursing environment and practice requires head nurses to be effective negotiators in the clinical workplace (Barragan & Cervantes, 2019).

Negotiation is the method by which two or more individuals with diverse concerns or viewpoints try to achieve agreement, finding an acceptable solution to a shared problem, as well as to keep the relation among the individuals. There are not a limited number of

parties that can participate in negotiations (Ahmed, et al., 2016; Kong, & Yao, 2019). The essence of effective negotiation is effective communication; the better the communication the better the negotiation. The capability to convince somebody relies primarily on the capability to converse, as well as to turn the idea into words that the another part obviously comprehends (Carnevale, 2019).

Head nurses are negotiators; whether with staff nurses, patients, relatives, doctors, managers, or with each other. Negotiation is portion of the continuing as well as ongoing practice integral within nursing (Cleary, et al., 2018). Effective negotiation skills have been recognized as a necessary element of the head nurse role and implementation of the negotiation practice in today's dynamic as well as challenging health care setting is often hard and listening to the another's perspective in addition to his/her justification is significant (Chapman, et al., 2017).

The negotiation process can basically be agreed as a four-stage process which are preparation, opening, bargaining, and closure. Preparation stage is the most important step and it is influential to the achievement of the negotiation steps (Brett, 2017). In this stage, learning everything possible about the topic below negotiation, the sides participated, besides any exceptional features of the practice. Being good-prepared creates self-confidence as well as gives an advantage to the negotiator. Opening stage; it establishes the character for the negotiation to a great level (Enamul & Nilufar, 2018). It includes both negotiating sides offering their conditions to each one. Bargaining stage; includes impending nearer to the goal you planned to reach, the main approach is to persuade the another part. And finally, closure stage; It also includes the closing of the contract in which both sides formalize (Coke, 2019).

Head nurses in order to constructively negotiate must recognize the processes before, during, as well as after the negotiation and control the process (Caputo, et al., 2019). The negotiator must know every side's actions as well as wants to act with it accordingly, assist others emphasis on the general concern rather than winning situations, utilize creativeness throughout negotiation to achieve satisfactory opinions, must successfully manage self-justifying in addition to passive persons, and lastly cause the disagreeing sides sense perfect without hurting anybody. Additionally to finishing the debate by exploring wholly perspectives again as well as achieving agreement, every interest of everyone at this stage must be reported (Filho, et al., 2019).

Negotiation is an essential skill for time management and it depends on the competence of the head nurse as a negotiator; there is an irregularity in the institution when the head nurses does not have this competency. Head nurses utilize negotiation for its advantages. Negotiation is a finest effective method to time management (Stevens, et al., 2018).

Time is a vital reserve that each head nurse wants to accomplish the objectives as well as aims of an association. Time management can be defined as a period, either little or extensive, which includes in what way head nurses utilize it wisely to make outcome or is the act or process of applying conscious control above the amount of

time consumed on certain actions, specifically in order to rise effectiveness or production. Time management is one of the managerial skills of the head nurses and is essential for accomplishment of institutional objectives (Qtait & Alarab, 2018).

Time management in the area of health and for head nurses has vital importance because it is directly correlated to the individuals' well-being. Avoidance of time waste as well as having time control may cause enhancement of administrative capabilities, protection of human resources, decreasing of strain, and finally, rise of work happiness as well as psychological well-being among head nurses (Nayak, 2018). Time management can be assisted through using a variety of tools, skills, and practices utilized to manage time once achieving particular activities, assignments and objectives. This process includes a varied range of actions, consisting of: planning, establishing objectives, delegating, examining of time consumed, observing, arranging as well as ranking (Sainz & Ferrero, 2019).

Time management skills considered as a determinant factor for head nurses' success. Having proper negotiation skills allow to take some measure of control during negotiation process. Pre-planning the activities help to be become prepare, know exactly what the need to achieve and help to be more in control of the future (Habib, et al., 2018). Successful negotiators utilize time in methods that are further profitable to negotiation result than normal negotiators and this is where successful negotiators have a tendency to give more attention on how to utilize accessible time in order to benefit their negotiations (Matos, 2018).

### **Aim of the study**

The aim of the present study was to investigate effect of negotiation skills training program on head nurses' time management skills through:

- Assessing head nurses' knowledge regards negotiation skills
- Assessing head nurses' perception of negotiation skills
- Assessing head nurses time management skill during negotiation process

- Designing and implementing negotiation skills training program
- Evaluating the effect of implementing negotiation skills training program on head nurses' negotiation skills, knowledge and time management skills

### Significance of the study

Negotiation is an everyday experience; the negotiations play a major role in all aspects of daily activities of the head nurses. Every discussion that requires a decision needs negotiation and time management skills. Head nurses are negotiators; whether with staff nurses, patients, relatives, doctors, managers, or with each other, negotiation is a portion of the continuing and ongoing method integral within nursing. It is important to head nurses in health care locations to know diverse negotiation knowledge and skills to be able to interact properly and manage their time through diverse, difficult and repeated conditions during the day (Tofan, 2018). Negotiation and time management are necessary management tools that head nurses utilized to organize the management activities reasonably, and support their decision making. So, it is very important for them to be aware and knowledgeable about different concepts of negotiation and learns these skills and practices that required to manage their times and succeed in their roles. Therefore, this study aims to investigate effect of negotiation skills training program on head nurses' time management skills.

### Patient and Methods

#### **Research hypothesis:**

It is hypothesized that:

- Implementing negotiation skills training program for head nurses will be improve their knowledge of negotiation skills
- Implementing negotiation skills training program for head nurses will be improve their time management skills

**Study design:** A quasi-experimental research design was utilized to achieve the aim of the study.

**Study setting:** All inpatient departments at Main Mansoura University Hospital. Capacity of beds 1800 and the hospital represent Ministry of Higher education and found in

Mansoura city followed Dakahelia governorate and provide different health care services at Delta Region.

**Sample:** Convenient sample of head nurses working at Main Mansoura University Hospital at time of data collection (n= 100).

#### **Tools for data collection:**

Three tools were utilized for data collection in this study, namely; Negotiation Knowledge Questionnaire, Negotiation Process-Style Scale and Time Management Questionnaire.

#### **Tool I: Negotiation Knowledge Questionnaire:**

It is a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers based on the review of the related literature (Mc-Clendon, 2010; Torabi Pour, 2010; Druckman & Wagner, 2016; Brett, & Thompson, 2016).

It is consists of two parts:

**1<sup>st</sup> part:** It concerned with participants' personal data as age and years of experience.

**2nd part:** It is utilized to assess head nurses' negotiation knowledge. It comprised of 10 questions (true and false "5" questions and matching "5" questions). The questions were scored as "1" for correct answer, and "zero" for incorrect answer. Scoring system was: Poor <60%, fair 60- <65%, good 65- <75, very good 75-<85 and >=85 excellent.

**Tool II: Negotiation Process-Style Scale:** It was developed by (Ester & John, 2010) and aims to assess the negotiation skills. It contains 28 statements divided into four main categories; Talker (7 items), aggressor (7 items), preparer (7 items) and finally, listener (7 items). To assess these statements was used scale ranging from "3" always, "2" sometime and "1" never. With scoring system: Low (<50%), moderate (50-75%) and high >75%.

**Tool III: Time Management Questionnaire:** It was developed by (Mohammed, 2014). It consisted of (10 items) to assess time management skill during negotiation process. Answers were measured on a three-point rating scale extended from "3" always, "2" sometime and "1" never. With scoring system: low (<50%), moderate (50-75%) and high >75%

**Validity and reliability:**

The tools were translated by the researchers into Arabic, and then tested for its content validity and relevance via a group of expertise (5) from academic nursing staff (Nursing administration, Faculty of Nursing, Mansoura University) and based on their feedback, a necessary modification was done. The reliability for the tools were done using cronbach's alpha test. It was (0.89) for negotiation knowledge, (0.92) for negotiation process style scale, and (0.87) for time managing skill.

**Pilot study**

A pilot study was conducted before beginning data collection on (10% of the total study sample) selected haphazardly to make sure the clearness, applicability, as well as achievability of the tool in addition to calculate the duration required to answer the tool's questions by each participant. Necessary modification was made before starting data collection. Data attained from the pilot study was excepted from the study results.

**Ethical considerations**

Official approval to carry out the study was obtained from the Scientific Research Ethics Committee at Faculty of Nursing – Mansoura University. The participants were informed that their sharing in the study is volunteer as well as there is no damage if they select not to share also no personal data is participated outside of the research. The privacy as well as secrecy of the information were promised. Consent was established with the completion of the questionnaires.

**Field work:****Assessment phase**

- Planned an educational program which contains objectives of the training, definition, element, purpose, types, principles, effective negotiator characteristics, negotiator skills, stages and process of negotiation, negotiation strategies, preparation for negotiation, and negotiation technique.
- The negotiation knowledge questionnaire, negotiation process style scale and time management questionnaire were fulfilled by the participants before starting of the training

program at January 2018. The negotiation knowledge questionnaire took from 20–30 minutes to be finished, 15-20 minute for completing negotiation process style scale and 5-10 minutes for completing time management questionnaire. This pre-study test was planned to permit the researchers collected a baseline evaluation of head nurses' knowledge as well as skills to compare it with immediately after and 3 months after program. The data gathered two days/week in the morning and afternoon shift.

**Implementation phase**

After the questionnaires were finished, the training program was applied by the researchers. The time plan of the program implemented over the period from February 2018 to May 2018. The head nurses are grouped according to their workplace into 7 groups. The training program has taken 18 hours dispersed as the following; 9 sessions, 2 hour/session, 2 days/week. Each researcher implemented the program with one group in the day by utilizing accessible assets, related contents as well as instructional strategies for every session. Varied approaches of teaching were utilized as lectures, group discussion, and brainstorming. Instructional media involved handout formulated by the researchers and dispersed to wholly contributors in the first day.

**Evaluation phase**

Follow up phase (immediately and after 3 months) started from the beginning of the June to the end of September 2018, the influence of the education program was assessed through utilizing the same previous mentioned tools.

**Statistical analysis**

The gathered data were arranged, tabularized as well as statistically analyzed utilizing SPSS software (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 26, SPSS Inc. Chicago, IL, USA). The categorical variables were represented such as frequency as well as percentage. Continuous variables were represented such as mean, standard deviation. Repeated Two way ANOVA test was utilized in order to test the difference among more than two parametric variables (pre, post, and post 3 months). Statistically significant was considered at  $p\text{-value} \leq 0.01$ .

## Results

Table (1) represents personal characteristics of the studied head nurses. The table shows that more than two thirds of head nurses were in the age group (31- 40) and more than one third of them had more than 15 years of experience.

Table (2) shows levels of knowledge related negotiation skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program. The table displays statistically significant improvement of head nurses' knowledge immediately after program & after 3 months of program. Before program, head nurses' knowledge was poor (100%), while immediately after program was very good (50%) and it was good after 3 months of program (40%).

Table (3) illustrates levels of negotiation and time management skills among the studied head nurses before the training program. They were in low level in negotiation and time management skills (96.0, 89.0) respectively.

Table (4) shows mean differences of knowledge related negotiation skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program. There was statistically significant improvement of head nurses' total knowledge related negotiation skills. Moreover total knowledge mean scores increased from (2.20±0.94) to (6.73±1.14) after program.

Table (5) illustrates mean differences of negotiation skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program. According to the table, there was statistically significant improvement of head nurses' total negotiation skills as well as in negotiation skills four categories. Total negotiation skills mean scores increased from (36.85±2.63) to (68.02±3.45). The highest mean score of negotiation skills categories after training program was in negotiation as talker, while the lowest was in negotiation as aggressor.

Table (6) describes mean differences of time management skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program. According to the table, there was statistically

significant improvement of head nurses' total time management skills as well as in all time management skills items. Total time management skills mean scores increased from (12.69±1.64) to (23.78±1.87). Participation helps to achieve the aim had the highest mean score of time management skills items after training program, while can another person take your place in negotiation process had the lowest mean score of time management skills items.

Table (7) represents negotiation and time management skills levels among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program. The table displays that there was statistically significant improvement of head nurses' negotiation and time management skills. Negotiation skills level increased from low to moderate and time management skills level increased from low to high after training program.

Table (8) illustrates correlation between time management and negotiation skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program. This table displays that, there was a positive correlation between head nurses' negotiation skill and time management skills.

**Table (1):** Personal characteristics of the studied head nurses (n=100)

Variables	n	%
Age years:		
▪ 20-30	20	20.0
▪ 31-40	65	65.0
▪ >40	15	15.0
Mean±SD	35.41±5.12	
Experience		
▪ 1-5	6	6.0
▪ 6-10	28	28.0
▪ 11-15	32	32.0
▪ >15	34	34.0
Mean±SD	13.32±5.20	

**Table (2):** Levels of knowledge related negotiation skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program (n=100)

Levels of knowledge related negotiation skills	score	Before program		Immediately after program		3 months after program	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
▪ Poor <60%	0-5	100	100.0	2	2.0	5	5.0
▪ Fair 60-<65%	6	0	0.0	2	2.0	6	6.0
▪ Good 65-<75	7	0	0.0	17	17.0	40	40.0
▪ Very good 75-<85	8	0	0.0	50	50.0	39	39.0
▪ Excellent ≥85	9-10	0	0.0	29	29.0	10	10.0
$\chi^2/$ <i>p-value</i>		164.69 0.000**					

\*\* p&lt;0.01

**Table (3):** levels of negotiation and time management skills among the studied head nurses before the training program (n=100)

Levels of Variables	Negotiation skills		Time management skills	
	n	%	n	%
▪ Low (<50%)	96	96.0	89	89.0
▪ Moderate (50-75%)	4	4.0	11	11.0

**Table (4):** Mean differences of knowledge related negotiation skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program (n=100)

Variables	Before program	Immediately after program	3 months after program	F	p
	Mean±SD	Mean±SD	Mean±SD		
▪ Total knowledge related negotiation	2.20±0.94	8.09±1.02	6.73±1.14	802.73	0.000**

\*\* p&lt;0.01

**Table (5):** Mean differences of negotiation skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program (n=100)

Negotiation skills categories	Before program	Immediately after program	3 months after program	F	p
	Mean±SD	Mean±SD	Mean±SD		
▪ Negotiation as talker	9.86±1.64	19.05±1.57	17.89±1.12	1169.89	0.000**
▪ Negotiation as aggressor	8.93±1.17	16.27±1.92	16.02±1.99	680.78	0.000**
▪ Negotiation as a preparer	9.41±1.28	16.59±2.12	16.40±1.85	479.68	0.000**
▪ Negotiation as listener	8.65±1.27	17.82±1.82	17.71±1.70	990.18	0.000**
▪ <b>Total negotiation skills</b>	36.85±2.63	69.73±4.24	68.02±3.45	2864.93	0.000**

\*\* p&lt;0.01

**Table (6):** Mean differences of time management skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program (n=100)

Time management skills items	Before program	Immediately after program	3 months after program	F	p
	Mean±SD	Mean±SD	Mean±SD		
1. Start negotiation process at the time	1.22±0.46	2.30±0.56	2.20±0.57	122.76	0.000**
2. Negotiation help in aims achievement	1.90±0.69	2.80±0.40	2.75±0.48	87.08	0.000**
3. Can another person take your place in negotiation process	1.18±0.46	2.22±0.52	2.15±0.54	136.30	0.000**
4. Participation helps to achieve the aim	1.29±0.49	2.97±0.17	2.94±0.28	839.25	0.000**
5. There is important person not present	1.19±0.44	2.28±0.55	2.24±0.59	137.72	0.000**
6. Clear aims of negotiation process	1.19±0.39	2.28±0.57	2.22±0.58	130.61	0.000**
7. There is important issues not discuss	1.70±0.43	2.36±0.54	2.30±0.58	160.49	0.000**
8. There is another method rather than negotiation for problem solving	1.20±0.43	2.41±0.53	2.37±0.61	172.65	0.000**
9. Negotiation process take more time than deserve	1.25±0.52	2.39±0.52	2.34±0.55	139.30	0.000**
10. Agreement at the end of negotiation process	1.10±0.36	2.36±0.50	2.27±0.58	219.78	0.000**
<b>Total time management skills</b>	<b>12.69±1.64</b>	<b>24.37±2.02</b>	<b>23.78±1.87</b>	<b>1270.47</b>	<b>0.000**</b>

**Table (7):** Negotiation and time management skills levels among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program (n=100)

Levels of negotiation and time management skills	Negotiation skills						Time management skills					
	Before program		Immediately after program		3 months after program		Before program		Immediately after program		3 months after program	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
▪ Low (<50%)	96	96.0	9	9.0	11	11.0	89	89.0				
▪ Moderate (50-75%)	4	4.0	91	91.0	89	89.0	11	11.0	13	13.0	23	23.0
▪ High >75%	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	87	87.0	77	77.0
$\chi^2/$ $p$ -value	190.48 0.000**						177.92 0.000**					

\*\* p&lt;0.01

**Table (8):** Correlation between time management and negotiation skills among the studied head nurses during different phases of training program (n=100)

You can change to scatter		Negotiation skills					
		Before program		Immediately after program		3 months after program	
		r	p	r	P	r	p
Time management skills	Before program	0.09	0.34				
	Immediately after program			0.06	0.49		
	After 3 months					0.12	0.24

## Discussion

Negotiation is based on skills that assist negotiators to be successful in their roles, so that they must acquire these skills as well as process that causes resolving of the numerous difficulties as well as complications that rise in an association accompanied by consciousness of negotiation methods as well as knowledge of diverse conceptions of negotiation (Zarei, et al., 2016).

According to the present study findings, head nurses' knowledge related to negotiation skills

before the training program was poor. This may be due to lack of concentrating on these matters in the curricula, which can provide further concentration to practical skills. A like restricted level of knowledge of negotiation skills was stated in a study in the United States (Pan & Leary, 2017).

The study results shown significant improvements in head nurses' knowledge after carrying out of the intervention program. Furthermore, this improvement continued through the follow-up phase of the study which shows

good holding of the data acquired. This achievement might be attributable to that the intervention program was intended based on factual met wants recognized through the assessment phase of the study.

**Abdel Ghani, (2017)** support present study results, who reported that, conducted education program assist head nurses in upholding them modern with novel concept, rising knowledge as well as competency, altering their behaviors as well as improving their capabilities to deal with difficulties in addition to work with others. The findings are in congruence with **Rees & Kopelman, (2019)** who reported that after carrying out of the particular educational program head nurse's knowledge was considerably improved from undesirable to desirable level.

The present study results revealed that, there was a small reduction in mean scores of head nurses' knowledge about negotiation skills at three months post-program compared to immediately post-program. This may be attributable to head nurses might have forgotten some of the knowledge they acquired through program carrying out. This result supported with **Ebraheam & El Shazly, (2019)** who found that, a small reduction in head nurse's knowledge scores at three months post-program evaluation was monitored compared to immediately post-program.

As regard to head nurses' total negotiation skills through different study phases, there were statistically significant improvement of head nurses' total negotiation skills as well as in negotiation skills four categories (talker, aggressor, preparer and listener), after program intervention both post and follow up phase, negotiation skills level increased from low to moderate. This may be due to the influence of the intervention program, different instructional methods and media, the presence of the program impact definitely on head nurse's knowledge about negotiation skills.

Similarly, **Shomalnasab & Amini, (2015)** reported that the level of satisfaction with the negotiation was very positive and more than half of subjects were very satisfied. In addition to, **Keough, (2017)** who stated that the total mean scores of head nurses' negotiation skill was low at pre-program and it improved at post and follow up program. Also, **McClendon, (2009)** reported

that head nurses skills required for negotiation in time of conflicts. The ability to negotiate was important to nursing managers because the negotiation skills develop critical thinking and effective communication skills.

Concerning time management skills levels among the studied head nurses throughout diverse phases of training program, the findings of current study shown that there was statistically significant improvement of head nurses' time management skills, time management skills level increased from low to high after training program. This might be due to the head nurses appreciated and applied main principles for good preparation of negotiation process and time management. This result in congruence with **Hamzehkola & Naderi, (2019)** who revealed that the greatest of head nurses had higher time management skill during negotiation process at post and follow up program as compared to pre-program. Also, **Sainz, & Ferrero, (2019)** stated that, the most of head nurses had higher time management skill during negotiation process at post and follow up program as compared to pre-program.

Concerning correlation between time management skills and negotiation skills among studied head nurses during different phases of training program, the present study findings demonstrated positive correlation between time management skills and negotiation skills during different phases of training program. This specified that, attending of previous training might have constructive effect on the head nurses thus; staff improvement must be ongoing as well as growing.

The result of present study was congruent with **Carnevale, (2019)** who stated that when the negotiators had ability to manage time effectively, they can achieve the goals of negotiation process. In the same line, **Rees & Kopelman, (2019)** found that successful negotiators utilize time in methods that are further useful to negotiation result than normal negotiators, confirming that time is a fundamental element of negotiation. Conversely, this finding disagreed with a study of **Ahammad, et al., (2016)** who reported that no statistically significant relation existing between knowledge, practice during the program phases.

## Conclusion

From the current study, it was concluded that the carrying out of the training program was correlated with improvement in head nurses' knowledge and skills. The head nurses had higher negotiation knowledge and skill at post and follow up program as well as higher time management skills. There was a positive correlation among head nurses' negotiation knowledge, skill and time management skills.

## Recommendations

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

- Periodical assessment of head nurses' knowledge to detect the areas that need training to improve their negotiation and time management skills.
- Conduct continuous education and training programs for stimulating and developing head nurses' knowledge and skills about the negotiation.
- Hospital administration should be aware of the importance of negotiation skills to both head nurses and organizational success to allow them to attend and participate in continuous education programs.
- Further studies: Further application of this program not only for head nurses but also to all nursing staff at all levels to improve their negotiation knowledge and skills as well as to promote their time management skills.

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