

Original Research Article

A study on patient satisfaction with therapeutic communication of nurses in multispecialty hospital

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Received: 31 March 2026

Revised: 12 May 2026

Accepted: 13 May 2026

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ABSTRACT

Background: Therapeutic communication is a fundamental component of nursing practice that significantly influences patient satisfaction and overall healthcare quality. It is also a critical element of patient safety, as effective communication helps reduce medical errors, enhances patient understanding and supports safe clinical decision-making. Effective nurse-patient communication promotes understanding, alleviates anxiety, fosters trust and enhances health outcomes. As primary caregivers, nurses play a pivotal role in delivering patient-centered care through their communication skills.

Methods: A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 73 patients admitted to orthopaedic, oncology and surgical wards of a tertiary care hospital. Participants were selected using convenience sampling techniques. Data was collected using structured questionnaire assessing various components of nurses' therapeutic communication. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean and Standard Deviation.

Results: The overall mean satisfaction score was 4.13 ± 0.83 , indicating a high level of patient satisfaction. The highest satisfaction was observed in nurses' knowledge and skills (4.32 ± 0.69) and clarification of patient doubts (4.29 ± 0.79). Patients also reported high satisfaction with emotional support, responsiveness and communication regarding health status. However, neutral responses were noted in areas such as interaction during admission and time spent with patients.

Conclusions: Therapeutic communication has a significant positive impact on patient satisfaction and quality of nursing care. Strengthening nurses' communication skills through regular training and institutional support is essential to enhance patient-centered care.

Keywords: Nursing care, Nurse-patient interaction, Patient satisfaction, Therapeutic communication

INTRODUCTION

Therapeutic communication is a purposeful, goal-directed interaction between healthcare providers and patients that aims to promote emotional well-being, enhance understanding and improve health outcomes. It involves techniques such as active listening, empathy, clarification,

reassurance and appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication to establish a trusting and supportive nurse-patient relationship. These techniques, including open-ended questioning, reflection, silence and body language, enable patients to express their concerns effectively and facilitate holistic care.¹ In healthcare settings, therapeutic communication plays a crucial role in enhancing patient satisfaction, improving adherence to

treatment and reducing anxiety and stress. Effective communication ensures accurate information exchange, builds trust and positively influences patients' overall care experience.^{2,3} Nurses, being primary caregivers who spend the most time with patients, have a significant influence on patients' perceptions of care. Therefore, their communication skills are a key determinant of patient satisfaction.² Patient satisfaction is widely recognised as an important indicator of healthcare performance, reflecting patients' perceptions and experiences of the care they receive. Studies have consistently demonstrated that effective nurse-patient communication improves trust, reduces psychological distress and enhances patient engagement and health-related quality of life.³

A cross-sectional study conducted among cancer patients in Türkiye reported that patient-centered communication significantly improved patient engagement and satisfaction with healthcare services.³ Therapeutic communication also contributes to improving patient experiences and supporting better healthcare outcomes. Training programs aimed at enhancing nurses' communication skills have been shown to improve patient satisfaction and overall nursing care practices.⁴ However, barriers such as heavy workload, staff shortages and lack of communication training can negatively affect the effectiveness of therapeutic communication, leading to misunderstandings and reduced patient satisfaction.⁵

Several studies have examined the relationship between therapeutic communication and patient satisfaction. Alhussin et al reported that more than 70% of patients expressed high satisfaction with nursing care, particularly in areas related to communication, responsiveness and professional competence.⁶ Similarly, Alrimali et al and Alreshidi et al found a high overall patient satisfaction score (4.07±0.72), emphasizing the importance of effective communication in shaping patient perceptions.⁷ Negi et al demonstrated a strong association between the quality of therapeutic communication and patient satisfaction during hospitalization.⁸

Furthermore, patients who perceive nurses as empathetic, supportive and informative tend to report higher satisfaction with nursing services.⁹ Kulsum et al identified a statistically significant relationship between therapeutic communication and patient satisfaction (p=0.046).¹⁰ Ariyanti et al also highlighted that therapeutic communication positively influences patient satisfaction and motivation during hospitalisation.¹¹

Despite the established importance of therapeutic communication, challenges such as workload, staffing constraints and limited training continue to affect its implementation in clinical settings.^{5,12} Studies by Moykari et al further confirmed that better knowledge and practice of therapeutic communication among nurses are associated with higher patient satisfaction levels.¹² Overall, therapeutic communication is a fundamental component of nursing practice and a key determinant of

patient satisfaction. It enhances trust, reduces anxiety and improves patient engagement. However, there remains a need to assess therapeutic communication practices in different hospital settings to identify gaps and strengthen patient-centered care. Therefore, the present study aims to evaluate the impact of nurses' therapeutic communication on patient satisfaction in a tertiary care hospital.

METHODS

Statement of the problem

A study on patient satisfaction with therapeutic communication of nurses in multispecialty hospital

Study design and setting

A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in a selected tertiary care hospital. The study included patients admitted to orthopaedic, oncology and surgical wards.

Study duration

The study was conducted from June 2020 to March 2021 in a selected tertiary care hospital.

Study population and sampling

The study population comprised patients admitted to the selected wards during the study period. A convenience sampling technique was used to select participants and a total of 73 patients were included in the study. The sample size was calculated using a formula with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence interval.

The sample size was calculated using the standard formula.

$$n = Z^2 \frac{p(1-p)}{e^2}$$

where,

$$Z = 1.96 \text{ at } 95\% \text{ confidence interval}$$

$$p = 0.9013$$

$$e = 0.05$$

Data collection tool and technique

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire developed to assess nurses' therapeutic communication. The tool consisted of two sections.

Section A

Demographic variables (age, gender, education, hospital ward).

Section B

Assessment of patient satisfaction with nurses' therapeutic communication. Patient satisfaction was measured using a five-point likert scale and the scores were expressed as mean and standard deviation.

Inclusion criteria

It includes patients admitted to orthopaedic, surgical and oncology wards. Patients admitted to the hospital for a minimum duration of three days.

Exclusion criteria

Patients who were not willing to participate in the study were excluded from the study.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The results were tabulated and interpreted accordingly.

Ethical approval

Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Institutional Ethics Committee of the study institution prior to the commencement of data collection. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants and confidentiality of the information was maintained throughout the study.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents 32.9% were in the age group of 41–50 years, followed by 26% in

the age group of 51–60 years, 16.4% in the age group of 31–40 years, 13.7% in the age group of 20–30 years and 11% aged 61 years and above. With regard to gender, 47.9% of the respondents were male, while 52.1% were female. In terms of educational status, 17.8% of the respondents had primary education, 42.5% had secondary education, 32.9% were graduates and 6.8% were post-graduate. Regarding the hospital ward, 34.2% of the respondents were admitted to oncology wards, while 32.9% were from orthopaedic wards and 32.9% were from surgical wards. Regarding duration of the hospital stay, 41.1% of patients stayed for 6-10 days, followed by 38.4% for 3-5 days and 20.5% stayed for more than 10 days.

The findings indicate that the majority of patients were satisfied with nurses' therapeutic communication across all domains. Satisfaction was moderate for cordial behaviour during admission (mean=3.81±0.72) and polite behaviour (mean=3.97±0.73). Participants reported greater satisfaction with maintaining a calm environment (4.01±0.86), ensuring food availability (4.16±0.88) and maintaining privacy and confidentiality (4.10±0.85). Patients expressed high satisfaction with emotional support and stress reduction (4.18±0.87), responsiveness to concerns (4.07±0.86) and clarification of doubts (4.29±0.79), while communication of health status to doctors (4.26±0.93) and explanations during procedures (4.16±0.80) were also rated positively.

Satisfaction was evident in areas such as explanation about treatment (4.12±0.82), information sharing (4.16±0.83), nurses' concern for recovery (4.12±0.93) and time spent with patients (4.15±0.89). Nurses' knowledge and skills received the highest satisfaction rating (4.32±0.69). Overall, therapeutic communication was associated with a strong positive impact on patient satisfaction, with a mean score of 4.13±0.83.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of patients (n=73).

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age (in years)		
20–30	10	13.7
31–40	12	16.4
41–50	24	32.9
51–60	19	26.0
61 and above	8	11.0
Gender		
Male	35	47.9
Female	38	52.1
Education		
Primary	13	17.8
Secondary	31	42.5
Graduation	24	32.9
Post-graduation	5	6.8
Hospital ward		
Orthopaedic ward	24	32.9
Oncology ward	25	34.2

Continued.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Surgical ward	24	32.9
Duration of hospital stay (in days)		
3-5	28	38.4
6-10	30	41.1
>10	15	20.5

Table 2: Patient satisfaction with therapeutic communication of nurses.

Components	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Mean±SD
Cordial behavior during admission	10 (13.6)	41 (56.2)	21 (28.8)	0 (0)	1 (1.4)	3.81±0.72
Demonstrates polite behavior	16 (21.92)	41 (56.16)	14 (19.18)	2 (2.74)	0 (0)	3.97±0.73
Ensured a calm and comfortable environment during the stay	23 (31.51)	32 (43.83)	14 (19.18)	4 (5.48)	0 (0)	4.01±0.86
Concerned whether food was available on time	31 (42.46)	27 (36.99)	11 (15.07)	4 (5.48)	0 (0)	4.16±0.88
Maintained privacy and confidentiality	26 (35.62)	31 (42.46)	14 (19.18)	1 (1.37)	1 (1.37)	4.10±0.85
Helped reduce stress and anxiety through nursing care	30 (41.09)	30 (41.09)	10 (13.71)	2 (2.74)	1 (1.37)	4.18±0.87
Responded promptly	24 (32.88)	34 (46.57)	12 (16.44)	2 (2.74)	1 (1.37)	4.07±0.86
Helped in clarification of doubt/queries	34 (46.57)	28 (38.36)	9 (12.33)	2 (2.74)	0 (0)	4.29±0.79
Confirmed that health status was communicated to the doctor	36 (49.31)	25 (34.25)	9 (12.33)	1 (1.37)	2 (2.74)	4.26±0.93
Approached properly during therapeutic/diagnostic procedures	29 (39.73)	28 (38.36)	15 (20.54)	1 (1.37)	0 (0)	4.16±0.80
Ensured that the treatment and nursing interventions were understood	25 (34.25)	35 (47.94)	11 (15.07)	1 (1.37)	1 (1.37)	4.12±0.82
Provided proper information about health status and treatment	30 (41.09)	27 (36.99)	14 (19.18)	2 (2.74)	0 (0)	4.16±0.83
Showed concern regarding health problems and recovery	29 (39.73)	30 (41.09)	9 (12.33)	4 (5.48)	1 (1.37)	4.12±0.93
Spent adequate time	31 (42.46)	25 (34.25)	15 (20.55)	1 (1.37)	1 (1.37)	4.15±0.89
Knowledgeable, skillful and provides high quality of nursing care	32 (43.84)	32 (43.84)	9 (12.32)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.32±0.69
Overall						4.13±0.83

DISCUSSION

The present study assessed patient satisfaction with nurses' therapeutic communication in a multispecialty hospital and found a high overall satisfaction level (4.13±0.83), reflecting that communication practices were

effective and positively perceived by patients. Moderate satisfaction was observed in areas such as cordial behaviour during admission (3.81±0.72), indicating a need to improve initial patient interaction and orientation. This finding is consistent with Alrimali and Alreshidi, who emphasised the importance of effective

communication during first contact.⁷ Additionally, polite and respectful behaviour of nurses (3.97 ± 0.73) further underscores the role of interpersonal skills in building patient trust, as supported by Nisa et al.⁹ Higher satisfaction was observed in maintaining a calm environment (4.01 ± 0.86), ensuring basic needs such as food availability (4.16 ± 0.88) and maintaining privacy and confidentiality (4.10 ± 0.85), reflecting adherence to holistic and ethical nursing practices. High satisfaction with emotional support and stress reduction (4.18 ± 0.87) underlines the psychological benefits of therapeutic communication. Patients also reported high satisfaction with responsiveness to concerns (4.07 ± 0.86) and clarification of doubts (4.29 ± 0.79), emphasizing the importance of clear and effective communication, consistent with the findings of Ariyanti.¹¹ Effective communication of patient status to doctors (4.26 ± 0.93) and during procedures (4.16 ± 0.80) indicated good coordination and continuity of care. Satisfaction with explanations regarding treatment (4.12 ± 0.82) and health information (4.16 ± 0.83) highlights the role of patient education in improving engagement and adherence. Patients also perceived nurses as empathetic and attentive (4.12 ± 0.93) and reported adequate time spent with them (4.15 ± 0.89), despite workload challenges. Nurses' knowledge and skills received the highest satisfaction rating (4.3 ± 0.69), reflecting strong confidence in the quality of care. Overall, the finding reinforced that therapeutic communication is a key determinant of patient satisfaction, consistent with existing literature and highlights the need for continuous training and institutional support to strengthen communication practices.

Limitations

The study was limited by the use of convenience sampling, a small sample size from a single hospital and restriction to selected wards, which limits generalization of the findings. Additionally, only patients' perspective was considered, without assessing other contributing factors such as workload or staffing.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrated a high level of patient satisfaction with nurses' therapeutic communication in the multispecialty hospital, with an overall mean score of 4.13 ± 0.83 . Patients particularly appreciated nurses' competence, clarity in communication and emotional support provided during hospitalization. The findings highlight that effective therapeutic communication is a key component in enhancing patients' trust, reducing anxiety and improving overall healthcare outcomes. This study adds to the existing knowledge by emphasizing the importance of therapeutic communication in improving patient satisfaction within multispecialty hospital settings. Strengthening communication skills through regular training programs, supportive policies and adequate

staffing is essential to further enhance patient-centered care and overall quality of healthcare services.

Funding: No funding sources

Conflict of interest: None declared

Ethical approval: The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee

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Cite this article as: Menezes R, Harini AV, Shetty P. A study on patient satisfaction with therapeutic communication of nurses in multispecialty hospital. *Int J Community Med Public Health* 2026;13:3047-52.