



# Patient Perceptions of Nurse Listening Behaviors

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## PROPOSAL ABSTRACT

The purpose of this proposed interpretive phenomenological study is to discover, describe, and interpret patient perceptions of nurse listening behaviors. Because nurse listening is linked to an enhanced patient experience and improved patient outcomes, it is considered important enough that patient perception of its occurrence is solicited by the United States (US) Centers for Medicare or Medicaid (CMS) as part of the "HCAPHS" (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) survey (<https://www.cms.gov>, n.d.). However, little can be found in the literature describing which nursing behaviors patients perceive as listening behaviors. For inpatient nurses to reflect on and improve their interactions with patients, ultimately improving patient outcomes, they need to know how their behaviors are perceived, e.g., which to develop and which to avoid. Understanding this phenomenon will require consulting patients who have received hospital nursing care to appreciate their perceptions. Using qualitative methodology, the goal of this study is to elicit perceptions of adult immunosuppressed patients who have recently been hospitalized, regarding whether their nurses listened to them and, if so, which nurse behaviors caused them to believe listening had occurred. Alternatively, understanding which behaviors caused the perception of non-listening would help create a contrary case, providing further clarification of the construct. Understanding the way in which patients perceive nurse behaviors as they pertain to listening has implications across a spectrum of consequences: clinical, personal, financial, and educational...perhaps the most compelling of which is improved patient outcomes and experience.

## BACKGROUND

### The Importance of Nurse Listening and What We Know About It

- Good listening is...fundamental to effective nursing practice (Gilbert, 2004, p. 447)
- Because it is linked to an enhanced patient experience and improved patient outcomes, nurse listening is considered important enough that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) solicit patient perception of its occurrence through the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & Systems (or HCAHPS) survey (<https://www.cms.gov>, n.d.).
- Little can be found in the literature describing which nursing behaviors patients perceive as listening behaviors
- Understanding this phenomenon will require consulting patients who have recently received hospital nursing care to appreciate their perceptions, i.e., in a qualitative manner.

## OBJECTIVES

The main **aim** of this study is to understand, from a patient perspective

- which nurse behaviors imply listening has occurred,
- which nurse behaviors imply listening has not occurred, and
- how the inpatient experience with nurses who either listened or did not listen affected the participants both during hospitalization and after discharge

The **goal** is to

- increase awareness of and improve nurses' listening skills
- close the gap between nurse and patient perceptions of listening behaviors by sharing the study's results.

## THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

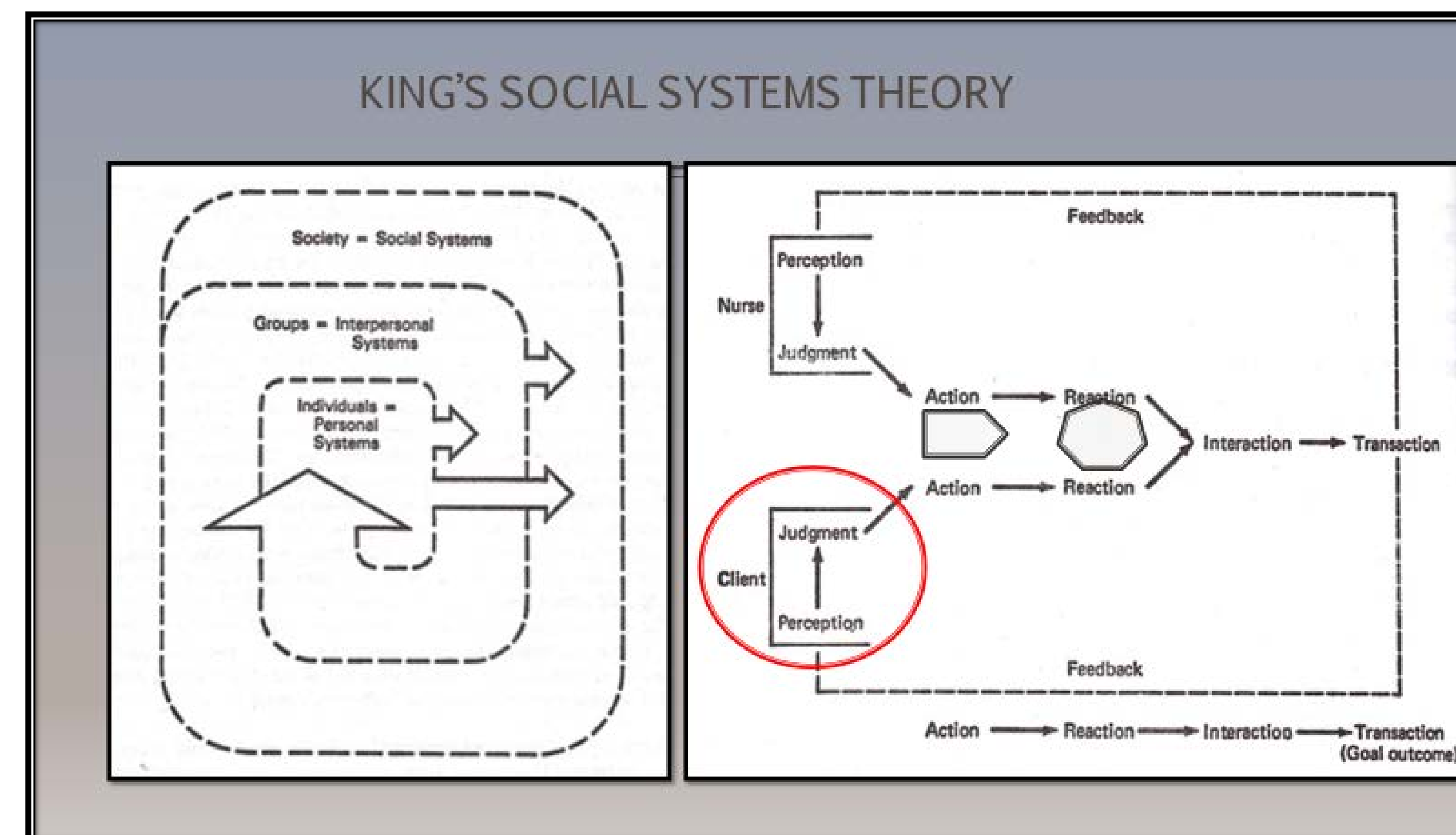
**Nursing:** Action, reaction, and interaction process (a practice methodology)

- Perception
  - The nurse and client meet in some nursing situation and **perceive each other**
  - **Accuracy of perception will depend upon verifying the nurse's inferences** with the client
- Reaction
  - The nurse and client **mentally react to each one's perceptions of the other**

"King (1971) explained, 'Perception of the nurse leads to judgments and to action by the nurse. Simultaneously, the **perception of the [client] leads to judgments and then to action by the [client].'**" – (Fawcett, 2013, p. 88)

**Note:** *This is where perceived listening behaviors matter...and why listening is linked to outcomes.*

King's concern for ethical standards of nursing practice is evident in her insistence on consideration of the client's *perception* of a situation and explication of the value system.



### Concepts and Non-relational Propositions Related to Phenomenon: Patient-perceived Listening Behaviors of Nurses

#### Human Beings

- **Personal System**
  - **Perception**- each person's awareness and **perception of what is real in his/her life and the environment. A central aspect of the process of human interaction.**
- **Interpersonal System**
  - **Interaction**- a process of **perception and communication between 2 or more personal systems** and/or the environment that includes a sequence of verbal and nonverbal goal-directed behaviors
  - **Communication**- the way in which **personal systems develop and maintain relationships.** (King here only describes oral and written communication...)
    - Verbal
    - Non-verbal
      - **Transaction**- observable goal-directed **interaction with the environment**
      - **Role**- **expected behaviors that are associated with each person's position in a social system**
      - **Stress**- a dynamic state of **person-environment interaction** that involves an exchange of energy and information...
- **Social System**
  - **Authority**- a process that is characterized by **active, reciprocal relations** that **reflect how one person influences others**

## LITERATURE REVIEW

SPIDER Categories	Search Terms Used
Sample	"patient"
Phenomenon of Interest	"nurse listening behavior"
Design	"questionnaire" or "survey" or "scale" or "instrument"
Evaluation	"perspective" or "perception" or "opinion" or "experience" or "attitude"
Research Type	"qualitative" or "mixed methods" or "quantitative"

- **No articles** found that addressed this topic in this setting.
- **Examples** of behaviors in other settings included verbal and nonverbal
  - Eye contact, body language, silence, sitting, facial expressions, leaning in
  - Asking clarifying or open-ended questions, using non-word voice affirmations, reflecting feelings, not interrupting

## METHOD: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

### Semi-structured Interview Questions for Patient Perceptions of Nurse Listening Behaviors

- Would you please share your story/something of your background?
- What comes to mind when you hear the word "listen" or "listening"?
- Consider your recent hospitalization and recollect a registered nurse (RN) who you believed listened to you. Can you please describe the setting and what the nurse did that made you feel he or she was listening?
- Again, during your recent hospitalization did you encounter a registered nurse (RN) who you believed was not listening to you? Can you please describe the setting and what the nurse did that made you feel he or she was NOT listening?
- In what way did the nurse's listening affect your experience in and beyond the hospital, if at all?
- In what way did the nurse's NOT listening affect your experience in and beyond the hospital, if at all?

## REFERENCES

- Gilbert, D. A. (2004). Coordination in nurses' listening activities and communication about patient-nurse relationships. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 27, 447-457.
- Fawcett, J., & DeSanto-Madeya, S. (2013). King's conceptual system. In *Contemporary nursing knowledge: Analysis and evaluation of nursing models and theories* (3rd ed., pp. 80-110). Philadelphia, PA: F. A. Davis.

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