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Meaning, dimensions, and implications of spiritual leadership for service managers in nursing services: An integrative literatur review

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Abstract

Background: Spiritual leadership integrates spiritual, moral, and humanitarian values to promote healthcare workers' well-being and improve nursing service quality.

Purpose: This study aimed to synthesize scientific evidence on the meaning, dimensions, and implications of spiritual leadership in nursing services.

Method: An integrative literature review was conducted using the framework developed by Whitemore and Knafl, comprising problem identification, literature search, data evaluation, and data analysis and synthesis. Literature searches were performed in PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar using the keywords "spiritual leadership," "nursing," "nurse manager," and "healthcare," guided by the PRISMA 2020 framework. Articles published between 2020 and 2026 were selected according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Results: Of the 15,274 records initially identified, 25 articles met the eligibility criteria and were analyzed using thematic synthesis. Three major themes emerged: (1) the meaning of spiritual leadership in nursing services, characterized by meaningful work, spiritual values, and human relationships; (2) its core dimensions, including vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, supported by spiritual, emotional, and social competencies; and (3) its implications for nursing service managers, including improved caring behaviors, work engagement, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, spiritual well-being, and nursing care quality.

Conclusion: Spiritual leadership may foster meaningful work environments, positive organizational cultures, and high-quality nursing services. Its implementation may strengthen nursing service managers' capacity to lead healthcare services in a humanistic and sustainable manner.

Keywords: Nursing Services; Nursing Service Managers; Spiritual Leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual leadership is a leadership approach that has gained increasing attention in healthcare organizations because it integrates spiritual values, organizational goals, and the psychological needs of healthcare professionals. Unlike leadership approaches that primarily focus on achieving organizational objectives, spiritual leadership emphasizes the development of meaningful work, hope/faith, altruistic love, and the spiritual well-being of individuals within the organization.

The literature indicates that spiritual leadership contributes to workplace spirituality, employee well-being, organizational commitment, and organizational sustainability, making it a relevant leadership approach for addressing the complexities of modern work environments, including the healthcare sector (Akar et al., 2024) (Sitorus et al., 2025).

Within healthcare organizations, spiritual leadership is considered capable of fostering a more humanistic, supportive, and meaning-centered work

environment. Bibliometric analyses indicate that research on spiritual leadership in healthcare continues to expand and is increasingly associated with service quality, organizational commitment, work environment, and nursing leadership (Sesioria et al., 2022).

As healthcare organizations face increasingly complex challenges, including high workloads, demanding service standards, the need to ensure patient safety, and a growing risk of occupational burnout among healthcare professionals, nursing leaders are required to develop and implement spiritual leadership practices. In such circumstances, nursing leaders must not only possess strong managerial competencies but also be capable of fostering meaningful work, enhancing intrinsic motivation, and promoting the psychological well-being of their team members (Ahmed et al., 2024).

Consistent with these findings, previous research has demonstrated that spiritual leadership contributes to the development of workplace spirituality, which in turn enhances work motivation, job satisfaction, nurses' well-being, and the quality of healthcare services (Nishanthi et al., 2025; Fezih et al., 2024). Therefore, spiritual leadership is regarded as a leadership approach that can address healthcare organizations' need for a more humanistic form of leadership grounded in humanitarian values and principles (Samul, 2020).

Another study found that leaders who are able to instill a clear vision, foster hope and faith, and create meaningful work experiences can encourage nurses to perform their duties with greater enthusiasm and commitment (Suprpta et al., 2024).

Spiritual leadership has become increasingly important for nursing leaders because it not only focuses on achieving organizational goals but also fosters meaningful work, intrinsic motivation, and the well-being of healthcare professionals. In the complex and highly demanding healthcare environment, nursing leaders are expected to cultivate a work culture that is humanistic, supportive, and grounded in humanitarian values (Zeid et al., 2022).

Although research on spiritual leadership has continued to expand within the fields of healthcare and nursing, most studies have primarily focused on examining the relationship between spiritual

leadership and various organizational outcomes, such as caring behavior, job satisfaction, work engagement, nurse performance, organizational commitment, and the quality of nursing care (Ouyang et al., 2026).

In contrast, a considerable body of research has examined spiritual leadership from the perspectives of organizational behavior, workplace spirituality, and individual outcomes among healthcare professionals. However, limited attention has been given to understanding the meaning, dimensions, and implications of spiritual leadership for nursing service leaders, particularly Service Managers, who play a critical operational leadership role in managing and ensuring the quality of healthcare services (Wu et al., 2020).

However, a comprehensive understanding of these aspects is essential for the development of leadership models that can effectively integrate spiritual values, humanistic care, and professional demands within nursing management practice (Masoud et al., 2022). Therefore, an integrative literature review is needed to synthesize the available scientific evidence regarding the meaning and dimensions of spiritual leadership in nursing services, as well as its implications for Service Managers.

RESEARCH METHOD

Study Design

This study employed an Integrative Literature Review (ILR) following the framework proposed by Whittemore and Knafl (2005). This approach enables the integration and synthesis of evidence from studies employing diverse research designs, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches, to develop a comprehensive understanding of a specific phenomenon. The review aimed to examine the conceptual meaning, key dimensions, and implications of spiritual leadership in nursing services, with particular attention to its relevance for nursing and healthcare service managers.

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Review Questions

Although spiritual leadership has been examined in organizational and healthcare settings, previous research has frequently focused on its associations with organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction, work engagement, caring behavior, organizational commitment, and service quality (Wu & Lee, 2020; Piwowar-Sulej & Iqbal, 2024). However, an integrated understanding of the meaning, dimensions, and managerial implications of spiritual leadership in nursing services remains necessary. Accordingly, this review addressed three research questions: (1) How is spiritual leadership conceptualized in nursing services? (2) What key dimensions of spiritual leadership are identified in the nursing and healthcare literature? and (3) What are the implications of spiritual leadership for nursing and healthcare service managers?

Literature Search Strategy

A literature search was conducted using PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar to identify relevant publications in nursing, healthcare, organizational management, and leadership. The search covered publications from 2020 to 2026 and included articles published in English or Indonesian. Database-specific search strategies were developed using combinations of keywords and Boolean operators. In PubMed, the search string was ("spiritual leadership") AND ("nursing" OR "nurse manager" OR "nursing management" OR "healthcare"). In ScienceDirect, the search string was "spiritual leadership" AND (nursing OR nurse OR healthcare). In Google Scholar, the search used the terms "spiritual leadership" nursing. Reference lists of relevant articles were also examined manually to identify additional publications potentially eligible for inclusion.

The identification and selection of studies were reported in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines. The initial search

identified 15,274 records, comprising 24 from PubMed, 150 from ScienceDirect, and 15,100 from Google Scholar. Following the application of the publication-year criterion, 7,837 records were excluded, leaving 7,437 records for further consideration. To ensure a manageable screening process, Google Scholar screening was restricted to the first 200 results ranked as most relevant. This step excluded 7,120 records, resulting in 317 records for title and abstract screening: 18 from PubMed, 99 from ScienceDirect, and 200 from Google Scholar.

Titles and abstracts were screened against the predefined eligibility criteria, and 252 records were excluded because they were not sufficiently relevant to the review objectives. The remaining 65 articles underwent full-text assessment. Of these, 40 were excluded because they did not adequately address spiritual leadership, were outside the nursing or healthcare context, or did not meet the review objectives and eligibility criteria. Ultimately, 25 articles were included in the integrative synthesis. The selection process is presented in Figure 1.

Eligibility Criteria

Studies were eligible for inclusion if they addressed spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality, or closely related concepts relevant to leadership in nursing and healthcare settings. Eligible populations and contexts included nurses, nurse managers, nurse leaders, nursing management, and healthcare services. Studies were required to have been published between 2020 and 2026, be available in full text, and be written in English or Indonesian. Eligible publication types included original quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies, as well as systematic reviews, literature reviews, bibliometric reviews, and longitudinal studies. Only peer-reviewed scientific journal articles published in accredited Indonesian national journals or reputable international journals were considered. Studies also had to contribute to understanding the meaning, dimensions,

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implementation, or implications of spiritual leadership in nursing practice and management.

Studies were excluded if they did not address spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality, or related concepts relevant to the review; focused on contexts outside nursing and healthcare; were published before 2020; were unavailable in full text; or were written in languages other than English or Indonesian. Editorials, news articles, conference proceedings, letters to the editor, conference abstracts, and other non-scientific publications were also excluded. Articles that had not undergone peer review or did not align with the research questions and objectives were likewise excluded.

Study Selection and Data Extraction

Study selection was conducted in successive stages, comprising record identification, title and abstract screening, full-text eligibility assessment, and final inclusion. After the 25 eligible articles had been identified, relevant information was extracted systematically using a synthesis matrix. The extracted information included the authors and publication year, country or setting, study design, research objectives, population or participants, principal findings, and contributions to understanding spiritual leadership in nursing services. The matrix facilitated comparison

across studies and supported the organization of findings according to the review questions.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

Data were analyzed using a thematic approach within the integrative literature review framework. The selected articles were read repeatedly to obtain a comprehensive understanding of spiritual leadership in nursing services. Relevant data, including study objectives, research designs, participant characteristics, key findings, and practical implications, were extracted and systematically organized in a synthesis matrix.

The extracted findings were compared across studies to identify recurring patterns, similarities, differences, and conceptual relationships. Findings with similar meanings were grouped into categories and subsequently synthesized into broader themes. This process resulted in three overarching themes: (1) the meaning and conceptualization of spiritual leadership, (2) the key dimensions of spiritual leadership, and (3) the implications of spiritual leadership for nursing and healthcare service managers. These themes provided the analytical basis for presenting and discussing the review findings in relation to the research questions.

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RESEARCH RESULTS

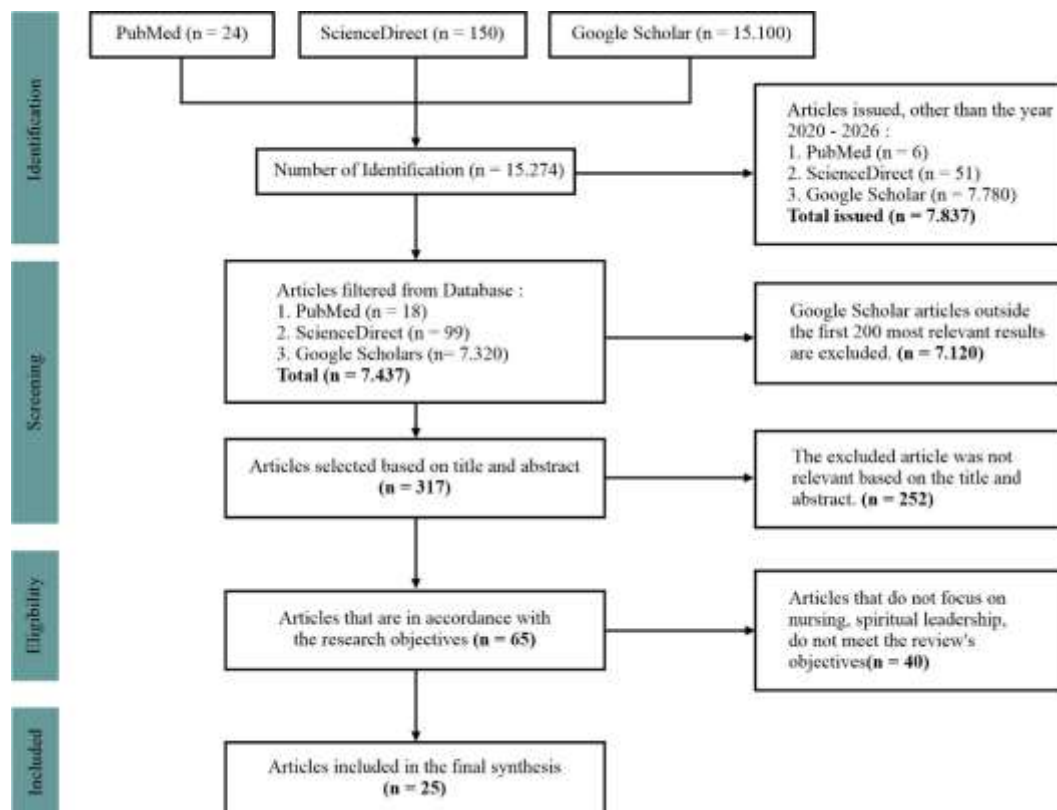


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of the Article Selection Process

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Table 1. Characteristics of Selected Articles

(Author, Year) Country	Research Design	Research Purposes	Key Results	Meaning, Dimensions and Implications
(Sriani et al., 2024) Indonesia	Kuantitatif Korelasional Cross-Sectional	Exploring the relationship between spiritual leadership and nurses' caring behavior.	There is a positive relationship between spiritual leadership and nurses' caring behavior, although the strength of the relationship is relatively weak. The application of spiritual leadership is important in improving nurses' caring behavior.	Spiritual leadership is defined as leadership that instills spiritual values and caring in nursing services. The dimensions observed include role modeling, intrinsic motivation, positive interpersonal relationships, and an orientation toward humanitarian values. Consequently, spiritual leadership is positively related to nurses' caring behavior, thus contributing to improved nursing care quality.
(Kolomboy et al., 2023) Indonesia	Grounded Theory Qualitative Study (FGD)	Exploring indicators of spiritual-based transformational leadership in hospitals.	Three main indicators of spiritual-based transformational leadership were found, namely emotional skills, spiritual skills, and social skills.	Spiritual leadership is defined as leadership that integrates spiritual values into staff leadership. Its dimensions encompass emotional, spiritual, and social skills. Consequently, spiritual leadership supports increased nurse commitment, performance, and the quality of nursing services.
(Lesomar & Bunga, 2024) Indonesia	Literature Review	Describe and analyze the influence of the spiritual leadership style of the head of the ward on the performance of implementing nurses.	Spiritual leadership improves nurse performance, work motivation, workplace engagement, nursing assessment compliance, service quality, and reduces burnout and turnover intention.	This article defines spiritual leadership as leadership based on vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love in guiding staff. Its dimensions include vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love. Consequently, spiritual leadership improves nurse performance, work motivation, work engagement, service quality, and reduces burnout and turnover intentions.
(Candrawati et al., 2024) Indonesia	Explanatory Quantitative	Analyzing the influence of spiritual leadership on caring behavior through	Spiritual leadership has a direct influence on caring behavior. The calling variable was shown to mediate	Spiritual leadership is defined as leadership that fosters meaning in work (calling) and spiritual well-being in nursing practice. Its dimensions include spiritual leadership, calling, and membership.

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	Cross-Sectional (PLS-SEM)	the mediation of calling and membership.	the relationship between spiritual leadership and caring behavior, while membership did not act as a mediator.	The implication is that spiritual leadership directly enhances nurses' caring behavior, with calling acting as a crucial mediator in improving the quality of nursing care.
(Baguna et al., 2024) Indonesia	Cross-Sectional Survey	To determine the relationship between nurses' perceptions of spirituality and spiritual care and spiritual care practices.	There is a significant positive correlation between perceptions of spirituality and spiritual care with spiritual care practices ($r=0.235$; $p<0.001$).	Spirituality in nursing is defined as the nurse's ability to understand and meet the spiritual needs of patients as part of holistic care. Its dimensions include perceptions of spirituality, spiritual care, and spiritual care practices. Consequently, a more positive perception of spirituality is associated with increased spiritual care practices, thus supporting a more comprehensive quality of nursing care.
(Wu & Lee, 2020) Taiwan	Cross-Sectional Survey	Analyzing the influence of spiritual leadership on nurses' work engagement through calling and psychological capital.	Spiritual leadership improves nurses' work engagement. Calling and psychological capital have been shown to mediate this relationship.	This article defines spiritual leadership as leadership that builds meaningful work and positive psychological energy for nurses. Its dimensions include spiritual leadership, calling, psychological capital, and work engagement. Consequently, spiritual leadership enhances nurses' work engagement by strengthening calling and psychological capital, thereby encouraging higher performance and dedication in nursing care.
(Hamzaa et al., 2025) Egypt	Multicenter Descriptive Cross-Sectional Study	Investigating the role of spiritual leadership in the relationship between altruism and passion in nurses.	There is a significant positive correlation between spiritual leadership, passion, and altruism. Spiritual leadership acts as a mediator of altruism's influence on work passion.	This article defines spiritual leadership as leadership that fosters work ethics, caring, and humanitarian values in the nursing environment. Its dimensions include spiritual leadership, passion, and altruism. Consequently, spiritual leadership enhances nurses' altruism and passion, strengthening their motivation and commitment to providing quality nursing care.

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(Khomsin & Supriharyanti, 2024) Indonesia	Systematic Literature Review (SLR)	Reviewing the development of spiritual leadership research and the direction of future research development.	An analysis of 29 Scopus articles shows that spiritual leadership has a positive impact on various organizational outcomes through the dimensions of vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love.	This article defines spiritual leadership as a leadership model that focuses on creating meaningful work, spiritual well-being, and achieving organizational goals through spiritual values. Its dimensions include vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, the main components of spiritual leadership theory. Consequently, spiritual leadership has a positive impact on individuals and organizations, such as increased motivation, job satisfaction, commitment, performance, and organizational sustainability.
(Akar et al., 2024) Türkiye	Bibliometric Analysis & Thematic Content Analysis	Identifying the components of workplace spirituality in the nursing profession.	Ditemukan enam komponen utama workplace spirituality: nursing education, organizational context, recruitment-orientation, work environment experience, training programs, dan harmonious working relationships.	This article defines workplace spirituality as a working environment that enables nurses to find meaning, value, and connectedness in their work. Its dimensions include nursing education, organizational context, recruitment and orientation, work environment experience, training programs, and harmonious working relationships. Consequently, workplace spirituality supports nurse well-being, harmonious working relationships, and improved quality of nursing care.
(Sitorus et al., 2025) Indonesia	Cross-Sectional Correlational Study	Analyzing the relationship between nurses' spiritual well-being and the competence of providing spiritual care to nurses in Indonesia.	There was a significant positive relationship between spiritual well-being and spiritual care competence ($r_s = 0.214$; $p < 0.001$). Higher spiritual well-being improved nurses' ability to provide spiritual care to patients.	This article defines spiritual well-being as a positive state reflected in an individual's relationship with themselves, others, the environment, and God. Its dimensions include spiritual well-being and spiritual care competence. Consequently, a higher level of spiritual well-being is associated with increased nurse competence in providing spiritual care to patients, thus supporting holistic and quality nursing care.

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(Zeid et al., 2022) Egypt	Correlational Cross-Sectional Study	Knowing the level of spiritual leadership and psychological capital and the relationship between the two in nurse educators.	Spiritual leadership is in the medium-high category, and psychological capital is high. There is a strong and significant positive correlation between spiritual leadership and psychological capital ($R=0.63$; $p=0.001$).	This article defines spiritual leadership as a positive leadership style capable of building psychological strength and self-development in followers. Its dimensions include vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, and psychological capital as important outcomes. Consequently, spiritual leadership is positively related to psychological capital, thereby increasing optimism, resilience, self-efficacy, and performance in nursing staff.
(Samul, 2020) Poland	Literature Review & Bibliometric Analysis	Synthesizing the development of spiritual leadership theory and its role in creating a sustainable workplace.	An analysis of 373 publications shows that spiritual leadership contributes to workplace spirituality, employee well-being, organizational commitment, and sustainable workplace.	This article defines spiritual leadership as leadership that creates a sustainable workplace by fulfilling spiritual needs, the meaning of work, and human values. Its dimensions include vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, calling, and membership. Consequently, spiritual leadership improves employee well-being, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and supports the creation of a sustainable workplace.
(Nishanthi et al., 2025) India	Bibliometric Review	Analyze the development of workplace spirituality research and its impact on organizational effectiveness and identify future research directions.	Analysis of 610 articles shows that workplace spirituality is related to organizational effectiveness, job satisfaction, employee engagement, innovation, organizational performance, and well-being.	This article defines workplace spirituality as the alignment between personal and organizational values that creates meaningful work, a sense of community, and employee well-being. Its dimensions include meaningful work, a sense of community, and values alignment. Consequently, workplace spirituality contributes to increased organizational effectiveness, employee engagement, workplace well-being, and overall organizational performance.
(Suprpta et al., 2024)	Descriptive Correlational	Analyzing the influence of spiritual leadership on	Spiritual leadership has a positive influence on work discipline and nurse	This article defines spiritual leadership as leadership that instills spiritual values to build discipline, responsibility, and

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Indonesia	Survey (Cross-sectional)	work discipline and performance of hospital nurses in Denpasar, Bali.	performance. Work discipline mediates the relationship between spiritual leadership and nurse performance.	professionalism in nurses at work. Its dimensions include spiritual leadership, work discipline, and nurse performance. Consequently, spiritual leadership improves work discipline, which ultimately impacts nurse performance and the quality of hospital services.
(Ouyang et al., 2026) China	Longitudinal Field Study (3-wave survey)	Analyzing the mechanism of spiritual leadership in increasing charge-taking behavior in nurses.	Spiritual leadership is positively related to taking charge. Spiritual well-being mediates this relationship, and the effect is stronger for nurses with high perceptions of pay-for-performance.	This article defines spiritual leadership as leadership that enhances the spiritual well-being of nurses, thereby encouraging proactive behavior in the workplace. Its dimensions include spiritual leadership, spiritual well-being, taking charge, and pay-for-performance perception. Consequently, spiritual leadership increases nurses' willingness to take initiative and contribute to organizational improvement by enhancing spiritual well-being.
(Wu et al., 2020) China	Cross-sectional Survey	Mengeksplorasi hubungan spiritual climate dan transformational leadership terhadap burnout dan turnover intention perawat.	Spiritual climate memperkuat transformational leadership dalam menurunkan burnout dan niat keluar kerja. Burnout dan turnover intention berhubungan dengan rendahnya spiritual climate.	This article defines a positive spiritual climate as a work environment that provides meaning, support, and fulfillment for nurses' spiritual needs. Its dimensions include spiritual climate, transformational leadership, emotional exhaustion (burnout), and turnover intention. Consequently, a positive spiritual climate strengthens leadership effectiveness, reduces burnout, and decreases nurses' desire to leave their jobs.
(Ribeiro et al., 2021) Portugal	Commentary / Expert Discussion	Discussing the role of spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality in improving nurse welfare	Spiritual leadership contributes to workplace spirituality, motivation, job satisfaction, well-being, and quality of care. The authors emphasize the need	This article defines spiritual leadership as a leadership approach that fosters meaningful work, human values, and spiritual well-being in nursing management. Its dimensions include spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality, which mutually support each other in creating a healthy work environment. Consequently, the

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		and the quality of health services.	to integrate spiritual leadership into nursing management.	application of spiritual leadership helps nurses feel more valued, connected to their work, and improves the quality of the work environment and nursing services.
(Masoud et al., 2022) Australia	Systematic Review & Meta-analysis	Identifying levels of spiritual intelligence and their relationship to professional nursing practice.	Analysis of 35 studies (7,301 nurses) showed that spiritual intelligence has a moderate positive relationship with competence, caring behavior, professional commitment, service quality, and professional nursing practice.	This article defines spiritual intelligence as an individual's ability to find meaning, value, and purpose in professional nursing practice. Its dimensions include spiritual intelligence, nursing competence, professional attributes, the art of nursing, and personal commitment. Consequently, spiritual intelligence is positively related to professional nursing practice, thus supporting improved competence, commitment, and the quality of nursing care.
(Piowar-sulej & Iqbal, 2024) Poland and Pakistan	Systematic Literature Review	Develop a comprehensive framework regarding antecedents, mediators, moderators and outcomes of spiritual leadership.	Of the 274 articles analyzed, spiritual leadership was shown to be related to workplace spirituality, employee well-being, engagement, organizational commitment, and performance. The research also identified various mediators and moderators that influence the effectiveness of spiritual leadership.	This article defines spiritual leadership as a leadership approach that focuses on creating meaningful work, connectedness, and spiritual well-being within an organization. Its dimensions include vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, workplace spirituality, employee well-being, and work engagement. Consequently, spiritual leadership contributes to improved employee well-being, motivation, job satisfaction, commitment, and performance, as well as reduced burnout and turnover intention.
(Fezih et al., 2024) Indonesia	Kuantitatif Korelasional	Analyzing the influence of workplace spirituality and organizational climate on	Workplace spirituality and organizational climate simultaneously explained 57.8% of the variation in resilience at work. The higher the	This article defines workplace spirituality as a working environment that provides meaning, purpose, and positive connectedness for nurses in carrying out their profession. Its dimensions include workplace spirituality, organizational climate, and resilience at

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		resilience at work in nurses.	workplace spirituality, the higher the nurses' resilience.	work. Consequently, workplace spirituality, combined with a positive organizational climate, enhances nurses' work resilience, helping them adapt to work pressures and maintain performance in a dynamic healthcare environment.
(Paida & Hamdoni, 2024) Philippines	Descriptive-Correlational Study	Analyze the leadership traits of nurse managers and their relationship to staff nurse commitment.	Nurse managers' leadership traits are significantly related to staff nurses' affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Positive leadership increases job satisfaction and commitment.	Nursing leadership is defined as the ability of a leader to demonstrate positive traits such as honesty, fairness, communication, responsibility, and caring. Its dimensions include honesty, trust, communication, responsibility, and compassion. Consequently, positive leadership increases nurse commitment and supports the quality of nursing care.
(Habibpour & Mostafazadeh, 2025) Iran	Cross-sectional Analytical Study	To determine the relationship between workplace spirituality and general health and quality of work life (QWL) in nurses.	Workplace spirituality is strongly positively related to QWL ($r=0.73$; $p<0.001$) and negatively related to anxiety, insomnia, depression, and social dysfunction.	Workplace spirituality is defined as the search for meaning in work, a sense of community, and alignment of individual and organizational values. Its dimensions include meaningful work, a sense of community, and alignment with organizational values. Consequently, workplace spirituality improves the quality of work life and supports the health and well-being of nurses.
(Sesioria et al., 2022) Indonesia	Bibliometric Analysis (Deskriptif Kuantitatif)	Analyze publication trends, literature developments, and research maps of spiritual leadership in the health sector.	Spiritual leadership research is rapidly expanding in the areas of healthcare, service quality, organizational commitment, and the workplace. Four main clusters of spiritual leadership research in healthcare have been identified.	Spiritual leadership is defined as a leadership style based on vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love to create a positive and meaningful work environment. Its dimensions include vision, hope/faith, altruistic love, workplace spirituality, and organizational commitment. Consequently, spiritual leadership improves work engagement, organizational commitment, healthcare worker well-being, and the quality of healthcare and nursing services.

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(Abdulkhalifa & Aboramadan, 2026) Palestine, specifically the Gaza Strip	Quantitative Cross-sectional with SEM	Analyzing the influence of transformational leadership on nurses' adaptive performance through psychological capital (PsyCap) and the moderating role of workplace spirituality.	Transformational leadership has a positive effect on adaptive performance and PsyCap. PsyCap mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and adaptive performance. Workplace spirituality strengthens the relationship between PsyCap and adaptive performance.	Workplace spirituality is defined as the meaning of work, a sense of community, and alignment of values within an organization. Its dimensions include meaningful work, a sense of community, and alignment with organizational values. Consequently, workplace spirituality increases nurses' resilience and adaptability in the face of change and work pressure.
(Sritoomma & Wongkhomthong, 2021) Thailand	Mixed Methods (Qualitative Phenomenology and Confirmatory Factor Analysis)	Identifying the components of strategic leadership competencies in chief nurse executives in private hospitals in Thailand.	Found 7 components of strategic leadership with 75 competencies, namely strategic-innovative thinking and planning, developing today's and tomorrow's leaders, relating the parts to the whole, building partnerships, making it happen, corporate spirit, and giving direction.	Strategic leadership is the ability of nursing leaders to set direction, build innovation, and develop an organization. Its dimensions include giving direction, making it happen, building partnerships, corporate spirit, developing leaders, and strategic-innovative thinking and planning. Consequently, strategic leadership enhances managerial capacity, innovation, and the effectiveness of nursing organizations.

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Research Characteristics

Among the 25 included studies, cross-sectional, correlational, and descriptive survey designs were the most common ($n = 14$; 56.0%). Other designs included systematic and literature reviews ($n = 4$; 16.0%), bibliometric reviews and analyses ($n = 3$; 12.0%), and one study each employing mixed-methods, qualitative, longitudinal, and commentary/expert opinion approaches.

Regarding levels of evidence, most studies were classified as Level VI ($n = 16$; 64.0%), followed by Level V ($n = 6$; 24.0%). Level I, Level IV, and Level VII evidence were each represented by one study ($n = 1$; 4.0%). In terms of journal indexing, 11 studies (44.0%) were published in Scopus Q1 journals. This indicates that a substantial proportion of the included literature appeared in journals ranked in the highest quartile of the Scopus journal classification system. However, journal quartile rankings reflect journal-level metrics and should not be interpreted as direct indicators of individual study quality (Samul, 2020; Sesioria et al., 2022; Piwowar-Sulej & Iqbal, 2024).

The thematic synthesis generated three major themes concerning spiritual leadership in nursing services: (1) the meaning of spiritual leadership in nursing services, (2) the dimensions of spiritual leadership, and (3) the implications of spiritual leadership for nursing service managers.

Theme 1: The Meaning of Spiritual Leadership in Nursing Services

The synthesis conceptualizes spiritual leadership as an approach to healthcare management grounded in spiritual, moral, and humanitarian values. Beyond achieving organizational objectives, this approach emphasizes meaningful work, spiritual well-being, and positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace. In nursing contexts, spirituality can provide meaning, comfort, and inner peace, supporting individuals in coping with health-related challenges and developing a deeper understanding of themselves through personal transformation (Samsualam & Hidayah, 2022).

Spiritual leadership is also associated with the development of workplace spirituality, employee well-being, and organizational commitment through the integration of spiritual values into leadership practices

(Lesomar & Bunga, 2024). By fostering a sense of purpose and intrinsic motivation, this leadership approach may help create a more supportive and humanistic healthcare work environment. Such an environment is particularly relevant to nursing, where interpersonal relationships, compassion, and holistic care are central to professional practice (Ribeiro et al., 2021).

Theme 2: Spiritual Dimensions of Leadership

The literature synthesis revealed that the dimensions of spiritual leadership most frequently applied in the reviewed studies were based on the Spiritual Leadership Theory developed by Fry, namely vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love. The dimension of vision refers to a leader's ability to establish a meaningful organizational direction and purpose. Hope/faith reflects confidence and optimism in achieving shared goals, whereas altruistic love emphasizes care, respect, appreciation, and compassion toward organizational members. The review findings also indicate that spiritual leadership is strengthened through various supporting competencies, including spiritual skills, emotional skills, and social skills, which enable leaders to develop effective and meaningful workplace relationships (Kolomboy et al., 2023). Ketiga These three core dimensions serve as the foundation for fostering a positive workplace culture and supporting nursing care that is human-centered in its orientation.

Theme 3: Implications of Spiritual Leadership for Service Managers

The synthesis findings indicate that spiritual leadership has broad implications for Service Managers in nursing services. Numerous studies have reported that spiritual leadership contributes to improvements in caring behavior, work engagement, job satisfaction, work passion, spiritual well-being, service quality, and organizational commitment (Hamzaa et al., 2025; Paidia & Hamdoni, 2024).

In addition to its impact on individual healthcare professionals, spiritual leadership also contributes to improving the quality of nursing care and strengthening a more humanistic organizational culture (Sesioria et al., 2022). Other findings suggest that the successful implementation of spiritual

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leadership requires organizational support through formal training programs, the strengthening of workplace culture, and the integration of spiritual values into nursing management systems (Habibpour & Mostafazadeh, 2025). Therefore, Service Managers play a strategic role as role models in internalizing spiritual values, fostering a positive work environment, and enhancing the quality of patient-centered care.

DISCUSSION

Spiritual Leadership Theory

The findings of this integrative literature review indicate that spiritual leadership in nursing services represents a form of leadership grounded in spiritual, moral, and humanitarian values. This leadership approach is manifested through efforts to create meaning in work, foster positive interpersonal relationships, and direct healthcare services toward enhancing both individual and organizational well-being. These findings are consistent with the Spiritual Leadership Theory proposed by Fry (2003), which posits that spiritual leadership is composed of three core dimensions: vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love (Khomsin & Supriharyanti, 2024). These three dimensions play a crucial role in fostering a sense of calling and membership, which serve as sources of intrinsic motivation that support individuals' engagement within the organization (Candrawati et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the Spiritual Leadership framework proposed by Ulrich (2020) explains that spiritual leadership is rooted in *inner centrality*, or the deepest level of self-awareness, which subsequently influences the formation of a leader's values, thoughts, words, actions, habits, and ultimately character. The integration of Fry's and Ulrich's perspectives suggests that spiritual leadership in nursing services encompasses not only a leader's ability to develop vision, hope/faith, and care for team members, but also the process of internalizing spiritual values that shape leadership character and behaviors in everyday practice.

Accordingly, spiritual leadership for Service Managers can be understood as a combination of personal and organizational dimensions that contribute to creating a meaningful work environment, enhancing the well-being of healthcare professionals,

and supporting the delivery of humanistic and high-quality nursing care.

Based on the thematic analysis, three major themes emerged that characterize spiritual leadership in nursing services:

The Meaning of Spiritual Leadership in Nursing Services

The review findings indicate that spiritual leadership is conceptualized as a leadership approach that integrates spiritual, moral, and humanitarian values into the management of healthcare organizations. These findings suggest that spiritual leadership extends beyond the achievement of organizational goals and encompasses efforts to create meaningful work, promote spiritual well-being, and foster positive interpersonal relationships within the workplace. Several studies included in this review demonstrate that spiritual leadership contributes to the development of workplace spirituality, employee well-being, and organizational commitment through the internalization of spiritual values within leadership practices (Baguna et al., 2024).

These findings reinforce the view that leadership in nursing services requires not only technical and managerial competencies but also the ability to foster meaning and a shared sense of purpose in work (Abdulkhalifa & Aboramadan, 2026).

These findings are consistent with the Spiritual Leadership Theory developed by Fry (2003), which posits that spiritual leadership is an intrinsic process that enables individuals to discover meaning and purpose in their work through a shared vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love. In the context of nursing, meaningful work is particularly important because healthcare services require emotional engagement, empathy, and a holistic orientation toward patient care.

Furthermore, the concept of spiritual leadership proposed by Ulrich (2020) suggests that spiritual leadership originates from *inner centrality*, a deep level of self-awareness that shapes a leader's values, thoughts, words, actions, habits, and ultimately character. The integration of these two theoretical perspectives indicates that spiritual leadership in nursing services is a process of internalizing spiritual values that influences how leaders think, behave, and

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act in creating a meaningful and humanistic work environment.

Dimensions and Competencies of Spiritual Leadership

The literature synthesis revealed that the most prominent dimensions of spiritual leadership in nursing services are vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, as proposed in Fry's (2003) model. The vision dimension provides healthcare professionals with direction, purpose, and meaningful work, enabling them to understand their contribution to patient care and organizational goals. Hope/faith helps foster optimism, confidence, and resilience in responding to the complex challenges of healthcare service delivery. Meanwhile, altruistic love promotes a workplace culture characterized by care, appreciation, empathy, and positive interpersonal relationships.

In addition to these three core dimensions, the review findings indicate that spiritual leadership is supported by other competencies, including spiritual skills, emotional skills, and social skills (Sritoomma & Wongkhomthong, 2021). These findings suggest that spiritual leadership is not merely understood as a concept related to individual spirituality but is also manifested through leaders' behaviors and everyday leadership practices. Such engagement enables leaders to develop effective communication, foster harmonious working relationships, and resolve conflicts in a constructive manner. Therefore, the effective implementation of spiritual leadership in nursing services requires the strengthening of both personal and interpersonal competencies to support the creation of a conducive, healthy, and productive work environment.

Implications of Spiritual Leadership for Service Managers

The review findings suggest that Service Managers need to internalize the values of vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love within their everyday leadership practices. The application of these values can be demonstrated through meaningful communication, staff empowerment, the reinforcement of a caring culture, and the creation of a work environment that supports the spiritual well-being of healthcare professionals.

This review further indicates that spiritual leadership has broad implications for nursing service managers. Numerous studies have demonstrated that spiritual leadership is strongly associated with caring behavior, work engagement, job satisfaction, spiritual well-being, service quality, and organizational commitment (Candrawati et al., 2024; Ahmed et al., 2024; Wu & Lee, 2020; Hamzaa et al., 2025). These findings indicate that spiritual leadership not only influences the well-being of healthcare professionals but also contributes to organizational effectiveness and the quality of healthcare services, including patient safety, patient satisfaction, and adherence to standard operating procedures (Rauf & Hidayah, 2025).

For Service Managers, spiritual leadership can serve as a leadership approach that supports the development of a humanistic, collaborative, and meaning-centered workplace culture. In their role as operational leaders, Service Managers bear a strategic responsibility to serve as role models by demonstrating integrity, empathy, compassion, and a strong commitment to patient care.

Furthermore, the review findings indicate that the implementation of spiritual leadership is likely to be more effective when supported by organizational initiatives, including leadership training programs, the reinforcement of workplace cultures grounded in spiritual values, and the integration of spiritual leadership principles into nursing management systems (Zendrato & Juniarta, 2025; Ribeiro et al., 2021). Therefore, the development of spiritual leadership should be regarded as a strategic investment in enhancing human resource quality and improving the quality of nursing services.

Overall, this review demonstrates that spiritual leadership is a relevant leadership approach for addressing the challenges of modern healthcare. By integrating spiritual values, human-centered leadership principles, and adequate organizational support, spiritual leadership can foster a positive workplace culture, enhance the well-being of healthcare professionals, and contribute to the delivery of sustainable, high-quality nursing care.

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CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that spiritual leadership in nursing services is conceptualized as a leadership approach that integrates spiritual, moral, and humanitarian values into the management of healthcare services. The synthesis of 25 studies identified three major themes: the meaning of spiritual leadership, the dimensions of spiritual leadership, and the implications of spiritual leadership for Service Managers. Spiritual leadership is not solely oriented toward achieving organizational goals but also emphasizes the creation of meaningful work, the promotion of spiritual well-being, and the development of positive interpersonal relationships within the workplace. The dimensions most frequently identified in the literature were vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love, which play a crucial role in fostering intrinsic motivation, organizational commitment, and a humanistic workplace culture within nursing services.

The findings further indicate that Service Managers may derive substantial strategic benefits from spiritual leadership, including improvements in caring behavior, work engagement, job satisfaction, service quality, and organizational commitment. Beyond their role as operational managers, Service Managers are expected to serve as role models in internalizing and demonstrating spiritual values within nursing management practices. Therefore, the development of spiritual leadership should be supported through leadership training programs, the strengthening of values-based organizational cultures, and the integration of spiritual leadership principles into nursing management systems.

Future research is recommended to explore the lived experiences and interpretations of spiritual leadership directly from the perspectives of Service Managers in order to enrich the conceptual understanding and practical application of leadership within nursing services.

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