

## INDICATORS FOR ACHIEVING THE SUCCESS OF MIDWIVES' EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS: A REVIEW FROM MIDWIFERY SERVICES

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### Abstract

Effective communication is a fundamental skill in midwifery, playing a crucial role in building trust, ensuring the safety of patients, and enhancing the health outcomes for both mothers and newborns. This review of existing literature focuses on studies that evaluate the communication skills of midwives across different healthcare settings. The research included articles published from 2015 to 2025, sourced from databases like PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. The findings show that midwives use various forms of communication, including spoken words, body language, written notes, and interactions with others, all of which greatly influence the quality of care they provide. While many studies indicate that midwives often show empathy and are good listeners, there are still challenges in areas such as being confident in expressing needs, maintaining proper records, and communicating effectively across different cultures. It is important for midwives to recognize the signs of effective communication in their work, such as possessing strong communication abilities, understanding human behavior, having training in effective communication techniques, and being able to use technology. The review concludes that ongoing learning and development in communication skills are vital for improving midwives' abilities and delivering care that is centered around the needs of patients.

**Keywords:** Communication skills, effective communication, midwifery services, communication indicators.

### INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the most fundamental aspects of human interaction and serves as a crucial determinant of various outcomes in both social and health contexts. Many social challenges, interpersonal conflicts, psychological disorders, and even individual developmental issues often stem from ineffective or inappropriate communication patterns. The role of communication becomes increasingly critical in the context of healthcare services, as it directly influences the quality of care, patient safety,

decision-making processes, and the overall experience of individuals receiving health services (Febriana et al., 2025). Communication is not merely an additional skill, it is an essential component embedded in every step of maternal and newborn healthcare delivery. The dynamics of pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period represent highly sensitive, emotional, and complex phases, requiring healthcare professionals (particularly midwives) to possess optimal communication skills to ensure positive maternal and neonatal health outcomes (Olde Loohuis et al., 2023).

Midwives are at the frontline of maternal healthcare and often serve as the first and primary point of contact for women throughout their reproductive cycle. Their responsibilities extend far beyond clinical procedures, as midwives also provide emotional support, empower women through education, facilitate shared decision-making, and assist families in navigating critical life transitions. Midwives interact with various individuals, including pregnant women, partners, extended family members, and healthcare teams, all of whom require effective communication strategies (Radeva, 2023). According to Katebi et al. (2016), midwives must not only be capable of delivering accurate health information but also provide holistic support that encompasses the emotional, cognitive, social, and cultural needs of their clients. Effective communication is a core competency that enhances the quality of midwifery care and strengthens the relationship between midwives and the communities they serve.

The ability of midwives to communicate effectively in clinical practice contributes significantly to various health outcomes. Communication in midwifery is not limited to verbal exchanges, but also involves body language, active listening, empathy, cultural sensitivity, therapeutic presence, and the ability to tailor messages according to the client's needs and context. The integration of scientific knowledge with the interpersonal art of communication allows midwives to balance professionalism, empathy, and clarity in delivering information. Through this comprehensive approach, effective communication supports informed decision-making, strengthens therapeutic relationships, and enhances women's confidence and satisfaction with midwifery care (Ganisia and A'zdom, 2025; Melisa & Susanti 2025).

Several studies conducted in maternity wards emphasize the significance of communication in influencing maternal satisfaction with the care they receive. When midwives communicate appropriately, respectfully, and empathetically, it has been shown to positively influence the physiological and psychological experiences of women during childbirth. Effective communication is associated with reduced anxiety, lower blood pressure, and decreased perceived pain during labor. In addition, good communication enhances mothers' sense of control, comfort, and safety, contributing to a more positive birth experience. Ahmed (2020) demonstrated that communication fosters mutual trust and shared understanding, enabling women to make informed decisions, reducing fear of normal childbirth, and improving cooperation between women and healthcare providers.

Effective communication in midwifery plays a vital role in ensuring continuity of care, promoting patient-centered care, and strengthening therapeutic relationships. When midwives successfully build trust with women, it is likely to improve adherence to health recommendations, facilitate early detection of complications, and encourage optimal utilization of maternal health services. Enhancing communication skills among midwives is an essential strategy for improving maternal safety and reducing preventable complications, especially in low- and middle-income countries where maternal mortality remains a serious public health issue (Chang, et al., 2018). Conversely, poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretation of medical instructions, dissatisfaction with services, and even adverse health outcomes (Howick et al., 2024).

Several emerging challenges within contemporary maternal healthcare further underscore the importance of communication competencies among midwives. Increasing diversity in client populations with variations in language, culture, beliefs, and health literacy requires midwives to communicate adaptively and with cultural sensitivity. Additionally, advancements in technology demand communication skills that are effective not only in face-to-face interactions but also in digital environments such as teleconsultations, health applications, and electronic medical records. Midwives must be able to integrate communication strategies that align with technological developments without compromising empathy, ethics, or confidentiality (Sari et al., 2024).

Several reports indicate gaps in the training, assessment, and evaluation of communication skills in midwifery education and practice. Barriers such as high workloads, time constraints, staff shortages, limited training opportunities, and hierarchical structures within health facilities can hinder midwives' ability to communicate effectively. Differences in cultural expectations and power dynamics between health care providers and clients can also complicate communication. Understanding these barriers is crucial for designing indicators of successful communication to strengthen effective communication competencies among midwives (Okeke et al., 2025).

Given the broad and critical role of communication in midwifery, it is highly relevant to identify specific indicators that reflect the achievement of effective communication within midwifery services (Anita, 2024). These indicators serve as measurable benchmarks that can be used by midwives, educators, healthcare managers, and policymakers to assess communication performance and design appropriate improvement programs. Such indicators may relate to interpersonal skills, client satisfaction, clinical outcomes, adherence to ethical principles, or the ability to address diverse communication needs in practice (Gessese et al., 2022).

This article aims to identify the indicators that determine the achievement of effective communication in midwifery services. Through a comprehensive literature

review, this article analyzes various factors influencing communication between midwives and clients and highlights the core components required for effective communication in midwifery practice. The review also discusses practical implications for education, training, and policy development, particularly in the context of improving maternal health outcomes. By understanding these indicators, midwives and healthcare institutions can strengthen communication processes, promote client-centered services, and contribute to more positive and meaningful maternity experiences. Ultimately, effective communication is not merely a technical skill but the foundation of midwifery care that embodies empathy and respect for women's dignity. Communication reflects the values of respect, autonomy, and partnership that form the core of midwifery practice.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study adopted a literature review as a qualitative research method, using a descriptive literature review design to identify indicators of effective communication success. An effective and well-rounded review, as emphasized by Webster and Watson and cited in Snyder (2019), provides a solid foundation for advancing knowledge and facilitating theory development. Therefore, this review synthesized relevant findings from various sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles and empirical studies published within the past 10 years. The inclusion criteria focused on literature addressing indicators of effective communication skills, while studies were excluded if they did not directly address the implementation of effective communication or lacked an adequate empirical or theoretical foundation.

The research included articles published from 2015 to 2025, sourced from databases like PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. Thematic analysis was employed to identify and organize key patterns across the selected literature, with particular attention to recurring themes related to effective communication and its application in midwifery care. This method allows for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of effective communication success, thereby contributing to more informed educational approaches and deeper theoretical insights.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Good Communication Skills**

Good communication is a fundamental indicator of effective midwifery care, as it enables midwives to build trust, ensure mutual understanding, and create a positive care experience for women during pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period (Doherty et al., 2023). In many countries, communication competency, including verbal, non-verbal, and written communication, is a formal requirement for professional registration, highlighting its crucial role in providing safe, respectful, and woman-centered maternity care (Shakibazadeh et al., 2017). Good communication skills are an

indicator of effective communication. Effective communication involves providing clear and accurate information (Grant et al., 2025). These competencies are crucial in supporting informed decision-making and enhancing women's autonomy during antenatal, intrapartum, and postnatal care.

Empirical evidence shows that good communication significantly improves maternal satisfaction, strengthens the therapeutic relationship, and reduces anxiety during pregnancy and childbirth (Shamoradifar et al., 2022). The implementation of verbal, nonverbal, and written communication in healthcare plays a crucial role in ensuring effective, safe, and patient-centered care. Good verbal communication skills, including the use of appropriate words and sentence structure, are essential. Healthcare providers use verbal communication to convey information clearly, explain diagnoses and procedures, and support shared decision-making through open dialogue with patients and their families. Nonverbal communication, including eye contact, facial expressions, body posture, and tone of voice, reinforces verbal messages and helps convey empathy, caring, and respect, thus strengthening the therapeutic relationship (Abeid et al., 2024; Keutchafo et al., 2022). Furthermore, effective written communication, including accurate documentation and accessible health education materials, supports continuity of care and ensures that women receive reliable and understandable information (Stefan et al., 2024).

Good communication between midwives can reduce uncomfortable or tense situations, minimize misunderstandings, and foster positive interactions with patients. Consequently, these improved interactions support more effective collaboration, informed decision-making, and improved problem-solving in midwifery care, ultimately contributing to safer and more respectful maternal health services (Kim & Kim, 2020; Yeganeh et al., 2025). This trust enhances midwives' understanding of patients' needs, preferences, and cultural backgrounds, which is crucial for providing individualized and holistic care. Furthermore, strong communication skills enhance midwives' professionalism and confidence, positively impacting patient satisfaction and the overall quality of midwifery care.

### **Good Behavioral Skills**

Behavioral skills are the abilities that influence how a midwife can interact with other people and to responds the certain situations. Behavioral science skills are excellent for understanding how psychological aspects influence the message delivery process, minimizing misunderstandings, and identifying the nature and character of the interlocutor for more effective communication (Lefebvre & Beaucousin, 2025). Generally, behavior skill in communication can increases the knowledge about the clients' problems, improves decision-making on discharging and transferring them, provides appropriate solutions to improve their quality of care, and increases the sense of participation and cooperation in the treatment team, and this way, ultimately,

promotes the quality of cares and reduces medical errors, drops the client's stay duration in the hospital and lowers medical costs (Rezaei-Abhari, et al. 2019).

Effective communication not only conveys medical information but also demonstrates respect for women's rights as empowered individuals with a voice in the care they receive (Kwame & Petrucka, 2021). Respectful care not only increases maternal satisfaction but also shapes overall perceptions of the quality of midwifery care (Lunda et al., 2024). Behavioral science skills can be applied through the delivery of respectful healthcare. The role of communication in providing respectful care is crucial in maternity care. Respectful care in midwifery care is a tangible manifestation of effective communication between midwives and the women they serve (Shamoradifar et al., 2022). Respectful care encompasses respect for women's dignity, rights, privacy, and decision-making during pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period. When midwives communicate empathetically and respectfully, it not only fosters a strong therapeutic relationship but also enhances women's positive experiences with maternity services.

Recent studies have shown that consistent application of respectful maternity care principles significantly contributes to increased maternal satisfaction and active engagement in their own healthcare (Cahyani & Surani, 2025). Contemporary studies have shown that when midwives use communication that respects women's choices and supports their autonomy, clients' trust in healthcare providers increases, resulting in more positive care experiences (Leinweber & Stramrood, 2024). This reinforces the argument that communication is not just a technical skill but a fundamental element in providing dignified, inclusive maternity care that aligns with the full realization of women's reproductive rights. When midwives communicate responsively and empathetically, women are more likely to feel heard, respected, and actively engaged in their care, which contributes to safer outcomes and increased adherence to health recommendations (Bohren et al., 2017).

Midwife's communication skills not only affect their problem-solving ability but also shape their understanding of patients' physical and emotional conditions, as well as influence patients' perceptions of midwives' professionalism. Effective communication enables midwives to listen actively, convey clear and empathetic information, and build trust with women and their families, which is essential in identifying problems accurately and responding appropriately (Kim & Kim, 2020). Yeganeh et al. (2025) demonstrated that effective midwife-mother communication, achieved by ensuring a safe environment, fostering emotional connection, and demonstrating reliability, facilitates maternal self-entrustment; a process where mothers progressively develop confidence in and reliance on their midwives. These key components form a practical framework for enhancing maternity care interactions and strengthening therapeutic relationships.

## Communication Skills Training

Communication skills training (CST) is essential for healthcare providers in maternity care because it enables patient-centered, empathetic, and effective interactions. Training in communication skills for midwives is considered a key indicator of successful and effective communication within maternity services. The training included various sessions for health workers. They had the chance to share their thoughts, understand patient backgrounds, and practice listening skills. They also learned how to use facial expressions, gestures, and polite language when communicating with patients through role-play exercises. The results of the training were positive. Participants could explain the material through role-play and improve their active listening skills. They managed their facial expressions, gestures, and voice tone better, and applied polite communication with patients from different backgrounds (Saptyasari et al., 2025).

Evidence shows that communication skills training significantly enhances midwives' ability to provide empathetic, responsive, and woman-centered care. Studies have demonstrated that CST positively influences the clinical practices of midwives and nurses across various hospital settings, including gynecological wards, delivery rooms, neonatal intensive care units, surgical units, emergency departments, and infertility services (Seger & Oleiwi, 2025). These findings highlight the broad applicability and relevance of CST in improving maternity and reproductive health services. Through CST, midwives are better prepared to engage with women and their families respectfully and responsively, ensuring that care delivery aligns with patients' needs, values, and expectations.

Effective communication training equips midwives with core competencies in therapeutic communication, such as active listening, supportive non-verbal behaviors, clear and accurate information delivery, and the ability to establish trusting relationships. Recent research confirms that healthcare professionals who receive structured communication training are better able to perform essential care functions, including providing appropriate health education, supporting shared decision-making, and enhancing patient comfort and safety (Boissy et al., 2016; Samir et al., 2025). Although flexible communication training improves healthcare professionals' confidence and knowledge, continuous practice is often required to sustain these improvements over time.

Midwives who participate in communication skills training programs consistently demonstrate improved communicative behaviors, including increased clarity, reduced misunderstandings, and stronger interpersonal interactions with patients and their families. Beyond strengthening individual competencies, CST also contributes to the overall quality of maternity care services by enhancing providers' communication skills, self-efficacy, and professional attitudes (Hooper et al., 2025; Peimani et al., 2025). Therefore, communication skills training is widely recognized as a strong indicator of

effective communication performance in delivering high-quality, patient-centered midwifery care. Communication described as the focus of all clinical actions and the basis of medical activity is so critical that is considered as the foundation of human progresses.

### **Ability to Use Communication Technology**

The ability of midwives to use communication technology is one of the key indicators of successful effective communication in midwifery care. The use of technologies such as instant messaging applications, mobile phones, health information systems, and teleconsultation enables midwives to deliver information clearly, in a timely manner, and in accordance with clients' needs. Through communication technology, messages can be received more quickly and accurately, thereby reducing the risk of miscommunication between midwives and women. The use of communication technology also supports improved client understanding of health information (Lee et al., 2020).

Educational materials delivered through digital media, such as written messages, images, or videos, help pregnant, laboring, and postpartum women to understand their health conditions, care plans, and danger signs more comprehensively. This clarity of information serves as an indicator that the communication provided by midwives is effective, as it enhances clients' knowledge and awareness. In addition to the aspect of understanding, midwives' ability to utilize communication technology contributes to the establishment of responsive two-way communication (Mulyani et al., 2024). Easy access to communication encourages clients to be more active in asking questions and expressing concerns, while midwives are able to provide prompt and appropriate feedback. This ongoing interaction reflects effective communication, as it fosters mutual trust, openness, and a sense of security between midwives and clients.

Research findings emphasize that the success of effective communication is not determined solely by midwives' verbal and nonverbal skills, but also by their ability to use communication technology appropriately. The integration of technology with interpersonal communication enhances the quality of interactions, service efficiency, and client satisfaction. In addition, effective use of communication technology supports continuity of care and strengthens professional relationships between midwives and clients across different stages of maternal health services (Wakelin et al., 2023). Therefore, mastery of communication technology should be considered an essential competency for midwives in achieving effective and high-quality communication in midwifery practice.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that indicators of successful effective communication in midwifery services include several key aspects, namely:

clarity of message, empathy, openness, assertiveness, active listening skills, and the use of verbal and nonverbal language appropriate to the patient's condition. Effective communication between midwives and clients not only increases patient trust and satisfaction but also positively impacts the quality of care and maternal and infant health outcomes.

Furthermore, successful communication is also influenced by internal factors such as knowledge, interpersonal skills, and experience, as well as external factors such as supportive work environments and community culture. Therefore, improving midwives' communication competencies through ongoing training and the application of a humanistic approach to midwifery practice is essential to achieving holistic, responsive, and patient-centered care.

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