

Assessment of Public Relations as management tool in nurse-patient relationship on quality of care and decision-making in public hospitals in Benue State

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Abstract

The study particularly, aimed to ascertain the uses of public relations as management tool in nurse-patient relationship on quality of care and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State. The study was anchored on Interpersonal Relations Theory. The research technique employed was the survey method. The population for this study comprised all patients in Benue State representing three senatorial districts, namely: Benue North East, Benue North West, Benue South as well as all the nurses working in public hospitals in Benue State. Benue State is estimated approximately, 6,141,300 (National Population Commission, 2022). The multi-stage sampling techniques was employed to select a sample size of 400, while the instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. Data was collected and analyzed by frequency distribution tables and expressed in simple percentages. Findings showed that, there are uses of public relations as management tool in nurse-patient relationship in public hospitals. The uses are: Building trust, confidence and transparency, promoting patient-centered care, crisis communication, patient advocacy and education delivery, community engagement or relations, feedback and continuous improvement and promoting a positive image. The findings also showed the kind of relationship that existed between nurses and patients during their interaction in the healthcare facility as combination of social relationship and therapeutic relationship. The study therefore recommends that, Nurses should be good public relations' practitioners in order to forestall conflicts and maintain cordial relationships amongst patients. They should increasingly be exposed to the study of public relations as it relates to their profession.

Key words: Public Relations, Nurse-Patient Relationship, Quality of Care

Authors' Contributions

Orya, Theophilus Tertsea: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing-Original Draft.

Prof. Wogu, Joseph Oluchukwu: Review and Editing.

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Introduction

Public relations today are in almost all areas of life. One such area is the area of health. Health is today without a doubt one of the most important areas of social activity. As such, it is exposed to the numerous critics. The image of doctors, nurses and health institutions in the public are not even close to what health professionals represent. Hospitals and specifically caregivers, including nurses in many developing nations have been criticized for lacking human touch in their approach and management of patients. As a matter of fact, cases of neglect and abusive language abound in many health institutions.

All of these demands the role played by public relations practice. Nurses must therefore be good public relations ambassadors in order to foretell conflicts and putting in place precautionary measures in maintaining cordial relationships amongst their various patients. Nurse Managers should see public relations as a planned activity and as a management function. This is particularly important when viewed from the fact that the major problems of nursing stem from the way nurses are perceived by others within and outside the healthcare delivery system. Various health institutions are shaken by the affairs associated with corruption and bribery. Nurses who are very close to the admitted patients in the hospitals are linked to the stereotype that they are people who have extremely low ability for good and effective communication with its public (Harvey and Onine, 2024).

The above negative trend has underscored the need for public relations (PR) in health practice among Nigerian health professionals. Such PR brings about constant creation, shaping and sustenance of positive image of their professions and their organizations in the eyes of their patients and the general public (Chijioke, Ijeoma and Nwaneri et al, 2019). The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) defines public relations as the strategic communication process which erects mutually satisfying relationships between organizations and their publics (PRSA, 2020). In both for public and private sectors, PR professionals use various communication strategies to achieve organizational goals, manage debilitating image, crises, and enhance stakeholders' engagement.

Nurse-patient relationship is an interaction between a nurse and patient aimed at enhancing the well-being of the patient who may be individual, a family, a group or a community (Perez-Toribio, Moreno-Poyato and Roldan-Merino, 2024). According to Zahra, Nazila and Masoumeh (2024), the nurse-patient relationship is very paramount in that, when patients seek health care services or are hospitalized, many are not familiar with the process or what to expect. They may be worried about what is to come and may not understand the medical jargon being spoken. For some, engaging them-using medical lingo is like listening to a foreign language. Imagine being in a foreign country with people speaking to you and you have no or little idea what is being said. One can feel helpless and out of control, which may lead to anger or resistance to learning. If a healthy nurse-patient relationship is established from the get-go, the nurse can help the patient feel more at ease in their situation and encourage questions and participate in their care.

Public Relations (PR) is about creating mutual understanding and a good image between an organization and its internal and external publics. Chijioke, Ijeoma, and Nwaneri (2019) described PR as an essential management tool in healthcare, emphasizing its role in consciously engaging with people to make services or individuals appealing. In healthcare, effective PR relies on the relationship between nurses and patients.

When health professionals' behaviors foster a positive rapport with patients, it enhances their public image and improves the overall healthcare experience. This positive perception leads to greater respect for healthcare professionals, influencing their working conditions, remuneration, and policy support. The study aims to explore how PR impacts the nurse-patient relationship, quality of care, and decision-making in public hospitals. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the role of public relations as a management tool for achieving nurse-patient relationship on quality of care and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State.

According to literature of nursing care, nurses are obliged to treat patients with maximum respects and empathy. Attending behaviour is a patient-centered process and the basic conditions required on the part of the nurse for attending to occur are genuineness, warmth and empathy (Shaban, Mohammed and Gomaa, 2021). It is the responsibility of the nurse to be aware of the power of imbalance, to recognize the potential for patients to feel intimidated and to create a therapeutic relationship. The awareness therefore, helps to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries.

However, articles, news, academics journals and experiences of some patients revealed that patients are not treated well in the nurse-patient relationship. Patients are often without defenses and might depend on nurses to meet basic needs. Patients might not have a network of supportive family and friends and may want to depend on the nurse beyond the practice setting. Some patients, such as those with mental health problems or those in need of ongoing care, could be particularly vulnerable.

Good public relations among nurses will assist in overcoming misconception and dealing with unfavorable publicity. This will help to improve upon the nurse-patients relationship in the hospital. It is therefore, pertinent to ask; what is the use of public relations in nurse-patient relationship on quality of care and decision making in public Hospitals in Benue State?

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the role of public relations as a management tool for achieving nurse-patient relationship on quality of care and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Ascertain the uses of public relations as management tool in nurse-patient relationship on quality of care and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State.
- ii. Determine the impacts of public relations on quality of care provided by nurses and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State.
- iii. Examine the relationship between good public relations practicing nurse and patients' satisfaction with the way they are attended to in public hospitals in Benue State.

Literature Review

Public Relations

Public Relations have been in existence since the creation of man. Our interactions in our homes, neighborhoods, and offices exhibit some elements of Public Relations. For as long as our activities involve communication and we seek to generate goodwill, we are engaged in the public relations process. We want to assume, and probably correctly too, that we already understand what public relations entails. But as a reminder, and for the purposes of this paper, we shall focus on what Rex Harlow, (1995) a veteran public

relations expert, has added to what has already been known of the field of public relations. The new dimension, which is being referred to here, is its length and technicality, which has linked public relations to management. The definition, which was arrived at after an examination of about 472 different definitions and after consultations with 83 experts in the profession, goes thus:

Public relations is a distinctive management function which helps to establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management to keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound ethical communication techniques as its principal tools.

Apart from identifying public relations with management, the definition unambiguously points out the numerous functions which public relations perform in an organization. Attesting to the managerial function of public relations in an organization, Osho (1999) and Nwosu (1996) in Chile and Chiakaan (2012, p. 12) acknowledge that public relations does not substitute any organizational management; it only contributes towards achieving efficient management where all parties to an organization's survival and longevity are harmonized.

In the context of hospitals, Public Relations is a life-sustaining management tool that fosters good communication, raises trust, and promotes mutual relationship between healthcare practitioners and patients. In hospitals, public relations strategies are engaged to produce a good image and reputation of the healthcare practitioners, while ensuring that patients' care is at the forefront.

Uses of Public Relations as Management Tool in Nurse-Patient Relationship in Public Hospitals

The fundamental uses of Public Relations in Nurse-Patient Relationship include:

Building Trust, Confidence and Transparency: Clear and precise communication about treatment plan, hospital policies, and patient equitable can reduce confusion or misunderstanding and anxiety. Nurses play a vital role in giving accurate and compassionate information which successively improves patient satisfaction.

Promoting Patient-Centered Care: PR strategies underline the importance of patient-centered care by emphasizing the hospital's commitment to understanding and responding to the sole needs of each patient. Nurses can act as an influential PR personality by advocating for patients and ensuring their voices are heard.

Crisis Communication: Crisis being part and parcel of nature is sometimes unavoidable; it can only be managed. Hospitals often face situations such as medical errors, emergencies, or outbreaks that frighten the public and puts hospital's credibility and decency under intense scrutiny. The major effect of this crisis can create the threat of death of patients or even healthcare professionals and loss hospital property. The healthcare PR officers being versed in crisis management plays an important role in managing good communication during the pre-crisis stage, crisis stage and post crisis stage.

Patient Advocacy and Education Delivery: Educating patients on their health challenges, treatments, and prevention and curing strategies through PR awareness creation can foster effective health results.

Community Engagement or Relations: the most important thing to consider whenever public relations practitioner is dealing with the community is effective communication. Effective PR tools extend beyond the hospital walls, involving the host community. Nurses, through PR initiatives, can partake in community health programmes, seminars, conference and outreach activities to raise awareness campaigns about health-related issues and hospital services.

Feedback and Continuous Improvement: this is response to the healthcare practitioner's messages, reactions, and proves of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of nurses' services or behaviours and decisions making on quality of healthcare as well as generally assessment of the hospital operations by patients, which makes communication an interactive affair.

Promoting a Positive Image: this is also known as image making function. When Nurses and other healthcare practitioners of hospital organizations perform all other functions that promote the overall good image of their hospital organizations, they are equally considered to be promoters and sustainers of the corporate image of their organizations. When patients experience positive interactions with nurses, they are more likely to share positive reviews, leading to a good reputation for the hospital.

Nurse-patient relationship

The nurse-patient relationship is one of the aspects that affect the patient's autonomy. The relationship that exists between nurses and patients is very important because it can either put a strain and stress on patients or ease their pain. In an International Journal of Nursing Science (2023), nurse-patient relationship was seen to exist to satisfy the patient need and not that of the nurse. It further asserted that nurses are always responsible to establish and maintain boundaries with patients, irrespective of how the patient behaves. Journal of Hospital Administration (2024) supported the above statement with a comment that therapeutic nursing services contribute to the patient's health and well-being. The journal further comments that nurses are obliged to establish and maintain effective relationship by using their nursing knowledge and skills while they apply caring attitudes and behaviours.

A good nurse-patient relationship reduces the days of hospital stay and improves the quality and satisfaction of both. In contrast, although the patient's participation in their decisions is greater, the good relationship is conditioned by the patient's submissive role. A poor or bad nurse-patient relationship decreases the quality of care and diminishes the patient's autonomy. A bad patient is considered who demands a lot of information, who wishes to make his/her own decisions, sometimes, contrary to those recommended by professionals, who does not maintain a good relationship with professionals (Griffith and Tengnah, 2013 in *Molina-Mula and Gallo-Estrada, 2020*).

Kind of Nurse-Patient Relationships

This study analyzes the type of nurse-patient relationship focuses on concepts of therapeutic.

Therapeutic relationship

The relationship between nurse and patient differs from both a social and an intimate relationship in that the nurse maximizes his or her communication skills, understanding of human behaviours and personal strengths to enhance the patients' growth. The focused of the relationship is on the patients' ideas, experiences, and feelings. In the nurse-patient relationship, the nurse should focus on significant personal issues that will be introduced by the patient in the helping process. In this relationship, nurse and patient identify areas that need exploration and often evaluate the degree of change in the patients. Although the nurse may assume a variety of roles (e.g teachers,

counselors, socializing agent, liaison), the relationship is consistently focused on the patient's problem and needs.

Quality Healthcare

Quality healthcare focuses on improving patient outcomes rather than simply increasing the number of patients seen. The shift to value-based care emphasizes the importance of providing safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable care. The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) outlines two key definitions of quality healthcare: one by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the other by the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality (AHRQ), both emphasizing safe, effective care and achieving the best possible outcomes. Additionally, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published six goals for quality healthcare, including reducing harm, strengthening patient engagement, improving communication and care coordination, preventing and treating chronic diseases, promoting healthy living, and making care affordable.

Impacts of Public Relations in Health Practice and Nurses Decision making in hospital

Nurses work at each level of the healthcare, have varied roles and are constantly in contact with people. Dealing with profession challenges and responsibilities requires nurses to have the good public relations knowledge and skills to participate in healthcare decisions. So, they need considerable and continuous PR skills to promote their participation in decision making to face the grand expectations of the professions and job performance. These expectations outlined focus on enhancing professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes, particularly in public relations (PR) within healthcare. Chijioke et al. (2019) emphasized that PR is effective when the message communicated reflects a positive, sustainable image of an organization.

In healthcare, this means projecting a positive image of health professionals and the healthcare industry through actions and interactions with the public. Key practices for public relations effectiveness include: assuring patients of high-quality services, handling complaints promptly, remaining calm under provocation, avoiding confrontations, maintaining strong interpersonal communication, providing timely care, consistently upholding a positive professional image, educating patients on ethical matters, and

demonstrating sincerity and integrity in all interactions. These practices contribute to building trust and a good public image for healthcare professionals.

Role of Nurses in Establishing and Maintaining Good Public Relations

Maintaining good public relations require nurses to adopt the following skills. These include:

Ethical practice: Professionalism in nursing involves respectful, competent interactions that build trust and confidence with patients and the public.

Empathy: helps nurses create compassionate, supportive environments.

Boundaries: ensures professional relationships focused on patient care.

Confidentiality: safeguards patient privacy, fostering trust.

Therapeutic behavior: such as clear communication and active listening, promotes positive outcomes. Lastly, **self-awareness** allows nurses to reflect on their actions, ensuring they provide optimal care while maintaining a positive public image.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Interpersonal Relations Theory

Interpersonal Relations Theory

Interpersonal Relations Theory was proposed by Hildegard Peplau between, (1952-1988). The theory emphasized the nurse-client relationship as the give-and take of nurse-client relationship that was seen by many of revolutionary. Peplau went on to form an interpersonal model emphasizing the need for a partnership between nurse and client as opposed to the client passively receiving treatment and the nurse passively acting out doctor's orders. The assumptions of Hildegard peplau's interpersonal relations theory are:

- i. Nurse and the patient can interact
- ii. Peplau's emphasized that both the patient and nurse mature as the result of the therapeutic interactions
- iii. Communication and interviewing skills remain fundamental nursing tools. And lastly,
- iv. The interpersonal relations theory believed that nurses must clearly understand themselves to promote their client's growth and to avoid limiting the client's choices to those that nurses value (Asemah et al, 2017).

Peplau's Interpersonal Relations Theory is highly relevant to this study as it emphasizes the nurse-client relationship, which is the core focus of this research paper. The theory highlights that both the nurse and the patient grow in knowledge and maturity throughout their relationship. Peplau believed that the quality of the relationship, shaped by the thoughts, feelings, and actions of both parties, plays a crucial role in improving the patient's health by addressing all their specific needs.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to assess the "Uses of Public Relations as a management tool in nurse-patient relationships on quality of care and decision-making in public hospitals in Benue State." This is because "Surveys are effective tools for measuring public opinions, attitudes, and orientations within a population, especially when the population is too large to observe comprehensively" (Babbie, 2001, p. 164). The population for the study included all patients in Benue State from three senatorial districts: Benue North East, Benue North West, and Benue South—and all nurses working in public hospitals, with an estimated population of approximately 6,141,300 million (National Population Commission (NPC), 2022). The study used the Taro Yammane formula to determine a sample size of 400, which is considered appropriate for survey research as recommendation by Wimmer and Dominick (2011), that a survey using a sample of 400, if properly conducted, will usually represent the characteristics of that population. The study utilized multi-stage sampling techniques, including Stratified Sampling, Simple Random Sampling, and Purposive Sampling. The state was divided into three senatorial districts, and one local government was purposively selected from each district, making a total of three local governments. This sampling method ensured that the sample was representative and aligned with the study's variables as Osuala (2007) notes that, dividing the population into separate strata on a sample technique assumed to be closely associated with the variables under study. The selected local governments and council wards are tabulated below.

Table of selected local government and council wards

S/No	Local Government	Selected council wards
1	Katsina-Ala	Township, Ikurav2, Utande,
2	Makurdi	Modern Market, Wurukum, North Bank, High Level,Wadata,
3	Otukpo	Fidii, Walimaiyo, North Bank II Ewulo, Township I, Township II,

This study used a structured questionnaire to assess the role of public relations in nurse-patient relationship on quality of care and decision-making in public hospitals in Benue State. Data was analyzed using frequency distribution tables and simple percentages, with qualitative analysis addressing the research questions. The questionnaire was administered to 400 respondents and fortunately enough all copies were successfully returned and usable. The table below shows the distribution of the questionnaire.

Presentation of Results

Table 1: Uses of Public Relations as Management Tool in Nurse-Patient Relationship in Public Hospitals

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Building Trust, Confidence and Transparency	60	15
Promoting Patient-Centered Care	36	9
Crisis Communication	20	5
Patient Advocacy and Education Delivery	22	5.5
Community Engagement or Relations	17	4.2
Feedback and Continuous Improvement	15	3.8
Promoting a Positive Image	56	14
All of the above	174	43.5
Total	400	100%

Table 1 sought to ascertain uses of public relations as management tool in nurse-patient relationship in public hospitals. According to the distribution of 400 respondents, majority of the respondents by 174 (43.5%) chose all of the above. This implies that the uses of public relations as management tool in nurse-patient relationship in public

hospitals in Benue State include: Building trust, confidence and transparency, promoting patient-centered care, crisis communication, patient advocacy and education delivery, community engagement or relations, feedback and continuous improvement and promoting a positive image.

Table 2: Impacts of Public Relations on Quality of Care Provided By Nurses and Decision Making in Public Hospitals

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Increases, employees' moral as well as better labor management relations	60	15
Creates a good working environment	98	24.5
Decision making implementation becomes easy	50	12.5
Stronger nurses' attachment to healthcare organizations	44	11
Increase commitment and satisfaction on decision taken	42	10.5
All of the above	106	26.5
Total	400	100

Table 2 presents the distribution of respondents according to impacts of public relations on quality of care provided by nurses and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State. Out of the 400 sampled respondents, majority of 106 (26.5%) identified all of the above: Decision making implementation becomes easy, creates a good working environment, increase commitment and satisfaction on decision taken, increases, employees' moral as well as better labour management relations, stronger nurses' attachment to healthcare organizations as impacts of public relations on quality of care provided by nurses and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State.

Table 3: Kind of relationship that should exist between a nurse/patient

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Social relationship	58	14.5
Intimate relationship	43	10.7
Therapeutic relationship	93	23.3
Combination of a and c of the above	206	51.5
Total	400	100

Table 3 presents the distribution of respondents according to kind of relationship that should exist between a nurses and patients. According to the distribution of 400 respondents, majority of the respondents (51.5%) suggested combination of “a” and “c” of the above, meaning, social relationship and therapeutic relationship. Thus, is a clear indication that the above suggested have to be to kind of relationship that should exist between nurses and patients.

Table 4: Relationship between Good Public Relations Practicing Nurse and Patients’ Satisfaction with the Way They Are Attended to in Public Hospitals

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Boundaries	60	15
Confidentiality	71	17.8
Therapeutic nurse behaviour, genuine, warm and respectful	56	14
Cultural sensitivity, cultural competence collaborative goal setting	22	5.5
Responsible, ethical practice, building trust, emotional support, Humour	17	4.3
All of the above	174	43.5
Total	400	100%

In line with the data contained in table 4 above, it is evident that boundaries, confidentiality, therapeutic nurse behaviour, genuine, warm and respectful, cultural sensitivity, cultural competence, collaborative goal setting, responsible, ethical practice, building trust, emotional support, humour, by respondents, as the majority were the PR skills that are responsible for relationship between nurse-patients satisfaction in Public Hospitals in Benue State, since the highest percentage (43.5%) out of the total sample chosen said so.

Discussion of Findings

This study shows that there are uses of public relations as management tool in nurse-patient relationship in public hospitals. The uses are: Building trust, confidence and transparency, promoting patient-centered care, crisis communication, patient

advocacy and education delivery, community engagement or relations, feedback and continuous improvement and promoting a positive image. This is in line with the postulations of Fatma (2014), who affirmed that the PR department has to specifically ensure positive mouth to mouth publicity, image created in the minds of community regarding quality of services, satisfaction from the services provided, maintain a dedicated staff, achieving a sustainable economic growth within available resources. It is further in agreement with the assertions of Gohil and Gohil (2016) who stated that the important of PR in hospital management as it correlates with the high inventory cost, investment, expectations of the people, media affordable rates, growing criticism, dealing with consumer protection groups, ensuring smooth and comprehensive management organization, at the same time creating a positive and favourable image/brand values.

Findings also indicated the impacts of public relations on quality of care provided by nurses and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State as revealed in table 2 of this study. Decision making implementation becomes easy, creates a good working environment, increase commitment and satisfaction on decision taken, increases, employees' morale as well as better labour management relations, stronger nurses' attachment to healthcare organizations as impacts of public relations on quality of care provided by nurses and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State. These outcomes align with Chijioke et al. (2019), who emphasized that effective PR ensures a sustainable, positive image of the organization by conveying favorable messages to the public. In healthcare, this includes how professionals interact with others, which influences the public's perception of both healthcare providers and the industry as a whole.

As the result of the major findings from the study as revealed in tables 4, showed the kind of relationship that exist between nurses and patients during their interaction in the healthcare facility. Majority of the respondents (51.5%) suggested combination of social relationship and therapeutic relationship. These are in agreement with the finding of Grace et al, (2018) who asserted that, the therapeutic nurse-patient relationship is primary, thus the core of all nursing treatment methods regardless of the major aim. It is true that disorders have strong biochemical and genetic components such as schizophrenia and major affective disorders cannot be healed through therapeutic means. However, many of the accompanying emotional problems such as poor self-image and low self-esteem can be significantly improved through a therapeutic nurse-patient

alliance or relationship. In agreement with Grace et al, (2018), Idode et al, (2023) which stated that, when patients do not engage in a therapeutic relationship with the healthcare giver chances are that, no matter what plans of care or planned interventions are made, nothing much will happen except mutual frustration and mutual withdrawal. The therapeutic nurse-patient relationship was a planned, time-limited and goal-directed connection between a registered nurse (RN) and patient for meeting a patient's healthcare needs.

For the relationship between good public relations practicing nurse and patients' satisfaction with the way they are attended to in public hospitals, as illustrated in table 5 affirmed the highest percentage (43.5%) said boundaries, confidentiality, therapeutic nurse behaviour, genuine, warm and respectful, cultural sensitivity, cultural competence, collaborative goal setting, responsible, ethical practice, building trust, emotional support, humour, are the PR skills that are responsible for relationship between nurse and patients satisfaction in public hospitals in Benue State. This finding is This is in line with the postulations of Shaban, Mohammed and Gomaa (2021), who affirmed that nurses play a vital role in establishing and maintaining good PR through their demonstration of professionalism, empathy, and therapeutic nurse behaviour, while maintaining appropriate boundaries, upholding confidential, and exhibiting self-awareness, ultimately fostering trust, confidence, and a positive image of the healthcare organization

In many instances, especially in the developing nations, nurses are portrayed as sub-servant workers only capable of carrying out orders. Nurse practitioners and leaders should strive to correct this wrong notion through standard professional nursing practice. While it is recognized that perception, attitude and subsequent behaviour are greatly influenced by multi-variant factors, human beings still generally recognize standards of behaviour expected from individuals or groups.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to ascertain the uses of public relations as management tool in nurse-patient relationship on quality of care and decision making in public hospitals in Benue State. Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that PR activities are crucial for distinguishing hospitals from competitors, enhancing communication between hospitals and communities, and fostering a positive hospital

image and culture. PR efforts such as health promotion, media relations, special events, and fundraising are vital for hospital marketing and problem-solving.

Nurses are encouraged to use PR skills and attitudes to maintain effective relationships with patients, as these relationships significantly impact patient satisfaction and health outcomes. A good nurse-patient relationship can ease patient pain, reduce hospital stays, and improve care quality, while poor relationships can diminish patient autonomy and care quality.

The study recommends that nurse managers view PR as a strategic management tool to build goodwill through actions, not just words. Hospital PR practitioners should focus on improving patient satisfaction by educating staff, identifying factors that motivate or dissatisfy patients, and fostering positive relationships. Nurses should be trained in PR to improve patient interactions and prevent conflicts.

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