

TRUST AND NURSE-PATIENT COMMUNICATION IN RELATION TO SATISFACTION OF PATIENTS IN HEMODIALYSIS CENTERS

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between trust and nurse-patient communication on satisfaction of patients in hemodialysis centers. The descriptive-correlational design was utilized in this study. Data were gathered through survey questionnaire from 195 patients in hemodialysis centers. Mean was employed in analyzing the trust, level of nurse-patient communication and level satisfaction of patients. Pearson-product moment correlation was used to analyze the relationships between variables. Furthermore, the multiple regression analysis was used to measure the influence of trust and nurse-patient communication on satisfaction of patients in hemodialysis centers. The results indicated that patients reported high levels of trust and satisfaction, and the level of nurse-patient communication was likewise very high. Moreover, the results showed a significant relationship between trust and nurse-patient communication on the satisfaction of patients in hemodialysis centers. Furthermore, trust and nurse-patient communication significantly predict patients satisfaction in hemodialysis centers.

Keywords: Patient Satisfaction, Trust in Nurses, Nurse-Patient Communication, Hemodialysis, Healthcare Quality, Patient Experience, Nursing Care

INTRODUCTION

Nurse-patient communication plays a critical role in enhancing patient satisfaction. This study specifically focuses on private hemodialysis centers, where long-term interactions shape the therapeutic relationship. Trust between nurses and patients is a key factor in this relationship, influencing how patients perceive the quality of care and their overall satisfaction.

Nurses, being the frontline workers in hospitals and healthcare institutions, provide both medical care and emotional support to patients (Billings et al., 2021). When nurses communicate effectively, they not only convey essential information about treatment, but also establish a rapport that helps patients feel understood, valued, and cared for (Kwame & Petrucka, 2021). This relational aspect of care is particularly important in hemodialysis centers where long-term interactions can either enhance or detract from patient satisfaction. Specifically, hemodialysis patients necessitate interactions with nurses as they often require treatments multiple times a week. These interactions go beyond the mere delivery of clinical care in such a manner that they form the basis of a therapeutic relationship that can significantly impact patient satisfaction. Specifically, in private hemodialysis centers, patients have greater expectations for care and treatment and the role of nurse-patient communication becomes even more crucial (Camedda et al., 2023). Therefore, it is important to recognize the role of communication and deeply understand its effects on patient satisfaction in a unique setting like hemodialysis centers.

Patient satisfaction is influenced by various factors such as the technical competence of the healthcare personnel (Manzoor et al., 2019), the quality of services (Ferreira et al., 2023), and interpersonal dynamics (Guan et al., 2024). Included in the interpersonal dynamics is the nurse-patient communication which is considered as one of the most important predictors of patient satisfaction (Afrashtehfar et al., 2020). However, communication alone may not fully explain the level of patient satisfaction. Mutual trust between patients and nurses plays a vital role in influencing this relationship (Çoşkun Palaz & Kayacan, 2023). Trust in healthcare providers helps to build a sense of security and confidence in the care process (Conradsen et al., 2024). Additionally, it influences how patients interpret their interactions with nurses and shapes their overall satisfaction with the care they receive (Kaihlainen et al., 2019). Therefore, patients who trust their nurses are more likely to feel that their needs are being met, thereby leading to higher levels of satisfaction. Contrastingly, without mutual trust, even the best communication approaches may not be sufficient, as patients may feel skeptical about the information and care being provided.

The concept of trust in healthcare encompasses several dimensions, including the belief that healthcare providers are competent and honest (Hannawa et al., 2022). In the specialized context of hemodialysis care, where patients are often dealing with chronic health conditions, the establishment of trust can significantly influence their health outcomes and emotional well-being (Abdolsattari et al., 2020). This study examines how trust and nurse-patient communication influence patient satisfaction in private hemodialysis centers. This study is also particularly relevant in Davao City, Philippines where the healthcare sector is evolving to meet the growing demand for specialized services. While previous studies have explored nurse-patient communication and its effect on patient satisfaction in various healthcare contexts (Kwame & Petrucka, 2020; Sharkiya, 2023; Bahari et al., 2024), there is a gap in the literature regarding the influencing role of trust, especially in private hemodialysis centers. By addressing this gap, the study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the complex interplay between communication, trust, and satisfaction in the context of long-term care settings, where patients rely heavily on their healthcare providers over extended periods.

This study determined the relationship between trust, nurse-patient communication, and satisfaction of patient in private hemodialysis centers in Davao City. It also provided valuable insights for healthcare administrators, nurses, and policymakers on improving communication and fostering trust in patient care. The findings of this study had practical implications for healthcare administrators, nurses, and policymakers in private hemodialysis centers in

Davao City. The study further recognized that enhancing nurse-patient communication and promoting trust could lead to improved patient satisfaction, better health outcomes, and a stronger reputation for quality care.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the influence of trust and nurse-patient communication on the patient satisfaction in private hemodialysis centers in Davao City. Specifically, this sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of trust of patients in private hemodialysis centers in terms of:
 - 1.1 trust in nurse competence
 - 1.2 trust in intentions
 - 1.3 reliability of information
 - 1.4 emotional safety
2. What is the level of nurse-patient communication in private hemodialysis centers in terms of:
 - 2.1 clarity of information
 - 2.2 empathy
 - 2.3 active listening
 - 2.4 responsiveness
 - 2.5 non-verbal communication
3. What is the level of satisfaction of patient in private hemodialysis centers in terms of:
 - 3.1 overall satisfaction with care
 - 3.2 satisfaction with communication
 - 3.3 satisfaction with emotional support
 - 3.4 satisfaction with treatment options
 - 3.5 likelihood to recommend
4. Is there a significant relationship between:
 - 4.1 trust and patient satisfaction
 - 4.2 nurse-patient communication and patient satisfaction
5. Do trust and nurse-patient communication significantly predict patient satisfaction?

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on Trust Theory, Interpersonal Communication Theory, and Patient Satisfaction Theory, which collectively explain the relationships among communication, trust, and satisfaction in hemodialysis care. Trust Theory (Çoşkun Palaz & Kayacan, 2023) emphasizes that trust extends beyond confidence in a nurse's competence—it involves emotional connection, honesty, and integrity. In hemodialysis settings, where patients receive long-term care, trust plays a crucial mediating role, strengthening or weakening the impact of nurse-patient communication on satisfaction.

Moreover, interpersonal Communication Theory (Dietl et al., 2023) highlights that effective communication builds shared understanding and strong relationships, while Patient Satisfaction Theory (Manzoor et al., 2019) explains that satisfaction arises from both technical competence and relational factors such as empathy, trust, and communication. Together, these theories provide the foundation for examining how communication and trust influence patient satisfaction in private hemodialysis centers in Davao City, with implications for improving nurse-patient interactions, healthcare training, and patient-centered care practices.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. A descriptive research design is used to gather information about the current status of a phenomenon in order to describe it (Shuttleworth, 2008). Descriptive research design is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe (Shuttleworth, 2008). Moreover, it is a fact finding study that allowed the researcher to examine characteristics, behaviors, and experiences of study participants (Calmorin, 2007). Furthermore, the correlational design is used to identify the strength and nature of association between two or more variables (Creswell, 2003).

The respondents of the study were patients undergoing hemodialysis in private dialysis centers in Davao City. They were selected based on inclusion criteria aligned with the study's objectives, particularly regarding nurse-patient communication, trust, and patient satisfaction. The study employed the questionnaires adapted from different studies and considered fit to the context of the respondents of this study. The instrument was divided into three parts such as trust, nurse-patient communication and patients satisfaction. The data were analyzed using the mean, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Trust

Table 1 shows the level of trust among patients. The level of trust contains contains of four indicators, namely: trust in nurse competence, trust in intentions, reliability of information and emotional safety. It garnered an overall mean rating of 3.99 and a standard deviation of .487. The SD results range from .607-1.480 which denotes that the respondent's scores are not so dispersed from one another.

In terms of trust, the category mean is 4.48, described as high. This indicates that the patients oftentimes exhibit trust in terms of nurse competence. This support the study of Abdi et al. (2020) pointed out that clinical competence is a major determiner of patient trust, emphasizing that the technical side is essential in the sphere of nursing practice.

Table 1. Level of Trust

Trust Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Trust in Nurse Competence	4.48	.620	Very High
Trust in Intentions	3.76	.717	High
Reliability of Information	3.93	.643	High
Emotional Safety	3.65	.651	High
OVERALL	3.99	.487	High

In the trust intentions the category mean is 3.76 described as high. This indicates that the patients oftentimes exhibit trust in terms of intentions. In the study of Hall et al. (2021) echoed this variability, acknowledging that many patients feel emotionally supported by nurses, while others see the absence of empathetic engagement as a problem.

Meanwhile, in terms of reliability of information, the category mean is 3.93 which described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes exhibit trust in terms reliability of information. It indicates that nurses would need to build credibility through clear, consistent, and open delivery of even complex or critical health information (Oldland et al., 2020).

In the aspect of emotional safety, the category mean is 3.63 which described as high. This denoted that the patients oftentimes exhibit trust in terms emotional safety. In other words, according to Vujančić et al. (2022), patients feel largely emotionally safe with nurses, but are still possibly unsure about their ability to remain confidential.

Furthermore, the overall mean is 3.99 which described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes exhibit trust. The study, therefore, yielded solid findings regarding patient perceptions of trust in nursing, with subscales operational as trust in nurse competence, trust in intentions, trust in reliability of information, and trust with emotional safety. This observation is consistent with Wu et al. (2022), who described that trust fundamentally affects communication, adherence to treatment, and better health outcomes.

Moreover, O'Connor et al. (2019) revealed that the relationship of trust is complicated because whereas technical competence engenders an initial growing confidence, emotional safety and existence through consistent caring behaviors fortify the striving relationship over time.

Level of Nurse-Patient Communication as Perceived by Patients

Table 2 shows the level of nurse-patient communication. The level of nurse-patient communication contains contains of five indicators, namely: clarity of information, empathy, active listening, responsiveness and non-verbal communication. It garnered an overall mean of 4.48 and a standard deviation of .559. The SD results range from .540-.740 which denotes that the respondent's scores are not so dispersed from one another.

In terms of clarity of information, the category mean is 4.57 described as very high. This means that the patients always perceived nurse-patient communication in terms of clarify of information. These results indicate that even if patients are made to feel emotionally supported, targeted training in diversity, equity, and inclusion would further optimize the patient experience, as supported by Davuluri et al. (2022).

Table 2. Level of Nurse-Patient Communication as Perceived by Patients

Nurse-Patient Communication Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Clarity of Information	4.57	.536	Very High
Empathy	4.43	.591	High
Active Listening	4.52	.559	Very High
Responsiveness	4.42	.580	High
Non-Verbal Communication	4.45	.548	High
OVERALL	4.48	.559	High

In the empathy aspect, the category mean is 4.41 described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes perceived nurse-patient communication in terms of empathy. These results indicate that even if patients are made to feel emotionally supported, targeted training in diversity, equity, and inclusion would further optimize the patient experience, as supported by Davuluri et al. (2022).

In terms of active listening, the category mean is 4.52 described as very high. This indicates that the patients always perceived nurse-patient communication in terms of active listening. This support the study of Sharkiya (2023), communication will build trust and empower patients with their health journey to be active participants in it.

In the responsiveness category, the category mean is 4.42 described as high. This indicates that the patients oftentimes perceived nurse-patient communication in terms of responsiveness. On the study of McCabe (2004) and Stewart et al., (2000), it indicates that effective communication, including accessibility and follow-up,

significantly enhances patient satisfaction and trust in healthcare providers. Coulter & Ellins (2007) and McKinstry et al., (2006) have shown that efforts to increase patient and family participation could have a significant positive effect on satisfaction, adherence, and long-term health outcomes.

In the non-verbal communication aspect, the category mean is 4.45 described as high. This indicates that the patients oftentimes perceived nurse-patient communication in terms of non-verbal communication. Contrary to what Kwame & Petrucka (2020) reported that particularly in maternity/antenatal and primary healthcare settings at public healthcare facilities, the majority of nurses insult and humiliate patients in addition to ignoring their needs and concerns, the findings of this study otherwise indicate that at almost all dimensions, patients are largely understood, supported, and well-informed by their nurses in terms of communication. Moreover, non-verbal communication has been found to play a crucial role in patient satisfaction, as it enhances the therapeutic relationship and fosters a sense of trust and empathy (Huang et al., 2015; McCabe, 2004).

Furthermore, the overall mean score of 4.48, which is described as high, indicates that patients frequently perceive nurse-patient communication as effective. This finding aligns with Hildegard Peplau's Interpersonal Relations Theory, which highlights the importance of the nurse-patient relationship as a dynamic and collaborative process essential to effective care. According to Peplau, effective communication fosters trust and mutual understanding, enabling nurses to address patients' emotional and psychological needs more effectively and ultimately improving health outcomes (D'Antonio et al., 2014). By prioritizing interpersonal communication, nurses can create a therapeutic environment in which patients feel valued and actively involved in their care, leading to greater satisfaction and adherence to treatment plans (Aston & Coffey, 2012).

Level of Satisfaction of Patient

Table 3 shows the level of satisfaction of patient in private hemodialysis centers. The level of satisfaction of patient contains of five indicators, namely: overall satisfaction with care, satisfaction with communication, satisfaction with emotional support, satisfaction with treatment outcomes and likelihood to recommend. It garnered an overall mean of 3.81 and a standard deviation of .493. The SD results range from .579-1.365 which denotes that the respondent's scores are not so dispersed from one another.

Table 3. Level of Patient Satisfaction in Private Hemodialysis Centers

Patient Satisfaction Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Overall Satisfaction with Care	3.92	.673	High
Satisfaction with Communication	3.99	.579	High
Satisfaction with Emotional Support	3.73	.775	High
Satisfaction with Treatment Outcome	3.84	.676	High
Likelihood to Recommend	3.57	.737	High
Overall	3.81	.493	High

In terms of overall satisfaction with care, the category mean is 3.92 described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes satisfied in terms of services and care. A significant finding, given the chronic nature and long-term costs associated with hemodialysis (Baye et al., 2024).

In the aspect of satisfaction with communication, the category mean is 3.99 described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes satisfied in terms of communication. This level of satisfaction strengthens patient trust, supporting treatment adherence (American Nurses Association, 2024).

In the emotional support, the category mean is 3.73 described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes satisfied in terms of emotional support. Implies that sometimes patients feel emotionally underserved or rushed in treatment. This suggests that it is important for providers to preserve a good balance between clinical efficiency and personal attention, especially in a high-stress long-term treatment environment such as dialysis (Kersten et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, in terms of treatment outcome, the category mean is 3.84 described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes satisfied in terms of treatment outcome. This suggests a need for clearer explanations regarding clinical decisions, as collaborative care models have been shown to enhance patient understanding and confidence (Harrison et al., 2015).

In the likelihood to recommend, the category mean is 3.57 described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes satisfied in terms of likelihood to recommend. These indicate systemic and operational challenges such as cost barriers and service accessibility, tending to influence whether a patient would actually recommend the facility to others. Research by Dyer et al. (2018) suggests that addressing logistical issues can significantly improve patient satisfaction and overall facility reputation.

Furthermore, the overall mean is 3.81 which described as high. This means that the patients oftentimes satisfied in private hemodialysis centers. This aligns with the Patient Satisfaction Theory, which posits that patient satisfaction is influenced not only by the technical quality of care but also by the interpersonal aspects of the healthcare experience (Pascoe, 1983). By enhancing emotional support and fostering warm communication, healthcare providers can create a more patient-centered environment that addresses both the cognitive and affective dimensions of patient satisfaction.

Relationship Between Trust, Nurse-Patient Communication, and Satisfaction of Patient

Table 4 shows relationship between trust, nurse-patient communication and satisfaction of patients. The results show that all the independent variables have significant relationship with the satisfaction of the patients ($p < .05$). In particular, there is a significant relationship between trust and patient satisfaction ($r = .398$, $p < .05$). The

strength of correlation between the two variables is moderate and has a directly proportional relationship as revealed by the coefficient of .398. This suggests that the increase of trust would essentially increase the patient satisfaction.

Table 4. Relationships on the Level of Trust, Nurse-Patient Communication, and Satisfaction of Patient

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	Satisfaction of Patients		
	R	p-value	Remarks
Trust	.398	.000	Significant
Nurse-Patient Communication	.451	.000	Significant

This aligns with an article published by USAHS (2024), which emphasizes that effective communication—rooted in clarity, active listening, and compassion—is essential for building trust in healthcare. In practice, this means that when nurses communicate procedures clearly, listen attentively to patient concerns, and maintain open, empathetic dialogue, patients are more likely to develop trust, thereby enhancing the overall therapeutic relationship.

Similarly, there is a significant and strong relationship between Nurse-patient communication and the satisfaction of patients ($r = .451, p < .05$). This indicates that as the nurse-patient communication increases, the patient satisfaction is also likely to increase. The relationship emphasizes the core function of communication in patient experiences. When nurses are approachable, open, and responsive, the patients are likely to feel appreciated and look after them so that this has a positive impact on their satisfaction with the services provided at the healthcare facility (Petronio-Coia & Schwartz-Barcott, 2020). With this benefit, administrators can see a stronger rationale for training nurses in holistic care, that is, beyond clinical competence, for the development of soft skills and emotional intelligence.

The correlation between Trust in Nurses and Satisfaction of Patients was $r=0.398$, also a moderate positive correlation. This means that the more patients trust their nurse, the higher their satisfaction with the received total care may be. Trust, according to Kwame & Petruca (2021), can act as a psychological cushion, which reduces anxiety, increases treatment compliance, and promotes interpretation of care results in a more positive light.

Influence of Trust and Nurse-Patient Communication on Satisfaction of Patients

Table 5 presents the results of regression analysis which purpose is to show the significant predictors of satisfaction of patients. The results indicate that the trust and nurse-patient communication were found to be significant predictor of the satisfaction of patients.

Table 5.
Influence of Trust and Nurse-Patient Communication
on Satisfaction of Patients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value	Remarks
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	1.239	.304		4.073	.000	
Trust	.287	.066	.283	4.356	.000	Significant
Nurse-patient communication	.318	.057	.360	5.555	.000	Significant

Note: $R = .525, R\text{-square} = .275, F = 36.448, p = .000$

In particular, trust has a significant direct effect on the satisfaction of patients ($\beta = .283, p < .05$). This means that the regression weight for trust in the prediction on the satisfaction of patients is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). Thus, for every unit increase in organizational learning, there is a corresponding increase in the work performance by .283. Trust Theory supports this finding, where trust in nurses was found to correlate with higher patient satisfaction—agreeing with earlier findings that secure and respected patients were more likely to give good ratings to care experiences (Molina-Mula & Gallo-Estrada, 2020).

Similarly, nurse-patient communication significantly predicts the satisfaction of patients ($\beta = .360, p < .05$). This means that the regression weight for nurse-patient communication in the prediction of satisfaction of patients is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). In other words, when the nurse-patient communication is increase by 1, satisfaction of patients would increase by .360. These findings confirm the Patient Satisfaction Theory by demonstrating that both technical (trust/competence) and relational (communication/empathy) aspects determine patients' perception of their care (Manzoor et al., 2019).

Lastly, the findings were apparent in the results of the regression analysis in which 27.5 percent of the variance of patients satisfaction can be explained by the model as indicated by $R^2 = .275$. This would mean that 72.5 percent of the variation of the patients satisfaction can be attributed to other factors aside from the independent variables in the model. This reinforces Interpersonal Communication Theory, demonstrating that empathetic, high-quality communication translates into higher satisfaction levels. It is, therefore, seen that patients appreciate not only the service competence of their care providers but also the way they communicate information-related aspects, the way they address their concerns, and show them emotional support (Moya-Salazar et al., 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The level of trust between patients and nurses in private hemodialysis centers in Davao City is high. This indicates that nurses have been known to possess a set of common traits that patients tend to believe about their competence,

intentions, reliability, and emotional support, and therefore strong foundations must be laid at the very beginning in their relationships.

2. Patients perceive the level of communication between nurses and patients as high. This reflects that nurses in these centers are able to communicate effectively, listen attentively, and explain medical matters clearly, which supports a more comfortable and informed care experience for patients.

3. The level of patient satisfaction experienced in private hemodialysis centers is high regarding communication, holistic care, and treatment outcomes. This indicates that patients are generally pleased with service provision concerning care delivery settings; hence, they are satisfied with the support received during treatment.

4. Trust, nurse-patient communication, and patient satisfaction show significant positive relationships. Thus, it implies that high patient satisfaction is attained when effective trust in nurses and proper communication is done to the patients positively.

5. Trust and nurse-patient communication significantly predict patient satisfaction, indicating that these factors are crucial for creating a positive healthcare experience. When patients feel confident in their nurses and experience open, empathetic communication, they are more likely to report higher satisfaction levels with their care. This relationship underscores the importance of cultivating both trust and effective communication strategies within healthcare settings to enhance overall patient outcomes.

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