

A Drawing of Public Perception of Nurses' Caring Actions Based on Jean Watson's Carative Factor Theory at the Wolofeo Community Health Center, Ende District

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ABSTRACT

Caring is a fundamental concept in modern nursing practice that emphasizes empathy, presence, and therapeutic relationships between nurses and patients. As a core indicator of nursing care quality, caring behavior significantly influences patient satisfaction, comfort, and trust, particularly in primary healthcare settings. This study aimed to describe public perceptions of nurses' caring practices based on Jean Watson's Carative Factor theory at the Wolofeo Community Health Center (UPT). A descriptive quantitative design was employed involving 48 respondents selected through convenience sampling from a population of 93 individuals who had received nursing services. Data were collected using a modified Caring Assessment Tool (CAT) questionnaire based on Watson's caring components and measured on a four-point Likert scale. The instrument demonstrated good validity and high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87). Data were analyzed descriptively using frequency distributions and percentages. The results revealed that 93.75% of respondents perceived nurses' caring behavior as good, while only 6.25% perceived it as poor. Most respondents were early adults, female, had a high school education, and worked as farmers or housewives, indicating that positive perceptions of caring extended across diverse demographic groups. These findings suggest that nurses at the Wolofeo Community Health Center have successfully implemented caring values, particularly in empathy, therapeutic communication, and creating a supportive care environment. In conclusion, caring practices aligned with Jean Watson's theory contribute positively to patient experiences and trust in primary healthcare services. Strengthening caring through continuous training and humanistic service policies is recommended to sustain and enhance nursing care quality.

Keywords: caring nurses, public perception, Jean Watson's theory, Carative Factor, community health center, nursing services.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, the concept of caring has become one of the most important foundations of modern nursing practice. Caring is understood not only as an act of helping, but as a therapeutic relationship that emphasizes empathy, presence, and meaningful communication between nurses and patients. According to Watson (2022), caring is at the heart of the nursing profession through the formation of human relationships based on altruistic values, sensitivity, trust, and emotional support.

Caring is a crucial indicator of the quality of nursing care and directly influences patient satisfaction, comfort, and experience during treatment (Suhartini et al., 2023). Recent studies have shown that nurses' caring behavior still faces challenges, such as high workloads, limited resources, and a lack of therapeutic communication training (Rahmawati & Siregar, 2024). The continued public complaints about nurses' unfriendly attitudes, lack of responsiveness, and low emotional attention demonstrate that caring requires ongoing evaluation in healthcare.

Jean Watson, through her Carative Factor theory, emphasizes ten caring components that form the basis of holistic nursing care, including a humanistic value system, sensitivity to self and others, trusting relationships, meeting basic needs, and creating a supportive and protective environment (Watson, 2021). When nurses are able to implement each of these components, a therapeutic relationship is formed and patient health outcomes are improved (Henderson et al., 2022).

Community health centers, as primary healthcare facilities, play a crucial role in providing quality nursing care. Therefore, public perception of nurses' caring practices is a tangible indicator of service quality. Understanding public perception is crucial as a basis for service evaluation, improving nurse competency, and developing patient-centered policies (Prasetyo & Utami, 2023).

Based on this description, this study aims to describe public perceptions of nurses' caring practices based on Jean Watson's Carative Factor theory at the Wolofeo Community Health Center (UPT). The findings are expected to serve as a reference for improving the quality of nursing services through a humanistic and patient-centered approach.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive design, with a population of 93 people who had received nursing services at the Wolofeo Community Health Center (Puskesmas). Convenience sampling was used, resulting in 48 respondents who met the inclusion criteria.

Inclusion criteria included being 18 years of age or older, having received nursing services, and being willing to participate. Exclusion criteria included respondents with communication disorders and those not present at the time of data collection.

Data were collected using a modified Caring Assessment Tool (CAT) questionnaire containing indicators based on Jean Watson's Carative Factor theory, using a Likert scale of 1–4. The instrument was tested for validity using Pearson Product Moment (r count > 0.279) and Cronbach Alpha (0.87), thus being deemed valid and highly reliable.

Data collection was conducted through self-administered questionnaires after respondents received an explanation of the study's objectives. Data were analyzed descriptively using frequency distributions and percentages to illustrate community perceptions of nurses' caring actions.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents' Age

No.	Age Categories	N	%
1	Early Adolescence (12-16)	4	8,33
2	Late Adolescence (17-25)	9	18,75
3	Early Adulthood (26-35)	18	37,5
4	Late Adulthood (36-45)	13	27,09
5	Early Seniors (46-55)	4	8,33
Total	Total	48	100

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents' Gender

No.	Gender	N	%
1	Female	30	62,5
2	Male	18	37,5
Total	Total	48	100

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents' Education

No	Education Level	N	%
1	Elementary School	8	16,67
2	Middle School	18	37,5
3	High School	22	45,83
Total	Total	48	100

Table 4. Distribution of Respondents' Occupations

No	Occupation	N	%
1	Farmer	20	41,66
2	Housewife	18	37,5
3	Private Employment	2	4,17
4	Student	8	16,67
Total	Total	48	100

Table 5. Overall Caring Perception

No.	Nurse Caring	N	%
1	Good Caring	45	93,75
2	Poor Caring	3	6,25
Total	Total	48	100

Discussion

The results of the study showed that 93.75% of the public perceived nurses' caring behavior as good, while only 6.25% perceived it as poor. This finding indicates that the majority of the public viewed the caring behavior of nurses at the Wolofeo Community Health Center (UPT) very positively. Respondent characteristics showed that the majority were in early adulthood (37.5%), female (62.5%), had a high school education (45.83%), and worked as farmers (41.66%).

Perceptions of Nurse Caring

The 93.75% "good" caring level indicates that nurses are perceived as displaying empathy, therapeutic communication, and responsiveness in accordance with Watson's caring standards. This indicates that the nurse-patient relationship reflects Carative Factor values, such as the humanistic-altruistic value system and sensitivity to self and others (Watson, 2021). High levels of caring are typically influenced by the quality of nurse interactions, therapeutic communication skills, and a supportive care environment (Suhartini et al., 2023). In the context of the Wolofeo Community Health Center, this high rating can be attributed to services being more socio-culturally connected to the community, resulting in more effective communication.

Interpretation Based on Demographics

Early adults (37.5%) were the most frequently involved in the study. This age group has the ability to assess services more objectively due to their frequent interaction with health facilities. Women (62.5%) were more likely to respond because they are more frequently involved in family health matters; this aligns with a study by Rahmawati & Siregar (2024) that found that women tend to be more sensitive to service quality. Respondents with a high school education (45.83%) provided a basis for interpreting that health literacy was sufficient to assess caring behavior. The majority worked as farmers (41.66%), who generally expect fast, friendly, and clear service. The high proportion of good caring behaviors indicates that nurses are able to meet patient expectations in this demographic group.

Watson (2022) emphasized that the quality of interpersonal relationships is central to the quality of care. The high perception of caring in this study indicates that nurses have implemented this component. These results align with several recent studies, including Suhartini et al. (2023) found that 90% of patients rated nurses' caring as good in primary care, showing a pattern similar to the results of this study. Prasetyo & Utami (2023) also reported that attention, empathy, and

communication were the dimensions of caring that most influenced patient satisfaction. Henderson et al.'s (2022) study showed that a supportive environment and nurse sensitivity were the two caring indicators that most determined positive patient perceptions, in line with your findings. However, these results differ slightly from the study by Rahmawati & Siregar (2024) who found that limited nurse numbers and high workloads can reduce the quality of caring. This difference may occur because community health centers have a lower number of daily visits than large hospitals, so nurses have more time to interact humanistically. Overall, this study strengthens the evidence that caring remains a key indicator of patient satisfaction and trust, especially in primary care facilities.

Research Implications

These findings have significant implications for practical, academic, and policy areas. Practically, nurses need to consistently maintain warm therapeutic communication practices, genuine empathy, and sensitivity to patients' physical and psychological conditions, as these aspects have been shown to contribute to the quality of nursing care. The results of this study can also be used by community health center heads as a basis for developing and strengthening service quality improvement programs, including through training in effective communication, strengthening caring values, and managing stress for nurses. From an academic perspective, this study enriches the nursing literature, particularly regarding the implementation of Jean Watson's caring theory in primary health care facilities, and can serve as a reference in the development of assessment instruments and further research on the quality of nursing care. Meanwhile, at the policy level, these findings encourage community health centers to develop and implement standard operating procedures for services that more explicitly emphasize humanistic aspects, so that caring values are not only a personal attitude of nurses but are systematically integrated into the culture and governance of health services.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study showed that the public's perception of the caring actions of nurses at the Wolofeo Community Health Center (UPT) was categorized as good (93.75 percent), while only 6.25 percent of respondents rated them as poor. This finding indicates that nurses have implemented the caring values in accordance with Jean Watson's Carative Factor theory, particularly in creating a supportive service environment, providing emotional attention, and demonstrating empathy and sensitivity to patients' conditions. This positive perception reflects the quality of humanistic interactions between nurses and patients in the healthcare process.

The characteristics of respondents, who were predominantly young adults (37.5 percent), female (62.5 percent), and high school graduates (45.83 percent), indicate that this group has had quite intense experience interacting with healthcare services, enabling them to provide relatively objective assessments of nurses' caring behavior. This also demonstrates that a therapeutic relationship between nurses and patients has been well-established, characterized by a sense of comfort, trust, and acceptance of the services provided.

Overall, this study confirms that nurses' caring actions have met public expectations and contributed to increased trust and positive patient experiences in receiving healthcare. Therefore, caring attitudes need to be continuously maintained and enhanced through regular training at community health centers, particularly those focused on strengthening therapeutic communication and empathy. Nurses are also expected to continue developing interpersonal competencies and upholding humanistic values in nursing practice. Meanwhile, future researchers are advised to conduct further research with an analytical design to more deeply identify the factors influencing nurses' caring behavior.

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