Transformational Leadership in Nursing: A Concept Analysis

By

Florence Onyemaechi Oahimijie
Institute of public Administration and Health Services Management
University of Benin, PMB 1154
Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria
E-Mail: florence.oahimijie@uniben.edu
GSM: 08158736056

&

Olorunfemi Olaolorunpo, PhD
Department of Nursing, Faculty of Nursing Science,
Achievers University, Owo, Ondo State. Nigeria
E-Mail: O.olaolorunpo@achievers.edu.ng

Abstract

Transformational leadership is a leadership approach which has attracted considerable interest in nursing for its potential to encourage and uplift nurses to exceed expectations, foster innovation, and improve patient care. Despite its importance, the meaning of transformational leadership in nursing remains imprecise as a result of the diverse definitions and applications across various healthcare settings. Therefore, it is crucial to explain the significance of transformational leadership in the field of nursing and identify its defining attributes, antecedents, and outcomes.

Walker and Avant's concept analysis strategy was applied to examine the concept of transformational leadership in nursing. An extensive literature search was carried out using databases such as CINAHL, EBSCOhost and PubMed for the years 1980-2023. The search encompassed peer-reviewed articles, full-text publications, and English-language materials. A total of 40 articles were analyzed, achieving saturation.

A thorough literature review identified key characteristics commonly associated with transformational leadership. Applying Walker and Avant's method, three defining attributes emerged as central themes: inspiration, motivation, and individualized consideration.

A well-defined interpretation of transformational leadership in nursing describes it as a leadership style that cultivates inspiration, motivation, and personalized support to enhance the growth of individuals and teams, ultimately advancing patient care and organizational performance in healthcare environments.

What is known?

- Transformational leadership in nursing is recognized for its capacity to inspire and improve healthcare delivery, but its definition remains unclear due to differing interpretations across healthcare settings.
- The need for transformational leadership is critical as healthcare systems face challenges requiring innovation, improved teamwork, and better patient outcomes.
- Clarifying the defining attributes, antecedents, and consequences of transformational leadership will help provide a clear framework for nursing practice and improve healthcare delivery.

What is new?

- This analysis defines transformational leadership in nursing as a leadership approach that fosters inspiration and motivates staff through vision, individualized consideration, and personal development to enhance patient care and team dynamics.
- The complexity of transformational leadership is highlighted by its application across various healthcare settings, adapting to different organizational needs and challenges.
- Future definitions of transformational leadership in nursing should emphasize its significance in fostering innovation, improving job satisfaction, and promoting better healthcare outcomes in diverse and evolving healthcare environments.

1. Introduction

Leadership in nursing has long been considered an essential aspect of healthcare delivery. However, with the increasing complexity of healthcare systems, the shift toward more dynamic and engaging leadership models has gained prominence (Al-Dossary, 2017). One such model is transformational leadership, a concept that emphasizes encouragement and motivation among healthcare staffs to achieve their fullest potential while fostering positive changes within healthcare organizations (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Transformational leadership is particularly significant in nursing, as it affects not only the professional growth of nurses but also enhances patient care outcomes and organizational performance (Bard et al., 2022). Despite its recognition, the concept of transformational leadership in nursing remains underexplored and inconsistently defined across various healthcare settings.

The origins of transformational leadership can be traced back to the work of Burns (1978), who initially differentiated between transactional leadership, which emphasizes exchange-based relationships, and transformational leadership, which focuses on inspiring followers to transcend their own self-interest for the greater good of the organization (Bass & Bass, 1985; Khanin, 2007).

In nursing, this shift toward transformational leadership aims to engage nurses in a shared vision, empowering them to act as active contributors to the organizational mission, improve patient care, and foster collaborative working environments (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). The attributes of transformational leadership in nursing include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Fischer, 2016). These attributes are crucial in addressing the challenges faced by modern healthcare systems, such as staff burnout, low morale, and the increasing demands for improved patient care.

Transformational leadership in nursing has gained increasing significance as healthcare becomes more complex. Nurses are faced with high workloads, increasing patient acuity, and an ever-expanding need for specialized care, which can contribute to burnout and dissatisfaction (Aiken et al., 2002). Transformational

leaders are instrumental in combating these issues by motivating nurses, enhancing their job satisfaction, and promoting a culture of continuous learning and development (Wong & Cummings, 2007). These leaders provide a framework in which nurses feel supported and valued, fostering a work environment that is conducive to high-quality patient care and organizational success (McFadden, 2021).

Despite its importance, the concept of transformational leadership in nursing remains somewhat vague. Various definitions and interpretations of transformational leadership have emerged within different contexts and nursing specialties, contributing to confusion and inconsistencies in its implementation (Gellis, 2001). For instance, while transformational leadership has been positively correlated with better clinical outcomes, improved nurse retention, and higher patient satisfaction, the specific pathways through which these outcomes are achieved are still being explored (Alilyyani et al., 2018). Additionally, transformational leadership requires certain antecedents, such as the leader's capacity to establish trust, offer emotional support and foster an environment that encourages collaboration and innovation (Bass & Avolio, 1994). The consequences of transformational leadership, however, extend beyond improved staff morale and engagement to include better organizational performance and enhanced quality of care (Kouzes & Posner, 2012).

The demand for a more precise and consistent comprehension of transformational leadership in nursing is further emphasized by the growing challenges within healthcare systems. As the nursing workforce faces an increasing demand for care, coupled with the global shortage of nurses, the ability to provide effective leadership has become crucial to ensuring a sustainable and high-functioning healthcare system (McFadden, 2021). Transformational leadership, by promoting a culture of empowerment and innovation, offers a potential solution to address these challenges and enhance nursing practice across diverse healthcare settings (Alilyyani et al., 2018).

This concept analysis seeks to offer a thorough comprehension of transformational leadership in nursing by synthesizing the extensive literature on the subject. By

clarifying the defining attributes, antecedents, and consequences of transformational leadership, this paper seeks to offer a structured framework that will assist nursing leaders, healthcare organizations, and scholars in applying transformational leadership principles effectively within nursing practice. A clearer understanding of this leadership model will not only guide the professional development of nurses but also improve patient care outcomes, contribute to organizational success, and address the ongoing challenges faced by the healthcare system.

2. Selection and Aims of The Concept Analysis

Transformational leadership was chosen for this concept analysis due to its critical role in nursing practice and its potential to positively impact healthcare delivery. This leadership style is recognized for fostering organizational change, boosting nurse job satisfaction and improving patient care outcomes (Aiken et al., 2002). Given the challenges faced by the nursing profession, including high turnover and burnout, understanding and applying transformational leadership is essential to address these issues and support better clinical and organizational results (Wong & Cummings, 2007).

This analysis aims to refine the concept of transformational leadership in nursing by outlining its key attributes, precursors, and outcomes. The varying and often inconsistent definitions across disciplines necessitate a clear, structured framework to guide nurses, researchers, and healthcare organizations in applying these principles effectively. By providing a more precise understanding, this analysis will contribute to enhancing nursing leadership practices, improving staff engagement, and promoting better patient care outcomes.

3. **Methods**

3.1. The Concept Analysis Approach

Walker and Avant's concept analysis method was employed to explore transformational leadership in nursing. This approach follows a structured, iterative process, including: (1) selecting the concept, (2) determining the objectives of the analysis, (3) identifying various applications of the concept in nursing, (4) defining its key attributes, (5) constructing a model case, (6) developing borderline,

related, and contrary cases, (7) identifying the antecedents and consequences, and (8) establishing empirical referents. This method provides a comprehensive understanding of transformational leadership and its significance in nursing practice. To ensure transparency, the analysis adhered to the Standards for Reporting Qualitative Research (SRQR) guidelines (Walker & Avant, 2005).

3.2. Data Sources

An extensive search was carried out across three online databases—PubMed, CINAHL, and EBSCOhost—for articles related to transformational leadership in nursing. The search included peer-reviewed publications from January 2000 to October 2024. Keywords such as "nursing leadership," "transformational leadership," and "nurse empowerment" were used to narrow the search. Inclusion criteria involved English-language, full-text, and academic journal articles, while articles that were not peer-reviewed or did not focus on nursing leadership were excluded. This process yielded 19 articles, which were thoroughly reviewed to identify common themes and defining attributes of transformational leadership in nursing. To ensure comprehensive coverage, references from the reviewed articles were also examined for additional relevant literature. Saturation was reached when no new themes emerged from the literature. Key terms and attributes from the selected articles were systematically documented using an Excel spreadsheet. Since this concept analysis did not involve human participants, it was not subject to Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval.

4. Results

4.1. Identifying All Possible Uses of the Concept in Nursing

Transformational leadership is a concept that is extensively utilized in nursing and healthcare settings due to its ability to influence and improve both the workforce and patient outcomes. It is recognized not only in nursing theory and practice but also in various healthcare disciplines, organizational leadership, and policy-making. The application of transformational leadership in nursing spans across different contexts, such as team management, patient care delivery, and the broader organizational framework of healthcare institutions.

Table 1: Key Concepts in Nursing Leadership from 19 References

Reference	Inspirational Motivation	Empowerment	Intellectual Stimulation	Individualized Consideration	Idealized Influence
Schick-Makaroff & Storch (2019)				X	X
Almost et al. (2020)	X	X		X	
Mildon et al. (2017)	X		X		
Stelnicki & Carleton (2021)			X	X	
Carter et al. (2010)	X	X			X
Hubley et al. (2024)		X		X	
Collins et al. (2020)	X	X	X		
Al-Thawabiya et al. (2023)	X			X	X
Choi et al. (2016)		X		X	
Major (2019)	X		X		

Niinihuhta & Häggman-Laitila (2022)		X		X	
Inayat et al. (2023)	X			X	X
Woodward (2020)		X			
García-Sierra & Fernández-Castro (2018)		X		X	X
Bard et al. (2022)		X			X
García-Sierra et al. (2023)	X	X			
Spencer & McLaren (2017)	X		X		
Batheja (2021)	X				X
Poels et al. (2020)	X	X		X	

Transformational leadership is vital in nursing, as it fosters motivation and inspiration among nursing teams to enhance patient care quality (Collins et al., 2020). This approach to leadership is defined by the ability of nurse leaders to provide a clear vision, foster motivation, and encourage innovation among their teams (Cummings et al., 2021). By focusing on both the professional development and personal growth of nursing staff, Transformational leaders foster a workplace culture in which nurses feel appreciated and empowered, which contributes to

high levels of job satisfaction, engagement, and retention (Cline et al., 2019). Consequently, transformational leadership influences not only the professional growth of nurses but also enhances the overall quality of care in healthcare settings. Moreover, transformational leadership has been extensively applied in nursing education. Nurse educators use transformational leadership to inspire and guide future nurses, fostering an environment of intellectual stimulation and critical thinking (Moon et al., 2019). By encouraging autonomy and creativity, transformational leaders in education create learning environments where students are encouraged to enhance their skills and actively participate in the field of nursing (Moon et al., 2019; Ystaas et al., 2023). Similarly, within healthcare organizations, transformational leadership is fundamental in leading change and guiding innovation. Nurse leaders who exhibit transformational leadership qualities are able to successfully drive change initiatives, improve organizational practices, and ensure that patient care remains of the highest standard (Doody & Doody, 2012).

The widespread use of transformational leadership also extends to healthcare management and policy-making. Within the framework of healthcare organizations, transformational leadership is used to influence organizational culture, improve nurse-patient relationships, and optimize workflow and processes. Leaders who embody transformational qualities contribute to the creation of a culture of care, where the needs of both patients and staff are met effectively. Additionally, in policy-making, transformational leadership is seen in efforts to improve healthcare systems and address challenges such as nurse shortages, quality of care, and healthcare disparities. Transformational leaders within healthcare organizations work towards creating policies that not only support the well-being of the workforce but also enhance patient safety and healthcare outcomes (Richards, 2020; Robbins & Davidhizar, 2020).

Thus, transformational leadership in nursing is used in multiple settings, ranging from individual nursing practice to large-scale healthcare management, making it an essential concept for promoting a high standard of care, professional development, and organizational success. The flexibility and multidimensional

application of this leadership style in nursing ensure its relevance in addressing both current and emerging healthcare challenges (Moon et al., 2019).

4.2. Defining the Attributes of Transformational Leadership in Nursing

Transformational leadership in nursing is characterized by several key attributes that define the leadership style and its influence on both nursing staff and patient outcomes. These attributes are fundamental in distinguishing transformational leaders from other leadership styles, and they contribute significantly to improving healthcare outcomes, enhancing job satisfaction, and fostering a positive organizational culture. The core attributes of transformational leadership in nursing encompass intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation (Collins et al., 2020; Fischer, 2016).

1. Inspirational Motivation

A key characteristic of transformational leadership is inspirational motivation, which refers to a leader's ability to inspire and encourage their followers to work toward a shared vision or goal (Doody & Doody, 2012). In nursing, this means that transformational leaders use their vision to align the goals of the nursing staff with the overarching mission of the healthcare institution, particularly in delivering exceptional patient care (Doody & Doody, 2012). Such leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision of success, fostering a sense of purpose and enthusiasm among their colleagues. By motivating their staff with enthusiasm and optimism, transformational nurse leaders help their team overcome challenges and remain committed to improving patient outcomes, which fosters both individual and team growth.

2. Intellectual Stimulation

Another key attribute of transformational leadership lies in intellectual stimulation, which encourages creativity and analytical reasoning among the nursing staff (Iraizoz-Iraizoz et al., 2023). Transformational leaders promote innovation by challenging the status quo, encouraging nurses to think outside the box, and fostering a culture where new ideas and solutions are welcomed. In nursing, this is especially beneficial for enhancing patient care practices and developing new strategies to address complex health issues. Intellectual stimulation empowers

nurses to problem-solve, contribute to decision-making processes, and actively engage in improving healthcare delivery systems (Iraizoz-Iraizoz et al., 2023). This trait fosters a workplace culture where nurses feel intellectually appreciated and have opportunities for continuous professional growth.

3. Individualized Consideration

Transformational leader's exhibit individualized consideration by acknowledging and addressing the specific needs of their team members. In nursing, this entails offering mentorship, support, and guidance tailored to each nurse's unique strengths and areas for development (Almost et al., 2020). By providing personalized support, transformational leaders cultivate a work environment where nurses feel appreciated and understood, fostering trust and commitment. This quality is especially vital in nursing, as it helps manage both personal and professional challenges faced by nursing staff. Through mentorship programs, constructive feedback, or encouragement, individualized consideration contributes to higher job satisfaction, enhanced morale, and lower burnout rates.

4. Idealized Influence

Another essential characteristic of transformational leadership is idealized influence, which signifies a leader's capacity to set an exemplary standard for their team. Transformational nurse leaders exhibit behaviors and values that align with the core principles of nursing practice, such as integrity, compassion, and professionalism (Manges et al., 2017). By setting a positive example, these leaders Earn their team's trust and respect, which in turn influences their staff to adopt similar values and behaviors. Idealized influence is essential in nursing, as it reinforces ethical practice, promotes Individualized care approach, and cultivates a high-performance culture. Nurses are more likely to adopt these values and strive to mirror the behavior of transformational leaders who lead by example (Hakvoort et al., 2022).

5. Empowerment

Transformational nursing leaders also prioritize empowerment, which is crucial. They grant team members autonomy, promote their decision-making abilities, and actively engage them in change and improvement initiatives (James et al., 2021).

This empowerment enables nurses to take control of their work, make impactful patient care decisions, and contribute to the overall success of healthcare organizations (Friend & Sieloff, 2018). By fostering this sense of ownership and responsibility, transformational leaders boost job satisfaction and performance among their nursing staff (Collins et al., 2020).

4.3. Constructing a Model Case of Transformational Leadership in Nursing

A model case of transformational leadership in nursing can be exemplified through the leadership practices of a Nurse Manager who actively engages with their team, creating a climate of transparent communication, trust, and respect. (Korku & Kaya, 2023). In this scenario, the Nurse Manager not only exemplifies the core attributes of transformational leadership but also creates an atmosphere where nursing staff feel motivated, valued, and empowered to take on leadership roles within their practice (Korku & Kaya, 2023).

The Nurse Manager, in this model case, consistently demonstrates empathy by understanding the individual challenges and needs of their nursing staff (Siirala et al., 2019). They take the time to listen to concerns, provide emotional support, and offer guidance when needed. This results in a nurturing atmosphere where nurses feel valued and understood, boosting job satisfaction and staff retention

Furthermore, the Nurse Manager encourages intellectual stimulation by cultivating an environment of constant learning and innovation. The Nurse Manager encourages their team to explore new evidence-based practices, engage in critical thinking, and participate in decision-making processes that impact patient care. This both supports individual professional development and builds the team's capacity to adjust and flourish in a dynamic healthcare setting (Fowler et al., 2021; Siirala et al., 2019).

In this model case, the Nurse Manager also prioritizes professional development through mentorship. They actively support and guide their team members in achieving their career goals, offering opportunities for advanced training, certification, and leadership roles. Through tailored guidance and support, the

Nurse Manager fosters an environment where nurses are motivated to grow, expand their skills, and take on greater responsibilities (Fowler et al., 2021).

Most importantly, the Nurse Manager's leadership style embodies vision and inspiration. They consistently communicate a strong, inspiring vision for patient care and organizational goals, ensuring team alignment and commitment. The Nurse Manager not only sets high standards but also inspires their team to achieve excellence by providing encouragement, recognition, and constructive feedback (Siirala et al., 2019; Spiva et al., 2020).

Finally, through empowerment, the Nurse Manager enables nurses to take initiative, make decisions, and lead efforts within their own areas of practice. Allowing nurses to have ownership of patient care and contribute to improving workflows, the Nurse Manager encourages independence and responsibility, which are vital for nurturing leadership potential.

This model case of transformational leadership in nursing reflects the key attributes of transformational leadership which includes, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, individualized consideration, and empowerment. By leading through example, mentorship, and inspiration, the Nurse Manager effectively drives positive change within the nursing team and the broader healthcare environment, ultimately improving both staff engagement and patient outcomes.

4.3.1 Borderline Case

A Nurse Manager in a busy hospital unit exhibits some aspects of transformational leadership but lacks consistency in their approach. They occasionally motivate and encourage their team but do not always provide clear guidance or actively support professional development. While they promote open communication, they often fail to follow through on staff concerns, leading to frustration among nurses. Although they recognize achievements, their feedback is sporadic and sometimes lacks depth. As a result, while some nurses feel inspired, others remain disengaged due to the leader's inconsistent application of transformational leadership principles.

4.3.2 Contrary Case

In contrast, a Nurse Manager with an authoritarian leadership style lacks the core elements of transformational leadership. They rarely seek input from their team and make decisions unilaterally without considering staff perspectives. Instead of fostering a supportive environment, they rely on strict policies and punitive measures to enforce compliance. Nurses feel undervalued, hesitant to voice concerns, and discouraged from taking initiative. Professional development is not prioritized, and there is little encouragement for innovation or learning. As a result, staff morale is low, leading to decreased job satisfaction and high turnover rates.

4.4. Identifying Antecedents and Consequences of Transformational Leadership in Nursing

The antecedents to transformational leadership in nursing can be identified as several key factors that serve as a foundation for the development of such leadership behaviors. One crucial antecedent is a commitment to patient-centered care. Transformational leaders in nursing are deeply invested in ensuring that care is aligned with the needs and preferences of patients. This commitment shapes their leadership style, encouraging them to adopt practices that improve both patient care and the working environment for nursing staff (Chen et al., 2023; Peng & Tseng, 2019).

Another significant antecedent is organizational support for leadership development. Hospitals or healthcare settings that prioritize the development of leadership skills in their nursing staff are more likely to cultivate transformational leaders (Peng & Tseng, 2019). This support encompasses training, mentorship, and a culture that values professional development.. For transformational leadership to succeed, nurses must be given the tools, understanding, and self-assurance to lead well.

Additionally, a culture of teamwork and collaboration is an essential antecedent to transformational leadership. A nursing environment where collaboration is valued creates opportunities for transparent dialogue, collaborative decision-making, and joint problem-solving (Sangaleti et al., 2017). Transformational leaders thrive in

these environments as they can guide teams through challenges, inspire cooperation, and foster mutual respect among team members.

The effects of transformational leadership in nursing are substantial, influencing both nursing staff and patient outcomes. A key positive impact is the enhancement of job satisfaction among nurses (Labrague et al., 2020). By creating a supportive environment that values recognition and personal growth, transformational leadership helps nurses feel more engaged in their roles (Aiken et al., 2002). Higher job satisfaction also correlates with lower burnout rates, as transformational leaders prioritize staff well-being, encourage work-life balance, and support professional development (Dall'Ora et al., 2020).

Another important outcome is strengthened team cohesion. With the leadership of a transformational figure, nurses are more inclined to collaborate effectively and provide mutual support (Ystaas et al., 2023). This sense of unity strengthens the overall team dynamic and ensures that the team functions smoothly, even during high-pressure situations. Cohesion within the team leads to improved communication and collective problem-solving, both of which positively influence patient care.

Transformational leadership also plays a direct role in enhancing patient care quality. Nurses under transformational leaders often exhibit greater motivation, commitment, and engagement in their duties (Ystaas et al., 2023). This translates into better clinical outcomes, as motivated and engaged nurses are more attentive to patient needs, take initiative in providing care, and engage in continuous improvement efforts.

Furthermore, transformational leadership can cultivate a supportive and empowering organizational culture, fostering a sense of confidence and encouragement among nurses (Ystaas et al., 2023). This creates an environment where nurses are encouraged to take on leadership roles themselves, further contributing to the development of future leaders. As a result, transformational leadership helps establish a cycle of leadership development within the

organization, ensuring sustained improvements in both nurse satisfaction and patient care over time.

4.5. Defining Empirical Referents of Transformational Leadership in Nursing

Empirical referents of transformational leadership in nursing are the measurable indicators used to evaluate its effectiveness in healthcare settings (Fischer, 2016). These indicators provide a concrete assessment of how transformational leadership influences both nursing staff and patient outcomes.

A key empirical referent is nurse job satisfaction, as research consistently links transformational leadership to higher job satisfaction levels (Penconek et al., 2021). Nurses under transformational leaders often feel valued, supported, and motivated, which reduces job dissatisfaction and, in turn, lowers nurse turnover (Doody & Doody, 2012). Maintaining high job satisfaction is essential for fostering a stable and experienced nursing workforce, which is vital to the success of healthcare organizations (Quesada-Puga et al., 2024).

Another important empirical referent is nurse retention rates. Transformational leadership is known to foster an environment in which nurses feel motivated, valued, and actively engaged in their work (Aiken et al., 2002). As a result, transformational leaders are instrumental in enhancing nurse retention by fostering a supportive work environment that promotes professional growth, acknowledges contributions, and prioritizes the well-being of nursing staff. High retention rates are indicative of effective leadership, as they reflect an organizational culture where nurses are motivated to remain and grow within the institution (Aiken et al., 2002).

The implementation of evidence-based practices is also a key empirical referent for transformational leadership in nursing. Transformational leaders actively encourage and support the use of evidence-based practices in clinical settings (Chan et al., 2023). These leaders inspire their teams to apply research findings and best practices to improve patient care. The effective adoption of evidence-based practices serves as a key indicator of transformational leadership, demonstrating a commitment to enhancing clinical outcomes and upholding high standards of care (Chan et al., 2023).

Moreover, patient outcomes serve as a crucial empirical referent for assessing transformational leadership. Studies indicate that nursing units under transformational leaders achieve superior patient outcomes, including increased patient satisfaction and enhanced clinical results (Ystaas et al., 2023). Transformational leadership fosters greater nurse engagement, promotes the adoption of innovative care practices, and encourages collaboration with other healthcare professionals. This comprehensive approach enhances the quality of patient care and leads to improved overall outcomes.

5. Operational Definition

The literature review on transformational leadership in nursing underscored its defining attributes and influence within healthcare settings. Based on the findings, transformational leadership is operationally defined as a nurse leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and empower their team by providing a clear vision, personalized support, and fostering a culture of innovation and professional growth. The core attributes identified include inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation.

The antecedents to transformational leadership encompass organizational support for leadership development, a commitment to patient-centered care, and a culture of collaboration and teamwork. These elements create the foundation for the emergence of transformational leaders who can drive positive changes in nursing practice and patient outcomes. Additionally, the outcomes of transformational leadership include higher job satisfaction, strengthened team cohesion, enhanced patient care quality, and lower turnover rates among nursing staff.

6. Discussion

With the continuous evolution of the healthcare sector, transformational leadership has become a crucial driver of change, enhancing both nursing practice and patient outcomes. Growing pressures on healthcare systems globally, along with rising costs, highlight the need for strong leadership within the nursing profession. By fostering inspiration, motivation, and empowerment, transformational leadership is recognized as a vital strategy for addressing these challenges. As healthcare increasingly prioritizes patient-centered care and quality improvement, the

importance of transformational leadership is expected to grow, guiding nursing teams toward innovative solutions and more effective care delivery.

The urgency for transformational leadership is heightened by global healthcare challenges such as staff shortages, high turnover rates, and the increasing complexity of patient care (Balloun et al., 1995). Leaders who can inspire and motivate their teams play a crucial role in fostering a supportive work environment that encourages collaboration, job satisfaction, and staff retention. As healthcare systems struggle to deliver high-quality care amid resource constraints, transformational leadership offers a framework for enhancing team engagement and equipping nurses with the skills and support needed to excel in their roles (Balloun et al., 1995).

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical role of strong leadership in healthcare. Transformational nurse leaders have been instrumental in navigating their teams through the crisis, fostering unity, and ensuring that staff remain resilient and focused amid unprecedented challenges [59]. This global health emergency has emphasized the necessity for healthcare systems to be adaptable and responsive—qualities that define transformational leadership. The ability to lead effectively during periods of uncertainty while cultivating a culture of trust and collaboration has been invaluable in sustaining high standards of care throughout the crisis.

As nursing increasingly adopts transformational leadership, its benefits extend beyond the workplace to enhance patient outcomes. Research indicates that nursing units under transformational leaders achieve greater patient satisfaction, improved clinical results, and stronger team cohesion. These positive impacts on both staff and patient care highlight the need to cultivate transformational leadership within nursing education and practice (Alilyyani et al., 2018).

7. Conclusion

The examination of transformational leadership in nursing has defined it as the capacity of nurse leaders to inspire, motivate, and empower their teams through open communication, empathy, intellectual stimulation, and professional

development, all aimed at achieving, sustaining, or enhancing team performance and patient care. Nurses ultimately spend more time interacting with their leaders and within their teams than they do with any other healthcare professionals. Recognizing transformational leadership as a central aspect of nursing practice reinforces the importance of incorporating these leadership qualities into both professional development programs and the overall healthcare system. Transformational leadership is a dynamic and proactive approach that allows leaders to actively engage with their teams, creating environments that promote growth, collaboration, and the delivery of high-quality patient care.

References

Aiken, L. H., Clarke, S. P., Sloane, D. M., & International Hospital Outcomes Research Consortium. (2002). Hospital staffing, organization, and quality of care: cross-national findings. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care, 14*(1), 5-14.

Aiken, L. H., Clarke, S. P., Sloane, D. M., Sochalski, J., & Silber, J. H. (2002). Hospital nurse staffing and patient mortality, nurse burnout, and job dissatisfaction. *JAMA, 288*(16), 1987-1993. doi:10.1001/jama.288.16.1987.

Al-Dossary, R. N. (2017). Leadership in nursing. *Contemporary Leadership Challenges, 1*, 251-264.

Alilyyani, B., Wong, C. A., & Cummings, G. (2018). Antecedents, mediators, and outcomes of authentic leadership in healthcare: A systematic review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 83*, 34-64.

Al-Thawabiya, A., Singh, K., Al-Lenjawi, B. A., & Alomari, A. (2023). Leadership styles and transformational leadership skills among nurse leaders in Qatar, a cross-sectional study. *Nursing Open, 10*(6), 3440-3446. doi:10.1002/nop2.1636.

Almost, J., Gifford, W., Ogilvie, L., & Miller, C. (2020). The role of nursing leadership in ensuring a healthy workforce in corrections. *Nursing Leadership (Toronto, Ont.), 33*(1), 59-70. doi:10.12927/cjnl.2020.26191.

Avolio, B. J., Zhu, W., Koh, W., & Bhatia, P. (2004). Transformational leadership and organizational commitment: Mediating role of psychological empowerment and moderating role of structural distance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 25*(8), 951-968.

Balloun, J. L., Stebbins, L. H., & Von Bergen, C. W. (1995). The emerging need for transformational leadership in health information management. *Topics in Health Information Management, 15*(3), 39-46.

Bard, K., Cornell, J. A., Cunningham, S. D., Madigan, E. A., & Solomon, J. (2022). The Nurse Empowerment Program for Nurses in Direct Care Positions. *Journal of Nursing Administration, 52*(10), 542-548. doi:10.1097/NNA.0000000000001196.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (Eds.). (1994). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Sage.

Bass, B. M., & Bass Bernard, M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*.

Batheja, C. (2021). Transformational Executive Health-Care Leadership: What Makes a Good and Great Health-Care Leader? *Creative Nursing, 27*(2), 78-82. doi:10.1891/CRNR-D-21-00007.

Carter, N., Martin-Misener, R., Kilpatrick, K., Kaasalainen, S., Donald, F., Bryant-Lukosius, D., Harbman, P., Bourgeault, I., & DiCenso, A. (2010). The role of nursing leadership in integrating clinical nurse specialists and nurse practitioners in healthcare delivery in Canada. *Nursing Leadership (Toronto, Ont.), 23*(Spec No 2010), 167-185. doi:10.12927/cjnl.2010.22274.

Chan, R. J., Knowles, R., Hunter, S., Conroy, T., Tieu, M., & Kitson, A. (2023). From Evidence-Based Practice to Knowledge Translation: What Is the Difference? What Are the Roles of Nurse Leaders? *Seminars in Oncology Nursing, 39*(1), 151363. doi:10.1016/j .soncn.2022.151363.

Chen, W. L., Wang, H. H., & Chen, K. M. (2023). [Concept Analysis of Fusion Leadership]. *Hu Li Za Zhi, 70*(5), 91-97. doi:10.6224/JN.202310_70(5).12.

Choi, S. L., Goh, C. F., Adam, M. B., & Tan, O. K. (2016). Transformational leadership, empowerment, and job satisfaction: the mediating role of employee empowerment. *Human Resources for Health, 14*(1), 73. doi:10.1186/s12960-016-0171-2.

Cline, D., Curtin, K., & Johnston, P. A. (2019). Professional Organization Membership: The Benefits of Increasing Nursing Participation. *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing, 23*(5), 543-546. doi:10.1188/19.CJON.543-546.

Collins, E., Owen, P., Digan, J., & Dunn, F. (2020). Applying transformational leadership in nursing practice. *Nursing Standard, 35*(5), 59-66. doi:10.7748/ns.2019.e11408.

Cummings, G. G., Lee, S., Tate, K., Penconek, T., Micaroni, S. P. M., Paananen, T., & Chatterjee, G. E. (2021). The essentials of nursing leadership: A systematic review of factors and educational interventions influencing nursing leadership. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 115*, 103842. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2020.103842.

Cummings, G. G., Tate, K., Lee, S., Wong, C. A., Paananen, T., Micaroni, S. P. M., & Chatterjee, G. E. (2018). Leadership styles and outcome patterns for the nursing workforce and work environment: A systematic review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 85*, 19-60. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2018.04.016.

Dall'Ora, C., Ball, J., Reinius, M., & Griffiths, P. (2020). Burnout in nursing: a theoretical review. *Human Resources for Health, 18*(1), 41. doi:10.1186/s12960-020-00469-9.

Doody, O., & Doody, C. M. (2012). Transformational leadership in nursing practice. *British Journal of Nursing, 21*(20), 1212-1214, 1217-1218. doi:10.12968/bjon.2012.21.20.1212.

Fischer, S. A. (2016). Transformational leadership in nursing: a concept analysis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 72*(11), 2644-2653. doi:10.1111/jan.13049.

Fowler, K. R., Robbins, L. K., & Lucero, A. (2021). Nurse manager communication and outcomes for nursing: An integrative review. *Journal of Nursing Management, 29*(6), 1486-1495. doi:10.1111/jonm.13324.

Friend, M. L., & Sieloff, C. L. (2018). Empowerment in Nursing Literature: An Update and Look to the Future. *Nursing Science Quarterly, 31*(4), 355-361. doi:10.1177/ 0894318418792887.

García-Sierra, R., & Fernández-Castro, J. (2018). Relationships between leadership, structural empowerment, and engagement in nurses. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 74*(12), 2809-2819. doi:10.1111/jan.13805.

García-Sierra, R., Martínez-Zaragoza, F., & Fernández-Castro, J. (2023). Leadership to improve nurse engagement and empowerment: evidences to improve the training of nurses. *BMJ Leader, 7*(2), 96-101. doi:10.1136/leader-2021-000537.

Gellis, Z. D. (2001). Social work perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership in health care. *Social Work Research, 25*(1), 17-25.

Hakvoort, L., Dikken, J., Cramer-Kruit, J., Nieuwenhuyzen, K. M., van der Schaaf, M., & Schuurmans, M. (2022). Factors that influence continuing professional development over a nursing career: A scoping review. *Nurse Education in Practice, 65*, 103481. doi:10.1016/j.nepr.2022.103481.

Hubley, P., Ballantyne, M., & McAllister, M. (2024). Introducing a "Made-for-Healthcare" Leadership Approach: Strengths-Based Nursing and Healthcare Leadership. *Nursing Leadership (Toronto, Ont.), 36*(4), 1-4. doi:10.12927/cjnl.2024.27313.

Inayat, S., Younas, A., Andleeb, S., Rasheed, S. P., & Ali, P. (2023). Enhancing nurses' involvement in policy making: A qualitative study of nurse leaders. *International Nursing Review, 70*(3), 297-306. doi:10.1111/inr.12828.

Iraizoz-Iraizoz, A., García-García, R., Navarrete-Muro, A., Blasco-Zafra, A., Rodríguez-Beperet, A., & Vázquez-Calatayud, M. (2023). Nurses' clinical leadership in the intensive care unit: A scoping review. *Intensive and Critical Care Nursing, 75*, 103368. doi:10.1016/j.iccn.2022.103368.

James, A. H., Bennett, C. L., Blanchard, D., & Stanley, D. (2021). Nursing and values-based leadership: A literature review. *Journal of Nursing Management, 29*(5), 916-930. doi:10.1111/jonm.13273.

Khanin, D. (2007). Contrasting Burns and Bass: Does the transactional-transformational paradigm live up to Burns' philosophy of transforming leadership? *Journal of Leadership Studies, 1*(3), 7-25.

Korku, C., & Kaya, S. (2023). Relationship between authentic leadership, transformational leadership and innovative work behavior: mediating role of innovation climate. *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics, 29*(3), 1128-1134. doi:10.1080/10803548.2022.2112445.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2012). *LPI: Leadership practices inventory: Development planner* (Vol. 270). John Wiley & Sons.

Labrague, L. J., Nwafor, C. E., & Tsaras, K. (2020). Influence of toxic and transformational leadership practices on nurses' job satisfaction, job stress, absenteeism and turnover intention: A cross-sectional study. *Journal of Nursing Management, 28*(5), 1104-1113. doi:10.1111/jonm.13053.

Manges, K., Scott-Cawiezell, J., & Ward, M. M. (2017). Maximizing Team Performance: The Critical Role of the Nurse Leader. *Nursing Forum, 52*(1), 21-29. doi:10.1111/nuf.12161.

McFadden, M. L. (2021). *Cybersecurity Experiential Leadership Learning* (Doctoral dissertation, Northeastern University).

Mildon, B., Cleverly, K., Strudwick, G., Srivastava, R., & Velji, K. (2017). Nursing Leadership: Making a Difference in Mental Health and Addictions. *Nursing Leadership (Toronto, Ont.), 30*(3), 8-22. doi:10.12927/cjnl.2018.25388.

Moon, S. E., Van Dam, P. J., & Kitsos, A. (2019). Measuring Transformational Leadership in Establishing Nursing Care Excellence. *Healthcare (Basel), 7*(4), 132. doi:10.3390/ healthcare7040132.

Niinihuhta, M., & Häggman-Laitila, A. (2022). A systematic review of the relationships between nurse leaders' leadership styles and nurses' work-related well-being. *International Journal of Nursing Practice, 28*(5), e13040. doi:10.1111/ijn.13040.

Peng, J. C., & Tseng, M. M. (2019). Antecedent and Consequence of Nurse Engagement. *Journal of Psychology, 153*(3), 342-359. doi:10.1080/00223980 .2018. 153 6639.

Penconek, T., Tate, K., Bernardes, A., Lee, S., Micaroni, S. P. M., Balsanelli, A. P., de Moura, A. A., & Cummings, G. G. (2021). Determinants of nurse manager job satisfaction: A systematic review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 118*, 103906. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2021.103906.

Poels, J., Verschueren, M., Milisen, K., & Vlaeyen, E. (2020). Leadership styles and leadership outcomes in nursing homes: a cross-sectional analysis. *BMC Health Services Research, 20*(1), 1009. doi:10.1186/s12913-020-05854-7.

Quesada-Puga, C., Izquierdo-Espin, F. J., Membrive-Jiménez, M. J., Aguayo-Estremera, R., Cañadas-De La Fuente, G. A., Romero-Béjar, J. L., & Gómez-Urquiza, J. L. (2024). Job satisfaction and burnout syndrome among intensive-care unit nurses: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Intensive and Critical Care Nursing, 82*, 103660. doi:10.1016 /j.iccn. 2024.103660.

Richards, A. (2020). Exploring the benefits and limitations of transactional leadership in healthcare. *Nursing Standard, 35*(12), 46-50. doi:10.7748/ns.2020.e11593.

Robbins, B., & Davidhizar, R. (2020). Transformational Leadership in Health Care Today. *Health Care Manager (Frederick), 39*(3), 117-121. doi:10.1097/ HCM. 0000000 000000296.

Sangaleti, C., Schveitzer, M. C., Peduzzi, M., Zoboli, E. L. C. P., & Soares, C. B. (2017). Experiences and shared meaning of teamwork and interprofessional collaboration among health care professionals in primary health care settings: a systematic review. *JBI Database System Reviews and Implementation Reports, 15*(11), 2723-2788. doi:10.11124/JBISRIR-2016-003016.

Schick-Makaroff, K., & Storch, J. L. (2019). Guidance for Ethical Leadership in Nursing Codes of Ethics: An Integrative Review. *Nursing Leadership (Toronto, Ont.), 32*(1), 60-73. doi:10.12927/cjnl.2019.25848.

Siirala, E., Suhonen, H., Salanterä, S., & Junttila, K. (2019). The nurse manager's role in perioperative settings: An integrative literature review. *Journal of Nursing Management, 27*(5), 918-929. doi:10.1111/jonm.12770.

Spencer, C., & McLaren, S. (2017). Empowerment in nurse leader groups in middle management: a quantitative comparative investigation. *Journal of Clinical Nursing, 26*(1-2), 266-279. doi:10.1111/jocn.13426.

Spiva, L., Davis, S., Case-Wirth, J., Hedenstrom, L., Hogue, V., Box, M., Berrier, E., Jones, C., Thurman, S., Knotts, K., & Ahlers, L. (2020). The Effectiveness of Charge Nurse Training on Leadership Style and Resiliency. *Journal of Nursing Administration, 50*(2), 95-103. doi:10.1097/NNA.0000000000000848.

Stelnicki, A. M., & Carleton, R. N. (2021). Nursing Leadership Has an Important Role in the Management of Nurses' Mental Health. *Nursing Leadership (Toronto, Ont.), 34*(2), 12-15. doi:10.12927/cjnl.2021.26537.

Walker, L. O., & Avant, K. C. (2005). *Strategies for theory construction in nursing* (Vol. 4). Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Wong, C. A., & Cummings, G. G. (2007). The relationship between nursing leadership and patient outcomes: a systematic review. *Journal of Nursing Management, 15*(5), 508-521.

Woodward, K. F. (2020). Individual nurse empowerment: A concept analysis. *Nursing Forum, 55*(2), 136-143. doi:10.1111/nuf.12407.

Ystaas, L. M. K., Nikitara, M., Ghobrial, S., Latzourakis, E., Polychronis, G., & Constantinou, C. S. (2023). The Impact of Transformational Leadership in

the Nursing Work Environment and Patients' Outcomes: A Systematic Review. *Nursing Reports, 13*(3), 1271-1290. doi:10.3390/nursrep13030108.

Zhao, F., Ahmed, F., & Faraz, N. A. (2020). Caring for the caregiver during COVID-19 outbreak: Does inclusive leadership improve psychological safety and curb psychological distress? A cross-sectional study. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 110*, 103725. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2020.103725.