TIME MANAGEMENT, PROCRASTINATION AND PRIORITIZATION: A FRAMEWORK FOR SERVICE BASED LEARNING MODULE

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Abstract

There is a large number of students facing difficulties in their time management and do not have sufficient time to perform well in academic task. This concept paper describes the nature of time management, procrastination and prioritization that might influence students' academic performance in higher education institutions and proposes a conceptual framework for service based learning module towards excellent academic performance. This study identifies the constraints of time management among students and describes the best options for their time management. This paper is based on secondary data from several reading and analysis of previous researches and literatures on student time management, procrastination and prioritization. It is found that time management is highly important to academic performance of students. Time management, procrastination and prioritization are related to the academic performance of students. They are strong indicators, which affect academic performance. This study may plug in new contribution to knowledge that the theoretical implication will contribute to fill in the lack or an insufficiency of previous literatures about time management, procrastination and prioritization towards academic performance at Malaysian higher educational institutions. This practical implication of study would help the higher educational institution to strengthen the teaching and learning process through a better time management strategy.

Keywords: time management; procrastination; prioritization; academic performance; service based learning; time management system;

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Student academic performance is directly related with economic and social development of the country (Mushtaq & Khan, 2012). Service based learning enhances students' academic performance by providing a unique way for students to solve problems and developing their ability to collaborate and adapt to the real-world application of content knowledge (Daniel & Mishra, 2017). According to Daniel and Mishra (2017) service based learning is a type of "experiential education" in which the learning takes place through situating students in the real life scenarios and expose the student to real world experience instead of in a traditional classroom environment. Service based learning enhances academic knowledge and personal awareness. Daniel *et al* (2017) argue that service based learning promote personal growth such as increased self-efficacy. Service based learning offers students with real life scenarios, real life application, real life experience and learning experience along with the elimination of negative stereotypes which in turn will promote positive thinking about comprehensive ideas for future actions (Daniel & Mishra, 2017). Time management, procrastination and prioritization

are related to academic performance and student who participate in service based learning program are encouraged to think comprehensive ideas for time management, adapt to different situations which need the time management and have the awareness to apply the skills of time management to increase self-efficacy.

Time management is the skill in which all students should not only know, but also need to know how to apply (Faisal, Abdulla, Mohammad, & Nabil, 2014). Students have a lot of tasks and have to satisfy a lot of different lecturers, and the grades for each subject are determined by the academic task quality. Faisal, *et al* (2014) stated that there are a lot of students who are unsuccessful in academic facing difficulties in their time management and complaint that they do not have sufficient time to perform certain task. Due to inefficiency in time management and not able to meet the timeline, they get frustrated and stressed. There is an increasing number of studies mentioned that time management is related to student' academic performance significantly. Time management is interrelated to course grades (Burrus et al., 2013). Faisal, *et al* (2014) mentioned that time management is very critical to students especially university students as it will improve their grades and increase their productivity. According to Olowookere et al. (2015) students' improper time management are related to lower academic achievement. Behaviours like inappropriate time allocation, participating in unnecessarily activities that consume time, spending a lot of time on social networks and last minute preparation for examination, have caused a huge interruption for students and are often discussed as one of the main reasons for low academic performance (Faisal *et al*, 2014).

The problem of interruptions, disorganization, procrastination and working pressure indicate time management is positively linked to academic performance (Faisal *et al*, 2014). According to Aduke (2015), procrastination and prioritization were strong indicators, which affected the academic performance relative to time management. Aduke (2015) stated that both of the procrastination and prioritization are the common time management troubles for students who pursuit their academic. Thus, it is crucial for students to learn and know some of the time management proper step. For instance, prioritize the most important matters, and focus on issues, which are critical for success. The underpinning theory of this study is self-efficacy theory. That is, one's capability to manage time, control and avoid procrastination and prioritization of important task to achieve desired academic goals. Currently, there are few amounts of comprehensive researches on combination of time management, procrastination and prioritization conducted in Malaysia and abroad. There are some researches study the relationship between time management and academic performance, and some researches study the relationship between procrastination and prioritization and academic performance. Even though there are some studies conducted in European countries (Burrus et al. 2006), but the findings are still inconsistent in Malaysian context. Moreover, there is obviously lack of research on time management, procrastination and prioritization that focusing on service based learning program in higher education institutions. These variables are very crucial to help students achieve academic performance.

This study also proposed a conceptual framework for service based learning module towards excellent academic performance with the focus on how the time management, procrastination and prioritization affect students' academic performance; which identifying research gaps. Furthermore, this study will discuss on how to make students become more organized and guide them to have better time management levels. The finding of this research will not only be significant to the students of University Utara Malaysia but will be valuable to all courses that apply service based learning program in their assessment at any higher education institutions. This research is initiated based on one of courses in School of Business Management (SBM) at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) that assesses service based learning activities among students. The Seminar in Management Thinking Class (BPMN3103) uses these activities. The objective of the assignment is to develop excellent community communication skills; to experience efficient teamwork ability; and to establish knowledge in writing good report. The students are evaluated based on the teamwork and communication skills rubric. The activities also need to be reported and are evaluated using written rubric.

The Service Based Learning program would be significant to students and the university itself. For those students, findings of this research will act as guidance which guide students to better manage their time and help students become more organized to achieve good academic performance. For Service Based Learning program, findings of this research are very helpful to facilitate service based learning activity planning. Service Based Learning program organizer can refer to the findings of this research to design and implement effective time management activity in service based learning, which can raise awareness of students to manage their time. Furthermore, effective time management service based learning will improve students' time management skills, develop and cultivate quality student who in turn will contribute to the community in future. The researcher will acquire more knowledge, while improving the analytical skill to interpret the data regarding the relationship of time management, procrastination and prioritization with students' academic performance.

2.0   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Time Management on Academic Performance in Service Based Learning

Time management is a series of skills, habits, principles, tools and systems which operate together to assist a person to get more value from his time together with the purpose of improving personal quality of life (Aduke, 2015). Time management is a skill of arranging, organizing and estimating an individual time to generate more efficient work as well as increasing productivity. Time management is the action or process of planning and conducting conscious control on the spend time on particular activities, especially generating more efficiency as well as increasing productivity. Time management concentrates on problem solving. The example of the problems is: not able to handle interruption, procrastination, due date pressure, self-regulatory, not clear with personal goals, being uncertain or undecided and messy task (Aduke, 2015).

Time management comprises of setting goals in order to meet future needs, planning and prioritizing in order to achieve goals (Burrus et al., 2013). Time management is goal setting, reviewing and analysing spent time, scheduling effective time, prioritizing and choosing what to do, commissioned task, keeping focus at work, motivating oneself to achieve the goal (Jacqueline, 2016). With time management, an individual will be more efficient to complete their own tasks and target; setting priorities as well as scheduling tasks; having balance with flexibility and control over the time. Time is the only resource, which cannot alter, cannot be retrieved when it has been used and is fully applied at the owner's appreciation. Nobody is able to control over the movement of time but everyone can decide on the ways to use it. Time management is a self-management with a clear concentration on the future in determining what to do, focusing on how much time is assigned to the activity, focusing on how to more effectively complete activities and when is the right time for certain activities.

Time management have direct relationship with the academic performance in higher learning institutions. According to Olowookere et al. (2015), students' academic performance is forecasted by time management practice. Successful pupils are good time managers. Student's time is a limited resource. Like other limited resources, time can be managed with more or less effectively. Differences between individual's time management practices have certain differences to the extent of student achievement in their school. Students who have good time management skills are generally students who have passion to attain goals, which leads to excellent academic performance (Aduke, 2015).

In different levels of education, proper time management is crucial. This is due to it will determine the direction and success of students. According to Aduke (2015), academic achievement cannot be isolated from time management because all of the activities carried out by students were completed within the time. Prentice & Robinson (2010) stated that service learning provides a good platform for students to apply what they have learnt and make mistakes in the process. Student's time management skills are developed and applied in service learning.

2.2   Procrastination on Academic Performance in Service Based Learning

Procrastination is delay in doing something, especially from the habit of laziness, and it affects everyone (Faisal *et al*, 2014). Procrastination is a common phenomenon and occurs in daily behaviours (Gafni & Geri, 2010). No matter which occupations, procrastination will make all people in trouble as we all procrastinate again and again in our life. Thus, everybody has procrastination problem. This indicates everyone delays in doing something in a different way. Everyone have different levels of procrastination. According to Faisal *et al* (2014), due to task-aversion, a lot of students tend to procrastinate. Generally, the last thing that a student would do is studying. Students prefer to enjoy various kinds of entertainment along with having distractions first. However, it is the student's responsibility to continue the passion, which drives the student's progress in their academic. Sometimes, procrastination leads to good work, but not the best work, because it is the last minute work.

Not all students are aware that procrastination in academic causing students' anxiety and lower their confidence given the fact that it is impossible to get back the time wasted (Aduke, 2015). Usually, a lot of students who live in the hostel are easily getting distracted (Faisal *et al*, 2014). For example, if students need to spend 10 minutes with each person at the hostel, the time remained for them to do revision and study is lesser. This can affect student's academic progression. Student tends to delay their academic task. In the end, they get distressed when there are a lot of subjects need to be studied and they do not have enough time to do so. Faisal *et al* (2014) studied that some people procrastinate to the extent of giving up the urgent task. Based on the survey, few students start to do their assignment as soon as possible after their classes have finished (Faisal *et al* 2014). Gafni and Geri (2010) there are many students involve themselves in doing the task only before the deadline. The more the students put off the work, the more the Grade Point Average (GPA) will begin to decrease. When student continues to put off his work, more pressure and stress will arise, which eventually causes him to submit the assignment late and his Grade Point Average (GPA) will begin to decrease (Faisal *et al*, 2014).

According to Faisal *et al* (2014), hesitation also leads student to procrastinate especially during discussion where students spend a lot of time thinking about the topic that they will discuss and content that they will write about, as well as which topic and content that they are going to present. In addition, some of researchers found that students engaged in procrastination from the beginning of semester, with the ratio of one in five students enrol themselves for the class early but never show during the first class, while other students attend the class just for a while. In the end of the semester, they need to learn back what they have missed themselves. Eventually, reading unnecessary comprehensive material will make students confused and maybe not help them in academic thus wasting their time. Deficiency in proper time management among students would have certain negative effects on some academic activities. These are the outcome of procrastination and not focus on the issues such as time planning and prioritization. Students who are poor in time management might face with less efficiency, low productivity, ineffectiveness, experience frustration and stress (Aduke, 2015). Student perhaps are overwhelmed due to multiple tasks and delay their academic tasks until later days, or worrying about the class project and examination instead of completing them. This also will lead to stress, which in turn will mess up the schedule that was planned before. The frequently postponement of academic tasks, events or actions and lack of arrangement of schedule based on the priorities can make student's study difficult. Eventually, it will affect their fulfilment of educational achievement and goals for academic performance (Aduke, 2015). Procrastination is the variable, which has much impact on academic performance among all variables. However, it seems like everybody procrastinates. But the procrastination problem in a person can be reduced through time management activity in service based learning. With the guidance provided in service based learning activities, procrastinators will learn no how to determine and identify the causes of their procrastination and control them.

2.3 Prioritization on Academic Performance in Service Based Learning

Time management is a skill, which will influence on student's academic performance. However, students do not feel that prioritizing task based on importance is a need (Aduke, 2015). This leads to academic stress. Academic stress takes place with some situations like students rushing in completing assignment; experience the pressure to cramming for the exams as well as sleeping in only few hours due to disorganizations and worry. Students feeling frustrated in trying to get themselves to begin their own work because they are poor in time management skill such as prioritization of tasks (Aduke, 2015).

Academic grades in higher learning institutions usually based on the fulfilment of multiple tasks, lengths, deadlines and priorities. The quality of skills, thought and efforts put in the academic determined all of the different tasks and the academic grades. So, the students must be able to manage time, where the time management is an important part for success in academic (Aduke, 2015). Studying and doing assignment will become less overwhelming and will be more enjoyable by prioritizing the tasks. Effective time management techniques should be applied to student's overall schedule in order to attain both success and peace of mind. Student should arrange their schedule based on their priorities (Aduke, 2015). According to Al-Zoubi (2016), arranging tasks based on their importance is an ideal exploitation to time. Al-Zoubi (2016) explained that one must give priorities to the important tasks over the other task, allocate sufficient time to obtain the best results for the sake of effectiveness. The effectiveness can be assessed by the quality of tasks completed in particular time. Prioritization based on the importance of task can be done by recording important dates like the due dates of assignment and then arranging them based on due date, difficulty and the size of assignment (Faisal *et al*, 2014).

The relationship between prioritization and academic performance was significant. Lack of setting fixed term or daily goals will give impact on academic activities. Goals must be arranged or performed based on the sequence of urgency and importance. According to Aduke (2015) self-discipline is needed in time planning in order to improve academic performances. Besides that, students need to be aware of time, strive hard to planning, spend their time wisely without delaying the plan by setting up priorities on the plan, which in turn will gain more academic confidence from knowing what they are progressing towards their goals. The academic confidence will contribute to the high level of students' academic performance. Furthermore, with the guidance provided in service based learning activities, students are expected to have the ability to prioritize their goals and sequence their actions accordingly, and then benefit from the growth of the productivity and efficiency.

2.4 Academic Performance

Academic performance is educational results. In other word, academic performance is the level where a student, educator or institution has attained their academic objective (Aduke, 2015). Both the public and private school, college, higher education institutions are striving to enhance students' academic performance. Based on Kithinji and Kanga (2017), in all education systems, academic performance is the criterion or standard of judging the quality of student learning which is accepted globally. Maintaining a satisfactory academic record and fulfilling the obligations of enrolled courses are compulsory to all students in higher education institutions.

Academic performance usually is assessed by continuous assessment or examinations. However, there is no public recognition on how academic performance is best assessed or what aspects are crucial. Academic performance appears to improve when time is well managed (Aduke, 2015). Academic performances will become poor if time is not managed the properly and wisely. Student's learning performance and academic gain is influenced by daily study hour (Ali et al., 2013). Mushtaq and Khan (2012) stated that student academic performance is measured by many ways such as Cumulative

Grade Points Average (CGPA), Grade Points Average (GPA) and student's examination result. Elmore et al. (2016; as cited in Atchley et al., 2013), in general, academic performance is assessed through the grade obtained in the course. Mushtaq and Khan (2012) stated that Grade Points Average (GPA) was used by most of the researchers around the world to measure student academic performance (as cited in Broh, 2000; Darling, 2005; Galiher, 2006; Stephen & Schaban, 2002). In particular semester, Grade Points Average (GPA) is used to measure student academic performance. Based on Mushtaq *et al* (2012), stated that result of specific subject or the results from previous year are used by some other researcher to measure the student academic performance.

Besides that, in order to attain the maximum level of academic performance, students must have a high attendance rate. Absenteeism will affect the achievement target and also poor performances among the students. Mushtaq and Khan (2012), academic performance play a crucial function to produce excellent graduates which will turn into excellent manpower as well as leaders, who have responsibility to contribute for the nation's social and economy advancement. So, time management must be managed properly to maintain good academic performances of students in long term and become a successful manpower and leaders who will contribute to country in future.

2.5   Time Management System

According to Al-Zoubi (2016), in time management, a person will use the best way to take advantage of his time in order to obtain the best results. One of the best ways for managing time systems is using a time management cycle at the beginning of the student's academic year. The time management cycle proposed by Poser (2003) can make students become more organized and guide them to have better time management levels. The time management cycle involves goal setting, time awareness and time tracking, planning, taking action, time shifting and adjusting (Poser, 2003). The time management cycle are illustrated in Figure 1:
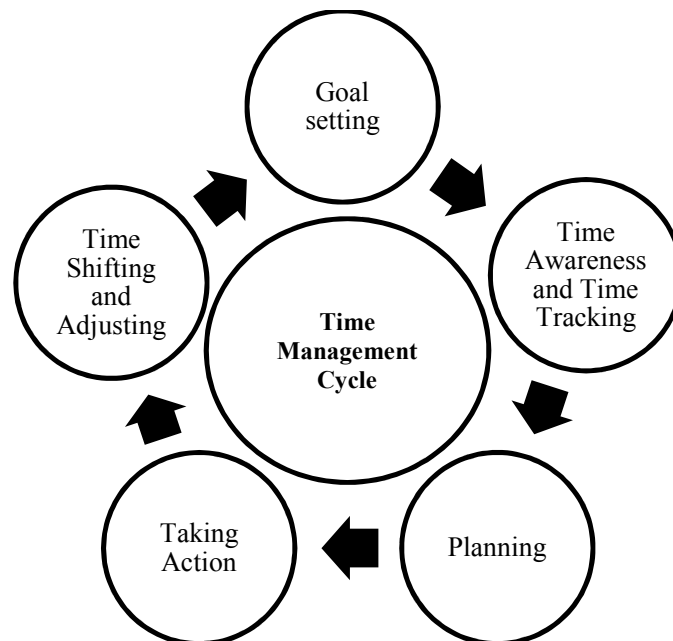

Figure 1 Time Management Cycle
Source: Poser, B. (2003).

2.5.1 Goal Setting

The cycle starts with process of setting the goal, which establishes a context for time management (Poser, 2003). Student must have a clear objective to their academic performance and know what is crucial for them to succeed in their study. Once the student has a set of goals, student needs to divide the goals into sub-goals or manageable steps in order to handle them in one small step on time that can decrease procrastination. Divide the goals into sub-goals or manageable steps can make student to be more alert to monitor their own progress and can check whether they are on the track or not (Poser, 2003). With the goal setting, student will be lesser in getting interruption and distraction easily, become more organized and able to prioritize (Faisal *et al*, 2014). For instance, high Grade Points Average (GPA) is a goal that most students wish to achieve in particular semester. To check whether students are on the track to achieve high Grade Points Average (GPA) or not, students can divide the goal into sub-goals such as doing well in the quiz, test, assignment in order to obtain good coursework carry marks with the best exploitation of time. With good coursework carry marks, which can contribute to the final examination result, the student will archive high Grade Points Average (GPA).

2.5.2 Time Awareness and Time Tracking

The next phase of the cycle includes the process of time awareness and time tracking. Every task has a due time to be finished (Al-Zoubi, 2016). Students are encouraged to make a schedule but work in reverse order to identify and determine the actual time needed for a task for time tracking (Poser, 2003). Determine and aware the actual time needed to complete a task is interrelated with effectiveness (Faisal, *et al*, 2014). For example, determining the time used to complete a tutorial. Besides that, time awareness and time tracking process highlight many individual's habits that a student might selectively ignore currently (Poser, 2003). For example, some students found that every time when they plan to do assignment, they end up with playing games on smartphone. No matter what the time habits the students possess, time tracking will assist student to adjust and fine-tune their time management practices (Poser, 2003).

2.5.3 Planning

The third phase of the cycle is planning. Students need to be good at planning as well as prioritizing, like planning the schedule and trying to work hard in order to meet the deadlines (Faisal *et al*, 2014). Planning can be done by recording the planned activities on planner or calendar as a reminder. Poser (2003) proposed there are four planning tools, which aid students in planning the time: a Weekly Objectives List, a Weekly Planner, a Monthly Planner and a Time Log. With the time planning tools, student can plan their time and tasks ahead and getting organized, where the tasks are already listed and the events are already scheduled. During planning, students will write down the decision regarding how they spend their time so that they are more organized and can avoid from getting stuck in deciding whether they want to do the tasks which are not related to their goals.

2.5.4 Taking Action

The fourth phase of the cycle is self-monitoring the action (Poser, 2003). The reason for students must monitor the action by their own are not only limited to monitor and control whether they utilize their time well, but also need to monitor whether they are doing the task which converge with their goals. When students start to work on their tasks, student should keep focusing on trying to do their best to execute what they have set out for themselves (Poser, 2003). For instance, student self-monitor themselves on whether they are doing the assignment as soon as possible after getting them and put all mobile phones away while studying in order to obtain good examination result.

2.5.5 Time Shifting and Adjusting

The last phase of the cycle is time shifting and adjusting (Poser, 2003). Poser (2003) suggested that students should make adjustments on their plans and time management habits. Just like scheduling a class, scheduling time for relaxation is crucial in time shifting and adjusting. Good mood will lead to good grades in academic. Student should always have positive thinking and overcome any bad feelings and problem in their educational life (Faisal *et al*, 2014). Staying focused to deal with changes in academic life and have adaptability to unpredictable events is crucial. When students face time troubles, students should remember that some of the time troubles can be predicted and some are not, some of the time troubles can be controlled and some are not. For the time troubles, which are not controllable, student must keep calm and return back to the track as early as possible. For the time troubles that are predictable and controllable, handle them directly in order to avoid the time troubles bring obstacle to goals achievement (Poser, 2003). One of the examples of time trouble is procrastination. Examine the time trouble and come out with the time trouble solutions, tips and strategies that can assist them to shift their time back to their goals. As students go through time management cycle multiple times, their goals will be more solid; the awareness of time that they use will be increased.

3.0 PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Independent Variables   **Dependent Variable**
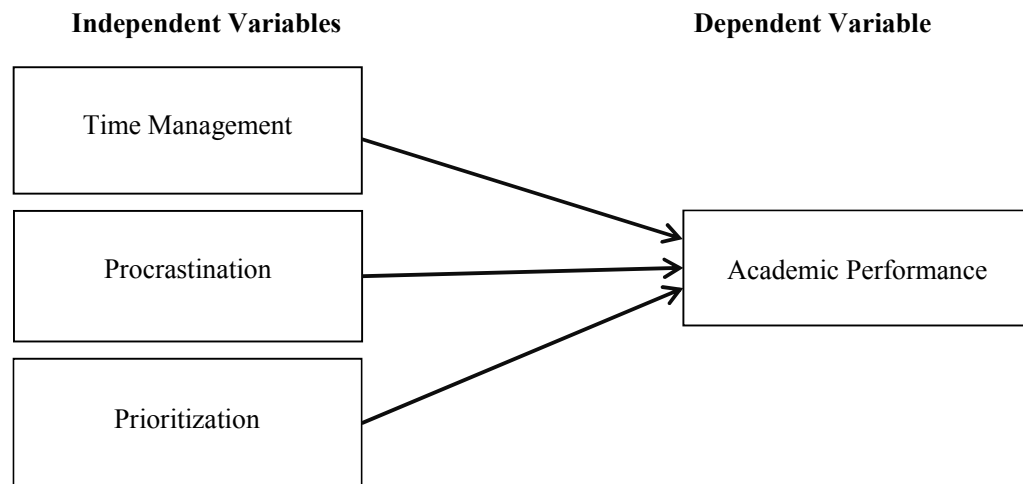

Figure 2 Proposed Conceptual Framework

The theory of a research can be supported or hold by a structure which is known as theoretical framework. In the theoretical framework, it includes concepts, definitions and references in order to correspond with the existing theory, scholarly literature, which is applied in particular study. The variance in the dependent variable is contributed by the independent variables. Based on the Figure 2, this study will show the relationships of three elements or independent variables that are time management, procrastination and prioritization towards the dependent variable, that is, academic performance.

This study may propose three main hypotheses for the further research such as:
H1: There is a significant relationship between time management and academic performance.
H2: There is a significant relationship between procrastination and academic performance.
H3: There is a significant relationship between prioritization and academic performance.

4.0   METHODOLOGY

This paper is a conceptual paper that aims to analyse the influence of time management, procrastination and prioritization on academic performance of student in higher education institutions. In order analysing the links between variables, secondary data research was conducted by the researchers through reading and analysing previous researches and literatures on student time management, procrastination and prioritization. The objective of this conceptual paper is to describe how time management, procrastination and prioritization influence on academic performance of students in institutions of higher education, thus proposes a conceptual framework for service based learning module towards excellent academic performance with the focus on how the time management, procrastination and prioritization affect students' academic performance, identifies the limits of time management among the students and describes the best options for their time management. In this research, valuable secondary data such as journals, articles were gathered from library research and on line service.

This study will conduct an action research at School of Business, University Utara Malaysia. The study will incur among students who enrol during the semester. Research instrument or measurement scales basically refer to scholars in time management (Aduke, 2015; Brigitte et al., 2005; Jacqueline, 2016; Lakein, 1973; Olowookere et al., 2015; Prentice & Robinson, 2010), procrastination (Aduke, 2015; Faisal *et al*, 2014; Gafni & Geri, 2010) and prioritization (Aduke, 2015; Al-Zoubi, 2016; Faisal *et al*, 2014), which will be determined by further reading and analysis from previous researches and literatures. The research design is using the survey method. Undergraduate students from School of Business will be chosen as respondents through simple random sampling method. The respondents are selected by distributing the questionnaires directly to the respondents. All of the questionnaires will be collected after respondents complete the questionnaires. Questionnaire items will be based on Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree). Data collected are analysed via the software, 'Statistical Package For Social Sciences' (SPSS) version 22.0 by using descriptive study such as frequency, percentage, the mean/mean score and standard deviation and inferential study, which analyse the relationship and influence of the variables.

5.0   IMPLICATION OF RESEARCH

This study may plug in new contribution to knowledge. The theoretical implication will contribute to fill in the lack or insufficiency of previous literatures about time management, procrastination and prioritization towards academic performance at Malaysian higher education institutions as well as fill in the lack or insufficiencies of previous literatures about time management, procrastination and prioritization which are linked with service based learning. Even though the research methodology employed in this study is not new, however, they were combined in the unique way, which had not been employed previously. Further of this research will propose three main hypotheses using inferential statistics on Pearson correlation, multiple regression analysis.

The practical implication of this study would help the higher education institution to strengthen the teaching and learning process through a better time management strategy. Moreover, the practical implication of this study would assist management team of School of Business University Utara Malaysia in managerial positions to understand which aspect of time management training need to be emphasized in service based learning activity and how to improve the quality of service based learning activity planning, organizing, controlling as well as leading students on how to manage their time properly. Practically, this study contributes the time management knowledge to students which in turn will enhance their ability to manage their time and gain more academic confidence from knowing what they are progressing towards their goals.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research should propose empirical study by using new technique of sample, population and analysis in the research design for both qualitative and quantitative in order to expand the findings. Since time management, procrastination and prioritization has positive impacts on academic performance, it is imperative for future research to study the unique contribution that time management appears to provide in preparing self-efficiency of students for the workforce, which is related to framework for service based learning module. Time management and self-efficiency is indispensable in the generating high performance talents.

7.0 CONCLUSION

There have been several outcomes highlighted in the literature regarding the time management, procrastination and prioritization toward academic performance. In conclusion, time management, procrastination, prioritization are strong indicators, which affected the academic performance (Aduke, 2015; Al-Zoubi, 2016; Brigitte et al., 2005; Faisal, Abdulla, Mohammad, & Nabil, 2014; Gafni & Geri, 2010; Jacqueline, 2016; Lakein, 1973; Olowookere et al., 2015; Prentice & Robinson, 2010). Poor time management, procrastination and did not prioritize the task would influence the academic performance of students. Time management system would be a very useful tool, which enables students to have better time management levels as well as have a systematic ways to enhance their academic performance. Service based learning interactions, which incorporated time management activity, also can improve student's time management skills, behaviour, efficient confidence which in turn would contribute to their academic performance. This will help university to attain their mission of producing excellent graduates with holistic characteristics who will become excellent manpower and leaders who serve the global community in future.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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