

Barriers to Nurse-Patient Communication in Primary Healthcare Centres in Bahrain: Patient Perspective

Abstract

Introduction: Effective and efficient communication is a core element in healthcare systems especially between healthcare providers and patients. This study aims to identify communication barriers between nurses and patients in Primary Healthcare Centres in Bahrain.

Methodology: This is a cross-sectional study conducted across primary healthcare centres in Bahrain. Four hundred and four patients were recruited using convenience sampling. Self-administered questionnaire comprising of 29 items on communication barriers was used.

Results: A total of 402 patients consented to participate. The largest effect on communication was reported in the following six statements: Shortage in the number of nurses compared to the large number of patients (63.3%), Lack of desire of nurse to communicate with patients (61.2%), and Negative attitude of the nurse towards the patient (59.4%). Further, the difference in language between nurses and patients, the lack of self-confidence by nurses, and too much work and tasks to be done by the nurse throughout the day were additional three statements most ranked to have a significant impact on communication. Significant association was noted between lack of self-confidence and age and educational status (p -value <0.004 , p -value <0.032 respectively). Further, negative attitude of nurses towards patients had a significant association with gender and educational status (p -value <0.009 , p -value <0.004 respectively), lack of desire of nurses to communicate with patients was also significantly associated with gender (p -value <0.028).

Conclusion: Communication between healthcare providers and patients is pivotal for an optimal healthcare service. Based on the findings of this study and the literature, it is recommended that efforts should be directed towards continuous monitoring and improvement of communication skills to optimise health care delivery.