

ENHANCING SPIRITUAL CARE IN NURSING PRACTICE: EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IMPLEMENTATION OF SPIRITUAL ASPECTS AND FULFILLMENT OF PATIENTS' SPIRITUAL NEEDS

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ABSTRACT

Background: Nurses are integral to comprehensive patient care, addressing biological, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions. Spiritual care is a crucial component of nursing, ensuring patients' holistic well-being. **Objective:** This study explores the link between nurses' spiritual application and inpatients' spiritual fulfillment. **Method:** Conducted at Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital, Palembang from October to December 2023, this quantitative research sampled 42 inpatients through simple random sampling. Data collected via questionnaires were analyzed using univariate and bivariate methods (chi-square). Instruments included "Aspects of Application of Spirituality" and the Spiritual Care Competency Scale (SCCS), alongside the Spiritual Needs Questionnaire (SpNQ) for assessing spiritual fulfillment. **Results:** the relationship between the application of the spirituality aspect of nurses and the fulfillment of the spiritual needs of inpatients is 64.3%, indicating that the application of the spirituality aspect of nurses is considered not good. Meanwhile, as many as 35.7% of patients indicated that the implementation of the spirituality aspects of nurses was good. Chi-square analysis ($p=0.011$) indicated a significant correlation between nurses' spiritual practices and inpatients' spiritual fulfillment. **Recommendation:** Enhancing spiritual practices requires structured interventions like spiritual skills training, framework development, monitoring systems, leadership support, and collaborative training. These measures aim to elevate healthcare service quality and ensure holistic patient care.

Keywords: Nurses, Patients, Spiritual Aspects, Spiritual Needs.

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual care involves the actions and practices implemented by nurses to address and fulfill the spiritual needs of patients (Cone & Giske, 2022). Effective spiritual care necessitates the establishment of a mutually trusting relationship between the nurse and the patient. This trust fosters an environment where patients feel comfortable and safe to express their spiritual concerns and needs openly, facilitating deeper and more meaningful interactions. According to Elham Zafarian Moghaddam, Hamidreza Behnam, Tayebeh Reihani (2022), such trust can significantly enhance the quality

of spiritual care by allowing patients to be more open and engaged in their care process. This openness is crucial for nurses to accurately identify and respond to the spiritual needs of patients, ultimately contributing to holistic patient care.

As a crucial element of nursing services, nursing care must address patients as holistic beings, encompassing biological, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions. This holistic perspective recognizes individuals as integrated entities rather than a collection of separate parts or systems. Consequently, the role of nurses extends

beyond physical care to include the fulfillment of patients' spiritual needs, which is an integral part of their responsibilities and functions in providing comprehensive nursing care (Jakob, 2020). According to Husaeni & Haris (2020), acknowledging and addressing these spiritual needs is essential for delivering truly holistic care, ensuring that all aspects of a patient's well-being are considered and supported.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the relationship between religious dimensions and health is of paramount importance. WHO has recognized the religious dimension as one of the four essential elements of health. Globally, 86% of patients report that religion significantly influences their daily lives. Both hospitalized patients and outpatients often exhibit a strong spiritual and religious orientation. In a study involving 98 inpatients, over 97% believed in the existence of God, 94% utilized prayer, and 98% felt a close connection to God. Additionally, a survey conducted among patients hospitalized at two different hospitals revealed that 100% believed in the existence of God, 95% prayed daily, and 96% agreed that spiritual health is as vital as physical health (WHO, 2022). These findings underscore the critical role of spiritual and religious practices in the overall health and well-being of patients, highlighting the need for healthcare providers to consider these dimensions in patient care (Moghadam et al., 2021).

Nurses must understand spirituality and recognize how spiritual beliefs influence each individual's life. When spiritual needs are unmet, it can lead to issues such as spiritual distress, negatively affecting a patient's overall well-being (Murtiningsih, 2022). Despite its importance, the fulfillment of these spiritual needs is often inadequately addressed because nurses are frequently burdened with tasks that fall outside their primary responsibilities. This

misallocation of duties can compromise the quality of care and the ability of nurses to provide comprehensive services, including addressing the spiritual needs of patients (Ministry of Health Republic Indonesia, 2023). To enhance patient care, it is crucial for healthcare systems to ensure that nurses are supported and enabled to focus on their core duties, including the vital aspect of spiritual care (Martin et al., 2017).

As professional healthcare providers, nurses play a crucial role in delivering comprehensive nursing care that includes spiritual services. These services involve offering religious guidance to boost patients' zest for life, creating a safe and comfortable environment that encourages focused worship, and facilitating access to clergy members aligned with patients' beliefs. Unfortunately, these aspects are often under-addressed in hospital settings, where the focus tends to be predominantly on patients' physical needs (Brian P. Hughes, 2017). According to Estetika & Jannah (2021), many nurses may overlook the spiritual dimension of care due to competing demands and priorities. Enhancing the integration of spiritual care into nursing practice requires a systemic approach that supports nurses in fulfilling these important aspects of patient care, ensuring a more holistic and patient-centered approach to healthcare delivery.

Fulfilling a patient's spiritual needs is a critical aspect of their healing journey. However, in practice, nurses sometimes overlook these spiritual dimensions, which can significantly impact the overall healing process of patients (Sprik et al., 2019). Recognizing the significance of spiritual guidance in healthcare, the World Health Organization (WHO) acknowledged in 1984 that the spiritual dimension is integral to a holistic understanding of health. As part of their comprehensive role, nurses bear the responsibility to address not only the biological and sociological needs of their

patients but also their spiritual needs, as this contributes to the esteemed role of nurses in healthcare provision (Linda et al., 2020). Attending to spiritual needs within nursing practice can enhance patient satisfaction on a spiritual level. This involves fostering connections not only with a higher power but also nurturing relationships with oneself, others, and the environment (Husna, 2019). Efforts to integrate spiritual care into nursing practice are crucial for ensuring a more holistic and patient-centered approach to healthcare delivery, thereby promoting overall well-being and healing (Zhang et al., 2017).

However, significant challenges exist in addressing patients' spiritual needs, as some nurses may perceive these needs as less critical. Consequently, patients' spiritual well-being can be overlooked within the framework of nursing services. Challenges arise from factors such as heavy workloads, inadequate understanding of effective implementation strategies, and insufficient preparation in providing necessary spiritual care facilities and resources (Jakob, 2020). These obstacles often hinder the proper fulfillment of patients' spiritual needs. Recognizing and addressing these challenges are essential steps in ensuring that patients receive comprehensive care that encompasses their spiritual as well as physical and emotional needs. By overcoming these barriers, nurses can play a pivotal role in fostering holistic healing experiences for their patients, thereby enhancing overall health outcomes and satisfaction with care (Cruz et al., 2017).

Further research conducted by Melastuti & Sri Wahyuningsih (2023) revealed that out of 77 respondents surveyed, 55 respondents (71.4%) were categorized as having a good level of spiritual application, while 22 respondents (28.6%) demonstrated a sufficient level of spiritual application. This study underscores the varying degrees to which

individuals integrate spiritual practices into their lives, highlighting a significant proportion who exhibit robust spiritual engagement. Understanding these variations can inform healthcare providers, including nurses, about the diversity of spiritual needs among patients and the potential impact on their overall well-being. Such insights are crucial for developing tailored approaches to spiritual care that meet the diverse needs of individuals across different contexts of care.

Based on the findings from the questionnaire, it was observed that a significant majority of nurses actively integrate spirituality into their care practices for patients in the Inpatient Room at Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital in Palembang. Additionally, brief interviews conducted with patients indicated that most nurses assist in facilitating religious services for patients throughout their hospitalization. These findings highlight the proactive role of nurses in addressing the spiritual needs of patients, contributing to a supportive and holistic care environment. Such practices not only underscore the importance of spiritual care in healthcare settings but also emphasize the dedication of healthcare professionals in meeting the diverse needs and preferences of their patients.

Based on a preliminary study conducted on October 9, 2023, researchers conducted brief interviews with 10 nurses at Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital in Palembang. The study revealed that no prior research had been undertaken on a similar topic at the hospital. This finding underscores the novelty and significance of the current research initiative, as it seeks to fill an important gap in understanding how spirituality is integrated into nursing care within this specific healthcare setting. By exploring this previously uncharted territory, the study aims to contribute valuable insights into the practices and perceptions surrounding spiritual care among nurses at

the hospital. This research endeavor not only aims to enhance the knowledge base but also holds potential implications for improving spiritual care practices and patient outcomes in similar healthcare contexts.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the correlation between the implementation of nurses' spirituality and the fulfillment of spiritual needs among inpatients. Recognizing the importance of addressing spiritual dimensions in healthcare, this research seeks to innovate the role of nurses as providers of comprehensive and holistic health services, encompassing not only physical care but also spiritual and emotional support. According to Nuridah & Yodang (2021) that by understanding and enhancing how nurses integrate spiritual aspects into their caregiving practices, this study aims to contribute to the improvement of patient care experiences. Such insights are crucial for developing effective strategies that promote holistic well-being and satisfaction among patients, thereby enriching the quality of healthcare delivery in clinical settings.

METHODS

This research employs quantitative methods with a correlational descriptive design to explore the relationship between nurses' spirituality and the fulfillment of inpatients' spiritual needs. The study was conducted within the inpatient facilities of Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital in Palembang, spanning from October 2023 to December 2023. By utilizing quantitative approaches, the research aims to quantify and analyze the extent to which nurses' spiritual practices influence the spiritual well-being of hospitalized patients. This timeframe allows for a comprehensive examination of spiritual care practices and their impact over a sustained period, providing valuable insights into how healthcare providers can better integrate spiritual dimensions into patient care protocols.

The study population was all patients treated in the inpatient unit of the Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital in Palembang, with patients having undergone inpatient treatment for more than three days. This included a total of 42 patients. To select samples from this population, probability sampling was used using simple random sampling techniques. This approach ensures that every individual in the population has an equal opportunity to be included in the research, thereby increasing the representativeness and reliability of the findings. By utilizing this method, the research aims to draw accurate and generalizable conclusions about the relationship between nurses' spiritual practices and meeting the spiritual needs of inpatients.

The analysis techniques utilized in this study include univariate and bivariate analyses, with the chi-square test employed to examine relationships between variables. Data collection was conducted through a structured questionnaire completed by the respondents, personally administered by the researcher. The questionnaire included sections on the respondents' demographics, as well as items assessing nurses' competencies in spiritual care using a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). Additionally, it contained items evaluating the fulfillment of patients' spiritual needs, assessed on a binary scale (yes or no). This comprehensive approach enabled the collection of detailed data regarding both the nurses' perspectives on their spiritual care practices and the patients' perceptions of how well their spiritual needs were being met. The study was conducted in the inpatient ward of Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital in Palembang, aiming to provide valuable insights into the integration of spiritual care in nursing practices and its impact on patient well-being.

Researchers conducted validity and reliability tests at Muhammadiyah

Hospital in Palembang, with 30 patients participating as respondents. For the variable "Aspects of Application of Spirituality," the Spiritual Care Competency Scale (SCCS) questionnaire, adapted from Leeuwen & Cusveller (2004) and utilized in research by Arndt (2021), was employed, consisting of 15 questions. For the variable "Fulfillment of Spiritual Needs," the Spiritual Needs Questionnaire (SpNQ), adapted from Büsing A. (2021), was used, comprising 7 questions. Validity testing was conducted using SPSS 21, with Bivariate Chi-Square analysis to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the measurement instruments. These rigorous testing methods aim to ensure that the data collected accurately reflect the competencies of nurses in spiritual care and the extent to which patients' spiritual needs are being met.

In assessing the level of aspects of nurses' spirituality, 12 questions were found to be valid, each with a significance result of less than 0.05. Similarly, for the variable concerning the fulfillment of inpatients' spiritual needs, 6 questions were validated with significance results also below 0.05. Reliability testing for the

aspects of nurses' spirituality yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.889, indicating high reliability. The same reliability coefficient was obtained for the fulfillment of inpatients' spiritual needs, confirming the reliability of both variables. Ethical considerations were meticulously addressed, including obtaining informed consent and ensuring confidentiality for all respondents. The study also received an Ethical Clearance Letter from the Faculty of Medical Sciences at Sriwijaya University, with protocol number 024-2023. These measures ensure that the research adheres to ethical standards and the data collected is both valid and reliable, supporting the integrity and credibility of the study's findings.

RESULTS

Univariate Analysis

This analysis determines the frequency distribution of characteristics of nurse and patient respondents based on age and gender. Frequency distribution The independent variable is the aspect of fulfilling spirituality and the dependent variable is fulfilling the patient's spiritual needs. The univariate analysis of each variable is as follows:

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Patients Based on Demographic Data at Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital Palembang from October 2023 to December 2023 (N=42)

No.	Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Age (Year)		
	< 30	14	33,3
	31-40	16	38,1
	> 40	12	28,6
	Total	42	100
2	Gender		
	Man	15	35,7
	Women	27	64,3
	Total	42	100

Based on Table 1 Demographic Data of the Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital Palembang from October 2023 to December 2023, it is known that the majority of patients are aged between 31-40 years as much as 38.1% of respondents, while the gender found is that more than half of the patients are female, namely 64, 3%.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Implementation of Nurses' Spirituality Aspects to Patients (N=42)

No	Application of Spiritual Aspects	f	%
1.	Not Good	31	73.8
2.	Good	11	26.2
	Total	42	100

From Table 3, shows the frequency distribution of the application of aspects of nurses' spirituality, it was found that more than half of the nurses had not been able to apply it well to patients, namely 73.8%.

Tabel 3. Frequency Distribution of Fulfillment of Spiritual Needs (N=42)

No.	Application of Spiritual Aspects	f	%
1.	Fulfilled	14	33,3
2.	Not fulfilled	28	66,7
	Total	42	100

Based on Table 3, a description of patients' spiritual needs, it was found that more than half of the respondents' spiritual needs were not met, namely 66.7%.

Bivariate Analysis

Table 4. The Relationship between the Implementation of Spirituality Aspects of Nurses and Fulfilling the Spiritual Needs of Inpatients at the Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital, Palembang

Application of Spiritual Aspects	Fulfillment of Spiritual Needs				Total	χ^2	p -value			
	Fulfilled		Not fulfilled							
	f	%	f	%						
Not Good	3	7.1	24	57.2	27	64.3	7.266			
Good	8	19.0	7	16.7	15	35.7				
Total	11	26.1	31	73.9	42	100				

Based on table 4, the relationship between the application of the spirituality aspect of nurses and the fulfillment of the spiritual needs of inpatients is 64.3%, indicating that the application of the spirituality aspect of nurses is considered not good. Meanwhile, as many as 35.7% of patients indicated that the implementation of the spirituality aspects of nurses was good. This matter shows that there is a real difference in fulfilling the spiritual needs of patients depending on how much. Statistical analysis shows that there is a significant relationship between the implementation of aspects of spirituality in nurses and fulfilling the spiritual needs of inpatients, with a chi-square value of 7.266 and a p-value of 0.011. both aspects of nurse spirituality are applied. This information can be a basis for improving health services that are more holistic and pay attention to aspects of spirituality in treatment practices at the Siti Khadijah Islam Hospital, Palembang.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research results, it is known that out of 42 patients, their spiritual needs were met by applying aspects of spirituality without being implemented

properly by nurses involving more than half of the total patients, namely 27 people (64.3%). On the other hand, a small number of respondents, namely 15 people (35 .7%)

reported that their spiritual needs were met by implementing good aspects of spirituality. The results of statistical analysis show a chi-square value with a p-value of 0.011. Based on these values, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between the implementation of spirituality aspects by nurses and the fulfillment of needs spirituality in inpatients at the Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital in Palembang from October 2023 to December 2023. This is reinforced by the fact that the chi-square value of X² table is (7.266). The conclusion from this analysis is that the better the nurse's application of the spirituality aspect, the more the patient's spiritual needs are met, and conversely, the less well the nurse's spirituality aspect is implemented, the less the patient's spiritual needs are met.

Spiritual care services have a positive impact on patient health by enhancing mental well-being, increasing coping resources, improving pain management, and reducing depression. Therefore, it is essential to have nurses who are dedicated to implementing these spiritual services. Their role is crucial in addressing the holistic needs of patients, fostering an environment that supports both physical and spiritual healing (Sprik et al., 2019). According to Ulansari (2020), the presence of nurses skilled in providing spiritual care can significantly contribute to the overall health and recovery of patients, demonstrating the importance of integrating spiritual care into standard nursing practices. By doing so, healthcare providers can ensure a more comprehensive approach to patient care that addresses the diverse needs of individuals.

Melastuti & Sri Wahyuningsih (2023) states that nurses with relatively low levels of spirituality tend not to provide optimal care to patients. This finding aligns with the results of our research, which indicate that patients receiving inadequate spiritual care from nurses are more likely to have their spiritual needs unmet. This underscores the critical importance of nurses' spirituality in

delivering comprehensive and effective care. According to Sajadi et al. (2018) that when nurses are well-versed and committed to addressing spiritual aspects of patient care, they are better equipped to fulfill the holistic needs of their patients, enhancing overall health outcomes and patient satisfaction. This highlights the need for healthcare institutions to prioritize spiritual training and support for nurses to ensure high-quality, patient-centered care.

Indrika (2022) conducted similar research, revealing that the majority of nurses poorly implemented the spiritual aspects of patient care. Specifically, 56 nurses (72.5%) were found to inadequately address the spiritual needs of their patients. As a result, most patients' spiritual needs were left unmet. This finding highlights a significant gap in the provision of holistic care and underscores the importance of enhancing nurses' competencies in spiritual care. Addressing this gap is crucial for improving patient outcomes and ensuring that all dimensions of patients' well-being, including their spiritual needs, are effectively met. This study emphasizes the need for targeted training and support for nurses to better integrate spiritual care into their daily practice, ultimately leading to more comprehensive and satisfactory patient care.

This theory is further supported by research conducted by O'Brien (2022), which found a significant relationship between the application of spiritual aspects by nurses and the fulfillment of hospitalized patients' spiritual needs. Their findings emphasize the critical importance of enhancing health services, particularly in addressing the spiritual dimension of patient care. The study concludes that the more effectively nurses implement spiritual care practices, the more likely patients' spiritual needs will be met. Conversely, inadequate implementation of these practices can result in unmet spiritual needs. This underscores the necessity for healthcare institutions to focus on improving the spiritual

competencies of nurses, ensuring a holistic approach to patient care that fully addresses the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of patients.

The research underscores the significance of spirituality as a crucial component in healing and managing illnesses. It highlights the potential of integrating spiritual care into healthcare practices to enhance patient outcomes. Moving forward, it is imperative for hospitals and nurses to collaborate effectively in refining and implementing spiritual care practices. This partnership aims to foster a holistic approach to healthcare that addresses not only the physical symptoms but also the spiritual and emotional well-being of patients (Sajadi et al., 2018). By prioritizing the integration of spiritual aspects into patient care protocols, healthcare providers can contribute to improving overall patient satisfaction and health outcomes. This concerted effort ensures that patients receive comprehensive care that supports their overall well-being, fostering a healing environment conducive to recovery and overall health improvement (Willemse et al., 2020). The integration of spirituality within health services is recognized as a fundamental necessity for every individual, particularly during times of illness. Illness often strengthens a person's relationship with their faith, as they navigate feelings of vulnerability and dependency. In such moments, individuals often turn to their spirituality for solace and strength, believing that only their Creator can provide healing and comfort. Nurses play a pivotal role in addressing these spiritual needs, acting as

compassionate caregivers who not only attend to physical ailments but also support patients' spiritual journeys. By recognizing and responding to the spiritual dimensions of patient care, nurses contribute significantly to holistic healing and the overall well-being of their patients. This holistic approach ensures that patients receive comprehensive care that nurtures their spiritual, emotional, and physical health, fostering an environment conducive to recovery and resilience.

CONCLUSION

There exists a significant relationship between nurses' spiritual practices and their ability to meet the spiritual needs of inpatients at Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital in Palembang, observed from October 2023 to December 2023. Statistical analysis reveals a chi-square (χ^2) value of 7.266 with a p-value of 0.011, indicating a robust association between these variables. This suggests that effective implementation of spiritual aspects by nurses correlates positively with the fulfillment of patients' spiritual needs. Consequently, it is crucial to prioritize and implement targeted strategies to enhance nurses' spiritual competencies. By doing so, hospitals can ensure a more comprehensive and holistic approach to healthcare delivery, particularly for inpatients at Siti Khadijah Islamic Hospital in Palembang. This focused effort aims to improve patient outcomes and satisfaction, emphasizing the integral role of spirituality in promoting overall health and well-being within healthcare settings.

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