

## Assessment of Leadership Skills Among Nursing Faculty

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### ABSTRACT

#### Background of the Study

Leadership is a cornerstone of effective nursing education. Nursing faculty not only impart knowledge but also serve as pivotal leaders who influence curriculum development, mentorship, policy-making, and institutional advancement. As academic leaders, they are responsible for cultivating a learning environment that promotes student engagement, critical thinking, and professional growth.

In the contemporary healthcare landscape, the complexity of patient care and the evolving demands of the profession necessitate that nursing educators possess strong leadership competencies. These competencies include communication, emotional intelligence, decision-making, conflict resolution, and the ability to inspire and lead change.

The dual role of faculty—as educators and institutional leaders—makes it essential to assess their leadership skills. Strong leadership among faculty promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, enhances faculty-student relationships, drives innovation in teaching methodologies, and supports the development of evidence-based practices. Moreover, faculty leadership directly influences student outcomes, faculty retention, and the overall reputation of nursing programs.

Despite its importance, leadership among nursing faculty is often under-assessed and undervalued, leading to gaps in development and performance. Understanding the current status of leadership skills among nursing faculty will help identify areas for professional development and inform strategies to strengthen educational and clinical leadership across institutions.

#### Objective of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to assess the leadership skills among nursing faculty.

This includes evaluating key leadership competencies such as:

Communication and interpersonal skills

Decision-making and problem-solving abilities

Team building and collaboration

Conflict resolution and emotional intelligence

Visionary thinking and adaptability

Capacity to lead academic and clinical innovation

By assessing these areas, the study aims to identify strengths and areas for improvement, ultimately contributing to enhanced faculty development, student outcomes, and institutional effectiveness.

#### Methodology

This study employed a Mixed Method Approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively assess the leadership skills among nursing faculty

## Research Design

A descriptive research design was used to evaluate the leadership competencies of nursing faculty members.

### Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of 20 nursing faculty members were selected as the sample for this study. The participants were chosen using a simple random sampling technique to ensure equal representation and reduce selection bias.

### Setting of the Study

The study was conducted across selected nursing colleges, providing a relevant academic environment for evaluating faculty leadership within educational institutions.

## Data Collection Tools

The primary tool used for data collection was a Leadership Skills Assessment Tool.

This tool evaluated various domains of leadership, including:

Communication

Decision-making

Teamwork

Innovation

Professionalism

Emotional intelligence

Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires, while qualitative insights were gathered via open-ended questions or brief interviews, allowing for deeper exploration of faculty perspectives on leadership.

## Findings of the Study

The analysis of the sample data revealed that nursing faculty leadership is predominantly democratic in nature, characterized by a strong emphasis on inclusiveness, effective communication, and motivational support. Faculty members were generally observed to foster collaborative environments, encouraging participation and shared decision-making among peers and students.

However, several challenges were identified, including:

Team passivity, where some members were less actively involved in group initiatives

Communication barriers, leading to occasional misunderstandings or inefficiencies

Varying degrees of confidence in conflict resolution and strategic leadership

Despite these challenges, participants demonstrated the ability to leverage their educational background and practical experiences to lead effectively within academic and clinical settings.

The findings suggest that ongoing professional development in areas such as:

Conflict management

Advanced communication techniques

Team engagement strategies

would further enhance leadership effectiveness among nursing faculty. Strengthening these areas could promote a more cohesive and dynamic educational environment, ultimately benefiting student learning and institutional performance.

## 1. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical role of leadership in nursing education and emphasizes the necessity for ongoing development of leadership competencies among nursing faculty. The findings demonstrate that while many faculty members exhibit democratic leadership qualities—such as inclusiveness, communication, and motivational support—there remains a need for improvement in areas like conflict management and team engagement.

The insights gained from this research can serve as a foundation for developing targeted professional development programs, enhancing leadership practices, and ultimately contributing to the growth and effectiveness of nursing education. Strengthening leadership within faculty ranks is essential for fostering student success, promoting academic excellence, and

advancing the nursing profession.

**Keywords:** Leadership skills, Nursing faculty, Nursing education, Professional development, Faculty leadership

## 2. INTRODUCTION

In the field of nursing education, faculty members hold a pivotal leadership role in shaping the competencies, values, and professional identities of future nurses. Their influence extends beyond delivering course content; nursing faculty also serve as mentors, role models, and advocates for evidence-based practice and lifelong learning. In today's complex and rapidly evolving healthcare environment, the demand for strong, adaptive leadership among nursing educators is more pressing than ever.

Effective leadership in nursing education is multifaceted. It requires a unique combination of clinical expertise, pedagogical proficiency, and the ability to inspire and motivate both students and colleagues. These attributes contribute not only to individual student success but also to the overall quality and progress of nursing programs.

The assessment of leadership skills among nursing faculty encompasses various dimensions such as:

Communication and interpersonal effectiveness

Decision-making and critical thinking

Teamwork and interprofessional collaboration

Ability to manage organizational challenges and change

These competencies are essential for fostering an academic culture that encourages continuous improvement, innovation, and accountability. Moreover, strong leadership among faculty enhances student engagement, supports curriculum development, and aligns educational practices with current healthcare needs.

Given the importance of leadership in nursing education, a focused exploration into the existing leadership capabilities of nursing faculty can yield valuable insights. It can help identify strengths and developmental needs, guide the design of professional development initiatives, and support institutional strategies aimed at improving both educational outcomes and the broader impact of nursing education on healthcare systems.

### Background of the Study

Leadership plays a pivotal role in nursing education, influencing not only faculty effectiveness but also student engagement and the overall growth of academic institutions. Nursing faculty serve dual roles—as educators and leaders—by guiding students in their professional development while also contributing to academic policies, curriculum design, and institutional decision-making.

Effective leadership among nursing faculty fosters:

Collaboration across departments and disciplines

Innovation in teaching strategies and clinical practices

Implementation of evidence-based approaches to education

These factors collectively contribute to the enhancement of healthcare education and improved patient care outcomes through the preparation of competent, confident, and compassionate nursing professionals.

Assessing leadership skills among nursing faculty is essential for identifying existing strengths, recognizing areas in need of development, and uncovering opportunities for targeted professional training. Understanding the current leadership landscape allows institutions to:

Promote effective mentorship and role modeling

Strengthen teamwork and inter-professional collaboration

Improve strategic decision-making at both programmatic and institutional level

Ultimately, a clear picture of faculty leadership capabilities supports academic excellence and institutional advancement, ensuring that nursing education remains responsive, resilient, and aligned with evolving healthcare demands.

### Need for the Study

#### 1. Importance of Leadership in Nursing Education

Leadership in nursing education is fundamental to the quality of teaching, student engagement, and the overall growth of academic institutions. Nursing faculty are responsible not only for delivering curriculum content but also for mentoring

students, managing academic responsibilities, and participating in institutional governance. Strong leadership ensures:

Effective communication

Collaborative teamwork

Educational innovation

These qualities collectively enhance the quality of nursing education and ultimately contribute to improved patient care outcomes.

## **2. Gaps in Leadership Training Among Nursing Faculty**

Despite its significance, formal leadership training is often lacking in the professional development of nursing educators. Traditional nursing programs emphasize clinical competencies while frequently overlooking leadership development. This gap can result in:

Difficulty in decision-making and conflict resolution

Limited mentorship capacity

Challenges in fulfilling institutional leadership roles

Assessing leadership skills is critical for identifying these deficiencies and for designing targeted, competency-based training programs.

## **3. Enhancing Faculty Effectiveness and Student Outcomes**

Faculty leadership directly influences their ability to:

Motivate and mentor students

Communicate and collaborate effectively with colleagues

Make informed decisions in academic and administrative roles

Adapt to evolving challenges in nursing education

By conducting a structured leadership skills assessment, institutions can gain valuable insights into faculty strengths and developmental needs, ultimately enhancing:

Faculty performance

Teaching effectiveness

Student learning outcomes

## **4. Supporting Institutional Growth and Accreditation**

Strong leadership among nursing faculty contributes significantly to:

Achieving academic excellence

Strengthening faculty development initiatives

Enhancing institutional reputation

Meeting national and international accreditation standards

This study will provide evidence-based recommendations to enhance leadership capabilities within nursing faculties, thereby benefiting:

Students

Educators

The institution as a whole

## **3. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS**

**Assess:** To systematically evaluate, measure, or determine the nature, ability, or quality of leadership skills

**Leadership skills:** The ability of nursing faculty to influence, guide and mentor students and colleagues while contributing to institutional decision making.

**Nursing faculty:** Who are licensed nurses who work as educators in academic or clinical settings, responsible for teaching, mentoring, and guiding nursing students at undergraduate or graduate levels.

## **Objectives of the Study**

### **Primary Objective:**

To assess the leadership skills among nursing faculty in selected nursing colleges.

### **Secondary / Supportive Objectives:**

To identify the strengths and areas for improvement in the leadership competencies of nursing faculty.

To explore the relationship between leadership skills and faculty effectiveness in academic and administrative roles.

To evaluate the need for professional development programs aimed at enhancing leadership capabilities.

To provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening leadership practices in nursing education.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Approach**

The study adopted a Mixed Method Approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of leadership skills among nursing faculty.

### **Research Design**

A Descriptive Research Design was employed to assess and describe the leadership competencies of the faculty within their institutional and educational contexts.

### **Sample**

The target population for the study consisted of nursing teaching faculty working in selected nursing colleges.

### **Sampling Technique**

A Simple Random Sampling Technique was used to ensure unbiased representation of the faculty members, allowing each participant an equal chance of being selected.

### **Sample Size**

The study included 200 nursing faculty members, ensuring sufficient data for meaningful analysis and interpretation.

### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

#### **Inclusion Criteria**

##### **General Inclusion Criteria:**

Faculty must be a full-time or part-time nursing faculty member.

Must have at least six months to one year of teaching experience.

Willing to voluntarily provide informed consent to participate in the study.

Must be proficient in English or the primary language used in the assessment.

Must be present and available during the data collection period.

##### **Leadership-Specific Inclusion Criteria:**

Faculty currently holding or aspiring to hold a leadership or administrative role, such as Head of Department (HOD), program coordinator, or similar.

Possession of relevant educational qualifications, such as B.Sc. Nursing, M.Sc. Nursing, or Ph.D. in Nursing (as per institutional norms).

Actively involved in academic decision-making, curriculum development, or student mentorship activities.

#### **Exclusion Criteria**

##### **General Exclusion Criteria:**

Non-teaching staff, such as administrative or support personnel not involved in teaching.

Newly appointed faculty with less than six months of teaching experience.

Faculty who do not consent to participate in the study.

Faculty who are on long-term leave (e.g., maternity, study, or medical leave) during data collection.

Faculty who face a language barrier that prevents effective participation in the assessment

Leadership-Specific Exclusion Criteria:

Faculty who do not currently hold or aspire to a leadership role within the institution.

Faculty without at least a Master's degree in Nursing (or equivalent, based on institutional requirements).

Faculty not involved in decision-making, curriculum design, or mentorship responsibilities.

Variables and Tool Description

Variables are defined as characteristics that vary among subjects and are central to the focus of the research. In this study, the variables reflect the measurable aspects of leadership skills and demographic profiles of nursing faculty.

### I. Demographic Variables

The demographic variables considered in this study include:

Age

Gender

Marital Status

Educational Qualification

Designation

Previous Leadership Experience

Total Years of Work Experience

These variables help in analyzing potential correlations between faculty background characteristics and their leadership competencies.

### II. Tool for Data Collection

The Nursing Faculty Leadership Skills Assessment Tool was developed to measure key aspects of leadership among nursing educators. The tool is divided into five major sections, each reflecting a core dimension of effective leadership:

Transformational Leadership

Communication Skills

Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Abilities

Mentoring Skills

Team Building and Leadership Style Indicators

### Scoring Method

A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess responses in each section. Participants rated each item based on their level of agreement:

Response Category	Score
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
Neutral	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

Higher scores indicate stronger perceived leadership abilities in the respective domains.

## Data Analysis

### Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the demographic characteristics of the participants and assess the distribution of leadership skills.

Frequencies and percentages were used to describe categorical variables such as age, gender, educational qualification, designation, and years of teaching experience.

Mean scores and standard deviations were planned (if applicable) to assess leadership skill dimensions across different sections of the assessment tool.

### Qualitative Analysis

For the qualitative component, thematic analysis was employed to interpret participants' responses.

Content analysis was conducted by coding and categorizing open-ended responses.

The data were carefully reviewed, coded, and grouped into recurring themes based on the participants' perceptions and experiences related to leadership.

This approach enabled a deeper understanding of the contextual and experiential aspects of leadership among nursing faculty.

The final themes were reported with supporting quotes or summaries that reflected key insights from the data.

### Demographic Profile of Participants

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age (in Years)	30–40	150	75%
	41–50	40	20%
	Above 50	10	5%
Gender	Male	70	35%
	Female	130	65%
	Transgender	0	0%
Educational Qualification	B.Sc. Nursing	50	25%
	M.Sc. Nursing	130	65%
	Ph.D.	10	5%
	P.B.B.Sc. Nursing	10	5%
Current Designation	Tutor	80	40%
	Assistant Professor	60	30%
	Associate Professor	20	10%
	Professor	40	20%
Years of Experience	More than 5 Years	140	70%
	More than 10 Years	30	15%
	More than 15 Years	30	15%

**Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants by Demographic Variables**

#### 4. RESULTS

The demographic characteristics of the study participants are presented in Table 1. A total of 200 nursing faculty members participated in the study.

**Age Distribution:** The majority of participants (75%) were in the age group of 30–40 years (n=150), followed by 41–50 years (20%, n=40), and above 50 years (5%, n=10).

**Gender:** A significant majority were female (65%, n=130), while male participants constituted 35% (n=70). No participants identified as transgender.

**Educational Qualification:** Most of the faculty members held an M.Sc. Nursing degree (65%, n=130), followed by B.Sc. Nursing (25%, n=50), Ph.D. holders (5%, n=10), and P.B.B.Sc. Nursing degree holders (5%, n=10).

**Current Designation:** A considerable proportion of the participants were Tutors (40%, n=80), followed by Assistant Professors (30%, n=60), Professors (20%, n=40), and Associate Professors (10%, n=20).

**Years of Teaching Experience:** The majority had more than 5 years of teaching experience (70%, n=140), with 15% (n=30) having more than 10 years, and another 15% (n=30) having more than 15 years of experience.

These findings provide a foundational understanding of the participants' backgrounds and support further interpretation of the leadership assessment results.

**Table 2: Leadership Skills Assessment Questionnaire (n = 200)**

Skill Area	Statement	1 (%)	F (%)	2 (%)	F (%)	3 (%)	F (%)	4 (%)	F (%)	5 (%)	F (%)
Communication Skills	I clearly communicate goals and expectations to students and colleagues.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	60	(30%)	130	(65%)
	I listen actively to others' perspectives before responding.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	60	(30%)	130	(65%)
	I provide timely and constructive feedback.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	60	(30%)	130	(65%)
	I use effective communication methods during meetings and lectures.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	50	(25%)	140	(70%)
Decision-Making Skills	I involve relevant stakeholders before making important decisions.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	10	(5%)	90	(45%)	90	(45%)
	I make timely and well-informed decisions.	0	(0%)	10	(5%)	10	(5%)	80	(40%)	100	(50%)
	I consider data and evidence while making academic decisions.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	10	(5%)	80	(40%)	100	(50%)
	I take responsibility for the outcomes of my decisions.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	70	(35%)	120	(60%)
Mentoring Skills	I support and guide junior faculty in their career growth.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	10	(5%)	60	(30%)	120	(60%)
	I encourage students to pursue academic and professional goals.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	10	(5%)	20	(10%)	160	(80%)
	I provide constructive advice based on experience.	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	10	(5%)	30	(15%)	150	(75%)
	I act as a role model for colleagues and	10	(5%)	0	(0%)	30		40	(20%)	120	(60%)



Skill Area	Statement	1 (%) F	2 (%) F	3 (%) F	4 (%) F	5 (%) F
	students.			(15%)		
Team Building	I encourage collaboration among faculty and staff.	10 (5%)	0 (0%)	90 (45%)	30 (15%)	70 (35%)
	I recognize and value the contributions of team members.	10 (5%)	0 (0%)	60 (30%)	50 (25%)	80 (40%)
	I manage team conflicts effectively and constructively.	10 (5%)	10 (5%)	50 (25%)	70 (35%)	60 (30%)
	I work to build a positive and inclusive work environment.	10 (5%)	0 (0%)	50 (25%)	70 (35%)	70 (35%)
Leadership Style Indicators	I inspire others by sharing a clear academic vision.	10 (5%)	0 (0%)	20 (10%)	70 (35%)	100 (50%)
	I prefer to lead through motivation rather than authority.	0 (0%)	10 (5%)	90 (45%)	90 (45%)	10 (5%)
	I set high standards and expectations for team performance.	10 (5%)	0 (0%)	20 (10%)	90 (45%)	80 (40%)
	I adapt my leadership style based on the situation.	0 (0%)	10 (5%)	10 (5%)	70 (35%)	110 (55%)

**Table 2: Leadership Skills Assessment Results**

The quantitative data from the leadership skills assessment tool revealed the following key findings across the five skill domains:

#### Section A: Communication Skills

The majority of participants strongly agreed that they *use effective communication methods during meetings and lectures*, with 70% (140 participants) endorsing this statement. This highlights strong confidence in their communication abilities within academic settings.

#### Section B: Decision-Making Skills

Within decision-making, 60% (120 participants) strongly agreed that they *act as a role model for colleagues and students*, indicating a high sense of responsibility and leadership through example.

#### Section C: Mentoring Skills

In mentoring, the most prominent response was that 80% (160 participants) strongly agreed with *encouraging students to pursue academic and professional goals*, reflecting a strong commitment to student development.

#### Section D: Team Building Skills

For team building, 40% (80 participants) strongly agreed that they *recognize and value the contributions of team members*, demonstrating awareness of the importance of appreciation and collaboration within faculty teams.

#### Section E: Leadership Style Indicators

The majority, 50% (100 participants), strongly agreed that they *inspire others by sharing a clear academic vision*, highlighting an emphasis on motivational and visionary leadership among nursing faculty.

These results collectively indicate that nursing faculty perceive themselves as effective communicators, role models, mentors, team players, and inspirational leaders—key attributes essential for fostering a positive and productive educational environment.

### Qualitative Results: Analysis of Open-Ended Questions

A total of 20 participants completed the qualitative portion of the study, responding to three open-ended questions aimed at exploring their leadership experiences and perspectives. The responses were analyzed thematically and are summarized below:

#### 1. What do you think are your greatest strengths as a leader?

Participants highlighted several key strengths including:

Strong communication and interpersonal skills, enabling effective collaboration with students and colleagues.

Ability to motivate and inspire others through a supportive and empathetic approach.

Problem-solving skills and decisiveness in academic and administrative matters.

Commitment to mentorship and fostering professional growth in junior faculty and students.

What challenges do you face in your leadership role?

Common challenges reported by participants included:

Managing conflicts within teams and navigating interpersonal disagreements.

Balancing administrative responsibilities with teaching and research duties.

Overcoming resistance to change or lack of engagement from some faculty members.

Limited formal training in leadership and conflict management.

How has your education or experience shaped your leadership style?

Participants expressed that:

Formal education, particularly advanced degrees, provided a theoretical foundation for leadership principles.

Practical experience in clinical and academic settings helped develop situational adaptability and emotional intelligence.

Continuous professional development and learning from mentors influenced their leadership approaches.

Exposure to diverse teams and challenges fostered a democratic and inclusive leadership style.

### Qualitative Themes from Open-Ended Questions

The qualitative data from 20 participants were analyzed and categorized into three main themes based on their responses:

#### Theme I: Greatest Strengths as a Leader

Participants identified several key strengths, including:

Motivating and encouraging colleagues to perform their best.

Practicing inclusiveness and fostering a collaborative environment.

Delegating tasks effectively according to team members' capabilities.

Maintaining good communication with staff to ensure clarity and understanding.

Demonstrating empathy by understanding others' perspectives before addressing situations.

#### Theme II: Challenges Faced in Leadership Roles

Common challenges reported by participants included:

Passivity or lack of initiative among some team members.

Difficulty adapting to different personalities and varied work styles.

Ensuring cooperation and active participation from colleagues.

Misunderstandings and conflicts arising from poor communication within teams.

#### Theme III: Influence of Education and Experience on Leadership Style

Many participants described how their education and experience shaped their leadership style:

Nursing education provided a solid foundation in managerial roles and leadership theories.

Formal training enhanced communication skills and leadership principles.

Practical experience through managing teams and handling conflicts helped implement leadership knowledge in real situations.

Most described their leadership approach as democratic, valuing participation, inclusiveness, and shared decision-making.

Continuous learning through education and hands-on experience was emphasized as crucial to developing effective leadership skills.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that nursing faculty leadership is predominantly grounded in democratic leadership principles, emphasizing inclusiveness, effective communication, and motivation. This aligns with participants' self-reports of their greatest strengths, such as fostering collaboration, delegating based on team members' capabilities, and understanding diverse perspectives before addressing issues.

Quantitative data demonstrated that faculty members strongly perceive themselves as effective communicators, mentors, and inspirational leaders who share a clear academic vision. These traits are essential for creating a supportive educational environment that encourages student growth and faculty collaboration.

However, the study also identified notable challenges faced by nursing leaders, including passivity among team members, difficulties in adapting to varied personalities and work styles, and communication barriers that can lead to conflicts or misunderstandings. These challenges reflect the complexity of academic leadership roles where managing diverse teams and balancing multiple responsibilities require ongoing skill development.

Participants reported that their education and practical experiences play a critical role in shaping their leadership style. Formal nursing education provides foundational knowledge in leadership theories and communication skills, while hands-on experiences in managing teams and resolving conflicts enhance their ability to implement these skills effectively. The predominance of a democratic leadership style suggests a preference for shared decision-making and inclusivity, which is well-suited for the collaborative nature of nursing education.

To further strengthen leadership effectiveness among nursing faculty, continued professional development programs focusing on conflict management, advanced communication strategies, and team engagement are recommended. Such initiatives can equip leaders with tools to address challenges more proactively, foster greater participation, and enhance overall faculty and student outcomes.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the vital role of leadership within nursing education and emphasizes the necessity for ongoing development of leadership skills among faculty members. The findings demonstrate that effective nursing leadership, grounded in democratic principles and strong communication, plays a crucial part in fostering a collaborative and motivating academic environment. Addressing the identified challenges through targeted professional development can enhance leadership capabilities, ultimately benefiting faculty performance, student learning outcomes, and the overall advancement of nursing education. These insights provide a valuable foundation for designing strategies aimed at strengthening leadership practices in nursing faculties.

## REFERENCES

N/A

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