

Nurses' Perceptions of Caring Behavior at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Medan 2023

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Caring is a moral attitude in nursing practice, the caring nature of nurses when dealing with sick people and patient families. Every day must show that nurses really care about the situation. Caring behavior is an action based on caring, compassion, skills, empathy, responsibility, sensitivity, and support. In general, caring behavior is a form of basic nursing practice in which the patient feels comfortable and assisted in carrying out the patient's healing process more quickly. The purpose of this study is to determine nurses understanding of caring behavior This research uses a qualitative approach with the phenomenological method. The data collection is carried out by means of in-depth interviews with 5 questions to dig deeper into the understanding of nurses in caring behavior. Taking participants using simple random sampling technique 5 participants. The data analysis technique used is thematic analysis. Based on the results of direct interviews, the results obtain: Caring is a sense of good interpersonal relationships, being sensitive and concerned about the patient's condition. Caring behavior is when providing nursing care to patients. Caring behavior can be given by showing empathy and sincerity towards patients, trying to overcome patient complaints and not discriminating between patients. Caring behavior is very beneficial for patients so that they feel satisfied and happy with their treatment, build a trusting relationship and improve the quality of nursing care. There are obstacles in the implementation of caring behavior, namely when nurse cares and serves the patient well, but the patient refuses and gets angry.

Keywords: Caring Behavior, Nurse

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1. Introduction

According to WHO in Supriyanto (2019), a hospital is an integral part of a social and medical organization, which has the function of providing comprehensive health services to the community, both curative and preventive, where the outreach services reach families and their home environment, the hospital is also a center for training health workers and for bio-psycho-socioeconomic-cultural research. Law No. 44 of 2009; Hospital is a health service institution that organizes comprehensive individual health services that provide inpatient, outpatient, and emergency services.

Watson defined caring as a necessary relationship between the provider and recipient of nursing care to enhance and protect the patient, ultimately impacting the patient's ability to recover. Watson's theory of caring is a holistic model of nursing that states that the goal of caring is to support the total healing process. Pressures and time constraints in healthcare settings limit the scope of caring practice, rendering nurses and other healthcare professionals indifferent to client needs (Watson, 2008).

According to Karo (2019), caring behavior in nursing is explicitly a reflection of human nature, manifested through attributes such as compassion, competence, self-confidence, conscience, and commitment. Caring behavior can be seen in nurses' understanding of caring and care. This reflects nurses' awareness of the importance of caring. Nurses recognize the influence of caring behavior and knowledge. Nurses

enhance their understanding of patient care. Nurses must understand that caring behavior can improve care and help patients recover.

Caring behavior in nursing explicitly reflects human nature, manifested through attributes such as compassion, competence, confidence, conscientiousness, and commitment. Caring behavior can be seen in nurses' understanding of care and concern. This reflects nurses' awareness of the importance of care. Nurses recognize the influence of caring behavior and knowledge. Nurses enhance their understanding of patient care. Nurses must understand that caring behavior can improve service and help patients recover (Karo, 2019).

Based on the results of an initial survey conducted by researchers through interviews with 10 patients treated at Santa Elisabeth Hospital Medan in the Maria-Marta ward, the data obtained showed that 5 patients (50%) stated that nurses provided good care, 3 patients (30%) stated that nurses provided adequate care, and 2 patients (20%) stated that nurses provided inadequate care (RSE, 2022).

Nurses in Indonesia currently face a dilemma: on the one hand, they must strive to improve the quality of nursing services, while on the other, the government is cutting the budget allocated for nursing services. In carrying out their duties, nurses rarely develop good interpersonal relationships due to the high number of patients they serve and the time constraints they face.

According to Puwaningsih (2015), in reality, there are still many nurses who are not caring, which is indicated by the greater number of caring activities provided by nurses to patients. Some nurses even do not have time to listen to clients, provide comfort, and other caring actions. Sometimes nurses see the nurse-client therapeutic relationship as something less important to pay attention to. Some empirical evidence supports the lack of caring behavior of nurses. To improve caring behavior of nurses, encouragement from within the nurse is needed. The feeling of empathy is one of the caring caratives, where the feeling of empathy will motivate caring. According to Firmansyah et al. (2019), poor caring behavior is influenced by excessive workload, which causes many client complaints about the lack of friendliness, patience, and attention from nurses. Nurses with high levels of work stress also show poorer perceptions of their caring behavior.

According to (Gannika & Karundeng, 2020), nurses lack caring because they do not reflect attitudes such as acting quickly in serving patients at all times, reporting all details of patient changes to the doctor during the visit, paying attention to the complaints of the patient's family, always asking about patient complaints, and being impatient in providing services. According to Urzia & Jannah (2020), improving nurses' caring behavior can also be seen from how nurses instill trust in patients. because instilling trust in patients is one of the important elements in building an effective relationship between nurses and patients.

According to Tutu Ariani (2018), there was an increase in nurses' behavior after caring behavior training, especially in therapeutic communication in providing nursing care to patients. It is recommended that trained nurses maintain caring behavior in every nursing care given to patients, especially in communication, and hospital institutions should continue to provide facilities to improve caring behavior skills to each nurse periodically and conduct periodic evaluations to continuously improve services to patients in order to further improve caring for patients. This study aims to determine how nurses perceive caring behavior of nurses at St. Elisabeth Hospital Medan in 2023.

2. Literature Review and Problem Statement

Hospitals

According to the WHO (in Supriyanto, 2019), hospitals are an integral part of social and medical organizations, whose function is to provide comprehensive health services to the community, both curative and preventive. Their services reach families and their home environments. Hospitals are also centers for training health workers and for bio-psycho-socioeconomic-cultural research. Law No. 44 of 2009 defines a hospital as a health service institution that provides comprehensive individual health services, including inpatient, outpatient, and emergency services. Hospital Characteristics:

1. It is a capital-intensive, labor-intensive (resource-intensive), and technology-intensive industry.
2. The nature of hospital products is highly diverse, as are service processes, even though the inputs are the same. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between process, output, and outcome.
3. The dynamic evolution of the hospital paradigm, from non-profit to just-profit, or where profit was previously excluded from business competition, now it is competitive.

Caring

According to Karo (2019), *caring* is one of the most important aspects of nursing. As nurses, they show care by performing tasks, holding hands, and being attentive. Or by being truly present. Nurses care by meeting the needs of patients, family members, and other healthcare providers. *Caring* is more than just performing tasks; it's about establishing a transpersonal *caring* relationship with patients and understanding others. Forms of Caring Service According to Perry & Potter (2009), caring is a product of culture, values, experiences, and relationships with others. In providing nursing care, caring can take several forms, including:

1. Presence Presence is an encounter with another person, a means of closer connection and conveying the benefits of caring. Explain that presence means "being there" and "being with." "Being there" does not only mean physical presence, but also includes communication and understanding.
2. Touch Caring touch is a form of verbal communication that can influence a client's comfort and safety, enhance self-esteem, and improve their orientation to reality. Friendly and prompt behavior when performing nursing procedures will provide comfort.
3. Listening Caring involves interpersonal interaction and is not simply a reciprocal conversation between two people. In a care relationship, the nurse builds trust, opens up the topic of conversation, and listens to what the client has to say. Listening is key, as it demonstrates the nurse's full attention and interest. Listening includes understanding the client's intentions and responding back to the other person.
4. Understanding the client Caring is the process of understanding the client. This concept encompasses the nurse's understanding of a specific client and the selection of subsequent interventions. The caring relationship established by the nurse, along with the nurse's increasing knowledge and experience, are valuable resources when changes in clinical conditions occur.

caring consists of carative factors/caritas processes that facilitate healing, respect wholeness, and contribute to the evolution of humanity. Caring in nursing has existed in every society; every society has had some people who care for others. The attitude of caring is not acquired from generation to generation. It is absorbed by the culture of the community. The culture of nursing has an important socio-scientific role in advancing, maintaining, and preserving human caring as a way to fulfill its mission to society and humanity more broadly (Watson, 2008).

Caring Behavior

According to Karo (2019), *caring behavior* is an action related to patient well-being, such as sensitivity, comfort, attentive listening, honesty, and non-judgmental acceptance. *Caring behavior* reflects the nursing staff's knowledge of how to nurture patients as whole individuals through *caring* actions and identify the need for nursing interventions. Furthermore, they must be prepared to implement these actions through the application of their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences, which are central to their caring values. According to Watson (2008), caring behavior is a form of basic nursing practice that is demonstrated through patience, honesty, confidence, presence, touch, compassion, and humility in carrying out actions, so that patients feel comfortable and are assisted in a faster healing process. Furthermore, it will prevent worsening conditions in patients and, instead, provide a sense of comfort to the patients we serve every day. *Caring behavior* is an action based on concern, compassion, skill, empathy, responsibility, sensitivity, and support. *Caring behavior* is required by nurses:

1. Be honest
2. Advocate for the client's choice of care
3. Provide complete and clear explanations
4. Always keep family members informed
5. Show interest in answering questions and providing honest answers
6. Provide emergency services
7. Provide and maintain client privacy
8. Assure the client that nursing services will always be available
9. Help establish the client as fully as possible
10. Teach the family how to maintain physical comfort (Potter & Perry, 2009).

Efforts to improve caring behavior, according to Hamim in Karo (2019), include improving nurses' self-concept, including enhancing positive self-concept and learning about self-identity, self-image, and self-esteem as nurses. The quality of nursing work, life, and self-concept regarding caring influence nurses' behavior in nursing care. This led to the discovery of a model of the quality of nursing work life and self-concept regarding nurses' caring behavior in hospitals.

3. Method

According to Polit & Beck (2012), a research design is the overall plan or structure and strategy of a study structured in such a way as to obtain answers to research questions. A research method is a technique used by researchers to structure a study to collect and analyze information relevant to the research question. This study uses a qualitative design with a phenomenological approach that aims to determine a nurse's perception or understanding of caring behavior. According to Nursalam (2015), a population is a subject (e.g., a human: a client) who meets predetermined criteria. The population in this study was 21 nurses in the Maria-Marta ward.

According to Nursalam (2015), simple random sampling is the simplest type of probability sampling. In this sampling method, each element is selected randomly. The sampling technique used in this study was simple random sampling using a dice roll, as follows: The researcher provided 21 rolls of paper, each numbered 1-5, and selected as the sample. The rolls were placed in a box and mixed. Once collected, a random sample was drawn. The roll with the number 1-5 on it was selected as the sample. The sample in this study consisted of five nurses in the Maria-Marta ward. The inclusion criteria were:

1. Nurses in the Maria-Marta ward with: a. Bachelor's degree b. 1-10 years of service
2. Understanding of Caring Behavior

3. Willingness to be a respondent
4. Collaborative skills.

According to Nursalam (2015), research instruments are the tools used to collect data. The instruments used in this study were interviews, voice recorders, manuscripts, stationery, and questionnaires. The research instrument used was interviews concerning the problem being studied to obtain the subjects' opinions on a research problem. The research instrument used in this study was participant interviews, which addressed five questions about caring behavior:

1. What is the definition of caring?
2. What is the definition of caring behavior?
3. How do you implement caring behavior in nursing practice?
4. What are the benefits of caring behavior in nursing?
5. What are the obstacles faced in practicing caring behavior in nursing?

According to Nursalam (2015), data collection is the process of approaching subjects and gathering the characteristics of subjects required for a study. The type of data collection used in this study is primary data, which involves obtaining data directly from the target population through five-question interviews. Data collection was conducted after obtaining permission from the Director of St. Elisabeth Hospital Medan. After obtaining permission, the author requested the nurses' availability to serve as respondents by contracting their time and providing equipment such as notebooks, pens, a voice recorder, an interview guide, a manuscript, and conducting the interview. Interviews lasted a minimum of 45 minutes per respondent. In this study, the author did not conduct validity and reliability tests because they used a standardized interview guide (Karo, 2019).

The author first explained the purpose, benefits, and procedures of the study after obtaining the respondents' consent. If they agreed, the author provided an informed consent form for them to sign. If the respondents were unwilling, the author did not force them to participate, as they must respect their rights.

4. Results and Discussion

Description of Participant Characteristics

No	Participant Code	Age	Gender	Position	Education
1	DT	48	Female	Head Nurse	Ners
2	ST	35	Female	Nursing Staff	Ners
3	FT	26	Female	Nursing Staff	Ners
4	LP	25	Female	Nursing Staff	Ners
5	GT	24	Female	Nursing Staff	Ners

From the table above, it can be seen that all participants were female, highly educated, one was the head of the room and the other four were nursing staff with a work period of 1-10 years.

Understanding Caring

All participants answered that they understood the concept of caring. The following are the interview results:

"Caring is an attitude, like the nurse's interpersonal relationship with the patient, how the nurse cares for the patient, and how the patient understands their needs." (P1)

"In my opinion, caring is caring for patients, such as caring for others, being caring, listening to patients' complaints, being sensitive to their complaints, and being attentive to their condition." (P2)

"Caring is our caring attitude toward our patients or clients."

*" (P3) Caring is the interpersonal relationship with patients, the nurse's attitude of loving others, being caring toward patients, and being sensitive. (P4)
"Caring is our caring, in this case, our concern for patients." (P5)*

The results of the study conducted on five participants, P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5, stated that caring is "our caring attitude toward patients and their families, by listening to and being sensitive to patient complaints, building interpersonal relationships with patients, and nurses must be able to provide attention and love for patients."

The above is supported by research by Urzia (2020), who stated that in providing nursing services, caring behavior is the spirit of the nursing profession, where caring behavior is the core of nursing that distinguishes nursing from other health professions. Nurses' caring behavior is based on humanitarian values such as kindness and concern, as evident in respondents' answers during interviews. Nurses often address patients by their given names and do not forget to introduce themselves to patients and their families, whether in a simple manner.

Understanding Caring Behavior

Five participants answered the question of what caring behavior is. The following is their explanation:

"Caring behavior is how nurses treat their patients by providing compassionate service in accordance with the mission and vision of St. Elisabeth Hospital. So, from this caring behavior, we understand the obstacles and problems that patients encounter before taking action." (P1)

"Caring behavior is the concern we show to patients, such as empathy and compassion in taking action, listening to patient complaints." (P2)

"Caring behavior, as I understand it, is our attitude and behavior toward, or our concern for, the well-being of patients, showing acceptance and acknowledgment of the patient." (P3)

"Caring behavior is understanding the patient's challenges, then providing and listening to their problems or complaints, and then taking the necessary action." (P4)

"Caring behavior is our attitude and behavior toward our patients. For example, if they ask a question, we answer it kindly. We don't ignore them. That's how we care, we feel their pain." (P5)

From the research results, five participants stated that the definition of caring behavior is how we as nurses treat patients, treating patients with compassion, demonstrating empathy and acceptance, and being able to feel the pain experienced by patients for their well-being. Caring behavior also emphasizes individual self-esteem, meaning that in nursing practice, nurses always assess patients by accepting their strengths and weaknesses. Patients expect nurses to have adequate knowledge of their medical conditions so they can address the complaints experienced by each patient (Aeni et al., 2019).

How to Demonstrate Caring Behavior in Nursing Practice

Four participants stated that demonstrating caring behavior involves demonstrating empathy and sympathy. The following are the explanations from four participants:

"First, we assess the patient, who needs it, and we always strive to address the problems they face and find solutions by demonstrating empathy and sympathy." (P1)

"How to treat patients: For example, if a new patient comes in with a complaint, we first ask about the patient's complaint. By asking about the patient's complaint, we listen carefully, listen to all their concerns, and don't interrupt them. We demonstrate sincerity. We then demonstrate that we accept what they have to say. That's empathy." (P2)

"I provide that by treating those we serve with love, demonstrating our attitude toward patients with empathy, compassion, and we will help them both physically and spiritually." (P4)

"For us, in other words, when we give medication, for example, antibiotics or painkillers, the injection is quite painful. So, we have to stroke them, talk to them, and teach them relaxation techniques so they don't feel pain." (P5)

From the research results, four participants explained how to demonstrate caring behavior in nursing practice. The four participants (R1, R2, R4, and R5) explained that the way to demonstrate caring behavior in nursing practice includes showing empathy and sympathy toward patients, asking and listening to every patient's complaint, demonstrating sincerity, and engaging nurses in conversation and providing touch to reduce the patient's pain.

The above is in line with the research (Firmansyah et al., 2019), which states that caring gives nurses the ability to understand and help clients. Caring behavior is also an expression of love and bonding, authority and presence, always being together, empathy, and can motivate nurses to be more caring towards clients and able to take action according to client needs. The caring behavior demonstrated by nurses in providing their services is one indicator of service quality.

Benefits of Caring Behavior in Nursing Practice

The following are statements from participants:

"It's beneficial to satisfy customers or patients. If caring is done well, patients will feel satisfied with our service and more comfortable, which also improves the quality of our service." (P1)

"The benefit of caring behavior is that we become closer to patients, and patients are more open to their complaints. For example, not all patients come with the same complaint. They may have external complaints or something else. So, we know where the complaint originates, what happened previously, and we can understand it, and we can relate to the patient, what we should say to them, and what we should do. So, we can do it, and the patient can accept it and not get angry." (P2)

"The benefit is that it reflects the quality of nursing care by assisting patients with their physical and non-physical needs." (P3)

"The benefit of caring behavior for nurses is that it reflects the quality of care, the way nurses help patients with our sincere presence and feel their suffering." (P4)

"There are actually many benefits to this, right? Well, if it's a benefit, the patients will be happy, and there's also the term "oh yeah, the nurses here are friendly and angry too," so people don't feel like, uh, what should they say? Hmm, the term is that the nurses aren't indifferent, so if they come here, they'll be happy to come here, in other words, visiting us doesn't make their illness worse." (P5).

The research findings revealed that five participants expressed the benefits of caring behavior in nursing. These five participants, P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5, stated that patients would feel satisfied with the service and treatment, which would reduce their pain and improve the quality of nursing care.

This finding is supported by research (Susanti & Apriana, 2019), which found that when nurses demonstrate caring behavior in providing nursing care, good interpersonal relationships are established between nurses and patients, and between nurses and other healthcare professionals, leading to the achievement of good, quality nursing care. Quality care can be achieved through the provision of nursing care based on nurses' caring behavior.

Barriers to practicing caring behavior in nursing

Participants explained the barriers they faced when practicing caring behavior with patients in nursing. The following statements were made by participants:

"The barrier is that with certain patients, there's resistance. This resistance occurs, for example, when patients are desperate, perhaps already aware that their illness is terminal. They feel that medication is no longer useful, so they feel it's unnecessary. Then, there are also those who feel they've recovered and don't need medication. That's what happens when they refuse medication." (P1)

"The barrier often occurs, perhaps because each patient comes in with different complaints, so we might encounter obstacles when we're busy, so we just give them a perfunctory response. So they think we don't care, don't care about them. Then, even when they've repeatedly asked questions, we might not see it. It's a communication barrier. Communication isn't getting through, isn't being accurate, isn't getting through." (P2) "The obstacles are, uh, the client and family members are uncooperative or communication is hampered. Communication is like, 'Yes, we're doing something good, but the patient rejects what we're doing.'" (P3)

"The obstacles are uncooperative and unstable patients and family members, eee, that's emotional, communication barriers, and refusal to comply with all treatment. For example, we give cough medicine, eee, this is medicine recommended by the doctor, but eee, the family refuses, like that, uncooperative." (P4)

"The obstacles are usually eee, what do you want, some patients are less than cooperative, they're asked this, they answer something else, and so on. If there's treatment, some are hindered, like we give eee, something, eee, there's a refusal to give antibiotics, or transfusions. Many patients refuse or, based on their religious beliefs, refuse transfusions. So, this is where we need to apply caring behavior. What if it's not given, what happens if it's not given, eee, what are the consequences of the transfusion? That's what's needed." (P5)

From the research results, five participants reported experiencing obstacles when practicing caring behavior. Participants P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 stated that the obstacles they encountered when practicing caring behavior in nursing were: "We care and try our best to serve, but the patient refuses or gets angry with us as nurses." An obstacle encountered when practicing caring behavior is that the patient or the patient's family is uncooperative with the nurse, making it difficult for the nurse to collaborate with them for the patient's recovery (Anzani, 2020).

5. Conclusion

1. Nurses' understanding of *caring behavior*.

In interviews with nurses in the Maria-Marta ward at St. Elisabeth Hospital in Medan, all participants understood the definition of caring behavior, which is "Caring behavior is how we as nurses treat patients. We listen to their complaints, serve them with compassion, show acceptance and empathy toward them, and nurses must be able to feel the pain they feel for the sake of their well-being." This aligns with research (Firmansyah et al., 2019), which states that caring empowers nurses to understand and help clients. Caring behavior also expresses love and bonding, authority and presence, being present, and empathy, motivating nurses to be more caring and responsive to their clients' needs. The caring behavior demonstrated by nurses in providing care is an indicator of service quality.

2. How to provide *caring behavior* in nursing practice

The results of interviews with participants showed that all participants already knew how to provide caring behavior in nursing practice. Participants said that "The way to provide caring behavior in nursing practice is by us as nurses showing empathy to patients, serving patients with love without discrimination, asking about patient complaints, showing sincerity and showing that we accept

patients well and by listening to patient complaints, trying to resolve patient complaints and providing quality nursing care”.

This is in line with research (Firmansyah et al., 2019), which states that caring empowers nurses to understand and help clients. *Caring behavior* also expresses love and bonding, authority and presence, being present, and empathy. It can motivate nurses to be more caring and responsive to clients' needs. The *caring behavior* demonstrated by nurses in providing care is an indicator of service quality.

The way to provide *caring behavior* in nursing practice is by being professional, promoting a foundation of fast, friendly, caring service, smiling, greeting, touching, being honest, and sincere in serving patients (Yunita & Hariadi, 2019).

3. Benefits of *caring behavior* in nursing practice

The results of interviews with participants stated that the benefit of *caring behavior* is that patients feel satisfied with the treatment they receive, thereby improving the quality of nursing care.

This is supported by research (Susanti & Apriana, 2019), which states that nurses who demonstrate *caring behavior* in providing nursing services will foster good interpersonal relationships between nurses and patients, and between nurses and other healthcare professionals, resulting in good, high-quality nursing care. Quality care can be achieved through the provision of nursing care based on nurses' *caring behavior*.

4. Barriers faced in the practice of *caring behavior* in nursing

Interviews with participants implementing *caring behaviors* can encounter obstacles, such as when we care, are attentive, and try to provide good service, but the patient rejects us or becomes angry with us.

Another barrier encountered in practicing *caring behavior* is the patient's or their family's uncooperativeness, making it difficult for them to collaborate with them for the patient's recovery (Anzani, 2020).

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