

# RUTGERS

## School of Nursing

# The Development of Professional Self-Concept and Leadership Skills Among New Graduate Nurses

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## INTRODUCTION

New graduate nurses used learned behaviors, skills, and attitudes to enhance their professional development.

New graduates use behaviors, skills, and attitudes to function in a challenging environment (AACN,2008).

Effective decision making ability effects nurses professional self-concept, thus influencing nurses' leadership skills. (Sasat et al., 2002)

## PURPOSE OF STUDY

To describe new graduate nurses' perceptions of professional self-concept and leadership.

## PROFESSIONAL SELF-CONCEPT AND LEADERSHIP

### PROFESSIONAL SELF-CONCEPT

A set of self-attitudes that are formed by experiences that enhance a professional identity. (Arthur,1992)

Develops as one moves from the academic setting to the professional setting. (Arthur, 1995)

### LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY

Influences the quality of the work (Cumming et al. 2010)

Effects patient outcomes (Wong Laschinger, & Cummings, 2010)

Effective leadership at the bedside is pivotal to implementing successful healthcare initiatives for service improvements. (Bohmer, 2013)

## METHODS

Convenience sample of new graduate nurses in northeastern U.S

Online Survey (Qualtrics)

Professional-Self Concept Nurses Instrument (PSCNI) (Author, 1995)

## PSCNI

- 27-item scale measuring:
  - Professional Practice
    - Leadership
    - Skill
    - Flexibility
  - Satisfaction
  - Communication
- Range of possible scores: 27-108

## RESULTS

Table 1: Characteristics of Sample (N = 124)

Characteristics	Mean (SD) or Frequency (%)
Age	29.97 SD = 10.5
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	14 (11.4%)
Female	109 (88.6%)
<b>Education</b>	
Diploma	4 (3.3%)
Associates Degree	32 (26.0%)
Baccalaureate Degree	87 (70.7%)
<b>Unit of Employment</b>	
Critical Care (ICU, PACU/RR, Step-Down, ER, OR)	32 (27.6%)
Medical or Surgical Unit	45 (38.8%)
Pediatrics	7 (6.0%)
Maternity	10 (8.6%)
Long Term Care	9 (7.8%)
Home Care/Community Health Nursing	13 (11.2%)
<b>Internship or Externship</b>	
No	99 (80.5%)
Yes	24 (19.5%)
<b>Nursing Assistant Experience</b>	
No	88 (71.5%)
Yes	35 (28.5%)

Table 2: Instrument mean scores

Scale	Range and Mean (SD)
PSCNI (27-items)	66-105; 87.7 (SD = 9.8)
Leadership (5-items)	10-24; 8.3 (SD = 2.9)

Table 3: Regression of Age and Nursing Assistant Experience onto Professional Self-Concept (N = 115)

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Standardized Regression Coefficient	P-Value
Age	.307	.298	.01
Nursing Assistant Experience	4.720	.230	.03
Constant	73.312		.00
F	3.256		
R <sup>2</sup>	.17		

Dependent Variable: Total PSCNI Score

Table 4: Regression of Age and Months of Experience onto Leadership (N = 115)

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Standardized Regression Coefficient	P-Value
Age	.078	.251	.03
Months of Experience as an RN	.165	.206	.05
Constant	15.033		.00
F	2.377		
R <sup>2</sup>	.13		

Dependent Variable: Leadership

## DISCUSSION

New graduates perceived to have high levels of Professional Self-Concept.

- Education preparation influences professional development (Kelly & Courts, 2007)

Age played a role in influencing professional self-concept and leadership.

- The majority of the sample were millennials and have a concrete point of view, carry a convincing attitude, and can be ambitious in their work ethic. (Generations Matter, 2014)

- Millennials known to have a sense of entitlement (Alexander & Sysko, 2013)

Prior health care experience influenced professional self-concept.

- More exposure one has to the health care environment, increases self-concept.

As new graduate nurses gain valuable professional experiences their leadership can also flourish.

## CONCLUSION

The opportunities for leadership training and education may add value to new graduate nurses professional development and self-concept.

## LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

A convenient sample

A cross sectional, self-reported study

Using the issue date of license not the date they graduated from college

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