



## TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND CONTEXTUAL PERFORMANCE: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY AMONG NURSING STAFF IN KUALA LUMPUR

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### ABSTRACT

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The role of nurses in the health care sector is critical and the demand for nurses in Malaysia is expected to reach 130,000 qualified nurses by 2020. This paper investigated the influence of transformational leadership on contextual performance of nurses in Kuala Lumpur. Past research revealed that employee sustainable performance is positively influenced by transformational leadership. However, there is a dearth of studies on the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' contextual performance in the nursing sector in Kuala Lumpur. The present study attempts to fill the research gap by investigating the influence of intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and idealized influence towards better contextual performance. This was a quantitative research and data was gathered through self-administered questionnaires from 135 nurses in Kuala Lumpur. The SPSS software was used, and the findings revealed that intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and idealized influence had a positive correlation with contextual performance. The findings suggest that the four dimensions are interdependent, and they harmonize to yield better contextual performance. The findings of this study have practical implications in nursing leadership. Transformational leadership enables leaders in the nursing sector to motivate nurses and implement change effectively. This study is one of very few studies which have investigated the effect of transformational leadership on employee's contextual performance in the nursing sector in Kuala Lumpur. The results of this study will add to the current body of knowledge plus assist in creating foundational solutions to improve performance of nurses.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The nursing sector is a facet of the Malaysian healthcare industry and it plays a critical role (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2015). In 2014, there were a total of 92,681 nurses in the healthcare industry in Malaysia. The demand for nurses in Malaysia is very high and expected to reach 130,000 qualified nurses by 2020 (Pillay, 2017). Despite the progress of the nursing sector, the nursing career is characterized by heavy workload and nurses tend to experience significant stress and burnout (Rao, 2012). Therefore, ensuring high level of career satisfaction and organizational commitment is essential to minimize nurses' turnover (Pillay, 2017). The attrition rate is high and local nurses cited the "demanding work and long hours" as the reason for their exit from the profession (Goh, 2017). In addition, there continues to be inefficiencies when it comes to the contextual performance of nurses in many of these institutions (Jarrar *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, leadership competencies play a critical role in the creating of a workplace climate that would influence performance of nurses (Angst and Borowiecki, 2014).

Transformational leadership and its influence on employee performance have drawn extensive attention in research. A transformational leader is depicted as a person who leads change in an organization and has a strong vision, creativity and inspiration (Mohammad *et al.*, 2011). The findings from past research revealed that employee sustainable performance was positively influenced by transformational leadership (Asrar-Ul-Haq and Kuchinke, 2016; Jiang *et al.*, 2017). The transformational leadership style as compared to transactional leadership places a lot of emphasis on leader-follower interactions to improve performance (Howell, 2012). Cavazotte *et al.* (2012) stated that a transformational leader is the kind of person who can stimulate their followers, and to influence them to view new and contemporary perspective. Transformational leadership also foster's strong unity among organization members which is an important contributor towards employees' performance (Heneman and Judge, 2005). Researchers have also pointed out that effective transformational leaders tend to have the capability to properly motivate their followers and improve performance (Brown *et al.*, 2005). Additionally, transformational leaders help enhance the awareness of the organizational members about important organizational issues (Scouller, 2011). Therefore, leaders in the nursing sector in Kuala Lumpur need to pay close attention to transformational leadership and thereby to eventually improve nurses' job performance.

Nurses are one of the essential inputs to any healthcare system and nurses have a high effect on the overall performance of healthcare organizations (Fritzen, 2007). However, other than the high attrition rate local nurses in Malaysia, a problem that is being observed lately in the nursing sector is the deterioration of performance of nurses (Jarrar *et al.*, 2016). Despite the increasing developments in the health sector, weaknesses in general managerial and leadership capacity in the health sector have been cited as one of the contributory factors towards the failure to scale up effective health services (Daire and Gilson, 2014). Jarrar *et al.* (2016) also stated that leadership style is one variable that affect the outcomes of hospitalized patients. Jarrar *et al.* (2016) asserted that leaders of healthcare organizations should transform work environments to develop high functioning interdisciplinary teams, a learning culture, and engage all staff in order to improve performance. Scouller (2011) stated that ineffective leadership is causing for a drop in nursing performance. Therefore, there is a need to understand the mechanism between transformational leadership style and nurses' performance quality in health care professions.

In addition, most previous research has focused on the direct impact of transformational leadership on outcomes, such as follower performance (Dvir *et al.*, 2002). However, there is a dearth of studies on the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' contextual performance in the nursing sector in Kuala Lumpur. Therefore, this study is critical in a sense that it is one of the few empirical studies that tested the influence of transformational leadership on employee's contextual performance in the nursing sector in Kuala Lumpur. Specifically, this research will reveal the influence of intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and idealized influence towards better contextual performance in the healthcare sector in Kuala Lumpur. This research would further improve the understanding and adoption of the function of transformational leadership in the nursing sector in Kuala Lumpur.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Conceptualization of Employee Contextual Performance

Many authors have defined employees' job performance and the related parameters (Campbell, 1990; Borman and Motowidlo, 1997). Researchers have paid attention to the predictors of performance (e.g. (Campbell, 1990; Lee and Donohue, 2012)). Campbell (1990) coming from the psychological perspective described job performance in terms of eight dimensions. Job performance is also conceptualized as job relevant behaviour and not about what employees' results of their work (Aguinis, 2009). Motowidlo *et al.* (1997) stated that job performance is the aggregated value to the organization of the discrete behavioural episodes that an individual performs over a standard interval of time. McCloy *et al.* (1994) proposed a model that specifies three determinants of performance, namely declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and motivation. Lee and Donohue (2012) tested the model

developed by Campbell (1990) and further amended the model of job performance with six components. Borman and Motowidlo (1997) further classified job performance into task and contextual performance. It can be assumed that what constitutes performance differs among jobs. As a result, there are a high number of measures as indicators of employees' performance.

According to Borman and Motowidlo (1997) contextual activities influences and supports the psychological and social environment of the organization. Several management scholars maintained that employee performance is behaviour and this concept differentiates outcomes and performance (Campbell, 1990; Aguinis, 2009). Contextual performance covers behaviours such as persistence and enthusiasm, volunteering to carry out additional task activities, helping and cooperating with others, volunteering for tasks, following rules and procedures plus endorsing, supporting and defending organizational objectives Borman and Motowidlo (1993). Motowidlo *et al.* (1997) developed a model where contextual performance is dependent on contextual skills, habits and knowledge. Contextual behaviour was found important in organizational outcomes and refers to the environment in which the technical core operates (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993). Aguinis (2009) also maintained that contextual performance has gained importance and behaviours should be given more importance than results in organizations. Researchers have also argued that managerial level jobs have many role-prescribed contextual activities such as motivating and team building which can be considered extra role activities for non-managers (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997).

## 2.2. Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance

Researchers and scholars have maintained that leadership and employee performance are essential instruments that contribute towards organizational performance (Singh and Rani, 2017). According to Ireland *et al.* (2009) leadership is a widely analyzed and investigated variable which has a direct effect on the contextual performance of the employees. Singh and Rani (2017) stated that effective leadership behavior does play a role in influencing the contextual performance of the employees, and strong leaders normally tend to outperform weaker leaders. Other researchers also asserted that effective transformational leadership would influence to produce better contextual performance (Lussier and Achua, 2010; Masa'deh *et al.*, 2016). A transformational leader can inspire employees to a high level of commitment and guide and transform an organization towards achieving their main aims and objectives (Lussier and Achua, 2010). Transformational leadership, can further influence employees to move beyond their selfish interests and act according to the larger interest of organizations (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership in organizations provides a direction and develops an emotional relationship with employees, increasing the employees' belief in higher goals, above their own interests (Bass, 1985). The specific behaviors of transformational leaders are classified into four dimensions namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulus, and individualized consideration.

Several studies have found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. The findings by Jiang *et al.* (2017) clearly revealed that employee sustainable performance is positively influenced by transformational leadership. A study by Boehm *et al.* (2015) found that a leader's charisma and transformational leadership climate increased a firm's organizational identity strength, which in turn, relates positively to firm performance. Findings of a study by Asrar-Ul-Haq and Kuchinke (2016) further confirmed that there exists a significant relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance outcomes. The findings of another study by Caillier (2014) revealed that transformational leadership had a direct, positive effect on employee evaluations and mission valence strengthened the positive relationship between transformational leadership and performance. Masa'deh *et al.* (2016) also found that both transformational and transactional leadership styles have significant impact on job performance, but it was found that transactional leadership impacted knowledge sharing, whereas transformational leadership did not. However, a study by Banks *et al.* (2016) found that authentic leadership demonstrated greater dominance over transformational leadership when predicting group or organization performance. Similarly, the results of a study by Geier (2016) revealed that transformational

leadership was a dominant predictor of employees' performance only in normal contexts. The transactional contingent reward leadership style was the dominant predictor of followers' performance in extreme events (Geier, 2016). Therefore, the leader behaviors can change or adapt between extreme normal contexts and extreme events, as the same leaders can be less transformational in their behaviors in extreme events as compared with normal contexts. Based on the above, there are some inconsistencies in the findings by researchers.

The idealized influence dimension of transformational leadership refers to the attributes ascribed by employees to their leader, according to their perceptions of the leader's confidence, power, confidence and transcendent ideals (Bass, 1985). Szu-Fang (2013) stated that a leader who practices idealized influence would likely go beyond their individual self-interest. Jung and Sosik (2002) study of 47 Korean firms found that, by inspiring team members with goals of higher levels, transformational leaders can enhance team cohesion and boost team performance. Lussier and Achua (2010) also stated that idealized influence include behaviors which would instill a sense of pride within the followers for being associated with their leader. Lussier and Achua (2010) further asserted that employees and team members tend to emulate a leader who displays idealized influence. Effective transformational leadership generates greater idealized influence, and this has a direct role in generating better contextual performance among employees (McGee and Rennie, 2009). Transformational leadership is usually synonymous with the leader's charisma (Yahaya and Ebrahim, 2016). The nursing environment is characterized by high uncertainty and in such environment; charismatic leaders can enhance employees' performance (Waldman *et al.*, 2001). Charismatic leaders also inspire employees through mission and vision that give an identity to employees (Bai *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, as explained by Li *et al.* (2012) the employees who are emotionally influenced by their charismatic leader may sacrifice self-interests for the sake of the organization. The employees of a charismatic leadership may be motivated by a higher levels of self-efficiency and challenge themselves with more challenging goals (Waldman *et al.*, 2001). Tittmore (2003) asserted that a transformational leader who shows idealized influence displays power and confidence. Transformational leaders, who would speak about important values and beliefs, instill trust in employees and trust is an important element in all relationships (Tittmore, 2003). Based on the above, the idealized influence or charisma dimension of transformational leadership plays an important role in ensuring the improvement in the contextual performance of employee (Wagner and Hollenbeck, 2010). Based on the past research findings discussed above and logically extending them, the following hypothesis was formulated for testing in the present study.

H1. Idealized influence of leaders exerts a positive influence on contextual performance of nurses in Kuala Lumpur.

The inspirational motivation dimension of transformational leadership refers to leadership behaviors that are focused at inspiring and motivating employees to achieve challenging or difficult goals (Bass, 1985). According to Owen (2005) this dimension of transformational leadership is about a leader who speaks and acts with great optimism about the future. De Jong and Bruch (2013) explained that a leader is able to motivate followers because when he/she is motivated inspirationally, he or she is able to exhibit confidence, respond positively to his or her follower's thoughts and ideas. The transformational leader articulates a very compelling futuristic vision for the benefit of the employees in an organization (Heneman and Judge, 2005). The leader also exhibits a lot of confidence about how the goals of an organization are achieved (Johnson *et al.*, 2008). Amagoh (2009) stated that a leader who exhibits inspirational motivation as part of their leadership can create a very positive and exciting image about the organization and about what needs to be considered by the organizational members. The motivational behavior further improves team spirit and creates greater enthusiasm among the organizational members (Van Vugt *et al.*, 2008). Judge *et al.* (2002) stated that such behavior is relevant in overcoming difficult challenges faced by the organization. As a result, it follows that the contextual performance of the employees starts to increase (Lussier and Achua, 2010). Miltenberger (2004) also asserted that inspirational motivation makes a transformational leader stand out and supports his role in ensuring better contextual performance among the employees. Hackman and

Johnson (2009) provided further support by indicating that inspirational motivation creates the sort of enthusiasm and motivation which is required to ensure a high level of optimism. Based on the past research findings discussed above, the following hypothesis was formulated for testing in the present study.

H2. Inspirational motivation influence of leaders exerts a positive influence on contextual performance of nurses in Kuala Lumpur.

According to Bass (1985) intellectual stimulation refers to the way a leader questions the status quo and appeals to the intelligence of followers to prompt them to question their own ideas. Researchers and scholars have maintained the importance of intellectual stimulation as a component of transformational leadership (Cavazotte *et al.*, 2012; Alabi and Alabi, 2014). Intellectual stimulation can stimulate team members and they may feel challenged by embracing impressive visions (Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009). In addition, the intellectual stimulation makes members feel important and thereafter a learning team climate will be formed (Zohar, 2000). Cheung and Wong (2011) further stated that intellectual stimulation is a component of transformational leadership which helps the leader to educate the followers about the ways and means to view organizational problems from various different perspectives. Wagner and Hollenbeck (2010) also indicated that intellectual stimulation encompasses the teaching about new and creative ways of overcoming work-related challenges by the leader. As explained by Herrmann and Felfe (2014) leaders encourage followers to challenge existing assumptions and in doing so, the followers are expected to become creative in their approach to work and take risks where necessary to solve organizational problems and meet its goals. Through intellectual stimulation, employees become more creative and efficient at problem solving, thereby resulting in better contextual performance (Ireland *et al.*, 2009). The transformational leader who uses intellectual stimulation would re-examine various critical assumptions and come up with effective ways of ensuring that employees are able to approach and resolve problems with confidence and creativity (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010). Bradford and Burke (2005) further asserted that a transformational leader who exhibits higher level of intellectual stimulation will influence employees to show better contextual performance. Alabi and Alabi (2014) provided further support by stating that a transformational leader who can employ better intellectual stimulation will help in the development of higher contextual performance among the employees. Based on the past research findings discussed above and logically extending them, the following hypothesis was formulated for testing in the present study.

H3. Intellectual stimulation influence of leaders exerts a positive influence on contextual performance of nurses in Kuala Lumpur.

The individual consideration dimension of transformational leadership refers to the socio-emotional support given by a leader to his/her followers, in response to their specific needs (Bass, 1985). Several researchers have found support for the importance of individualized consideration (Markwell, 2013; Orabi, 2016). Al-Shuaiby (2009) explained that individual consideration plays a positive role to ensure superior contextual performance by employees. Research findings also supported the positive role of individualized consideration because it ensures that all the employees in the organization are provided with sufficient attention to improve contextual performance (Al-Shuaiby, 2009). Markwell (2013) explained that the transformational leaders who show individualized consideration, tries to spend time to coach and teach the employees on an individual basis. Through individualized consideration, the leaders also promote self-development among the employees in an equitable way (Baron *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, transformational leaders who provide individual consideration to their employees can identify the differing needs, abilities, and aspirations of each and every individual (Heneman and Judge, 2005). Hence, the identification of needs and a sense of being treated equally by the leader further motivate employees to improve contextual performance in the organization (Al-Shuaiby, 2009). Another study by Orabi (2016) found a significant relationship between individual consideration and organizational performance. Based on the past research findings discussed above and logically extending them, the following hypothesis was formulated for testing in the present study.

H4. Individualized consideration influence of leaders exerts a positive influence on contextual performance of nurses in Kuala Lumpur.

### 3. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 3.1. Research Design

This research is based on positivism philosophy. Positivism relates to the philosophical stance of the natural scientist (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). In this study, with a deduction approach, a theory and hypotheses were developed. This is a quantitative study where quantitative analysis techniques that range from providing simple descriptive to establishing statistical relationships of the variables involved were used (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). This is a cross sectional study and a research strategy using the survey method was designed to collect data and test the hypotheses (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Collection of primary data was done using a self-administered questionnaire. The emphasis here was on studying to explain the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The reliability of a measure is established by testing for both consistency and stability and this was based on Cronbach's alpha which is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another. Data analysis was based on descriptive and inferential statistics that were generated using SPSS version 20.

#### 3.2. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The population for this study were nurses engaged in the healthcare sector in Kuala Lumpur. Non probability sampling method was used and according to Cavana *et al.* (2001) the non-probability methods in this study have a discrete advantage of rapidly accessing participants who are most likely to participate and give information. Convenience sampling was used because there is no publicly available list of respondents readily available. Hair *et al.* (2006) suggests that the minimum sample size is 100 when considering models containing five or fewer constructs, each with more than three items; 150 when models contain seven or fewer constructs. Sample sizes larger than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for most research (Roscoe, 1975). For this study, the agreed sample size was set at 150 respondents but only 135 complete responses were collected.

#### 3.3. Instrumentation

For current study, self-administered questionnaire was chosen due to its convenience and greater anonymity (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The purpose of the questionnaire was to generalize from a sample to a population to make inferences about the characteristics of the population (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The self-administered questionnaires were administered through internet or directly and delivered by hand and collected later (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The questionnaire consists of two sections. The first section is on three demographic variables (gender, marital status and age) were included. This second section measures the independent variables that are attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. The fixed alternative questions required the respondents to choose the best answer based on a five- point Likert-type scale.

#### 3.4. Data Collection

Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect virtually all data that was analysed by computer (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Email response rates may only approximate 25% to 30% without follow-up (Sheehan, 2001). Initially a total of 200 mails were sent through e-mail. A multimode approach to e-mail survey administration can enhance response rates (Sheehan, 2001). The direct distribute and collect method was used for respondents that could be reached personally. After one month, reminders were sent via email to the target respondents. The response rate was only 25 percent (50 respondents) at the end of the first month. The data collection was extended by another month and reminders were sent plus attempts were made to make direct appointments. A total of 72

questionnaires were received through mail and 68 were through direct distributed and collect method. A total of 5 questionnaires were removed due to omissions or errors. Only 135 questionnaires were usable, and the rest were incomplete or inappropriate.

### 3.5. Data Analyses

The completed questionnaires were checked and coded for statistical analysis. As stated by Sekaran (2003) in data analysis there were three objectives: getting a feel for the data, testing the goodness of data, and testing the hypotheses developed for the research. The feel for the data gave preliminary ideas of how good the scales were, how well the coding and entering of data have been done, and so on Sekaran (2003). Descriptive statistics was used to acquire a feel for the data by checking the central tendency and the dispersion. SPSS Version 20 was used to test the reliability and Pearson correlation statistics.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

The respondents included 77% (n=105) female and 23% (n=30) male. Majority of the respondents, 47% (n=63) were married. The respondents age included 9% (n=12) below 21 years, 27% (n= 36) between the age range of 22 to 30 years, 60% (n=81) between the age range of 31 to 40 years and 4% (n=6) above the age of 40 years.

### 4.2. Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which a variable is consistent in what it is intended to measure (Hair *et al.*, 2006). The Cronbach alpha coefficient calculated using SPSS software. For the dependent variable the Cronbach alpha was 0.942. For the independent variables, the Cronbach alpha was 0.785, 0.797, 0.843 and 903 for Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivational, Intellectual Inspiration and Individual Consideration. The Cronbach alpha value was above 0.7 is acceptable (Pallant, 2010). Pilot testing was done and this provided with some idea of the questionnaire's face validity (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). For content validity, experts were asked to comment on the representativeness and suitability of the questions (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

### 4.3. Pearson Correlation

As shown in Table 1, all the bivariate correlations between (IV) and the (DV) were positive. The Pearson's bivariate correlation showed that the correlation between the IVs and DV was supported. The correlation coefficient was high between all the DVs and IVs. This represents a high positive correlation and suggests that there was a strong correlation between the job performance and all the four dimensions of transformation leadership namely Idealized Influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual Stimulation and Individual Consideration. An increase in transformational leadership competencies will result in a high increase in the performance of nurses. The correlation coefficient was also statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table-1. Pearson Correlation Coefficient

	Job Performance	Idealized Influence	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual stimulation	Individual Consideration
Job Performance	1.000	.842**	.822**	.860**	.709**
Idealized Influence	.842**	1.000			
Inspirational motivation	.822**		1.000		
Intellectual Stimulation	.860**			1.000	
Individual Consideration	.709**				1.000

Source: Prepared by author based on primary data collected in this study

## 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relationship between idealized influence and job performance was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables [ $r = .84$ ], with high levels of idealized influence associated with higher levels of job performance. The results of this study supported the hypothesis H1. The results of this study are consistent with several prior studies (Wagner and Hollenbeck, 2010). This study revealed that the idealized influence dimension of transformational leadership is one of the key determinants of job performance among nurses. The study revealed that leaders who exhibit idealized influence can influence better job performance among nurses. Therefore, leaders in healthcare organizations should further influence their employees with positive idealized influence.

The relationship between inspirational motivation and job performance was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There was also a strong, positive correlation between the two variables [ $r = .82$ ], with high levels of inspirational motivation associated with higher levels of job performance. The results of this study supported the hypothesis H2. The results of this study are consistent with several prior studies (Lussier and Achua, 2010). As explained by Lussier and Achua (2010) inspirational motivation results in greater contextual performance of the employees. The study revealed that leaders with higher inspirational motivation can influence better job performance among nurses. Therefore, leaders in healthcare organizations should further influence their employees with positive inspirational motivation.

The relationship between intellectual stimulation and job performance was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables [ $r = .86$ ], with high levels of intellectual stimulation associated with higher levels of job performance. The results of this study supported the hypothesis H3. The results of this study are consistent with several prior studies (Herrmann and Felfe, 2014). As explained by Herrmann and Felfe (2014) leaders using intellectual stimulation encourage followers to challenge existing assumptions and in doing so, the followers are expected to become creative in their approach to work and meet the organization goals. Therefore, leaders in healthcare organizations should further influence their employees with positive intellectual stimulation.

In this study, individualized consideration was hypothesized to exert an influence on job performance. The relationship between individualized consideration and job performance was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables [ $r = .71$ ], with high levels of individualized consideration associated with higher levels of job performance. The results of this study supported the hypothesis H4. The results of this study are consistent with several prior studies (Markwell, 2013; Orabi, 2016). As explained by Al-Shuaiby (2009) individual consideration plays a positive role to ensure superior contextual performance by employees. Therefore, it can be concluded that leaders who show individualized consideration can improve performance of nurses.

The findings will also provide theoretical and practical implications for policymakers, organizations and institutions to facilitate and performance of nurses in the healthcare sector. This research showed that the main predictor is intellectual stimulation. However, this research also revealed that all the four dimensions of transformational leadership had a positive and strong correlation with job performance. Therefore, even though these four components are interdependent, they must harmonize to yield a performance (Renjith *et al.*, 2015). Leaders who use transformational leadership effectively will result in a greater job performance. Based on the findings of this study, transformational leadership enables leaders in the healthcare sector to develop a long-term vision and develop an effective nursing workforce. The nursing sector is characterized by heavy workload and nurses tend to experience significant stress and burnout (Rao, 2012). Therefore, it is imperative for nurse leaders to embrace transformational leadership style to influence and motivate nurses to manage stress, adapt to changes and work towards the organizational vision and goals. The goal of a transformational leader should be to develop a healthy work environment that leads to job satisfaction and better job performance among nurses in Kuala Lumpur.

Despite the significant findings of this study, there are some limitations. Firstly, in the present study only selected factors were considered to study the dimensions of transformational leadership that influence motivation and job performance of nurses. There are other moderators and mediators such as ethnicity and age of nurses that were not examined and should be examined in future studies. The data for this study was collected via a self-reported questionnaire that could be susceptible to bias. This study was carried out in Kuala Lumpur and the sample size of 135 respondents may not be sufficient to generalise the results. These limitations of this study provide directions for future research. For future studies, a more in-depth research on leadership styles that affect job performance of nurses can be undertaken. This study only covered nurses in public and private sector in Kuala Lumpur only. Extending the study to include other employees at the managerial level may add further support to the findings. Future research should incorporate the factors such as culture, age differences, ethnic differences and religiosity to have a better understanding of the factors that influence transformational leadership and performance. A mixed method approach is which can be either an explanatory sequential approach or an exploratory sequential approach is recommended to obtain and more in-depth information. Demographics such as education level and income could be further investigated to test the differences towards performance of nurses.

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