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Assertiveness Among the Nursing Undergraduates in a Defence University, Sri Lanka

W.G.C. Kumara^{1#}, S.S.P. Warnakulasuriya²

¹Department of Nursing & Midwifery, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, Kotelawala Defence University

²Faculty of Nursing, University of Colombo

#ckumara@kdu.ac.lk

Introduction: Assertiveness is considered a valuable skill in the nursing profession as it contributes to Strengthen inter-professional relationships, preventing workplace violence, reducing occupational stresses, minimizing negligence, and improving nurses' leadership ability, job satisfaction, professional autonomy, and professional efficacy. Therefore, assertiveness is an important skill that should be developed from the beginning of nursing studentship. However, there is a dearth of studies conducted on assertiveness among nursing students in Sri Lanka.

Objective: To assess the assertiveness and its relationship with the socio-demographic variables among the BSc. Nursing undergraduates at the Kotelawala Defence University (KDU), Sri Lanka.

Methods: The study was conducted as a descriptive cross-sectional study among all (n=147) nursing undergraduates of KDU. A pretested self-administered questionnaire was used to assess socio-demographic data and validated Sinhalese version of the assertiveness scale developed by Begley and Glacken, 2004 to measure the level of assertiveness. The study instruments were shared online once informed consent was obtained. The data were analyzed using SPSS 23.0, using the descriptive statistics followed by the independent sample t-test and the one-way ANOVA test.

Results: The mean assertiveness of the study population was 81.35 ± 6.51 . The majority (74.8%) of the study participants was females. Many participants have revealed that they had attended leadership programmes (85.7%) and assertiveness training programmes (19.7%) conducted by the University and other institutes. It was observed that the assertiveness is not significantly different within the associated factors such as gender, marital status, nationality, parents' assertiveness, age group, number in the family, academic year, English proficiency, childhood trauma, the assertiveness of closed peers, interest in the nursing profession and other course work ($P > 0.05$).

Conclusions: The results showed a greater assertiveness score among the nursing undergraduates enrolled to KDU. However, there were no statistically significant mean differences found on assertiveness among socio-demographic variables.

Keywords: Assertiveness, Nursing undergraduates, Sri Lanka