

## The Correlation between the Anxiety of the Family Members of the Patients Referring to the Emergency Department and Their Views on the Communication Skills of Nurses

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**Abstract :** Background and Aims: Hospitalization of one of the family members in the hospital, especially in the emergency department, causes anxiety and psychological problems in family members and others. The way nurses interact with patients and their companions can play an important role in controlling and managing their anxiety. This study aims to determine the relationship between the anxiety of family members of patients referring to emergency departments and their views on the communication skills of nurses. Materials and Methods: The current research was a descriptive-correlation cross-sectional study on 263 family members of patients referred to the department. The emergency of two selected medical training centers affiliated with Iran University of Medical Sciences was performed. The samples were selected continuously in 2018 based on the inclusion criteria. Information was collected using the Health Communication Questionnaire (HCCQ) and Beck Anxiety Questionnaire (BAI). To analyze the data, Pearson's correlation coefficient, independent t-tests, analysis of variance, and Kruskal-Wallis were used at a significance level of 0.05. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 16 statistical software. Results: The mean score of communication skills of emergency department nurses from the point of view of patients' companions was at a low level (74.36 with a standard deviation of 3.7). 3.75% of patients' companions had anxiety at a mild level. There was no statistically significant correlation between the anxieties of the patient's companions. The anxiety of the patient's companions had a statistically significant relationship with the educational level ( $P=0.039$ ), economic status ( $P=0.033$ ), and family relationship with the patient ( $P=0.001$ ). Also, the average anxiety score in children was significantly higher than that of patients' wives ( $P=0.008$ ). The triage level of the patient also had a statistically significant relationship with the anxiety of the patient's companions ( $P>0.001$ ). Conclusion: Most of the family members of the patients referred to the emergency room experienced mild anxiety. Also, from their point of view, the communication skills of emergency nurses were at a weak level. Despite the fact that there was no statistically significant relationship between the patient's family member's anxiety and their opinion about nurses' communication skills in this study, it seems that the weak communication skills of nurses from the patient's family member's point of view need special attention. The results of the present study can provide the necessary grounds for planning to improve the communication skills of nurses and also control the anxiety of patient caregivers through in-service training or other incentive mechanisms.

**Keywords :** anxiety, family, emergency department, communication skills, nurse

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