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Strengthening Clinical Leadership Skills Among Nursing Students: A pilot program from Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin

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Statement: In Germany's dynamic healthcare environment, the demand for clinically competent and leadership-ready nurses is increasing. However, traditional nursing education often focuses more on clinical skills than on leadership training. To bridge this gap, this study introduces a pilot leadership development program for undergraduate nursing students aimed at enhancing their leadership competencies before entering the clinical workforce.

Methodology: The study was conducted at Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin, involving 100 final-year nursing students. A 12-week pilot program was integrated into the academic semester, comprising leadership theory modules, case-based learning, interprofessional simulations, and mentoring sessions with senior clinical staff. A pre-post assessment design was used, incorporating the Nursing Leadership Practice Inventory (NLPI) and reflective journals to evaluate changes in leadership awareness, communication, conflict management, and decision-making skills.

Result: Findings showed a statistically significant improvement in all four leadership domains measured. Students' leadership self-efficacy scores increased by 45%, and their ability to handle simulated team conflicts improved by 37%. Feedback from clinical mentors noted greater initiative and confidence in the students during their internships. Additionally, 78% of participants indicated a strong desire to pursue formal leadership roles within five years of practice, suggesting long-term impact.

Biography

Anna Schneider is an Associate Professor at the Institute of Nursing Science, Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin. With over 15 years of experience in nursing education and leadership development, she specializes in curriculum innovation, clinical mentorship, and interprofessional training. Dr. Schneider leads research projects focused on modernizing nursing education and is actively involved in national policy development for advanced nursing roles in Germany. Her work aims to prepare the next generation of nurses to lead with competence, compassion, and confidence.

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