

# Professional Training, Job Satisfaction and Self-Efficacy on Nursing Leadership Competencies; A Conceptual Framework

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**Abstract:** *This paper presents a conceptual framework that examines the interconnections among professional training, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and nursing leadership competencies. The framework is anchored in motivational and behavioral perspectives, integrating elements of Social Cognitive Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory. It argues that professional training functions as a critical foundation for developing leadership capacity by equipping nurses with the skills, confidence, and motivation necessary to manage complex healthcare challenges. Job satisfaction and self-efficacy are positioned as mediating mechanisms that explain how professional training translates into enhanced leadership competence. When nurses perceive their professional environment as supportive and fulfilling, and when they believe in their capability to lead effectively, they are more likely to demonstrate transformational behaviors that strengthen team performance and organizational outcomes. The proposed model offers both theoretical and practical value by linking continuous learning and psychological empowerment to leadership growth. It provides a pathway for healthcare leaders, educators, and policymakers to design evidence-based professional development strategies that foster empowerment, retention, and performance excellence in the nursing workforce, contributing to sustainable healthcare transformation and quality leadership practices.*

**Keywords:** Professional training, Job satisfaction, Self-efficacy, Nursing leadership, Conceptual framework.

## 1. Introduction

The evolving complexity of modern healthcare systems has intensified the need for highly competent nursing leaders capable of responding to organizational challenges, advancing quality improvement, and sustaining workforce engagement. Nursing leadership competencies encompassing strategic thinking, ethical decision-making, and interpersonal influence are essential for maintaining effective care delivery and professional standards (Rojko, Kvas, & Stare, 2025; Feng, Zhang, & Liang, 2025). Globally, nursing leadership development has become a central pillar of healthcare reform, as leadership behaviors directly influence staff motivation, retention, and patient outcomes (Phillipson et al., 2025; Galiotti et al., 2024). Within this context, professional training and continuing professional development (CPD) represent vital mechanisms for building and sustaining leadership

competence among nurses (King et al., 2021; Stavropoulou et al., 2025). Professional training strengthens nurses' ability to translate clinical knowledge into leadership behaviors through structured programs that integrate skill acquisition, reflection, and empowerment (Wang et al., 2025; Giordano et al., 2024). Studies indicate that leadership development initiatives grounded in competency frameworks significantly enhance managerial readiness and performance among nurse managers (Hartviksen et al., 2024; Maritsa et al., 2022). Beyond technical mastery, such programs foster psychological empowerment, enabling nurses to develop self-efficacy and confidence in their decision-making abilities factors that are crucial for effective leadership (Bush, Michalek, & Francis, 2021; Moran, Israel, & Sebeliski, 2021). Self-efficacy, derived from Bandura's social cognitive theory, is increasingly recognized as a predictor of leadership potential, as nurses who perceive themselves as competent and capable are more likely to engage in transformational behaviors that motivate teams and improve care quality (Kim & Sim, 2020; Pabis, 2025).

At the same time, job satisfaction operates as a critical psychological mechanism linking professional training to leadership outcomes. Empirical research has consistently demonstrated that supportive professional environments and leadership development activities increase satisfaction and organizational commitment among nurses (Matta & Chammas, 2022; Hudays et al., 2024). Job satisfaction not only promotes retention but also enhances cognitive and emotional engagement, which strengthens leadership confidence and willingness to take initiative (Curado & Santos, 2022; Anselmus Dami et al., 2022). Within nursing organizations, satisfied and self-efficacious leaders are more likely to create positive practice environments and inspire their teams to achieve excellence (Yu et al., 2024; Tsapnidou et al., 2024). The current study is grounded in this interplay between professional training, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy as multidimensional determinants of nursing leadership competencies. Despite extensive evidence on each factor individually, limited research integrates these constructs into a cohesive conceptual model that captures their combined influence on leadership development, particularly within the Saudi healthcare context (Arishi, Hudays, & Fitzpatrick, 2025; Aldhafeeri et al., 2024). Addressing this gap is essential as the Kingdom's Vision 2030 agenda prioritizes leadership capacity-building and workforce empowerment in its health-sector transformation plans (Alruwaili et al., 2024). Therefore, this paper proposes a conceptual framework explaining how professional training enhances nursing leadership competencies through the mediating effects of job satisfaction and self-efficacy. By integrating psychological and organizational perspectives, the framework aims to guide future empirical studies and inform strategic leadership development initiatives across healthcare systems.

## **2. Theoretical Foundations**

### **2.1 Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986)**

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) emphasizes the reciprocal interaction between personal factors, behavior, and environmental influences in shaping human learning and performance. Central to this theory is the concept of self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their ability to successfully execute behaviors necessary to achieve specific outcomes. In nursing, self-efficacy plays a pivotal role in influencing leadership readiness, confidence, and professional behavior (Moran, Israel, & Sebeliski, 2021; Bush, Michalek, & Francis, 2021). According to SCT, individuals acquire and strengthen competencies through observation, modeling, and mastery experiences processes that are core to structured professional training programs (Kim & Sim, 2020). When nurses participate in competency-based leadership development initiatives, they engage in reflective learning and experiential practice that reinforce confidence and skill mastery (Wang et al., 2025). This perception of capability enhances their motivation and resilience when navigating complex healthcare

environments. Empirical evidence shows that self-efficacy contributes to decision-making, communication, and transformational leadership behaviors that improve staff performance and patient outcomes (Pabis, 2025; Yang et al., 2024). Within this theoretical framework, professional training serves as the environmental and behavioral mechanism that enhances self-efficacy, which in turn influences nursing leadership competencies establishing SCT as a foundational lens for the proposed model.

## 2.2 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959)

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory provides a motivational framework that distinguishes between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, work conditions) that prevent dissatisfaction, and motivators (e.g., recognition, achievement, responsibility) that promote job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation. In nursing contexts, job satisfaction is deeply intertwined with professional growth opportunities and recognition of competence (Curado & Santos, 2022; Matta & Chammas, 2022). Professional training and continuing professional development (CPD) initiatives often function as motivators, empowering nurses to gain autonomy, improve performance, and experience professional fulfillment (King et al., 2021; Stavropoulou et al., 2025). Herzberg's theory explains why investment in training programs has enduring motivational effects. When nurses perceive that their organization supports their growth, their intrinsic motivation increases, leading to higher job satisfaction, stronger commitment, and better leadership engagement (Hudays et al., 2024; Anselmus Dami et al., 2022). Moreover, satisfied nurses are more likely to exhibit proactive leadership behaviors, mentor others, and foster healthy work environments (Yu et al., 2024). Thus, the theory underpins the mediating role of job satisfaction between professional training and leadership competencies, highlighting motivation as a critical psychological pathway for leadership development.

## 2.3 Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory, introduced by Burns (1978) and expanded by Bass (1985), emphasizes the role of leaders in inspiring followers to exceed expectations through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. This theory aligns closely with nursing leadership because it focuses on developing people, fostering innovation, and empowering teams to achieve collective goals (Rojko, Kvas, & Stare, 2025; Tsapnidou et al., 2024). In contemporary healthcare, transformational leadership behaviors are essential for adapting to change, promoting staff engagement, and advancing patient safety outcomes (Phillipson et al., 2025; Feng, Zhang, & Liang, 2025). Transformational leadership has also been associated with greater self-efficacy and job satisfaction among nurses (Yu et al., 2024; Jing et al., 2021). Leaders who model empowerment, communicate vision, and provide individualized support foster confidence and motivation in their teams, ultimately improving organizational performance (Burnett, 2024; Maritsa et al., 2022). Furthermore, transformational leadership competencies can be developed through structured training, coaching, and reflective practice (Galiotti et al., 2024; Edwards, 2024). These programs cultivate both the emotional intelligence and cognitive adaptability necessary for leadership success, making transformational leadership a key theoretical pillar for understanding how training, motivation, and psychological empowerment interact in nursing leadership development.

## 2.4 Integration of Theories

The integration of Social Cognitive Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory provides a multidimensional lens for understanding the pathways through which professional training influences nursing leadership competencies. Bandura's theory explains how self-efficacy acts as a cognitive and behavioral driver of competence; Herzberg's framework situates job satisfaction as an intrinsic motivational mediator; and Transformational Leadership Theory connects these psychological constructs to observable leadership performance and team outcomes (Rojko et al., 2025; Moran et al., 2021; Curado & Santos, 2022). Together, these theories suggest that leadership competence emerges not only from technical skill acquisition but also from the interplay of motivation, confidence, and inspiration cultivated through professional learning experiences. Professional training enhances self-efficacy by providing mastery and feedback (Bandura, 1986; Wang et al., 2025), fosters job satisfaction by fulfilling motivational needs (Herzberg, 1959; King et al., 2021), and promotes transformational leadership behaviors that drive organizational excellence (Tsapnidou et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2024). This theoretical convergence offers a robust foundation for the proposed conceptual framework, positing that job satisfaction and self-efficacy serve as complementary mediators through which professional training exerts its influence on nursing leadership competencies.

## 3. Hypotheses Development

### 3.1 Professional Training and Nursing Leadership Competencies

Professional training is widely recognized as a fundamental mechanism for developing and sustaining leadership competencies in nursing practice. Leadership competencies such as communication, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and strategic decision-making require ongoing capacity building through structured training and reflective learning (Rojko, Kvas, & Stare, 2025; Wang et al., 2025). Continuing professional development (CPD) programs provide nurses with the opportunity to enhance these competencies by engaging in evidence-based learning experiences that bridge theoretical knowledge with leadership behaviors (King et al., 2021; Stavropoulou et al., 2025). According to the transformational leadership paradigm, training interventions that integrate coaching and mentoring foster adaptability, ethical sensitivity, and collaboration within nursing teams (Galiotti et al., 2024; Maritsa et al., 2022). Empirical findings demonstrate that well-designed leadership training programs improve nurses' empowerment, confidence, and team management abilities, ultimately enhancing patient care outcomes (Giordano et al., 2024; Phillipson et al., 2025). Therefore, professional training serves as a key driver for developing leadership capacity and enabling nurses to meet the dynamic demands of healthcare organizations.

**H1:** Professional training has a significant positive relationship with nursing leadership competencies.

### 3.2 Professional Training and Job Satisfaction

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory emphasizes that intrinsic motivators such as achievement, recognition, and growth opportunities significantly enhance job satisfaction. Professional training acts as a strong motivational factor, providing nurses with pathways for career advancement and self-fulfillment (Curado & Santos, 2022; King et al., 2021). When nurses perceive that their organizations invest in their professional growth through continuous learning and competency-based programs, their commitment and satisfaction increase (Matta & Chammas, 2022; Hudays et al., 2024). This

relationship is particularly relevant in healthcare environments facing workforce shortages, where investment in staff development mitigates burnout and turnover (Alruwaili et al., 2024). Training also cultivates a sense of belonging and professional identity, reinforcing intrinsic motivation and engagement (Anselmus Dami et al., 2022). As CPD opportunities align with career goals and performance expectations, they enhance both individual well-being and organizational loyalty (Stavropoulou et al., 2025).

**H2:** Professional training has a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction.

### 3.3 Professional Training and Self-Efficacy

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory posits that learning experiences and mastery achievements strengthen self-efficacy the belief in one's ability to perform tasks successfully. In nursing, professional training provides the mastery experiences and feedback necessary to enhance this belief (Moran, Israel, & Sebeliski, 2021; Bush, Michalek, & Francis, 2021). Training programs that emphasize skill simulation, mentoring, and reflective practice allow nurses to gain confidence in their leadership potential (Kim & Sim, 2020; Wang et al., 2025). Empirical studies have shown that professional education interventions significantly improve self-efficacy, leading to better clinical judgment and leadership performance (Yang et al., 2024; Pabis, 2025). As nurses acquire new leadership tools and practice them in real-world contexts, their perceived capability to influence organizational outcomes increases. This heightened sense of self-efficacy not only strengthens individual performance but also encourages proactive and transformational leadership behaviors (Galiotti et al., 2024).

**H3:** Professional training has a significant positive relationship with self-efficacy.

### 3.4 Job Satisfaction and Nursing Leadership Competencies

Job satisfaction has long been identified as a determinant of effective leadership performance. Nurses who experience satisfaction in their roles tend to exhibit higher engagement, emotional stability, and motivation attributes strongly linked to leadership competency (Matta & Chammas, 2022; Curado & Santos, 2022). Herzberg's theory suggests that intrinsic rewards derived from fulfilling and meaningful work enhance employees' psychological readiness to lead and influence others. Within nursing, satisfied professionals are more likely to demonstrate transformational leadership behaviors that inspire teams and improve clinical outcomes (Yu et al., 2024; Tsapnidou et al., 2024). Conversely, dissatisfaction can reduce leadership potential by fostering stress, disengagement, and turnover intention (Hudays et al., 2024). Leaders who are content with their professional development opportunities tend to communicate effectively, mentor junior staff, and maintain a collaborative work environment (Rojko et al., 2025; Galiotti et al., 2024).

**H4:** Job satisfaction has a significant positive relationship with nursing leadership competencies.

### 3.5 Self-Efficacy and Nursing Leadership Competencies

Self-efficacy serves as a psychological enabler of leadership effectiveness, determining how confidently nurses approach complex decisions and guide their teams. According to Social Cognitive Theory, individuals with high self-efficacy demonstrate greater persistence, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities (Kim & Sim, 2020; Moran et al., 2021). In nursing leadership contexts, self-efficacious individuals are more likely to take initiative, innovate, and inspire subordinates (Bush et

al., 2021; Pabis, 2025). Empirical research supports that nurses' self-efficacy strongly predicts leadership competence, particularly in domains such as communication, delegation, and ethical decision-making (Yang et al., 2024; Feng, Zhang, & Liang, 2025). Transformational leadership approaches further enhance this relationship by reinforcing confidence through role modeling and empowerment (Yu et al., 2024; Jing et al., 2021). Hence, self-efficacy can be viewed as both a prerequisite and a reinforcing factor in the development of effective nursing leaders.

**H5:** Self-efficacy has a significant positive relationship with nursing leadership competencies.

### **3.6 Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction between Professional Training and Nursing Leadership Competencies**

While professional training directly contributes to leadership development, its impact may be amplified through increased job satisfaction. Training interventions that acknowledge nurses' career aspirations and promote professional autonomy often heighten satisfaction levels, which in turn lead to more confident and engaged leadership behaviors (Curado & Santos, 2022; Matta & Chammas, 2022). Job satisfaction acts as a psychological mechanism that transforms learning experiences into motivational energy for leadership application (King et al., 2021; Hudays et al., 2024). In healthcare organizations, satisfaction derived from growth opportunities fosters loyalty, reduces burnout, and enhances commitment to team success (Alruwaili et al., 2024). As a result, nurses who feel supported and valued are more likely to demonstrate collaborative and transformational leadership (Yu et al., 2024; Tsapnidou et al., 2024). This mediating process highlights the motivational role of satisfaction in linking professional development to leadership outcomes.

**H6:** Job satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between professional training and nursing leadership competencies.

### **3.7 Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy between Professional Training and Nursing Leadership Competencies**

Self-efficacy is another essential mediator explaining how professional training translates into leadership competence. Training fosters self-efficacy by providing mastery experiences, mentorship, and feedback that build nurses' confidence in their professional abilities (Moran et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2025). Nurses who believe in their capability to lead are more likely to apply the skills gained through professional training to influence others and achieve organizational goals (Bush et al., 2021; Pabis, 2025). Transformational leadership theory supports this linkage by emphasizing empowerment and self-belief as catalysts for behavioral change and innovation (Yu et al., 2024; Jing et al., 2021). Consequently, self-efficacy functions as the internal cognitive process that channels training outcomes into competent leadership performance. This mediating pathway reflects the psychological empowerment essential for advancing nursing leadership in complex healthcare settings (Galiotti et al., 2024; Feng et al., 2025).

**H7:** Self-efficacy significantly mediates the relationship between professional training and nursing leadership competencies.

## **4. Gap in the Literature**

### **4.1 Professional Training and Nursing Leadership Competencies**

Although professional training has been consistently recognized as a cornerstone for leadership competency development in nursing, existing studies tend to emphasize program design and immediate skill acquisition rather than long-term leadership outcomes. Research has demonstrated that competency-based training enhances managerial performance and role readiness (Wang et al., 2025; Giordano et al., 2024). Similarly, continuing professional development (CPD) has been linked to improved clinical judgment and decision-making among nurse leaders (King et al., 2021; Stavropoulou et al., 2025). However, few studies explore how these training interventions translate into sustained behavioral competencies such as strategic vision, emotional intelligence, or transformational influence (Rojko, Kvas, & Stare, 2025; Phillipson et al., 2025). Moreover, most existing research focuses on leadership training in Western or institutionalized healthcare contexts, with limited inquiry into cultural and organizational influences specific to emerging healthcare systems such as Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 transformation (Aldhafeeri et al., 2024; Arishi, Hudays, & Fitzpatrick, 2025). The absence of regionally grounded evidence creates a contextual gap in understanding how professional training programs can be tailored to strengthen leadership competencies within Saudi nursing organizations.

### **4.2 Job Satisfaction and Nursing Leadership Competencies**

The relationship between job satisfaction and leadership performance has been well documented across management and healthcare literature, yet the empirical links specific to nursing leadership competencies remain fragmented. Existing studies have shown that job satisfaction predicts work engagement, retention, and organizational commitment (Hudays et al., 2024; Curado & Santos, 2022), and that satisfied nurses tend to adopt transformational leadership behaviors that foster collaboration and innovation (Yu et al., 2024; Tsapnidou et al., 2024). Nevertheless, limited research investigates the direct causal mechanisms through which satisfaction influences leadership competencies such as decision-making, ethical reasoning, and communication. Additionally, studies often view satisfaction as an outcome rather than a mediating psychological driver of leadership performance (Matta & Chammas, 2022; Alruwaili et al., 2024). This narrow perspective overlooks the motivational and emotional processes through which satisfaction transforms professional learning into competent leadership behavior. Thus, a conceptual gap persists in articulating job satisfaction's mediating role within leadership development pathways in nursing practice.

### **4.3 Self-Efficacy and Nursing Leadership Competencies**

Although self-efficacy has been extensively studied in clinical performance and professional confidence, its integration into the leadership competency discourse remains underdeveloped. Bandura's theory underscores the importance of self-efficacy in shaping behavior and motivation, yet few studies have empirically examined how self-efficacy mediates the effects of professional training on leadership outcomes (Moran, Israel, & Sebeliski, 2021; Pabis, 2025). Empirical evidence suggests that self-efficacious nurses demonstrate greater initiative, adaptability, and problem-solving ability key traits of effective leadership (Bush, Michalek, & Francis, 2021; Yang et al., 2024). However, many studies conceptualize self-efficacy in isolation, focusing on clinical performance or academic confidence rather than leadership skill expression (Kim & Sim, 2020; Galiotti et al., 2024). Furthermore, the majority of leadership development frameworks fail to incorporate self-efficacy as a measurable construct or mediating mechanism in leadership formation (Rojko et al., 2025; Yu et

al., 2024). Consequently, there is a conceptual and methodological gap in exploring how professional training enhances leadership competencies indirectly through the empowerment of nurses' self-efficacy.

#### **4.4 Integrated Gaps in the Model**

Across these strands of research, a clear integration gap emerges. Existing studies have explored professional training, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy independently, yet their interconnected influence on nursing leadership competencies remains conceptually fragmented. The literature lacks comprehensive frameworks that synthesize psychological (self-efficacy and satisfaction) and organizational (training and support) dimensions into a unified model of leadership development (Phillipson et al., 2025; Giordano et al., 2024). Moreover, limited research has empirically tested the dual mediating effects of job satisfaction and self-efficacy in transforming professional training into sustainable leadership competencies (Moran et al., 2021; Curado & Santos, 2022). This integration gap is particularly pronounced in Middle Eastern and Saudi contexts, where leadership development is a strategic priority under Vision 2030 but remains under-researched in nursing disciplines (Arishi et al., 2025; Aldhafeeri et al., 2024). Therefore, there is a pressing need to develop and validate a conceptual framework that explains how professional training influences nursing leadership competencies through the mediating mechanisms of job satisfaction and self-efficacy. Such a framework will not only fill the existing theoretical void but also provide actionable guidance for healthcare policymakers, educators, and organizational leaders in designing evidence-based leadership development strategies.

### **5. Conceptual Framework Development**

#### **5.1 Professional Training, Job Satisfaction, and Self-Efficacy**

Professional training is the cornerstone of leadership development in nursing and represents the foundation of the proposed conceptual framework. It is through structured, competency-based education, continuing professional development, and mentorship initiatives that nurses develop the technical and interpersonal skills essential for leadership (King et al., 2021; Stavropoulou et al., 2025). Training fosters both cognitive and motivational growth by enhancing self-awareness, communication, and critical thinking abilities (Wang et al., 2025; Giordano et al., 2024). These professional learning experiences satisfy intrinsic motivators such as achievement, recognition, and self-improvement, thereby increasing job satisfaction (Curado & Santos, 2022; Matta & Chammas, 2022). Consistent with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, such programs also strengthen self-efficacy the belief in one's capacity to perform leadership tasks effectively by providing mastery experiences and opportunities for self-reflection (Moran, Israel, & Sebeliski, 2021; Bush, Michalek, & Francis, 2021). Empirical evidence confirms that training interventions designed to enhance professional competence improve nurses' confidence, autonomy, and leadership engagement (Galiotti et al., 2024; Edwards, 2024). Therefore, professional training acts as both a motivational and cognitive enabler, influencing satisfaction and self-belief, which together shape the foundation of nursing leadership competencies.

#### **5.2 Job Satisfaction and Self-Efficacy**

Job satisfaction and self-efficacy are interdependent psychological constructs that reinforce one another in promoting leadership readiness. Nurses who experience high job satisfaction tend to

display greater motivation, commitment, and resilience, all of which enhance their willingness to assume leadership responsibilities (Hudays et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2024). According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, intrinsic motivators such as professional recognition, achievement, and personal development are vital to generating satisfaction, while supportive conditions maintain it. Conversely, self-efficacy influences satisfaction by instilling confidence and competence in handling professional challenges (Kim & Sim, 2020; Yang et al., 2024). High self-efficacy allows nurses to manage stress and uncertainty effectively, leading to greater professional fulfillment and engagement (Pabis, 2025; Feng, Zhang, & Liang, 2025). Empirical findings demonstrate that environments fostering both satisfaction and efficacy increase empowerment and leadership behaviors, leading to sustained professional growth (Tsapnidou et al., 2024; Galiotti et al., 2024). This reciprocal dynamic reflects how confidence and satisfaction interact to build emotional stability, autonomy, and competence, creating a solid psychological base for effective nursing leadership.

### 5.3 Mediated Pathways toward Nursing Leadership Competencies

The conceptual framework highlights two primary mediating pathways that explain how professional training enhances nursing leadership competencies. The first pathway is motivational, where training improves job satisfaction by fostering recognition, morale, and personal fulfillment, which, in turn, inspire nurses to engage in transformational leadership practices (Curado & Santos, 2022; Matta & Chammas, 2022). Satisfied nurses exhibit greater interpersonal communication, collaboration, and proactive leadership engagement (Yu et al., 2024; Tsapnidou et al., 2024). The second pathway is cognitive, in which professional training strengthens self-efficacy, leading to improved confidence in leadership and problem-solving (Moran et al., 2021; Bush et al., 2021). As self-efficacy rises, nurses demonstrate greater adaptability, innovation, and decision-making ability in complex healthcare environments (Yang et al., 2024; Feng, Zhang, & Liang, 2025). These two pathways motivational through satisfaction and cognitive through efficacy function together to mediate the relationship between training and leadership. Integrating these mechanisms provides a more holistic understanding of leadership development, linking professional education with psychological empowerment and practical leadership outcomes (Rojko, Kvas, & Stare, 2025; Phillipson et al., 2025).

### 5.4 Proposed Conceptual Framework

The proposed conceptual framework, illustrated in Figure 1, integrates the theoretical relationships among professional training, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and nursing leadership competencies. Professional training acts as the exogenous factor that influences leadership competencies both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction and self-efficacy. The framework acknowledges the reciprocal interaction between job satisfaction and self-efficacy, where increased satisfaction enhances confidence, and greater self-efficacy reinforces professional fulfillment. Grounded in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory, this integrated framework offers a comprehensive understanding of how organizational learning and psychological processes contribute to effective nursing leadership (Moran et al., 2021; Curado & Santos, 2022; Yu et al., 2024). It provides a multidimensional view of leadership as a result of continuous learning, motivation, and empowerment. Furthermore, it aligns with the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 by emphasizing the development of empowered, competent, and resilient nurse leaders who can advance healthcare transformation and quality improvement across the Kingdom (Aldhafeeri et al., 2024; Arishi, Hudays, & Fitzpatrick, 2025).

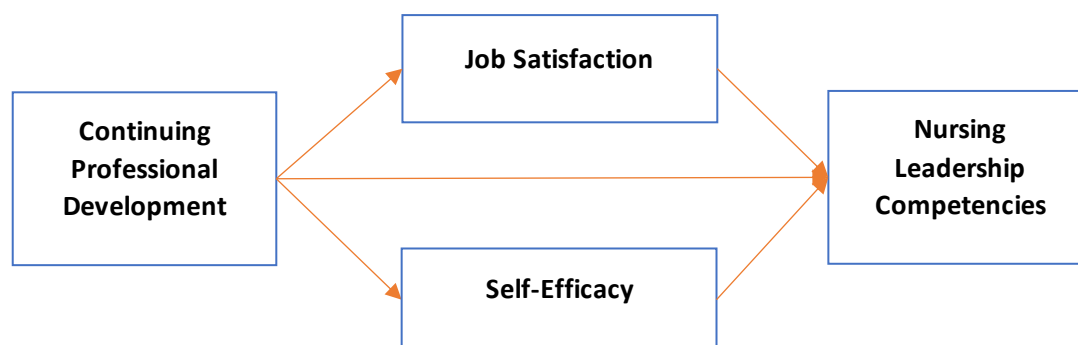


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## 6. Practical Implications

### 6.1 Implications for Healthcare Leaders

The proposed conceptual framework offers significant implications for healthcare leaders seeking to strengthen nursing leadership competencies through targeted interventions in professional training, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy. Leadership development in nursing should move beyond traditional supervisory training and instead focus on structured, evidence-based competency programs that build confidence, motivation, and empowerment (Wang et al., 2025; Rojko, Kvas, & Stare, 2025). Nurse leaders play a pivotal role in creating environments that encourage continuous learning, feedback, and mentorship, which enhance both satisfaction and leadership self-efficacy among staff (Giordano et al., 2024; Edwards, 2024). Leadership strategies should incorporate transformational approaches that promote psychological safety, recognition, and participation in decision-making processes, fostering a culture of trust and engagement (Yu et al., 2024; Tsapnidou et al., 2024). By integrating ongoing professional training into the organizational culture, healthcare leaders can reduce burnout, increase motivation, and improve leadership succession planning. Moreover, aligning these initiatives with Herzberg's motivational principles allows leaders to strengthen nurses' intrinsic drive for achievement and commitment (Curado & Santos, 2022; Matta & Chammas, 2022). Empowering leaders to mentor and coach new nurses not only develops future leadership pipelines but also supports the sustainability of high-quality patient care and organizational excellence (Galiotti et al., 2024; Bush, Michalek, & Francis, 2021).

### 6.2 Implications for Policymakers and Regulators

For policymakers and healthcare regulators, this framework provides a foundation for designing and institutionalizing leadership development policies that reinforce national healthcare transformation goals. Policymakers should prioritize structured professional training programs and competency frameworks that are integrated into national accreditation standards and continuing education requirements (Phillipson et al., 2025; King et al., 2021). These programs must be tailored to strengthen both cognitive and motivational components of leadership self-efficacy and job satisfaction thereby ensuring a holistic development approach. Regulators should also encourage healthcare institutions to adopt leadership evaluation systems that assess not only administrative outcomes but also psychological empowerment and professional growth (Rojko et al., 2025; Yu et al., 2024). In the Saudi Arabian context, aligning leadership training and empowerment policies with Vision 2030 ensures that nurses are equipped to contribute to national objectives of healthcare quality, efficiency, and innovation (Aldhafeeri et al., 2024; Arishi, Hudays, & Fitzpatrick, 2025).

Furthermore, government and regulatory bodies should invest in leadership capacity-building at all organizational levels, ensuring equitable access to training opportunities for both emerging and experienced nurse leaders. Encouraging partnerships between academic institutions, professional councils, and healthcare organizations can also facilitate the creation of standardized leadership competencies that respond to evolving healthcare challenges and workforce needs (Gümüş & Bellibaş, 2020; Lund, 2022).

### 6.3 Implications for Researchers and Educators

For researchers and educators, this study's conceptual framework highlights several critical areas for advancing nursing leadership research and pedagogy. Researchers are encouraged to empirically validate the proposed relationships between professional training, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and leadership competencies using quantitative and mixed-methods approaches (Rojko, Kvas, & Stare, 2025; Phillipson et al., 2025). Such empirical evidence would enrich leadership theory and guide the development of context-specific interventions across diverse healthcare settings. Educators should integrate leadership, motivation, and self-efficacy principles into nursing curricula to prepare students for future leadership responsibilities early in their professional journey (King et al., 2021; Giordano et al., 2024). Curriculum design should include experiential learning, simulations, and reflective practices that strengthen leadership confidence and ethical judgment (Wang et al., 2025; Moran, Israel, & Sebeliski, 2021). Moreover, mentorship and coaching programs should be embedded within academic and clinical education frameworks to nurture leadership identity formation and sustained motivation (Galiotti et al., 2024; Edwards, 2024). From a research standpoint, future studies could explore how demographic, cultural, and organizational factors influence the mediating roles of job satisfaction and self-efficacy. This would not only validate the conceptual model across contexts but also inform educational practices and leadership development policies aligned with national healthcare transformation priorities (Aldhafeeri et al., 2024; Arishi, Hudays, & Fitzpatrick, 2025).

## 7. Conclusion

This study developed a comprehensive conceptual framework that integrates professional training, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy as essential determinants of nursing leadership competencies. The framework highlights the dual role of professional training as both a cognitive and motivational driver that enhances nurses' knowledge, confidence, and engagement. By linking structured training to improved satisfaction and self-belief, the model emphasizes how professional development initiatives can strengthen leadership capacity and foster a culture of empowerment within healthcare organizations. Job satisfaction and self-efficacy are positioned as interconnected mediating mechanisms that explain how professional training translates into effective leadership outcomes. When nurses feel fulfilled in their roles and confident in their abilities, they are more likely to demonstrate initiative, resilience, and transformational leadership behaviors. This reciprocal relationship creates a reinforcing cycle that enhances performance, collaboration, and organizational commitment. The proposed framework provides meaningful guidance for healthcare leaders, policymakers, and educators aiming to develop sustainable leadership within the nursing workforce. It emphasizes the need for evidence-based training programs, supportive work environments, and leadership education that prioritizes empowerment and continuous growth. Overall, the model contributes to both theoretical advancement and practical application by offering an integrated perspective on how learning, motivation, and self-efficacy work together to produce competent, confident, and future-ready nursing leaders.

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