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## Research Article

# The Effect of Three Good Things Technique on Self-Leadership to Nursing Students

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### Abstract

**Background:** Every nursing student must develop self-leadership skills. It has been proven that nursing students who score high in self-leadership would have better performance and self-efficacy. The Three Good Things intervention is a potential strategy for enhancing self-leadership.

**Aim:** The aimed of the research was to identify the effect of the three nice things technique on nursing students' self-leadership.

**Method:** This research is a quantitative study using a Quasi-Experimental design with Two Group Pre and Post-test, involving 60 nursing students as respondents. Data collection with the RSLQ questionnaire (*Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire*) and data analysis using Paired Sample ANCOVA and T-Test

**Results:** This study showed the picture of low self-leadership before intervention both in the control and intervention groups. Then after the intervention, the self-leadership was still low in the control group, while the intervention group showed a high self-leadership, then there was a significant difference in self-leadership between before and after the intervention in the intervention group with a p-value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). There was no significant difference between the control before and after the intervention with a p-value of 0.335 ( $p > 0.05$ ). And the three good things intervention proved to have an effect on self-leadership in nursing students (p-value of 0.000).

**Conclusion:** This study showed an effect of providing three good things interventions on self-leadership in nursing students. This research is expected for the institution to conduct training or workshops on self-leadership in maintaining the consistency of student self-leadership in the institution.

### Keywords

Self-leadership; student of nursing; three good things technique

## INTRODUCTION

Students entering adulthood, which normally occurs between the ages of 18 and 25, have obligations for their development phase, which include having accountability for their lives as they enter maturity (1). Highly

motivated students will have an abundance of energy to devote to educational pursuits (2). Achievement motivation is one sign that the student has self-leadership. Every student also needs self-leadership skills, Self-leadership is an individual's ability to influence, direct, motivate himself and

develop his abilities so that he becomes a better person (3,4).

Self-leadership is a term that refers to the self-influence pattern used to maintain also for improving one's effectiveness. Self-leadership helps people learn how to be more self-reliant by using theories about behavioral reinforcement, setting goals, intrinsic motivation, and tools for constructive thinking, among other things (5). As this empirical study has consistently demonstrated, self-leadership is a critical component of individual achievement. Self-leaders were found to have greater levels of work performance (6).

An effective approach to improving self-leadership is positive psychology with the three good things technique (7). Positive psychology is a discipline of psychology concerned with mental well-being that is founded on human characteristics (8). The benefits of a positive psychological state are to grow and develop feelings of hope, confidence, optimism, and resilience (9). The more psychological capital that is activated, the more individuals are capable of exerting effort and utilizing procedures to complete tasks, and therefore are more motivated, expect greater results, and cope with hurdles more successfully (10).

Students entering adulthood, which normally occurs between the ages of 18 and 25, have obligations for their development phase, which include having accountability for their lives as they enter maturity (1). Highly motivated students will have an abundance of energy to devote to educational pursuits (2). Achievement motivation is one sign that the student has self-leadership. Every student also needs self-leadership skills. Self-leadership is an individual's ability to influence, direct, motivate himself and develop his abilities so that he becomes a better person (3,4).

Self-leadership is a term that refers to the self-influence pattern used to maintain also for improving one's effectiveness. Self-leadership helps people learn how to be more self-reliant by using theories about behavioral reinforcement, setting goals, intrinsic motivation, and tools for constructive thinking, among other things (5). As this empirical study has consistently demonstrated, self-leadership is a critical component of individual achievement. Self-leaders were found to have greater levels of work performance (6).

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The importance of this research is because positive psychology with the three good things technique has an effect on self-leadership which has been shown to have a positive effect on various outcomes, including the process of self-reference, motivation, behavior, and performance (11). Additionally, evidence indicates that optimism and successful coping methods are associated with individual self-leadership (12,13).



Self-leadership is needed for nursing students, especially nursing students at STIKep PPNI West Java who have a vision and mission to become a nursing college that excels in nursing leadership, so self-leadership needs to be formed in nursing students at STIKep PPNI West Java. The difference between this study and previous research is that the instrument used by the current researcher is more complete than previous researchers and the sample difference where this study was conducted on nursing students, and because there is still little research on positive psychology that affects self-leadership.

## METHODS

This is a quantitative study that implements a quasi-experimental design with a two-group pretest-posttest design using purposive sampling. This research was conducted online to third-level students at STIKep PPNI West Java on April 20 – May 3, 2021 with a total sample of 60 respondents, and divided the sample between 30 control groups and 30 intervention groups. Data collection using the RSLQ questionnaire (*Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire*) and data analysis with paired sample t-test and ANCOVA. Then the researcher consideration of research ethics by taking into account several aspects, namely: *Informed Consent*, Anonymity, Autonomy, Justice, and Confidentiality.

## RESULTS

### Characteristics of Nursing Student Respondents

**Table 1.**  
**Frequency Distribution of Level 3 Student Characteristics at STIKep PPNI West Java**

Characteristics of Respondents	Intervention Group		Control Group	
	Mean ± SD	Min ± Max	Mean ± SD	Min ± Max
Age	20.7 ± (.758)	19±22	20.7 ± (1.028)	19±25
	N	%	N	%
Gender				
Man	4	13.3	6	20
Woman	26	86.7	24	80
Study Program/Class				
S1-3A	6	20	6	20
S1-3B	6	20	6	20
S1-3C	7	23.3	6	20
D3-3A	6	20	7	23.3
D3-3B	5	16.7	5	16.7

Based on the results of research conducted at STIKep PPNI West Java, especially for third-year students, the characteristics of nursing students in the intervention group

showed an average age of 20.7 years old with the range between 19-22 years old. The control group an average age of 20.7 years was minimum. 19 years old and maximum 25 years old. Univariate analysis on gender showed that the respondents were more likely to be women than men in both groups. Based on the study program, third-grade bachelor's degree students who are willing to be more respondents in the intervention group and third-grade diploma program students as many as seven people, or 23.3%, in the control group.

## Overview of Nursing Student Self-Leadership

**Table 2.**  
**Description of Nursing Student Self-Leadership Before and After Intervention (n=60)**

Variable	Intervention		
	Mean ± (SD)	median	Min-Max
<i>Pre-Test</i>	133.4 ± (4,499)	133	124 - 145
<i>Post Test</i>	143.8 ± (5,095)	144	133 - 152
	Control		
	Mean ± (SD)	median	Min-Max
<i>Pre-Test</i>	135.53 ± (5.88)	135.5	125 - 148
<i>Post Test</i>	135.76 (4.99)	135.5	127 - 146

Table 2 showed that the average score of self-leadership before being given intervention in the intervention group was 133.4 with SD 4,499, median 133, minimum 124, maximum 145, and after intervention the average value was 143.8 with SD 5,095, median 144, minimum 133, maximum 152. Then the mean value of self-leadership before intervention in the control group was 135.53 with SD 5.88, median 133.5, minimum 125, maximum 14, and after intervention the average value was 135.76 with SD 4.99, median 135.5, minimum 127, maximum 146. Based on the results of measuring self-leadership, the higher the score obtained, the higher the self-leadership behavior in a person, on the contrary if the score obtained is

low, the self-leadership behavior in a person is also low. And it can be interpreted that if the mean value is close to the maximum score then self-leadership is high, otherwise if the mean value is close to the minimum score then self-leadership is low.

Based on the data above, it can be concluded that the pre-test scores in the intervention group and the control group are still low because the mean value is close to the minimum value. Then the post-test value in the control group is also still low because the mean value is close to the minimum value, while the post-test value in the intervention group is high, because the mean value is close to the maximum value.

**Table 3.**  
**Description of self-leadership per-domain in nursing students in the intervention group and the control group (n = 60)**

Variable	Intervention Group (n=30)		Control Group (n=30)	
	Mean ± SD	Min - Max	Mean ± SD	Min - Max
<b>Score Domain</b>				
<b>Visualizing successful performance</b>				
Pre-test	19.2±1.45	17 - 23	20.6±1.71	17 - 24
Post-test	20.87±1.35	19 - 24	20.7±1.44	19 - 24
<b>Self goal setting</b>				
Pre-test	19±1.53	15 - 22	19.8±1.61	17 - 23
Post-test	20.8±1.18	19 - 23	19.8±1.53	16 - 23
<b>Self talk</b>				
Pre-test	12.2±1.19	11 - 14	12.46 ± 1.13	10 - 15
Post-test	13±1.08	11 - 15	12.56±1.006	10 - 15
<b>Self reward</b>				
Pre-test	8.16±0.87	7 - 10	7.96±0.76	7 - 10
Post-test	8.67±0.8	7 - 10	7.86±0.68	7 - 9
<b>Evaluating beliefs and assumptions</b>				
Pre-test	15.8±0.93	12 - 18	15.7±1.43	12 - 19
Post-test	16.86 ± 0.93	16 - 19	15.63±1.18	12 - 17
<b>Self-punishment</b>				
Pre-test	15.2±1.51	13 - 19	14.3 ± 2.39	7 - 18
Post-test	16.53±1.3	14 - 19	14.4±1.97	9 - 18
<b>Self-observation</b>				
Pre-test	16.5±1.13	14 - 19	16.26 ± 0.9	15 - 19
Post-test	17.4 ± 0.93	15 - 19	16.3 ± 0.88	15 - 19
<b>Focusing thoughts on natural reward</b>				
Pre-test	20.26 ± 1.17	18 - 23	20.76±1.006	19 - 23
Post-test	21.93±1.08	20 - 24	20.7 ± 1.2	19 - 23
<b>Self cueing</b>				
Pre-test	7.03 ± 1.09	5 - 10	7.6±1.06	6 - 9
Post-test	7.7±0.83	6 - 10	7.7±0.91	6 - 9

Based on table 3 shows the intervention group and control group with the results of the pre-test and post-test of several RSLQ instrument variables (*Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire*) which consists of 34 question items and is divided into several domains including successful performance visualization, self-target setting, self-talk, self-esteem, evaluating beliefs and assumptions, self-

punishment, self-observation, focus on natural rewards, and self-signal. Of the several domains that have been mentioned, there are several domains with the highest average pre-test owned by the domain focusing on natural rewards with an average of 20.26 (SD = 1.17) with a Min-Max of 18 - 23 and a successful performance visualization domain with an average 19.2 mean (SD = 1.45) with Min - Max 17 - 23 in the

intervention group, in the control group the domain focused on natural rewards with a mean of 20.76 (SD = 1.006) with Min-Max 19 - 23 and the successful performance visualization domain with a mean of 20.6 (SD = 1).

After being given the intervention, the highest average domain was the same as the domain before the intervention, namely the domain focused on natural rewards and visualization of successful performance, in the intervention group the domain focused on natural rewards tended to increase with an average value of 21.93 (SD = 1.08) and Min-Max. 20 - 24, and the visualization domain of successful performance with an average value of 20.87 (SD = 1.35) and Min-Max of 19 - 24. Then in the control group, the domain focused on natural rewards did

not increase with an average value of 20.7 (SD = 1.2) and Min-Max 19 - 23, and the domain of successful performance visualization with an average value of 20.7 (SD = 1.44) and Min-Max 19 - 24. The results of the above study indicate that the description of self-leadership based on the domain before the intervention was given to the domain intervention group the focus on natural rewards and the visualization domain of successful performance is still low when compared to the mean scores in the control group. But after the intervention was performed, the mean scores of the domains focused on natural rewards and visualization of successful performance were higher in the intervention group than in the control group.

## Differences in Self-Leadership

Table 4.

Differences in Self-Leadership Scores Before and After the Intervention were given to the Intervention and Control Group (n=60)

Group	Pre-test (Mean ± SD)	Post-test (Mean ± SD)	T	Mean Difference	p-value
Intervention	133.4±4.499	143.8±5.095	-22,301	-10.4	0.000
Control	135.53±5.88	135.76 ± 4.99	-0.980	-0.233	0.335

### a) Differences in student self-leadership in the intervention group

Based on table 4.3 above the mean score before intervention in the intervention group was 133.4 with SD of 4,499. then the average value after the intervention showed an increase with an average difference of 10.4. And there is a significant difference in the intervention group before and after the intervention is given, with a p value = 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ), and it can be interpreted that  $H_a$  accepted and  $H_0$  rejected.

### b) Differences in student self-leadership in the control group

The mean score prior to intervention was 135.53 with a standard deviation of 5.88 in the control group. Then, following the intervention, the average value indicated a small increase, with an average difference of 0.23. And there was no significant difference between the control and intervention groups, with a p-value of 0.335.

## The Effect of Three Good Things Technique on Self-Leadership in Nursing Students

**Table 5.**  
**The Effect of Three Good Things Technique on Self-Leadership in Nursing Students.**  
**(n=60)**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2223.233a	2	1111.617	289,391	.000
Intercept	36,007	1	36,007	9,374	.003
Pre	1255,216	1	1255,216	326,774	.000
Group	1418,023	1	1418,023	369.158	.000
Error	218,950	57	3,841		
Total	1174805,000	60			
Corrected Total	2442,183	59			

According to table 5, the difference in self-leadership total score after the intervention of the three good things technique was found to be significant when compared to the control group that did not receive the three good things intervention, with a mean square value of 1418,023,  $F = 369.158$ , and  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). This demonstrates that the second hypothesis,  $H_0$ , was rejected and  $H_a$  was accepted. It can be said that doing three good things has a big impact on self-leadership.

## DISCUSSION

### Overview of Nursing Student Self-Leadership Before and After Giving Intervention

One sign that students have self-leadership is to have achievement motivation, achievement motivation is a driving force for someone to achieve success. It is characterized by the persistent struggle of individuals to achieve their goals (14). One of the characteristics of students according to (15) is that students are able to gain emotional freedom by expressing their opinions and feelings with an attitude

according to their environment and emotional freedom. Students who continue their studies in undergraduate programs are mostly in the range of eighteen to twenty-one years. And in this study, the average student was 20.7 years old.

One of the developmental tasks of students achieved at the adolescent development stage is the ability to form identity, where at this stage students have the opportunity to develop basic abilities within the scope of the social framework and sharpen their ability to take and carry out and regulate roles in any activity (16). The ability to go through this stage makes adolescents have self-leadership. Self-leadership is the development of self-management functions, self-direction, self-control, and self-motivation (17).

Then self-leadership in nursing students at STIKep PPNI West Java can be seen from the results of the research on self-leadership before the intervention in the intervention group, the average score is 133.4 with an SD of 4,499, and after the intervention the average value is 143.8 with an SD of 5,095. Then the average value of self-

leadership before the intervention was given to the control group was 135.53 with an SD of 5.88 and after the intervention the average value was 135.76 with an SD of 4.99. From the data above, it can be concluded that the higher the score obtained, the higher the self-leadership behavior in a person, on the contrary if the score obtained is low, the self-leadership behavior in a person is also low (18).

Furthermore, in the description of self-leadership by domain, there are several domains with the highest average pre-test owned by the focus domain on natural rewards with an average of 20.26 and the successful performance visualization domain with an average of 19.2. The domain focused on natural rewards with an average of 20.76 and the visualization domain of successful performance with an average of 20.6. Then after being given the intervention, the highest average domain was still the same as the domain before the intervention, namely the domain focused on natural rewards and successful performance visualization, in the intervention group the domain focused on natural rewards with an average value of 21.93, and the successful performance visualization domain with a score of 21.93. an average of 20.87.

The results of the above study indicate that the self-leadership of nursing students in the intervention group before being given an intervention in the domain focus on natural rewards with and visualization of successful performance is still low when compared to the average score in the control group. But after the intervention was performed, the mean scores of the domains focused on

natural rewards and visualization of successful performance were higher in the intervention group than in the control group.

The main focus on natural rewards is meant to foster an atmosphere in which a person is motivated or rewarded by the pleasurable parts of a job or activity, thus fostering emotions of competence and self-determination and energizing task-related behaviors that contribute to performance (19). Concentrating on natural rewards can be attained by focusing attention on the unpleasant features of a task and then focusing on the activity to illustrate that the unpleasant aspects are fundamentally useful, or by focusing on the positive feelings linked with the task.

The visualization of successful performance is defined as an attempt to imagine a successful task execution before the task is carried out (19). Occasionally, this imagination might be exercised by mimicking the task at hand. Individuals who visualize themselves successfully completing an activity prior to completing image it are more likely to appear successful when confronted with a real task. Along with the aspects of focus on natural rewards and visualization of successful performance, additional dimensions such as self-targeting, self-motivation, self-esteem, evaluating beliefs and assumptions, self-punishment, self-observation, and self-cues all improved. Putting the parts and dimensions of self-leadership into each person is thought to help them improve their skills, especially in the academic process.

### **Differences in self-leadership before and after the three good things intervention**

According to the results of the paired t-test, the intervention group demonstrated a significant difference between before and after the three nice things technique intervention, with a value of (p-value: 0.000) as the control group did not (p-value>0.05). From the data above, it can be concluded that there are differences in self-leadership scores after being given the three good things intervention in the intervention group. This shows that the three good things intervention on self-leadership has been shown to have a positive effect on various outcomes, including self-referencing processes, motivation, behavior, and performance (11). It has been demonstrated that student self-regulation mechanisms are favorably associated with motivation, behavior, and performance. When a person possesses strong self-leadership and is capable of leading himself, achievement becomes effortless and has a positive effect on self-confidence to accomplish goals (20).

Self-leaders were found to have higher levels of job performance (6), self-efficacy, and positive influence, as well as greater job satisfaction (3,21). They became more inventive as well (22,23). Additionally, self-leadership refers to self-influence practices used to sustain and develop individual performance by integrating theoretical concepts such as behavioral reinforcement, goal planning, intrinsic motivation, and tools for constructive thinking. Self-leadership aids in the development of individual self-regulation (5).

Additionally, those with a high level of self-leadership will be more proactive, proactive, active, and responsible in all aspects of their lives.

Fundamentally, people who are capable of self-leadership may influence the development of self-confidence, possess a high level of self-awareness, and exhibit the ability to be reflected in their behavior (24).

### **The Effect of Three Good Things Technique on Nursing Student Self-Leadership**

In this experimental study, the researcher tested the effectiveness of the treatment given. The treatment is said to be effective if there is a difference in scores between the intervention group and the control group. Based on the results of the study using the ANCOVA statistical test, it was found that the difference in self-leadership scores after the intervention of the three good things technique in the intervention group showed a significant difference compared to the control group that was not given the intervention with p-value = 0.000 (p<0.05).

The results of the research above show that the three good things technique has a positive influence on self-leadership so that the higher the score obtained, the higher the self-leadership behavior in a person. The results of this study are in line with previous research which showed that the three good things intervention significantly improved the self-regulation process of overall self-leadership, and the three good things intervention showed a positive effect on self-leadership (7).

Intervention *Three good things* is a family of positive psychotherapy developed as a deliberate intervention to foster positive cognition and promote constructive behaviour (8). The three

good things intervention significantly improves the self-regulation process of overall self-leadership (7). The three good things intervention showed a positive effect. Benchmarking estimates according to the areas of organizational behavior and human resources (25). Since this self-regulation process has been shown to be positively related to motivation, behavior, and performance (23), the three good things intervention shows behavioral effects significantly profitable (11).

The three good things technique training method was adapted which includes three methods/methods, namely first, thinking about positive experiences. Thinking about positive experiences aims to enable the subject to recognize positive experiences every day, even though they are small and simple things. Thinking of positive experiences will bring up positive emotions. Second, writing down the positive experiences experienced aims to make the subject remember longer experiences and positive emotions experienced (8). Psychological research shows that writing helps organize thoughts and facilitate integration and also helps a person accept his experiences and place them in a context (26). Third, reflect on the positive experiences experienced.

Promising approach to improving self-leadership is positive psychology (three good things), a branch of psychology that deals with mental well-being based on human strengths. The three good things intervention focuses on individuals with all emotional and cognitive strengths and competencies by emphasizing positive emotions, engagement, and meaning.

## CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that the three nice things intervention had a substantial influence on third-grade nursing students' self-leadership. It is envisaged that educational institutions can make significant strides toward improving student self-leadership by implementing the three good techniques. Additionally, further study on the effectiveness of the three good techniques in the learning process for nursing students might be conducted by using a bigger sample size.

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