

Impact of online peer discussion on leadership development in graduate nurses

Graduate nursing students must develop their professional leadership capacity. There is growing evidence that leadership development should extend beyond teaching traditional knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) and target the growth of leadership efficacy and identity. Structured, reflective peer discussions about past leadership experiences may enhance insight, develop confidence and re-frame assumptions about oneself and one's capacity to lead. Reflecting on one's leadership experience is critical for developing self-efficacy and leadership identity. Experience-based nursing peer discussions offer the benefit of peer feedback and require the ongoing engagement of the participants. This pilot study aimed to assess the impact of the educational intervention "Looking for Leadership", a

semi-structured web-based, peer discussion activity about first-person leadership experiences on self-reported levels of leadership self-efficacy. Forty-three students participated in a two group; pretest-posttest evaluation and leadership self-efficacy were measured using the 22 items Leadership Self Efficacy Questionnaire developed by Hannah and colleagues. Students in the intervention group (n=27) reported higher levels of Total Leader Self-Efficacy and significantly higher Leader Means Efficacy ($p=.010$). Leader means efficacy is the extent to which leaders believe that they can rely on others in their work environment to enhance their effectiveness as a leader. The use of structured, reflective peer discussion was effective in developing leadership capacity. Additional research is needed regarding the effectiveness of this approach using larger samples.

Biography

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Health Care Science, Northeastern University and Program Director for the Graduate Nursing Administration and Leadership program since 2013 and the newly developed Nursing Informatics Graduate Certificate. Laura received her BSN from Salve Regina University, an MSN from Yale University and a PhD from Boston College. After serving in executive, program-based and advanced practice clinical nursing leadership roles in acute and critical care for 25 plus years, Laura brought her experience in leadership, outcomes-driven practice and acute healthcare service delivery to the classroom. Laura's research interests include leadership development using innovative teaching strategies and role transition. Laura is a member of the American Nurses Association, American Association of Nurse Executives, the Organization of Nurse Leaders and the National Honor Society, Gamma Epsilon Chapter.

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