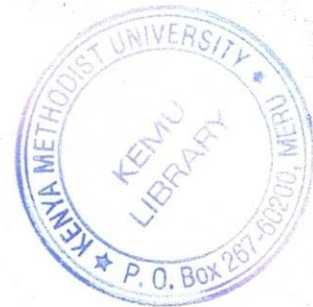


**EVALUATION OF READINESS FOR SELF-DIRECTED
LEARNING AMONG DIPLOMA NURSING STUDENTS**

IN TANZANIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

Self-directed learning is an important ability for the student nurses engaging in lifelong learning which will help them to cope with health challenges of the 21st Century. The teaching strategy has been adopted by many countries for training student nurses. In Tanzania, nursing schools have continued the use of traditional teaching and learning methods making the learners more teacher-dependent. The objectives of the study were to; (i) assess the level of readiness for self-directed learning among diploma nursing students (ii) determine level of motivation for self-directed learning among diploma nursing students and (iii) compare the levels of self-directed learning readiness among subgroups of the participants. A descriptive (cross-sectional) survey was carried out to evaluate the readiness for self-directed learning among diploma nursing students in Tanzania. A validated self-administered questionnaire (self-directed learning rating scale for nursing education – short form: SDLRSNE-SF) method was used to collect the data from 311 diploma student nurses from different nursing schools across Tanzania. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data and the inferential statistics were used to test the study hypotheses. The data are presented using tables and graphs as appropriate. All analyses were carried out using SPSS version 19.0 computer software. All distributed questionnaires were returned (return rate of 100%) and item response rate of over 98% on all subscales of the SDLRSNE-SF. The results showed that the median score on the SDLRSNE-SF was 128. Given that the guideline scores of 87 being the threshold of low/high readiness, the results suggest that the diploma student nurses' level of readiness for SDL was high. The level of motivation was measured using the 'desire for learning' subscale of SDLRSNE-SF, with a guideline average score of 27 being the threshold between low and high motivation. The median desire for learning score was 41, indicating a very high level of motivation. There was a 'small effects' correlation between age and the readiness for SDL, $r_s = -0.125$, $p = 0.030$. Gender had no effect on the level of readiness for SDL. Those with A-level qualifications, had a higher level of readiness for SDL (Median = 129, IQR = 123.5-131.5) than those with O-level qualification (Median = 123.5, IQR = 117-128), $p < 0.001$. The type of nursing program had significant effect on the readiness for SDL, those in the pre-service program having a significantly higher level of SDL (median = 126, IQR = 120-131) than those in the in-service program (median = 123, IQR = 115-127). This study concluded that the diploma nursing students in Tanzania (especially those in the pre-service program) are ready for self-directed learning and they are highly motivated to undertake SDL in their programs. Recommendations were made to the government, MoHSW and to nursing educators to foster self-directed learning method and to provide the necessary equipments to make it possible for students.