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Public health nurses' caring behaviour can increase homecare patients' satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Background: Caring behaviour plays a vital role in the nursing profession, especially in public health settings. In-home care services, where patients receive medical attention in the comfort of their homes, the quality of care and patient satisfaction depend heavily on the nurse's ability to exhibit caring behavior.

Objective: This study aims to analyze and identify the relationship between the caring behavior of public health nurses and the level of patient satisfaction in homecare services.

Methods: In this study, the design used is a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional study approach. According to the formula found by Isaac and Micheal, the population in this study amounted to 402 respondents, so a sample of 162 respondents was obtained. The sampling technique was Probability Sampling with a proportional random sampling type.

Results: Based on the results of the cross-tabulation that has been carried out between caring behaviour and patient satisfaction using the Fisher Exact test statistical test, the result is in the form of a p-value of 0.001 with a significant level of <0.05 and with this value (0.001) means less than the value a (0.05). It can indicate that Ha is accepted and Ho is rejected, and it can be concluded that caring behavior can increase patient satisfaction.

Conclusion: Researchers suggest that the caring behavior of public health nurses has a vital role in increasing patient satisfaction with homecare services. Nurses can help patients feel more comfortable and supported in their home environment through more personalised attention, effective communication, and emotional support. This contributes directly to increased patient satisfaction, which feels valued and cared for holistically in-home care.

Keywords: home care services, patient satisfaction, public health nurses,

INTRODUCTION

Homecare services have become one of the essential alternatives in providing healthcare, especially for patients who require ongoing care at home. In this context, the role of public health nurses becomes crucial because they are responsible not only for the clinical aspects but also for the emotional and psychosocial aspects of the patient (Arsat *et al.*, 2023). Caring behaviour, which includes empathy, support, attention, and good communication, is essential in providing quality and adequate services (Vázquez-Sánchez *et al.*, 2023). Caring behaviour is one of the main dimensions that affect patient satisfaction. Homecare patients, often in vulnerable conditions, rely heavily on the quality of their interactions with their caregivers. Research shows that the caring behavior of nurses contributes to feelings of security, value, and support by patients, which ultimately increases their satisfaction with the services received (Allen *et al.*, 2023). Nurses who can show genuine care, be responsive to patients' needs, and build good relationships will create a more positive atmosphere of care. In a homecare environment, where patients often spend more time with their nurses than in other healthcare facilities, this caring behavior is critical in determining patients' satisfaction with the services provided (Melissant *et al.*, 2024).

Patient satisfaction is one of the critical indicators in assessing the quality of health services, especially in the context of home care (Pontier-Marchandise *et al.*, 2023). The interaction between patients and caregivers is crucial in a homecare setting, where patients receive care in their homes. Public health nurses play a central role in providing medical and emotional support to patients, influencing their experience during the treatment process (Wang, Asan and Zhang, 2024). Caring behaviour, which includes empathy, attention, good communication, and respect for the patient's needs, is critical to building an effective therapeutic relationship. When nurses show highly caring behavior, patients feel cared for and valued, which can increase their satisfaction with the services provided (Gage, Gwyther and Stassen, 2024). The caring behavior of public health nurses contributes positively to patient satisfaction with homecare services. Therefore, it is essential to understand and explore this relationship more deeply and identify specific factors of caring behaviour that can be improved to maximize patient satisfaction (Etemad-Sajadi, Heo and Clergue, 2023a).Public health nurses have a very strategic role in providing holistic care, which focuses not only on the physical and psychosocial aspects of the patients. Nurses' caring behaviour is critical in creating a sense of security and comfort at home care, where patients often feel more vulnerable due to health conditions requiring continuous care (Ozdemir Koyu and Kilicarslan, 2024). By demonstrating a solid attitude of empathy, caring, and emotional support, nurses can reinforce patients' trust and sense of comfort, ultimately contributing to increased satisfaction with the services received. High caring behavior of nurses is positively correlated with increased patient satisfaction, especially in public health services and home care (Boven *et al.*, 2023).

However, further studies are still needed to understand how this caring behaviour affects patients' perception of service quality. Quality health care is not only measured from technical and medical aspects but also from how health workers, especially nurses, show caring behaviour in providing services. Caring behaviour is a form of concern demonstrated by nurses through empathy, sensitivity, and effective communication with patients, which is one of the essential pillars in providing patient comfort and satisfaction. Nurses' caring behavior has a significant positive correlation with patient satisfaction.

Patients who feel valued, respected, and receive good attention from nurses tend to be more satisfied with the services they receive (Härkönen *et al.*, 2024).

In the context of homecare services, where patients receive care at home, the role of public health nurses becomes more complex. They are not only responsible for clinical care but also have the task of creating emotionally and socially supportive relationships for patients as well as their families (Buma, van Klinken and van der Noort, 2023). Patients' conditions at home are often more vulnerable, so the caring behaviour of nurses is crucial in ensuring that patients feel supported holistically. Nurses' caring behaviour significantly impacts patient satisfaction with homecare services (Khirani, Patout and Arnal, 2024). Communication skills, empathy, work engagement, and a supportive work environment are key factors that can improve nurse caring behavior and, ultimately, patient satisfaction. Therefore, health institutions must provide training and create a supportive work environment for nurses to enhance the quality of service and patient satisfaction. Nurse caring behavior is an essential aspect of health services that can affect patient satisfaction levels, especially at homecare. This study explores the relationship between nurses' caring behavior and patient satisfaction in homecare services.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, the design used is a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional study approach. According to the formula found by Isaac and Micheal, the population in this study amounted to 402 respondents, so a sample of 162 respondents was obtained. The sampling technique was Probability *Sampling* with a proportional random sampling type. Inclusion Criteria: Patients treated for at least three days, the patient's family, or those willing to be respondents can communicate verbally, read, and fill in instruments. Data collection techniques go through stages: determining the topic of the problem, making observations, submitting research ethics and research permits, determining samples, inclusion and exclusion criteria, informed consent, data collection, data analysis, and presentation in tables and descriptions. The instrument in this study uses a questionnaire containing questions using a Likert scale. The questionnaire was used to find the respondents' biodata and determine the score of the influence of caring, the implementation of patient safety, and patient satisfaction. The questionnaire contains several questions for biodata, including name, age, gender, last education, occupation, and status. The level of validity of an instrument or questionnaire is tested for validity and realism. Data analysis is done after collecting data from all respondents or other sources. The collected data is then processed and analyzed using statistical methods in this study. They use Microsoft Excel and SPSS software to enter and process data. This research has received approval from the research ethics committee with the number B-335/KEP/IV/2024.

RESULT

Table 1. Distribution of respondent frequency by gender, age, marital status, last education, occupation

Characteristic	Frequency	%
Gender		
Man	31	19.1
Woman	131	80.9
Age		
12-16	3	1.9
17-25	35	21.6
26-35	26	16
36-45	45	27.8
46-55	26	16
56-65	20	12.3
>65	7	4.3
Marital Status		
Marry	121	74.7
Unmarried	41	25.3
Last Education		
Elementary School	21	13.0
Junior High School	33	20.4
Senior High School/Vocational High School	81	50.0
S1/S2/DIII	24	14.8
Others (not in school)	3	1.9

Based on Table 1, the characteristics of the respondents were described where the number of respondents by gender was obtained the highest data, namely 131 patients (80.9), while the number of male respondents was 31 (19.1), the number of respondents based on age 36-45 was 45 patients (27.8) being the highest data, while the age of 12-16 was three patients (1.9) being the lowest data, and judging from marital status, The number of married respondents was 121 patients (74.7) as the highest data, while the unmarried respondents were 41 patients (25.3) and it can be reviewed from the latest education showing that the high school/vocational school level was the highest data of 81 patients (50.0) and the other level or not going to school was the lowest data of 3 patients (1.9).

Table 2. Frequency distribution of caring, patient satisfaction, dimension of caring behavior

Category	Frequency	%
Caring		
Medium	5	3.1
High	157	96.9
Patient Satisfaction		
Medium	21	13
High	141	87
Dimension of caring behaviour		
Formation of humanistic and altruistic value factors		
Not enough	76	46.9
Good	86	53.1
Instilling faith and hope		
Not enough	15	9.3
Good	147	90.7
Instilling sensitivity towards yourself and others		
Not enough	17	10.5
Good	145	89.5
Fostering relationships of mutual trust and mutual help (helping trust)		
Not enough	64	39.5

Good	98	60.5
Increasing and accepting the expression of positive and negative feelings		
Not enough	80	49.4
Good	82	50.6
Provide an environment that supports, protects, and improves mentally, socioculturally and spiritually.		
Not enough	80	49.4
Good	82	50.6
Assists in the fulfillment of basic human needs		
Not enough	14	8.6
Good	148	91.4

Based on Table 2. The results were obtained from as many as 157 (96.9%) respondents, who stated that caring behaviour was in the high category and as many as 5 (3.1%). The results were 141 (87.0%) Respondents stated that Patient Satisfaction was in the High category and as many as 21 (13.0%). The dimension of the caring behaviour variable that has the highest value is the dimension of helping in meeting basic human needs with a suitable category of 148 respondents (91.4%), and the dimension that has the lowest value, namely the dimension of increasing and accepting the expression of positive and negative feelings and providing an environment that supports, protects, and improves mental, sociocultural and spiritual conditions with a suitable category of 82 respondents (50.6%). Helping each other with the Good category, as many as 98 respondents (60.5%).

Table 3. Results of data analysis on the relationship between caring behaviour and satisfaction

Caring behavior	Patient Satisfaction						P Value
	Medium		High		Total		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Medium	5	3.1	0	0	5	3.1	0.0001
High	16	9.9	141	87	157	96.9	

Based on Table 3. It can be seen from the respondents that patients with moderate caring behaviour result in moderate patient satisfaction as many as five respondents (3.1%), and respondents with moderate caring behaviour result in high patient satisfaction as many as 0 respondents (0.0%). Meanwhile, 16 respondents (9.9%) had high caring behaviour with moderate patient satisfaction and 141 respondents (87.0) had high caring behaviour with high patient satisfaction. Based on the results of the cross-tabulation that has been carried out between caring behaviour and patient satisfaction using the Fisher Exact test statistical test, the result is in the form of a p-value of 0.001 with a significant level of <0.05 and with this value (0.001) means less than the value a (0.05). It can indicate that Ha is accepted and Ho is rejected, and it can be concluded that caring behavior can increase patient satisfaction. This can be interpreted as the higher the caring behavior, the higher the patient satisfaction, and vice versa. The caring behavior of health workers is directly related to patient satisfaction. The higher the level of caring behavior shown by health workers, such as empathy, attention, and good communication, the higher the patient's satisfaction with the services provided. Conversely, low caring behavior can reduce patient satisfaction. Thus, improving caring behavior is one of the important keys to improving the quality of health services and patient satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

Researchers suggest that the caring behavior of public health nurses has an important role in increasing patient satisfaction with homecare services. Nurses can help patients feel more comfortable and supported in their home environment through more personalised attention, effective communication, and emotional support. This contributes directly to increased patient satisfaction, which feels valued and cared for holistically in-home care. Nurse caring behaviours,

such as respect, assurance of human presence, and positive connectedness, correlate positively with patient satisfaction (Zsarnoczky-Dulhazi *et al.*, 2023). Good caring behavior can increase patient satisfaction with homecare services. Patients who feel empathy, attention, and active involvement from nurses are more satisfied with their care, as they feel treated personally and valued (Möckli, Espinosa, *et al.*, 2023). In addition, increased patient satisfaction is directly correlated with improved quality of life and health outcomes. It is essential to explore how the caring behavior shown by public health nurses in homecare services can affect patient satisfaction. This study is expected to provide a clear picture of the contribution of caring behavior to service quality and patient satisfaction in-home care (Etemad-Sajadi, Heo and Clergue, 2023b).

Nurses' caring behavior is an essential aspect of health services that can affect patient satisfaction levels, especially in-home care. Nurses' involvement and job satisfaction are closely related to their caring behaviour (Suprapto, Mulat and Lalla, 2021). Nurses who feel engaged and satisfied with their work tend to show higher caring behaviours, positively impacting patient satisfaction. Therapeutic communication and empathy skills from nurses are essential in improving caring behaviour and, in turn, patient satisfaction (Suprapto *et al.*, 2024). Therapeutic communication training can improve nurses' caring behavior and patient satisfaction. Nurses' involvement and job satisfaction are closely related to their caring behavior. Nurses who feel engaged and satisfied with their work tend to show higher caring behaviours, positively impacting patient satisfaction. Nurses' caring behaviour contributes to patient satisfaction, well-being, and, subsequently, to the performance of healthcare organizations. This behaviour is influenced by physiological, psychological, socio-cultural, developmental and spiritual factors (Walsh *et al.*, 2024).

Identifying the factors that affect nurses' caring behaviour is essential to improving the quality of patient care: spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, psychological possession and nurse fatigue influence nurses' caring behaviour (Geransar *et al.*, 2023). Caring behaviour in nursing is an essential element that reflects the quality of interaction between nurses and patients (Suprapto, 2019). Caring is not just about providing medical services but also includes empathy, caring, emotional support, and effective communication. This caring role is increasingly significant in homecare services because patients receive care at home, where the environment is more personal, and patients may feel more vulnerable (K Sreedharan *et al.*, 2024). Public health nurses involved in home care are crucial in providing holistic care. They focus not only on the physical condition of the patient but also on their psychosocial well-being. Through good caring behaviour, nurses can help reduce anxiety, increase patient confidence, and provide comfort and security in treatment (Reynaud *et al.*, 2024).

Patients often feel a lower level of caring compared to that felt by nurses. Patients value nurses' professional knowledge and skills more, while nurses emphasise privacy and confidentiality of information (Rattanakanlaya *et al.*, 2023). Job status, motivation, work experience, and environment greatly influence nurses' caring behaviour. There is a difference in perception between nurses and patients regarding caring behaviour, where patients value nurses' professional skills and knowledge more. Improving nurses' caring behavior can positively impact the quality of care and patient satisfaction (Mata-Lima, Paquete and Serrano-Olmedo, 2024). Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to the factors that affect caring behaviour and develop strategies to improve caring behaviour among nurses. Patients consider nursing care to be more playful than nurses, with factors such as the work environment, the emotional intelligence of the nurse, and sociodemographic characteristics influencing the expression of care (Alhifany *et al.*, 2023). Nurses' caring behaviour is relatively poor, with factors such as being married, having lower work experience, satisfaction with motivation, prospects, and the nursing profession influencing their behaviour. Fostering caring behaviours among nurses significantly reduces missed nursing care adverse events in patients and improves quality nursing care (Möckli, Simon, *et al.*, 2023).

Implications for public health nurses and future health workers

They are improving the quality of home care services. Public health nurses can focus more on developing caring behaviours in patient interactions. By strengthening empathy, communication, and personalized attention, nurses can improve patient satisfaction and homecare services' overall quality—development of education and training in caring. The implication for the future of nursing education is the need for more emphasis on training in caring behaviour. The nursing education curriculum should integrate communication and empathy skills to ensure future healthcare workers can provide high-quality, patient-focused care. Multidisciplinary Collaboration. Public health nurses of the future will need to work more closely with other health workers in multidisciplinary teams to provide comprehensive and personalized care. In this collaboration, caring behaviour is important in ensuring that each team member fully listens to the patient—using technology in care. In the future, technologies such as telemedicine will be increasingly used in health services, including home care. However, nurses must be able to maintain caring behaviour even through digital platforms, ensuring that the relationship with patients remains warm and personal even if care is provided remotely—improvement of Nurses' Welfare. Increasing caring behaviour also has a positive impact on the welfare of the nurses themselves. By practising practical caring, nurses can experience higher job satisfaction, reduce stress, and improve their mental health, ultimately creating a positive patient-care cycle.

CONCLUSION

Researchers suggest that the caring behavior of public health nurses has a vital role in increasing patient satisfaction with homecare services. Nurses can help patients feel more comfortable and supported in their home environment through more personalised attention, effective communication, and emotional support. This contributes directly to increased patient satisfaction, which feels valued and cared for holistically in-home care. The caring behavior of public health nurses has a significant influence on patient satisfaction with homecare services. By demonstrating empathy, care, and effective communication, nurses can create a strong relationship with patients, increasing their perception of the quality of services. Improving caring behaviour has a positive impact on patient satisfaction. It contributes to patients' emotional and psychological well-being and is vital to in-home care. Therefore, it is important to emphasize the role of caring behaviour in nursing practice in the future. It is hoped that nursing education institutions will strengthen the curriculum by emphasizing the developing of communication skills and caring behaviour. Practice-based training should be included to ensure nursing students can apply caring behaviours in interactions with patients.

Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest

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