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Patient Safety Culture and Patient Safety Outcomes in Saudi Arabia: Perceptions of Expatriate Nurses

Amal A. Alharbi, RN, MSN

V. Susan Dahinten, PhD, RN

School of Nursing, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Background: There has been extensive research into the effects of safety culture on patient safety internationally, but findings have been inconsistent (Lee et al. 2019), and limited attention has been given to how nurses of different nationalities or cultural backgrounds may view safety culture and patient outcomes. In Saudi Arabia, expatriate nurses form the majority of the nursing force. Although expatriate status has been studied in relation to nurse retention in Saudi Arabia (e.g., Albougami et al., 2020), we hypothesized that it may also be associated with perceptions of patient safety culture, quality of care, and patient safety outcomes.

Purpose: This study examined the relationships between perceptions of patient safety culture, quality of care, and patient safety among expatriate nurses in Saudi Arabia after controlling for nurse characteristics including nationality, and the nurses' work environment.

Methods: This correlational study used cross-sectional data collected from registered nurses working in one multi-specialty hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Participants completed an online survey that assessed their perceptions of safety culture (using items from the AHRQ Hospital Survey on Patient Safety Culture), quality of care, and patient safety. The survey also asked about expatriate status and country where the nurses received their basic nursing education. As 97% of the respondents had been educated in India or Pakistan (36%, n=180) or the Philippines (61%, n=308), and self-identified as non-Saudi, this study focused on these two groups for a final sample of 488 expatriate nurses. (Country where basic nursing education was received was used as a proxy for nationality for expatriate nurses.) Hierarchical logistic regression was conducted to examine the relationships between nationality, safety culture, and quality of care and patient safety, after controlling for other nurse characteristics and the nurses' work environment (measured with the *PES-NWI*; Lake, 2002)

Results: T-test results showed that expatriate nurses from India/Pakistan rated patient safety culture, quality of care and patient safety significantly higher than nurses from the Philippines. They also had more years nursing experience (M = 14.3 vs 8.6) and had been working on their current unit longer (M = 8.3 vs 3.9 years), but were less likely to have a nursing degree than nurses from the Philippines (15.9% vs 99.7%). Hierarchical logistic regression results showed that nationality (OR=5.03) and patient safety culture (OR = 2.28) were significant predictors of perceived quality of care as very good/excellent even after accounting for the nurses' work environment (OR = 2.03) and other nurse demographic characteristics. Only patient safety culture (OR = 2.43) and nurses' work environment (OR = 2.25) were significant predictors of perceived patient safety after accounting for other predictors.

Conclusion: Perceptions of patient safety culture are predictive of both perceived quality of care and patient safety, even after accounting for the broader conditions of

nurses' work environments. However, it is important to account for nationality as well as expatriate status, as cultural differences or past nursing experiences may influence expectations and perceptions of safety culture, quality of care, and patient safety.

Title:

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Keywords:

Expatriate nurses, Quality of care and Safety culture

Abstract Summary:

This study examined the relationships between perceptions of patient safety culture, quality of care, and patient safety among expatriate nurses in Saudi Arabia. Results indicated that differences in cultural background were significantly associated with differences in nurses' perceptions of patient safety culture, quality of care, and patient safety.

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First Primary Presenting Author

Primary Presenting Author

Amal A. Alharbi, RN, MSN
 University of British Columbia
 School of Nursing
 PhD Student
 Vancouver, British Columbia
 Canada

Author Summary: Amal Alharbi is currently a PhD student at the University of British Columbia, School of Nursing, Canada, who is also a Lecturer at the University of Tabuk, Department of Nursing, Saudi Arabia. She is keenly interested in advancing nursing profession in Saudi Arabia, with a focus on healthcare services and policy research. Her program of research focuses on health systems and improving the quality and safety of patient care delivery.

Second Author

V. Susan Dahinten, PhD, RN
 University of British Columbia
 School of Nursing
 Associate Professor
 Vancouver, British Columbia
 Canada

Author Summary: Dr. Dahinten is an Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. The recent focus of her research has been the influence of nurse work environments on patient safety and nurse outcomes.