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The Feeling of Surrender: Patients' Perceptions of their Interactions with Nurses

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Abstract

Background: Meaningful nurse-patient interaction is crucial to achieving better health outcomes. A nurse should understand the importance of tailored effective communication to understanding how each patient prefers to be treated. Nurse-patient interaction is a potential resource to promote hope, meaning and purpose in life, which results in harmony and healing environment. Previous studies have shown a variety of aspects of nurse-patient interaction, however the process of interaction have not been thoroughly investigated from the patients' viewpoint. This qualitative study aimed to investigate patients' perceptions of their interactions with nurses in the hospital wards.

Method: A phenomenological approach was undertaken in one public hospital in Indonesia. 10 participants were recruited from general wards by purposeful sampling method. The data were collected through observations of nurse-patient interaction, the ward atmosphere as well as the activities by semi-structured interviews. Transcripts were then examined and analyzed by Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach.

Result: Three themes were extracted from data analysis including saying sorry for neglecting me, calming the atmosphere for nurses' openness and feeling surrender to destiny.

Discussion and Conclusion: Based on the results, issues such nurses' openness and positive atmosphere in the hospital wards are shown to be important in maintaining the best quality of nurse-patient interactions. Nurses should be aware of these factors during interactions with patients.

Keywords: *Feeling of surrender, surrender, patients' perception, interactions, nurses.*

Introduction

Meaningful nurse-patient interaction is crucial to achieving better health outcomes. A nurse should understand the importance of tailored effective

communication to understanding how each patient prefers to be treated. Nurse-patient interaction is a potential resource to promote hope, meaning and purpose in life, which results in harmony and healing environment.¹ Patients expressed that the nurse-patient relationship was a fundamental aspect in nursing care which empowers patients' abilities to engage in overall well-being practices. Previous studies identified that there was no connection between nurses and patients, thus patients felt difficulties to connect with certain nurses. Strong connection is an important aspect of nursing care created by a sense of trust and it is essential for the development of nurse-patient interactions.

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Personal beliefs, values, perceptions, expectations and personal expression and behavior was stated as factors that influence the development of trust between nurse-patient.²⁻⁴

Nurse-patient relationship develops after several interactions in a relatively short period of time. Studies showed that patients believed the importance of nurse-patient relationship in their care. Being a genuine, being open and honest and also being present when they need them were considered as essential keys in sustaining the relationship. Patients stated that they need to feel valued, respected as individuals and should be treated as if they were humans. Social interaction between nurse-patient has been described as a therapeutic and intervention process to achieve health outcomes. In addition, the interactions should be developed based on mutual trust and respect, it was part of a cognitive and psychomotor process.⁵⁻⁶

Patients' centered care and patients' experiences of using health services are current health issues. Improving high quality of patient care requires more than clinical skills, it requires a deep understanding patients' experiences encompass the range of interactions that patients have with hospital. Effective social interactions are designed as opportunities to develop a strong connection, mutual trust and understanding in a relationship. There were two key factors in social interaction: 'developing and maintaining relationships' and 'caring and motivational interactions'. Promoting these factors could promote a long-lasting relationship.⁷

Previous studies have shown a variety of aspects of nurse-patient interaction, however the process of interaction have not been thoroughly investigated from the patients' viewpoint. This qualitative study aimed to investigate patients' perceptions of their interactions with nurses in the hospital wards.

Material and Method

A phenomenological approach was undertaken in one public hospital in Indonesia. 10 participants were recruited from general wards by purposeful sampling method. The data were collected through observations of nurse-patient interaction, the ward atmosphere as well as the activities by semi-structured interviews.

Open-ended questions allowed participants to share their experiences of interactions. It was started with opening questions, "How would you describe yourself

as a person?", "How many days have you been staying in this hospital?", "How would you describe your interactions with nurses?".

Transcripts were then examined and analyzed by Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach. Several steps in IPA analysis: (1) Read and re-read the transcripts and pick up the messages, (2) Re-read the whole transcripts and examine prospective themes, (3) Pay attention to the emergent themes and create a link between themes and (4) Organize themes and interpret the meaning of themes.⁸⁻⁹

Findings: Nurses are exposed to many challenges and issues in the workplace that may influence the quality of nursing care. Improving the outcome of nursing care based on the experiences of patients, we need to consider patients' perception to the care they received in the wards. Three themes were extracted from data analysis including saying sorry for neglecting me, calming the atmosphere for nurses' openness and feeling surrender to destiny.

Table 1. Themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-Themes
Saying sorry for neglecting me	Disregard patient concerns
	Feel sorry for the missed care
Calming the atmosphere for nurses' openness	Being humorous
	Being polite
	Hoping openness
Feeling surrender to destiny	Being restricted
	Being surrendered

Saying sorry for neglecting me: Patients stated that nurses 'saying sorry for neglecting them', it was developed from two sub-themes: 'disregard patient concerns' and 'feel sorry for the missed care'. Patients felt that nurses sometimes missed response to call alarms, administer the medication, and assist in bathing. However, nurses also said they were sorry for prioritizing another patient. Patients stated that: 'I haven't taken a bath in three days', 'I have tried to call them to help me, yet they were so busy and came late', '....but, they said sorry for neglecting us, they were only trying to help another patient', 'They said to us, just be patient, we will help you later after another patient', 'They seem so busy....but...somehow my family could not find them in nurses' station'. Nurses are important human resources in determining the quality of care in the hospitals as well as the nature of health outcomes. More than half of

respondents felt that there were not enough nurses in the wards. Nurses also admit that they did not have enough time to properly care for their patients. Studies showed that insufficient staff or time to carry out their work directly influence the patient outcomes and increase the risk of patient safety. Yet, hospital management should improve the policies for dealing with missed nursing care and its consequences for patients, health providers and the hospital.¹⁰⁻¹¹

Calming the atmosphere for nurses’ openness:

Hospital environment provide an effective stimulation and adequate support for healing capacity of patients, families, and health providers. Patients expressed that they have been trying to ‘calming the atmosphere for nurses’ openness’. This theme came from three sub-themes: ‘being humorous’, ‘being polite’ and ‘hoping openness’. They knew that nurses seemed so busy in the wards, thus they tried to create a calm atmosphere by being humorous individuals, being polite during interactions and hope that nurses will be more motivated to help them. Patients stated that: ‘We have tried to create a humour while we communicate with them, so they will feel relax’, ‘We have to be polite when we need help from nurses’, ‘We do that for their openness’, ‘We have to help them, so they also help us, yaaaa.....by being humorous like this’. Humour played a significant role in developing nurse-patient relationships and supporting nurses to provide adequate treatment to patients and their families. It helps patients to make a strong connection with health providers, provide a continuum of care and mutual support.¹²⁻¹⁵

Feeling surrender to destiny: Patients explored the ‘feeling surrender to destiny’ which was developed from two sub-themes: ‘being restricted’ and ‘being surrendered’. Patients said that: ‘I felt like surrender... may be it is what we should get’, ‘This ward you know, it feels so hot, even we cannot bring any fan in the hospital’, ‘We cannot ask for further questions, they just said to us, just be patient in this hospital’, ‘You know, it’s just we have to feel like this...surrender.... what can we do, we are the one who need helps from them’, ‘Just be patient, that is all you need’. Being surrendered means as having no other options than to relent, this happened when patients could no longer help themselves during hospital stays. They rely on nurses for comfort, reassurance, advice, and support. Dependence on other people means that they trust others to help and manage the situation. During communication with nurses, patients have to be a cooperative person and

doing as nurses requested. Nurses should also be present for their patients during the nursing shift, active listening and maintain a good eye contact while interacting with patients. A mutual trust and respect during interactions was developed when the patients were invited to take part in the nursing care.¹⁶⁻¹⁷

This study highlights the perspectives of patient during interaction with nurses. The results of this study may have implications for nurses to manage their care and improve their relationships to achieve high quality of patients’ outcomes.

Conclusion

Based on the results, issues such nurses’ openness and positive atmosphere in the hospital wards are shown to be important in maintaining the best quality of nurse-patient interactions. Nurses should be aware of these factors during interactions with patients.

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