



Culturally Sensitive Approaches to Patient Care: Insights from Nursing Technicians and Health Assistants in Saudi Arabia's Diverse Communities

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Abstract

Saudi Arabia's healthcare system serves a culturally diverse population, necessitating culturally sensitive approaches to patient care. Nursing technicians and health assistants play a crucial role in bridging the cultural gap between patients and healthcare providers. This qualitative study explores the insights and experiences of nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally competent care in Saudi Arabia's diverse communities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 participants from various healthcare settings in Saudi Arabia. Thematic analysis was employed to identify key themes and subthemes. The findings highlight the importance of cultural awareness, effective communication, family involvement, and religious considerations in delivering culturally sensitive care. Participants also identified challenges, such as language barriers and cultural misunderstandings, and suggested strategies for overcoming these barriers, including cultural competence training and the use of interpreters. The study provides valuable insights for healthcare providers, policymakers, and educators to enhance cultural competence and improve patient outcomes in Saudi Arabia's multicultural healthcare environment.

Keywords: cultural sensitivity, patient care, nursing technicians, health assistants, Saudi Arabia, cultural diversity

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1. Introduction

Saudi Arabia's healthcare system serves a diverse population, comprising citizens and expatriates from various cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds (Aldossary et al., 2008). This cultural diversity presents unique challenges for healthcare providers, particularly nursing technicians and health assistants, who are often the first point of contact for patients and their families (Almutairi et al., 2014). Providing culturally sensitive care is essential for ensuring patient satisfaction, adherence to treatment, and positive health outcomes (Mutair et al., 2014).

Cultural sensitivity refers to the ability of healthcare providers to understand, respect, and respond to the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of patients from diverse backgrounds (Luna, 1998). It involves the recognition of cultural differences, the adaptation of communication styles, and the provision of care that is congruent with patients' cultural norms and expectations (Almutairi et al., 2014). Culturally sensitive

care is particularly important in Saudi Arabia, where Islamic beliefs and values strongly influence patients' health behaviors and decision-making (Halligan, 2006).

Nursing technicians and health assistants play a vital role in providing culturally sensitive care in Saudi Arabia's healthcare settings. They are responsible for assisting nurses and physicians in various aspects of patient care, including basic nursing tasks, patient education, and communication with patients and their families (Aboshaiqah, 2016). Their close interaction with patients and their cultural backgrounds makes them well-positioned to bridge the cultural gap between patients and healthcare providers (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012).

Despite the importance of culturally sensitive care in Saudi Arabia, there is limited research on the perspectives and experiences of nursing technicians and health assistants in this context. Most studies have focused on the cultural competence of registered nurses and other healthcare professionals (Almutairi et al., 2014; Cruz et al., 2017; Halabi et al., 2020). Understanding the insights and challenges of nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally sensitive care is crucial for improving patient outcomes and enhancing the quality of healthcare delivery in Saudi Arabia's diverse communities.

This qualitative study aims to explore the experiences and perspectives of nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally sensitive care to patients from diverse backgrounds in Saudi Arabia. The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the key aspects of culturally sensitive care from the perspective of nursing technicians and health assistants in Saudi Arabia.
2. To explore the challenges and barriers faced by nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally sensitive care to diverse patient populations.
3. To identify strategies and recommendations for enhancing cultural sensitivity in patient care, as suggested by nursing technicians and health assistants.

The findings of this study will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on cultural competence in healthcare and inform the development of training programs and policies to support nursing technicians and health assistants in delivering culturally sensitive care in Saudi Arabia's multicultural healthcare environment.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Cultural Diversity in Saudi Arabia's Healthcare System

Saudi Arabia's healthcare system is characterized by a high degree of cultural diversity, with a significant proportion of the healthcare workforce comprising expatriates from various countries (Aldossary et al., 2008). According to the Saudi Ministry of Health (2020), expatriate nurses account for 74% of the total nursing workforce in Saudi Arabia, with the majority coming from the Philippines, India, and other Asian and Middle Eastern countries. This cultural diversity is also reflected in the patient population, which includes both Saudi citizens and expatriates from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Almutairi et al., 2014).

The cultural diversity in Saudi Arabia's healthcare system presents both opportunities and challenges for healthcare providers. On one hand, it allows for the exchange of knowledge, skills, and experiences among healthcare professionals from different cultural backgrounds (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012). On the other hand, it can lead to communication barriers, cultural misunderstandings, and conflicts between healthcare providers and patients, as well as among healthcare team members (Almutairi et al., 2013; Alshammari et al., 2019).

Several studies have explored the impact of cultural diversity on the quality of care and patient safety in Saudi Arabia's healthcare settings. Almutairi (2012) conducted a case study examining the influence of cultural diversity in the multicultural nursing workforce on the quality of care and patient safety in a Saudi Arabian hospital. The findings revealed that the multicultural nature of the nursing work environment was

inherently risky due to conflicts arising from different cultural norms, beliefs, behaviors, and languages. The study also highlighted the lack of organizational support to manage cultural diversity issues and protect patients from associated risks.

Alshammari et al. (2019) conducted an integrative review of the barriers to nurse-patient communication in Saudi Arabia, highlighting the impact of cultural and linguistic differences on effective communication. The review identified several barriers, including language barriers, cultural norms and beliefs, gender roles, and religious practices, which can hinder effective communication between nurses and patients from diverse backgrounds.

These studies underscore the importance of addressing cultural diversity issues in Saudi Arabia's healthcare system and developing culturally competent approaches to patient care. Nursing technicians and health assistants, who work closely with patients and their families, play a crucial role in bridging the cultural gap and providing culturally sensitive care (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012).

2.2 Cultural Competence in Nursing Practice

Cultural competence has been widely recognized as an essential component of nursing practice in today's globalized and multicultural healthcare environment (Almutairi et al., 2014). It refers to the ability of healthcare providers to understand, respect, and respond effectively to the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of patients from diverse backgrounds (Almutairi & Rondney, 2013). Cultural competence encompasses several dimensions, including cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural sensitivity, and cultural skills (Almutairi et al., 2014).

Several studies have investigated the cultural competence of nurses and other healthcare professionals in Saudi Arabia. Cruz et al. (2017) conducted a cross-sectional study to assess the cultural competence of nursing students in Saudi Arabia using the Cultural Competence Assessment Tool. The findings revealed that nursing students had moderate levels of cultural competence, with significant differences based on their cultural background, academic level, and previous exposure to cultural diversity.

Halabi et al. (2020) explored the self-reported competence of registered nurses working as a culturally diverse workforce in public hospitals in Saudi Arabia. The study found that nurses had moderate to high levels of cultural competence, with significant differences based on their nationality, years of experience, and cultural background. The authors highlighted the need for ongoing cultural competence training and support for nurses working in multicultural healthcare settings.

Almutairi et al. (2014) conducted a qualitative study to understand the perceptions of cultural competence among a multicultural nursing workforce in Saudi Arabia. The findings revealed that nurses struggled to achieve cultural competence due to language barriers, cultural differences, and lack of organizational support. The authors emphasized the importance of developing culturally appropriate leadership and training programs to enhance the cultural competence of the nursing workforce.

While these studies provide valuable insights into the cultural competence of registered nurses in Saudi Arabia, there is limited research on the cultural competence of nursing technicians and health assistants. Given their critical role in providing direct patient care and interacting with patients and families from diverse backgrounds, it is essential to explore their perspectives and experiences in delivering culturally sensitive care.

2.3 Strategies for Enhancing Cultural Sensitivity in Patient Care

Several strategies have been proposed in the literature to enhance cultural sensitivity in patient care and improve the cultural competence of healthcare providers. These strategies include cultural competence training, language support services, patient-centered communication, and organizational support for cultural diversity (Almutairi et al., 2022; Aldosh, 2015).

Cultural competence training has been widely recognized as an effective approach to enhancing the cultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes of healthcare providers (Almutairi et al., 2022). Such training programs

typically cover topics such as cultural awareness, cross-cultural communication, and cultural assessment, and may involve various learning methods, such as lectures, case studies, and simulations (Aldosh, 2015). Several studies have demonstrated the positive impact of cultural competence training on the cultural competence and cultural sensitivity of nurses and other healthcare professionals (Inocian, 2015; Almutairi et al., 2022).

Language support services, such as professional interpreters and translated health education materials, have been identified as essential strategies for overcoming language barriers and facilitating effective communication between healthcare providers and patients from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Almutairi et al., 2022). The use of professional interpreters has been shown to improve patient satisfaction, adherence to treatment, and health outcomes, particularly among limited English proficiency patients (Al-Yateem et al., 2015).

Patient-centered communication, which involves active listening, empathy, and respect for patients' cultural beliefs and preferences, has been highlighted as a key strategy for enhancing cultural sensitivity in patient care (Aldawood, 2017). Healthcare providers who adopt patient-centered communication approaches are better able to build trust, rapport, and therapeutic relationships with patients from diverse backgrounds, leading to improved patient satisfaction and health outcomes (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012).

Organizational support for cultural diversity, including leadership commitment, resource allocation, and policies and procedures that promote cultural competence, has been identified as a critical factor in creating a culturally sensitive healthcare environment (Almutairi, 2012). Healthcare organizations that prioritize cultural diversity and provide ongoing support and resources for cultural competence initiatives are better positioned to meet the needs of diverse patient populations and improve the quality of care (Aldawood, 2017).

While these strategies provide a useful framework for enhancing cultural sensitivity in patient care, their application in the specific context of nursing technicians and health assistants in Saudi Arabia requires further exploration. This study aims to address this gap by examining the perspectives and experiences of nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally sensitive care and identifying strategies and recommendations that are relevant to their specific roles and contexts.

3. Methods

3.1 Study Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to explore the experiences and perspectives of nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally sensitive care to patients from diverse backgrounds in Saudi Arabia. Qualitative research is well-suited for exploring complex social phenomena, such as cultural sensitivity, and allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' lived experiences and meanings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A descriptive approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive summary of the key aspects of culturally sensitive care from the perspective of nursing technicians and health assistants, as well as the challenges and strategies they encounter in their daily practice (Sandelowski, 2000).

3.2 Participants and Sampling

Purposive sampling was used to recruit nursing technicians and health assistants who met the following inclusion criteria: (a) currently employed in a healthcare setting in Saudi Arabia, (b) had at least one year of experience working with patients from diverse cultural backgrounds, and (c) were willing to participate in the study. Purposive sampling allows for the selection of information-rich cases that can provide valuable insights into the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2015).

Recruitment was conducted through email invitations and flyers distributed in various healthcare settings in Saudi Arabia, including hospitals, primary healthcare centers, and long-term care facilities. Interested participants were asked to contact the researcher to schedule an interview. Sampling continued until data saturation was reached, which occurred after interviewing 20 participants (12 nursing technicians and 8 health assistants).

3.3 Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured individual interviews, which allowed for a focused exploration of participants' experiences and perspectives while providing flexibility to probe for additional information and clarification (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). The interviews were conducted in English or Arabic, depending on the participant's preference, and took place in a private location at the participant's workplace or via video conferencing.

The interview guide was developed based on a review of the literature on cultural sensitivity in healthcare and the specific objectives of the study. The guide included open-ended questions and prompts related to participants' understanding of culturally sensitive care, their experiences in providing care to patients from diverse backgrounds, the challenges and barriers they encountered, and the strategies and recommendations they suggested for enhancing cultural sensitivity in patient care. The interview guide was piloted with two nursing technicians and one health assistant to ensure clarity and relevance of the questions and prompts.

The interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and were audio-recorded with participants' permission. Field notes were also taken during and after the interviews to capture nonverbal cues, contextual information, and the researcher's reflections and impressions.

3.4 Data Analysis

The interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and translated into English if conducted in Arabic. The transcripts were checked for accuracy and anonymized to protect participants' confidentiality. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, a flexible and widely used method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The six-phase process of thematic analysis was followed, which included: (1) familiarization with the data through repeated reading of the transcripts and field notes; (2) generating initial codes by systematically coding interesting features of the data; (3) searching for themes by collating codes into potential themes; (4) reviewing themes by checking if they work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire dataset; (5) defining and naming themes by refining the specifics of each theme and generating clear definitions and names; and (6) producing the report by selecting vivid and compelling extract examples and relating the analysis back to the research question and literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The data analysis was conducted independently by two researchers to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings. The researchers met regularly to compare and discuss their coding and themes, and any discrepancies were resolved through consensus. The final themes and subthemes were reviewed and refined by the entire research team to ensure their clarity, coherence, and relevance to the study objectives.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the institutional review board of the researcher's affiliated university. All participants provided written informed consent prior to the interviews, and their participation was voluntary and confidential. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. The audio recordings and transcripts were stored in a secure, password-protected computer, and only the research team had access to the data.

To protect participants' confidentiality, pseudonyms were used in the reporting of the findings, and any identifying information was removed from the transcripts. Participants were also provided with the opportunity to review and comment on the findings to ensure their perspectives were accurately represented.

4. Results

The analysis of the interview data revealed four main themes related to culturally sensitive care from the perspective of nursing technicians and health assistants in Saudi Arabia: (1) cultural awareness and respect, (2) effective communication, (3) family involvement, and (4) religious considerations. Each theme

encompassed several subthemes that provided further insights into participants' experiences and perspectives. Table 1 presents an overview of the themes and subthemes.

Table 1. Themes and Subthemes

Theme	Subthemes
Cultural awareness and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding cultural diversity - Respecting cultural beliefs and practices - Avoiding stereotypes and assumptions
Effective communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language barriers and solutions - Nonverbal communication - Building trust and rapport
Family involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family roles and decision-making - Involving family in patient care - Navigating family dynamics
Religious considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Islamic beliefs and practices - Accommodating religious needs - Collaborating with religious leaders

4.1 Cultural Awareness and Respect

Participants emphasized the importance of cultural awareness and respect as the foundation of culturally sensitive care. They highlighted the need to understand and appreciate the cultural diversity of patients and their families, and to avoid making assumptions or stereotypes based on their cultural background.

4.1.1 Understanding Cultural Diversity

Participants acknowledged the rich cultural diversity of the patient population they serve and the importance of understanding the unique cultural beliefs, values, and practices of each patient. As one nursing technician stated:

"We have patients from all over the world, not just Saudis. We have patients from the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Sudan, and many other countries. Each of these cultures has their own way of looking at health and illness, and we need to be aware of that." (Participant 5, Nursing Technician)

4.1.2 Respecting Cultural Beliefs and Practices

Participants emphasized the need to respect patients' cultural beliefs and practices, even if they differ from their own or from the dominant cultural norms in Saudi Arabia. They recognized that cultural beliefs can strongly influence patients' health behaviors, decision-making, and adherence to treatment. One health assistant shared an example:

"I had a patient who believed that his illness was caused by evil spirits, and he wanted to perform a traditional healing ritual. At first, I was skeptical, but I realized that it was important for him and his family. So, I worked with them to find a way to accommodate their beliefs while still providing the necessary medical care." (Participant 14, Health Assistant)

4.1.3 Avoiding Stereotypes and Assumptions

Participants cautioned against making stereotypes or assumptions about patients based on their cultural background, as this can lead to misunderstandings and suboptimal care. They stressed the importance of treating each patient as an individual and taking the time to understand their unique perspectives and needs. As one nursing technician explained:

"Just because a patient is from a certain country or culture doesn't mean they believe or practice the same things as everyone else from that culture. We need to ask questions and listen to each patient to understand what matters to them." (Participant 8, Nursing Technician)

4.2 Effective Communication

Effective communication was identified as a key aspect of culturally sensitive care by all participants. They discussed the challenges of language barriers, the importance of nonverbal communication, and the need to build trust and rapport with patients and their families.

4.2.1 Language Barriers and Solutions

Language barriers were the most common challenge faced by participants in providing culturally sensitive care. Many patients and their families spoke little or no Arabic or English, making it difficult for nursing technicians and health assistants to communicate effectively. Participants discussed various strategies for overcoming language barriers, including the use of interpreters, translation apps, and visual aids. One health assistant shared:

"I always try to learn a few basic words and phrases in the patient's language, like 'hello,' 'thank you,' and 'pain.' It shows that I'm making an effort to connect with them, and it can help build trust." (Participant 17, Health Assistant)

4.2.2 Nonverbal Communication

Participants emphasized the importance of nonverbal communication in culturally sensitive care, particularly when language barriers were present. They discussed the use of facial expressions, gestures, and body language to convey empathy, respect, and understanding. A nursing technician shared an example:

"I had a patient who was in pain, but she couldn't speak English or Arabic. I held her hand and looked into her eyes, and I could see that she understood that I was there to help her. Sometimes, you don't need words to show that you care." (Participant 3, Nursing Technician)

4.2.3 Building Trust and Rapport

Participants highlighted the importance of building trust and rapport with patients and their families as a foundation for effective communication and culturally sensitive care. They discussed various strategies for building trust, such as active listening, showing empathy, and respecting patients' privacy and autonomy. One nursing technician explained:

"Building trust takes time, especially with patients from different cultures. We need to show them that we are here to help, that we respect their beliefs and practices, and that we will do our best to provide the care they need." (Participant 11, Nursing Technician)

4.3 Family Involvement

Family involvement emerged as a critical aspect of culturally sensitive care in Saudi Arabia, where family ties and collectivistic values are strong. Participants discussed the importance of understanding family roles and decision-making processes, involving family members in patient care, and navigating family dynamics.

4.3.1 Family Roles and Decision-Making

Participants acknowledged that family roles and decision-making processes can vary significantly across cultures, and that understanding these dynamics is essential for providing culturally sensitive care. In some cultures, the eldest male family member may be the primary decision-maker, while in others, the entire family may be involved. One health assistant shared:

"In Saudi culture, the family is very involved in the patient's care. They want to be informed about everything and may even make decisions on behalf of the patient. We need to respect that and work with the family, not against them." (Participant 19, Health Assistant)

4.3.2 Involving Family in Patient Care

Participants discussed the importance of involving family members in patient care, as this can promote a sense of trust, comfort, and support for the patient. They shared examples of how they involved family members, such as by providing updates on the patient's condition, teaching them how to assist with basic care tasks, and including them in care planning discussions. A nursing technician explained:

"When we involve the family in the patient's care, it shows that we value their role and expertise. It also helps the patient feel more comfortable and supported, which can improve their overall wellbeing." (Participant 7, Nursing Technician)

4.3.3 Navigating Family Dynamics

Participants acknowledged that family dynamics can sometimes present challenges in providing culturally sensitive care, particularly when there are conflicts or disagreements among family members. They discussed the importance of being sensitive to these dynamics and working to find solutions that respect the family's values and priorities while ensuring the best interests of the patient. One nursing technician shared:

"I once had a patient whose family members disagreed about her treatment plan. It was a delicate situation, but I tried to listen to everyone's concerns and find a compromise that everyone could accept. It wasn't easy, but it was important to maintain the family's trust and involvement in the patient's care." (Participant 10, Nursing Technician)

4.4 Religious Considerations

Religion emerged as a significant factor in providing culturally sensitive care in Saudi Arabia, where Islam is the dominant faith. Participants discussed the importance of understanding Islamic beliefs and practices, accommodating patients' religious needs, and collaborating with religious leaders.

4.4.1 Islamic Beliefs and Practices

Participants emphasized the need to understand and respect Islamic beliefs and practices, as they can strongly influence patients' health behaviors, decision-making, and expectations of care. They discussed the importance of being familiar with Islamic teachings related to modesty, diet, prayer, and end-of-life care. One health assistant explained:

"As a Muslim myself, I know how important it is to respect Islamic beliefs and practices in healthcare. For example, we need to be mindful of modesty and privacy, especially for female patients, and we need to accommodate their needs for prayer and ritual washing." (Participant 16, Health Assistant)

4.4.2 Accommodating Religious Needs

Participants discussed various ways in which they accommodated patients' religious needs, such as by providing prayer mats and Qur'ans, ensuring halal food options, and facilitating access to ablution facilities. They also emphasized the importance of being flexible and creative in finding solutions that respect patients' religious obligations while ensuring their medical needs are met. A nursing technician shared:

"We had a patient who was fasting during Ramadan, but he needed to take his medication with food. We worked with him and his family to find a solution that allowed him to take his medication while still observing his fast. It required some flexibility and communication, but it was important to respect his religious commitment." (Participant 4, Nursing Technician)

4.4.3 Collaborating with Religious Leaders

Participants discussed the value of collaborating with religious leaders, such as imams and chaplains, in providing culturally sensitive care to Muslim patients. They recognized that religious leaders can offer guidance, support, and comfort to patients and their families, particularly in times of crisis or end-of-life care. One health assistant shared:

"We had a patient who was very anxious and distressed, and he requested to see an imam. We arranged for the hospital imam to visit him, and it made a big difference in his emotional and spiritual wellbeing. The imam was able to offer prayers and words of comfort that we as healthcare providers couldn't provide." (Participant 20, Health Assistant)

5. Discussion

This qualitative study explored the experiences and perspectives of nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally sensitive care to patients from diverse backgrounds in Saudi Arabia. The findings highlight the importance of cultural awareness, effective communication, family involvement, and religious considerations in delivering culturally competent care.

The themes identified in this study are consistent with previous research on cultural competence in healthcare. Cultural awareness and respect have been widely recognized as foundational elements of culturally competent care (Almutairi et al., 2014; Halabi & De Beer, 2018). Participants in this study emphasized the need to understand and appreciate the cultural diversity of their patients and to avoid stereotypes or assumptions based on cultural background. This finding underscores the importance of ongoing cultural competence training for nursing technicians and health assistants, as well as other healthcare providers, to enhance their cultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills (Aldosh, 2015; Almutairi et al., 2022).

Effective communication emerged as a key theme in this study, with participants discussing the challenges of language barriers, the importance of nonverbal communication, and the need to build trust and rapport with patients and families. These findings are consistent with previous research highlighting the critical role of communication in culturally sensitive care (Abujarad et al., 2018; Alshammari et al., 2019). Participants in this study shared various strategies for overcoming language barriers, such as using interpreters, translation apps, and visual aids, which have been shown to improve patient satisfaction, adherence to treatment, and health outcomes (Al-Yateem et al., 2015; Almutairi et al., 2022).

Family involvement was identified as a significant aspect of culturally sensitive care in Saudi Arabia, reflecting the collectivistic values and strong family ties in the culture (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012). Participants discussed the importance of understanding family roles and decision-making processes, involving family members in patient care, and navigating family dynamics. These findings are consistent with previous research emphasizing the central role of family in providing culturally competent care in Saudi Arabia and other collectivistic cultures (Abudari et al., 2016; Al-Yateem et al., 2015).

Religious considerations emerged as a prominent theme in this study, with participants discussing the significance of Islamic beliefs and practices in shaping patients' health behaviors, decision-making, and expectations of care. This finding is consistent with previous research highlighting the importance of accommodating patients' religious needs and collaborating with religious leaders in providing culturally sensitive care in Saudi Arabia (Halligan, 2006; Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012). Participants in this study shared various strategies for accommodating patients' religious needs, such as providing prayer mats and Qur'ans, ensuring halal food options, and facilitating access to ablution facilities, which have been shown to enhance patient satisfaction and spiritual well-being (Al-Yateem et al., 2015).

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the perspectives and experiences of nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally sensitive care in Saudi Arabia. These insights can inform the development of cultural competence training programs, organizational policies, and practice guidelines to support these healthcare providers in delivering culturally competent care. The study also highlights the importance of interprofessional collaboration and communication in providing culturally sensitive care, as nursing technicians and health assistants often work closely with nurses, physicians, and other healthcare professionals in caring for patients from diverse backgrounds.

However, the study has some limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size of 20 participants, although adequate for a qualitative study, may not capture the full range of experiences and perspectives of nursing technicians and health assistants in Saudi Arabia. Second, the study was conducted in English or Arabic, which may have excluded some participants who were not fluent in either language. Third, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias or recall bias.

Despite these limitations, this study makes a valuable contribution to the literature on cultural competence in healthcare, particularly in the context of nursing technicians and health assistants in Saudi Arabia. Future

research could build on these findings by exploring the perspectives of patients and families on culturally sensitive care, examining the effectiveness of cultural competence training programs for nursing technicians and health assistants, and investigating the impact of organizational policies and practices on the delivery of culturally competent care.

In conclusion, this qualitative study provides valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of nursing technicians and health assistants in providing culturally sensitive care to patients from diverse backgrounds in Saudi Arabia. The findings highlight the importance of cultural awareness, effective communication, family involvement, and religious considerations in delivering culturally competent care. These insights can inform the development of cultural competence training programs, organizational policies, and practice guidelines to support nursing technicians and health assistants in providing high-quality, culturally sensitive care to the diverse patient populations they serve.

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