



EXPLORING THE LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND PREPAREDNESS FOR LEADERSHIP ROLES AMONG FINAL YEAR B. Sc (N) STUDENTS - A CROSS-SECTIONAL MIXED METHOD STUDY

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Abstract

Leadership is a key factor in success of any organization, as it shapes vision, guides strategic initiatives and help to carry out the essential objectives. Developing leadership skills in students is crucial for their personal growth and future success. Leadership skills empower students to acquire self-confidence and start to know your self-worth. A mixed method study with both qualitative and quantitative approach was used to explore the leadership skills and preparedness for leadership roles among final year B.Sc.(N) Students at selected colleges in and around Salem in which non-probability convenience sampling was adopted to select the samples. The data was collected using structured and unstructured questionnaire for quantitative and qualitative respectively. Quantitative data was analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics and qualitative data was categorized into thematic analysis. The findings revealed that among 169 students, highest students 68(40%) had adequate knowledge on leadership skills. It was also found that there was significant association between the father’s and mother’s educational status and students leadership skills. Participant responses for qualitative data were categorized into six themes based on various aspects of leadership skills.

The study concluded that further measures need to be taken for preparing the nursing students to develop leadership skills and preparedness for leadership roles.

Keywords: *leadership skills, preparedness for leadership roles*

Introduction

Leadership is a key factor in success of any organization, as it shapes vision, guides strategic initiatives and help to carry out the essential objectives. Leadership involves the ability to influence others to achieve the common goals, highlight the significance of both the leader's action and dynamics within a group. The effectiveness of leadership is determined not only by a leader's capability to direct and control but also by their ability to motivate, inspire the individuals within the organization to achieve the goal. Various scholars have defined distinct leadership styles that represent different types of approaches in influencing and guiding the followers. Understanding these styles is crucial for examining how leaders handle decision making, conflict resolution and team collaboration.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE IN NURSING:

Leadership in schools has been a major cause for concern, not only in our society, but on a global level. Developing leadership skills in students is crucial for their personal growth and future success. Leadership skills empower students to acquire self-confidence and start to know their self-worth. Learning leadership skills helps students to grow both personally and professionally. Though it is needed for all the students, being in a nursing profession which requires handling various situations that needs many leadership skills, it is important for them to know about effective leadership and develop leadership skills. Thus, with the focus to know the level of leadership knowledge, perception and preparedness for leadership among nursing students we, the researchers conducted a study to explore the leadership skills and preparedness for leadership roles among final year B.Sc.(N) Students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

A Cross-sectional mixed method study to explore the leadership skills and preparedness for leadership roles among final year B.Sc.(N) students at selected colleges, Salem.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1.To assess the knowledge on leadership skills among final year B.Sc.(N) Students at selected colleges of Salem.
- 2.To assess the preparedness for leadership roles among final year B.Sc.(N) Students.
- 3.To associate the level of leadership skills with the selected demographic variables of final year B.Sc.(N) students.

HYPOTHESIS:

H₁: There is a significant association between the level of knowledge on leadership skills and demographic variables of final year B.Sc.(N) Students at $p \leq 0.05$ level.

METHODOLOGY

A Mixed method study with both qualitative and quantitative research design and non-probability convenience sampling was adopted to assess the level of knowledge and preparedness for leadership roles among final year B.Sc Nursing students. After getting permission from the Head of the Institutions to collect the data, questionnaire on demographic variables, structured questionnaire consisting of 25 multiple choice questions for quantitative data to assess the level of knowledge on leadership skills and unstructured questionnaire consisting of 10 open-ended questions for qualitative data to assess the preparedness for leadership roles were shared through google form to various institutions in and around Salem. The scores for quantitative data were categorized into adequate knowledge, moderately adequate knowledge and inadequate knowledge. After receiving the response, the quantitative data were analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics and qualitative data were analysed by using thematic analysis.

RESULTS:

The findings revealed that among 169 students, most of the students (54.4%) were 21 years old, were Hindus (66.9%) whose mothers were home makers (68.6%). Majority of the students were females (80.5%) and were from nuclear family (81.7%). Highest number of students' fathers have completed primary education (39.1%) and were daily wages (37.3%) whereas highest number of students' mothers have completed secondary education (35.5%) and the family monthly income was Rs. ≤ 10000 (35.5%). Nearly half of the students had previous leadership experience as class representative (49.1%).

a. Distribution of students according to the level of knowledge on leadership skills.

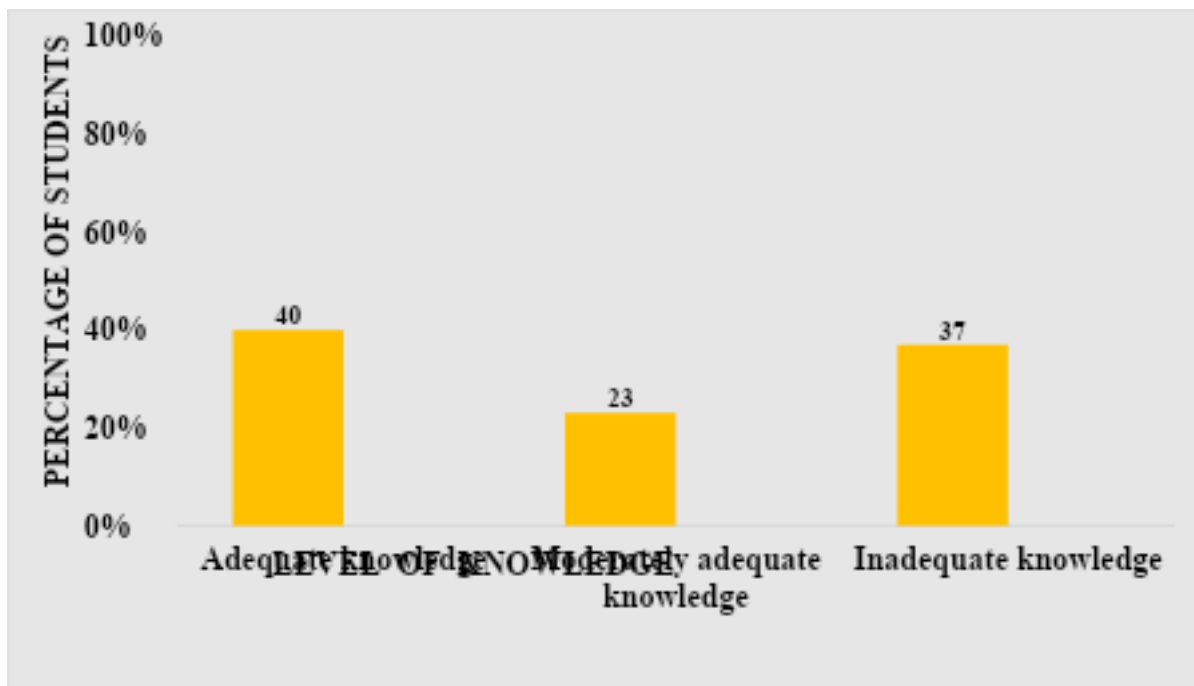


Fig 4.1 Frequency and Percentage distribution of students according to the level of knowledge on leadership skills.

The above diagram shows that 68(40%) students have adequate knowledge, 39(23%) students have moderately adequate knowledge and 62(37%) students have inadequate knowledge on leadership skills.

Participants responses for qualitative data were analysed to determine themes using words, phrases and sentences and thematic analysis was done.

b) Thematic analysis of students regarding preparedness of leadership roles.

Responses Received	Themes Arrived
Among 168 students, 99 students said that they have the leadership qualities like decision making, maintaining equality, problem solving skills, motivating others, compassionate and good communication. Similarly, 52 students said that they have qualities like emotional stability, self-awareness, self-confidence, empathy and coordination.	Identification of leadership skills
Eighty-eight students said that they have some previous leadership experiences like being class representative, supervising juniors during their clinical training in the ward, initiating their peers to complete the requirements whereas 56 students said that they have no previous leadership experiences.	Previous Experience and Leadership preparedness
One hundred and one students said that they have the communication skills like listening, conversing with politeness, having clarity, understanding others communication and perception, preplanning before communicating with others and giving space to others for sharing	Effective Communication

information whereas 52 students have not replied related to communication.	
From 168 students, 68 students said that the leader should have the roles of problem solver, decision maker, advocate, trainer, critical thinker and a good communicator whereas 86 students said that leader have the role of dominating others or influencing them and 5 students said that they have no idea about the role of a leader.	Navigating the role of a Leader
Seventy students perceived that to become a leader they should be honest, empathetic and sympathetic, motivate others, be calm, critical thinker, observer, making proper judgement, alert, understanding the situation whereas 53 students said that the leader should have a dominating behaviour, giving punishment for improper subordinates, should always make decisions based on majority whereas 8 students gave no answer.	Perception of Leadership Preparedness
Regarding fostering supportive environment 102 students said that a leader should always make decision which is beneficial for their group members and encourage them and motivate them, give special training for their subordinates, advocate for them in critical situations whereas 50 students said that always discussion with group members need to be made while making any change and avoid discrimination between group members.	Fostering Supportive Environment

c) Association between the level of knowledge on leadership skills and demographic variables

N=169

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	Df	χ^2	table value
1.	Age in years	4	0.90	9.49
2.	Gender	2	2.02	5.99
3.	Religion	4	4.56	9.49
4.	Type of family	4	2.02	9.49
5.	Father's education	6	14.57*	12.59
6.	Mother's education	6	16.18*	12.59
7.	Father's occupation	8	11.28	15.511
8.	Mother's occupation	6	3.89	12.59
9.	Family monthly income	6	5.98	12.59
10.	Previous Leadership experience	6	3.93	12.59

*Significant at $p \leq 0.05$ level

The above table reveals that there is significant association between the level of knowledge on leadership skills and with father's education and mother's education and no association with other variables. Hence the research hypothesis H_1 is accepted only for father's education and mother's education at $p \leq 0.05$ level and rejected for other variables. This reveals that parent's education plays a major role in the development of leadership skills among nursing students.

DISCUSSION:

According to the level of knowledge, the present study was similar to the results of the study conducted by **Keerthana B** to assess the knowledge and attitude on leadership among nursing students. The study results revealed that among 38 students, 12 (31.6%) students had inadequate knowledge, 22 (57.8%) students had moderate knowledge and 4 (10.6%) students had adequate knowledge.

Similarly, according to the preparedness for leadership, the present study was supported by **Alison H. James** who conducted a study on Perceptions and experiences of leadership in undergraduate nurse education. The findings revealed that perceived characteristics of leadership were based on 3 themes such as participants experiences and learning, emotional perceptions and positive and negative attributes on leadership skills.

Recommendations

- A retrospective study to assess the student leader experience influencing the current leadership roles among nursing leaders.
- A Similar study can be conducted in various settings to identify the factors influencing or affecting leadership skills and preparedness.
- A Similar study can be conducted with large samples and for longer duration

Nursing Implications:

Nursing practice

Practicing nurses should be encouraged to take an informal leadership role to build confidence and competence for formal leadership position

Nursing Education

Nursing curriculum can integrate leadership development as a core component at undergraduate and post graduate levels.

Nursing Administration

The nurse administrator can organise in-service education program regarding leadership skills and preparedness of leadership roles

Nursing Research

Nursing research can be conducted at various aspects of leadership which could pay way for newer implementation for the development of leadership skills among student nurses.

Conclusion

Preparing nursing students for leadership roles is crucial for the future of healthcare. Effective leadership in nursing is essential for improving patient outcomes, fostering a positive work environment, and driving positive change within the healthcare system. Nurses need to be equipped with leadership skills to navigate the complexities of modern healthcare and adapt to its ever-evolving landscape.

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