

## Advancing Nursing Through Holistic Education, Leadership, and Community Engagement

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*Her academic career at TSU spans nearly two decades, marked by steady advancement from **Instructor I to Associate Professor III (Permanent)**. In addition to teaching, she has held key leadership and administrative roles, most notably as **Dean of the College of Science** since November 2016. She also served as **College Secretary, Extension Chairperson** for both the College of Science and the College of Nursing, **Level I & Community Health Nursing (CHN) Coordinator**, and a member of national accreditor by AACCUP representing Tarlac State University and became member of Internal Audit IMS Team in the university, reflecting her strong commitment to governance, extension services, and quality improvement.*

*Dr. Rigor's professional experience is deeply rooted in clinical and public health practice. She worked as a **Staff Nurse at Talon General Hospital**, served as a **Sanitary Inspector at RHU-I & II, Victoria, Tarlac**, and rendered nursing services at the **Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs/Comprehensive Rehabilitation Center at Gizan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. She also completed preceptorship training in major hospitals, including **Tarlac Provincial Hospital, San Lazaro Hospital, Mariveles Mental Hospital, and the Philippine Orthopedic Center**, underscoring her holistic commitment to nursing education, leadership, and community health service.*

## Introduction

In this article, you will learn about Holistic Nursing education (HNE) as it relates to "leadership", "community outreach/programming", and the concepts surrounding HNE. You will learn the importance of holistic approaches in patient care. You will also examine the fundamental components of HNE that support a holistic approach to nursing.

As defined by the American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA), "Holistic Nursing is a philosophy of caring that recognizes, integrates and addresses the totality of an individual - including the physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions." An HNE educator works in conjunction with other disciplines to facilitate a comprehensive view of nursing that includes all factors affecting health and wellness.

The HNE educator facilitates learning of many concepts, including ethical decision-making, values, beliefs, ethics, and professional standards, while also providing holistic nursing care. An HNE educator teaches students about ethical nursing practice.

When healthcare providers provide care holistically, they often do so because they believe it enhances their patients' health and well-being. The Holistic Nurses Association (HNA) states that "As health care providers become aware of the importance of providing care in a holistic way and how this affects their patients' well-being, they are more likely to continue to be a part of this holistic view of providing care." The new holistic nursing model will result in nurses who will be balanced both in their careers and their lives (Sali, 2023).

## Holistic Education Philosophy

Holistic nursing education is an educational philosophy that advocates for "the commitment" and the understanding of how the mind, body, and spirit of a patient work together to provide a well-rounded approach to patient care. Holistic education fosters the understanding that a patient is more than just a medical diagnosis or ailment, and that a patient is also a complete human being with emotional and spiritual needs. A nurse's ability to develop cultural sensitivity and cultural competence, and to

provide appropriate care based on this knowledge, is a critical aspect of this holistic educational philosophy. A nurse who understands a patient's cultural background can connect with that patient and provide care to a diverse population. Furthermore, by understanding and respecting each patient's cultural values and beliefs, nurses will provide care in a respectful, understanding manner, which will help improve that patient's treatment outcomes.

Holistic Education promotes lifelong learning so that nurses continue to develop professionally and stay informed about current knowledge and skills. Lifelong Learning provides nurses with an opportunity to learn from past nursing experiences, to recognize their own thoughts and feelings as health care providers, and to engage in nursing continuing education. An increase in the quality of patient care and, thus, the eventual improvement of nursing and the patient population will be attributed to continuous nursing improvement.

A commitment to holistic principles throughout the nursing school process will provide the foundation for future nurse leaders. Future nurse leaders who recognize the interdependence of their patient's health and wellness (body, mind, and spirit) will be better able to lead the development and implementation of patient-centered care and community wellness initiatives (Zhou & Komarovska, 2023) will greatly affect the present landscape of nursing in terms of policy development and practice through their commitment to creating systems that emphasize holistic care, therefore pushing forward Society toward a more compassionate and effective health care system ( Lin, 2024 ).

### **Leadership in Nursing**

Nurse leaders play a critical role in shaping the evolution of health care by fostering an environment that prioritizes holistic patient care. Often, nurse leaders exhibit a transformational style of leadership, inspiring and motivating others to achieve goals beyond what they believed achievable. Nurse leaders foster an environment that promotes a unified mission statement and vision for delivering compassionate care to their teams and patients. Through this leadership style, nurse leaders collaborate with



team members, foster open communication, and empower nurses, creating an atmosphere where nurses feel valued and engaged in their work.

Mentoring is also a major component of leadership in nursing. Through mentoring relationships, experienced nurses may coach newer colleagues in the process of providing care, equipping them with the knowledge and expertise to successfully navigate the complexities of patient care. Furthermore, this mentoring relationship enhances the mentee's skills and reaffirms the core principles of holistic care by fostering a sense of accountability for patients' safety and well-being. Additionally, mentoring allows nurse leaders to foster a culture of support and belonging among their health care teams, resulting in improved patient outcomes and increased job satisfaction for nurses.

The ongoing dedication of nurse leaders to supporting the growth and development of other nurses within their health care teams will continue to have a ripple effect that extends beyond individual patient care practices. The community is a natural extension of the role of nurse leaders, and nurse leaders can serve as advocates for health initiatives and provide support for health services to help meet the diverse needs of the communities they serve. As such, the community is an integral component of the holistic approach to health that includes the care of patients as well as the improved health and well-being of communities. As such, nursing leadership intertwines with community engagement, promoting a holistic view of health. Additionally, providing community engagement opportunities promotes individual patient care and the broader health and well-being of communities (Ginting, 2022).

Community engagement in nursing provides an avenue for nursing to effectively connect with the communities it serves. Community involvement enhances nursing outcomes by providing community members with insight into their health status, cultural sensitivities related to health needs, and the societal challenges they may encounter as individuals and groups within the community. The knowledge gained from community involvement enables the development of nursing

strategies tailored to local concerns and to improve the overall health care experience for patients in that community.

A common strategy for engaging with a community is through health fairs and community education sessions. In addition to promoting health awareness, health fairs and education sessions enable nurses to build relationships with community members through engagement. For example, a case study of a nursing team that organized multiple health screening days in a low-income neighborhood demonstrated that access to services helped to build trust in the health care system and increased health literacy among community members. In this way, providing a community engagement opportunity allows patients to receive specific health-related information and to communicate directly with nurses, thereby empowering them and fostering a sense of belonging to the community and the nursing profession.

In addition to being an effective strategy for fostering community engagement, technology can also be used to promote community engagement. By engaging with community members through social media and online health resources, nurses can effectively reach larger numbers of individuals within their communities.

By collaborating across different types of teams, they will gain valuable experience that will help them navigate the realities of current Healthcare Systems. As nursing education continues to change and evolve, integrating interprofessional collaboration principles into its fabric will enhance the delivery of patient care and give nursing students the tools and confidence to coordinate and lead initiatives that value the patient's total health and wellness. This emphasis on collaboration establishes a foundation for examining future directions in nursing education, where collaborative teaching strategies will substantially influence the next generation of Nurses. The evolution of nursing education will be driven largely by several important emerging trends shaping nursing education's future, including holistic practices and technological advancements, as well as by well-considered policy recommendations.



In the future, nursing education will be greatly impacted by several emerging trends surrounding holistic practices and technological advancements, along with thoughtful policy recommendations. An important trend is the increasing emphasis on integrating technology into nursing education. Virtual simulations and internet-based learning platforms are creating a safe, secure environment for nursing students to practice their clinical skills, helping build confidence and competence before entering an actual clinical setting. This evolution in educating future nurses creates not only a more accessible form of education but also prepares nursing students for a variety of technological tools they will encounter in the contemporary healthcare workforce.

While developing future nursing education programs, it will be critical to develop a well-rounded nursing education with an emphasis on technical skills, but more importantly, to develop strong communication and supportive care for patients. This foundation is necessary to help nursing educators and future nurses prepare for a future that will require nursing professionals to be resilient, adaptive and committed to holistic practices. By fostering this transition, it will allow nursing educators and leaders to provide a call to action to develop an innovative future for nursing education that will ultimately benefit patients and society as a whole.

### **Reflection**

Working in both community service and nursing education greatly inspires me. My path has taught me the importance of lifelong learning and the necessity of constantly improving one's knowledge and abilities. My pursuit of several postgraduate degrees, culminating in a PhD in nursing, serves as a reminder that academic advancement is a journey that demands commitment, tenacity, and enthusiasm. As my career at TSU progressed, I went from being an instructor to an Associate Professor III and, finally, the Dean of the College of Science. It prompts me to consider my career path and how I might assume leadership and mentoring roles while remaining rooted in my industry.

The theory and practice, grounded in a wealth of clinical and public health expertise, also impress me. My work as a community health



coordinator, sanitary inspector, and staff nurse inspires me to value practical experience alongside academic accomplishments. I now understand that engaging with communities, understanding practical health issues, and translating knowledge into practical service are the keys to genuine influence in nursing. My work inspires me to strike a balance between leadership, scholarship, and real-world impact, while combining my professional development with tangible benefits for the people and society.

As I reflect on my experience, I see that improving nursing calls requires a comprehensive strategy that combines community involvement, leadership, and teaching. Throughout my career, I have worked to mentor and inspire students to become capable and caring professionals, while expanding my own knowledge through lifelong learning. While my clinical and community experiences have grounded me in the reality of public health and patient care, holding leadership positions has taught me the value of governance, cooperation, and establishing an environment that supports excellence. Finally, genuine advancement in nursing occurs when we combine academic study, real-world experience, and service, ensuring that our work benefits the nursing profession and the communities we serve.

