

**LIVED EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNITY NURSES ON THE  
IMPLEMENTATION  
OF PREVENTION PROGRAM AGAINST RABIES ENCEPHALITIS  
AMONG THE SELECTED BARANGAYS OF TAGUM CITY**

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**ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study particularly phenomenological design with thematic analysis explored and understand the lived experiences of community health nurses on the implementation of prevention programs against Rabies Encephalitis among the selected barangays of Tagum City. The deployed community nurses on the selected barangays of Tagum City as participants were purposively chosen based on certain criteria and qualification, then interviewed through in-depth interview and focus group study using a validated interview guide. For the qualitative data analysis, thematic analysis was employed to generate themes and sub-themes from the responses of the participants. The themes extracted from the lived experiences of the community nurses included funding, culture, and communication. As for challenges and barriers they encountered, the following themes generated were cultural barriers, logistical issues, behavioral challenges, and staffing constraints. And regarding the strategies used to overcome the obstacles, the following themes extracted included education campaigns, community engagement, technology use, and threat perception. All the data gathered from the participants were summarized, then thoroughly analyzed, and was given implication and recommendations that is useful to the readers, policy makers, and to the future researchers.

Keywords: *Lived Experiences, Challenges and Barriers, Strategies, Community Nurses, Implementation, Prevention Programs, Rabies Encephalitis, Tagum City*

**INTRODUCTION**

**Background of the Study**

In the shadow of modern medicine, rabies encephalitis remains a silent predator that turns the brain into a battleground. Though vaccines have given us a fighting chance, the disease is a sobering reminder that nature's most ancient perils can never be totally defeated but only suppressed. It was only seen as a medical challenge, but also as a survival narrative, with each success bringing us closer to rewriting the fate of millions.

Rabies is a 100% preventable disease in which there is pre-exposure and post-exposure prevention. Rabies vaccine can be given by two routes: it's via intramuscular and via intradermal. The use of the intradermal immunization regime requires a smaller quantity of vaccine but has equivalent effectiveness. Vaccines are used to prevent the disease both before and after the exposure. Given the lethality of clinical rabies, post-exposure prophylaxis is imperative. Globally, dogs are the overwhelming source of human rabies. Mass vaccination of dogs is the most cost-effective way to eliminate rabies. Rabies elimination remains a significant public health challenge, due to the lack of resources for vaccination programs and rabies surveillance in endemic regions (Ellerington, 2023).

Even so, rabies is a rare but serious public health concern in the United States. Before 1960, several hundred people died of rabies each year. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of human and animal health experts, fewer than 10 human deaths are reported each year in the U.S. While rabies is uncommon in humans, three out of four Americans live in a community where raccoons, skunks, or foxes carry this deadly disease. In the U.S., around 4,000 animal rabies cases are reported each year, with more than 90% occurring in wildlife like bats, raccoons, skunks, and foxes. This is a big change from the 1960s, when domestic animals, mainly dogs, represented most of the rabies cases. Even though rabies is well-controlled in the U.S., over 4 million Americans report animal bites each year with 800,000 seeking medical attention. Rabies vaccines are complex, expensive, and limited. Public health programs can assess each person who may have been exposed to rabies to determine if they need rabies-related medical care, including the vaccine. Sometimes, people still die from rabies, usually because they didn't get medical help soon enough after being scratched or bitten. It's important to be aware of the risk, especially with bat bites, which can be easy to ignore because they don't always leave obvious marks (CDC, 2024).

In the Philippines, rabies remains to be a public health problem. It is the most acutely fatal infectious disease responsible for the death of 200-250 Filipinos every year. At least one-third of human rabies deaths are among children less than 15 years of age. Two thirds or human rabies cases are males. Dogs are the sources of most human rabies deaths. The high cost of anti-rabies vaccine and immunoglobulin, expenditure for medical consultations and the loss of income are an additional burden to a regular Filipino family confronted with a potential rabies exposure. In 2018, out of 29,105 animal bite patients who consulted, 28,513(97.9%) were categories II and III and 26,278(92%) availed of anti-rabies vaccine. For CAT II, out of 15,197 who were registered cases, 12,061(79%) completed the days, 0, 3 and 7 post exposure prophylaxis and 144(0.9%) were not able to avail any anti-rabies vaccination. For CAT III, 8,062 were registered cases and 5,149(63.8%) received Rabies Immunoglobulin (RIG). 7,059(87.5%) completed days 0, 3 and 7 visits, while 52(.64%) did not avail of anti-rabies vaccination. Wound care is part of rabies exposure management wherein the bite wound should be washed immediately with soap and water, preferably for 10 -15 minutes. In 2018, 5,149(63.8%) out of 8,062 were given ERIG. In 2018, only Kalinga and Tabuk reached the 80% target dog vaccination coverage. The overall

coverage of all the provinces was higher at 60% compared to 2017. Biting animals are still dogs (91-92%) followed by cats (6.8 & 8.3%) and others like pigs, horse, cattle and goats (1.3-1%) respectively (DOH-CHD-CAR, 2019).

Concurrently, most of the studies focus on the prophylaxis and further treatment of post-bite, the possible reservoir, mode of transmission, and the fatality of the said disease. Around 6.5 million animals enter animal shelters each year. Sadly, only half of them end up getting adopted in their first year. There is an enormous need to rescue animals. These missions take in animals that have been abandoned, abused, or neglected. They are then treated with the appropriate needed care. Part of being educated on the topic understands that pets that have been abandoned for a variety of reasons may pick up infectious diseases. If they are in survival mode, they need to find food sources. They also may be on edge. Keeping streets clean and safe to help limit the spread of infectious diseases is a key benefit to local communities (McCray, 2023). That's why prevention is very important in the community settings, to which healthcare providers in promoting certain program related to the problem so that the animal or pet owners will heighten their level of awareness and sense of responsibility, or the people in the community.

Upon delving further, the main point of this study was to explore the lived experiences of community nurses in promoting preventive measures of Rabies Encephalitis in terms of challenges and strategies. This study prepends important benefaction to the existing framework of information, and to enlighten everyone that prevention is not only about medication and treatment itself but also about the practices, attitude, and knowledge that community nurses must have in implementing certain guidelines and protocols.

### **Research Questions**

This study directed to find out the lived experiences of community nurses on the implementation of prevention program against rabies encephalitis among the selected barangays of Tagum City. Notably, this pursues answers to the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of community nurses on the implementation of prevention program against rabies encephalitis among the selected barangays of Tagum City?
2. How do community nurses perceive the challenges and barriers they encounter when implementing rabies encephalitis prevention programs in the selected barangays?
3. What strategies do community nurses use to overcome obstacles in promoting awareness and preventive measures for rabies encephalitis in the selected barangays of Tagum City?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was corresponded by the Health Belief Model (HBM) by social psychologists Irwin M. Rosenstock, Godfrey M. Hochbaum, S. Stephen Kegeles, and Howard Leventhal (1950), Milio's Framework of Prevention by public health nurse Nancy Milio (1976), and Enacted Theory by K. Weick (1969). The HBM is a widely used theory that can help guide health promotion and disease prevention programs. It is based on the idea that people's beliefs about their risk of disease and the benefits of taking action to prevent it influence their likelihood of acting. Key elements of the Health Belief Model focus on individual beliefs about health conditions, which predict individual health-related behaviors. The model defines the key factors that influence health behaviors as an individual's perceived threat to sickness or disease (perceived susceptibility), belief of consequence (perceived severity), potential positive benefits of action (perceived benefits), perceived barriers to action, exposure to factors that prompt action (cues to action), and confidence in ability to succeed (self-efficacy).

At the same time, the Framework for Prevention Model has significantly influenced Community Health Nursing by emphasizing the importance of addressing the social determinants of health and promoting preventive measures. The model encourages community health nurses to focus on empowering individuals and communities through education, alternative options for health promotion, and collaborative efforts. By integrating Milio's framework into their practice, nurses can enhance the effectiveness of preventive interventions and contribute to the overall well-being of the communities they serve. Also, the Enacted Theory also plays as an important theory for this study because it explains how people's behaviors and interactions with their surroundings produce meaning and comprehension. Numerous disciplines, including organizational theory, cognitive science, and mentorship, can benefit from its use.

## **METHODS**

This chapter conferred the research design, research locale, respondents, research instruments, data gathering procedure and statistical tools.

### **Research Design**

This study made use of the phenomenological research design. It is a qualitative research method that explored the meaning people give to their experiences. It aimed to understand the core aspects of human experiences without imposing preconceived theories or interpretations. It has unique characteristics like it focused on the audience's interpretation of something, it lacks researcher bias or prior influence, emphasized descriptive research insights and connected objectivity with lived experiences, and usually involved a small sample of participants (approximately 10-15). And, phenomenological research is commonly used in the social and health sciences (Husserl, 1858-1938).

In this the study, it inclined the lived experiences of the community nurses in promoting preventive measures against rabies encephalitis. On top of that, it created possible recommendation or strategies regarding the existing challenges the community nurses have encountered.

**Research Participants**

The community nurses deployed in the 21 barangays of Tagum City were the participants of this study. A total of 12 participants were selected and underwent an interview, specifically: 6 participants for in-depth interview while the other 6 for focus group discussions. The purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting the participants. This technique is a form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue or capacity and willingness to participate in the research (Oliver, 2006). As a criteria, only those community nurses deployed who have at least 2 years of employment to the said program and above were selected as participants of this study, while those who have below 2 years been excluded.

**Research Instrument**

This study utilized a semi-structured interview guide as the primary data collection instrument to explore the lived experiences of community nurses in implementing rabies encephalitis prevention programs. The interview guide was carefully designed to elicit rich, detailed narratives that reflect the nurses' personal experiences, challenges, strategies, and insights related to rabies prevention efforts in their respective communities.

Initial questions aimed to establish rapport and gather background information on the participants' roles and years of experience, followed by core questions in relation to the participant's experiences in delivering rabies prevention services in your community and the challenges they face when implementing rabies vaccination or awareness programs. Probing questions were employed as needed to clarify and deepen the responses.

**Data Analysis**

This study employed thematic analysis as the primary method for analyzing the qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews. Thematic Analysis was chosen for its flexibility and systematic approach in identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within the data. This method enabled the researcher to capture the depth and complexity of the participants' lived experiences related to the implementation of rabies encephalitis prevention programs.

The data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for thematic analysis. In the first phase, familiarization with the data was achieved by repeatedly reading the transcribed interviews and listening to the audio recordings. This allowed the researcher to immerse in the narratives and gain a holistic understanding of the content. In the second phase, initial codes were generated by systematically highlighting significant statements, phrases, and expressions that were relevant to the study's objectives.

During the third phase, the researcher grouped related codes into potential themes by identifying recurring patterns and relationships across the data. These themes were then reviewed and refined in the fourth phase to ensure they accurately reflected the participants' perspectives and were supported by sufficient data. In the fifth phase, the themes were clearly defined and named to capture their essence and meaning. Finally, in the sixth phase, the findings were written up in a coherent narrative that presented the themes, sub-themes, and illustrative participant quotes to support the interpretation.

Throughout the analysis, manual coding was utilized, and memo-writing was employed to document insights and reflections during the coding process. To enhance credibility and confirmability, peer debriefing with qualitative research experts was conducted, and member checking was performed with selected participants to validate the interpretations of their responses.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Presented in this chapter are the profiles, lived experiences, challenges and barriers they commonly encountered, and strategies initiated of the participants. The data collected, documented, and scrutinized through thematic analysis are displayed in a descriptive and tabular format.

### Profile of the Participants

Shown in Table 1 are the attributes of the participants involved in this investigation. There were 6 who engaged in the In-Depth Interview, while the other 6 contributed to the Focused Group Discussions.

**Table 1: Profile of the Participants**

Participant's Code	Sex	Age	Position	Length of Service
IDI P1	Male	33	Nurse I	2 years
IDI P2	Male	35	Nurse I	4 years
IDI P3	Male	30	Nurse II	9 years
IDI P4	Male	35	Nurse II	9 years
IDI P5	Female	36	Nurse II	6 years
IDI P6	Female	35	Nurse I	2 years
FGD P1	Female	48	Nurse III	18 years
FGD P2	Female	52	Nurse I	7 years

FGD P3	Female	35	Nurse I	5 years
FGD P4	Female	36	Nurse III	6 years
FGD P5	Male	37	Nurse I	6 years
FGD P5	Male	36	Nurse I	2 years

The table distinctly illustrated the composition of the community nurses, comprising 6 females and 6 males. Most of the participants are on their 30s while there are 2 who belonged the middle age. Concerning the civil status, there are 5 participants who are still single, 5 participants who are already married, and 2 who are separated. In terms of their length of service, 5 participants have length of service of 2-5 years, 6 participants with 6-10 years, and 1 participant with 11 years and above. Regarding the position of the participants, 7 participants are Nurse I, 3 participants are Nurse II, and 2 participants are Nurse III.

### **Lived Experiences of Community Nurses on the Implementation of Prevention Programs against Rabies Encephalitis**

Thematic analysis of the interviews revealed three major themes, namely: funding, culture, and communication. Each with several sub-themes that reflect the complex realities faced by community nurses in implementing rabies encephalitis prevention programs.

#### **Funding**

It is a money given for a specific reason, usually to assist a project, business, organization, or individual activity. It might originate from a variety of sources and be utilized to pay bills, make growth investments, or accomplish objectives. It is important because it provides the financial resources needed to start, sustain, and grow initiatives, whether in business, education, research, or social development.

**Limited Resources.** Limited budget from local government and reliance on external donations for vaccines can have serious and far-reaching consequences, both immediately and over time. There is a delay in vaccine development and possibly a limited supply. With that, there's a lot of people in power who took advantage of it just like producing a fake one or some used it for political propaganda.

*"The funding for Rabies Program is insufficient to supply the demand for anti-rabies vaccination."  
(IDI P3)*

*"Sa panahon karon kay daghan jud kayo ang*

*mapakaan ug hayop unya dili enough ang budget para i-compensate ang mga kaso hantod sa ma-drain jud intawon.” (IDI P2)*

*“Luoy ang kahimtang ron labon sa mga treatment center kay daghan kayo mudangop para wala jud me ikahatag. Ingnon namo sila na mupalit ug tambal then kami ra ang mo-tusok pero maguol tawon sila kay walay pampalit.” (IDI P5)*

*“Lisod kayo ang sitwasyon labon na ug sugod sa tuig kay wala pa jud kaayo allotted na budget para sa mga vaccine for rabies unya if muhatag naman gani dali ra jud mahurot.” (FGD P2)*

**Dependence on Stakeholders.** Barangays rely solely on DOH or donations for vaccines due to lack of local funding. Just like governmental organizations, investors, or business executives only for the assistance can result in several problems, particularly if the internal team or larger community isn't involved. It may lead to a loss of autonomy, unstable decision-making, and misaligned goals.

*“In our barangay, we solely depend on the availability of the vaccines provided by DOH or donations. And sometimes our partner institution will donate but that's very seldom.” (FGD P1)*

*“Masuko jud intawon sila inig ingnon nga hulata lang kay wala pa niabot ang donation kay maunsa na daw sila. Dili baya daw sila kapalit sa maong tambal kay mahal daw kaayo.” (IDI P2)*

*“Dili jud malikayan nga naa me maka-lalis na mga pasyente ug watcher kay ngano daw pirmi walay tambal. Ngano daw sige hulata atong donation. Magpalit daw dapat ang barangay aron ipang-hatag sa katawhan.” (IDI P3)*

## **Culture**

It is a group of people's common values, beliefs, customs, social mores, and behaviors. Language, symbols, and conventions are all part of this intricate system of taught and shared ways of living that set one group apart from another. People's daily lives and relationships are influenced by their culture, which impacts their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Additionally, it promotes communication, strengthens communities, and stimulates economic progress. Also, culture fosters learning, tolerance, and an improvement in general quality of life.

**Accessibility Issues.** Social marginalization, limited participation in cultural activities, and a lessened sense of belonging are all consequences of accessibility concerns in culture, especially for those with disabilities. Additionally, it can lead to unfavorable views and preconceptions, which can affect people's chances and quality of life. On the other hand, meeting accessibility requirements in cultural contexts can foster inclusivity, improve comprehension, and result in a more vibrant and egalitarian society.

*"GIDA are the most affected in relation to accessibility of the anti-rabies vaccine." (FGD P4)*

*"There are plenty here in our area who can't avail our services because of their location that's quite far from here." (FGD P6)*

**Education Gaps.** Disparities in health-seeking behavior between educated and less-educated groups. There are several detrimental effects that can result from an educational gap, in which certain individuals perform worse academically than others. These include diminished self-esteem and mental well-being, trouble keeping up with the course work, and possible effects on prospects and social development. A cycle of poverty may also result from learning gaps, which can also impact a person's prospects for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. This is very common especially to those who live in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) because they're far from any opportunities that's why most of them have weak level of awareness when it comes to health-related concern. That's why if community nurses try to explain the importance of treatment for anti-rabies there are uneducated that has no compliance at all compared to the educated ones who have the comprehension of the phenomena.

*"Educated people are the ones with good seeking behavior compared to those who haven't had the privilege of education." (FGD P3)*

*"Mahibal-an jud kung kinsa ang dali maka-sabot." (IDI P3)*

*"There are people who easily react to whatever information we provide only to find out that they don't understand at all. Especially if we ask them to repeat what we have taught or what we have instructed." (IDI P4)*

*"Isog kaayo sila woi pero inig pangutan-on nimo sila ug seryoso about sa ilang kaso ug unsay dapat buhaton kay dili halos mutingog." (IDI P5)*

**Ethical and Religious Beliefs.** Respect for local beliefs or practices, but challenges in aligning them with medical advice. Different viewpoints on medical treatments can result from differing ethical and religious convictions, which can occasionally cause conflicts between a patient's views and the advice of medical professionals which is very common especially on the management of animal bites. A community may experience social disintegration, decreased communication, and even conflict if language and cultural diversity problems occur.

*"We share and uphold people's principles and standards of behavior, especially on their beliefs."  
(FGD P5)*

*"Inig mag-mention nag ani na sila about sa ilang tribo ug religion kay dili nalang jud me mu-react na kay mao raman gihapon." (IDI P6)*

**Language and Diversity.** Challenges due to tribal diversity, language barriers, and cultural misunderstandings. It may influence cultural identity, which could result in the loss of distinctive customs and history. It is essential to address these problems with inclusive policies and practices to create a peaceful and prosperous community. Just like for some instance, patients in a certain barangay can't get simple instruction that has a great impact on their ongoing treatment.

*"Plenty of lived experiences... like language barrier, cultural misunderstanding, and adjustment in a diverse setting." (FGD P4)*

*"Naa jud times nga mag lisod me explain sa ilaha kay dili sila kasabot maski Bisaya nag ani. Adjust nalang jud me ug taman ba." (FGD P6)*

## **Communication**

It is the exchange of ideas, thoughts, feelings, and information between people or groups via a variety of channels. It can happen verbally or nonverbally and involves a sender, a message, and a recipient. Building relationships, working together, and understanding all depend on effective communication. Since it guarantees that information is communicated properly, fosters trust, and gives people the ability to take an active role in their treatment, effective communication is essential in health education. Patients who get clear communication are better able to comprehend their illnesses, available treatments, and the significance of following advice. Additionally, it encourages patients and healthcare professionals to work together, which improves patient satisfaction and health results.

**Simplifying Health Messaging.** Need for layman's terms in SBCC materials to improve understanding. Improving health literacy, enabling patients to make educated decisions, and eventually improving health outcomes all depend on simplifying health message. We can enhance adherence to treatment

programs, decrease misconceptions, and strengthen patient-provider relationships by making health information easily understandable and accessible. That's why some of the community health nurses produce flyers or hand-outs and even advocacy campaigns to use laymen's term and pictures that are easily understood that's why all levels of people can capture the message itself.

*"SBCC materials should be in layman's term so everybody can understand rabies information."  
(FGD P4)*

*"Naga-paskel jud me ug mga tarpaulin ug panghatag flyers pud then amo jud gina butang kay Mother Tongue para mas daghan ang maka-sabot ba." (FGD P6)*

*"Basta naa gani me announcement or mga visual aide na ginagamit kay gina-sure jud namo or we see to it that its pictures are relatable and understandable para mas daghan ang mubasa ug mas daghan pud ug muhatag ug importana kung unsa man gani tong mga nakasulat."  
(IDI P6)*

## **Perception of Community Nurses on the Challenges and Barriers they encounter when implementing Rabies Encephalitis Prevention Programs**

### **Cultural Barrier**

It is the disparities in norms, attitudes, and beliefs that can create hurdles to communication and understanding. When people from various cultural backgrounds interact, these differences can cause miscommunications, misinterpretations, and even conflict.

**Misconceptions about Rabies.** There are several widespread misunderstandings about rabies. Knowing the facts regarding this illness is essential for protecting both you and your pets. In addition to bites, scratches and open wounds exposed to saliva can also spread rabies. Furthermore, not all animals exhibit overt signs of rabies, and rabies is not just a problem in rural areas or with outdoor pets. That's why those people who do not understand the said disease will not be alarmed and just rely to alternatives which has no scientific evidence that it can cure rabies like "tandok" or putting garlic or any chemical to the wound. "Tandok" is refers to a traditional method of treating animal bites, primarily those from dogs or snakes, by using an animal horn or a similar suction apparatus to supposedly extract venom or rabies. It's considered a traditional practice, though medical experts warn against its effectiveness. There are the potential negative effects or risks to the patients who undergone "tandok", skin damage, delay in proper medical treatment, and most of all, possible infection. Also, to the person who is performing the "tandok" is prone to the infectious disease

and contamination. That's why everyone is highly encouraged to avoid this kind of practice or procedure for optimum safety.

*"They don't believe rabies exists and put garlic on the wound." (IDI P3)*

*"Some people rely on any herbal or whatever treatment comes to their mind because they're not into the idea of vaccination." (IDI P5)*

*"Magka-tawa nalang gani me kay gihimo na hinuon nila ug ginisa ang samad kay maski unsang panakot naman hinuon ilang gibutang kay tambal lagi daw to." (IDI P6)*

*"I must say that ignorance or misconception is a factor on this because they don't have any idea on what the priority steps are or to do when bitten by animal regardless if it's a pet or a stray." (FGD P1)*

*"Daghan jud kaayo hinumanon basta about ani." (FGD P3)*  
*"Daghan jud kaayo mag alig-alig basta about nag ani sa pagtambal sa maong samad kay ginahimo ra jud dawn a kaniadto unya wala man daw sila naunsa mao ang common kay ahos jud ug katong sungay sa usa." (FGD P5)*

**Religious Resistance.** Some reject vaccines due to religious beliefs or even resistance to specific treatments that can have several detrimental effects, such as postponed or denied therapy, possible health risks, and strained patient-provider relationships. It may also affect the distribution of resources and the cost of healthcare. That's why people who are not in favor with the opinions of healthcare professionals because they're firm with their religious side usually reached the fatal stage or death especially with rabies.

*"Some would be on their religious side of beliefs." (IDI P4)*

*"Most of the people in our community are not quite into medical side but more on their religious beliefs." (IDI P5)*

### **Logistical Issues**

It is when an operation or event's effective planning, coordination, and execution are interfered with. These problems can be anything from delivery and transportation issues to inventory management and resource allocation problems. They may cause delays, inefficiencies, and monetary losses by affecting the overall efficacy and cost of operations.

**Vaccine Shortages.** Under-supply of anti-rabies vaccines affects program reach. It is one of the common problems experienced by the patients in a certain barangay or community when we talk about logistics. Because of the high demand but less supply, many of the patients in a certain area were not able to avail the free treatment.

*"The under-supply of anti-rabies vaccine is a barrier." (IDI P1)*

*"Maka-ingon jud kong dako kaayo nga problema sa amo nga mga nurses diri ang pagka-kulang sa maong vaccine." (IDI P4)*

*"It's really a challenge for us to face this kind of scenario to which we have less supply of vaccine then the demand is high because of the high number of animal bite cases." (FGD P1)*

**Distance to Treatment.** Remote locations discourage compliance or in case there's available vaccine but because of the distance to the treatment center they just decide not to pursue because of the concern in transportation and includes inconvenience on their part.

*"Patients refuse treatment because the center is far from their residence." (FGD P2)*

*"Pirmi nila isulti nga layo ang ilang balay padulong sa center ba unya kalas ug pliti. Pobre ra jud daw sila. Mao na kasagaran nila mulo." (FGD P5)*

*"Dapat daw buhatan ug mga branch ang treatment center na maka-apil ang lagyo ug balay kanang dili lang jud kay tuyuon." (FGD P6)*

### **Behavioral Challenges**

These are issues that can interfere with day-to-day functioning, interpersonal connections, and general well-being. These difficulties might be modest or severe, and they can show up as impulsivity, anger, withdrawal, or trouble following directions. Effective management of these difficulties requires an understanding of the underlying causes and the application of suitable techniques.

**Non-compliance.** Patients skip vaccination schedules or drop out due to financial constraints. It is a negative factor that can greatly affect the course of treatment of the patients because the passive immunoglobulin brought by the anti-rabies vaccine will fully activate once the patient was able to complete the doses from D0 to Day7 or D28 if case the biting animal will be dead 14 days from the time of incident. Even if, there are patients who would comply especially if they

understood the disease and the benefits of the treatment that's why they will look for any means just to comply and complete the said treatment.

*"Compliance to the vaccination schedule is a challenge... due to financial restraint." (IDI P1)*

*"Pirmi jud namo gina-emphasize unsa ka-importante ang pagkumpleto sa mga doses sa maong tambal para mu-fully activate siya sa lawas kay if in case dili ma-kumpleto kay mawala ra jud to sa lawas." (IDI P2)*

*"Sige jud me remind na balik jud sa next dose." (FGD P4)*

### **Staffing Constraints**

It is described as limitations or restrictions that affect an organization's capacity to manage its workforce or fill positions effectively. These restrictions may result from several things, such as financial limitations, a lack of skilled workers, hiring freezes, or trouble recruiting competent applicants. Increased patient death and morbidity rates are the most harmful consequence of personnel shortages in medical care. This is because understaffing worsens patient outcomes by raising the likelihood of medical errors, increasing patient infections, and causing care to be missed or delayed.

**Overworked Nurses.** Lack of dedicated staff delays implementation and counseling. Community nurses who have heavy workloads suffer from increased stress, burnout, and emotional weariness, which may compromise patient safety and care quality. Additionally, these consequences may lead to higher turnover rates, higher absenteeism, and decreased job satisfaction. High workloads can also harm nurses' physical and emotional health, which lowers their general well-being.

*"There is no dedicated trained nurse... causing delays in implementation." (IDI P2)*

*"Luoy jud ang nurse kay pila gud na sila ka population unya ako ra jud isa ga-duty tas inig muanhi sila kay bulto. So unsaon nalang?" (IDI P4)*

*"We should give emphasis on how important the presence of trained healthcare worker in this kind of environment is so we can provide or deliver a best service that we give." (FGD P1)*

*"Government should look deeper into this matter so that they can give enough budget for additional staff in the community specifically nurses." (FGD P5)*

*"Unta ma-aksyonan jud ang pagka-kulang sa nurses sa komunidad kay ang mga pasyente diring dapita*

*kay naga-saka jud pud. Diri man jud na sila una mudangop before sa mga dagkong hospital.” (FGD P6)*

**Patient Prioritization.** Nurses manage workload by triaging cases, but patients feel neglected. Prioritizing patients should be done by community nurses according to their vulnerability, the severity of their medical conditions, and the resources that are available. According to Maslow's hierarchy of requirements, this entails attending to immediate needs like breathing, circulation, and airway (ABCs) before moving on to other needs. The patient's total health needs, including social, emotional, and physical elements, as well as their capacity to obtain and follow through on required care, must also be considered by community nurses. But because of the shortage of staffing, the ideal algorithm of prioritization was not followed.

*“We prioritize patients, but some say, ‘Maayo pa ug mo-uli nalang.” (FGD P5)*

*“Naa jud mga tao or pasyente na dili makasabot na first come first serve basis jud ta pirmi pero if nay mga senior citizen ug buntis kay amor a pud gina-una pati kanang mga emergent na kaso.” (FGD P6)*

## **Strategies used to overcome obstacles in promoting awareness and preventive measures for Rabies Encephalitis?**

### **Education Campaigns**

These are planned activities intended to educate, enlighten, and motivate audiences about subjects, ideas, or educational possibilities. To accomplish their objectives, they make use of a variety of platforms, including social media, television, and community outreach. These campaigns, which frequently address public health issues, advance social justice, and increase awareness of numerous challenges, seek to enhance public understanding, attitudes, and behaviors connected to important educational issues. It has a wide range of beneficial effects, such as raising civic involvement, encouraging environmental stewardship, and improving health outcomes. Additionally, they can result in more dynamic learning environments, better academic performance, and stronger communities.

**Culturally Sensitive Materials.** Using local language and relatable examples to explain rabies risks. These are items that, owing to their power, require special care and handling and/or may only be viewed by certain people.

*“We develop educational materials in familiar language and images.” (IDI P1)*

**Storytelling.** Sharing real-life rabies deaths to emphasize urgency. It is the act of sharing stories, either orally, digitally, or in writing, to communicate

messages, entertain, educate, or inspire. It's a fundamental human practice used across cultures to preserve history, cultural identity, moral values, and even in the medical field if there's evidence. These are the simplest initiatives taken by our participants on their covered barangay just to heighten their awareness specially on establishing preventive programs against rabies encephalitis.

*"We shared an example of a patient who died within 48 hours of symptoms." (IDI P2)*

*"Amoa jud na sila pirmi ingnan about sa mga pasyente nga maig-an ug rabies kay dili na jud tawon mabuhi. Ang uban mutoo pero ang uban kay mag lingo-lingo ra jud." (IDI P4)*

### **Community Engagement**

It entails organizations and individuals collaborating with the community to address common challenges and increase well-being. It is about developing relationships, communicating effectively, and managing interactions to generate mutually beneficial results for both the organization and the community.

**Door-to-Door Vaccination.** Reaching remote or underserved areas directly. Here, doing a door-to-door vaccination by the community nurses is quite favorable on the side of the patients who are very far from the treatment center, it ensures that they'll have the benefits of the created strategy.

*"Door-to-door campaigns help reach those unable to access central points." (IDI P6)*

*"We can feel how grateful they were if there are times that we deliver the treatment right to their door." (FGD P2)*

*"People in our community are very thankful and happy when we do door-to-door because they can save energy, time, and money." (FGD P3)*

**Free or Subsidized Services.** Removing financial barriers for low-income groups. Providing a free or subsidized services increase the active participation of the patients and the other residents of a certain barangay knowing that they can save money because they don't need to spend just to avail of the service or treatment.

*"Free services increase participation in low-income areas." (IDI P5)*

*"Grabe ang kalipay sa katawhan labon na makabalo sila nga libre ang serbisyo ug mga tambal kay matipid jud daw sila. Ipalit nalang daw nila ug konsumo ug para sa ilang mga estudyante imbis na ipalit lagi daw ug medisina." (IDI P6)*

*“People here are very happy everytime they hear that they don’t need to pay out from their pocket. They always say that government is really working and making initiatives. So, the positive regards are always given to us.” (FGD P2)*

*“Sobra jud ilang pasalamat ba basta makabalo nga libre.” (FGD P4)*

### **Technology Use**

It refers to the various ways in which humans use technical instruments and approaches to solve issues, meet needs, and improve daily living. It encompasses everything from simple instruments like hammers to complex systems like computers, and its effects are felt in all sectors of society. There are several benefits to using technology in community settings, such as better communication, easier access to resources, more efficiency, and more chances for participation and cooperation. Economic growth, healthcare, education, and community development can all be greatly impacted by these advantages.

**SMS Reminders.** Sending appointment alerts and educational info via text. Some strategies done by some of the community nurses using technology are sending of SMS to the patients that will serve as the reminders.

*“We use SMS for reminders and rabies information.” (FGD P1)*

*“Naa jud panahon nga kami maghimo ug initiative na ipang-inform namo sila pina-agi sa text messages kay saying man gud if dili nila ma-comply. Ma-useless nuon.” (FGD P3)*

**Mobile Application.** Developing apps to report bites and locate treatment centers. It can be utilized for emergency case to which they can report animal bite incidence and locate nearest treatment center that is amenable to the patients.

*“We’re creating apps to report bites and find nearby centers.” (FGD P3)*

*“Murag mao naman gud pud ang nauso sa ubang institusyon aron madali kay maghimo sila ug app para sa konsultasyon ug uban pa.” (FGD P5)*

### **Threat Perception**

It is the conscious or unconscious assessment that something or someone constitutes a hazard. It is an essential idea in several domains, including international relations, psychology, and risk assessment. In essence, it is concerned with how individuals or groups perceive and interpret possible dangers, which can impact their behavior, attitudes, and even political actions.

**Mortality Awareness.** Highlighting rabies fatalities to motivate compliance. By heightening the information to the community how fatal rabies is and through presenting census of mortality rate of the said disease, many decided to seek for a treatment. Because most of the people especially those that are unaware about the impact of rabies at present will not be alarmed, not unless if they heard stories about its fatality or seen on social media that it's really a health threat.

*"People comply more when they hear Rabies is that fatal or deadly." (IDI P4)*

*"Nah! Amoa jud na sila ginapakita sa mga video or mga post about sa pasyente nga nisaka na jud sa utok ang maong rabies. Makuyawan gud sila maka-kita kay tinuod jud lagi daw." (IDI P5)*

*"Ginapakita jud namo ang update about sa mga na-infect sa maong virus para motoo jud sila ug maka-bati ug kahadlok." (FGD P3)*

*"We show them the situationer about the census of animal bite cases including the ones being infected by rabies so that they will have an idea how serious it is." (FGD P6)*

### **Implications to Nursing Practice**

The findings of this study highlight the critical need for community nurses to be equipped not only with clinical competencies but also with skills in program implementation, resource management, and community engagement. The challenges related to insufficient funding and reliance on external stakeholders underscore the need for nurses to actively participate in health program planning and advocate for sustainable support. Strengthening nurses' capacity in health systems navigation, intersectoral collaboration, and local resource mobilization is essential for ensuring the continuity and effectiveness of rabies prevention programs at the grassroots level.

Cultural factors such as education gaps, ethical and religious beliefs, and language barriers present unique demands on nursing practice. These findings call for the integration of culturally competent care and communication strategies into daily nursing routines. Community nurses must be able to tailor health messages according to the sociocultural context of the populations they serve. This includes using local dialects, simplifying technical information, and engaging community influencers to address resistance and promote vaccine acceptance. In doing so, nurses act not only as caregivers but also as educators and change agents in public health.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of effective communication and health literacy promotion as integral parts of nursing practice. Simplifying complex health information related to rabies encephalitis, including the importance

of vaccination and post-exposure care, is essential in encouraging timely and appropriate health-seeking behavior. Community nurses are in a prime position to lead health education efforts and foster trust within communities. To support this role, continuous training in communication, behavioral change strategies, and community-based health education should be institutionalized as part of professional development in nursing.

Furthermore, community-based prevention initiatives are important because they address risk factors and promote well-being to enhance population health outcomes. In contrast to clinical services alone, these initiatives can impact environmental and social factors that impact health and reach a broader spectrum of people, including those who are at lesser risk. Community-based prevention can have a bigger overall effect on lowering health issues and encouraging healthy behaviors by concentrating on the whole population. In a community context, rabies encephalitis can have disastrous effects, such as high rates of morbidity and mortality, financial hardship, and psychological distress. Rabies is almost invariably lethal once symptoms start to show. Due to the possibility of misdiagnosis and restricted access to efficient treatment, the illness also puts a strain on healthcare systems.

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