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September 2, 2021

Dear Dr. Larry Gross,

We wish to submit an original research article titled “Patient–Provider Communication through a Cross-Cultural Perspective among Families with Rare Diseases in Taiwan” for consideration by I*nternational Journal of Communication*.

We confirm that this work is original and has not been published elsewhere, nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

In this paper, we explored risk factors to patient-provider communication and quality of care for families with rare disease patients in Taiwan by conducting five focus groups consisting of forty participants with different roles, including patients, family caregivers, healthcare providers, and community service providers. We identified fourteen themes, with ten relevant to patient-provider communication and four relevant to quality of care. We consider our study significant because (a) we fill in the void of extant evidence by delving into culture-specific factors, 2) methodologically we included perspectives from all stakeholders who are engaged in the treatment process for rare diseases and c) our results call attention to the unique challenges faced by families with rare disease in the Eastern societies, an academically and medically underrepresented patient population.

We believe that this manuscript is appropriate for publication because our study has the prospect of promoting effective patient-provider communication among families with rare disease in Asian communities. Our findings offer insightful guidance for professionals and organizations about what individual, interpersonal, and structural factors should be addressed by clinical practices and institutional policies in order to maximize the effectiveness of patient-provider communication and quality of care for rare disease patients.

We have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Please address all correspondence concerning this manuscript to Dr. Hsinyi Hsiao at hsinyihs87@gms.tcu.edu.tw. Thank you for your consideration of this manuscript.

Sincerely,

Hsin-Yi Hsiao