

(Research) Article

The Relationship Between *Nurse Caring* and The Level of Anxiety of Patients' Families in the ICU Room RSUD RAA Soewondo Pati

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ABSTRACT:Caring nurses are nurses' attitude of caring for patients, treating patients with sincerity, affection, sincerity, providing support both through communication and direct action. Anxiety is a psychological condition where a person experiences excessive anxiety constantly and is difficult to control so that it can have a bad impact on daily life. Anxiety must be lowered so as not to adversely affect physical and psychological disorders, fatigue and family helplessness in dealing with these stressful situations. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between nurse care and the level of anxiety of patients' families in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) room of RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital. This study uses a type of correlational quantitative research with a cross sectional approach. The population in this study was 122 patients, with the calculation of the Arikunto formula, a sample of 31 respondents was obtained. The research instrument used was the caring CPS (Caring Professional Scale) questionnaire, while to measure the level of anxiety, the ZS-RAS (Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale) questionnaire was used. The majority of respondents showed good caring behavior of nurses as many as 22 respondents (71%) with mild anxiety levels of 15 respondents (48.4%), moderate anxiety as many as 6 respondents (19.4%), and severe anxiety as many as 1 respondent (3.2%). The caring behavior of nurses was sufficient as many as 9 respondents (29%) with a level of mild anxiety of 1 respondent (3.2%), moderate anxiety as many as 6 respondents (19.4%), and severe anxiety as many as 2 respondents (6.5%). The results of the spearman rank (Rho) statistical test obtained a significant value (p value) of 0.002. There was a relationship between the caring behavior of nurses and the level of anxiety of patients' families in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) room of RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital.

Keywords: Anxiety, Family, Caring, Nurse.

1. BACKGROUND

The patient's state in the room *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) is a very critical patient condition and requires special services. Nurse services tend to be fast and careful with their duties that are carried out every day. The space usually uses sophisticated tools that are unfamiliar to patients and their families. When one of the family members has to be hospitalized, the family becomes anxious. Concerns increase when there are family members being treated in the unit *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) (Sulaeman, 2021). *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) is a specialized care unit reserved for patients suffering from serious illnesses that require close monitoring. In this room there is medical technology and special health workers (Ministry of Health, 2022). The level of family anxiety increases due to the severity of the disease and the critical condition of the patient (Herawati and Fithriyan, 2018).

Anxiety is a psychological condition where a person experiences excessive anxiety continuously and is difficult to control so that it can have a negative impact on daily life (Ministry of Health, 2018). Research conducted by (Rusinova and Kukal, 2018) in 22 *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) of the hospital over a six-month period involving 406 family members of 293 patients. The results of the study showed that the anxiety of the patient's family was relatively high, which was 78%. In a study conducted in American hospitals, anxiety symptoms were found in 10-42% of patients' families (Kulkarni et al., 2018). In 2018, experts explained that 6% of people over the age of 15 in Indonesia experienced anxiety disorders and around 14 million people experienced anxiety symptoms (Titin Sri Rahayu, 2021). In Indonesia, the level of anxiety of the families of patients treated in

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Intensive Care Unit (ICU) by 66.67% (Putra, 2021).

The impact of this family anxiety problem is the inability to make necessary decisions. This can cause obstacles in providing medical services to patients and consequently extend the patient's stay in *Intensive Care Unit (ICU)* (Pardede et al., 2020). Anxiety experienced by families can interfere with the family's ability to support their family members undergoing treatment. Persistent severe anxiety in the family can contribute to fatigue, physical and psychological disorders and the family's helplessness in dealing with these stressful situations (Sugiyarto et al., 2021). Symptoms of anxiety include heart palpitations, trembling, dry mouth, muscle pain, excessive sweating, rapid breathing, chest pain, headache, mild tremors, depression and unfamiliarity with the environment (Ilahi et al., 2021). These symptoms, if not treated properly, can cause depression in a person (Nuhidayati, 2018).

Health workers, especially nurses, play an important role in overcoming the distress experienced by the patient's family. One of the efforts to reduce anxiety in the patient's family is to show *Caring*. Nurses can provide services to patients and families that reflect caring behavior (Widyastuti and Anggrera, 2019). The findings of previous research by (Christine, 2018) stated that most families have a good perception of nurses who *caring*. In addition, (Augustin, 2020) stated that most of the respondents experienced adequate treatment with moderate levels of anxiety. *Caring* Nurses are nurses' attitude of caring for patients, treating patients sincerely, with affection, providing support both through communication and direct action (Kusnanto, 2019). For patients, *caring* Nurses include several components such as compassion, communication, competence, comfort, confidence, commitment and appearance (Munandar, 2022).

Based on data from the *Intensive Care Unit (ICU)* RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital, the number of patients admitted in 2023 is 554 patients. The patient data that came in October-December 2023 was 122 patients. Interviews conducted with 7 families of patients on January 31, 2024 found that they felt anxiety, worry, and fear while waiting for patients outside *Intensive Care Unit (ICU)*. Family members react to fear in a variety of ways, some cry, feel confused, shocked, pray, some feel hopeless and leave everything to God. Of the 7 family members of the patient, 4 people said they were severely anxious, 2 people said they were moderately anxious, and 1 person said they were mildly anxious. Nurses play an important role in dealing with this situation by providing information to families about the patient's progress in *Intensive Care Unit (ICU)*. Nurses should also try to maintain a friendly and smiling attitude when interacting with family members.

2. METHOD

This study uses a type of correlational quantitative research with an approach to *cross sectional*. Sampling techniques using *non-probability* sampling. The population in this study is 122 patients, with the calculation of the Arikunto formula obtained a sample of 31 respondents, with the inclusion criteria of respondents being the patient's nuclear family, families living in the same house, respondents aged ≥ 20 years, and families of patients who have been treated for more than 2 days in the room *Intensive Care Unit (ICU)*. The research instrument used by the researcher is a behavior questionnaire *caring* CPS nurses (*Caring Professional Scale*), while to measure anxiety levels, namely using the ZS-RAS anxiety questionnaire (*Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale*).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Distribution of Respondent Characteristics Based on Nurses' *Caring* Behavior in the ICU Room of RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital in 2024

| Caring Behavior | Frequency | % |
|------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Good | 22 | 71,0 |
| Enough | 9 | 29,0 |
| Total | 31 | 100 |

Table 1 above shows that of the 31 respondents, the highest category is the good category with 22 respondents (71.0%) and the lowest category is moderate with 9 respondents (29.0%). The results of the study using the *caring professional scale* (CPS) instrument as many as 22 respondents (71.0%) stated that the *caring* behavior of nurses in the *Intensive Care Unit (ICU)* room has been carried out well. *Caring* nurses are good, because most of the patient's families give the opinion that nurses provide *caring* treatment by providing motivation, providing clear information to the family in providing care to

patients, nurses give a good and friendly response to patients and families, provide support by reminding them to always worship and pray, nurses also always discuss the patient's condition to the doctor.

In line with research (Paputungan et al., 2018) it is known that caring nurses is in the good category. Where of the 78 respondents in this study, as many as 44 people (56.4%) rated the caring of nurses as good. This is because the respondents feel that the nurse accepts the patient's feelings attentively if the patient can talk, comes to the patient without judgment, provides action according to what the patient needs, helps the patient's family in understanding what they feel, respects the patient, is sensitive to the patient's feelings and mood, shows kindness when caring for the patient and gives gentle touch to the patient to provide comfort.

According to (Sari Sarapang, 2022), a high positive caring behavior of nurses will affect the anxiety of the patient's family. This is because the family feels that the caring behavior that has been given by nurses to patients is very important for the patient's recovery. Researchers argue that *caring behavior* of nurses can reduce family anxiety levels. The family will feel safe and comfortable with the nurse because the family believes that there are people who are considered more knowledgeable and more capable of overcoming the patient's condition, namely the presence of doctors and nurses who have special skills. This statement is supported by (Nurahayu and Sulastrri, 2019) who said that with a warm, attentive and firm attitude of nurses, patients will have a good emotional experience.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondent Characteristics Based on the Patient's Family Anxiety Level in the ICU Room of RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital in 2024

| Family Anxiety | Frequency | % |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Light | 16 | 51,6 |
| Keep | 12 | 38,7 |
| Heavy | 3 | 9,7 |
| Total | 31 | 100 |

From table 4.7 above, it shows that of the 31 respondents, the highest category is mild anxiety as many as 16 respondents (51.6%) and the lowest category is severe anxiety as many as 3 respondents (9.7%). The results of the study using the *Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale* (ZSRAS) questionnaire on respondents in the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) room of RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital were obtained that the highest was in the mild anxiety category of 16 respondents (51.6%). This anxiety is felt because the patient's family believes that the patient will be handled by the nurse as best as possible and the patient's family can overcome the anxiety they feel, such as by dhikr or diverting their thoughts to other things so that the patient's family's anxiety is mostly at a mild level (Heriana and Miradiah, 2023).

This is in line with research (Nurahayu and Sulastrri, 2019) which found that most of the research results experienced mild levels of anxiety, namely 25 respondents (41%), 2 respondents (3.3%) had moderate anxiety, and none had severe or very severe anxiety. The researcher argued that most of the respondents experienced a normal level of anxiety experienced by some respondents due to the severity of the patient's illness that was not too severe and the cost of treatment that had been covered by health insurance.

The anxiety experienced by the patient's family is caused by fear if the family member being treated dies or becomes disabled, there is a lack of information and communication between the patient's family and the patient because the patient's family cannot wait for the patient 24 hours. In addition, anxiety in the patient's family is caused by the high cost of the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU). As a solution to reduce anxiety in patients' families, nurses can provide anxiety-reducing techniques such as providing aromatherapy, music therapy in the waiting room of the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU). In addition, nurses can teach relaxation distraction techniques such as deep breathing, mind diversion and 5-finger hypnosis.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Nurse *Caring* Relationship with Patient Family Anxiety Levels in the ICU Room of RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital in 2024

| Family Anxiety Levels | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Caring Behavior | Light | | Keep | | Heavy | | Total | | <i>p</i> |
| | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | |
| Good | 15 | 48,4 | 6 | 19,4 | 1 | 3,2 | 22 | 71 | 0,002 |
| Enough | 1 | 3,2 | 6 | 19,4 | 2 | 6,5 | 9 | 29 | |
| Total | 16 | 52 | 12 | 39 | 3 | 10 | 31 | 100 | |

Based on table 4.8 above, it shows that from 31 respondents, the most caring behavior results were obtained in the good category of 22 respondents (71%), namely with a level of mild anxiety of 15 respondents (48.4%), moderate anxiety as many as 6 respondents (19.4%), and severe anxiety as many as 1 respondent (3.2%). The *caring* behavior of nurses with a moderate category was 9 respondents (29%), namely with a level of mild anxiety of 1 respondent (3.2%), moderate anxiety of 6 respondents (19.4%), and severe anxiety of 2 respondents (6.5%).

The results of the *Spearman Rank (Rho)* statistical test obtained that the significant value (*p* value) was 0.002, the value was smaller than the level of significant value (0.05 (0.002 < 0.05)). The result of the correlation coefficient from this study was obtained as $r = 0.527$. Therefore, from these results, it can be interpreted that α) *sebesar* the caring behavior of nurses has a relationship with the level of anxiety of patients' families in the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) room of RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital with a *p* of 0.002, which is in a very strong correlation force.

The results of the study showed that the highest *caring* behavior of nurses was in the category of good *caring* as many as 22 respondents (71%), namely with a level of mild anxiety of 15 respondents (48.4%), moderate anxiety of 6 respondents (19.4%), and severe anxiety of 1 respondent (3.2%). The results of this study are in accordance with research conducted by (Titin Sri Rahayu, 2021) which states that some of the patient's families experience mild anxiety with the role of good *caring* nurse behavior. According to the researcher's assumption, a high positive caring behavior of nurses will affect the anxiety of the patient's family. This is because the family feels that the caring behavior that has been given by nurses to patients is very important for the patient's recovery. Nurses who are caring also have an impact on increasing self-confidence, so anxiety will be reduced because there are nurses who are considered more knowledgeable and more capable in caring for patients (Nurul C., et al. 2017).

The results of the study were obtained that *caring* is good but there is still severe anxiety, this can occur due to various factors that can cause anxiety for the patient's family. The patient's family stated that they felt anxious because they were afraid of losing their family in the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) room. This is in line with research (Husna and Sari, 2018) where 100% of the families of patients treated in intensive rooms are afraid of loss, so it can cause feelings of sadness, fear, anxiety and even stress when seeing patients, especially when patients are not self-aware. Strengthened by research (Widiastuti, 2023) which states that the anxiety of the families of patients who are treated in the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) is due to the severity of the patient.

The *caring* behavior of nurses in this study also showed that there were 9 respondents (29%) caring nurses with a moderate anxiety level of 1 respondent (3.2%), moderate anxiety as many as 6 respondents (19.4%), and severe anxiety as many as 2 respondents (6.5%). The results of the study are in accordance with research conducted by (Safaatul Intani, 2023) which stated that of the most respondents, namely *adequate caring* as many as 72 (86.7%) with a moderate anxiety level of 59 respondents. The frequency of anxiety will be reduced if the nurse shows sufficient *caring* behavior. Patients and their families will feel comfortable and trust in nurses when they are provided with care with a touch of love, attention, and presence, as well as when they continue to listen. However, the results of the study show that *caring* in the sufficient category still experiences severe anxiety, possibly this is due to the respondents' perception of the *caring* behavior of nurses in the sufficient category, namely because of negative experiences with nurses, so that

patients feel distrust in nurses which makes patients experience severe anxiety (Nurhayu and Sulastri, 2019).

The level and form of anxiety experienced by each family will vary. Caring nurses can reduce the anxiety felt by the patient's family in the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) room. Families will feel guided, helped, and given solutions to the problems they face. So that nurses' *caring* behavior plays a very important role to be applied in the form of providing nursing care to the families of patients who experience anxiety.

The strength of the relationship between nurses' caring behavior and the level of anxiety of patients' families in the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) room was at a mild or good level (0.527). In accordance with research conducted by (Nana Rohana, 2019) showing the relationship between nurse caring and the level of anxiety of the patient's family in the *ICU Intensive Care Unit* room, the better the nurse's care to the patient's family, the milder the level of anxiety in the patient's family. This is because the nurse who has understood the patient's feelings well enough and has provided actions in accordance with the patient's needs, so that the patient feels comfortable and safe with the actions given by the nurse. Therefore, it can be concluded, based on the results of the hypothesis test above, that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The highest result in nurses' caring behavior was caring behavior with a good category of 22 respondents (71.0%). The highest level of anxiety in patients' families was in the mild anxiety category of 16 respondents (51.6%). The results of the statistical test showed that there was a relationship between the caring behavior of nurses and the level of anxiety of patients' families in the *Intensive Care Unit* (ICU) room of RAA Soewondo Pati Hospital with a p value (0.002). This research can be used as input for further research, especially in the field of nursing related to nurses' caring behavior with the anxiety of patients' families in other treatment rooms by considering several characteristics and several factors that are not yet present in this study. Researchers can then add other variables, such as the relationship between family support and anxiety levels in patients.

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