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### The Role of Emotional Support in Improving Mental Well-being in Community Patients: A Nursing Psychology Perspective

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#### Abstract

Mental well-being is one of the important indicators of public health. Emotional support has been proven to play a role in helping community patients cope with psychological stress, especially in the context of nursing services. However, research highlighting the relationship between emotional support and mental well-being at the community level is still limited. This study aims to analyze the role of emotional support in improving mental well-being in community patients from the perspective of nursing psychology. Method: This study a cross-sectional design conducted in the Mulyorejo subdistrict during the period of May-July 2025. The sample consisted of 60 people selected using purposive sampling. The research instrument was a validated questionnaire on emotional support and mental well-being. Data analysis used Pearson's correlation test. Results: The study showed a strong positive relationship between emotional support and mental well-being in community patients ( $r=0.652$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that the higher the emotional support received by patients, the better their mental well-being. Discussion: These findings support nursing psychology theory, which emphasizes the importance of empathetic interaction and therapeutic communication in improving patients mental health. The results of this study are in line with Watson's concept of caring, which places emotional connection at the heart of nursing practice. In addition, this study shows the urgency of increasing the capacity of nursing staff to provide systematic emotional support, given its significant impact on the mental well-being of community patients. These findings can serve as a basis for developing nursing psychology-based intervention programs in community health services..

**Keywords:** Mental Health, Stress, Communication, Emotional Support, mental well-being, community patients, nursing psychology

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## INTRODUCTION

The importance of emotional support in improving the mental well-being of community patients is clearly evident from the perspective of nursing psychology (Rusca et al., 2022). Effective emotional support significantly contributes to patients resilience and coping mechanisms, especially in the context of chronic illness. For example, individuals with emotional competence often derive significant psychocial benefits from giving and receiving emotional support, which is essential for the psychological well-being of breast cancer patients (Yoo et al., 2014).

Research studies highlight the significant impact nurses can have on patients psychological health. For example, Zabihi et al. emphasize nurses responsibility in treating mood disorders after acute medical events, such as burns, noting that effective nursing practices include identifying emotional needs and facilitating therapeutic interactions that support emotional rehabilitation (Zabihi et al., 2024). Examining the critical role of nursing interventions in promoting positive mental health and enhancing self-care capabilities among this population (Sánchez-Ortega et al., 2023). This study suggests that a solid emotional support framework is crucial in reducing the psychological burden associated with chronic illness, thereby promoting greater resilience and adaptive coping strategies (Amin et al., 2025). In addition, this study highlights the complex interactions between perceived social support, emotional regulation, and psychological outcomes, emphasizing how targeted nursing initiatives can significantly improve patient-centered care and overall well-being (Atta et al., 2024). Although it has been proven that individual psychological rehabilitation through emotional support, namely acceptance and

provision of emotional support, mediates group interaction and psychological well-being by comparing three potential basic mechanisms, namely the mediating role of emotional support, fair reciprocity (i.e., a balance between receiving and giving emotional support, where no party is overly advantaged or disadvantaged), and sequential reciprocity (Ngai et al., 2021).

Mental well-being is an important indicator of public health, especially for community patients who often face various psychosocial challenges such as stress, anxiety, limited social support, and stigma. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) emphasizes that mental health does not only mean freedom from mental disorders, but also includes positive conditions that enable individuals to function optimally in their daily lives (World Health Organization (WHO), 2021). In the community context, patients often lack adequate emotional support. Limited understanding among, family members, social stigma surrounding mental health issues, and limited access to mental health services are obstacles to meeting patients emotional needs. This condition can have an impact on low mental well-being, increased risk of psychological disorders, and a decline in the quality of life of community patients. Nursing psychology emphasizes a holistic approach to nursing care, which not only focuses on physical aspects but also pays attention to the emotional and psychosocial needs of patients.

The research question of this study are 1) How does emotional support play a role in improving the mental well-being of community patients; and 2) What strategies can be applied in nursing practice to improve emotional support for community patients.



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## METHOD

This study used a quantitative method with a cross-sectional design conducted in the Mulyorejo subdistrict during the period of May-July 2025. The sample consisted of 60 people selected using purposive sampling. The instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire consisting of two main parts. This questionnaire was designed to measure the main variables in the study, namely the level of emotional support received by community patients and their perceived level of mental well-being. This questionnaire consists of 10 questions covering several aspects, including attention and empathy, support in difficult situations, emotional security, acceptance without judgment, trust, and the active involvement of nurses in providing psychological support. Each question is measured using a 1-5 Likert Scale, with categories: 1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Undecided; 4) Agree, and 5) Strongly agree. The second instrument is an adaptation of the WHO-5 Wellbeing Index (WHO, 1998) and Ryff, 1989), which consists of 10 questions that measure indicators such as positive feelings, inner peace, life satisfaction, social relationships, life purpose, self-acceptance, optimism, self-control, and motivation in daily life. Data analysis was performed using Pearson's correlation test.

## RESULTS

The results of this study show demographic characteristics as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics (n=60)

Character istic	Categor y	Freque ncy (f)	Percent age (%)
Gender	Male	22	36.7
	Female	38	63.3
Age	20-30 Years	8	13.3
	31-40 Years	20	33.3
Highest Level of Education	41-50 Years	5	8.3
	>50 Years	10	16.7
Duration of Illness	>50 Years	30	50.0
	Element ary	15	25.0
Duration of Illness	Element ary	12	20.0
	Junior High School	25	41.7
Duration of Illness	High School	23	38.3
	College <1 Year		
Duration of Illness	College <1 Year		
	1-3 Years		
Duration of Illness	1-3 Years		
	More than 3 Years		

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents in this study were female, totaling 38 people (63.3%), while male respondents numbered 22 people (36.7%). These results indicate that the community patients involved in the study were predominantly female. This is consistent with findings from several community health studies showing that women tend to be more active in participating in health programs and psychological screening. In terms of age distribution, most respondents were in the 41-50 and > 50 age groups, each with 20 people (33.3%). The 31-40 age

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group numbered 12 people (20.0%), while the 20-30 age group was the smallest, with 8 people (13.3%). This distribution shows that most respondents are in the middle-aged and elderly categories, who are vulnerable to physical and psychological health problems and therefore require greater emotional support. Based on their highest level of education, most respondents had a high school education (50.0%), followed by college (25.0%), junior high school (16.7%), and elementary school (8.3%). The level of education affects respondents understanding of the importance of mental health and their ability to accept and utilize the emotional support provided.

Judging from the duration of illness, most respondents had experienced chronic health conditions for 1-3 years (41.7%), followed by more than 3 years (38.3%), and less than 1 year (20.0%). This condition shows that most respondents have been dealing with their illness for quite some time, requiring effective psychological adaptation strategies to maintain their mental well-being.

Table 2. Relationship between emotional support and mental well-being in Community Patients (n=60).

V ariable	C alculated r	I -value	D escription
Emotio nal Support	0. 652	.000	C orrelation strong, significan t
Mental Well- being			

Based on Table 2, the results of the Pearson correlation test show that there is a strong positive relationship between emotional support and mental well-being in community patients ( $r = 0.652$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This means that the higher the emotional support received by patients, the higher

their level of mental well-being. A  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$  indicates that this relationship is statistically significant, thus accepting the research hypothesis. These findings are in line with nursing psychology theory, which explains that emotional support can provide comfort, increase self-esteem, and facilitate patient adaptation to their health condition. Emotional support also acts as a protective factor against psychological stress, thereby helping patients maintain their mental health amid the challenges of chronic illness.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that there is a strong positive correlation between emotional support and psychological well-being in community patients ( $r=0.652$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). These findings indicate that the higher the level of emotional support received by patients, the higher the level of mental well-being of respondents. The statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) reinforces that this relationship is not coincidental, but scientifically consistent. Emotional support is an essential form of social support in improving patients mental health. This support can take the form of empathy, attention, and psychological reinforcement provided by family, friends, and health workers. According to Sarafino and Smith (2017), emotional support can reduce stress levels and increase feelings of meaning in life (Sarafino & Smith, 2017). This is in line with the perspective of nursing psychology, which emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to patients, covering physical, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects. This study supports previous findings by Taylor et al. (2018) which show that emotional support contributes significantly to improving the subjective well-being of individuals with chronic conditions. Furthermore, patients

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who feel emotionally supported tend to have more adaptive coping mechanisms, enabling them to better cope with psychosocial stress(Chang et al., 2023).

In the community context, the role of emotional support is becoming increasingly important because patients face not only physical health challenges, but also social stigma, isolation, and limited access to mental health services. These findings confirm that community-based interventions involving patients families and social networks can improve their mental well-being. For nursing practice, these research results reinforce the urgency for nurses to provide consistent emotional support, whether through therapeutic communication, counseling, or community approaches. Emotional support can be used as a promotive and preventive strategy in community-based mental health programs.

## CONCLUSION(S)

Based on the results of research on the Role of Emotional Support in improving mental well-being in community patients: A Nursing Psychology Perspective, it was found that there is a strong positive relationship between emotional support and mental well-being ( $r = 0.652$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).This indicates that the higher the emotional support received by patients, the higher their level of mental well-being.

Emotional support plays an important role as a protective factor in improving the mental health of community patients. This study confirms that providing emotional support, whether from family, social environment, or health workers, is an essential aspect of a nursing psychology approach that is oriented towards improving the quality of life of patients.

## Conflict of Interest

The researchers had no conflicts of interest in conducting this study.

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