

## CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN NURSING: UNLOCKING THE KEY FACTORS - A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Cultural competence is increasingly recognized as a vital skill for nurses to effectively interact with patients from diverse cultural backgrounds. This demand for cultural competence extends globally, with an increasing emphasis on nurses' ability to navigate cross-cultural encounters. There is a need for a greater comprehension of the essential components that influence nurses' development of cultural competence, despite the fact that research on cultural competence and its effect on patient satisfaction already existed

**Objective:** The objective of this study is to identify and understand the key factors influencing nurses' development of cultural competence.

**Method:** A systematic literature research was done to find the factors that might affect nurses' cultural competency in order to fill this gap.

**Results:** A search of electronic databases yielded 59 scientific articles, including six papers revealing a range of key factors influencing cultural competence in nursing practice. These factors encompassed various dimensions, including individual nurse attributes, educational interventions, and organizational support.

**Conclusion:** By recognizing these factors, healthcare organizations can design targeted interventions and educational programs to promote cultural competence among nursing professionals. Ultimately, this research contributes to the advancement of nursing practice and improves patient outcomes, fostering an inclusive and equitable healthcare environment for diverse populations.

### KEYWORDS

Culture, cultural competence, nursing cultural competence, influencing factors.

## PENDAHULUAN

A key component of modern healthcare delivery is cultural competency in nursing, which reflects the growing variety of patient populations and the requirement for healthcare personnel to interact productively with people from different cultural backgrounds. As front-line healthcare practitioners, nurses' capacity to work across cultural divides and deliver patient-centered care is crucial. Through a thorough assessment of the important elements influencing the development and use of cultural competency in nursing, this study tries to dive into the complex subject. This study aims to

shed light on how nursing education and healthcare institutions may better empower nurses with the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver effective care that is culturally sensitive.

People from various linguistic, sociocultural, and racial origins seek medical care, creating an unheard-of cultural mosaic in the healthcare industry. As a result, nurses in particular have the task of providing care that not only meets the medical needs of patients but also respects and takes into account their distinctive cultural viewpoints and preferences. Nursing professionals that are culturally competent have a strong grasp of

how cultural variations affect treatment adherence, communication, and patient outcomes in the healthcare setting.

Numerous studies throughout the years have emphasized the importance of cultural competency in raising patient satisfaction, decreasing health inequities, and strengthening patient-provider trust. A thorough analysis of the essential elements that support the growth of cultural competency in nursing, however, is absent. By examining the body of research already in existence, this systematic review seeks to close this gap by identifying the fundamental elements that support nurses' ability to successfully manage cultural diversity in healthcare settings.

## METHODS

This review describes the aspects offered to operationalize and quantify factors that could impact nurses' cultural competence. To find all relevant publications, a thorough literature search was conducted. The next section describes the review process.

### Research Design

In order to thoroughly analyze the important elements impacting the development and use of cultural competency in nursing, this study uses a systematic literature review method. To guarantee impartiality and rigor, the review procedure follows accepted standards for systematic reviews.

### Search Strategy

To identify relevant scientific articles, an extensive search was conducted across multiple

databases: CINAHLPlus, PubMed, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, and SAGE Journals. A combination of keywords and controlled vocabulary terms related to "cultural competence," "nursing," and "key factors" were used to ensure a comprehensive search. The search was limited to articles published within the last 10 years to ensure the inclusion of recent and relevant research.

### Study Selection Criteria

Crafting a refined narrative involves a meticulous curation process based on precise inclusion criteria. These criteria elegantly guide the selection of articles, shaping a coherent narrative centered on the development of cultural competence in nursing.

The primary criterion dictates that selected articles are published in English, ensuring global accessibility to their insights. Peer-reviewed status is a fundamental threshold, attesting to the scholarly rigor and authenticity of the chosen works. The narrative's core focus is on cultural competence in nursing, with each selected article delving deep into this theme. These articles collectively contribute to a multifaceted perspective, enriching the audience's understanding of cultural competence's significance in nursing practice. A pivotal criterion mandates that each article addresses key factors fostering cultural competence development. This ensures that the narrative transcends surface discussions, delving into the factors' complexities—be it self-awareness, educational strategies, effective communication, or institutional support, ensuring that only the most relevant and current contributions find their place. Among these criteria, a pivotal one dictates the exclusion of publications older than 10 years.

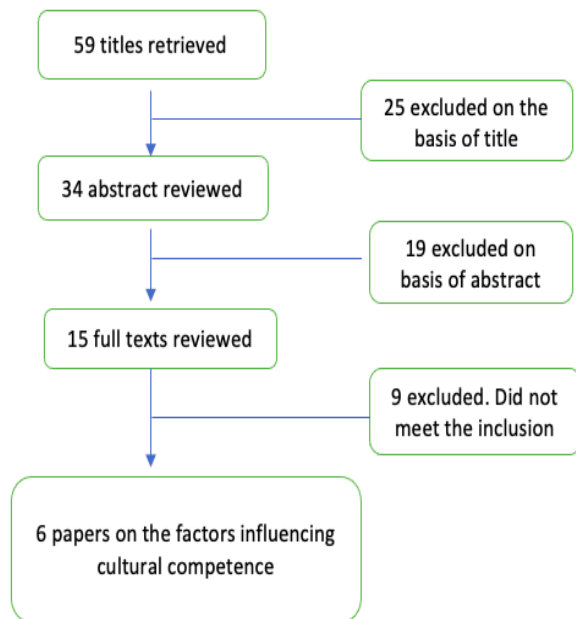


Figure 1 An overview of the literature review and search procedure

### Data Extraction

A structured data extraction form was developed to capture essential information from each selected article. The following data points were extracted:

Researchers retrieved the abstract and title of every reference obtained through literature review and had investigators carefully review them for eligibility to the study objectives. Articles that could not offer or quantitatively explore relationship involving the factors identified and nurses' cultural competence were disregarded during abstract evaluation. Researcher created the method to ensure that no abstraction will be rejected based just on the advice of one reviewer. When reviewers decided that a determination of qualification was not possible to make owing to a shortage of information, the entire article was listed for scrutiny. Consensus was used to resolve differences in the data extracted.

### Data Synthesis

The extracted data were synthesized using a thematic analysis approach. Similar themes, key factors, and patterns were identified across the selected articles. The identified factors were categorized and organized to provide a clear overview of the key themes that contribute to cultural competence development in nursing. Figure 1

### Ethical Consideration

This systematic analysis adheres to ethical principles even though it does not involve direct interaction with human subjects or the collection of new data. The study exclusively relies on publicly available information from existing sources, such as peer-reviewed publications and publicly accessible documents. As a result, the research process does not entail any direct involvement with individuals, thereby eliminating concerns related to participant consent, confidentiality, and privacy

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher looked at 59 articles published from 2012 to 2022. Six publications were determined to fit the inclusion requirement. Figure 1 depicts an overview of the literature search and evaluation procedure. Table 1, headed 'Factors affecting nurses' cultural competence,' lists papers that fulfill the requirement. We only highlighted articles that had accessibility to the study's whole text.

### Factors influencing nurses' cultural competence

The collection of publications analyzed focused on the factors that contributed to nurses'

cultural competence. The analyzed papers demonstrated widespread agreement among healthcare experts.

The research study investigated the factors

influencing the cultural competence of visiting nurses, with a focus on variables such as cultural education, empathy, and empowerment. Additionally, the study explored the impact of

Table 1. Factors affecting Nurses Cultural Competence

Reference	Sample size	CC tool	findings
Suk et al., (2018). Factors affecting the cultural competence of visiting nurses for rural multicultural family support in South Korea	143 nurses;	(Modified cultural awareness scale)	the cultural competence of visiting nurses was significantly influenced by experience of cultural education, empathy and empowerment.
Geleta (2018) Cultural competence and associated factors among Nurses working in tertiary hospitals in addis ababa, Ethiopia,	343 nurses	CCQN	Languages spoken beside Amharic and English, Previous cultural related education, Experience of caring for patients culturally and ethically different from one's own, Work experience besides current hospital, Interpreter service
Berie et al (2021) Cultural Competence Nursing Care and Its Associated Factors Among Nurses in Northern Ethiopia	516 nurses	NCCSQ	variables such as master education level, use of a language other than Amharic and English, frequency of caring diversified patient and feedback system in a hospital were significantly associated with the cultural competency nursing care.
Cai et al (2021) Cultural competence among nurses and its influencing factors: A cross-sectional study	325 nurses	(CCINC)	age, working experience, education, frequency of learning about different cultures via mass media, and duration of residing or visiting places with different cultures were identified as factors influencing cultural competence
Bunjitpimol, et al (2015). Factors affecting nursing cultural competency in private hospitals at Bangkok, Thailand	166 nurses	Self-administered questionnaire	It was found that knowledge of different cultures was affected by responsibility, age and level of confidence of the nurses ( $p < .05$ ) while attitude towards different cultures was affected by work shift, level of confidence and marital status of the nurses ( $p < .05$ ).
Geleta et al (2021). Cultural competence and its associated factors among nurses working in tertiary hospitals: a cross-sectional study	352 nurses	CCQNS	Participants' age, religion, level of education, work experience, current role, spoken languages beside Amharic and English, previous cultural care education, work experience beside the current hospital, the experience of caring for diverse patients and availability of interpreter service were the factors significantly associated with cultural competence

language proficiency, previous cultural education, experience with culturally diverse patients, work experience, and interpreter services on nurses' cultural competence. This discussion will delve into the results and implications of these findings

## **Nurses Attributes**

### **Empathy, and Empowerment**

The findings of the study underscore the pivotal role of empathy, and empowerment in shaping the cultural competence of visiting nurses. The presence of empathy is essential as it enables nurses to connect with patients on a deeper level, fostering trust and open communication. It is through empathy that nurses can truly grasp the emotional and cultural nuances of their patients' experiences. Additionally, empowerment empowers nurses to advocate for their patients, ensuring that their cultural and healthcare needs are met effectively. In essence, these three factors - cultural education, empathy, and empowerment - work in synergy to enhance the overall quality of care provided by visiting nurses, promoting better health outcomes and more positive patient-nurse relationships (Peek & Park, 2013; McCoy, 2006; Chung & Bemak, 2002).

### **Language Proficiency**

The research's emphasis on language proficiency as a significant contributor to cultural competence is a crucial insight for healthcare settings, particularly in diverse and multicultural environments. The ability of nurses to speak languages other than the dominant ones, such as Amharic and English, plays a vital role in bridging communication gaps with patients who may have

limited proficiency in those languages. Effective communication is at the heart of providing patient-centered care and ensuring that patients' needs, concerns, and preferences are fully understood. Multilingual nurses can establish rapport more easily, gather comprehensive medical histories, and provide clear instructions, ultimately leading to better patient outcomes. This finding underscores the practical importance of promoting and supporting multilingualism among healthcare professionals to enhance the cultural competence of healthcare delivery, a concept recognized and endorsed by Almutairi (2015) and Jonas et al. (2014). It serves as a reminder that language is a fundamental aspect of cultural competence and investing in language diversity among healthcare staff can significantly improve the quality of care and patient satisfaction.

### **Work experience**

The research findings regarding the positive correlation between nurses' overall work experience, including experiences outside their current hospital, and cultural competence underscore the invaluable role of a diverse professional background in enhancing the ability to provide culturally sensitive care. Nurses who have had the opportunity to work in various healthcare settings bring a wealth of experiences and exposure to different cultural contexts. This multifaceted experience enables them to develop a broader perspective and a deeper understanding of the intricacies of cultural diversity. They are more adept at recognizing and respecting the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of their patients, which in turn fosters trust and facilitates effective communication. It also allows them to adapt their care approaches to align with individual patient

needs, resulting in more patient-centered care. The research by Manal Al-Wahbi (2014) and Ber and Chipps (2014) reinforces the idea that a well-rounded professional background significantly contributes to nurses' cultural competence, highlighting the need for healthcare institutions to value and utilize the expertise gained through diverse work experiences among their nursing staff.

## Educational Intervention

### Cultural Education

The research finding that nurses who have received prior cultural education demonstrate higher levels of cultural competence reaffirms the critical role of education in healthcare. Cultural education equips nurses with the knowledge and awareness necessary to understand the diverse backgrounds and unique healthcare needs of their patients. This formal training provides a solid foundation upon which nurses can build their ability to deliver culturally sensitive care. This underscores the importance of ongoing training and development programs that are specifically tailored to enhance cultural competency among nurses. Such programs not only provide nurses with the knowledge and awareness needed to navigate diverse cultural contexts but also empower them to deliver more sensitive and effective care to patients from varied backgrounds. Continuous education in cultural competency is essential in a constantly evolving healthcare landscape, where patient populations continue to grow in diversity. Encouraging and prioritizing these educational initiatives within healthcare institutions can contribute to a more inclusive and patient-centered healthcare system.

Loftin et al. (2013), Sagar (2011), and Papadopoulos (2008) further support the idea that education and training are key drivers of cultural competence, highlighting the need for a proactive approach to equipping nurses with the necessary skills and understanding to meet the diverse needs of their patients.

### Master's Degree

In order to increase nurses' cultural competency, a master's degree in nursing is essential. With a diverse range of nursing master's specialist programs available in the country, such as Master of Nursing, Master of Nursing Management, Master of Nursing Science, etc., these academic pursuits offer an in-depth exploration of the impact of culture on the delivery of healthcare. The advanced education, specific courses, and extensive clinical experiences included in this academic endeavor provide nurses a deeper understanding of how culture affects healthcare delivery. These programs play a significant role in developing nursing professionals into culturally competent caregivers by providing them with crucial abilities in cross-cultural communication, cultural assessment, and the reduction of healthcare inequities. Additionally, master's degree programs frequently inculcate a strong dedication to advocacy and leadership, giving nurses the opportunity to push laws and procedures that promote cultural competency in hospitals and other healthcare facilities. Nurses with Master's degrees are well-positioned to provide culturally sensitive care, lead innovative practices, and significantly contribute to the mitigation of healthcare disparities within a diverse patient demographic because they have a broader perspective and a



strong foundation in research and critical thinking (Cicolini et al. 2015; Bastami et al. 2016; and Sagar, 2011).

## **Institutional Support**

### **Clinical Rotation**

The study's discovery that nurses with direct experience in caring for culturally diverse patients exhibit higher levels of cultural competence highlights the invaluable role of hands-on exposure in shaping healthcare professionals' ability to provide culturally sensitive care. This finding underscores the significance of healthcare institutions offering opportunities for nurses to work with diverse patient populations. Exposure to various cultural and ethical backgrounds not only enriches nurses' understanding of different perspectives but also helps them develop the practical skills needed to navigate cultural nuances in healthcare delivery. It promotes empathy, communication, and a deeper appreciation for the importance of tailoring care to align with patients' cultural beliefs and preferences. In this context, the hospitals and healthcare organizations should actively encourage and facilitate diverse patient experiences for their nursing staff, recognizing that firsthand exposure is a potent catalyst for fostering cultural competence. The insights from Lin et al. (2015), Kawashima (2008), and Songwathana et al. (2015) further reinforce the value of experiential learning in enhancing cultural competency among nurses, ultimately contributing to better patient outcomes and satisfaction.

### **Interpreter Services**

The study's identification of interpreter services as a critical factor in enhancing cultural

competence among nurses highlights the pivotal role of effective communication in providing culturally sensitive healthcare. In healthcare settings, where language barriers can impede understanding and compromise patient care, professional interpreter services become indispensable. Access to interpreters not only facilitates communication between healthcare providers and patients with limited English proficiency but also fosters trust and ensures that patients fully comprehend their diagnosis, treatment options, and healthcare instructions. This not only enhances the quality of care but also mitigates potential misunderstandings or errors. The research by Marion et al. (2016), Giger et al. (2007), and Jacobs et al. (2001) reinforces the significance of healthcare facilities prioritizing and providing access to interpreter services as a means to bridge these communication gaps, thus promoting cultural competence and ensuring equitable healthcare delivery for all patients, regardless of their language proficiency.

### **Limitations**

Since researcher only included papers in English that were written around 2012 to 2022, we may have missed some important research. For instance, since we excluded non-English articles, we were unable to ascertain whether any pertinent empirical study had been done in nations other than The US. Future evaluations might solve this problem by include content published in other languages. More analyses should be done in determining the most recent framework of cultural competence and to assess the most recent empirical research that examines the effects of cultural awareness in the

health system.

In spite of our concerted efforts to utilize a diverse array of databases, including CINAHLPlus, PubMed, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, and SAGE Journals, it remains plausible that certain relevant articles eluded our search. The choice of databases we employed may impact the comprehensiveness of our search outcomes and potentially introduce a selection bias. For future studies, it is recommended to mitigate this limitation by expanding the search scope to encompass additional databases, specialized journals, or repositories of grey literature. Collaboration with subject matter experts or professional librarians can prove invaluable in identifying a more comprehensive range of information sources.

Systematic reviews face a vulnerability to publication bias wherein studies demonstrating statistically significant results are more prone to being published compared to those reporting null or nonsignificant findings. This inherent bias has the potential to distort the amalgamated outcomes and overarching conclusions of the review. In order to address the issue of publication bias in future research endeavors, it is advisable to incorporate unpublished studies, conference abstracts, and reports from authoritative sources such as professional organizations and government agencies. Undertaking a comprehensive "grey literature" search can prove instrumental in capturing a broader spectrum of research findings.

## CONCLUSIONS

The research study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing the cultural

competence of visiting nurses. The results underscore the importance of cultural education, empathy, and empowerment, as well as language proficiency, experience with diverse patients, and the availability of interpreter services. Healthcare organizations should use these findings to inform their strategies for enhancing cultural competency among nursing staff, ultimately improving the quality of care provided to culturally diverse patient populations. Furthermore, ongoing training and education programs should be implemented to ensure nurses remain culturally competent throughout their careers.

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