



Communication Barriers Between Nurses and Patients: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Therapeutic communication between nurses and patients is paramount, as this relationship facilitates the process of healing and therapeutic improvement of the patient. Therapeutic communication between nurses and patients may be influenced by various barriers that can affect the scope and quality of this relationship. By recognizing and managing communication barriers between nurses and patients, a better therapeutic relationship can be established between these two parties, which helps improve and heal the patient. This study was conducted with the aim of investigating communication barriers between nurses and patients.

Search Strategy: This research is a systematic review. Our systematic search, based on the PRISMA protocol, was conducted on six databases, including Google Scholar, PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus, Embase, SID, and the World Health Organization databases, to extract relevant articles based on keywords. Our search strategy was conducted from 2010 to June 2024.

Results: Ultimately, 26 relevant studies were included in this research based on our inclusion criteria. Generally, the studies examined barriers falling into three categories: barriers related to nurses, patients, and the environment. Twelve studies focused on nurses' workload and high volume of work. Nine studies addressed language differences, six studies on nurses' lack of skills and knowledge, four studies on cultural barriers, four studies on physical and mental fatigue of nurses, three studies on patients' physical complaints and pain, three studies on the challenges of nursing work, three studies on the shortage of nurses, three studies on lack of time for nurses, three studies on unfamiliarity with hospital environment and inappropriate environment, three studies on lack of appreciation for nurses by superiors, two studies on the presence and interference of patients' relatives alongside the patient's bed, two studies on nurses wearing personal protective equipment, and two studies on the lack of facilities for nurses as significant communication barriers. The studies also discussed other patient barriers, such as anxiety, lack of trust in nurses, reluctance to communicate, negative attitudes of nurses toward patients, nurses' indifference, and nurses' impatience.

Conclusion and Discussion: The findings of this study indicate that there are many barriers to communication between nurses and patients, including but not limited to nurses' heavy workload, language differences between nurses and patients, nurses' lack of skills and knowledge, and cultural barriers. By recognizing and managing communication barriers between nurses and patients, a better therapeutic relationship can be established between these two parties, improving and healing the patient. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further studies to gain a more precise understanding of these barriers and their impact on patients' illness and treatment process.

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