

The Impact of a Spiritual Approach in Nursing on Patient Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

Nursing care should integrate physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions to enhance patient well-being. Spirituality has been shown to positively influence healing, reduce anxiety, and provide meaning during illness. In Islamic-based hospital environments, such as RS PKU Muhammadiyah Gombong, implementing the Muhammadiyah-Aisyiyah Standards of Hospital Services is vital but faces challenges such as limited understanding among nurses and lack of standardization. This study aims to explore the impact of spiritual approaches in nursing care on patients' emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. This descriptive observational study involved 78 respondents, comprising nurses and patients selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected via observations, in-depth interviews, and validated questionnaires, focusing on ten components of spiritual care. Descriptive statistical methods were used to analyze the implementation patterns and their impact on patient well-being. Findings revealed that nurses predominantly implemented spiritual care components effectively, with high adherence in practices such as initiating interactions with Islamic greetings (92%), providing spiritual support (89%), and creating environments conducive to worship (90%). However, aspects such as assessing patients' spiritual needs (75%) and educating them on worship during illness (77%) were less frequently addressed, often delegated to the hospital's spiritual care department. Patients reported enhanced emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being due to these practices. The integration of spiritual approaches in nursing care significantly supports patient well-being, strengthening the nurse-patient relationship and fostering holistic recovery. However, greater focus is needed on directly addressing patients' spiritual needs and providing education on the importance of worship during illness. Continuous training and development of standardized guidelines are essential to optimize the implementation of spiritual care in nursing practice.

KEYWORDS: Spiritual nursing, patient well-being, holistic care, Islamic healthcare, spiritual approach

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INTRODUCTION

Nursing care not only focuses on the physical and psychological aspects of the patient but also includes the spiritual aspect, which plays an important role in enhancing the patient's well-being (1). Spirituality has been proven to have a positive impact on the healing process, reduce

anxiety, enhance mental resilience, and provide meaning in facing illness (2). In Islamic-based hospital environments, such as Muhammadiyah-Aisyiyah Hospital, the spiritual approach becomes an integral part of healthcare services through the implementation of the Islamic Standards of Muhammadiyah-Aisyiyah Hospital. However, despite its

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importance, the implementation of spiritual aspects in nursing care still faces various challenges, such as limited understanding among nurses, lack of standardization, and obstacles in integrating with conventional medical care (3,4).

To optimize the implementation of a spiritual approach in nursing care, efforts must be made to enhance the understanding and adherence of healthcare workers to spiritual-based nursing standards. Training and education on the importance of spiritual aspects in patient care can enhance nurses' competence in providing holistic services (5). Furthermore, the development of standard guidelines and regular evaluations regarding the implementation of spiritual standards can help improve service quality and support the comprehensive recovery of patients (4).

This research aims to explore the impact of a spiritual approach in nursing care on the well-being of patients at RS PKU Muhammadiyah Gombong. Specifically, this research will identify how the application of spiritual aspects according to SIRSMA standards affects the emotional, mental, and spiritual conditions of patients during their treatment. Thus, this research is expected to provide insights into the effectiveness of the spiritual approach in nursing and serve as a basis for the development of policies and strategies to enhance the quality of spiritually-based services.

METHOD

Research design

This study uses a descriptive observational research design to illustrate the implementation of a spiritual approach in nursing care and its impact on patient well-being.

Research subject

The population in this study consists of nurses working at RS PKU Muhammadiyah Gombong and patients receiving spiritually-based nursing care. The research sample was selected using purposive sampling techniques with the following inclusion criteria: (1) nurses who have worked for at least one year in the hospital, (2) patients who have received nursing care for at least three days, and (3) patients who are willing to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria include patients in critical condition who are not able to be interviewed.

Data collection

Data were collected through field observations, in-depth interviews with nurses and patients, as well as questionnaires regarding the understanding and application of spiritual aspects in nursing. The questionnaire used has been tested for validity and reliability, with results showing that this instrument is valid and reliable. The observation process was conducted over 1 month, consisting of 4 observations carried out weekly. The questionnaire consists

of 10 questions with answer choices "done" and "not done," covering the following aspects:

Table 1. List of Questions on the observation sheet

| No | Question | Done | Not done |
|-----|---|------|----------|
| 1. | Opening interactions with an Islamic greeting | | |
| 2. | Providing spiritual support to patients | | |
| 3. | Inviting the patient to pray before the nursing procedure | | |
| 4. | Providing time for patients to perform religious practices | | |
| 5. | Asking about the patient's spiritual needs | | |
| 6. | Arranging an environment that supports patient worship | | |
| 7. | Educating patients about the importance of worship during illness | | |
| 8. | Respecting patients' privacy during worship | | |
| 9. | Using calming words that are in accordance with Islamic teachings | | |
| 10. | Involving the family in providing spiritual support | | |

The validity test was conducted using Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis with a significance level of 0.05. Validity and reliability were conducted on 20 respondents among the nurses in the ward. The results show that all items in the questionnaire have correlation values above 0.30 ($r > 0.30$), thus they are considered valid. The reliability test was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha method, resulting in a value of 0.85, indicating a high level of reliability.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods with percentages and frequency distributions to illustrate the patterns of applying the spiritual approach and its impact on patient well-being.

Ethical consideration

This research pays attention to ethical aspects by obtaining permission from the hospital and informed consent from all respondents. The data collected is kept confidential and used only for research purposes. This research has received permission and passed ethical review with No. 358.6/II.3.AU/F/KEPK/XI/2024 from the health ethics committee of Universitas Muhammadiyah Gombong.

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RESULTS

The research results obtained 78 respondents consisting of several treatment rooms. The distribution of the data can be seen in more detail in the table below.

Table 2. Characteristic respondents

| No | Characteristic | n | % |
|----|-----------------|----|------|
| 1. | Age | | |
| | 20 – 30 years | 35 | 44.9 |
| | 31 - 40 years | 28 | 35.9 |
| | ≥ 40 years | 15 | 19.2 |
| 2. | Gender | | |
| | Male | 30 | 38.5 |
| | Female | 48 | 61.5 |
| 3. | Education | | |
| | Nursing diploma | 36 | 46.2 |
| | Ners | 42 | 53.8 |
| 4. | Employee Status | | |
| | Stay | 50 | 64.1 |
| | Internship | 28 | 35.9 |
| 5. | Work Experience | | |
| | < 1 year | 10 | 12.8 |
| | 1 – 5 years | 40 | 51.3 |
| | ≥ 5 years | 28 | 35.9 |

Data shows the dominance of nurses in the productive age group, namely 31-40 years, and in line with the caring nature of a nurse, it is more often demonstrated by women. The education is already adequate at the nursing level, and they are permanent employees with 1-5 years of work experience in the same department, shown in Table 2.

Table 3. Recapitulation of the components of implementing the spiritual aspect in nursing care

| No | Question | % |
|-----|---|----|
| 1. | Opening interactions with an Islamic greeting | 92 |
| 2. | Providing spiritual support to patients | 89 |
| 3. | Inviting the patient to pray before the nursing procedure | 87 |
| 4. | Providing time for patients to perform religious practices | 85 |
| 5. | Asking about the patient's spiritual needs | 75 |
| 6. | Arranging an environment that supports patient worship | 90 |
| 7. | Educating patients about the importance of worship during illness | 77 |
| 8. | Respecting patients' privacy during worship | 91 |
| 9. | Using calming words that are in accordance with Islamic teachings | 93 |
| 10. | Involving the family in providing spiritual support | 88 |

Almost all nurses perform well on all these components, but what needs to be highlighted are number 5, Asking about the patient's spiritual needs, and number 7, Educating the patient about the importance of worship during illness. those components are often handled by the spiritual care department in the hospital, so they are frequently overlooked, as shown in table 3.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of spiritual aspects in nursing care is very important to support the overall well-being of patients. This spiritual aspect includes various actions oriented towards fulfilling the spiritual needs of patients, which not only involve physical and medical aspects but also take into account the emotional and psychological conditions of the patients (6,7).

Opening interactions with an Islamic greeting, such as "Assalamu'alaikum," can create a warm and respectful atmosphere (7,8). This greeting is part of Islamic tradition that reflects respect for others. In the context of care, greeting patients with Islamic salutations adds a humanistic touch that can reduce patient anxiety. According to research by Rabiti *et al* (2020), Islamic greetings have a positive impact on nurse-patient relationships, as well as increasing patients' comfort and sense of being valued (9).

Spiritual reinforcement can be achieved by providing emotional support and encouragement related to the patient's religious beliefs. This has proven to be important in increasing a sense of calm and reducing the patient's feelings of depression. Kwan *et al* (2019) emphasizes that the spiritual support provided to patients is closely related to the improvement in their quality of life and recovery (10).

Inviting patients to pray before medical or nursing procedures is a way to provide tranquility and instill spiritual confidence that the actions to be taken are protected by Kelly *et al* (2020) found that praying together before medical procedures can reduce anxiety and increase patients' sense of hope (11).

Providing time for patients to worship during treatment is an important aspect of maintaining their spiritual well-being. Lee (2020) states that the provision of valued time for worship can strengthen the patient's peace of mind and enhance their sense of spiritual awareness during the course of treatment (12).

Asking about patients' spiritual needs is one of the appropriate ways to understand their desires and needs related to spirituality. Although often carried out by the hospital's spiritual care department, Ghobani *et al.* (2020) suggest that nurses should also be directly involved in mapping patients' spiritual needs to provide holistic care (13).

An environment that supports patient worship is important to create a conducive atmosphere for patients to worship. According to Tavares *et al.* (2022), facilities that support patient worship, such as providing prayer spaces or

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quiet rooms, help patients feel valued and enhance their spiritual well-being (14).

Education about the importance of worship during illness can provide patients with an understanding that worship is not only related to religious obligations but also serves as a means of psychological reinforcement. Ribeiro *et al.* (2020) state that spiritual understanding can improve patients' quality of life and accelerate the physical recovery process (15).

Privacy during worship is very important to maintain respect for the patient's freedom of religion. Chirico *et al.* (2023) state that providing space for patients to worship according to their beliefs enhances their sense of autonomy and dignity, which contributes to a better quality of life (16).

The use of calming words that align with Islamic teachings can create a more comfortable atmosphere for patients. Miller *et al.* (2023) emphasizes that soothing language in accordance with religious teachings can reduce patient anxiety and strengthen the emotional support they receive (17).

Family is an integral part of the patient's spiritual support. Involving the family in providing spiritual support strengthens the patient's healing process, as they become a source of emotional and spiritual strength. Irawati *et al.* (2023) state that family support is very important in enhancing the spiritual resilience of patients, especially in the context of serious illnesses (18).

CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of spiritual aspects in nursing care plays an important role in supporting the overall well-being of patients, especially in the context of physical and mental recovery. The ten components outlined, such as starting interactions with an Islamic greeting, providing spiritual reinforcement, inviting patients to pray, allocating time for worship, and involving families in spiritual support, demonstrate that nurses have the responsibility to meet patients' spiritual needs as an integral part of holistic care.

Although almost all nurses have implemented this spiritual aspect well, two components that require more attention are asking about the patient's spiritual needs and educating the patient about the importance of worship during illness, as both often become the responsibility of the spiritual care department in the hospital. Therefore, it is important for nurses to be more involved in these two components to ensure that the spiritual needs of patients are met as fully as possible during their care.

Through an approach that prioritizes spiritual values, nurses not only provide physical care but also help patients maintain the spiritual balance essential for their recovery and quality of life. The implementation of these spiritual aspects also has a positive impact on the nurse-patient relationship and strengthens the sense of safety, comfort, and appreciation felt by the patient.

Thus, training and a deeper understanding of the importance of spiritual aspects in nursing care need to be continuously improved, so that nurses can provide more holistic care in accordance with the religious and cultural values of the patients.

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