Effects of Nurse Leadership Styles on Healthcare Organizations: An Integrative Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Leadership styles impact healthcare organizations. Nurse leaders may use one or more styles of leadership that affect a healthy work environment, nurse retention, the sustainability of a culturally competent and diverse workforce, and patient outcomes. The nurse leader role evolved from internal promotion with no formal education to more advanced job opportunities to mentor, train, and continue education. Nurse leadership styles develop through personality characteristics, experience, and education. The COVID-19 pandemic produced challenging times for nurse leaders, and these uncharted learning opportunities allow for reevaluating how nurse leadership styles impact healthcare organizations (Bush et al., 2021). Nurses need favorable work environments to support growth, safe and effective patient care, and well-being. This integrative literature review aims to identify the effect of nurse leadership styles on a healthy work environment, nurse retention, sustainability of a culturally competent and diverse workforce, and patient outcomes.

INTRO / GOALS / OBJECTIVES

- Focus on the impact of nurse leadership styles on a healthy work environment, nurse retention, the sustainability of a culturally competent and diverse workforce, and patient outcomes.

- Evolution and development of leadership styles is vital to understanding leaders' impact on organizations.

- Ineffective nurse leadership is linked to patient safety outcomes from the quality of work environments (Boamah et al., 2018).

- Nurse leaders may use one or more styles of leadership that affect a healthy work environment, nurse retention, the sustainability of a culturally competent and diverse workforce, and patient outcomes.

- Nurse leaders should develop styles suitable to lead organizations through turbulent times.

- Toxic leadership styles are more common and impact individual and organizational performance, generating interest from researchers (Abdelaliem & Abou Zeid, 2023).

- Nurses represent the most extensive healthcare profession; therefore, nurses need to be cared for by effective nurse leaders.
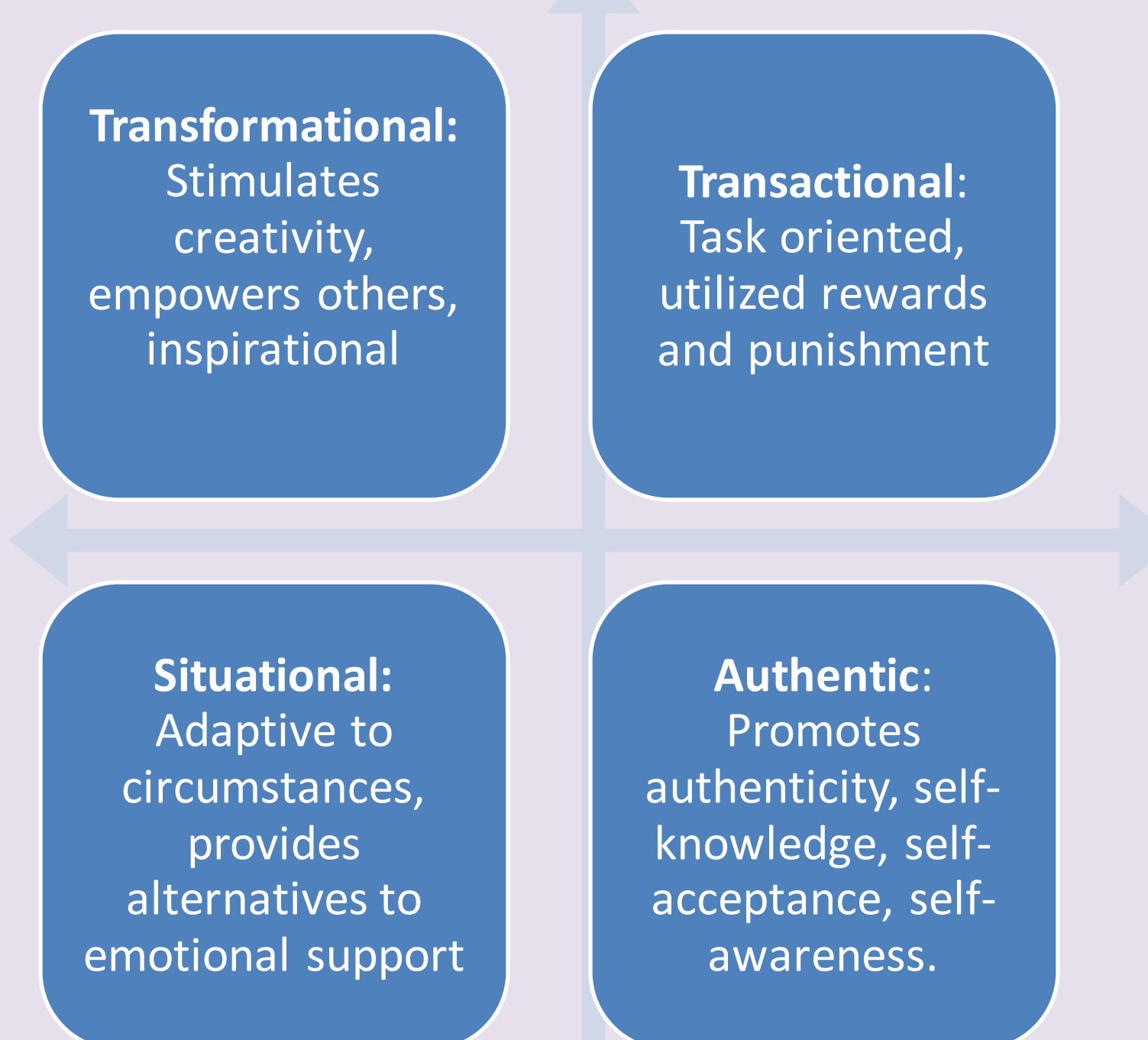
METHODS

- Searches of 40 databases spanning economics, education, general interest, government, healthcare, information science, mass media, psychology, sociology, and sports medicine were conducted concurrently through the EBSCOhost interface.

- Though focus overlaps within several tools, differences in indexing, description, and coverage made searching closely related resources worthwhile.

- Most relevant results, however, came from the following tools: *Academic Search Premier, CINAHL, MEDLINE, APA PsycInfo, and SPORTDiscus*.

- Searches were conducted from 2018 to 2024, and only empirical articles published after 2018 for current research were considered.

- As the author's primary reading language is English, results were limited to those published in English.

- A total of 89 articles were reviewed, and 21 met criteria.

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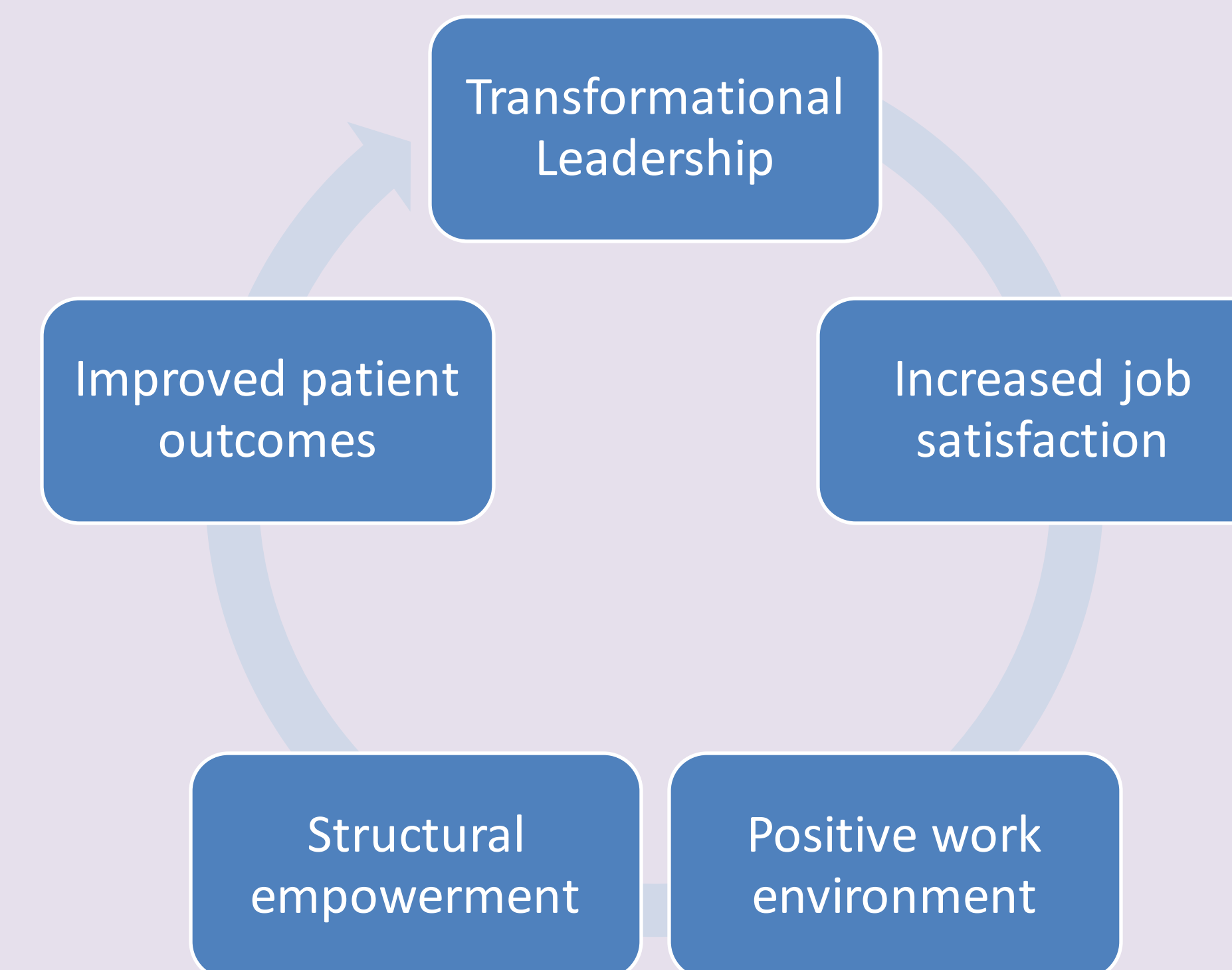
Leadership Styles

Transformational: Stimulates creativity, empowers others, inspirational

Transactional: Task oriented, utilized rewards and punishment

Situational: Adaptive to circumstances, provides alternatives to emotional support

Authentic: Promotes authenticity, self-knowledge, self-acceptance, self-awareness.

(Ferreira et al., 2022) (Pishgooie et al., 2018)

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Preliminary results from the integrative literature review reveal that relational leadership characteristics, such as transformation, positively impact healthcare. Task-oriented styles, including transactional, showed mixed outcomes with a negative influence on nurses' job satisfaction (Specchia et al., 2021). Noteworthy contributing factors to positive organizational outcomes include meaningful interactions and involvement with staff, clear communication, and structural empowerment (Pishgooie et al., 2018). Organizational culture impacts nurse leadership styles.

- Transformational Leadership
- Increased job satisfaction
- Positive work environment
- Structural empowerment
- Improved patient outcomes

(Ferreira et al., 2022)

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

- The literature review synthesized nurse leadership styles and organizational impact.

- Current literature reflects four main leadership styles with characteristics that influence healthcare organizations.

- Relational leadership styles, such as transformational leadership, are associated with increased job satisfaction, positive work environments, structural empowerment, and improved patient outcomes (Hult et al., 2023).

- Transformational leaders develop a diverse workforce that supports positive organizational outcomes (Ferreira et al., 2022)

- Nurse leaders can operationalize the findings in this literature review to enhance nurse retention, maintain a diverse workforce and healthy work environment, and improve patient outcomes.

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Nursing literature addresses leadership styles and their organizational impact. Further research on how to develop effective leadership skills will benefit nurse leaders. Gaps in nurse literature exists in the following areas:

- Leadership styles pre and post - COVID-19 pandemic

- Nurse retention strategies and enhancing nurse well-being in the post-pandemic world

- Leadership competencies and how to measure competencies

(https://www.theforage.com/blog/skills/what-is-research)

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