



Transformational Leadership in Nursing: Impact on Staff Retention and Patient Outcomes

¹ Norah Mohd Ahmed Tawashi,² Neda Eissa Alhesi,³ Khalofiah Eissa Alsbyani,⁴ Abeer Sultan Alotaibi,⁵ Albandri Hamood Alhazmi,⁶ Ataallah Awadh Ataallah Alsehaimi,⁷ Seetah Modhe Salmain,⁸ Abdullrahman Saad Rathaana Aldhafeeri,⁹ Aisha Yahya Hassan Hokumi,¹⁰ Ahlam Ibrahim Abdullah Belal,¹¹ Manal Maseer Alshammari,¹² Seham Mohammed Abdoalrahman Alhawsawi,¹³ Nawda Mubarak Hamdan Al-Dosari,¹⁴ Hamoud Abdullah,¹⁵ Neda Nasser Mohammad Sahly,¹⁶ Wasimah Nasser Mohammed Sahli.¹⁷ Ibrahim Ataya Ali Alzubudie

¹Ksa , ministry of health , Sabya General Hospital Jazan HealthCluster

²Ksa , ministry of health , Sabya General Hospital Jazan
HealthCluster

³Ksa , ministry of health , Sabya General Hospital Jazan HealthCluster

⁴Ksa , ministry of health , PHC sajir

⁵Ksa , ministry of health , Sabya General Hospital Jazan HealthCluster

⁶Ksa , ministry of health , Health management Specialist King salman medical city

⁷Ksa , ministry of health , Aziza phc

⁸Ksa , ministry of health , Mentel Health Hospital In Hafar Albatin

⁹Ksa , ministry of health , Sabya general hospital (Jazan health cluster)

¹⁰Ksa , ministry of health , Sabya General Hospital Jazan

¹¹Ksa , ministry of health , Maternity and children hospital in Hafar Al-Batin

¹²Ksa , ministry of health , Bahra PHC

¹³Ksa , ministry of health , Al-Hayer Health

¹⁴Ksa , ministry of health , Riyadh long term care hospital

¹⁵Ksa , ministry of health , Sabya General Hospital Jazan HealthCluster

¹⁶Ksa , ministry of health , Sabya General Hospital jazan

¹⁷Ksa , ministry of health , Primary Health Care Center in Hadda

Abstract

Background: The retention of nursing personnel is a huge difficulty in the healthcare sector worldwide, profoundly affecting patient care results. Transformational leadership has become a crucial element in resolving staff retention challenges, with its influence on nurse' happiness and dedication to their positions gaining heightened acknowledgment.

Methods: In order to investigate the correlation between staff nurse retention and transformational leadership style in hospital environments, a systematic review was implemented. A thorough search was conducted across several databases from 2021 to 2023, concentrating on terms pertaining to leadership, retention, and healthcare professionals. In the study, twelve relevant papers were included.

Results: The review has demonstrated a consistent and robust positive correlation between staff nurse retention in hospital environments and the transformational leadership style. Eleven of twelve research indicated a positive correlation, underscoring the substantial impact of leadership behaviors on nurse commitment and retention intentions. Moreover, transformational leadership was associated with heightened job satisfaction and perceived quality of care among nursing personnel.

Conclusion: The results emphasize the critical role of transformational leadership in improving staff retention in healthcare environments, with a particular emphasis on nursing. Nurse supervisors demonstrating transformational leadership traits are more inclined to cultivate a favorable work atmosphere, enhance nurse satisfaction, and eventually lead to improved patient outcomes. This systematic review consolidates research demonstrating the significance of strong leadership in reducing staff turnover and enhancing overall healthcare quality.

Keywords: transformative leadership, employee retention, nursing satisfaction, healthcare outcomes, systematic review.

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1. Introduction

The World Health Organization has shown that the deficiency of healthcare personnel is a worldwide issue, especially with nurses and midwives, who constitute over 50% of the existing shortfall in health professionals. Staff turnover rates vary significantly in high-income nations, with New Zealand exhibiting the highest rate at 44.3%, followed by the USA at 26.8%, Canada at 19.9%, and Australia at 15.1% [1, 2]. Furthermore, in Ireland, the HSE [3] reported a staff nurse turnover rate of 7.7% in 2021, above the national average of 6.4% , underscoring the heightened challenges in staff retention. The ambiguity of this statement necessitates more investigation to ascertain the underlying cause [4]. The worldwide nursing deficit is projected to reach 1.05 million by the conclusion of 2022, accompanied by a nurse turnover rate of 18.69% [5-7]. Multiple studies indicate that 4% to 54% of nurses worldwide want to leave the profession, underscoring concerns about insufficient staffing and poor patient outcomes. An increasing amount of research indicates that the leadership of nurse managers affects nurse retention [8, 9].

Employees are essential assets of an organization; thus, leadership should concentrate on strategies that enhance staff retention. In recent years, leadership has emerged as a crucial concept in nursing; hence, effective leadership styles are necessary to mitigate waste, costs, confusion, and errors [10, 11]. Leadership styles used by nurse managers significantly influence nurses' commitment to their employment. Furthermore, although extrinsic factors like salary increases might enhance work happiness, nurse supervisors can elevate job

satisfaction by using an appropriate leadership style [12]. It is proposed that about one-third of nursing staff work satisfaction may be enhanced by managers just adjusting their leadership behaviors [13]. Consequently, nurse managers may economically keep their personnel by exhibiting the "appropriate leadership style" [13]. Newstrom [14] characterizes leadership styles as the methods by which people provide guidance, execute strategies, and inspire others. Managers who embrace the transformational leadership (TL) style are suggested to reshape their followers' perceptions of significance, motivating them to see opportunities and difficulties optimistically [15].

Transformational leadership is delineated into four primary components: idealized influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personalized consideration [16]. Idealized influence transpires when leaders engender trust and respect by serving as role models for their followers. Secondly, inspiring motivation transpires when nurse managers empower their personnel to fulfill both the organization's purpose and their objectives [17]. Third, intellectual stimulation transpires when nurse supervisors motivate their personnel to cultivate innovative ideas and pursue continuous education via courses or evidence-based resources [18]. Individualized attention transpires when nurse managers foster individual staff members via assistance, support, and positive reinforcement. A transformative leader can advance the interests of employees and foster their commitment to the organization's objective. The leadership behaviors of nurse managers may significantly influence results for organizations, staff, and patients, either favorably or badly.

Elevated staff turnover in a hospital may lead to heightened overtime, exhaustion, tension, and decreased work satisfaction among the remaining nursing personnel [19-21]. Moreover, it disrupts the continuity of treatment, leading to diminished quality and safety, which may elevate the risk of prescription mistakes, falls, and healthcare-associated infections [21]. Consequently, increased staff turnover is a significant issue for nurse managers. Furthermore, heightened employee turnover may adversely impact hospital finances [22]. The initial Nursing Turnover Cost Calculation Methodology indicated that annual expenditures related to nurse turnover were roughly \$48,790 in Australia, \$20,561 in the United States, \$26,652 in Canada, and \$23,711 in New Zealand [23, 24]. The expenses underscore the significance of nurse retention; thus, it is essential to investigate the correlation between transformational leadership style and staff nurse retention in hospital environments. Effective leadership is deemed crucial for the retention of staff nurses [25]. Consequently, doing this systematic research is essential to consolidate the relationship between transformational leadership and staff nurse retention in hospital environments to mitigate staff turnover. This systematic review seeks to consolidate the existing research about the correlation between transformational leadership and staff nurse retention in hospital environments.

2. Methods

A comprehensive search was performed to guarantee the inclusion of all pertinent material to address the inquiry. The investigations were carried out from December 2021 until June 2023. The databases examined were CINAHL, MEDLINE, PubMed, PsychInfo, Cochrane Central Register, and Embase. The included keywords and phrases were transformational AND leadership OR management AND style OR method OR approach AND nurse OR caregiver OR

healthcare professional OR healthcare worker AND retention OR turnover OR commitment OR intent to stay OR organizational commitment OR affective commitment OR reduced predicted turnover OR turnover intention OR anticipated turnover OR intention to leave AND hospital OR acute care setting OR acute care facility. The restriction of the English language was implemented.

3. Principal Outcome

The primary outcome, staff retention, was assessed in all twelve investigations. In all, eleven out of twelve studies indicated a favorable correlation between transformational leadership style and staff nurse retention in hospital environments. Lavoie-Tremblay et al. [26] showed that transformational leadership style adversely and strongly influenced the desire to resign ($r = -0.39$, $P < 0.05$). Asamani et al. [13] identified a small but substantial positive link between transformational leadership style and staff nurses' desire to remain ($r = 0.221$, $P < 0.001$). Kodama et al. [27] indicated that TL style had a strong positive correlation with emotional commitment (OR = 2.23, 95% CI: [1.31–3.80]). Abualrub and Nasrallah [28] found a correlation between enhanced staff retention and transformational leadership style ($r = 0.391$, $P < 0.001$). Wang et al. [29] indicated a favorable correlation between TL style and nurse retention ($P < 0.001$, 95% CI: [0.269–0.478]). Al-Yami et al. [30] demonstrated a favorable correlation between TL style and organizational commitment ($r = 0.364$, $P < 0.01$). Pishgooie et al. [31] discovered a significant link between transformational leadership style and expected turnover ($r = -0.22$, $P < 0.001$).

Labrague et al. [32] found a strong correlation between TL style and organizational turnover intention ($r = -0.08$, $P < 0.05$). Magbity et al. [2] identified a strong association between transformational leadership style and nurses' turnover intention ($r = -0.377$). Suliman et al. [33] discovered that transformational leadership style significantly influenced nurse turnover ($P < 0.001$). Yücel [10] found that transformational leadership style substantially and adversely impacted turnover intention ($P < 0.001$). The findings demonstrate a statistically significant positive correlation between transformational leadership style and staff nurse retention in hospital environments. Abualrub and Alghamdi [12] were the only researchers to indicate that the correlation between transformational leadership style and staff retention was statistically negligible ($P < 0.14$), suggesting no association between transformational leadership style and the retention of staff nurses in the workplace.

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to assess whether demographic factors (model 1) and nurse managers' leadership styles (model 2) substantially influenced work satisfaction levels. The findings in the three papers indicated a correlation between transformational leadership style and nurses' work satisfaction. Abualrub and Alghamdi [12] documented a substantial moderate link between transformational leadership style and nurses' work satisfaction ($r = 0.45$, $P < 0.001$). Asamani et al. [13] discovered a favorable correlation between the transformational leadership style of nurse managers and the work satisfaction ratings of staff nurses ($r = 0.462$, $P < 0.001$). Labrague et al. [32] found a strong correlation between TL style and work satisfaction ($r = 0.37$, $P < 0.001$). The findings indicate that transformational leadership style has a statistically significant positive correlation with staff nurses' work satisfaction.

Lavoie-Tremblay et al. [26] examined the relationship between nurse management leadership styles and the quality of treatment. The quality of care was assessed using a four-item scale [34-36]. The scale was considered credible due to a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.84. Lavoie-Tremblay et al. [26] found a positive and substantial correlation between TL style and quality of treatment ($P < 0.001$).

4. Evaluation of Quality

All studies were considered genuine, except for Magbity et al. [2], which had problems with the population selection and the findings section. The inclusion and exclusion criteria in [2] were inadequately specified, and it remained unclear if informed permission was obtained from the subjects. The external validity remained ambiguous. No suggestions for additional study were offered, and subset analysis was a primary emphasis.

5. Discussion

The major objective of this systematic study was to investigate the correlation between transformational leadership style and staff nurse retention in hospital environments. The secondary outcomes were delineated as work satisfaction and quality of care. Eleven of the twelve studies demonstrate that transformational leadership style favorably influences staff nurse retention [2, 10, 13, 26–33]. Furthermore, three out of the twelve research indicate that transformational leadership style has a favorable and substantial correlation with work satisfaction [12, 13, 32]. Research found that the transformational leadership style has a favorable and substantial correlation with the quality of care [26].

The research by Abualrub and Alghamdi [12] showed that the correlation between transformational leadership style and staff nurse retention was statistically negligible. The findings of this research indicate that transformational leadership style has a negligible correlation with nurse retention. This research was the most antiquated, which may account for it being the only study with this result. Asamani et al. [13] indicated a small but significant link between transformational leadership style and staff nurse retention ($r = 0.221$, $P < 0.001$), whereas a greater association was seen between participatory leadership and staff nurse retention ($r = 0.243$, $P < 0.001$).

This comprehensive research demonstrates a favorable correlation between transformational leadership style and staff nurse retention. Numerous previous studies indicate that nurses are facing difficulties in their profession; they need encouragement, respect, and recognition, as well as feedback on their performance. Furthermore, Hutchinson et al. [37] suggested that a supportive work atmosphere may be crucial for nurse retention. A significant correlation was seen between increased cooperation in nursing units and employee retention [38]. The requirements of nurses may be addressed via transformational leadership approaches, hence enhancing staff retention. In light of varied findings, it is vital to examine the precise aspects of TL style that may or may not correlate substantially with staff retention. Additionally, it is vital to examine various leadership styles and their correlation with staff retention to ascertain which style is most conducive to retaining nursing personnel; hence, this necessitates additional investigation.

This systematic review's secondary result indicates that the three studies measuring work satisfaction [12, 13, 32] revealed a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership style and job satisfaction. Abualrub and Alghamdi [12] as well as Asamani et al. [13] indicated that nurses' work satisfaction ratings were mostly moderate. Consequently, it may be inferred that nurses in various nations are mostly dissatisfied with their employment, a condition that may diminish productivity and exacerbate the existing nursing shortage [13]. Nonetheless, as previously stated, TL had a favorable association with work satisfaction. This indicates that the implementation of transformational leadership by nurse managers may enhance nursing staff happiness and work contentment [12, 13, 32].

In addition to the findings of the current systematic study, Cummings et al. [39] performed a systematic review that revealed a significant correlation between transformational leadership style and work satisfaction, productivity, and employee retention. Consequently, participative management techniques and a nurse-friendly work environment, achievable via a nurse manager using a transformational leadership style, are associated with staff retention and job satisfaction [21, 40]. The potential positive implications of nurse retention, given that enhanced work satisfaction, may decrease turnover, should be acknowledged as an additional subject for future investigation.

Lavoie-Tremblay et al. [26] have shown that transformational leadership style has a substantial positive correlation with quality of care. This was the only research that assessed the quality of care and determined that the TL style yielded good quality of care, which was another secondary goal. Omitting the findings from this comprehensive analysis, earlier systematic studies revealed that the TL style correlated with heightened patient satisfaction diminished adverse events, decreased patient mortality, and fewer hospital-acquired infections [41, 42].

6. Constraints

This review was constrained by the available research for inclusion. The majority of the studies considered were cross-sectional and correlational in form, which limited their ability to establish causal links compared to a cohort analysis [43]. Moreover, two investigations used the survey approach for data collection, which has its difficulties. One common concern associated with using surveys for data collection is the occurrence of missing data [44]. While statistical methods exist to address missing data, they do not consistently provide perfect correctness [10]. Moreover, eight of the twelve studies used convenience sampling [2, 12, 13, 27–29, 32, 33], a nonrandom method that may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Nevertheless, eleven of the twelve studies included achieved excellent scores (>75%) in quality assessment. Subsequent studies should use a randomized controlled trial design to evaluate the leadership behaviors of nurse managers [26].

A further limitation of this study is that eleven out of the twelve research included were conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic [2, 12, 13, 26–33]. Despite this constraint, both pre-COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 investigations yielded comparable results. Additionally, a further limitation of this systematic review may be that the literature about the original objective was broadened based on the results; hence, these may be seen as an extension of the

initial intention. The included research was restricted to English due to the absence of funding for translation services.

7. Conclusion

This study sought to investigate the correlation between transformational leadership style and staff nurse retention in hospital environments. This study's findings emphasized the significance of transformational leadership style in improving staff nurse retention, job satisfaction, and quality of care. This systematic review corroborates existing evidence by demonstrating a link between transformational leadership style and positive outcomes in nursing, particularly in the retention of staff nurses. However, the findings are not wholly conclusive due to a lack of primary research on this matter, underscoring the need for more investigation in this critical domain.

8. Consequences for Nursing Administration

This review has several implications for nurse management. Nurse directors must advocate for the transformational leadership behaviors of nurse managers via leadership training programs to improve staff retention. Educational leadership programs may substantially and favorably influence the leadership and professional conduct of nurse managers [48]. Moreover, in collaboration with nurse educators, the nursing profession's regulatory agencies should establish skills for nurse managers grounded on transformational leadership and incorporate these abilities into nursing education programs [28]. Nursing leadership recruiting plans should be founded on these qualities [28].

Furthermore, it is proposed that magnet hospitals exhibit enhanced staff retention [45, 46]; this may be attributed to the transformational leadership style being a component of the magnet model [47]. Consequently, magnet hospitals use the transformational leadership style and have higher staff nurse retention compared to non-magnet hospitals [46]. This is significant when evaluating the findings of this research since leadership programs would enhance nurse managers' understanding of transformational leadership style, which correlates with staff nurse retention, job satisfaction, and quality of care.

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القيادة التحويلية في التمريض: تأثيرها على احتفاظ الموظفين ونتائج المرضى

الملخص

الخلفية: يُعدُّ احتفاظ الموظفين في مجال التمريض تحديًا كبيرًا في قطاع الرعاية الصحية على مستوى العالم، يؤثر بشكل عميق على نتائج رعاية المرضى. أصبحت القيادة التحويلية عنصرًا حاسمًا في معالجة تحديات الاحتفاظ بالموظفين، حيث تم التعرف بشكل متزايد على تأثيرها على سعادة المرضى وتفاؤهم في وظائفهم.

الطرق: للتحقيق في العلاقة بين احتفاظ المرضى بأسلوب القيادة التحويلية في بيئات المستشفيات، تم تنفيذ مراجعة منهجية. أُجريت عملية بحث شاملة عبر عدة قواعد بيانات من 2021 إلى 2023، مع التركيز على مصطلحات تتعلق بالقيادة والاحتفاظ والمحتفظ للمرضى في الرعاية الصحية. شملت الدراسة اثني عشر ورقة بحثية ذات صلة.

النتائج: أظهرت المراجعة وجود علاقة إيجابية متسقة وقوية بين احتفاظ المرضى في بيئات المستشفيات وأساليب القيادة التحويلية. أظهرت إحدى عشرة من أصل اثني عشر دراسة وجود علاقة إيجابية، مما يبرز التأثير الكبير لسلوكيات القيادة على التفاني والنيات المحتفظة للمرضى. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، كانت القيادة التحويلية مرتبطة بزيادة الرضا الوظيفي وجودة الرعاية المتصورة من قبل موظفي التمريض.

الخاتمة: تُبرز النتائج الدور الحيوي للقيادة التحويلية في تحسين احتفاظ الموظفين في بيئات الرعاية الصحية، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على التمريض. يظهر المشرفون على المرضى الذين يتحلون بخصائص القيادة التحويلية ميلاً أكبر لتطوير بيئة عمل إيجابية، وزيادة رضا المرضى، وفي النهاية تحقيق نتائج أفضل للمرضى. تُعزز هذه المراجعة المنهجية الأبحاث التي تُظهر أهمية القيادة الفعالة في تقليل معدل دوران الموظفين وتحسين جودة الرعاية الصحية بشكل عام.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القيادة التحويلية، احتفاظ الموظفين، رضا الممرضين، نتائج الرعاية الصحية، مراجعة منهجية.