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Title:

Academic Leadership for Developing Sri Lanka's First Master of Nursing Program

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ACCEPTED

Session Title:

Emerging Educational Administrator Institute (EEAI)

Slot:

EEAI: Sunday, 17 November 2019: 11:45 AM-12:15 PM

Applicable category:

Academic, Leaders

Keywords:

Leadership training, Master of Nursing and Sri Lanka

References:

- International Council of Nurses (2014). Nursing leadership in Global health: available at <http://www.icn.ch/details/108-nursing-leadership-in-global-health.html>.(accessed 21 August 2018).
- UGC (2018), Admission to an undergraduate course of the universities in Sri Lanka 2018/2019. Colombo: University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka

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- Jayasekara, R., & Amarasekara, T. D. (2015). Nursing education in Sri Lanka: challenges and vision for the future. 3rd Annual Worldwide Nursing Conference (WNC) Proceeding [ISSN 2315-4330], Singapore. doi: 10.5176/2315-4330_W NC15.47

Abstract Summary:

The purpose of this project was to establish the first Master of Nursing Programme in Sri Lanka, which will prepare nurses to provide leadership in education, management and research within a complex and dynamic, healthcare system. This project was implemented under the EEAI 18-month mentored-leadership programme

Content Outline:

Background

Professionally qualified nurses are essential to the health of the world's population (International Council of Nurses 2014). In developed and developing countries, the demand for higher education in nursing is increasing significantly. Sri Lanka is a rapidly growing country and has made significant development in nursing education. Pre-registration nursing education in Sri Lanka is currently based in three-year diploma which is attached to the Ministry of Health. In 2005, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJP) established the first, four-year nursing degree program and currently six state universities are conducting 4-year nursing degree programs. According to the University Grant Commission (UGC) in Sri Lanka, more than 300 students admitted to the undergraduate nursing programs in 2018 (UGC 2018). More than 2000 graduate nurses are currently working in the national healthcare sector, and most nurses are seeking postgraduate qualifications to develop their career prospects. Aluwihare- Samaranayake, Ogilvie, Cummings and Gellatly (2017) stated that Sri Lankan nurses need to act to enhance professionalisation through mandatory licensure, formalisation of evidence-based policies which shape nursing education in the future. Furthermore, Jayasekara, and Amarasekara, (2015) highlighted that nursing education in Sri Lanka need to reflect the contemporary needs of the nursing profession and current and future demands of health care. However, there is no postgraduate nursing program in Sri Lanka to fulfil the current and future demand for higher education for nurses in Sri Lanka. This innovative program will meet an identified need for accessible, flexible graduate nursing education that prepares nurses to provide leadership in healthcare, education, management and research within a complex and dynamic, healthcare system.

Purpose

To develop an evidence-based framework for Postgraduate Nursing Program, enabling the development of the first Master of Nursing (Research) program in Sri Lanka.

Methods:Project activities

This project has four activities namely: 1-Analysing current trends and issues in healthcare, and nursing education to capture the concepts that should be addressed in the conceptual framework for postgraduate nursing program, 2-Conducting a national survey regarding need of the postgraduate programs for nurses in Sri Lanka, 3-Developing a draft conceptual framework for the postgraduate nursing program via focus group discussions with key stakeholders in nursing and healthcare sectors and 4-Developing the administrative proposal for the program and following administrative procedure for the approval from the University and UGC.

The second activity was a descriptive cross-sectional survey, and it was approved by the Ethics review committee of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka. The survey was conducted from September 2018 to January 2019. The findings of this study will be used to develop the first Master of the Nursing degree program in state universities in Sri Lanka. The third and fourth activities are in progress.

Measures: Project Methods

The first activity of this project was a literature review, and it is still in progress. The 2nd activity was a descriptive- cross-sectional survey, which was conducted among Nursing graduates from the USJP from 2010-2018 (N=100). The research team developed a self-administered questionnaire, and it has two parts: Part A-demographic data (e.g. age, gender, occupation, etc.), part B- the need of a Master of nursing program (e.g. preferred speciality area, language proficiency, IT literacy, preferred learning mode, etc.). The initial contact was done via email with the survey consent form. If the participant agreed to participate in the survey and returned the completed consent form, the survey questionnaire was emailed or posted at the participant's request.

The third activity entails developing a draft conceptual framework for the postgraduate nursing program via focus group discussions with key stakeholders in nursing and healthcare sectors using a focus group method and currently the research team is preparing necessary documents for the ethics approval to conduct this step.

The fourth activity consists of developing the administrative proposal for the program and following the administrative procedure for the approval from the University and UGC, which is currently in progress.

Measures: Project Outcomes

The descriptive- cross-sectional survey found that (2nd activity), out of 100 participants, 60% work as nurses in the government hospitals or private hospital in Sri Lanka or overseas hospitals. Nearly thirty per cent of the participants work as academics in state universities in Sri Lanka. More than half of the participants (60%) have work experience of fewer than five years. Most of them rated their English and IT literacy as excellent. Ninety per cent of the participants reported that they intend to enrol in a master of nursing programme. The preferred speciality areas were nursing education (30%), adult nursing (32%), mental health nursing (33%), gynaecology and obstetrics nursing (34%) and nursing management (40%). The preferred teaching-learning methods were lectures (58%), self-directed learning (54%), workshops (50%) and problem-based learning (42%). Most of the participants (80%) preferred to learn part-time.

During the 3rd activity, the first author has conducted several meetings with keystakeholders to upgrade the existing nursing unit to a separate department. As a result, a new Department of Nursing and

Midwifery was established under the new Faculty of Allied Health which was approved by the UGC, Sri Lanka. Furthermore, the first author was involved in the development of the first Post-graduate Institute of Health Sciences which will be an affiliated postgraduate institute at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura and this proposal has already submitted to the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Higher Education. Currently, the first author is preparing needed documents to obtain the approval for establishing the Master of Nursing program. The first author actively engaged with EEAI mentor, EEAI faculty, and academic staff during this process. During this process, the first author has internalised the transformational leadership model.

Discussion

Above project was undertaken as a part of the Emerging Educational Administrator Institute's (EEAI) 18-month mentored-leadership experience program. Transformational leadership model was utilized as the leadership style in which the leaders encourage, inspire and motivate colleagues to innovate and create change that will help grow and shape the future success of the organization. By giving the leadership for the above mentioned project the first author gained a number of leadership qualities such as: guiding others through inspiration, strength of vision and motivating groups of people to work towards common goal, able to face challenges, work as a change agent, able to communicate with stakeholders, able to build consensus and manage conflict. However, the first author still needs some leadership qualities such as flexible, improving skills on asking assistance when required, and has more work-life balance to enhance her professional growth as an educational administrative leader. The nursing education sector in Sri Lanka needs transformational leaders who empower colleagues to reach the best possible outcomes. It is crucially essential to expand the leadership skills and move outside of the transactional space and into a transformational space that focuses on long term solutions for nursing education in Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

The results of the survey of nurse graduates indicated a strong desire to enroll in a master of the nursing program and a high demand for nursing management speciality. The motivation to study further indicates that graduate nurses are positively responding to the current and future demand of the profession. The findings of this survey can be used to curriculum planning and establishing the Master of Nursing program in Sri Lanka ensuring the best possible educational outcomes. The proposed first Master of Nursing program will be established in 2020.

Topic Selection:

Emerging Educational Administrator Institute (EEAI) (25197)

Abstract Text:

Project title: Academic Leadership for Developing Sri Lanka's First Master of Nursing Program

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