



# Leadership Skills Among The Nurses Working In Selected Hospitals, Chennai

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The world needs leaders, more so the Nursing profession. Nursing, being a dynamic profession and the largest workforce in health care organizations, takes a major role in health leadership and policy-making while retaining their traditional caring skills. Leadership skills are essential for all the level of nurses from those providing direct patient care to top management nurse leaders. Leadership in nursing needs to be fostered in many settings such as clinical management, policy, education, and research across public and private sectors and at the regulatory, organizational, and individual levels.

**Objective:** To assess leadership skills and associate them with selected demographic variables of nurses, working in selected hospitals.

**Methods:** A descriptive research design was used. Using a nonprobability purposive sampling technique, a total of 290 staff nurses were selected from two multispecialty hospitals in Chennai. The data collection tool consists of 2 parts: Demographic variables and Standardized Leadership skills questionnaire. Collected data were analysed, using descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Results:** More than half of the samples (55 %) had good leadership skills, 37 % of the samples had fair leadership skills, and only 8% of the samples had poor leadership skills. The mean leadership skill score was 194.09 and with a standard deviation of + 37.09. Chi-square was computed to find the association with selected demographic variables and was not significant at 0.05 level as age, gender, religion, educational qualification, current position, salary and tnm registration status. Hence  $H_0$  was accepted for these variables. There was a significant association with selected demographic variables such as marital status, institution studied, parent hospital attaché, leadership position held, place of work and year of experiences. Hence  $H_1$  was not accepted for these variables.

**Conclusions:** This study has revealed that more than half of the staff nurses had good leadership skills. Nurses are getting more opportunities like conducive clinical environment, mentoring guidance, induction training programme, in-service education programme, continuing nursing education programme, online module with renewal of license once in five years which helps nurses to develop excellent leadership skills.

**Keywords:** Nursing, Profession, Leadership skills, Staff nurses, Hospitals.

## I INTRODUCTION

In general, leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal achievement. Leaders are found everywhere, from government sectors to corporate level and in local communities, including our nursing profession. Nurse leaders play a key role in influencing healthcare organizations at various levels, and in all settings

Leadership in nursing is the way one can inspire, influence and motivate health care professionals as they work together to achieve their goals. Nursing profession has developed many strong natural leaders. To become an effective nurse leader must develop hard and soft skills. Hard skills include advanced clinical knowledge and technical skills which the nurses need to perform in their job. Soft skills are the social skills that need to be consciously developed over time and help the nurse leader effectively communicate with peers and subordinates and other health care team members.

Nurse leaders use critical thinking skills to inspire and influence others to achieve their maximum potential. Nurse leaders' ways of planning and execution, impact the overall goals of the health care organization. Nurse leaders communicate their expectations and motivate them to achieve predetermined goals. They must be flexible enough to adapt to technological changes, fluctuating payment methods, new treatment modalities, and regulatory and legislative environments.

A recent cross-sectional study (2022) conducted among 166 medical staff from hospitals in Craiova. The results reported that the important qualities nurse leaders must possess were ambition, informal communication with everyone around, the ability to learn in any situation, the ability to create a pleasant work environment. The important qualities of nurse leaders are teamwork, speed of decision-making in critical situations without creating conflicts, desire to contribute to the professional growth of the employee by allowing them to have own vision regarding certain situations.

A recent literature review assessed the correlation between leadership styles with healthcare quality measures. correlation of leadership with quality care and a wide range of patient outcomes (e.g., 30-day mortality, safety, injuries, satisfaction, physical restraint use, pain, etc.) were stressed in most of the articles. Therefore, leadership is considered a core element for a well-coordinated and integrated provision of care, both from the patients and healthcare professionals. Leadership is essential in all the settings (e.g., clinics or inpatient units, long-term care units, or home care facilities), especially for those who are directly involved with patients for long periods of time.

The nursing in charge uses different leadership style and the leadership style of each nursing in charge differ from each other. A cross sectional study conducted to evaluate the preferred leadership styles among nurse in charges. The results revealed that 55% of nurse in charges had transformational leadership styles, 15 % of them had transactional leadership styles, and only few preferred to have autocratic and democratic learning styles 10% and 1 % respectively.

There are many studies insisted on leadership style, and it is a key element for quality of healthcare. Effective leadership is the most critical components for successful outcomes of an organization. Transformational and transactional leadership behavior increases, patient safety culture, organizational citizenship behavior, and job satisfaction also increases.

Leadership in nursing begins at the bedside. Clinical and bedside nurses use leadership skills to coordinate, direct and support patient care with other healthcare team members. Nurses should have effective communication skills and serve as a patient advocate. Nurses, have challenging and multi-faceted roles, develop more leadership skills while on the job. All nurses within the healthcare organization can assume their role as a leader. As investigators have seen many nurses exhibit leadership traits, this instigated to take up the present study to assess the leadership skills among staff nurses in selected hospitals.

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

A descriptive study to assess the leadership skills among the nurses working in selected hospitals, Chennai

## OBJECTIVES

- To assess the level of leadership skills among nurses working in selected hospitals
- To associate the selected demographic variables of nurses with the level of leadership skills among nurses working in selected hospitals.

## NULL HYPOTHESIS

NH<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant association between selected demographic variables of nurses and the level of leadership skills.

## II MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive cross sectional research design was adopted. A total of 290 nurses were selected by using non probability purposive sampling technique in selected hospitals. The accessible population was all nurses working in selected hospitals. Out of 550 nurses, 290 nurses were selected.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL:** The research tool consists of 2 parts.

**Section A:** Demographic variables Performa consists of demographic information such as age, gender, marital status, religion, educational qualification, type of institution studied, parent hospital attached, leadership qualities held during nursing training. Work place information such as type of work place, years of experience, current designation, salary per month and availability of regular in-service education. Other information such as active TNNMC registration status and participation in CNE programme organised by other institutions.

**Section B:** Standardized reflection of leadership skills was adopted. Reflection of leadership skills scale comprises of 50 items. Each items had five alternatives varying from the almost always true to almost never true. Each response carries a score of 1,2,3,4 and 5 respectively. The minimum score is 50 and maximum score is 250. A score of below 125 indicates poor leadership skills, 126-200 indicates fair leadership skills, and 201-250 indicates good leadership skills.

## Ethical consideration

The study was approved by the St.Isabel's College of Nursing, Chennai. Necessary permission from the hospital authority was obtained. Before data collection, written consent was obtained from the samples. Confidentiality and individual anonymity were maintained throughout the study.

### Data Collection Procedure

After formal permission from the hospital authorities, the self-administrated questionnaire was given to the staffs and they were informed about the importance of responding very carefully to each statement of the questionnaire. The approximate time taken by staffs to complete the questionnaire was 15-20 minutes. The collected data were analysed by descriptive and inferential statistics.

## III RESULTS

### Demographic variables

Among 290 samples, 211(73%) were in the age group of 21-25 years, 268 (92%) were females, 223 (76%) were single ,144 (49%) were belong to hindus, 209 (72%) were studied B.Sc(N),111(39%) were studied in private institution,245(85%) had parent hospital attached.

Regarding work place information 142(49%) of them working in mission hospitals,120(41%) of staff had less than one year experience,157(54%) were junior staff nurse cadre,121(42%) had salary 12001-17000 per month,165(57%) of staffs had regular in-service education.

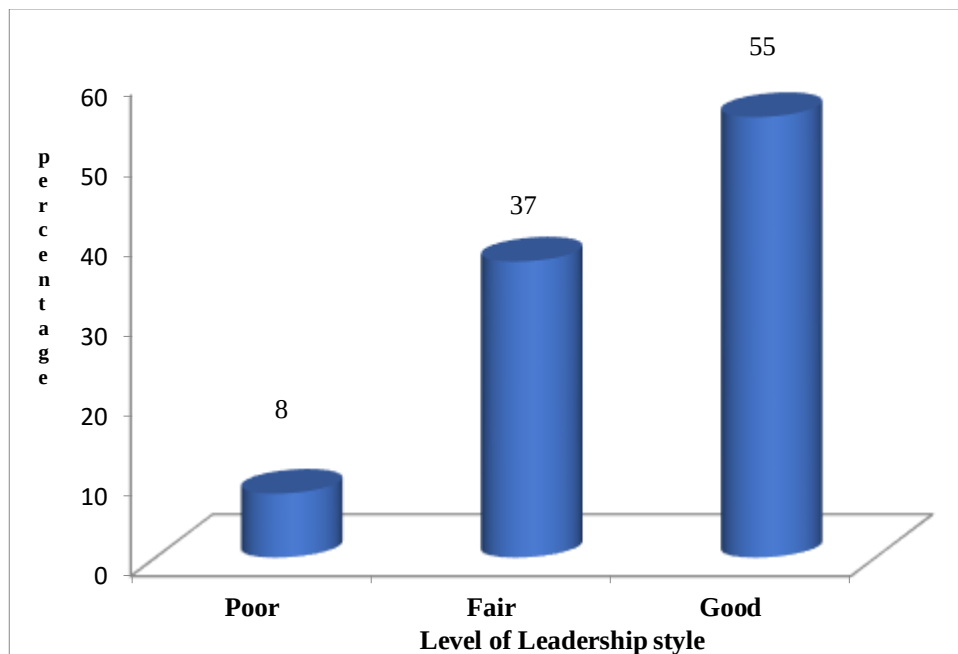
Regarding TNNMC registration 240(83%) of staff had active registration status and 172(59%) of staff reported that they were attending regular continuing nursing education programme organised by other institutions.

**Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of the level of Leadership skills among staff nurses**

**N=290**

| S.No | Level of Leadership Skills | f   | %  |
|------|----------------------------|-----|----|
| 1.   | Poor                       | 23  | 8  |
| 2.   | Fair                       | 107 | 37 |
| 3.   | Good                       | 160 | 55 |

Among 290 samples of staff nurses 160(55%) of them reported that they had good leadership skills,107(37%) reported that fair leadership skills and only 23(8%) of them reported that poor leadership skills.



The mean value of leadership skill was 194.09 with standard deviation of 37.09.

#### Association of selected demographic variables with level of leadership style

Chi-square was computed to find the association with selected demographic variables and was not significant at 0.05 level for variables such as age, gender, religion, educational qualification, current position, salary and TNNMC registration status. Hence  $NH_1$  was accepted for these variables.

There was a significant association with selected demographic variables such as marital status, institution studied, parent hospital attaché, leadership position held, place of work and year of experiences. Hence  $NH_1$  was not accepted for these variables.

#### IV DISCUSSION

Among 290 samples of staff nurses 160(55%) of them reported that they had good leadership skills, 107(37%) reported that fair leadership skills and only 23(8%) of them reported that poor leadership skills. The study was supported by Shirsha Bhandari(2016) conducted a study to assess the knowledge regarding leadership skills among staff nurses in selected hospital Bangalore. The result reveals that 6(12%) of subjects had poor knowledge, 44(88%) of subjects had average knowledge.

There was a significant association with selected demographic variables such as marital status, institution studied, parent hospital attached, leadership position held, place of work and year of experiences with the leadership skills.

#### Implications

- The nurse educator/student nurses can be taught regarding various leadership styles and leadership training programmes can be conducted to develop leadership skills.
- The nursing fraternity in the community and public health, as well as the stakeholders in the community, must take leadership roles in conducting various health awareness programmes and also providing health information regarding communicable and non-communicable diseases.

- Researchers can further conduct this study as type of leadership styles adopted and comparison studies between government, private, mission and corporate hospitals.
- The effectiveness of leadership training programmes can also be tested among nurses and nursing students.

### Limitations

The time constraints and self-report questionnaire were the limitations of the present study.

### V CONCLUSION

The results of the present study revealed that more than half of the nurses reported that they had good leadership skills. There was a significant association with selected demographic variables such as marital status, institution studied, parent hospital attached, leadership position held, place of work and year of experiences with the leadership skills. Nurses are getting more opportunities like conducive clinical environment, mentoring guidance, induction training programme, in-service education programme, continuing nursing education programme, online module with renewal of license once in five years which helps nurses to develop excellent leadership skills. It is essential for the nurse educators to develop nurse leaders to provide quality nursing care. “Great leaders are not born they are made” with this quote let us prepare more nurse leaders.

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