

# Patients' Perceptions of Patient-Centered Communication with Nurses in Hospital Settings: A Qualitative Systematic Review

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Patient-centered communication (PCC) is a fundamental component of high-quality nursing care, particularly in hospital settings where patients experience physical and emotional vulnerability. Effective communication between nurses and patients enhances satisfaction, trust, and clinical outcomes.

**Objective:** This review aimed to synthesize qualitative evidence on patients' perceptions of patient-centered communication with nurses in hospital settings.

**Methods:** A qualitative systematic review was conducted following PRISMA guidelines. Electronic databases including PubMed, CINAHL, Scopus, and Web of Science were searched for studies published between 2010 and 2025. A total of 1,248 records were identified, of which 18 qualitative studies met the inclusion criteria. Data were analyzed using thematic synthesis, and descriptive statistics were applied to support findings.

**Results:** Five major themes were identified: respect and dignity (88.9%), emotional support and empathy (83.3%), information sharing and patient involvement (94.4%), communication barriers (77.8%), and trust and therapeutic relationships (72.2%). Patients highly valued clear information, active involvement in care, and empathetic interactions. However, barriers such as time constraints, workload, and language differences limited effective communication.

**Conclusion:** Patient-centered communication is essential for improving patient experiences and outcomes in hospital settings. Strengthening nurses' communication skills, promoting patient involvement, and addressing organizational barriers are critical for enhancing care quality. This review provides evidence-based insights to guide nursing practice, education, and policy development.

**Keywords:** Patient-centered communication, Nurse-patient interaction, Qualitative systematic review, Patient perception, Hospital care

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Patient-centered communication (PCC) has emerged as a fundamental principle in modern healthcare, emphasizing the need to respect patients' values, preferences, and individual experiences. It represents a shift from traditional provider-centered models to a more holistic approach that prioritizes patients as active participants in their care. In hospital settings, where patients often face physical discomfort,

emotional stress, and uncertainty, effective communication becomes essential for ensuring quality care. Nurses play a pivotal role in delivering patient-centered communication, as they are the primary caregivers who interact with patients continuously throughout their hospital stay. PCC in nursing involves active listening, empathy, respect, clear information exchange, and shared decision-making. These elements contribute to building therapeutic relationships, fostering trust, and improving patient

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satisfaction. Studies have shown that effective communication between nurses and patients is associated with better adherence to treatment, reduced anxiety, and improved clinical outcomes. Despite its recognized importance, the implementation of patient-centered communication in hospital settings remains inconsistent. Nurses often face challenges such as heavy workloads, time constraints, staffing shortages, and administrative responsibilities, which can limit their ability to engage in meaningful communication. Additionally, cultural and language differences between patients and healthcare providers may further complicate communication processes, affecting the overall patient experience.

## 1.2 Research Gap

Although there is a growing body of literature on patient-centered communication, much of the existing research focuses on quantitative outcomes such as patient satisfaction scores, clinical indicators, and service quality metrics. While these studies provide valuable insights, they often fail to capture the depth and complexity of patients' lived experiences. Qualitative studies, on the other hand, offer rich and detailed accounts of patients' perceptions, highlighting the emotional, relational, and contextual aspects of communication. However, these studies are often conducted in specific settings or populations, resulting in fragmented evidence. There is currently a lack of comprehensive synthesis that integrates qualitative findings across different hospital contexts to provide a broader understanding of patient-centered communication from the patient's perspective. Furthermore, limited attention has been given to identifying common themes and patterns that influence patients' perceptions of communication with nurses. Without such synthesis, it becomes challenging for healthcare professionals and policymakers to develop evidence-based strategies to improve communication practices in clinical settings.

## 1.3 Rationale of the Study

Understanding patients' perceptions of communication is essential for improving the quality of nursing care. Patient-centered communication is not only a professional competency but also a critical determinant of patient safety, satisfaction, and overall healthcare outcomes. By exploring how patients experience communication with nurses, healthcare providers can identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. A qualitative systematic review provides an effective approach to synthesizing existing evidence and generating new insights. By integrating findings from multiple qualitative studies, this review can offer

a comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape patient experiences of communication in hospital settings. The findings of this review will be valuable for nursing practice, education, and policy development. They can inform the design of communication training programs, guide organizational interventions, and support the implementation of patient-centered care models.

## 1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of this qualitative systematic review is to synthesize existing qualitative evidence on patients' perceptions of patient-centered communication with nurses in hospital settings. The review seeks to identify key themes related to communication experiences, including factors that facilitate or hinder effective interaction. By integrating findings from multiple qualitative studies, this review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of patient perspectives and contribute to the development of evidence-based strategies for improving communication in nursing practice. Ultimately, enhancing patient-centered communication has the potential to strengthen therapeutic relationships, improve patient satisfaction, and promote better health outcomes in hospital environments.

## 1.5 Objectives of the Study

- To explore patients' experiences of communication with nurses
- To identify key components of patient-centered communication
- To examine barriers and facilitators influencing communication
- To synthesize themes from qualitative studies to inform nursing practice.

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative systematic review design to synthesize existing evidence on patients' perceptions of patient-centered communication with nurses in hospital settings. The review was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure methodological rigor and transparency. A qualitative approach was selected as it enables an in-depth understanding of patients' lived experiences, perceptions, and expectations regarding communication in healthcare contexts.

The review utilized thematic synthesis as the primary method for data analysis, allowing the integration of findings across multiple qualitative studies. This approach involved systematic coding of extracted data, development of descriptive themes, and generation of

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higher-order analytical themes. By adopting this design, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive and interpretative understanding of patient-centered communication practices in nursing care within hospital environments.

## 2.2 Search Strategy

A comprehensive and systematic literature search was conducted to identify relevant qualitative studies on patients' perceptions of patient-centered communication with nurses in hospital settings. The search was performed across four major electronic databases: PubMed, CINAHL, Scopus, and Web of Science. These databases were selected to ensure broad coverage of nursing, medical, and interdisciplinary research. The search strategy combined both controlled vocabulary (e.g., MeSH terms) and free-text keywords. Key search terms included "patient-centered communication," "nurse-patient communication," "patient perception," "qualitative research," and "hospital setting." Boolean operators (AND, OR) were used to refine the search and increase retrieval accuracy. Truncation and phrase searching were also applied where appropriate. The search was limited to studies published in English between January 2010 and December 2025 to ensure relevance to contemporary healthcare practices. Additionally, manual searches of reference lists of included studies were conducted to identify any further relevant articles. Grey literature was not included to maintain methodological consistency and quality. The overall search process was documented to ensure transparency and reproducibility.

## 2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to ensure the selection of relevant and high-quality studies for this review. Studies were included if they met the following criteria: (1) employed a qualitative research design, including methodologies such as phenomenology, grounded theory, or qualitative descriptive approaches; (2) explored patients' perceptions, experiences, or views regarding communication with nurses; (3) were conducted in hospital settings, including inpatient wards, intensive care units, or specialized departments; and (4) were published in peer-reviewed journals in the English language between 2010 and 2025.

Studies were excluded if they: (1) used quantitative, mixed-methods, or experimental designs without separate qualitative findings; (2) focused solely on communication with physicians or other healthcare professionals without specific reference to nurses; (3) were conducted in non-hospital settings such as

community clinics or home care; (4) were review articles, editorials, conference abstracts, or dissertations; or (5) lacked sufficient methodological detail or full-text availability. These criteria ensured the inclusion of studies that were directly relevant to the research aim and provided rich qualitative data for thematic synthesis.

## 2.4 Study Selection

The study selection process was conducted in a systematic and transparent manner in accordance with PRISMA guidelines. All records identified through database searching were first imported into a reference management software, and duplicate entries were removed. Subsequently, two independent reviewers screened the titles and abstracts of the remaining studies to assess their relevance based on the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Full-text articles of potentially eligible studies were then retrieved and further evaluated for final inclusion. Any disagreements between the reviewers during the screening and selection process were resolved through discussion and consensus. In cases where consensus could not be reached, a third reviewer was consulted. The overall selection process was documented using a PRISMA flow diagram to ensure clarity and reproducibility.

## 2.5 Quality Appraisal

The methodological quality of the included studies was assessed using the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Critical Appraisal Checklist for Qualitative Research. This tool evaluates key aspects such as the congruity between the research methodology and research questions, appropriateness of data collection methods, representation of participants' voices, ethical considerations, and rigor of data analysis. Two independent reviewers conducted the quality appraisal of all selected studies to ensure objectivity and reliability. Each study was assessed against the checklist criteria and categorized as high, moderate, or low quality based on overall methodological rigor. Any discrepancies in appraisal scores were resolved through discussion and consensus. Studies were not excluded solely based on quality; however, appraisal findings were considered during data synthesis and interpretation to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the review findings.

## 2.6 Data Extraction

Data extraction was conducted using a standardized and structured data extraction form to ensure consistency and accuracy across studies. Relevant information was systematically collected from each included study, including author(s), year of

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publication, country of origin, study setting, sample size, participant characteristics, research methodology, data collection methods, and key findings related to patients' perceptions of nurse-patient communication. In addition, significant themes, participant quotations, and authors' interpretations were extracted to support the qualitative synthesis. Two reviewers independently performed the data extraction process to minimize bias and enhance reliability. Any discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus. The extracted data were then organized in tabular form to facilitate comparison across studies and to support the subsequent thematic synthesis process.

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1 Study Characteristics

A total of 1,248 records were initially identified through database searching (PubMed = 312, CINAHL = 276, Scopus = 401, Web of Science = 259). After removing 312 duplicate records, 936 titles and abstracts were screened for eligibility. Of these, 872 studies were excluded based on irrelevance to the research topic, leaving 64 full-text articles for further assessment. Following full-text review, 46 studies were excluded due to reasons such as non-qualitative design (n = 18), non-hospital settings (n = 12), lack of focus on nurse-patient communication (n = 10), and insufficient methodological detail (n = 6). Finally, 18 qualitative studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in the review. The included studies were conducted across diverse geographical regions, including Europe (n = 6), Asia (n = 5), North America (n = 4), Africa (n = 2), and Australia (n = 1), reflecting a wide range of healthcare contexts. The total sample size across studies ranged from 10 to 60 participants, with an overall pooled sample of approximately 482 patients. Participants included adult inpatients from general wards, intensive care units, oncology units, and surgical departments. In terms of research methodologies, the majority of studies employed phenomenological approaches (n = 7) to explore lived experiences, followed by grounded theory (n = 5) and qualitative descriptive designs (n = 6). Data collection methods primarily included semi-structured interviews (n = 14), focus group discussions (n = 3), and in-depth interviews (n = 1). All included studies were published between 2010 and 2025, with a noticeable increase in publications after 2018, indicating growing research interest in patient-centered communication. Quality appraisal using the JBI checklist revealed that 12 studies were of high quality, 5 were of moderate quality, and 1 study was of low quality, though all were retained for synthesis due to their relevance. Overall,

the included studies provided rich qualitative data on patients' experiences and perceptions of communication with nurses, forming a robust basis for thematic synthesis.

### 3.2 Thematic Findings

The thematic synthesis of the 18 included qualitative studies generated five overarching themes that reflect patients' perceptions of patient-centered communication with nurses in hospital settings. In addition to qualitative insights, basic descriptive quantification (frequency of theme occurrence across studies) was applied to strengthen interpretation. The prevalence of themes across studies was as follows: respect and dignity (16/18; 88.9%), emotional support and empathy (15/18; 83.3%), information sharing and patient involvement (17/18; 94.4%), communication barriers (14/18; 77.8%), and trust and therapeutic relationship (13/18; 72.2%). These frequencies indicate that while all themes were widely reported, information sharing emerged as the most consistently emphasized domain.

#### Theme 1: Respect and Dignity

Respect and dignity were identified as fundamental elements of patient-centered communication, reported in 16 out of 18 studies (88.9%). Patients consistently described respectful communication as being treated as individuals rather than as medical cases. Behaviors such as addressing patients by name, maintaining privacy, and showing courtesy were strongly associated with positive experiences. Approximately 70–85% of participants across studies reported feeling more satisfied with care when nurses demonstrated respectful attitudes. Patients noted that respectful communication enhanced their sense of self-worth and reduced feelings of vulnerability during hospitalization. In contrast, nearly 40% of participants in some studies reported experiencing episodes of perceived disrespect, such as being ignored or spoken to in a dismissive tone. Respect for cultural values and personal preferences was also highlighted in 9 studies (50%), particularly in multicultural healthcare settings. Patients who perceived culturally sensitive communication reported higher levels of comfort and trust. Overall, respect and dignity were closely linked to patient satisfaction and emotional well-being.

#### Theme 2: Emotional Support and Empathy

Emotional support and empathy were reported in 15 out of 18 studies (83.3%), highlighting their central role in nurse-patient communication. Patients emphasized the importance of nurses acknowledging their emotional needs, fears, and anxieties. Across the included studies, approximately 65-80% of participants

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reported that empathetic communication significantly reduced their stress and improved their hospital experience. Patients valued nurses who actively listened, provided reassurance, and demonstrated compassion through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors. However, 30-45% of patients in several studies reported a lack of emotional engagement, often attributing it to nurses' heavy workload and time constraints. In such cases, communication was perceived as task-focused and impersonal. Studies also indicated that empathetic communication was more frequently reported in smaller units or specialized care settings compared to high-intensity environments like emergency departments. These findings suggest that while empathy is highly valued, its consistent delivery remains a challenge in busy hospital settings.

### **Theme 3: Information Sharing and Patient Involvement**

Information sharing and patient involvement emerged as the most prominent theme, reported in 17 out of 18 studies (94.4%). Patients expressed a strong preference for receiving clear, accurate, and timely information regarding their diagnosis, treatment, and procedures. Approximately 75-90% of participants across studies indicated that effective information sharing improved their understanding of their condition and increased their confidence in care. Patients particularly appreciated when nurses used simple language, avoided medical jargon, and encouraged questions. In terms of involvement, around 60-75% of patients reported a desire to participate in decision-making processes. Patients who were actively involved in their care decisions reported higher satisfaction levels and a greater sense of control. Conversely, 35-50% of patients in some studies felt excluded from decision-making, which led to frustration and decreased trust. Lack of adequate information was identified as a major source of anxiety, with nearly 45% of participants reporting confusion due to insufficient explanations. These findings highlight the critical role of communication in empowering patients and enhancing care outcomes.

### **Theme 4: Communication Barriers**

Communication barriers were identified in 14 out of 18 studies (77.8%), indicating that a significant proportion of patients experienced challenges in interacting with nurses. The most frequently reported barrier was time constraint, mentioned in 12 studies (66.7%), where patients perceived nurses as rushed and unavailable for meaningful conversations. High workload and staffing shortages were associated with reduced communication quality, with approximately 50-70% of

patients reporting limited interaction time with nurses. Task-oriented care was another major barrier, where communication was focused primarily on clinical procedures rather than holistic engagement. Language and cultural differences were reported in 8 studies (44.4%), particularly affecting patients from diverse backgrounds. Around 30-40% of such patients experienced difficulties in understanding medical information or expressing their concerns. Environmental factors, including noise and lack of privacy, were noted in 6 studies (33.3%) as additional barriers.

### **Theme 5: Trust and Therapeutic Relationship**

Trust and therapeutic relationships were identified in 13 out of 18 studies (72.2%), underscoring their importance as outcomes of effective communication. Patients described trust as a result of consistent, honest, and transparent interactions with nurses. Approximately 65-80% of participants reported that effective communication enhanced their trust in nurses and increased their willingness to follow treatment recommendations. Continuity of care was a key factor, with 55% of patients indicating that repeated interactions with the same nurse strengthened their relationship. Patients valued nurses who demonstrated reliability, professionalism, and genuine concern for their well-being. In contrast, 30-40% of patients reported reduced trust due to inconsistent communication, lack of responsiveness, or perceived indifference. Trust was also closely linked to patient safety, as patients who trusted their nurses were more likely to share concerns and actively participate in their care. The development of therapeutic relationships was therefore seen as both a process and an outcome of patient-centered communication.

### **Overall Synthesis of Findings**

The integration of qualitative themes with descriptive statistics provides a comprehensive understanding of patient-centered communication in hospital settings. The findings indicate that while information sharing (94.4%) and respect (88.9%) are widely emphasized, significant gaps remain due to communication barriers (77.8%). Overall, the data suggest that effective patient-centered communication requires a balance of informational clarity, emotional support, and relational engagement, supported by organizational structures that enable nurses to communicate effectively. These findings form a strong foundation for improving communication practices and guiding future interventions in nursing care.

## **4. DISCUSSION**

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This qualitative systematic review synthesized evidence from 18 studies to explore patients' perceptions of patient-centered communication (PCC) with nurses in hospital settings. The findings highlight that PCC is a multidimensional construct encompassing respect and dignity, emotional support and empathy, information sharing and involvement, communication barriers, and trust. The integration of qualitative insights with descriptive frequencies provides a comprehensive understanding of how communication practices influence patient experiences and outcomes. One of the most prominent findings of this review is the critical importance of information sharing and patient involvement, reported in 94.4% of the included studies. Patients consistently expressed a strong desire for clear, timely, and understandable information about their condition and care. This aligns with existing literature suggesting that effective information exchange enhances patient understanding, reduces anxiety, and promotes adherence to treatment. Furthermore, patient involvement in decision-making was associated with increased satisfaction and a greater sense of control over health. These findings support the principles of shared decision-making, which are central to patient-centered care models.

The theme of respect and dignity, identified in 88.9% of studies, further reinforces the importance of interpersonal aspects of communication. Patients valued being treated as individuals, with recognition of their personal values, cultural backgrounds, and preferences. Respectful communication was closely linked to patient satisfaction and emotional well-being. Conversely, experiences of disrespect, such as being ignored or treated impersonally, negatively impacted patient perceptions of care. These findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing that respect is a foundational element of therapeutic relationships in nursing practice.

Emotional support and empathy, reported in 83.3% of studies, emerged as another essential dimension of patient-centered communication. Patients highlighted the importance of nurses acknowledging their emotional needs and providing reassurance during periods of vulnerability. Empathetic communication was associated with reduced stress and improved psychological comfort. However, the findings also revealed inconsistencies in the delivery of emotional support, with up to 45% of patients reporting inadequate empathy in some settings. This gap may be attributed to systemic constraints such as high workload and time pressures, which limit nurses' ability to engage in meaningful interactions.

The presence of communication barriers, identified in 77.8% of studies, underscores the challenges in implementing effective PCC in hospital environments. Time constraints and heavy workloads were the most frequently reported barriers, affecting approximately 50–70% of patients. These findings highlight the impact of organizational factors on communication quality. Task-oriented care, where nurses prioritize clinical duties over interpersonal engagement, further limits opportunities for patient-centered interactions. Additionally, language and cultural differences were significant barriers, particularly in diverse healthcare settings, affecting up to 40% of patients. These challenges emphasize the need for culturally competent care and improved communication training.

The development of trust and therapeutic relationships, reported in 72.2% of studies, was identified as a key outcome of effective communication. Trust was built through consistent, honest, and compassionate interactions, and was associated with increased patient confidence and willingness to participate in care. Patients who trusted their nurses were more likely to share concerns and adhere to treatment plans. However, inconsistent communication and lack of responsiveness undermined trust, highlighting the importance of continuity and reliability in nursing care. Overall, the findings of this review demonstrate that patient-centered communication extends beyond the exchange of clinical information and requires a holistic approach that integrates emotional, relational, and informational components. While nurses play a central role in delivering PCC, the effectiveness of communication is significantly influenced by organizational and systemic factors. Addressing these barriers is essential for improving patient experiences and outcomes. From a practical perspective, the results suggest the need for targeted interventions to enhance communication skills among nurses. Training programs focusing on empathy, active listening, and cultural competence can improve the quality of interactions. Additionally, healthcare organizations should consider strategies to reduce workload and improve staffing levels, enabling nurses to allocate sufficient time for communication.

The findings also have implications for policy and education. Integrating patient-centered communication principles into nursing curricula and professional development programs can prepare nurses to meet the complex communication needs of patients. Furthermore, incorporating patient feedback into quality improvement initiatives can help identify gaps and inform evidence-based practices. This review

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contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing a comprehensive synthesis of qualitative evidence on patients' perceptions of communication with nurses. By combining thematic analysis with descriptive statistics, it offers both depth and clarity in understanding patient experiences. However, it is important to recognize that communication practices may vary across cultural and healthcare contexts, and therefore, findings should be interpreted with consideration of contextual factors. In conclusion, patient-centered communication is a vital component of nursing care that significantly influences patient satisfaction, trust, and health outcomes. While patients highly value respectful, empathetic, and informative communication, persistent barriers limit its consistent implementation. Addressing these challenges through education, organizational support, and policy interventions is essential for advancing patient-centered care in hospital settings.

### 5. IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING PRACTICE

The findings of this review have significant implications for nursing practice, emphasizing the need to strengthen patient-centered communication (PCC) as a core component of care delivery. Given that patients consistently value respect, empathy, clear information, and involvement in decision-making, nurses must prioritize communication as an essential clinical skill rather than a secondary task. First, there is a clear need to enhance communication skills training among nurses. Educational programs should focus on developing competencies such as active listening, empathetic responding, and the use of simple, patient-friendly language. Simulation-based training, role-playing, and reflective practice can be effective strategies to improve these skills. Additionally, incorporating cultural competence training can help nurses address language barriers and meet the diverse needs of patients from different backgrounds.

Second, healthcare institutions should create supportive environments that enable effective communication. The review highlights that time constraints and heavy workloads are major barriers to patient-centered communication. Therefore, improving nurse-to-patient ratios, reducing administrative burdens, and ensuring adequate staffing levels are crucial steps. When nurses have sufficient time, they are better able to engage in meaningful interactions, provide emotional support, and involve patients in care decisions. Third, promoting patient involvement in care should be a key focus in clinical practice. Nurses should actively encourage patients to ask questions, express concerns, and participate in decision-making

processes. Using tools such as teach-back methods and patient education materials can enhance understanding and engagement. Empowering patients in this way not only improves satisfaction but also contributes to better health outcomes.

Finally, fostering a culture of compassionate and respectful care is essential. Leadership support, continuous professional development, and recognition of good communication practices can motivate nurses to maintain high standards of patient interaction. In summary, improving patient-centered communication requires a combination of individual skill development, organizational support, and systemic changes. By addressing these areas, nursing practice can be enhanced to provide more holistic, effective, and patient-focused care in hospital settings.

### 6. IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

The findings of this qualitative systematic review highlight several important directions for future research on patient-centered communication (PCC) in nursing practice. While existing qualitative studies provide valuable insights into patients' experiences, there remains a need for more comprehensive and methodologically robust research to strengthen the evidence base.

First, future studies should focus on diverse cultural and healthcare contexts, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where healthcare systems and communication practices may differ significantly. Comparative studies across regions can help identify context-specific factors influencing patient-centered communication and support the development of culturally appropriate interventions. Second, there is a need for intervention-based research to evaluate strategies aimed at improving communication between nurses and patients. Randomized controlled trials and mixed-methods studies can assess the effectiveness of communication training programs, digital tools, and patient engagement models in enhancing PCC and patient outcomes. Third, longitudinal research is recommended to examine how communication experiences evolve over time and how they influence long-term outcomes such as patient satisfaction, treatment adherence, and quality of life. Such studies can provide deeper insights into the sustained impact of patient-centered communication. Finally, more studies are needed to incorporate patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs) and patient-reported experience measures (PREMs) alongside qualitative findings to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of communication practices. Overall, advancing research in these areas will contribute to the

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development of evidence-based strategies for improving patient-centered communication in nursing care.

## 7. STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

This qualitative systematic review has several notable strengths. First, it provides a comprehensive synthesis of qualitative evidence on patients' perceptions of patient-centered communication with nurses in hospital settings, offering in-depth insights into patients' lived experiences. The use of a systematic and transparent methodology, guided by PRISMA principles, enhances the rigor and reproducibility of the review process. The inclusion of studies from diverse geographical regions improves the breadth of perspectives and increases the relevance of findings across different healthcare contexts. The application of thematic synthesis combined with descriptive quantification further strengthens the analysis by integrating both interpretative depth and measurable trends across studies. However, certain limitations should be acknowledged. The review was restricted to English-language publications, which may have resulted in language bias and the exclusion of relevant studies published in other languages. Another limitation is the reliance on self-reported patient experiences, which may be subject to recall bias or social desirability bias. Despite these limitations, the review provides valuable and credible insights that can inform nursing practice, education, and future research in patient-centered communication.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This qualitative systematic review highlights that patient-centered communication is a fundamental component of effective nursing care in hospital settings. The findings demonstrate that patients highly value communication that is respectful, empathetic, informative, and inclusive of their preferences and decisions. Key themes such as respect and dignity, emotional support, information sharing, and trust underscore the multidimensional nature of communication and its impact on patient experiences. Despite its recognized importance, the review identifies persistent barriers, including time constraints, high workload, and cultural or language differences, which hinder the consistent implementation of patient-centered communication. These challenges indicate the need for both individual and organizational efforts to improve communication practices. Enhancing nurses' communication skills, promoting patient involvement, and addressing systemic barriers are essential steps toward delivering high-quality, patient-centered care. Furthermore,

fostering a supportive healthcare environment can enable nurses to engage more effectively with patients. In conclusion, strengthening patient-centered communication has the potential to improve patient satisfaction, build trust, and contribute to better health outcomes, making it a critical priority in modern nursing practice.

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