

THE ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HEALTH SERVICES: A LITERATURE REVIEW ON CULTURAL AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG MEDICAL PERSONNEL IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the role of intercultural communication in improving the quality of health services in Indonesia through a literature review on cultural awareness and intercultural communication skills among medical personnel. In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, health services require medical personnel to be able to interact with patients from various cultural backgrounds effectively, empathetically, and adaptively. This literature study collects and analyses various scientific sources, including journals, books, and research reports from the last 5 to 10 years. The results of the study show that cultural awareness is an important basis for medical personnel in understanding the values, beliefs, and health behaviours of patients, while intercultural communication skills play a role in translating this understanding into effective communication practices that respect differences. The integration of these two aspects has been proven to increase patient trust, satisfaction, and compliance with treatment, which ultimately strengthens the quality of healthcare services. This study recommends the need for policies and continuous training programmes that integrate intercultural communication competencies into the education system and professional practice of healthcare workers in Indonesia, thereby creating more inclusive, equitable, and humane healthcare services.

Keywords: intercultural communication, cultural awareness, medical personnel, communication skills, quality of health services, Indonesia

Introduction

Indonesia is known as a diverse nation with a wide variety of cultures, ethnicities, languages, and religions. On the one hand, this diversity is a social strength that reflects a rich and dynamic national identity; on the other hand, however, this diversity also presents serious challenges in the context of public services, including the health sector. The Indonesian healthcare system must be able to accommodate and serve people from various cultural backgrounds fairly and be sensitive to differences in values and lifestyles (Wulandari, 2022b).

Healthcare services are not only related to medical and technological aspects, but are also closely related to social and cultural factors that influence patients' decisions, perceptions, and behaviour. Many studies show that effective