


# Understanding Nursing Students' Competency in Working with Culturally Diverse Populations: A Palestinian Perspective

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## Abstract

**Background:** Understanding cultural competency is essential for providing competent, culturally sensitive care for improving health outcomes. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine nursing students' competency in working with culturally diverse populations. **Methods:** A cross-sectional design was conducted among 243 nursing students during their internship. The Cultural Competence Assessment Scale and a perception of student competency scale were used. **Results:** The study revealed that nursing students hold a high level of behavioral competence and awareness, with mean scores of  $4.99 \pm 0.84$  and  $4.77 \pm 0.52$ , respectively. Nursing students' cultural competency behavior was significantly predicted by resident location and cultural awareness, as revealed by multivariable regression analysis. **Conclusion:** Nurses must deliver culturally competent health care to individuals from a variety of backgrounds. It is critical to implement efficient interventions, including focused educational programs, aimed at improving students' readiness to offer equitable and culturally sensitive care to various patient populations.

## Keywords

Competency, cultural competency, nursing student

## Introduction

Cultural competency in healthcare is a broad term that includes all necessary elements for delivering competent care in a range of cultural contexts (Nair & Adetayo, 2019). Cultural competence requires learning about and applying awareness of patients' customs, traditions, rituals, beliefs, and medical practices (Knežević et al., 2022; Melendres, 2022).

Acceptance and respect for cultural diversity is crucial to cultural competency since it promotes an inclusive and dignified environment for all patients. Furthermore, cultural competency goes beyond understanding and includes customizing care delivery strategies to suit each patient's unique cultural preferences and demands (Stubbe, 2020). By adhering to these guidelines, medical professionals can make sure that their procedures reflect the cultural backgrounds of their patients, fostering rapport and trust, which will improve health outcomes (Abrisham, 2018; Stubbe, 2020).

According to Antón-Solanas et al. (2021), culturally competent nursing care is a comprehensive approach that goes beyond merely being aware of cultural diversity to actively integrate specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary

for giving diverse patient populations equitable and appropriate care. Developing specific abilities in cross-cultural evaluation, care delivery, and communication is another requirement for providing nursing care that is culturally competent. By using these abilities, nurses may successfully negotiate cultural differences and modify their care to suit the requirements of each patient, which promotes cooperation and trust (Sharifi et al., 2019). Furthermore, openness, empathy, and respect for people from diverse cultural origins are the cornerstones of culturally competent nursing care. Regardless of the patient's cultural identification or background, nurses may guarantee that care is not only suitable but also equal by emulating these qualities. In addition to improving patient outcomes and satisfaction, this all-encompassing approach to nursing care helps advance health equity in healthcare systems (Lee et al., 2020a).

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