Sadaf Murad - University of Alberta

Project: *Exploring the Hospitalization Experiences of Ethno-Racial Older Adults Living with Dementia*

Background:

Ethno-Racial communities often face various disparities and structural barriers in accessing equitable healthcare services. Discrimination and racism in healthcare practices towards ethno-racial individuals, especially older adults with dementia, create more barriers for them and their caregivers in accessing culturally sensitive care. In Canada, South Asians and Arabs are the fastest-growing racialized communities, migrating in greater numbers and living with dementia. Dementia in ethno-racial communities is considered taboo and stigmatized, due to which they often avoid hospitalization until it is life-threatening. Lack of awareness related to dementia and the stigma associated with it creates hurdles for ethno-racial older adults with dementia to seek acute medical care. Surprisingly, little attention has been given to examining their hospitalization-related experiences. Ethno-racial communities face challenges in receiving culturally appropriate hospital care due to systematic barriers and structural racism in the healthcare system. Fear of being

discriminated against and labelled based on one's ethnicity, identity and health needs often acts as a barrier in ethno-racial communities to seek help from healthcare providers. Challenges such as provider bias, stigma and discrimination towards ethno-racial older adults create hurdles for individuals living with dementia, their caregivers, and nurses to address their diverse health needs and provide them with culturally safe care. Structural barriers and discrimination embedded in hospital care practice and the lack of expertise in nurses to provide culturally sensitive care have an influence on the overall health and hospitalization experience of racialized older adults with dementia. Currently, no studies in Canada exist that target South Asian or Arab communities and the hospitalization experiences of those living with dementia. The aim of my research is to explore the hospitalization experience of ethno-racial older adults belonging to South Asian and Arab communities living with dementia, their caregivers and healthcare providers. My research's outcomes will identify the gaps in hospital care practice and recommend quality improvement strategies to provide culturally oriented dementia care in hospital settings. This research will allow racialized communities to share their hospitalization-rated experiences and participate in creating recommendations for inclusive healthcare.

Bio

Sadaf Murad Kassam (she/her) is a registered nurse with a clinical background in geriatric medicine and surgery, dementia units/Long-term care, Emergency, ICU, orthopedic/surgical care, and general medicine. She also taught geriatric psychiatry and acute care clinicals at the University of Alberta to undergraduate and after-degree students. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan. She did her master's in nursing (MN) in nursing education and aging at the University of Alberta and is currently a doctoral student in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Alberta. Her doctoral work examines the hospitalization experience of ethno-racial older adults with dementia and identifies the ways to create culturally sensitive dementia practices in hospital settings. She is interested in gender diversity and racial equity in ethno-racial communities, most specifically in older adults. Sadaf is particularly interested in using an intersectional lens and critical qualitative inquiry to explore how intersecting social identities influence access, health, and well-being.