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Self-directed learning readiness among nursing undergraduates in a selected non-state higher education institute, Sri Lanka: A pilot study

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Background: Education has been identified as a critical aspect that has a significant impact on the development of society. Nursing education is defined as the study on the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disabled and dying people. With the new norm during the pandemic, online education using e-learning systems is essential. The world is marching towards self-directed learning, which is learning with or without the assistance of others.

Objective: To assess self-directed learning readiness among nursing undergraduates in a non-state higher education institute in Sri Lanka.

Materials & Methods: A web-based descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among final year nursing undergraduates. A pretested (n=10) self-administered English version of the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) was used with the author permission, as the data collection tool. The tool consists of three subscales: Self-management (13 items), desire for learning (12 items), and self-control (15 items). The questionnaire was distributed as an online survey. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using IBM SPSS (25). Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of KIU, Sri Lanka.

Results: The preliminary sample consists of 50 participants with a mean age of 30.40 (± 4.271) years along with a minimum and maximum of 25 and 45 years, respectively. The majority (n=48, 96%) were females. Most of them (n=33, 66%) were married. The mean self-directed learning readiness score was 147.26 (± 13.58). More than half of the participants had self-directed learning readiness scores above 150, which is recognized as satisfactory readiness for learning. None of the measured socio-demographic factors were associated with self-directed learning readiness.

Conclusion: Self-directed learning readiness among nursing undergraduates in the selected Non-state higher education institute is moderately satisfactory. It is recommended to increase the awareness on self-directed learning among undergraduates to improve their academic performance.