

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# PATIENTS' EXPERIENCES AND LEVEL OF SATISFACTION ON THE CARE RENDERED BY STUDENT NURSES

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## Abstract

Understanding the patients' views on the care they receive is essential for the development of quality health care services. The study aimed to determine the patients' experiences and level of satisfaction on the care rendered by student nurses in the medical and surgical wards of a private hospital. Furthermore, it determined any significant difference in the patients' experiences and level of satisfaction when grouped according to demographic variables.

A descriptive research design was utilized in the study. The participants were recruited from the medical and surgical wards of the hospital from September 5 to October 15, 2016. A total of 100 patients who received care from the student nurses for a minimum of 2 days were included in the study.

The Newcastle Satisfaction with Nursing Scale (NSNS) was used to determine the patients' experiences and level of satisfaction on the care rendered by student nurses. Frequency, percentage, mean score, T-test, and ANOVA were utilized for the data analysis.

Results showed that patients' experiences were above good (category mean of 4.97) and were completely satisfied (category mean of 3.53) with the care rendered by the student nurses. A significant difference was also found between the highest educational attainment and patients' experiences ( $P < 0.05$ ). These findings are important in improving the quality of care rendered to the patients by student nurses. Furthermore, it helps the nursing education in determining and enhancing the competencies of the students in some focused areas.

**Keywords:** *Patients' experiences, patients' satisfaction, care, student nurses*

## Introduction

Understanding the patients' views on the care they receive is essential for the development of quality health care services. Taking notice of the patients' perceptions and satisfaction is the first step towards bringing patient-centered care in practice. Hence, student nurses, as part of the health care team, must determine the needs of the patients and provide care that meets the patients' expectations.

Caring involves two co-existing dimensions: instrumental and expressive caring. Instrumental caring, which is the 'doing of care', is goal-oriented to achieve efficiency and good evidenced-based treatment. On the other hand, the expressive caring

involves a series of patient-centered attitudes based on interactions that are carefully strategized to show respect, gentleness, sensitiveness, and patience (Loke, et. al., 2015). The care provided is dependent on the needs of the patients. Nursing actions are expected to meet patients' needs to conclude that the patient has received quality care (Adereti, et. al., 2014).

Patients' experiences refer to the feelings, thoughts, and knowledge shared by patients that influence the way they react, think, or behave (Makumbang & Adejumo, 2014). Patients can either have a positive or negative experience from the care rendered to them. Commendable nursing care results in positive

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experiences, while poorly executed nursing acts or interventions produce unpleasant and negative experiences from the therapeutic encounter with student nurses.

On the other hand, patient satisfaction is the perception of patients' needs and expectations being met (Ndambuki, 2013). It is a result of each patient's perception of the care individualized for them to eliminate his or her problems (Oskay, et. al., 2015).

Based on the literature, patients were highly satisfied with the nursing care of student nurses. Results showed that patients were more satisfied with nursing care given by the student nurses, especially those who were able to spend more time with them and provided individualized patient care (Topcu and Cakmak, 2014). They were able to meet patients' needs in a caring and attentive manner (responsiveness), provided care according to the patients' feelings (individualization), promoted communication among nurses and patients (coordination), and provided knowledgeable, skillful nursing care (proficiency) (Oskay, et. al., 2015).

Though some findings were found by the researchers during the literature review on the patient experiences and satisfaction on the care rendered by the student nurses (Oskay et al., 2015), patient experience on the care rendered by first-year student nurses (Mossop & Wiliinson, 2006; Camilla et, al., 2015) and patient satisfaction on the care rendered by student nurses (Topcu & Cakmak, 2014), these were found to be insufficient. Some studies were done in perinatology ward (Oskay et al., 2015), gerontology ward (Mossop & Wiliinson, 2006, dedicated education unit (Camilla et, al., 2015), and general surgery clinic (Topcu & Cakmak, 2014), but none was done in the medical ward and surgical wards in the hospital. The researchers chose the medical and surgical wards since the third/fourth-year students have their clinical placements in these areas and are expected to render more direct care to the patients as compared to first-year students in the reviewed studies (Mossop & Wiliinson, 2006). Moreover, in the studies reviewed, there are two studies which used qualitative research designs (Camilla et, al., 2015; Mossop & Wiliinson, 2006) and another two studies which used quantitative research designs (Topcu & Cakmak, 2014; Oskay et al., 2015), which are very minimal considering the importance of the topic.

Student nurses' rendered care is part of the overall care given to patients in training hospitals; that is why it should be given the same attention as to how staff nurses rendered care. Regularly assessing patients' experiences and satisfaction with valid and reliable assessment tools is useful in increasing the quality of healthcare through the implementation of necessary regulations aligned with patients' expectations. With a better understanding of patients' expectations for care, student nurses will be able to improve individualized care rendered to the patient leading to more positive patient outcomes.

Thus, the study sought to assess the patients' experiences and level of satisfaction on the care rendered by student nurses in the medical and surgical wards of the hospital. Moreover, it aimed to determine any significant difference in the patients' experiences and level of satisfaction when grouped according to their demographic variables.

## METHODOLOGY

A descriptive design was utilized in evaluating the patients' experiences and level of satisfaction on the care rendered by student nurses in the medical and surgical wards of the hospital.

After permission was granted, data were gathered between September 5 and October 15, 2016. Using a convenience sampling, a total of 100 patients who received care from BSN 3/BSN 4 student nurses for a minimum of 2 days within the two weeks of data collection were included in the study. For patients who were unable to complete the questionnaire themselves (e.g. because of difficulties in reading or writing), the researcher who distributed the questionnaires assisted by reading out and explaining the questions along with the possible responses to the patients and noted their answers on the questionnaire. The patients were given option to answer the Filipino or English version of the tool. The researchers also encouraged the patients to ask questions if they can't understand the questionnaire.

The Newcastle Satisfaction with Nursing Scale (NSNS) with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91 for experience and 0.96 for satisfaction was utilized in the study (Thomas, et.al., 1996) after asking permission from the author. The NSNS tool was translated into Filipino by a Filipino teacher and back-translated by an English teacher. It was pre-tested on September 2 to 5, with 10 participants.

The mean scores computed for patients' experiences scale were categorized from not so good to very good, while the patients' satisfaction scale computed was categorized from not at all satisfied to completely satisfied. Frequency and percentage were used to determine the demographic profile of the respondents while the weighted mean was used to determine the patients' experience of nursing care and satisfaction level. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine if there is a significant difference in the patient's experience in nursing care and satisfaction level.

## Ethical Consideration

The St. Paul University Philippines Ethics Board approved the study. As there is no Research Ethics Committee in the hospital, a letter asking permission from the nursing management of the hospital to conduct the study was asked and approved. The researchers secured the informed consent, did the interview, and collected the data from the participants of the study. Data

**Table 1.** 7-point Likert scale (Patient Experience)

Qualitative Description	Mean Score
Very good	5.142858- 6.00
Above Good	4.285715- 5.142857
Good	3.428572- 4.285714
Below good	2.571429- 3.428571
Poor	1.714286- 2.571428
Very Poor	0.857143- 1.714285
Not so good	0- 0.857142

**Table 2.** 5-point Likert scale (Patient's Satisfaction)

Completely Satisfied	3.2-4
Very Satisfied	2.4- 3.19
Quite Satisfied	1.6- 2.39
Barely Satisfied	0.8- 1.59
Not at all Satisfied	0- 0.79

collection was done without the student nurses who are in charge of the patients to mitigate bias. Anonymity and confidentiality of information were also observed.

## FINDINGS

The majority of the respondents (80%) were admitted at Mere Mary Ann de Tilly/MMA, with ages 40 to 50 (29%), male (53%), married (86%), were educated up to college-level (27%), and stayed in the ward on an average of at least three nights (36%).

The patients' experiences on the care rendered by student nurses were "Above Good", with a category mean of 4.97. The highest mean scores were: "Student nurses explained what they were going to do to me before they did it " (5.69), and "Student nurses told the next shift what was happening with my care" (5.69). The lowest mean score is: "Student nurses let things get on top of them" (0.60).

**Table 3.** Distribution of Participants when grouped according to Demographic Data

Unit Admitted	Frequency	Percentage
• HFU	20	20
• MMA	80	80
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
• Male	53	53
• Female	47	47
Age	Frequency	Percentage
• 18 – 28	9	9
• 29 – 39	14	14
• 40 – 50	29	29
• 51-61	25	25
• 62 – 72	19	19
• Over 72	4	4
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
• Single	9	9
• Married	86	86
• Widower/Widowed	5	5
Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
• Elementary Level	6	6.0
• Elementary Graduate	8	8.0
• HS Level	16	16.0
• HS Grad	24	24.0
• College Level	27	27.0
• College Grad	19	19.0
Length of Hospitalization	Frequency	Percentage
• 2 nights	18	18.0
• 3 nights	36	36.0
• 4 nights	28	28.0
• 5 nights	9	9.0
• over 6 nights	9	9.0

**Table 4.** Patients' Experiences with the care Rendered by Student Nurses

Items	Mean	Qualitative Description
1. Student nurses gave me information just when I needed it.	2.15	Poor
2. Student nurses made me do things before I was ready.	3.65	Good
3. No matter how busy student nurses were, they made time for me.	5.72	Very Good
4. Student nurses let things get on top of them.	.60	Not so Good
5. Student nurses explained what they were going to do to me before they did it.	5.69	Very Good
6. Student nurses told the next shift what was happening with my care.	5.69	Very Good
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.97</b>	<b>Above Good</b>

Table 5. Patients' Satisfaction with the Care Rendered by Student Nurses

Items	Mean	Qualitative Description
1) The amount of time student nurses spent with you	3.41	Completely Satisfied
2) How often student nurses checked to see if you were okay	3.48	Completely Satisfied
3) Student nurses' helpfulness	3.68	Completely Satisfied
4) Student nurses' treatment of you as an individual	3.65	Completely Satisfied
5) The amount of freedom you were given on the ward	3.64	Completely Satisfied
6) The amount of privacy student nurses gave you	3.47	Completely Satisfied
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>Completely Satisfied</b>

The respondents were completely satisfied with the care rendered by student nurses, with a category mean of 3.53. The items with the highest satisfaction scores were: "Student nurses' helpfulness", (3.68), and "Student nurses' treatment of you as an individual" (3.65). On the other hand, the item with the lowest satisfaction scores is: "The amount of time student nurses spent with you" (2.41).

There is no significant difference between patients' experiences and levels of patients' satisfaction when grouped according to the unit of admission, age, marital status, and length of hospitalization. There is however a significant difference between patients' experiences when grouped according to highest educational attainment. This is supported by a probability value of 0.001, which is less than .05.

## DISCUSSIONS

Based on the findings, there are more medical than surgical cases in the hospital. This could be because diseases are treated using medications first before surgery. Surgery is observed to be less preferred by patients due to some complications and changes in activities of daily living associated with it.

Males, as compared with females, are also more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as drinking or fast driving, which can affect their health (Korn & Bonny-Noach, 2018), causing more hospitalizations. This reflects the findings of the present study as there are more males than females. However, it was found that females tend to be more satisfied with the nursing care rendered by nurses as compared to males (Abdulla, 2000).

Ages within 40 to 50 are in middle adulthood and have generativity vs. stagnation as a developmental task –(Erikson, 2013). At this stage, physical development is essentially complete and a very gradual decline in functioning occurs (Berman, et. al., 2008). Also, this age group is more likely married as social norm dictates. However, the present findings showed that there were more patients in middle adulthood and married who are admitted in the wards. Married people were

found to be more satisfied with the care rendered to them than those with other relationship statuses like being single, widowed, and divorced (Abdulla, 2000).

People who have college level as highest educational attainment visits the hospital frequently maybe because they have enough knowledge and exposure to health services. Some studies found that patients with higher education were associated with a higher level of satisfaction (Oskay, et. al., 2015; Abdulla, 2000). On the other hand, another study established that patients with lower education levels have higher satisfaction levels than those with higher educational attainment (Topcu & Cakmak, 2014).

The present study tells us that the experience of the patients with the students is positive. This is similar in the experience of the older population with first-year students (Mossop & Wilkinson, 2006). It is noted that positive patient experience can be achieved by explaining procedures to be done and maintaining the continuity of care. This means that knowledge about their care and autonomy that comes with the explanation of care are important aspects of quality care for the participants of the present study. On the other hand, it was found that patients feel both stability and less stability on care rendered by students. Accordingly, this could be solved by including the patients in both the learning process of the students and their health care (Eskilsson, et. al., 2006).

Based on the findings, students should improve care management. Making time for the patients conveys a sense of commitment to the patient and plays a major role in meeting patients' expectations (Kieft et al., 2014). Moreover, the extra care, attention, and social opportunities are valued by the patients (Mossop & Wilkinson, 2006). In terms of satisfaction, the present findings are similar to the study conducted by Oskay, et al., (2015) and Topcu and Cakamak (2014), where patients' satisfaction with nursing care was determined to be high.

Again, the time element scored low in the satisfaction level. This implies the need to emphasize the importance of presence to the patients and to revisit the activities of the student nurses. Patients were found to be more satisfied with the nursing care

given by student nurses when they spend more time with them and provide individualized patient care (Topcu and Cakmak, 2014).

Based on the findings there is also a significant difference between patients' experiences when grouped according to the highest educational attainment. Education determines the amount of information one has and how they use this information. In this case, a patient who has more knowledge of healthcare information may seek more healthcare services and has higher expectations than a patient who knew lesser.

According to Oskay, et. al., (2015) as the patients' educational level increases, expectations toward the nursing service and nursing care increases. If these expectations are not met, patients rate their experiences with nursing care as low or negative. Furthermore, patients with higher levels of education can explain their expectations for better care and can make greater demands on nursing care. It was found that patients with higher education were associated with a higher level of satisfaction (Oskay, et.al., 2015)

On the other hand, those who are less educated may have more limited knowledge on how to interact or communicate with their health care provider which could affect their experience and satisfaction. Patients with lower education were found to have a higher satisfaction level (Topcu & Cakmak, 2014).

## CONCLUSIONS

The patients' experiences on the care rendered by the BSN 3 and BSN 4 students at the medical and surgical wards of Saint Paul Hospital were classified to be above good and their satisfaction level was completely satisfied. There is also a significant difference between patients' experiences when grouped according to the highest educational attainment. This demonstrates that the students have developed the necessary competencies in caring for the patients. They are providing quality care even though they are still studying under their BSN program. This, however, does not mean that they don't need additional learning anymore. This serves as a positive motivation for the students and the college to aim for higher quality care and education remembering that safe quality care is most important in nursing.

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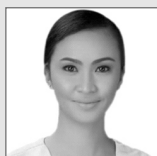
## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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### Acknowledgment

The authors wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. Rufo Tuddao for checking the statistical processes.

“Politicians understand the cost of educating and maintaining a professional nursing workforce, but only now are many of them recognizing their true value. Every penny invested in nursing raises the wellbeing of people and families in tangible ways that are clear for everyone to see. This report highlights the nursing contribution and confirms that investment in the nursing profession is a benefit to society, not a cost. The world needs millions more nurses, and we are calling on governments to do the right thing, invest in this wonderful profession and watch their populations benefit from the amazing work that only nurses can do.”

.. ICN President Annette Kennedy