

Advanced practice in nursing cultural competence in the field of advanced practic...

[Health & Medicine](#), [Nursing](#)



Culture is an essential component of the world because it provides individuals with their own ways of dealing with daily activities. Culture also allows each country to uphold their own principles and attitudes, based on how they perceive issues.

Analysts consider culture as a mental scheme that has shaped each population to its own characteristic features. In the field of nursing, it is important to understand the concept of culture because these healthcare professionals are responsible for providing medical services to any individual in need, regardless of cultural background (Torres, 2009).

It is thus imperative that advanced practice nurses are adept with the differences in culture, in order for them to deliver the best quality of healthcare that could be provided to the patient.

Cultural competence pertains to the ability to recognize differences in culture and still be able to professionally deliver their services to the client, regardless of ethnic background (Verma et al., 2009). It has been earlier established that cultural competence can be achieved in several ways.

One of the most straightforward methods is through learning different cultures and applying such knowledge at the actual workplace (Campinha-Bacote, 2009).

It should be noted that patients from other countries who seek medical attention in the hospital may carry different values, as well as beliefs, from what is commonly accepted or considered as a norm. The valuable knowledge and understanding of these differences may thus influence the

success of treatment by influencing the patient to adhere to the suggested therapy (Pumariega et al., 2009).

The issue of cultural competence is a relatively new concept in the field of nursing and this is mainly due to the significant increase in migration around the world (Sperber, 2009). It is thus normal to see that a city, state or country is inhabited by several nationalities because these migrants opted to find a better place for them to settle in.

In addition, it is a common occurrence that these recent migrants succumb to medical conditions and thus they need to seek medical attention at the nearest healthcare institution. It may thus be possible that a foreign-born patient will seem shocked at the method of medical attention that is given to him in a Westernized hospital (Im et al., 2009).

Cultural competence is thus a critical factor in the healthcare field because it may influence both the success of the treatment and the extent of cost for provide healthcare to the patient (Werkmeister-Rozas and Klein, 2009).

There are several theories that attempt to explain the concept of cultural competence. The theory concocted by Campinha-Bacote (1994) describes that attainment of competence in culture is gained through a continuous effort in learning and applying the lessons to the nursing professional immediate environment.

This theory is associated with the gain of awareness there are definitely differences in cultural backgrounds among individuals and thus any

interactions between individuals should be characterized with recognition of these differences.

Nursing professionals should thus be actively conscious of the attitudes and beliefs of their patients and this may be observed through the mutual exchange that the nursing professional will impart to the patient during medical treatment.

The theory also teaches the meaning of cultural knowledge, which pertains to the process of accepting that certain ethnic groups follows particular beliefs that may or may not be parallel to what is considered the norm in the Western world.

The Campinha-Bacote theory also educates the nursing professional of the concept of cultural skill. This topic involves the actual application of the lessons that the nursing professional has learned on the patient that he is currently taking care of.

The nursing professional has been trained to recognize a number of cultural backgrounds and thus it is expected that this healthcare worker could positively identify the patient's culture through the answers he provides to him from interviewing him upon presentation at the hospital.

The Campinha-Bacote theory also employs a form of exposure of the nursing professional to different cultures. This may be done in the form of engagement in a nursing care facility that is known to maintain patients of varied cultural backgrounds. The exposure of the nursing trainee to such

environment may be helpful in instilling a sense of variation that is normally present in all situations and places around the world.

Another theory that explains the concept of cultural competence is that designed by Lipson and Steiger (1996). This alternative theory is based on the concept the self-care is a universal characteristic that encompasses all cultural backgrounds. The approach thus upholds the idea that every individual strives to take care of themselves, as well as the other members of their family.

Taking care and giving concern to the community and the society is also covered under the theory of Lipson and Steiger (1996). The theory thus believes every individual is responsible for maintaining a healthy lifestyle, regardless of cultural backgrounds.

Processes such as health promotion, as well as prevention of disease, are thus included in this theory. It is also expected that the advanced practice nurse carries a perspective that there are different cultures that exist in society and that three major elements comprise this approach.

The element of self pertains to the personal principles and morals of a patient, which in turn influence his interaction with other people. The element of the other individual identifies the need to recognize and understand the patient himself, as well as his immediate family.

This connection needs to be considered because every individual is interconnected to another individual as he continuously circulates in his own particular social unit.

The third element, known as the context, pertains to the employment of the knowledge that the advanced practice nurse has acquired regarding cultural differences and competence. The combination of these three elements thus ensures the success in understanding cultures of patients.

The Banks and McGee theory (1989) describes that competency in the area of culture involves the application of care, as well as safety, in the treatment of different ethnicities. Culture competence is thus a gradual process of learning different cultures, as well as reflecting on the prime variations of each human population.

The understanding of cultures allows an advanced practice nurse to instill a caring and safe environment for every patient. The concept of learning that is associated with the Banks and McGee theory (1989) thus requires that an advanced practice nurse is adept in identifying the cultural background of the patient, including the type of language that he commonly employs for communication.

In cases when the nursing professional is not familiar with the patient's language, he should immediately find an interpreter who can help in communicating what is essential to be performed in the hospital.

The theory thus upholds an important concept in cultural competency and that is the advanced practice nurse should be aware and recognize his responsibility to perform additional measures in order to make the patient feel that he is being cared for and understood as well.

It will be difficult to treat a patient who does not understand a single word that the physician or nurse is doing, especially when it involves administration of a drug or conducting a medical test.

If the patient understands the reasons behind a specific medical procedure, it is most likely that the patient will allow the healthcare professionals to conduct this procedure and would even adhere to any directives that the physician or nurse would suggest.

Cultural competency is an important area in the field of healthcare because it dissolves any barriers that may hinder the administration of a medical treatment.

Awareness and understanding of difficulty cultures also expand an advanced practice nurse to be more accepting of different backgrounds and perform their tasks without prejudice or bias towards the patient. Cultural competency may also indirectly influence the success of a medical treatment and also facilitate in promoting patient adherence.

References

Banks, J. A. and McGee, C. A. (1989). *Multicultural education*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Campinha-Bacote, J. (1994). Cultural competence in psychiatric mental health nursing. *Nursing Clinics of North America*, 29, 1-8.

Campinha-Bacote, J. (2009). A culturally competent model of care for African Americans. *Urology and Nursing*, 29, 49-54.