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TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADERS IN A RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH SERVICE AREA IN AUSTRALIA**Deepak Doshi^a**^aRockhampton Hospital, Australia

Statement of the Problem: Leadership has been considered as a necessity among people, institutions, among other scholars and academicians in various multidisciplinary areas. Leadership has played a vital role in growth and development of the rural areas. Recruitment and retention of rural leaders have been major challenges identified in Australia. Leaders should have exceptional leadership traits. The study is focused on understanding the traits and characteristics of rural and remote area leaders in Australia. Moreover, several leadership traits were compared among rural and urban leaders as well as identifying new leadership traits.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Grounded Theory methodology was used contributing to qualitative research design. Convenience sampling was used to obtain a sample of 14 healthcare workers in South West Queensland rural and remote health facilities. Grounded theory process and thematic analysis were used for analysis of the data.

Findings: Results show that more than two-thirds had experience in both rural and urban settings. Leadership traits identified were; self-confidence, openness, agreeable and consciousness. New traits were identified as resilience, emotional intelligence and adaptation. Leaders were considered to be role models in rural areas unlike urban areas.

Conclusion & Significance: Study concluded that leadership traits and characteristics are vital in rural settings. Rural and remote area leaders require learning newer traits and characteristics and modifying some existing skills to be successful in rural areas. This is the first study in the world about rural area leadership to the best of author's knowledge. Further studies are recommended.

Biography

Deepak Doshi has immense interest in management and leadership. He has extensively published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at several international conferences including Africa, Europe, Asia and Australasia. He has worked as a leader in rural and urban areas. Rural and remote area leadership in rapidly growing rural areas is scarcely studied. In this original research, he has discovered new traits and characteristics of rural and remote area leaders in Australia.

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