

# COMPARISON OF AUTHENTICITY AND TRANSFORMATIONAL TRAITS BETWEEN NURSING STUDENTS LEVEL 1 TO 4

*By Simbolon et al*

## Original Research Article

# COMPARISON OF AUTHENTICITY AND TRANSFORMATIONAL TRAITS BETWEEN NURSING STUDENTS LEVEL 1 TO 4

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### Article Info:

Received: .....

Revised: .....

Accepted: .....

8

### DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.36720/nhjk.v12i2.533>

## Abstract

**Background:** Today nursing students are the future leader. Based on behavioral theory, leaders are made. So, nursing college is one of the institutions that produce nursing leaders. There are 25 traits of successful leaders that can be learned and practiced in nursing schools. So, it is necessary for nursing schools to evaluate these leadership traits among the students. The study benefits the schools whether to maintain or revise the curriculum related to leadership and management courses.

**Objectives:** This study aimed to describe and to compare nursing students' Authenticity and transformational leadership traits between level 1 to 4.

**Methods:** Comparative design was used in this study with the participation of 144 nursing students from level 1-4. Data are collected by using self-authentic and transformation questionnaire. Data are analyzed using SPSS descriptive and comparative analysis.

**Results:** There are three Authenticity & Transformational traits that have been practiced as always by level 4 students who have working experience with the highest mean value of 4.0. They are fair, self-directed, and clear in communication & collaboration. There are different mean values of Authenticity & Transformational traits at each level of students. There are significant differences found in several levels.

**Conclusion:** Based on the result, there is a big room for improvement in terms of practicing Authenticity & Transformational traits among nursing students. It is necessary for nursing schools to review and revise the leadership and management class instruction and activities in developing Authenticity & Transformational traits to a maximum level.

### Keywords:

*Authenticity and transformational, Leadership traits, Nursing student*

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E-ISSN

2623-2448

P-ISSN

2088-9909

## INTRODUCTION

Today nursing students are the future nursing leader. When they graduated and become leader, they will lead themselves,

nursing staff and partners on the healthcare team, colleagues at various managerial levels in health care organizations and so on (Sihombing, et al, 2021). Based on behavioral

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theory, leaders are made. So, Nursing school is one of the institutions that produce leaders. There are several leadership traits that can be learned in nursing schools. One of the most desirable is Authenticity and Transformational (A&T) leadership trait. Authenticity is important in nursing practice because of its many positive characteristics in creating healthy work environment. One of the characteristic<sup>27</sup> authentic leader is genuine in which leader act in a real, genuine and sincere way that is true to who they are as individuals (Pratt, 2023). The next characteristic of authentic leader is<sup>56</sup> he/she own high behavioural integrity by staying true to the values they espouse. It makes them always truth-telling, reliable, and believable person (Swaina, Cao, & Gardner, 2018).

Authentic person is self-disciplined as they always practice consistency. It is imperative that an authentic leader conquers the pressure and stresses which may cloud judgment or lead to inconsistent behavior (Alilyyani, Wong, Cummings, 2018). The practice of self-discipline extends beyond the work place. Authentic leaders should practice self-discipline in all areas of life for inconsistencies between work and home life will eventually lead to mistrust and disrespect from followers (Johnson, 2019).

In fact, authentic leaders have their own belief, value and purpose (passion). Being a passionate for the purpose lends itself to intrinsic motivation. Authentic leaders will lead with heart by exercising their compassion to empower others. Often authentic leaders have had personal experiences in their own lives that enable them to have compassion for others (Covelli, & Mason, 2017).

Moreover, authentic leaders keep positive relationships with their subordinates by establishing enduring relationships and stay connected with others. Nowadays, followers demand more personal relationships with their leaders before they will give themselves fully to their jobs. By building good relationships with followers had a significant impact on trust, collaboration, work engagement, and task

performance (Alilyyani, Wong, Cummings, 2018). There is relational transparency with authenticity in which leaders present a true self to close colleagues, family, and friends (Gardner, Cogliser, Da<sup>34</sup> & Dickens, 2011).

In addition, Leaders' authenticity maximizes employees' creative spirit that enable employees to overcome obstacles and meet challenges at work (Semedo, Coelho, & Ribeiro, 2018). They are also referred to as "positive leaders" and are seen as the glue that keeps a productive workplace together. (George, 2003).

Another style of leadership that is advantageous to maintaining a positive work environment is transformational leadership. Authentic leadership and transformative leadership have differences, although they are nonetheless closely related. In many literatures both of<sup>1</sup> them are associated. Transformational leaders shape a changing social architecture by being proactive, serving as a catalyst for innovation, functioning as a team member, and encouraging organizational learning. In addition, they are vision, passion, enthusiasm, and celebration culture in their service (Clark, 2009). The tension between productivity and efficiency is balanced by the leaders, who also build and maintain trust inside the company, transforming the working environment for nurses. They are also involving employees in decision-making and managing the transition process. They also created a learning organization within the company (Medicine, 2004).

To assess the efficacy of authentic and transformational (A&T) leadership, several research have been done. Results showed that A&T leaders influence numerous aspects of effectiveness, including enhanced organizational performance and work-life quality. In reality, it reduced unfavorable attitudes and actions on the part of followers, including anger, dissatisfaction, and absenteeism. contented nurses with their employer. They provided patients with improved services as a result. As a result, patients are more satisfied. Additionally, the

environment for patient safety and nurses' creative behavior have totally mediated (Choi, Goh, Adam, & Tan, 2016); (Datta, 2015); (53g, MacLennan, Hunt, & Cox, 2015); (Weng, Huang, Chen, & Chang, 2015). It is suggested that Transformational leadership can be applied to improve nurses' performance in different type of clients' treatment such as treating tuberculosis disease (Panyuwa, & Dwiantoro, 2021).

However, there is limited studies found in evaluation of the leadership traits among the nursing students. Therefore, There is a need for further research on student leadership attributes so that nursing institutions may offer students more learning opportunities so they can develop A&T skills while in college. Today's nursing schools should focus on teaching A&T skills to help the nursing profession survive and thrive in the future. As implied by behavioral theory, leaders are created, not born. This approach emphasizes that anyone can become a leader by studying what makes a successful leader tick. Character traits of a good leader can be discovered over time by observing their surroundings and the events that take place around them. According to this view, colleges are one of the institutions that can create future leaders. As a result, nursing schools need to offer the proper curriculum to enable students to practice specific leadership techniques as soon as possible. In this way, they acquire the greatest amount of leadership skills after completing their education.

To evaluate the successfulness of the curriculum and strategies of nursing management and leadership courses, it is suggested to nursing school to assess student's A&T traits at first in order to know what that they may have already previously. Simbolon & Perangin-angin (2020) evaluated freshmen students A&T behavior. Their study concluded that A&T leadership's traits are performed with a low percentage of students. They suggested improvement on A&T behaviors through the remaining level. Based on the result, it is necessary to evaluate the A&T leadership's traits for each level of student so the

development 44 A&T for each level can be described. So, the main purpose of this study is to describe and compare the A&T leadership's traits from batch 1 to 4. To compare A&T leadership's traits among the nursing students between batch 1 to 4. In addition, this study will identify whether 26 there are significant differences between batch 1, batch 2, batch 3, and batch 4. Nursing schools will gain from this study since it will provide baseline information on students' A&T characters. Which characters needed to be maximized and which ones they were already sufficiently good at. Determining what should be taught in nursing curricula to give students these skills while they are in school and be able to fully embody the qualities of A&T leadership after graduation will also be important to nursing schools, particularly to administrators. In fact, nursing students need to be aware of their A&T behaviors in order to select the best course of action to enhance their level of leadership qualities. Furthermore, it is projected to be useful for researchers and future researchers to plan continuing research in different settings and populations, and find the connection or gap between them.

**Objective(s):** To describe and to compare nursing students' Authenticity and transformational leadership traits between level 1 to 4.

## 52 METHODS

### Study design

This study is using a quantitative method with comparative approach.

### Setting

The research conducted in 32 Faculty of Nursing Universitas Advent Indonesia Bandung

### Research subject

Population is a nursing student in 32 Faculty of Nursing Universitas Advent Indonesia Bandung. Sample is selected using total sampling of all nursing students from batch 1 to 4.

*Instruments*

Data are collected by using a Transformation and Authentic-self questionnaire developed by Clark (2009). The questionnaire was translated from English to Indonesia by two experts (one English professor and one nursing professor). Then, translated questionnaire was validated by Simbolon & Perangin-angin (2020). All 25 items are valid. Reliability of the questionnaire is tested by using SPSS in which the value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.735. The questionnaire assessed the ability to practice caring & sincerity, consistency, honesty, and admitting fault. It included fairness, connectedness, trust, role modeling, and also collaboration, and good communication. There are items related to empowering others, sharing their vision, and how to show others their principles, values, purposes, and ethics. In addition, the ability to keep their physical and emotional safety, cheering behavior, respect others achievement and also managing stress by engaging meditation, prayers and hobbies as a requirement to be A&T leaders. Each item was scored with 0 (never), 2 (sometimes) and 4 (always).

*Data analysis*

Data are analyzed using SPSS. The first analysis was the utilization of descriptive analysis to find out the mean for 25 traits in each batch. The second analysis was to answer the question, what is the difference between each batch of student regarding the practice of the A&T traits then compare mean analysis was utilized. The last analysis was one-way ANOVA (Post Hoc Multiple Comparison) to see the different within the level.

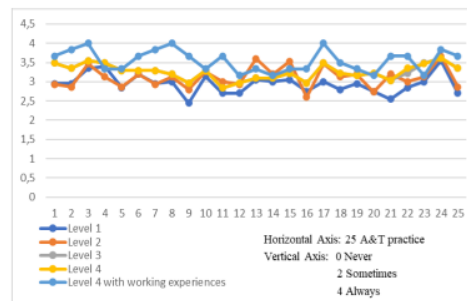
*Ethical consideration*

Data is gathered using cross-sectional (single point) technique in the classroom setting after the clearance ethic and permission from university are obtained. Participants are explained the purpose of study and offered informed consent to be signed.

**RESULTS**

Total number of students who are voluntarily returned the questionnaires are 40 students for batch 1, 30 students for batch 2, 31 students for batch 3, 31 student of batch 4 and 12 students of batch 4 who have working experience (students who continue from 3 years diploma and has working experience before continuing to BSN program). The total sample was 144 students. All of them filled out the informed consent and answered all 25 items of questions. Most of them are female (72.5%) and the rest are male (27.5%). The ages range from 17-37 years old.

Figure-1 displays the result of mean analysis for 25 A&T traits between nursing students in each batch. Based on figure 1, the highest mean values of 4.0 fell under three behaviors: fairness (no 3), self-directed (no 8), and clear communication & collaboration (no 17). It was found only on batch 4 with working experience. The second highest range of mean value of 3.833 were found also on three behaviors: consistency between word and action (no 2), commitment (no 7), and stress management (no 24). It was also found on batch 4 with working experience. The third highest range of mean value of 3,666 were fallen on the caring and sensitivity (no 1), do what is right (no 6), transcend self-interest (no 9), share vision (no 11), cheerfulness (no 21), respect others (no 22), and show principle, ethic, and value in every action (no 25). It was on the batch 4 with working experience only.



**Figure 1. Mean Analysis of 25 A&T Practice**

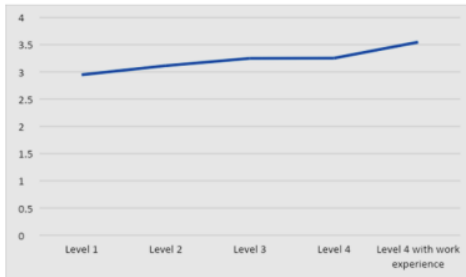
To answer the question, what is the difference between each level of student regarding the practice of the A&T traits?

Compare mean analysis was conducted. The result can be seen on table 1.

**Table 1. Mean Different Between Students of Batch 1 to 4**

Students Level	Mean	SD
Level 1	2.9460	.25614
Level 2	3.1147	.27657
Level 3	3.2477	.20247
Level 4	3.2522	.20275
Level 4 with working experiences	3.5467	.27855

Based on table 1, this study found that mean values in each students' batch are different. The lowest mean value was found on batch 1 with the mean value was 2,9460. It was increased to 3.1147 in batch 2, 3.2477 in batch 3, and 3.2522 in batch. The highest mean value discovered on batch 4 with working experiences. The mean value was 3,5467. It can be said that the performance of A&T behaviors was increasing as the batches are increased. <sup>54</sup> graphic of increase based on the mean value can be seen in the figure 2.



**Figure 2. Line Chard for A&T Traits Among Each Level**

In Figure-2 can be seen that the baseline of A&T behaviors in level 1 was at 2,9460 in terms of mean value. It was increased up to 3,5467 in level four with working experience. It can be seen that there is only a slight increase of A&T behaviors performance through each level of the study. The more detailed comparisons analysis can be seen on table 2.

<sup>43</sup> Table 2 shows that the difference between batch 1 to batch 2 <sup>57</sup> not significant with the p-value above 0.05. The difference between batch 1 to batch 3 and batch 4 are significant because both p-<sup>26</sup> values below 0.05. The difference between batch 2 to batch 3 and batch 4 are not significant for both p-values were greater than 0.05. However, between batch 2 to batch 4 with work experience is significant for the p-value was less than 0.05. The table also descr<sup>45</sup> that the difference from batch 3 3 to batch 4 was not significant because p-value greater than 0.05 but significant to batch 4 with work experience with significant value lower than 0.05. The difference from batch 4 to batch 4 with work experience in this study was found to be significant (p-value < 0,05).

**DISCUSSION**

There are three A&T traits that fully developed and haven been practiced as always. It is only found in batch 4 students who have working experience with the highest mean value of 4.0. They are fairness, self-directed, and clear communication & and collaboration. According to Dictionary 2020, the quality of being fair is treating people equitably or in a way that is reasonable or right. The capacity of students to act justly during their college years indicates that they will possess the ability to act justly ethically in the future. As nurses, they must exercise fairness when tending to various patient populations. Fairness in the workplace has a significant effect on society, employers, and workers. A study showed the relationship between health and perceptions of justice over time. It has been reported that employees who experience unfair treatment are more likely to experience physical health issues, depression, and to engage in unhealthy coping strategies like quitting smoking, drinking alcohol, or exercising less. In addition, it increases the likelihood of burnout (Eib, Bernhard-Oettel, & Leineweber, 2016). In management and leadership, fairness has been introduced as the glue that keeps leader and

**Tabel 2. Multicomparison of A&T Traits Between Batch 1 to 4**

Student's Batch	Mean difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Batch 1	Batch 2	-.16866*	.06949	.017	-.3062	-.0311
	Batch 3	-.30174*	.06949	.000	-.4393	-.1642
	Batch 4	-.30621*	.06949	.000	-.4438	-.1686
	Batch 4					
	With work experience	-.60067*	.06949	.000	-.7383	-.4631
Batch 2	Batch 1	.16866*	.06949	.017	.0311	.3062
	Batch 3	-.13307	.06949	.058	-.2707	.0045
	Batch 4	-.13754	.06949	.050	-.2751	.0000
	Batch 4					
	With work experience	-.43200*	.06949	.000	-.5696	-.2944
Batch 3	Batch 1	.30174*	.06949	.000	.1642	.4393
	Batch 2	.13307	.06949	.058	-.0045	.2707
	Batch 4	-.00447	.06949	.949	-.1421	.1331
	Batch 4					
	with work experience	-.29893*	.06949	.000	-.4365	-.1613
Batch 4	Batch 1	.30621*	.06949	.000	.1686	.4438
	Batch 2	.13754	.06949	.050	.0000	.2751
	Batch 3	.00447	.06949	.949	-.1331	.1421
	Batch 4					
	with work experience	-.29446*	.06949	.000	-.4320	-.1569
Batch 4 With work experience	Batch 1	.60067*	.06949	.000	.4631	.7383
	Batch 2	.43200*	.06949	.000	.2944	.5696
	Batch 3	.29893*	.06949	.000	.1613	.4365
	Batch 4	.29446*	.06949	.000	.1569	.4320
	Batch 4					

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

follower together. There are a number of reasons why workplace justice is crucial. It guarantees that each person gets an equal share of the same information. It is found that some policies about how to determine pay, promotions, and work schedules are visible. People require fairness because it conveys their standing within the organization, which will boost their self-esteem. Fairness indicates that followers get along well with their leaders and are seen as important resources for the company.

The second A&T trait that has been practiced as always is self-directed. This data shows that level 4 students with working experiences have practiced self-directed leadership's traits optimally. Self-directed refers to showing initiative and the ability to organize oneself. Self-directed learning is a method of acquiring knowledge and skills in which students take responsibility for their own progress (Li., Gong, Pan., and Wu, 2021). It can be practiced while studying in nursing colleges. In this phase, self-directed learners show their ability to create their own learning environment

(Saks, and Leijen, 2014). There are several benefits of being a self-directed person. It instilled a sense of autonomy and mastery in the learner and a sense of purpose. Learners feel self-control, confidence, and belief in themselves (Boyer, Edmonds, Artis, and Fleming (2014). Moreover, it supports the unlimited learning potential and creativity of learners. Self-directed skills are not developed in an instant but through practice in a certain time. It can be different from one individual to another. Moreover, it is also required faculty members to shift from being the "sage on the stage" to either a "guide on the side" or, ideally, an authentic learning facilitator (Robinson, PharmDa, and Persky, 2020).

The third A&T trait that has been practiced as always is clear communication and collaboration. This emphasizes the ability to use clear communication and collaboration already achieved particularly for students in level 4 with working experience but not for the rest of the level. The benefits of clear communication and collaboration are found in previous studies. A study found and suggested that creating strong collaboration among caregivers and nursing leadership provides high quality of care, higher job satisfaction, and lower intent to leave the job (Ma, Shang, and Bott, 2015). Another study also proved when good collaboration built among the nurse and physician will reduce the decision to leave (Galletta, Portoghese, Battista, and Leiter, 2013), in the other hand the absence of interprofessional collaboration result in higher possibility of error and omission in client's care (Vasiliki Matziou, Efrosyni Vlahioti, Pantelis Perdikaris, Theodora Matziou, Efstathia Megapanou & Konstantinos Petsios, 2014).

Therefore, the ability to communicate and collaborate are really important to be achieved by nurses. According to Leonard, Whiteman, Stephens, Henry, and Swanson-Biearman, (2022) New Graduate Students (NGS) may still lack in communication and collaboration skills to effectively interact with challenging patients, families, and interdisciplinary teams, leading to stress and burnout. They suggest that role

playing and debriefing exercises through different scenarios will enhance the communication and collaboration skills. Bartges (2012) suggested that pairing students in clinical practice assignments will develop their communication and collaboration skills.

The rest of the A&T traits mean values range from 3.83 to 2.45. These values suggested that nursing students in all levels need to learn how to practice those A&T leadership's traits. Students need to practice more often of those behaviors to prepare them to become A&T leaders in the future. Particularly to transcend self-interest (which found to be the lowest mean value of 2,45). Being selfless is defined as showing or having a great deal of concern for other people while showing little to no concern for oneself. "The quality of not putting yourself first but being willing to give more effort to others" is how selflessness is also defined (Vocabulary.com, 2020). Selflessness becomes a vital component of nursing and edifies nurses. Because they are selfless, nurses are able to work compassionately and offer caring services (Dorolen & Sonya, 2013). Lately, the selfless care of theory commitment has taken on a unique form that includes using one's therapeutic self in the face of one's suffering and putting oneself out there as a team member (collaborator) to overcome professional challenges (Gogola, 2018).

Finally, the results of this study show that there is an increase in A&T traits according to the increasing batch of students. There are some significant different from batch 1 Batch 3 and batch 1 to batch 4, also from batch 4 to batch 4 with work experience. However, there was no significant different from batch 2 to batch 3, and batch 2 to batch 4, and also from batch 3 to batch 4. The data shows that practicing A&T leadership's traits are needed in most of the batch. It is limited studies using this study tool in nursing students that can be compared with this study. One of the similar was conducted by Simbolon and Perangin-angin (2020). They evaluated the authenticity and transformational leadership traits at first level of nursing



students. They found that only one trait that 77.7 % person of students always perform the authenticity and transformational trait. It was stress management. Another 24 traits still under 75%. This study suggested that nursing school should emphasize the activities to increase the leadership traits in to maximize level.

## CONCLUSION

There are three A&T traits that have always been done by the batch 4 students with working experience. The study found that there are mean differences between A&T traits among the nursing students between each level. <sup>37</sup>ere were significant differences between batch 1 to batch 4, between batch 1 to batch 3, between batch 1 to batch 4, and batch 4 to batch 4 with work experiences. How<sup>47</sup> there are no significant differences between batch 2 to batch 3, batch 2 to batch 4 and batch 3 to batch 4.

## SUGGESTIONS

As this study was limited to one faculty of nursing only, the study suggests to this nursing school only that there is a big room for improvement in terms of development of A&T traits among the nursing students. It is needed for nursing schools to review and revise the leadership and management course curriculum. It is recommended that learning strategies must employ more activities to develop A&T traits during the study in nursing school. The activities need to be maximized whether in the classroom, laboratory, outside the classroom, and also in clinical practice. It is also suggested to others nursing schools to evaluate their students' leadership traits of authenticity and transformational so in the future more literature will be published related to this topic.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Research thanks to all participants.

## <sup>41</sup>DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest between authors and other parties related to this study.

## FUNDING

Funding solely provided by the authors.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

**Idauli Simbolon:** Initiate the study topic, aim, and design the methodology select the appropriate research instrument, and obtain the ethical clearance. Input the data in to Microsoft XL

**Albinur Limbong:** Provide the questionnaire ready for the students, explain the purpose of research, obtain the inform consent, and cistribut the questioner to the students and collect it back from them.

**Mori Agustina Br Perangin-angin:** Analisis the data, and writing, the result

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**Cite this article as:** Simbolon, I., et al. (2023). Comparison of Authenticity and Transformational Traits Between Nursing Students Level 1 To 4. *Nurse and Health: Jurnal Keperawatan*, 12 (2), 10-19 Number. <https://doi.org/10.36720/nhjk.v12i2.533>

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