

Factors Affecting the Delivery of Care as Experienced by Nurses in Selected Hospitals in Isabela, Philippines

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Abstract:- Providing safe and efficient care is a continuous issue for the nursing profession. It leads to more pleasant patient outcomes and enhances wellbeing. This research study sought to determine the nurses' perceptions on the factors affecting their delivery of health care services in the selected private hospital in Santiago City, Isabela, Philippines. It focused on determining the nurses' perceptions of the factors affecting the delivery of care which includes Environmental Factor, Organizational Factor, and Interpersonal Factor.

This Qualitative research utilized in-depth-interview among 8 participants. The study utilized a non-probability sampling technique, specifically the Convenience or Accidental Sampling in choosing the respondents to determine the nurses' perceptions on the factors affecting the delivery of care in terms of Environmental Factors, Organizational Factors, and Interpersonal Factors. The collected information was carefully analyzed using Thematic Analysis. The researchers requested recommendation from the chief nurse whom to interview. Interview was done until the researchers data saturation.

Results revealed that lack of facilities and an unfriendly environment such as the weather, noise, and facilities and equipment are some of the difficulties encountered by the participants. Being resourceful is one of the adjustments they made regarding environmental factors. On the other hand, in organizational factors, understaffing and nurses' burnouts are some challenges the participants encountered, thus, having a functional organizational structure is one of the adaptations they made. Lastly, poor interpersonal relationship is the most common difficulty experienced by the participants in terms of interpersonal factors, and building good communication was one of their adjustments.

Keywords:- Delivery, Nursing Care, Healthcare, Leadership, Nurse-patient relationship, Environmental

Factor, Organizational Factor, Interpersonal Factor, Philippines.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

To care is to feel concerned and a desire to give what is best for someone. A nurse cares for patients, assisting in managing physical needs, preventing illness, and treatment of health disorders. They observe and monitor the patient to accomplish this, collecting pertinent data to aid in treatment decision-making. There are a lot of factors in the delivery of care to patients. Among these are the Environmental factors, Organizational factors and Interpersonal factors. Environment is the social and physical condition where the nurses work. Having an ideal environment enables the nurses to give their best care possible. The temperature, working space, ventilation and lighting could reduce or heighten the stress level of a nurse. A good working organization can help provide a good working environment and culture for nurses. An organization which provides opportunities for growth to employees is motivating and fulfilling. Good interpersonal relationship in the workplace builds trust and moral support between workmates making a relatively difficult job bearable. In this study, we would like to understand the effect of these factors based on testimonies of nurses working in selected hospitals in Santiago City.

B. Purpose

The primary objective of this study is to determine the nurses' perceptions on the factors affecting the delivery of care. Specifically, it seeks to determine the challenges encountered of the nurses on the factors affecting the delivery of care in terms of: Environmental Factors; Organizational Factors; and Interpersonal Factors. Also, to understand the adjustments made by the nurses to adapt to the factors affecting the delivery of care.

II. METHODS

The study utilized Qualitative research design specifically Thematic Analysis. Qualitative thematic analysis involves reading through a set of data, like transcripts from 8 in-depth interviews or focus groups, and looked for patterns in meaning across the data.

The participants of this study were the Filipino registered nurses in the selected private hospitals in Santiago City, Isabela, Philippines. The respondents were regular nurses worked in the different areas in the field (e.g., ward, pediatric, intensive care unit, emergency room) with a total of 8 in-depth-interview participants. In determining the setting of the interview, the researchers considered the accessibility and practicability during the actual conduct of the study.

The researchers used a non-probability sampling technique, specifically the Convenience or Accidental Sampling Technique in choosing the respondents. It is a method adopted by researchers wherein they collected market research data from a conveniently available pool of respondents. Therefore, the sampling technique is considered appropriate by the researchers.

The study used researchers-constructed open-ended questions as a guide in gathering information through face-to-face interview and social media platform (messenger application) as a data-gathering instrument..

The data gathering procedure began with drafting a letter which includes a sample of guide questions used, then sought comments, suggestions, and permission from the research adviser. After finalizing the guide questions, the researchers started the data gathering process by requesting a consent letter and the cooperation of the respondents to participate. The data that were disclosed by the respondents treated with the strictest confidence. Since there is still some threat from COVID 19 infection, all guidelines from the Inter Agency Task Force (IATF) were strictly observed during face to face interview.

The researchers picked coding categories directly utilizing electronic data coding methods using a laptop. All data were read repeatably by the researchers to enhance awareness of the data. In this study, all interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim, and then the researchers read repeatedly to find phrases or themes that appeared to capture key concepts using the participant's words. After working through these phrases that belong to more than one fundamental concept, the terms then sorted into categories based on how they are linked to each other.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

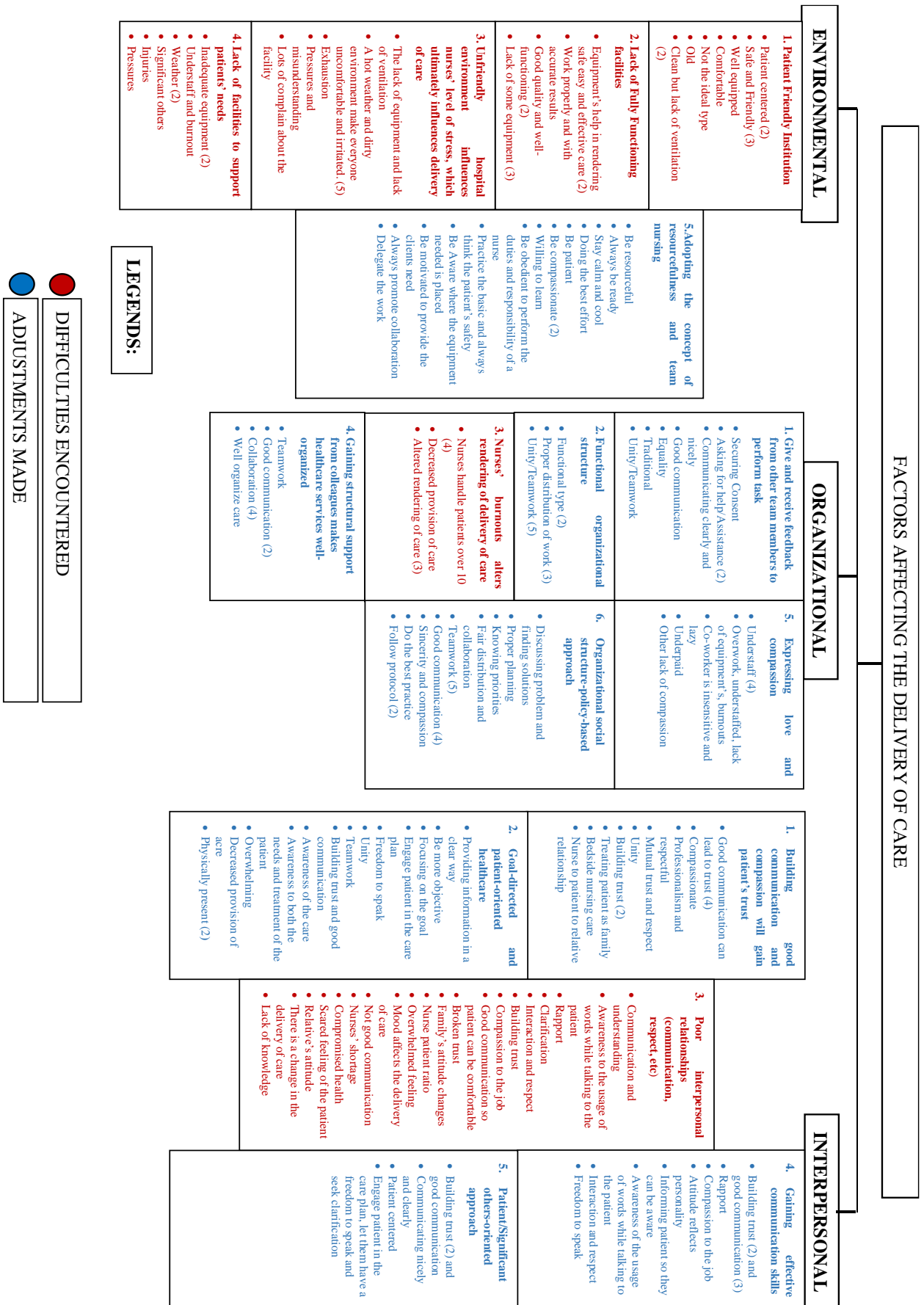


Fig. 1: Overall Thematic Analysis of the Study

This section presents the thematic analysis and framework of the data gathered in the researchers-constructed research questions. Moreover, this portion provides a narrative of themes, including a thematic framework that the researchers constructed from the data analysis to answer the general and specific research questions.

The researchers formulated significant themes that will represent the nurses' perceptions on the factors affecting the delivery of care to answer the research question of this study. The themes are classified through the factors affecting the delivery of care in terms of: Environmental, Organizational, and Interpersonal. Moreover, it is shown in the figure the overall result of the thematic analysis, which includes the factors affecting the delivery of care, the difficulties encountered by the participants, and their adaptations or adjustments made to deal with these issues affecting the delivery of care.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR

The researcher presents several topics and themes in this area that are relevant to the study. In this category, nurses share their environmental experiences working with clients.

The researcher categorized five themes that has been connected within the study namely, *Patient-friendly institutional environment, Lack of fully functioning facilities, Unfriendly hospital environment influences a nurse's level of stress, which ultimately influences delivery of care, Lack of facilities to support patient's needs, Adopting the concept of resourcefulness and team nursing.*

A. *Research Question 1. Can you describe the environment in which you performed your duties?*

➤ *Patient-Friendly Institutional Environment*

Four of the participants stated that they provide a safe and friendly environment so patients can feel more comfortable while receiving treatment from them. They attempt to meet the patient's needs and deliver the proper care.

Two of them reported that their hospital physical environment was warm and noisy specially when there are presence of several queries and concerns. They elaborated that the summer season causes a warm environment for them. During this season, it is unavoidable for them to feel irritated and short-tempered and sometimes it affects how they deliver their care.

Due to aged facilities, two responded that their hospital was deteriorating and was not as ideal as they had hoped particularly during the pandemic. They can't accommodate everyone and provide care for them all.

B. *Research Question 2. How is the facility and equipment you use in the hospital that you work with? And more...*

➤ *Lack of fully functioning facilities*

The level of patient care and the professional working environment for nurses, therapists, and other healthcare practitioners suffer when there are insufficient resources in healthcare settings.

Researchers asked participants about the facility and equipment they use at the hospital and how they work with it. Four participants reported that the equipment they need are always available and that the provision of care is always given immediately. Prompt treatment was always administered to their patient.

Three participants stated that sometimes they lack specific equipment, which alters how they deliver care because it slows down patient care provision. If such equipment is unavailable, they make specific innovations that may work.

C. *Research Question 3. How does the environment in the hospital you work affects the delivery of care?*

➤ *Unfriendly hospital environment influences a nurse's level of stress, which ultimately influences delivery of care*

Researchers questioned participants regarding the impact of the hospital environment on the quality of care provided to patients. One respondent stated that their environment affects the delivery of care by the lack of medical equipment and the patient's cooperation while providing care to them.

Three of the participants said that when the environment was unpleasant, the quality of treatment provided was inadequate. One of them further asserted that, during the pandemic, the extra workload caused by the surge in COVID cases caused the entire team to be exhausted.

One participant mentioned that the pressure from the patient's relatives also affected the delivery of care, especially when the relative is sensitive. The participant gave an example that when the patient needs to be admitted and needs to put IV, the relatives want someone from the healthcare workers who have a higher position to do it rather than them, which alters how they deliver care.

D. *Research Question 4. What obstacles have you faced to give patients the safest treatment possible?*

➤ *Lack of facilities to support patient's needs*

Researchers asked participants what obstacles they encountered in providing their patients with the safest possible treatment.

One participant mentioned that the patient's consent or the consent of significant others in procedures became an obstacle. The participant elaborated that a family member's decision to discontinue treatment affects the physician's ability to provide care to the patient because the treatment was halted.

Two of them stated that when the environment is too hot, both the nurse and the patient get short tempered, irritable, which also affects how they provide care for their patient. Also, two responded that the lack of equipment slowed their care; for example, if a patient needs oxygen and is unavailable, they wait for an additional minute until it arrives; thus, the care was delivered slowly. However, the three other respondents cited understaffing as the cause of nurses' burnout; they also stated that when schedules and workloads become toxic, they experience burnout.

E. *Research Question 5. How did you adopt to the factors affecting the delivery of care?*

➤ *Adopting the concept of resourcefulness and team nursing*
The researchers asked the participants what they do to adopt the factors that affect the delivery of care in terms of Environmental factor;

Two of them stated that when they lack equipment, they become innovative and resourceful; they put their best effort into providing the care that the patients need; two of them stated that when a patient shows a negative attitude, the nurse keeps calm and understands the patient's situation. Despite the difficulties on the given factors, they adhered to their responsibilities for the sake of their patients. Two of them responded that they must always learn the fundamentals of patient safety.

V. ORGANIZATIONAL FACTOR

The researcher presents several topics and themes in this area that are relevant to the study. In this category, nurses share their organizational experiences working with their colleagues, institution, facilities etc.

A. *Research Question 1. Can you describe how your organization plan in ensuring the safest delivery of care?*

➤ *Give and receive feedback from other team members to perform the task*

A team that communicates well together will develop a sense of purpose to help them accomplish their objectives. Team members can establish ties and a sense of belonging through regular friendly contact.

One participant said that they always secure consent and asking help if in doubt to ensure safe delivery of care. Five participants said that communicating nicely and clearly with other healthcare providers and promoting teamwork and collaboration ensures safe care while two participants stated that they follow protocols and perform quality procedures.

B. *Research Question 2. What are the management styles your organization have? Are there registered nurses assigned in a certain job?*

➤ *Functional Organizational structure*

A functional structure is used to organize workers. They are grouped based on their specific skills and knowledge. Doing specific work can promote productivity and lessen error. This is because nurses can focus only on the work assigned.

Two participants stated that there are specific nurses assigned in a particular task. According to them, when they work using functional style, they are more productive and they can deliver more effective care. Four of them said that they work as a team and according to them, working as a team in providing care helps them ensure that the care, they give is effective and safe. Two stated that they properly distributed the work avoiding conflict among the nurses and maintain orderliness in delivering care.

C. *Research Question 3. How is your workload throughout your responsibilities? How does it impact your ability to provide care?*

➤ *Nurses' burnout alters rendering of delivery of care*

The performance of nurses may be affected by sustained work-related stressors such as long hours, the need for quick decisions, and the burden of providing care for patients with negative outcomes.

Seven participants handling patients more than ten feels exhausted and stressed eventually affected the care they delivered because, according to them, it can decrease the quality of the care they gave to each patient but they were doing their best to perform interventions the patient's need.

D. *Research Question 4. How does your collaboration with other healthcare professionals play a role? Does it affect the delivery of healthcare services? How does teamwork influence the delivery of healthcare service?*

➤ *Gaining structural support from colleagues makes healthcare services well-organized*

Collaboration in the healthcare industry is defined as health professionals assuming complementary roles and cooperatively working together, sharing responsibility for problem-solving and making decisions to formulate and carry out plans for patient care.

For the eight participants of this study, collaboration for them does affect the delivery of care in a good way. For them, Collaboration is one of the most important things that is required in the profession. It helps make the work organized and easy to manage, which can result in effective care wherein it helps improve patients' health.

E. *Research Question 5. What are the difficulties/challenges you encountered in the hospital you are currently working on? How did you cope up or adopt to it?*

➤ *Expressing love and compassion helps relieves nurses' burnouts*

The nursing profession is one of the most demanding professions. Giving love in what you do and receiving love and appreciation from patients can help in dealing struggles in the workplace.

Understaffing is the most common challenge nurses face based on the six participants' statement. Overworked, underpaid, and a busy or demanding shift caused stress and professional burnout are also the challenges they experience.

These challenges affected the quality of care the participants gave the patients because they needed to divide their time among all the patients they handle. Participants coped with these challenges through proper communication with the team, sincerity and love in delivering care, fair distribution of duties, time management, being committed and some just got used to the difficulties.

F. Research Question 6. What strategies does your organization use to provide the safest and most effective patient care? Can you please describe/explain regarding those strategies?

➤ *Organizational social structure-policy-based approach*

Teamwork enables nurses and other healthcare professionals to carry out their duties effectively, efficiently, and safely. A nursing team succeeds as a whole when its members function well together.

Five participants stated that promoting teamwork and collaboration is an effective strategy in delivering safe and effective patient care because it makes the rendering of care much more accessible and better. Identifying priorities and outlining steps to reach the goal is the strategy used by one participant because according to the participant, it can help to visualize the things that need to be done. Also, good communication among the member of the healthcare team can avoid misunderstandings that can help ensure patient's safety, as stated by the two participants.

In organizational factor, an organization can deliver safe care by promoting teamwork, good communication, following protocols, and asking for assistance when in doubt. A care can be altered when a nurse handle patient beyond the standard number of patients per nurse. The most common struggle of a nurse is the lack of staffing, which leads to overload workloads and caused stress and being underpaid by the participants. Collaboration, good communication, proper distribution of work, and prioritizing and setting goals are some strategies that can be used to help deliver safe and effective patient care amidst the challenges.

VI. INTERPERSONAL FACTOR

The researcher presents several topics and themes in this area that are relevant to the study. In this category, participants shared their personal experiences working with clients.

The researchers categorized it into six themes to clearly and easily identify the factors affecting the delivery of care in terms of interpersonal factor. It includes building good communication and compassion that will gain patient's trust, goal-directed and patient-oriented healthcare, poor interpersonal relationships (communication, trust, respect, etc.), gaining effective communication skills, patient/significant others-oriented care approach.

A. Research Question 1. How will you define nurse-patient relationship? How does it affect delivery of care?

➤ *Building Good Communication and Compassion will Gain Patient's Trust*

To be an effective healthcare professional, clinical nurse, or nursing leader, you must possess excellent communication skills and the ability to use them in high-pressure circumstances. Good communication skills are crucial for cooperating on teams with other nurses and professionals from different fields. The researchers believed that "building good communication and compassion will gain patient's

trust" is the general definition of participants to nurse-patient relationships.

Four respondents stated that the definition of a nurse-patient relationship is about building rapport and relationships with the patient and significant others/family. In connection to this, the three participants explained that providing care is not only about the patients but also their relatives. If their relationship with the patients or family members alters, how they render their care may also change. The participants stated that sometimes, there are patients they need to be sweet to them, but there are also patients they need to be strict. That's is the importance of building rapport and relationships with the patients. It will make them feel more comfortable and become open to the provider.

On the other hand, since skillful communication enables healthcare personnel to create relationships with their patients, obtain critical health information, and collaborate effectively with all care team members. Three out of eight participants said that building good communication with patients and family is what the nurse-patient relationship is. The four participants said that good communication would help them build connections and gain their patients' trust. Likewise, the four participants also indicated that they build good communication with their patients to understand their patient's conditions and help them relieve their patient's anxiety. In this way, they can create an appropriate and best plan of care which is effective and helpful for them.

Meanwhile, one of the respondents defined this as respecting and accepting the ethnocultural differences of their patients. The participant said that the nurse-patient relationship should be based on mutual trust, respect, and acceptance of patients' ethnocultural differences because an accurate assessment, diagnosis, and treatment options are facilitated by open and honest communication among patients and healthcare professionals, especially nurses.

The researchers thought that individuals who have developed an open and secure discourse with a nurse or healthcare practitioner are more likely to reveal the full degree of their health conditions. Healthcare communication proficiency is fundamental to creating a trustworthy, collaborative relationship with patients and families. Moreover, interpersonal communication skills influence decision-making quality and patient motivation to adhere to treatment protocols and achieve desired clinical outcomes.

B. Research Question 2. What should be done to ensure the delivery of care to people? Tell us more about it...

➤ *Goal-Directed and Patient-Oriented Healthcare*

The researchers believed that a "goal-directed and patient-oriented healthcare" system is the theme to answer the second question. It comprises strategic planning at several levels for medical treatment. This theme refers to a nurse-patient relationship in which the participants highlighted the patient's specific needs to assist in the delivery of appropriate care.

We found out that three participants stated that being specific, objective, and focused to patients' goal can ensure effective delivery of care to patients. The three participants emphasized that they always try their best to be more objective in assessing their patients because if they will assess their patients based on subjective, it makes them more stress during their shift because there are patients who are not participating during assessment.

On the other hand, two respondents stated that they provided information and engaged in patient's care plan to ensure their patients feel important and safe which helps ensure the delivery of care. The reason is that it helped the participants gained cooperation from the patients which can encourage the patients to speak and verbalized their feelings. In this way, participants can create an accurate and effective plan of care.

Two participants said that nurses should not stay away from what they have learned to achieve effective delivery of care. The two participants indicated that being ideal in providing their care helped them become competent in their profession, making their patients feel safe and gain their trust.

Lastly, one participant said that workload should not be overwhelming which can lead to job stress and negatively affect the delivery of care. The participant said that an overwhelming workload makes them always in a hurry and they don't have enough time to assess an ideal way. This caused poor communication and ineffective diagnosis and treatment plan.

C. Research Question 3. In your opinion, what are the main obstacles that can affect the delivery of care in terms of interpersonal relationships?

➤ *Poor Interpersonal Relationships (communication, trust, respect, etc.)*

Interpersonal communication skill is one of the fundamentals of solid patient care, particularly for the physician, the nursing staff, and the patient. Communication skills in the health care context are a benefit, as they help the patient and the health care provider in terms of job satisfaction and the reduction of work-related stress, both of which harm health.

Based on the data gathered by the researchers, "poor interpersonal relationships (communication, trust, respect, etc.)" is the general theme for identifying the obstacles that affect the delivery of care in terms of interpersonal relationships. The theme was categorized into eight: not having good communication; patient's knowledge deficit; gaining patient's trust; participants' personal problems and challenges such as illnesses, physical and emotional attributes.

The researchers found three participants said that not having good communication is their main obstacle in delivering care to their patients. The participants believed that not having good communication among the healthcare team and, patients are seen as stressful to achieving objectives of the treatment plan. Moreover, the participants indicated that poor communication results in misdiagnoses and other

medical mistakes that can easily lead to avoidable health complications and even death of patients. Meanwhile, one participant said knowledge deficit is their main obstacle in delivering care to their patients. The participants believed not having proper information can be alter care and in achieving objectives of the treatment plan.

In contrast, two participants stated that personality types are their main obstacle in delivering care to patients. The two participants highlighted that having a strong foundation in nursing will ensure proper care and ensure good interactions with the patients are intact. The way they communicate with their patients influences the relationship between them. The participants' personalities have a significant role in determining how effectively they manage performing with compassion for patients' well-being and their own well-being.

On the other hand, two participants specified that their personal problems and challenges such as illnesses, physical and emotional attributes largely influenced the work output. The two participants said that when they are not feeling well, they cannot provide their patients the expected care, which will alter the treatment. The respondents indicated that sometimes, patients can notice the participants' emotions when they are feeling down, which affected their patient's mindset and feeling hopelessness about their treatment.

D. Research Question 4. What strategies do you do as a nurse to promote effective nurse-patient communication? Can you further explain it?

➤ *Gaining Effective Communication Skills*

Communication is crucial in the healthcare industry, particularly for nurses. Strong interpersonal bonds serve as the foundation of nurse-patient communication. Meaningful interactions will make it easier for nurses to do their clinical duties and keep patients interested in their care.

Based on the codes formulated by researchers through the data gathering, they found that gaining effective communication skills of the participants with clients is the most powerful technique to use in rendering care delivery. The theme was categorized into: five participants indicated that having good communication skills and gaining the trust of the patient will contribute to the patient's treatment; two respondents stated that establishing rapport is the key to the effective delivery of care; and one said fixing attitudes and personality is the strategy being used. All of these are strategies to promote practical communication skills.

Four out of eight participants said that having good communication skills and gaining the patient's trust contributes to the patient's treatment. the participants stated that communication is a very important component of their work. Understanding their patients helped them connect with each other and make the patients feel comfortable while receiving care and treatment. The respondents thought that interacting with the patient and being courteous at all times can be helpful.

On the other hand, three participants stated that establishing rapport is the key to effective healthcare delivery. The three participants said rapport is key to promoting effective nurse-patient communication. They indicated that an excellent rapport facilitates the development of a friendly and harmonious connection with patients. It enables them to comprehend what the patient is experiencing and interact effectively with them. Moreover, the participants believed that fixing attitudes and personality influenced their delivery of care. Genuinely putting themselves in their patients' shoes. By exercising empathy, the participants are more inclined to provide an effective delivery of care because they are more likely to gain trust and build rapport with the patients.

To execute effective communication one of the participants' strategies would include use of plain language like when sharing health teaching and avoiding medical terms because not everyone is knowledgeable enough (ex. instead of edema they used the word swelling). Another strategy is to confirm if your patient understands what you imparted; if understood, the patient can explain well the information you shared

E. Research Question 5. What strategies do you use to help nurses keep their patients involved in their care and ensure their choices are respected, and why?

➤ *Patient/Significant Others-Oriented Care Approach*

In patient-centered management, an individual's health requirements and intended health outcomes drive all health care choices and quality measures. Patients are partners with their health care professionals, who treat them from a clinical standpoint and an emotional, mental, spiritual, social, and economic vantage point.

Patient- and family-centered care promotes active cooperation and shared decision-making between patients, families, and clinicians to build and administer a complete, individualized care plan. Based on the data gathered, coding, and thematic analysis, this theme of patient/significant others-oriented care approach deals with the strategies to help nurses keep their patients involved in the treatment plan.

Four out of eight participants indicated that talking to the patient and explaining all the procedures that will be done makes them feel that they are involved in the treatment plan and respected. The patient's knowledge is likely to promote cooperation and, providing the recommendation is appropriate, the patient's wellbeing.

Moreover, according to two participants that were interviewed, constantly listening to the patients is one of the strategies to help nurses keep their patients involved in their care because when the participants spend their time to listen and understand the complaints of their patients, they are better equipped to respond to situations whenever they develop

Furthermore, two of the interviewed participants believed that treating their patients individually is the most effective strategy. With the help of this strategy, they can create a plan of care necessary to the patient's condition

because not all patients have the same coping and needs to keep them interested in the treatment plan.

The researchers believed that patient-centered care minimizes unnecessary treatments, respects patient choices, and enhances patient health. It enables healthcare practitioners to develop individualized patient care plans. Nevertheless, trust between the patient and practitioner is essential. Trustworthiness requires excellent leadership abilities and an in-depth understanding of nursing procedures.

VII. CONCLUSION

Various factors affect the delivery of care on hospitals in Santiago City. After conducting and analyzing the data gathered, the findings indicates that the factors affecting the delivery of care in terms in the environment are the weather, noise, and facilities and equipment. In terms of organizational, the staffing, workloads, and relationship with colleagues affect the delivery of care during a communication skill effect in the interpersonal factor; Challenges encountered by participants in Santiago City on the factors affecting the delivery of care in terms of environmental lack of Fully Functioning Facilities and unfriendly Hospital Environments like hot weather and noise. Lack of staffing and overloaded work are the difficulties the nurses face. In interpersonal, gaining the trust of the patient and the significant other is a struggle. Also, miscommunication within the healthcare team; The adjustments made by the healthcare personnel to adapt to the factors affecting the delivery of care in the environment are adopting the Concept of Resourcefulness and prioritizing patient's safety. In organizational factors, giving and receiving Feedback from other Team Members helps in Performing delivery of care. Promoting collaboration and teamwork and being compassionate to work greatly help in delivering care amid the challenges. In interpersonal factors, building good communication, compassion, and setting patient-centered goals are the adjustments in providing care.

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