

Exploring Relationship Between Communication Skills and Conflict Management Styles used by Nursing Staff

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ABSTRACT

Background: Conflict management is an essential skill that nursing staff need to acquire and practice, since conflict is inevitable, whether in learning environments or clinical settings that dealing with conflict and to prevent the mistakes, barrier of communication and nursing care. another important aspect to dealing with conflict is communication skills are the important feature for nursing staff to enhance communication between nursing staff, to reduce barrier of communication and conflict.

Methodology: The descriptive study was used to perform this design of study. Data were collected for the period from 6 of November, 2022 until the 26 of February, 2023 the study was carried out through the two teaching hospitals in Babylon city Marjan teaching hospital and Imam al-sadiq teaching hospital to assess the relationship between communication skills and conflict management styles used by nursing staff. probability sampling (systemic Random sample). A sample of study 300 nurses was chosen to obtain the data.

Results: The study results reveal that the collaborating style has the high mean (28.99) will the accommodating style mean is (22.39) when the mean of competing style is (18.63) the compromising style has the lower mean (16.37). also study results display that most of participants have satisfactory interpersonal communication skills (n = 236; 78.7%), followed by those who have good interpersonal communication skills (n = 22; 7.3%), and those who have poor skills (n = 42; 14%).

Conclusion: The current study most of participants are use the collaborating style and the lower use is compromising style. This style is used to solve the problem and that investing to collaborating of nursing staff, most of participants have satisfactory interpersonal communication skills. And there is significant relationship between communication skills section and type of conflict management style (collaborating, Accommodating, Competing, Avoiding, Compromising).

Key words: Conflict Management Styles, Communication skills and nursing staff.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational conflict is a common occurrence brought on by interactions between individuals. Depending on their personality traits, organizational contexts, and the specifics of the dispute, managers can manage it. Successful management intervention is expected to improve the positive rather than the bad effects of disputes in an organization, even when conflicts may not be completely eliminated. Conflict, for instance, might result in the idea interchange, modernization, and adaptability required for organizational success¹.

In the study of management and organizational behavior, conflict has been highlighted as a key component. Conflict is a possibility for all types of organizations, without exception. Conflict is defined as difference, which may be brought on by things like interests, values, comprehension, styles, or opinions².

There are many facets to conflict. It may exist at different levels, such as the intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup levels. Although being the largest group of healthcare workers in any facility, staff nurses occasionally have disagreements³.

Conflict management is a process that involves acknowledging the conflict, determining its severity, assessing the effects of this intensity,

choosing the best intervention strategies, and monitoring the outcomes. The following are the five most popular methods for handling conflicts: avoiding, accommodating, competing, compromising, and collaborating. These five tactics are distinguished by where they fall on the two dimensions of self- and other care. Thus, the five types each represent a unique blend of aggressiveness and cooperation⁴.

Based on the degree of assertiveness and cooperativeness, Thomas and Kilmann (1978) distinguished between five conflict management strategies. Their styles include competing, accommodating, compromising, collaborating, and avoiding⁵.

Nurses communicate nursing care to patients both verbally (via thorough speaking) and nonverbally (by acting, showing, touching, doing, etc.). Communication has been defined by many as the interchange of information, feelings, and thoughts between individuals. The communication may be oral or written, vocal or nonverbal, specialized or generic, relationship-focused or even impersonal. The "how, what, why, and where" of the communication method we choose as people, organizations, civilizations, religions, and nations can either degrade or elevate us⁶.

One of the most important abilities for healthcare professionals is communication skills, according to the worker. Information sharing,

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question-asking, involvement, rapport-building, and cooperation are all essential communication skills for nurses. However, there is limited interaction between nurses and patients, and nurses spend little time conversing with patients⁷.

Health practitioners' ability to communicate effectively is essential for providing quality care, which helps reduce symptoms of anxiety, guilt, discomfort, and sickness. Additionally, they can enhance the patient's physiological and functional state as well as their level of acceptance, compliance, and collaboration with the medical team⁸.

Based on their leadership and conflict-resolution abilities, nurse managers have a significant impact on the nursing staff, other members of the healthcare team, and patient care. The ability to learn conflict communication competencies is one that can be applied to any role. An effective leadership intervention is coaching. Executive leaders play a crucial role in shaping corporate culture, operations, and defining the parameters and tone for conflict management, as well as how it is viewed and handled⁹.

Effective conflict management depends on good communication, and ineffective conflict resolution, especially when it leads to disruptive activities, causes stress and low job satisfaction¹⁰.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive study carried out through the two teaching hospitals in Babylon city marjan teaching hospital and Imam al-sadiq teaching hospital to assess relationship between communication skills conflict management styles used by nursing staff of the sample study (300) sample of nursing staff.

The questionnaire of the Study is one of the means to help collect data that contribute to achieving the results expected by the study.

The questionnaire divided into three parts:

Part 1 : Demographic Sociodemographic characteristics of the nurse participated in the study and which include age, education level, gender, years of experience, and working shift. Part 2: this part is consisted of 40 items using to assess the communication skills used by nursing staff (Rafiu and Olanrewaju, 2012 ;Uzun and Ayik , 2017)¹¹. Part 3: this part is consisted of 28 items using to assess the conflict management styles used by nursing staff(Rahim organizational conflict inventory)¹².

The data of the present study following statistical data analysis approaches were used in order to analyze and assess the results of the study under application of the statistical package of Social Sciences (SPSS) Version (24). Descriptive data is reported as mean standard deviation, and for categorical variables, it is shown as number (percent).Inferential approach Statistical analyses were performed by using SPSS ,one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were also used. , and The level of significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Content Validity: To make the instruments more valid, it was presented to a panel of (12) experts in the different fields (4) Faculty members from the College of Nurse, University of Karbala , (3) Faculty members from the College of medicine , University of Karbala , (3) Faculty members from the College of Nurse, University of Babylon , (1) Faculty members from the College of Nurse, University of Warith AL-Anbia , (1) Faculty members from the College of Nurse, University of AL-Ameed .The results of the review of the questionnaire by the experts revealed that all of the experts agreed for questionnaire's items, since were clear and adequate for the measurement of the study.

Reliability: Reliability of the questionnaire was used to identify the accuracy of the questionnaire, since the results showed very high level of stability and internal consistency of principle parts concerning item's responses' of the questionnaire, all those were calculated by using the major statistical parameter: Alpha Cronbach, the acceptable of Reliability coefficients of the studied questionnaire concerning internal consistency (Alpha Cronbach). The reliability statistics display the communication skills scale enjoys a good internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.750), while the conflict resolution method scale enjoys a very good internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.832).

Ethical Consideration The ethics committee of the research in the got approval for the study in the Collage of Nursing/University of Karbala regarding confidentiality and anonymity of participants.). Also, After completely explaining the current study's objectives to the participants, their voluntary agreement was requested in order for them to take part in it. Additionally, consideration has been given to the confidentiality of the information acquired from the nursing personnel.

RESULTS

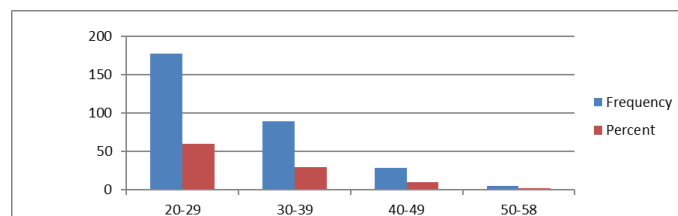


Figure 1: Age (years)

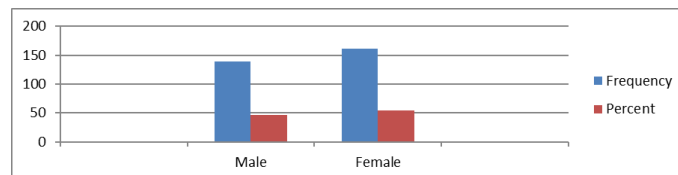


Figure 2: Gender

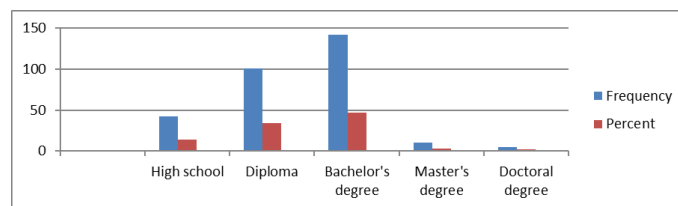


Figure 3: Educational Qualification

The study results reveal that the age mean is 29.64 ± 6.86 ; slightly more than half of participant at age group 20-29-years ($n = 178$; 59.3%), followed by those who at age group 30-39-years ($n = 89$; 29.7%), those who age 40-49-years ($n = 28$; 9.3%), and those who age 50-58-years ($n = 5$; 1.7%) (Figure 1&2).

Concerning the gender, more than half at study sample are females ($n = 161$; 53.7%) while the males ($n = 139$; 46.3%) (Figure 3). Regarding the educational qualification, less than half hold bachelor's degree ($n = 142$; 47.3%), followed by those who hold diploma degree ($n = 101$; 33.7%), those who are nursing high school graduates ($n = 42$; 14.0%), those who hold master's degree ($n = 10$; 3.3%), and those who hold a doctoral degree ($n = 5$; 1.7%).

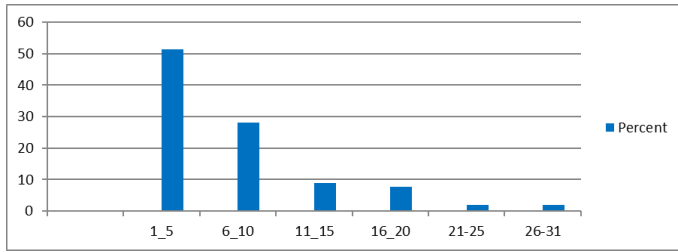


Figure 4: Years of Experience

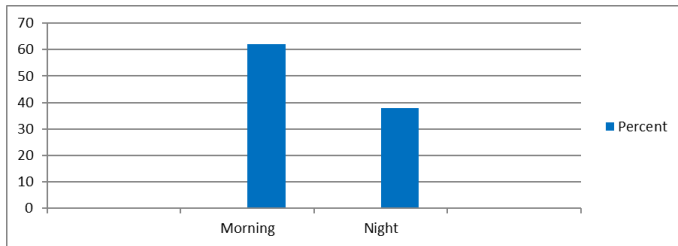


Figure 5: Work Shift

The study results reveal that the mean of years of experience is 7.14 ± 6.44 ; more than half have 1-5-years ($n = 154$; 51.3%), followed by those who have 6-10-years ($n = 84$; 28.0%), those who have 11-15-years ($n = 27$; 9.0%), those who have 16-20-years ($n = 23$; 7.7%), and those who have each of 21-25-years and 26-31-years ($n = 6$; 2.0%) for each of them (Figure 4).

With respect to the work shift, most reported that they have been working in morning shift ($n = 186$; 62.0%) compared to those who have been working in night shift ($n = 114$; 38.0%) (Figure 5).

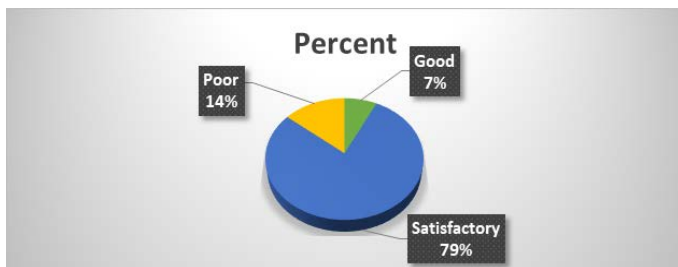


Figure 6: Total level of communication skills for nursing staff

Good=100-120; Satisfactory= 80-99; Poor= 40-79

The study results display that most of participants have satisfactory interpersonal communication skills ($n = 236$; 78.7%) (Figure 6),

followed by those who have good interpersonal communication skills ($n = 22$; 7.3%), and those who have poor skills ($n = 42$; 14%).

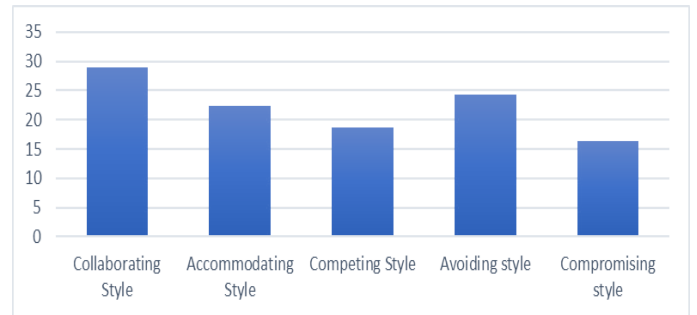


Figure 7: The five castigates of conflict management style used by nursing staff

The study results display that the collaborating style has the high mean (28.99) and standard deviation (4.01) will the accommodating style mean is (22.39) (Figure 7) and the standard deviation is (3.95) when the mean of competing Style is (18.63) and the standard deviation is (3.54) and the mean of the avoiding style is (24.29) and the standard deviation is (3.54) the compromising style has the lower mean (16.37) and standard deviation (2.64) .

The study results reveal that there is statistically highly significant difference in the Sending Clear Messages and Collaborating style. ($.007, p < 0.01$), also the Sending Clear Messages has highly statistically significant between Accommodating style ($000, p < 0.01$).

Regarding of Listening that there is statistically significant difference of Accommodating style ($.018, p < 0.5$), also has statistically significant difference between Listening and Competing ($.035, p < 0.5$) (Table 1).

Concerning Giving and Getting Feedback that there is statistically highly significant difference of Accommodating style ($.003, p < 0.01$), also has statistically significant difference between Giving and Getting Feedback and Competing style ($.030, p < 0.5$).

The study result show in this table that there is statistically highly significant difference between Handling Emotional Interactions and Collaborating style ($.005, p < 0.01$), also show that there is statistically highly significant difference between Handling Emotional Interactions and Accommodating ($.001, p < 0.01$) and the study result display that there is statistically significant difference between Handling Emotional Interactions and Avoiding style ($.034, p < 0.5$).

Table 1: Correlation Between Communication Skills sections and type of Conflict Management Styles of Nursing Staff

Variables		Collaborating	Accommodating	Competing	Avoiding	Compromising
Sending Clear Messages	Pearson Correlation	.154**	.210**	.079	.092	.109
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.000	.173	.111	.058
Listening	Pearson Correlation	-.019	.136*	.122*	-.005	-.053
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.749	.018	.035	.931	.364
Giving and Getting Feedback	Pearson Correlation	.093	.169**	.126*	.026	.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.108	.003	.030	.650	.709
Handling Emotional Interactions	Pearson Correlation	.163**	.189**	.051	.123*	.100
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.001	.377	.034	.084

**= High significant (P < .01); * = Significant (P < .0.5)

Table 2: Relationships between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their age group

	df	Sig.
Collaborating	30	.691
	269	
	299	
Accommodating	30	.961
	269	
	299	
Competing	30	.489
	269	
	299	
Avoiding	30	.540
	269	
	299	
Compromising	30	.572
	269	
	299	

The study results display that there is no statistically significant difference between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their age group (Table 2).

Table 3: Relationships between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their gender

	df	Sig.
Collaborating	1	.975
	298	
	299	
Accommodating	1	.385
	298	
	299	
Competing	1	.781
	298	
	299	
Avoiding	1	.926
	298	
	299	
Compromising	1	.797
	298	
	299	

The study results reveal that there is no statistically significant difference between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their gender (Table 3).

Table 4: Relationships between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their educational qualification

	df	Sig.
Collaborating	4	.136
	295	
	299	
Accommodating	4	.553
	295	
	299	
Competing	4	.993
	295	
	299	
Avoiding	4	.164
	295	
	299	
Compromising	4	.492
	295	
	299	

The study results reveal that there is no statistically significant difference between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their educational qualification (Table 4).

Table 5: Relationships between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their Years of experience

	df	Sig.
Collaborating	27	.009
	272	
	299	
Accommodating	27	.086
	272	
	299	
Competing	27	.875
	272	
	299	
Avoiding	27	.426
	272	
	299	
Compromising	27	.319
	272	
	299	

The study results display that there is statistically highly significant difference between Collaborating style and Years of experience Within Group of participants (.009, $p < 0.01$) (Table 5).

Table 6: Relationships between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their work shift

	df	Sig.
Collaborating	1	.830
	298	
	299	
Accommodating	1	.049
	298	
	299	
Competing	1	.989
	298	
	299	
Avoiding	1	.289
	298	
	299	
Compromising	1	.873
	298	
	299	

The study results display that there is statistically significant difference between Accommodating style for nursing staff and Work Shift Within Group of participants (.049, $p < 0.5$) (Table 6).

DISCUSSION OF STUDY

The result of this study repeatedly shown that The present study shown that the participant of nurses were slightly more than half of participant at aged group 20–29 years old(59.3%) of the total number of participant .This result matches the result of the study conducted by (Masarrah Aqeel Hadi ,2022). Who found in their study that the majority of the study subject's age younger than (20_29) years (64.4%) of all participants¹³.

Regarding the gender, female nurses predominated and accounted for more than half of all nurses, as opposed to male nurses, who account for(53.7%) of the total number of participants and have the Bachelor's

degree(47.3%) of all study sample. These results agree with(Eman S. Mostafa et al.,2020) show in the study result (75%) of nurses are female, (30%) have bachelor degree which found that the majority of their study sample are females and Bachelor's degree¹⁴.

According to the data collected from nursing staff,(1_5)years of experience (51.3%) of all participants for nursing staff. This finding matches with the study of (Sara A. Mostafa et al.,2019) nursing staff had <5 years of experiences with 67.4% of this study who mentioned that the majority of their study samples have less than 5 years of experience¹⁵.

According to the study findings which show that the collaborating style has the high mean (28.99)and standard deviation (4.01) , will the compromising style have the lower mean (16.37) and standard deviation (2.64) show in table (5-4) also show the least utilized for conflict management styles are competing (mean=18.63, std=3.79), avoiding (mean=24.29, std=3.54) and compromising style (mean=16.37, std=2.64). The study that compatible of recent study result show according (Zaid Al Hamdan et al.,2014) The nurses were most likely to use an integrating style or collaborating style of conflict management¹⁶.

According to the study findings which show that the majority of nurses have satisfactory interpersonal communication skills (frequency=236,78.7%) show in table (4-4), that show more of participant of nursing staff have the bachelor's degree of educational level and more of half percentage of participant have communication training courses that influence of level of communication skills that raising the level of communication skills.

According to (Eman S. Mostafa et al.,2020) finding in this study is not compatible result, The study results of levels of communication skills among studied sample show that the majority of the studied sample had unsatisfactory communication skills(67.5%)¹⁴.

The present study shown that the participant of nurses statistically highly significant difference in communication skills and conflict management styles utilized by nursing staff to solve the problem and prevent barrier of communication and to reduce conflict between nurses , more of their participant use collaborating style (0.007,p=<0.01) and use collaborating style with sending clear message of level of communication skills .

According to (Zhanna Zhalimbetova, 2019) finding the Poor communication skills, misunderstandings, and job mistakes are other factors that lead to conflicts in the workplace. The key component of good interpersonal communication is well-developed communication skills¹⁸.

The study results display that there is no statistically significant difference between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their age group also finding in the result that there is no statistically significant difference between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their gender. According to(Zaid Al Hamdan et al.,2014) no statistically significant relationship was found between age and conflict management style that agree with this study result, also finding in this study that there statistically significant difference between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their gender this finding is non-compatible with recent study result¹⁶⁻¹⁹.

The study results reveal that there is no statistically significant difference between conflicts management styles for nursing staff and their educational qualification, but the study result of experience of years display that there is statistically highly significant difference between Collaborating style and Years of experience Within Group of participants (.009,p=<0.01).

According to (Dolores J. Palacio, 2022)there was no significant relationship between the profile of the staff nurses educational qualification attainment and experience of years of staff nurse and conflict management styles²⁰.

In addition, The study results display that more than half of participants are morning shift (62.0 %). (Roohangiz Norouzinia et al.,2015) study finding highly of participants are morning shift that compatible of the study result⁸.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE STUDY

The results of the current study showed that Most of the study sample were between aged (20-29) with bachelor's degree female who have (1-5) experience of years. Most of participants use the collaborating style and the lower use is compromising style and the study revealed that there is significant association between conflict management style and, years of experience, work shift. Most of the participants have satisfactory interpersonal communication skills. The study revealed that there is significant relationship between communication skills section and type of conflict management style (collaborating , Accommodating, Competing, Avoiding, Compromising) and the study revealed that there is significant relationship between conflict management style and monthly income, years of experience, and work shift. and More years of experience and training of nurses by carrying out periodic educational sessions that really help in developing their communication skills. The study recommended: Continuous educational sessions and programs should be applied to enhance nurses communication skills and who to deal with conflict between nursing staff, Make educational program for conflict management style to nursing staff to deal with conflict and to solving the problem, and reassessment and follow-up for nurses are required following an education session to monitor, evaluate, and promote their skills by contribute the questioner check list to assess their knowledge in order to ensure their application in the work.

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Competing Interest: None

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