

**TITLE** Development of Transformational Leadership Behaviors in an Undergraduate Nursing Program: A Program Evaluation

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**OBJECTIVE** The purpose of the study was to examine how progression through an undergraduate baccalaureate nursing program curriculum impacts the development of transformational leadership characteristics in undergraduate baccalaureate nursing students in a public, four-year university in Arkansas.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Potential participants enrolled in the traditional pre-licensure baccalaureate nursing program attended classes on campus and were at the junior or senior level at a public four-year university in Arkansas. Participants included traditional students defined as nursing students who are attending a university for the first time and non-traditional students who are defined as having previous college experience, degrees, work experience, or hold licensure as practical nurses. The sample consisted of mostly female (96%), Caucasian (87%), traditional (86%) students between the ages of 21 and 23 years of age (75%). Two hundred and twenty-one students (59% response rate) completed the Student-Leadership Practices Inventory.

### **KEY FINDINGS**

Seniors scored significantly higher than juniors on Model, Inspire, Enable, and Encourage and the researcher claimed that this result “allowed rejection of the null hypothesis that progression through a baccalaureate nursing program has no impact on the development of those particular transformational leadership behaviors” (p. 60). Non-traditional students scored significantly higher on the Inspiring and Challenging subscales suggesting, according to the researcher “that progression through the baccalaureate nursing program does have an impact upon the development of transformational leadership behaviors” (p. 60). No significant interactions were found between student type and year.

The author concludes:

The findings supported existing data found in the literature that nursing curricula promote development of transformational and other leadership characteristics to some extent, but there exists a need to ensure leadership education is present to meet standards (p. 64).

Statistical analysis revealed that there is a significant increase in self-identification of leadership practices in the senior students as compared to the junior students. Therefore, the capstone project provided evidence in support of the literature that increased focus on leadership from the beginning of nursing program curricula is necessary in order to prepare nurse graduates for the demands of the nursing profession (pp. 64-65).