

Level Of Caring Practices of Nurses Toward Postpartum Mothers in Maimbung, Sulu: Basis for a Training Program.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the caring practices of nurses towards postpartum mothers and to find out whether there is any relationship between the caring practices of the nurses and their demographic characteristics. In particular, the study evaluated the level of empathy and emotional support, communication, patient education and guidance, and caring behavior of the nurses in their postpartum care activities. A quantitative descriptive–correlational research design was used, and the subjects were fifty (50) registered nurses assigned to the hospital's maternal and postpartum care units through purposive sampling. The data collection instruments used were a researcher-made questionnaire, based on Jean Watson's theory of human caring, and an observation checklist. Data on the profile and caring practices of the respondents were obtained from descriptive statistics, namely frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The relationship between some demographic variables and caring practices was examined using Pearson correlation analysis. Results showed that nurses' caring practice was significantly high in all dimensions measured, with communication skills being the highest. Correlation analysis also showed no significant relationship between demographic factors of age, gender, and years of experience and the overall level of caring practices. This study indicates that the postpartum care nurses provide is always compassionate, holistic, and patient-centered despite demographic characteristics. The study suggests that ongoing professional development and competency-based training should be given to further enhance caring behavior, communication, and patient education practices among nurses attending to postpartum mothers.

Keywords: Caring practices, nurses, postpartum mothers, patient-centered care, Jean Watson, training program.

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the level of caring practices of nurses toward postpartum mothers and develop a proposed training program based on the findings.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents?
2. What is the level of caring practices of nurses toward postpartum mothers?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and their caring practices?
4. What training program may be proposed based on the findings?

Scope and Delimitations

The study focused on registered nurses assigned to maternal and postpartum care units. It assessed caring practices in terms of empathy, communication, patient education, and overall caring behavior. The findings were limited to the selected healthcare institution.

Review of Related Literature

Postpartum care is essential for promoting mothers' physical, emotional, and psychological recovery after childbirth. The World Health Organization (2022) emphasizes that comprehensive postpartum care should include continuous assessment, health education, emotional support, and effective communication between nurses and mothers.

Caring is a fundamental aspect of nursing that extends beyond clinical competence to include empathy, trust, and holistic care (Watson, 2008). Caring behaviors improve patient satisfaction and healthcare outcomes (Sitzman & Watson, 2018). Effective communication and patient education help mothers understand self-care, breastfeeding, medication, and discharge instructions (McCarter et al., 2022; Thompson et al., 2023). Likewise, nurses who consistently demonstrate empathy and compassion contribute to better patient satisfaction and recovery experiences (Molina-Mula & Gallo-Estrada, 2020; Vujanić et al., 2022). These studies highlight the importance of continuous professional development in strengthening nurses' caring competencies.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Jean Watson's Theory of Human Caring, which emphasizes compassion, empathy, trust, and holistic care as essential components of professional nursing practice.

Conceptual Framework

The study adopted the Input–Process–Output (IPO) Model. The input included nurses' demographic profile and caring practices. The process involved questionnaire administration and statistical analysis. The output was the assessment of nurses' caring practices and the development of a proposed training program.

METHODOLOGY

The present study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational method to determine the level of caring practices of the nurses towards postpartum mothers and relate the demographic profile of the nurses with their caring practices.

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to determine the level of caring practices of nurses toward postpartum mothers and examine the relationship between selected demographic characteristics and their caring practices. The descriptive method assessed the nurses' caring behaviors, while the correlational method determined whether demographic variables were significantly associated with these practices.

Research Steps

The study began with a review of related literature, followed by the development and validation of the research instruments. After obtaining the necessary approvals, data were collected from the respondents using a validated questionnaire and observation checklist. The gathered data were analyzed, interpreted, and used as the basis for the proposed training program.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

Purposive sampling was employed to select fifty (50) registered nurses assigned to maternal and postpartum care units. Eligible participants met the inclusion criteria established by the researcher and voluntarily participated after providing informed consent. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire and observation checklist designed to assess caring practices in four dimensions: empathy and emotional support, communication skills, patient education and guidance, and overall caring behavior.

Data Analysis Methods

Demographic indicators of respondents' profile and their level of caring practices were summarized using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. To find out whether a significant relationship existed between selected demographic characteristics and practice of caring, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used. Tables and narrative discussions were used to present results.

Research Hypothesis and Validation

The study tested the null hypothesis that no significant relationship exists between nurses' demographic characteristics and caring practices. The instruments underwent expert validation and pilot testing.

Study Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The research performed abided by the ethical rules. All the necessary institutional authorities were obtained before data was collected. The participation was voluntary and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Participants' names were replaced by codes to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. It was explained to participants that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalties. The study also conformed to the ethical tenets of Respect for Persons, Beneficence and Justice described in the Belmont Report.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study found that nurses demonstrated a very high level of caring practices ($M = 3.63$), with communication skills receiving the highest rating, followed by patient education, overall caring behavior, and empathy. No significant relationship was found between demographic characteristics and caring practices, indicating that professional competence and commitment to quality postpartum care influence caring behaviors more than personal characteristics.

SUMMARY

The findings revealed that nurses consistently demonstrated a very high level of caring practices toward postpartum mothers. Communication skills received the highest rating, and no significant relationship was found between demographic characteristics and caring practices.

CONCLUSIONS

Nurses consistently provide compassionate, holistic, and patient-centered care to postpartum mothers. Caring practices are influenced more by professional competence and ethical commitment than by demographic characteristics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue competency-based training on caring behaviors and communication.
2. Strengthen patient education programs for postpartum mothers.
3. Encourage continuous professional development among nurses.
4. Conduct future studies using larger samples and multiple healthcare institutions.

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AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar, language refinement, and manuscript organization in preparing this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret the research data. All authors are fully responsible for the content and academic integrity of this manuscript.

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