# Compassionate Care: Exploration of the Nurse-Patient Relationship and Behavioral Dynamics in Healthcare Settings

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess patients' opinions of nurse behavior and explore the relationship between demographic characteristics and nurse behavior. Four hypotheses have been proposed to investigate the influence of age, gender, marital status, and educational level on nurse behavior. The research methodology was a quantitative, descriptive study using a survey of TU Teaching hospital ward patients. The survey had 45 participants and a 90% acceptance rate. The findings revealed dissatisfaction among patients with the period spent by nurses, while others accepted a lack of affection and belief in the pleasantness of nurses' gestures. However, patients largely believed nurses' clinical evaluations thought their care needs were addressed, and perceived favorable outcomes from nursing treatments. The correlation study indicated no significant relationships between age, gender, marital status, educational level, and nursing behavior. In conclusion, this study provides insight into patient opinions of nurse behavior, highlighting opportunities for improvement.
**Keywords:** Behavioral dynamics, compassionate care, healthcare settings

## Introduction

Nurse caring behavior is one aspect that is very related to nursing services, because caring includes human relationships and affects the quality of services and patient satisfaction (Pokharel, Aryal, Yadav, & Pokharel, 2021). Patient satisfaction is the result of an assessment in the form of an emotional response (feeling happy and satisfied) to the patient because of fulfillment of expectations or desires in using and receiving nurse services (Sakha & Menariya, 2021). Patient satisfaction is an evaluation or assessment after using a service that the selected service at least meets or exceeds expectations (Gurung, Thapa, Khadka, Karki, & Neupane, 2020).

The hospital as one of the health facilities is used by the government and the community (Freijser, et al., 2023). Hospitals have a very strategic role in efforts to accelerate the improvement of public health status (Figueroa, Harrison, Chauhan, & Meyer, 2019). The new paradigm of health care requires hospitals to provide quality services according to the needs and wishes of patients while still referring to the professional code of ethics (Piya, Shrestha, & Shrestha, 2022). At the hospital, the resources that contribute the most to supporting patient satisfaction, one of which is the nurse (Vahey, Aiken, Sloane, Clarke, & Vargas, 2004). The nurse gives the big influence to determine the quality of service. Nurses are as spread heads of service to patient and their families in the hospital, because of the frequency of meetings with the most of frequent patient (Babapour, Gahassab-Mozafari, & Fathnezhad-Kazemi, 2022).

Emerging findings appears to support the assertion of a link between good nurses and positive patient outcomes (Arsat, Chua, Wider, & Dasan, 2022; Thapa, Ghimire, & Bhattarai, 2023). There is a need to explore the issues surrounding patients' perceptions of and attitudes to nurses and to determine factors that contributed to their experience within that environment (Chan, Wong, Cheung, & Lam, 2018). Nursing is ethically grounded profession who work in proximity with patients (Sharma & Sharma, 2020). Nursing, as an integral part of the health

care system, encompasses the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and care of physically ill, mentally ill, and disabled people of all ages, in all health care and other community settings. Within this broad spectrum of health care, the phenomena of particular concern to nurses are individual, family, and group "responses to actual or potential health problems". The behaviour and attitude of nurses is very important to increase the morale of a patient (Agussalim, et al., 2020). The unique function of nurses in caring for individuals, sick or well, is to assess their responses to their health status and to assist them in the performance of those activities contributing to health or recovery or to dignified death that they would perform unaided if they had the necessary strength, will knowledge and to do this in such a way as to help them gain full of partial independence as rapidly as possible (Sandnes & Uhrenfeldt, 2022).

In the context of Nepal, the number of nurses is more so, the patient has high expectations from the nurses. Generally, the patient expects good behavior, attitude, respect, caring, empathy, and relationship of trust and help. Nurses with a positive attitude are expected to provide altruistic service, and compassionate care for health customers, to be proud of their profession and able to hold intra and extra-professional factors.

## Objectives

To assess the perception of patients towards nurse behaviour

To explore the relationship between the demographic characteristics of patients and the behavior of nurses towards patient

## Research Hypothesis

H1: There is significant relationship between age of patients and behavior of nurse towards patient.

H2: There is significant relationship gender of patients and behavior of nurse towards patient.

H3: There is significant relationship marital status of patients and behavior of nurse towards patient.

H4: There is significant relationship educational level of patients and behavior of nurse towards patient.

## Conceptual Framework

Keeping in view all of the variables discussed by different researchers the researchers have chosen Four variables, which are Age, Gender, Marital status and educational level and the dependent variable is behavior of nurses towards patients.
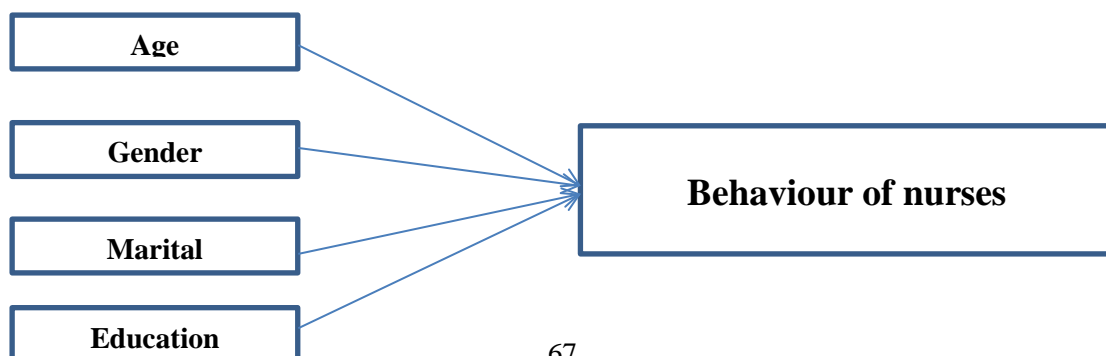
## Literature review

The caring nature of nurse can generally be interpreted as an ability to be dedicated to others, watchful oversight, feelings of love or care. Caring is ways of dynamic approach, where nurses work to further improve its care to clients. The good behavior of nurses aims to provide physical care and attention to emotions while increasing the client's sense of security and safety, then behavioral caring also emphasizes the individual's self, meaning that in carrying out nursing practice, nurses always respect clients by accepting the client's strengths and weaknesses so they can provide appropriate health services to patient (Oluma & Abadiga, 2020).

Nurse caring behavior requires an increase in nurses' knowledge about human's aspects of growth and development, responses to a constantly changing environment, limitations and strengths and basic human needs. The institute of medicine IOM has determined that care services are said to be of good quality if nurses provide services to patients in accordance with basic aspects of acceptance, attention, responsibility, communication and cooperation. Quality of service is influenced by the presence or absence of criticism and complaints from patients, social institutions or non- governmental organization even from the government though. Quality can be realized if there has been and the end of the interaction between patient and nurses. The quality of health care workers actually shows the performance (performance) of health services known as outputs which is the final result of the actions of doctors and other professionals towards patients, in the sense of changes in health status and satisfaction both positive (Mohammad, 2014).

## Research Methodology

The research is a quantitative study with descriptive and exploratory designs (Parajuli, Mahat, & Lingden, 2022; 2018). The survey is conducted on the patient of the nursing ward of the hospital. Whoever was okay enough to attend was welcomed and given a set of questionnaires and a pen. They were provided with a brief description of the purpose or aim of the research. The intention was to survey the patients whose perceptions towards nurses would be more apparent or lively for better feedback and data specifications. Samples for the survey were selected based on the experience of patients who deal with nurses within the hospital. Patients were eligible to take part in the study if they had a length of inpatient hospital stay of 24 hours or longer and were well enough to take part in a 10-minute survey session. 50 patients were initially contacted and invited to participate in the study from TU Teaching Hospital, Kathmandu, Nepal. Of those contacted, 5 subsequently became too ill for the session. 45 of the patients agreed to answer the survey question.  A study acceptance rate of 90%, of the 45 participants, 28 were female and 17 were male. Their ages ranged from 18 to 60 years. The length of time they had been in hospital at the time of the session was more than 24 hours. In this study, both primary and secondary data were used (Mahat & Mathema, 2018; Neupane, 2019). The primary sources of data were the information collected from individual questionnaire surveys of the hospital patients (Mahat & Agrawal, 2019). For this session, the patients and their caretakers needed to have the opportunity to express issues which were

relevant and concern to them. The secondary sources of data were the information desired from reports, the internet, health-related journals and books. Using the questionnaire survey method, Data were collected with the help of patient reviews and feedback regarding the behavior of Nurses. The questionnaire focused on the quality of care provided by nurses, their gestures towards patients and the interrelationship between nurse and patient.

## Results and Discussion

The respondents were asked about demographic characteristics. Table 1 shows the results of it.

Table 1: Demographic information

|  |  | Count | Column N % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | Below 18 | 0 | 0.0% |
|  | 18-24 | 25 | 55.6% |
|  | 25 and above | 20 | 44.4% |
| Gender | Male | 17 | 37.8% |
|  | Female | 28 | 62.2% |
|  | Others | 0 | 0.0% |
| Marital Status | Single | 28 | 62.2% |
|  | Married | 17 | 37.8% |
|  | Others | 0 | 0.0% |
| Educational Level | undergraduate | 19 | 42.2% |
|  | post graduate | 14 | 31.1% |
|  | Others | 12 | 26.7% |

Field Survey, 2023

There were altogether 45 respondents in this survey. Out of 45, 25 were 19-24 years old and 20 were 25 and above. It means among total respondents, 55.6% were between 19 and 24 years and 44.4% were of above 25 years age. Similarly, among total respondents, 28 were female and 17 were male which means 62.2% were female whereas 37.8% were male. In case of marital status, there were altogether 17 married and 28 married respondents with 37.8% and 62.2% respectively. Behind this, there were 19 respondents who were undergraduate, 14 were post graduate and remaining 12 were of others category like +2 and Diploma.

**Perception of Patients**

The following table shows the response of the participants.

Table 2: Response statistics

| | | Count | Column N % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Do you consider that the time the nurse takes care of you is enough/? | Not at all | 5 | 11.1% |
| | Little bit | 11 | 24.4% |
| | Moderately | 23 | 51.1% |
| | Quite a bit | 5 | 11.1% |
| | Extremely | 1 | 2.2% |
| Do you notice affection when you receive care from the nurse? | Not at all | 10 | 22.2% |
| | little bit | 23 | 51.1% |
| | Moderately | 11 | 24.4% |
| | Quite a bit | 1 | 2.2% |
| | Extremely | 0 | 0.0% |
| Do you feel that your care needs are met by nurses? | Not at all | 4 | 8.9% |
| | little bit | 17 | 37.8% |
| | Moderately | 14 | 31.1% |
| | Quite a bit | 9 | 20.0% |
| | Extremely | 1 | 2.2% |
| During care, the nurse clarifies the doubt you have? | Not at all | 3 | 6.7% |
| | little bit | 10 | 22.2% |
| | Moderately | 18 | 40.0% |
| | Quite a bit | 10 | 22.2% |
| | Extremely | 4 | 8.9% |
| Do you trust the nurse clinical evaluation of your health? | Not at all | 5 | 11.1% |
| | little bit | 8 | 17.8% |
| | Moderately | 12 | 26.7% |
| | Quite a bit | 16 | 35.6% |
| | Extremely | 4 | 8.9% |
| DO you feel that treatment performed by the nurse brings good results for you? | Not at all | 1 | 2.2% |
| | little bit | 7 | 15.6% |
| | Moderately | 14 | 31.1% |
| | Quite a bit | 18 | 40.0% |
| | Extremely | 5 | 11.1% |
| | Not at all | 4 | 8.9% |
| | little bit | 14 | 31.1% |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Do you think that nurses' gestures are pleasant? | Moderately | 17 | 37.8% |
| | Quite a bit | 9 | 20.0% |
| | Extremely | 1 | 2.2% |
| | Not at all | 1 | 2.2% |
| Do you believe in what the nurse tells you? | little bit | 12 | 26.7% |
| | Moderately | 16 | 35.6% |
| | Quite a bit | 12 | 26.7% |
| | Extremely | 4 | 8.9% |
| When performing the procedure, does the nurse request your authorization? | Not at all | 4 | 8.9% |
| | little bit | 7 | 15.6% |
| | Moderately | 16 | 35.6% |
| | Quite a bit | 10 | 22.2% |
| | Extremely | 8 | 17.8% |
| Do you feel you receive individualized care? | Not at all | 14 | 31.1% |
| | little bit | 12 | 26.7% |
| | Moderately | 11 | 24.4% |
| | Quite a bit | 7 | 15.6% |
| | Extremely | 1 | 2.2% |
| Do you talk about others matters other than illness with the nurses? | Not at all | 19 | 42.2% |
| | little bit | 18 | 40.0% |
| | Moderately | 2 | 4.4% |
| | Quite a bit | 4 | 8.9% |
| | Extremely | 2 | 4.4% |

Field Survey, 2023

The respondents were asked "Do you consider that the time the nurse takes care of you is enough". Out of 45 respondents, 5(11.1) % responded not at all, 11(24.4%) replied little bit, 23(51.5%) replied moderately, 5(11.11%) responded quite a bit and 1 (2.2%) replied extremely. It shows that most of the patients are not satisfied with nurse care system.

For the question "Do you notice affection when you receive care from the nurse", among 45 respondents, 10(22.2%) replied not at all, 23(51.1%) replied little bit, 11(24.4%) replied moderately, 1(2.2%) replied quite a bit and no any participant replied extremely. It shows that only few participants are satisfied with nurse care system.

The respondents were asked "Do you feel that your care needs are met by nurses?" Out of 45 respondents, 4(8.9) % responded not at all, 17(37.8%) replied little bit, 14(31.1%) replied moderately, 9(20%) responded quite a bit and 1 (2.2%) replied extremely. It shows that most of the patients are not satisfied with nurse care.

For the question "During care, the nurse clarifies the doubt you have", among 45 respondents, 3(6.7%) replied not at all, 10(22.2%) replied little bit, 18(40.0%) replied moderately, 10(22,

2%) replied quite a bit and 4(8.9%) participants replied extremely. It shows that most of the participants are satisfied with nurse care system and their doubts were cleared by nurses.

For the question "Do you trust the nurse clinical evaluation of your health?", among 45 respondents ,5(11.1%) replied not at all,8(17.7%) replied little bit,12(26.7%) replied moderately,16(35.6%) replied quite a bit and 4(8.9%) participants replied extremely. It shows that most of the participants are satisfied with nurse care system and they trust the clinical evaluation done by nurses.

For the question "DO you feel that treatment performed by the nurse brings good results for you?" among 45 respondents, 1(2.2%) replied not at all, 7(15.6%) replied little bit, 14(31.1%) replied moderately, 18(40%) replied quite a bit and 5(11.1%) participants replied extremely. It shows that most of the participants are satisfied with nurse care system and they feel the treatment performed by the nurse brings good result for them.

The respondents were asked "Do you think that nurse's gestures are pleasant?" Out of 45 respondents, 4(8.9) % responded not at all, 14(31.1%) replied little bit, 17(37.8%) replied moderately, 9(20%) responded quite a bit and 1(2.2%) replied extremely. It shows that most of the patients are not satisfied with nurse care system and they don't think nurses' gestures are pleasant.

The respondents were asked "Do you believe in what the nurse tells you?" Out of 45 respondents, 1(2.2) % responded not at all, 12(26.7%) replied little bit, 16(35.6%) replied moderately, 12(26.7%) responded quite a bit and 1(2.2%) replied extremely. It shows that most of the patient are satisfied with nurse care system and they believe what nurses tells them.

The respondents were asked "When performing the procedure, does the nurse request your authorization?" Out of 45 respondents, 4(8.9) % responded not at all,7(15.6%) replied little bit,16(35.6%) replied moderately, 10(22.7%) responded quite a bit and 8(17.8%) replied extremely. It shows that most of the patients are satisfied with nurse care system and they were requested for authorization.

The respondents were asked "Do you feel you receive individualized care?" Out of 45 respondents, 14(31.1) % responded not at all, 12(26.7%) replied little bit, 11(24.4%) replied moderately, 7(15.6%) responded quite a bit and 1(2.2%) replied extremely. It shows that most of the patient are satisfied with nurse care system and they believe what nurses tells them.

The respondents were asked "Do you talk about others matters other than illness with the nurses?" out of 45 respondents, 19(42.2) % responded not at all, 18(40.0%) replied little bit, 2(4.4%) replied moderately, 4(8.9%) responded quite a bit and 2(4.42%) replied extremely. It shows that of the patient does not talk about others matters other than the illness with the nurses.

**Correlation**

Correlation between Age and nurse behavior towards nurse

The following table shows the correlation between age and behavior of nurse towards patient.

Table 3: Correlation between Age and Behavior of nurse towards patients

| Correlations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Age | Mean |
| Age | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .187 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .219 |
| | N | 45 | 45 |
| Mean | Pearson Correlation | .187 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .219 | |
| | N | 45 | 45 |

Field Survey, 2023

The results shows that there is no significant relationship between age and behavior of nurse towards patient (P>0.05). This result rejects the alternative hypothesis 1 (H1: There is significant relationship between age and behavior of nurse towards patient).

Correlation between gender and nurse behavior towards nurse

The table shows the correlation between gender and nurse behavior.

Table 4: Correlation between gender and nurse behavior towards patient

| Correlations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Gender | Mean |
| Gender | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.179 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .239 |
| | N | 45 | 45 |
| Mean | Pearson Correlation | -.179 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .239 | |
| | N | 45 | 45 |

Field Survey, 2023

The result shows that there is no significant relationship between gender and behavior of nurse towards patient(P>0.05). This result rejects the alternative hypothesis 2(H2: There is significant relationship gender and behavior of nurse towards patient).

**Correlation between marital status and nurse behavior towards nurse**

Table 5:2 Correlations between marital status and nurse behavior towards nurse

| Correlations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Marital Status | Mean |
| Marital Status | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.102 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .504 |
| | N | 45 | 45 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mean | Pearson Correlation | -.102 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .504 | |
| | N | 45 | 45 |

Field Survey, 2023

The result shows that there is no significant relationship between marital status and behavior of nurse towards patient (P>0.05). This result rejects the alternative hypothesis 2(H2: There is significant relationship marital status and behavior of nurse towards patient).

Correlation between educational level and nurse behavior towards nurse

The table shows the correlation between educational level and behavior towards patient.

Table 6: Correlation between educational level and nurse behavior towards nurse

| Correlations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Educational Level | Mean |
| Educational Level | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.198 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .193 |
| | N | 45 | 45 |
| Mean | Pearson Correlation | -.198 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .193 | |
| | N | 45 | 45 |

Field Survey, 2023

The result shows that there is no significant relationship between educational level and behavior of nurse towards patient (P>0.05). This result rejects the alternative hypothesis 2(H2: There is significant relationship educational level and behavior of nurse towards patient).

## Conclusion

This research delves into the attitudes and behaviors exhibited by nurses towards patients within a hospital setting. The average opinions expressed suggest a predominantly positive outlook and conduct towards patients, indicating a heightened awareness among nurses regarding the impact of their behavior, which in turn correlates with their job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall perception of their potential influence. The study encompasses a diverse demographic profile among respondents, including factors such as gender, marital status, age, and educational attainment, thus enhancing the applicability of the findings and offering insights into patient perceptions across various backgrounds.

By focusing on nurses within healthcare sectors, this study sheds light on the significance of cultivating better attitudes and behaviors to enhance patient satisfaction, thereby emphasizing the importance of nurses' interactions with patients in bolstering hospital productivity. Despite conducting correlation analyses, the study failed to identify statistically significant

relationships between investigated variables such as gender, marital status, age, and educational level with nurses' behavior towards patients. It suggests that further research with larger sample sizes or incorporation of additional variables might be necessary to gather more substantial insights.

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