

Employability of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Graduates in the Healthcare Industry

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Abstract

Education has been the pillar of every man's dream and life aspirations. It shapes society in terms of social, cultural, economic, and fundamental development. It is vital that the curriculum be strengthened so that it would uphold and augment livelihood and job opportunities for nursing graduates. This study aimed to trace the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates for S.Y. 2014-2017. The findings served as the basis for a program-level intervention plan. This study utilized a descriptive design using simple random sampling with the use of a standardized Graduate Tracer Study survey tool designed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). This study utilized the descriptive survey research design.

There were one hundred fourteen (114) randomly selected graduates of the BSN degree who served as respondents. Statistical treatment utilized simple percentages and ranking. Out of 114 respondents of the nursing graduates of the University of Cebu College of Nursing for S.Y. 2014-2017, the majority of the alumni were

female nursing students who passed the Philippine Nursing Licensure Examination [PNLE]; professionals from Region VII, lived in the city, presently employed with a regular status working locally. The respondents took the undergraduate (BSN) course because of job opportunities abroad and a strong passion for the profession. The reason for some unemployed nursing graduates was the absence of opportunities. The company's line of business where the respondents are currently employed belongs to the health and social work sector. Salaries and benefits were the main reasons respondents accepted jobs and, at the same time, stayed in them. It was also the same motivation that the respondents were changing jobs. Most nursing graduates stated that their first job was related to their course, and they got the job details via recommendations from other people. The length of stay of the mainstream of the respondents in their jobs is from a year to less than three years. The job level position was rank-and-file. The initial monthly earnings for the first

and current job were between Php10,000.00 and less than Php15,000.00. Self-motivation was the soft skills learned by the majority of the nursing graduates. Experience, on the other hand, was the hard skill that was learned by the respondents, with mathematical ability as the lowest. The

popular nursing competency learned and applied by the nursing graduates in their jobs was health and quality nursing care. The respondents also agreed that the nursing competencies learned in college were relevant to their current job.

Keywords: *Nursing education, tracer study, employability, curriculum, competencies learned, descriptive, University of Cebu, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

The global nursing workforce is changing. As experienced nurses age, new graduates enter the profession, and nurses worldwide become increasingly transient, new and expanded roles in nursing are emerging within the dynamic world of healthcare. These transformations bring issues related to loss of knowledge, experience, and leadership, in addition to issues of transition for nurses beginning practice or moving into new roles (Lewis, 2015).

The International Labor Organization [ILO] (2017) postulates that the inability to create enough jobs to meet the growth of the labor force will push the rise of unemployed persons worldwide to 201 million in 2017. In its World Employment and Social Outlook - Trends 2017 report, the United Nations [UN] reported that the unemployment rate is set to rise to 5.8 percent compared to a year ago or 3.4 million more to 201 million in 2017, as labor force growth outstrips job creation (CNN Philippines, 2017).

On the other side, UNESCO reports an oversupply of graduates in some fields. Students enrolled in oversubscribed programs lead to a glut of graduates who cannot find jobs in their areas of specialization, such as nursing and information technology in the Philippines. The lack of work experience, particularly in the cutting-edge industries of the IT sector, was another factor that tended to limit graduate employment prospects (UNESCO Bangkok, 2012).

The Philippine Statistics Authority revealed that the employment rate in the Philippines by January 2017 was estimated at 93.4 percent. Four regions, namely, Ilocos Region (91.3%), National Capital Region (NCR) (91.5%), Caraga (91.5%), and CALABARZON (91.8%), had the lowest employment rates (Table 4). The labor force participation rate (LFPR) in January 2017 was estimated at 60.7 percent, given the labor force population of 69.4 million. The labor force population consists of the employed and the unemployed 15 years old and over. Among the unemployed persons in January 2017, 69.6 percent were males. Of the total unemployed, the age group 15 to 24 comprised 44.1 percent, while the age group 25 to 34 comprised 29.6 percent. By educational attainment, 16.5 percent of the unemployed were college graduates, 14.6 percent were college undergraduates, and 31.1 percent were high school graduates (Philippines Statistics Authority [PSA], 2017).

Philippine Nurses Association [PNA] (2016) reported that over 200,000 registered nurses were jobless as the government failed to increase the number of nurses in government hospitals. Gloria Amariago, the chief nurse at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH), said the PNA has been urging the Aquino administration through the Department of Budget and Management [DBM] to increase the number of nurses not only in PGH but in all government hospitals in the country so that the practicing nurses could work with quality on their patients. The present practice is that each nurse takes care of around 30 patients or more per duty. The ideal nurse ratio to ensure quality and safe patient care should be one nurse per 12 patients. According to the Philippine Nurse Association [PNA], more than 200,000 registered nurses work different



jobs that are far from health (Manila Times, 2016). Tracer studies are vital in gathering data from graduates. They evaluate the relevance of higher education, can contribute to the accreditation process, and are a valuable tool for assessing students, parents, faculty, and administrators.

It is with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) theme of building knowledge societies and using knowledge and information technology to transform economies and the country's move for radical economic development that the researchers move to address employability in the scale of their university. This study would contribute to the growing body of knowledge on this matter, and the findings would help move the stakeholders concerned to action.

The researchers had been teaching at the institution for nine (9) years. Being exposed to different areas in the hospital and teaching varied nursing subjects, it is the intent of the undertaking to help solve the problem encountered by the institution in tracking down its graduates and provide relevant feedback concerning their experiences and/or employment status.

Framework

This study is anchored on the Human Capital Theory by Schultz and Becker, who explained that the education system guarantees a more productive workforce, excellent salaries, and higher GDP. Therefore, the professional benefits the individual acquires in the education system are obvious. From an economic perspective, according to the Human Capital Theory, education and training are treated as an investment process that generates a future flow of income. Investment in education is assumed to impact workers' productivity positively and, in turn, their income (wages). Apart from these benefits, investing in human capital also incurs costs. These costs can take the form of the expenses of studying (fees, costs of accommodation and travel, etc.) but also include opportunity cost, that is, from the loss of potential income during study – the time spent on studying cannot be devoted to a productive job that generates production and income. It is assumed that these costs are compensated when the knowledge and competencies accumulated in the education process (human capital) generate a sufficiently high rate of return and raise the future flow of income to a level high enough to compensate for all costs incurred (Wigley et al., 2012).

The model of Ben – Porath (1967) and the famous Mincer Wage Equation (1974) show that education and training strongly influence wage formation during the life cycle. Important implications of the Ben – Porath Model include the following: persons with more schooling tend also to invest more in job training; persons significantly engaged in training in one period are more likely to do so again in the future; persons with greater ability or better schooling tend to engage in job training more than others with the same level of schooling; and with an increase in demand for human capital, the people observed an increase in the rate of return on education and on – the – job training (higher in the short run, diminishing in the long run) which are followed by an increase of school enrolments and job training frequency (Wigley et al., 2012).

The Signal Theory of Spence (1974) reduces the function of individual education to a signal function reporting the adaptability of the job-seeker to employers: Job-seekers with higher education are presumably more adaptive, more motivated, and have more excellent learning abilities. According to this theory, students who perform better during an educational career (continue education to a higher level, graduate from a better school, receive higher grades) are assumed to perform better in the labor market in terms of demonstrating higher productivity, a better perception of new skills and are more attractive to employers as candidates for employment and investment in training. Education is, therefore, only a signal to the employer that a potential candidate is of better quality (Wigley et al., 2012).

A boundaryless career pertains to a series of employment opportunities beyond the boundary of the single employment environment. The background is due to the following: First, career changes rapidly due to industrial restructuring and technical upgrading. Second, the influence of organizational transformation is due to the rapid development of information technology and the knowledge economy since the 1990s, and third, the influence of the rise of services has led to diverse development trends (Liu & Chen, 2013).

Boundaryless careers break through the hypothesis that organizations can employ life and highlight the instability and turbulence of modern careers. This describes employees as beyond a series of job



opportunities set by a specific or single employment scope, e.g., employees will no longer finish a lifetime career in one or two organizations but realize their career in more organizations, more occupations, and more posts. Individuals face more tough competition and frequent job changes; they no longer finish their lifetime career in one or two organizations but realize their career is broader in more organizations, occupations, ns, and posts (Liu & Chen, 2013).

The concept centers on improving employability, innovative system mechanisms for talent training, deepening the talent training mode, and significantly reforming and innovating teaching content, teaching methods, teaching technology, teaching environment, teaching value, etc. It enlightens the employability training in higher education. It posits that a variable and unstable employment environment requires colleges to improve the employability of students during talent training. This, on the one hand, sets up obstacles for individual career development and provides direction for the cultivation and development of individual employability of students. The boundaryless career will significantly influence their talent and training mode of the college. Cultivating and improving the employability of college students has become one of the critical factors in successful talent training in colleges. As colleges cultivate students' professional knowledge and professional skills, they should pay attention to cultivating employability, especially core employability, which will result in the sustained employment of students across different organizations (Liu & Chen, 2013).

Furthermore, under the mode, employability not only affects their original employment but also affects their employment transition and the sustainable development of their career. The quality development of our higher education is still in the primary stage. Most colleges pay much attention to the transmission of knowledge. However, despite the cultivation of employability, they especially neglect the cultivation of core employability and the cultivation of professionalism and values (Liu & Chen, 2013).

The USEM Model of Knight & Yorke (2004) outlines employability as four broad and interrelated components: understanding skillful practices (including deployment of skills), efficacy beliefs (including students' views of themselves), Metacognition (including self-awareness and a capacity to reflect on learning).

The Social Cognitive Career Theory was first developed by Robert W. Lent, Steven D. Brown, and Gail Hackett in 1994, then expanded upon by the same in 2000. The theory has two "predictors". The first of these predictors is self-efficacy, and the other is outcome expectations. Lent et al. (1994) state that the word 'career' means 'interests and choice processes' relevant to academic and career choices. According to SCCT, personal inputs include gender, race, and proactive personality, whereas contextual factors include social status, cultural, and organizational support for career development (Zafar & Mat., 2012).

An extended version of the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) proposed by Lent and Brown (2006) signifies the relationship between contextual and individual factors toward career satisfaction. Career satisfaction considers the individuals' belief that career progress aligns with their goals, values, and preferences (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001). Career satisfaction is related to subjective career success, which is the individuals' judgment of their career progression, accomplishments, and anticipated outcomes (Seibert & Kramer, 2001). People with a proactive nature tend to see opportunities and follow them, persevering until they influence their environment. Proactive personalities positively correlate with career satisfaction and career management behaviors (Seibert & Kramer., 2001). Programs that aid in the competency development of employees, also known as organizational career management or organizational sponsorship, are the processes by which employers enhance their employees' career success (Ng, 2005). Behaviors that enhance employability are called career management behaviors. These help a person in their career goals (Crant, 2000). These behaviors include career exploration, development of KSAs, networking, and promoting one's achievements (Zafar & Mat, 2012).

The Theory of Career Choice by John Holland postulates that individuals are attracted to a particular occupation that meets their personal needs and provides them satisfaction. It deals with factors influencing career choice based on congruence: the fit. Career choice is an expression of, or an extension of, personality in the world of work. Individuals search for environments that let them exercise their skills and abilities,



express their attitudes and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles. People tend to be attracted to specific jobs, and the environment then reflects personality (Zunker, 2002).

Holland's theory argued that the choice of a vocation is an expression of personality and that the six-factor typology he articulated could describe both persons and work environments. Understanding Holland's theory will help make good choices – deciding which occupations, careers, majors, or training programs best fit an individual (Zunker, 2002).

Parson's Frank Parson's Trait Theory assesses an individual's trait through objective measures and then matches an individual's trait to those typically required for successful performance in a given career area. Parson suggested three steps for enhancing the individual's career decision-making. First, one must clearly and objectively understand oneself, including abilities, interests, and attitudes. Second, knowledge of the requirements and characteristics of specific careers must be present. Lastly, there should be recognition and application of the relationships between the first and the second for successful career decision making (Gibson & Mitchell, 2008).

Boger (2007) claimed that cognitive flexibility theory is essential to the learner's success in academics and life. The role of this theory in education is the argument that how students are significantly taught impacts the nature and formation of their cognitive structures, affecting students' ability to store and readily access information. The role of education, hence, is to help learners appropriately apply their knowledge and adapt what they have learned to different situations (Calibo, 2013).

The role of the school does not end once the students graduate. That is why the government, through the Commission on Higher Education, mandates that all academic institutions conduct a graduate tracer study to get information from graduates to evaluate the institution's education and training results. The information will be used for further development of the school in the context of quality assurance (Calibo, 2013).

Universities are a crucial factor for knowledge production and dissemination in high-income economies, speeding up the processes of innovation and technical progress. They play a central role of universities in the learning systems of low – and middle – income countries is not to generate new knowledge but to raise the skills of the population, i.e. to build up human capital, and to help absorb ideas from developed countries (Chapman & Chien, 2014).

Longe (1999) indicated that the quality of education includes the learning environment and students' outcomes. There are two broad approaches to measuring quality. One involves measuring the outputs of the education system. The other includes examining the educational process that produces these outputs. These approaches can be used separately or together. From the input side, the quality of education can be gauged through students' capacity and motivation to learn and the curriculum or the subjects to be learned. Enhancing employability is one of the factors. Employability is also, ideally, about the quality of work or employment. People may be able to obtain work, but it may be below their level of skills or in low-paid or undesirable jobs. A focus on obtaining skills to gain suitable employment has led to an oversupply of graduates and a more significant number of contenders chasing the same jobs.

Brown and Hesketh (2004) argued that there is an apparent mismatch between individuals' expectations of employability and the realities of the labor market. Under these conditions, students will use several tactics in the labor market to maintain competitive advantage. Traditionally, it is recognized as the ability to gain and maintain employment within and across organizations (Finn, 2000). It implies possessing the qualities and competencies required to enable graduates to enter and maintain employment. In this definition, employability is a characteristic of the individual. A one-dimensional, outcome-based definition places the individual's skills at the concept's center (McArdle et al., 2007).

It is a mistake to assume that the provision of experience is a sufficient condition for enhanced employability. To have work experience, say, does not of itself, ensure that the student develops (further) the various prerequisites (cognitive, social, practical, etc.) for success in employment. The same argument applies to whole curricula. The curricular process may facilitate the development of prerequisites appropriate to employment but does not guarantee it. Hence, assuming that students are highly employable



based on curricular provision alone is inappropriate. Employability derives from how the student learns from his or her experiences. The student exhibits employability concerning a job if the latter can demonstrate a set of achievements relevant to that job. The Business Studies graduate who has a vestigial grasp of quantitative techniques would not, for example, be appropriate for a market research post in which statistical analysis would figure strongly. The individual might, however, make a valuable contribution to human relations. This illustrates the context-dependent on employability. A repertoire of attributes and achievements may have a general value but may prove insufficient for some specific situations. From the perspective taken here, employability is a (multi-faceted) characteristic of the individual. It is, after all, the individual whose suitability for a post is appraised. The definition highlights the importance of students maximizing their potential and emphasizes that employability includes skills and values. Research on employability shows that it covers knowledge, intellect, willingness to learn, teamwork skills, networking, and so on (Addis, 2012).

A career is defined as time extended working out of a purposeful life pattern through work undertaken by the person. Career planning represents individual responsibility. It includes evaluating strengths and weaknesses, setting goals, examining career opportunities, preparing for potential, and using appropriate developmental activities (Marquis & Huston, 2009).

Career management skills and life skills are commonly identified as self-awareness, such as diagnosing occupational interests and abilities and opportunity awareness (knowing what work opportunities exist and their entry requirements). Decision-making skills (to develop a strategy of getting from where one is to where one wants to be) and transition skills (including job search skills) (Brown & Hesketh, 2004).

Careers typically progress through stages of exploration: early career (trial and establishment), middle career (growth and maintenance), and later career (plateau and decline). The exploration stage involves identifying the right career and getting the appropriate education. An early career involves getting the first job, adjusting to a daily work routine, choosing a specialty, and transferring or promotion, which broadens one's perspective of the organization and profession. During the middle career, people establish their professional identity, choose among alternative career paths, and take on more responsibility. In their later careers, people develop others, shape the organization's future, plan for retirement, deal with a reduced workload and less power, and may help develop their replacement (Tomey, 2004).

A graduate tracer study is among the Commission on Higher Education requirements to evaluate and determine the relevance of the country's educational institutions. A tracer study is an alumni survey used to trace an educational institution's activities or employment status. It also examines and evaluates graduates' career and future employment opportunities (Millington, 2016). A tracer study by Schomburg (2003) traced back to specific elements of a project or program to identify effective and ineffective project components.

Graduate surveys are popular for analyzing the relationship between higher education and work. It provides quantitative-structural data on employment and career, the character of work and related competencies, and information on the professional orientation and experiences of the graduates. Even if the course evaluation can ask for the student to assess whether they have gained the knowledge and skills necessary for fulfilling their objectives, there is little proof of this until the student has completed the entire course of study and has entered the workforce (Schomburg, 2003).

People live in a rapidly changing world with diverse demands and challenges. Governments are increasingly looking to the universe to produce human resources with the right kind of capacities, skills, and knowledge to meet 21st-century needs and to facilitate the shift to a knowledge-based economy and high – technology through effective linkages between research and industry to ensure that their countries have a competitive edge in the global market. Therefore, preparing young people to enter the labor market has become a critical responsibility for universities. However, the relevance of their programs and the employability of their graduates are posing an increasing challenge for the universities, particularly given two sets of statistics: enrolment and youth unemployment rates. The enrolment in tertiary education has more than doubled over the past two decades, from 68 million in 1991 to 151 million in 2008. At the same



time, the financial crisis that began in 2008 has resulted in increasing unemployment (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's [UNESCO] Bangkok, 2012).

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Region has enjoyed remarkable economic growth in recent decades but has also witnessed rising inequality and the persistence of poor-quality jobs. In recent years, employment growth has slowed. In 2012, employment grew by 1.9 percent; in 2013, only 1.5 percent – on par with the global rate of 1.4 percent 1.8.

Unfortunately, for many young people, education does not provide the skills they need to gain the desired employment. The World Economic Forum report on Global Risks (2014) noted that any current graduates are discovering that despite their academic qualifications – often gained at significant expense – they lack the specific technical and professional skills demanded by the ever-changing jobs market.

Youth unemployment and underemployment have reached critical levels and are expected to continue to rise in most G20 economies. This threatens the global economic recovery and could lead to a "lost generation" of young adults. The generation coming of age in the 2010s faces high unemployment and precarious job situations, hampering their efforts to build a future and raising the risk of social unrest. In developing countries, an estimated two-thirds of the youth are not fulfilling their economic potential. However, many employers cannot find enough people with the skills to grow their businesses and enable the economy to recover. There are disconnects in the widely accepted logic that education provides skills and skills enhance employability. Skills are the basis of an individual's competitive position in the labor market. However, having earned degrees to enhance their employability, many graduates are now unemployed or underemployed because of insufficient skill demand (Chartered Global Management Accountant Report, 2014).

Valenzuela and Mendoza (2012) on their investigation about the Graduate Employability in the Philippines revealed that graduate unemployment in the Philippines has largely been attributed to a structural or skills mismatch. This is because job seekers, in general, are not seen by employers as having the necessary skills for employment, and due to new graduates, who are perceived to lack the requisite level and quality of communication, technical, and job-specific skills needed in the workplace. Another mismatch can be found in the disparity between the graduates or trainees produced and the type of jobs available. Thus, we have thousands of customer service jobs in the booming call center and BPO industries filled by graduates trained to be nurses and teachers. The Philippines also has an oversupply of business graduates, as demonstrated by the 22 percent who had business degrees in 2004, many of whom were unemployed. This current study reveals another closely related mismatch of perceptions between the graduates' assessments of their employability versus the employers' assessment. Graduates from this sample tended to rate themselves highly regarding their employability attributes. They appraised the training they received from their higher education institutions [HEIs] positively.

This, however, did not coincide with the assessments from the employers. This study confirms that employability, particularly graduate employability, is a function of a range of individual characteristics. Individual-level supply-side factors often associated with labor market outcomes are shown to be important. These employability attributes cited in this study include vital transferable skills such as adaptability, intellectual skills, teamwork, and basic interpersonal skills, as well as their usefulness to the graduates in their jobs. The employed respondents who mentioned the relevance of their courses to their jobs underscored the importance of academic qualifications and job-specific skills to succeed. The sample's unemployed and employed graduates have expressed their desire to get jobs pertinent to their chosen fields. Job-seeking strategies such as using the internet, walk-in interviews, and attendance at job fairs demonstrate the respondent's use of formal and informal search methods. It appears that employed graduates tend to attend job fairs more frequently than unemployed graduates. This suggests that particular job-seeking strategies may be more effective in finding employment. It is also interesting to note the greater weight given to the starting salary by the unemployed graduates in the sample (relative to the employed graduates) when choosing a job. This supports a suggestion that wage flexibility may be necessary for an individual's employability (Aberg, 2001).



Aside from the individual factors, external demands are equally important. The premium employers place on communication skills will impact the graduate's employability. On the other hand, mechanisms for matching labor demand and supply – such as providing accessibility to public services and job-matching technologies (e.g., job fairs, career or job placement services) and implementing measures to ease the school-work transition (e.g., linkages between academe and industry/employers) – are perceived to be more beneficial (Bangkok, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2012).

This pressing dilemma of disconnects between education, skills, and jobs has repercussions and effects on various stakeholders: most importantly for the young university-graduate adult who cannot find jobs; for employers who could contribute to economic development but cannot yield the skills they require; and for policymakers who are responsible for order and progress in the society in general; These issues also strike the educators and HEIs which tend to focus less on employability skills integration in the curricula, how to balance general and professional subjects, what should be the practical scope of teaching and learning modes or how they should collaborate with employers and get involved with practicum and apprenticeships; and how should they validate non – formal learning experiences.

The difficulties facing young women and men reflect broader skills gaps and mismatches. This was confirmed in a 2013 International Labour Organization survey of ASEAN enterprises and business associations, in which one in three respondents agreed that secondary school graduates were equipped with the relevant skills needed by their enterprises. By comparison, for tertiary graduates in ASEAN overall, the skills were viewed as better aligned with industry requirements. In this case, the most positive responses came from the Philippines and Singapore. This employer's survey also identified the greatest skills gaps. The training thought to be most widely needed was in management and leadership (29.0 percent of responses), followed by vocational training (17.0 percent) and customer service training (15.0 percent). A World Bank survey of employers identified gaps in job-related technical skills, as well as in cognitive skills such as problem-solving and critical thinking, and core skills such as teamwork and communication. In the Philippines, the bulk of job growth has also been in wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants, and community, social, personal, and other services, where levels of productivity are double that in agriculture, but a third of that in manufacturing (ASEAN, 2014).

Educational institutions do not always successfully prepare learners for the complexity inherent in the two primary sorts of activity attributed to the symbolic analysts' role. Learners are often expected to learn what is put in front of them and to work individually and competitively, and subject matter may be compartmentalized. The education of symbolic analysts – likely to be those at the leading edge of economic developments of one kind or another – requires institutions to make a particular effort to foster the achievements highlighted. The global economy favors knowledge and technology. Higher education is increasingly viewed as central to national strategies for securing shares in the global market, and universities are the repositories of valuable human capital to support national development. The contribution of universities to economic development can be seen in three areas: (i) producing and accumulating human capital; (ii) generating, disseminating, and applying knowledge; and (iii) innovating and inventing new information and technology. The accelerating shift to high-technology industries and an information technology economy requires sustained human resource development and training. Therefore, an appropriate higher education system is critical for preparing a competent workforce. Advancing, acclimatizing, and broadening the skills portfolio of individuals to create and fill the jobs of tomorrow is one of the most significant challenges facing all nations today. Everyone desires to rise and be more determined for the future – individuals, public and private employers, the education sector, and governments at all levels. Enlightening skills is an absolute 'win-win' necessity for all – for the economy, for the society, for the public and private employers, and, of course, for individuals themselves (Palanichamy & Veeramani, 2013).

Academic qualifications are essential, but the aptitudes and attitudes of job seekers are equally, if not more, essential to employers. A high-grade point average alone does not guarantee employment. Therefore, graduates must cultivate qualities most sought after by their potential employers. These are what the



researchers classified as "++ factors": they include motivation, an ability to think "outside the box," problem-solving and communication skills, and an ability to work in many different jobs and industries throughout their entire career seek to constantly improve and update their skill, and willing to learn new technologies. Any sign of these qualities might persuade employers to offer them jobs. Young people, therefore, are responsible for preparing themselves for a changing world by improving their knowledge and skills to meet the demands of employers and the realities of the workplace (Palanichamy & Veeramani, 2013).

Several vocational personalities could make individuals better predisposed to certain occupations such as realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. People of the same personality tend to flock together. People of the same personality type working together create a work environment that fits their type. For example, when artistic persons work together, they create a work environment that rewards creative thinking. People who work in an environment similar to their personality type are more likely to be successful and satisfied (Querikiol, 2013).

Over the last decade, those concerned with education and employment have been increasingly seeking evidence of how levels of educational attainment characterize individuals' performances in the labor market. Enhancing young people's short – and – long-term employability potential has become a central development priority in the European Higher Education Area (EC, 2011). According to findings of the Higher Education as a Generator of Strategic Competencies Project (2009), employers still have surprisingly little knowledge of what to expect from graduates, and higher education institutions (HEIs) have a similar low level of knowledge of what employers need. Both aspects are directly linked to strategic issues of enhancing graduates' employability as they improve higher education quality, governance, and societal relevance (Palvin et al., 2012).

The evolution of labor market conditions has 'raised the bar' in terms of accessing the job market. Indeed, in previous decades, the job market required cognitive skills and routine and non-routine manual abilities; hence, possessing a high school degree was already a strong indicator of human capital accumulation and a reasonable basis for getting a job. Nevertheless, the requirements for accessing the professions have changed, and individual success depends more on non-routine analytic and interactive skills. Thus, the choice of university program and the quality of university training is increasingly important for individual future careers. For example, Freeman and Hirsch (2008) empirically show that there is a strong relationship between the choice of education type and observed labor market conditions (Palvin, 2012).

A critical source of knowledge growth is learning – by doing- in innovative workplaces. Another is the higher education system. The higher education system is subject to governmental steer, one form of which is to emphasize the enhancement of the employability of new graduates (Yorke, 2006).

According to Carliner et al. (2006), competencies are defined as the knowledge, skills, or attitudes that enable one to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation or function to the standards expected in employment. Moreover, competencies can be considered along a spectrum, from the essential competencies needed to survive in the workforce to the advanced competencies needed to sustain employability and advance one's career (Marquis & Huston, 2009). Based on the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) graduate tracer survey (GTS), these competencies learned in college include communication, human relations, entrepreneurship, information technology, problem-solving – and critical thinking skills.

According to Article IV, Section 5 of the Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 14, series 2009, graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program must be able to apply analytical and critical thinking in nursing practice. The nurse must be competent in the following Key Areas of Responsibility and their respective core competency standards and indicators. The following are the areas of competency: Safe and Quality Nursing Care; Management of Resources and Environment; Health Education; Legal Responsibility; Ethico-moral Responsibility; Personal and Professional Development; Personal and Professional Development; Research; Records Management; Communication; and



Collaboration and Teamwork. Firstly, safe and quality nursing care means that the nurse demonstrates knowledge based on the health /illness status of individuals/groups; provides sound decision-making in the care of individuals/families/groups considering their beliefs and values; promotes safety, comfort, and privacy of clients; sets priorities in nursing care based on clients' needs; ensures continuity of care; administers medications and other health therapeutics; utilizes the nursing process as a framework for nursing; performs comprehensive and systematic nursing assessment; formulates a plan of care in collaboration with clients and other members of the health team; implements planned nursing care to achieve identified outcomes; and evaluates progress toward expected outcomes. Also, managing resources and environment entails nurses organizing workload to facilitate client care, utilizing financial resources to support client care, establishing mechanisms to ensure proper equipment functioning, and maintaining a safe environment. Health education involves nurses assessing the learning needs of the clients/ partner/s, developing a health education plan based on assessed and anticipated needs, developing learning materials for health education, implementing the health education plan, and evaluating the outcome of health education.

Moreover, the legal responsibility discusses that nurses must adhere to practices by the nursing law and other relevant legislation, including contracts and informed consent; adhere to organizational policies and procedures, local and national; and document care rendered. The ethical-moral responsibility encourages nurses to respect the rights of individuals/groups, accept responsibility and accountability for their own decisions and actions, and adhere to the national and international codes of ethics for nurses. Personal and professional development would motivate nurses to identify their own learning needs, pursue continuing education, get involved in professional organizations and civic activities, project a professional image of the nurse, possess a positive attitude towards change and criticism, and perform functions according to professional standards. Quality improvement means that nurses gather data for quality improvement, participate in nursing audits and rounds, identify and report variances, and recommend solutions to identified problems. Research inspires nurses to gather data using different methodologies, analyze and interpret data gathered, recommend actions for implementation, disseminate results of research findings, and apply research findings in nursing practice. Records management emboldens nurses to maintain accurate and updated client care documentation, record the outcome of client care, and observe legal imperatives in record keeping. Further, communication means that nurses establish rapport with clients, significant others, and members of the health team; identify verbal and non-verbal cues; utilize formal and informal channels; respond to the needs of individuals, families, groups, and communities; and use appropriate information technology to facilitate communication. Lastly, collaboration and teamwork inspire nurses to establish collaborative relationships with colleagues and other health team members and collaborate on a care plan with other members of the health team (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2009).

The Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing in 2016 envisions itself as the association of deans that innovates, competes, and empowers leading educational institutions to achieve excellence in nursing education for national and global development. The missions of ADPCN are to develop transformational leadership and management among all deans; to uphold code of ethics and create conducive, cultural and collegial relationships among deans; to build capabilities and creative credibility in research and instruction in the health profession; to expand and sustain dynamic members and networks nationally and internationally; to generate and maintain viable financial capabilities; and to maintain responsible organizational structure and systems in the association and network (Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing, 2016).

The Association of Nursing Services in the Philippines (ANSAP), incorporated in the year 2008, established principles of nursing practice in clinical settings. Five standards are identified in the nursing process. The first principle is the standards on assessment care, which are classified under two criteria: t: the process of assessment. Secondly, there are standards on patient care wherein there are seven identified care processes: care plan, implementation of care, and evaluation of care rendered. Also included are



medication management and family rights. The third principle is standards on patient and family education, wherein it has two criteria in which the nurse's independent role in providing health education is identified. Fourth is standards on access and continuity of care, wherein seven criteria guide the nurse regarding the importance of access to care. These standards identify the need to establish policies and procedures from admission to discharge and referral follow-up. Lastly is the standards on nursing documentation wherein there are two identified criteria, which include documentation of significant data, both structure and clinical, based on applicable laws and regulations, professional standards, and institutional requirements (Association of Nursing Service in the Philippines, 2008).

In consonance with the vision, mission goals, and core values of the University of Cebu College of Nursing, it aims to help students create a teaching-learning environment that fosters productivity and satisfaction among its stakeholders. It also targets producing graduates imbued with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that make them potent movers in their fields of practice, thus creating an environment that characterizes a University of Cebu product. Specifically, it molds students to become respectful to God, man, and creation; morally upright and concerned citizens; responds to the health needs of society and participates in community activities geared towards the total development of man; updates continually with the current trends and issues; and integrates research and technology in one's personal and professional pursuits (University of Cebu Manual for Students, 2013).

Based on the past four nursing licensure examinations, the University of Cebu College of Nursing had a passing average of 73% for the first timers. It is ranked 173rd out of 342 nursing schools in the Philippines (Philippine Universities and Colleges Guide, 2016).

One aspect of the skills dimension of employability and professionalism relates to encouraging students to be motivated to put regular effort into making the most of their abilities. The development of expertise is a slow, gradual progression through the stages of the model founded upon a mixture of talent and deliberate practice. The idea that the progression involves complex learning provides a rationale for sustained hard work, persistence in the face of difficulty, and the value of trying to master new challenges. It also helps to articulate self-efficacy beliefs (as these are about the capacity of the individual to overcome difficulties and succeed with new challenges) and why their importance for employability value of the fact that philosophical study encourages persistence in the face of difficulty. Considering the growth of expertise is potentially beneficial for addressing the problem that a substantial proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds see a university degree as an end rather than an achievement in the progression to long-term career success. Improving confidence, self-esteem, and aspirations has a significant role in developing graduates (Pegg et al., 2012). Assisting the students to think of themselves as potential experts could raise positive self-perceptions and prompt them to adopt a more active stance toward their career progression (Addis, 2012).

In the new business environment, employees are seen as responsible for acquiring the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities that current and prospective employers value. Participation by employees in different development activities offered by the organization increases their competitiveness (De Vos & De Hauw, 2010). Three distinct career competencies known as "ways of knowing" are central to one's career (Eby et al., 2003). Such competencies provide access to better, newer contacts and job opportunities (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994). "Knowing – why" competency among global managers relates to work-life balance, international exposure, professional identification, center of decision making, career progression, and search for challenge.

Education molds a country's social, cultural, economic, and radical development. Hence, the curriculum should promote and enhance job opportunities for graduates, thereby diminishing unemployment. In the modest knowledge – economy, the competencies and capabilities should be planned and upheld to suit the changing demands and requirements of the world (Palanichamy & Veeramani, 2013).

Nugroho et al. (2012) found that in Jakarta, Indonesia, many of the graduates looking for employment felt that the jobs they applied for were related to their field of study regardless of the HEI they had attended. Most of the graduates concurred that their academic training matched the requirements of their current



employment, indicating that the HEIs have prepared the students sufficiently to meet labor market demands. The graduates had also submitted many job applications before they could find employment. Still, many found employment and preferred working in the private sector. Regardless of the time in their current positions, most employed graduates were dissatisfied with their current jobs. The salary level appeared to have been an influential factor for those who had expressed some degree of job satisfaction. Many employers wanted the HEIs to improve their curricula to match the needs of the industry by including on-the-job and soft skills training as part of student skill development. Employers prioritized integrity, intellectual capacity, teamwork skills, and analytical and problem-solving skills as the most desirable characteristics they were looking for from the graduates (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], Bangkok, 2012).

The study of Sira (2012) on the employability of graduates in Malaysia revealed that there is general agreement among employers and graduates that changes are needed in higher education to make graduates more "employable" from the industry's perspective. Employers want students to be trained according to the workplace's needs and do away with subjects irrelevant to the needs of the working world. Academics agree that some changes are needed but emphasize that these changes must balance the demands of the industry against the needs of civil society and social development. Currently, the discourse on graduate employability is framed within industry – readiness. However, industry – readiness does not bring about a socially oriented economy and knowledge society. HEIs must reclaim their role as socially relevant institutions that produce graduates with the necessary attributes for a peaceful, sustainable society (Bangkok, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2012).

Objectives of the Study

This study traced the Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduates of the University of Cebu – Banilad for the school year 2014 – 2017. The findings served as the basis for a program-level intervention plan. Specifically, this investigations aims to present the following: 1) profile of the graduates in terms of gender, civil status, region of origin, degree obtained; and present address; 2) reasons of the graduates for taking the course, employment status of graduates, reasons for unemployment, and for those employed, their current job and place of work; 3) number of graduates who were able to land in a job related to the degree obtained in college; 4) academic competencies acquired in college that were utilized in their present job; 5) nursing competencies learned in college were that applied in their current occupation; 6) soft skills learned in college that were applied in their current occupation; 7) hard skills learned in college that were applied in their current occupation; 8) academic competencies offered by the college that are perceived by students as very useful for their graduates in their present job; and 9) nursing competencies presented by the college that are recognized by the faculty as valuable for their graduates in their existing employment.

METHODOLOGY

This section presents the discussions on the research design, research environment, research respondents, data gathering procedure, and treatment of data.

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive research design using the standardized Graduate Tracer Study (GTS) tool by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Research Environment

This investigation was undertaken at the different workplaces of the graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program of the University of Cebu – Banilad.



Research Respondents

The respondents of this study were the graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu-Banilad, Academic Years 2014 to 2017. The simple random sampling technique was used to identify the target respondents, The total population of the respondents from 2014 to 2017. The sample size for each batch of graduates are presentd in table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

School Year	Total Population (N)	Sample Size (n)
2014 – 2015	117	59
2015 – 2016	54	27
2016 – 2017	57	29
Total	228	115

Research Instrument

The instrument utilized in this study was the Graduate Tracer Survey (GTS), a standardized tool by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). It had four (4) parts with 34 items. The first part relates to the respondents' general information, which included the permanent address, contact number, civil status, gender, birthdate, region of origin, province, and location of residence. The second part of the questionnaire pertains to the educational background of the respondents. The third part included training or advanced studies attended after college. The last part was the employment data of the respondents.

Research Procedure

The researchers wrote a letter to the Campus Academic Director and the Dean of the College of Nursing for approval to conduct the study. Another letter was directed to the Registrar's Office requesting the overall population of the graduates for the academic years, 2014 to 2017 and asking for authorization to gain access to the latter's contact information, including the home address of the graduates and their landline/cell phone numbers.

After the request was approved, the target respondents were chose using the by simple random sampling technique. The researchers handed out the tool to the graduates at their workplace during their vacant time. To guarantee maximum involvement of the participants and retrieval of the questionnaires, the researchers informed and followed up with the traced graduates through their contact information. Also the available social media sites like Facebook and emails were utilized to trace and reach out to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad from 2014 to 2017. There were also some instances wherein the respondents were provided a soft copy version of the survey questionnaire in the Google form. The statistical treatments used were simple percentages and ranking for the profile and employment information of the respondnets.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section shows the data on the following: 1) profile of the graduates in terms of gender, civil status, region of origin, degree obtained, and present address; 2) reasons of the graduates for taking the course; 3) employment status of graduates, reasons for unemployment and for those employed, their current job and place of work; 4) number of graduates were able to land in a job related to the degree obtained in college; 5) academic competencies acquired in college that were utilized in their present job; 6) nursing competencies learned in college was that applied in their current occupation; 7) soft skills learned in college that were applied in their current occupation; and 8) hard skills learned in college that were applied in their



current occupation; 9) academic competencies offered by the college that students perceive as very useful for their graduates in their present job.

Table 1 presents the respondents' profile in terms of gender, civil status, region of origin, degree obtained, and location of residence.

Table 2. Respondent's Profile (n = 115)

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	27	23.4
Female	88	76.5
Civil Status		
Single	84	73
Married	16	13.9
Separated	1	0.8
Region of Origin		
Region 7	78	67.8
Region 9	20	17.3
Region 10	17	14.7
Location of Residence		
City	77	66.9
Municipality	28	24.3

The data in Table 1 showed that most of the respondents were female, equivalent to 76.5% of the total graduate respondents. Furthermore, they were primarily single, which comprised 73%. There were 13.9% who were already married when the study was conducted. It can also be noted that 0.8% were separated and acted as single parents.

The data also showed that 67.8% of the respondents were in Region 7, the mainstream. This was followed by Region 9 with 17.3%. Ranked at the bottom was Region 10. The University of Cebu–Banilad is situated in Cebu, which is in the heart of the Central Visayas region. Next to Manila, the economy of Cebu City is growing remarkably.

Moreover, 66.9% of the respondents were residing in the city, and only 24.3% lived in the municipality considering that the work opportunities for nurses are in the city, compared in the rural areas.

Kinicki and Kreitner (2006) opined that approximately 50.4% of the new entrants into the workforce between 2000 and 2010 are expected to be women. Even when women are paid the same as men, they may suffer in other job opportunities, receiving fewer stock options than males, even after controlling for level of education, performance, and job function, and reported less satisfaction with future performance and job function and reported less satisfaction with future career with future opportunities.

Also, male and female employees are entitled to equal promotion and training opportunities. Discrimination against female employees shall be deemed unlawful. Equal Pay Act of 1963 prohibits gender-based pay discrimination between jobs substantially similar in skills, effort, responsibility, and working conditions (Bateman, 2008).

Knowing the intention why students take a particular program in college is of vital importance. Table 2 highlights the reasons for the graduates to take up nursing.

Table 2. Reasons for taking the course for undergraduate degrees

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
1. High grades in the course or subject area related to the course	37	6
2. Good grades in high school	38	5
3. Influences of parents or relatives	50	2
4. Peer influence	37	6
5. Inspired by a role model	46	3
6. Strong passion for the profession	55	1
7. Prospect for immediate employment		
8. Status or prestige of the profession	39	4
9. Availability of course offering in chosen institution	39	4
10. Prospect of career advancement	36	7
11. Affordable for the family	39	4
12. Prospect of attractive compensation	36	7
13. Opportunity for employment abroad	38	5
	55	1

The top five (5) reasons included: opportunity for employment abroad, strong passion for the profession, influences of parents or relatives, inspired by a role model, status or prestige of the profession, prospect for immediate employment, and prospect for career advancement. It is common knowledge that the primary reason students take the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) course is the opportunity to work abroad, especially in the United States, United Kingdom, New Zealand, and other European countries, since their salaries and benefits are very high.

More Filipino nurses have been successful in their careers in foreign countries. They were satisfied with the compensation they were receiving and were able to help their families. This lures Filipinos' young minds to venture into the nursing field. Many enrolled in the program, as seen in the mushrooming newly opened nursing colleges.

Holland's Career Typology (1997) states that individuals are attracted to a particular occupation that satisfies their needs. Holland's theory deals with factors influencing career choice and is based on congruence: the fit between the individual and the environment (Zunker, 2002).

Career management skills and life skills are commonly identified as self-awareness, such as diagnosing occupational interests and abilities, and opportunity awareness (knowing what work opportunities exist and their entry requirements). Decision-making skills (to develop a strategy of getting from where one is to where one wants to be) and transition skills, which include job search skills (Brown & Hesketh, 2004).

Table 3 shows the respondents' professional examination result, particularly the Philippine Nurse Licensure Examination (PNLE)

Table 3. Professional Examination Result (n=115)

Indicators	Test Result	Percentage
Passed	89	77.30%
Failed	26	22.60%

Of the one hundred fifteen (115) respondents, eighty-nine (89), or 77.30%, passed the Philippine Nursing Licensure Examination (PNLE), while twenty-six (26), or 22.60%, did not pass the PNLE. Based

on the past four (4) nursing licensure examinations, the University of Cebu College of Nursing had a passing average of 73% for the first timers. It is ranked 173rd out of 342 nursing schools in the Philippines (Find University, 2016).

In consonance with the vision, mission goals, and core values of the University of Cebu College of Nursing, it aims to help students create a teaching-learning environment that fosters productivity and satisfaction among its stakeholders. It also targets to produce graduates imbued with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that make them potent movers in their fields of practice, thus creating an environment that characterizes a University of Cebu product (University of Cebu Manual for Students, 2013).

Table 4 presents information about the training or advanced studies attended after college.

Table 4. Trainings / Advanced Studies Attended after College (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Rank
1. Basic Life Support	40	2
2. Infectious and Communicable Diseases Training Seminar	33	4
3. Intravenous Training and Blood Transfusion	51	1
4. New Zealand Diploma Level 7	31	8
5. Private Nurse Training	34	3
6. Sacred Heart Hospital Staff Nurse Training	32	5.5
7. Neonatal Resuscitation Program	32	5.5
8. Lactation Management Program	31	8
9. National Competency II Training - EMS	31	8
Reason for Pursuing Advance Studies:		
1. Promotion	45	2
2. Professional Development	67	1

The respondents revealed that the top three trainings that they had undergone were: Infectious and Communicable Diseases Training Seminar (ranked first), Basic Life Support (ranked 2nd), and New Zealand Diploma Level 7 (ranked 3rd). This information indicates that Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates were exposed to the core skills that are essential in the performance of the job of the nurse.

The top two reasons the respondents pursued advanced studies were promotion (ranked 1st) and professional development (ranked 2nd). These data indicate that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad pursued master's degrees to attain high positions in the organization where they were employed and as preparation for future career pursuits.

These results were connected to the programs that aid in employee competency development, also known as organizational career management or organizational sponsorship, which are the processes by which employers enhance their employees' career success. Behaviors that enhance employability are called career management behaviors. These help a person in their career goals (Crant, 2000). These behaviors include career exploration, development of KSAs, networking, and promoting one's achievements (Zafar & Mat, 2012).

Table 5 displays the employment status of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad.

Table 5. Respondent's Employment Data (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Employed	85	73.90
Unemployed	30	26.00
• Regular	54	46.90
• Temporary	28	24.30
• Contractual	17	14.70

• Casual 16 13.90

Of the one hundred fifteen (115) respondents who graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the University of Cebu-Banilad, only eighty-five (85) or 73.90% were employed, and only thirty (30) or equivalent 26% were unemployed. Moreover, of those employed, a good number of fifty-four (54) or 24.30% were regular employees. On the other hand, sixteen (16) or 13.90% were temporarily employed but with casual status.

The nursing graduates also mentioned that the skills acquired in college and applied in work are knowledge of health and pharmacology terms, nursing services, and intravenous insertion. This result implied that the nursing graduates of the university were considered highly employable and could comply with the employers' standards since most of them had a regular status even though job opportunities in the Philippines for nurses were limited.

Brown and Hesketh (2004) stated that employability is ideally about the quality of work or employment. People may be able to obtain work, but it may be below their level of skills or in low-paid or undesirable jobs. A focus on obtaining skills to gain suitable employment has led to an oversupply of graduates and a more significant number of contenders chasing the same jobs. These authors argue that there is an apparent mismatch between individuals' expectations of employability and the realities of the labor market. Under these conditions, students will use several tactics in the labor market to maintain competitive advantage.

Thus, the choice of university program and the quality of university training is increasingly important for individual future careers. Freeman and Hirsch (2008) empirically show a strong relationship between the choice of education type and observed labor market conditions (Palvin, 2012).

Table 6 shows the information about the respondents' reasons for unemployment.

Table 6. Reasons for Unemployment (n=9)

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
Advance or further study	3	2
No job opportunity	4	1
Did not look for a job	2	3

For those respondents who were not employed at the time of the survey, the reasons were no job opportunity (ranked first), taking advance or further study (ranked 2nd), and not looking for a job (ranked 3rd). These findings revealed that the top reason why there were a good number of unemployed nursing graduates was the prevailing problem on the shortage of job opportunities for nursing graduates in the Philippines versus the huge number of nursing graduates from various schools. That is the reason why there were lots of them who were force to work outside the healthcare sector.

Career management skills and life skills are commonly identified as self-awareness such as diagnosing occupational interest and abilities, opportunity awareness (knowing what work opportunities exist and their entry requirements). Decision – making skills (to develop a strategy of getting from where one is to where one wants to be) and transition skills which include job search skills (Brown & Hesketh, 2004).

Table 7 unveils the respondents' present employment data of graduate.

Table 7. Present Occupation of the Nursing Graduates (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
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Industry	○ Officials of Government and Special-interest Organizations, Corporate Executives, Managers, Managing Proprietors and Supervisors	10	8.60
	○ Professionals	64	55.60
	○ Clerks	14	12.10
	○ Service workers and Shop/Market Sales workers	10	8.60
	○ Special Occupation	11	9.50
	Place of work	Local	88
Abroad		26	22.60

Table 7 shows that sixty-four (64), or 55.60%, were working as professionals, while ten (10), or 8.60%, were working as officials of government and special-interest organizations, corporate executives, managers, managing proprietors, and supervisors. This information shows that most Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad worked as professional nurses in various healthcare facilities, especially hospitals and other related organizations. This result also denotes that most BSN graduates are employable in various sectors.

This relates to Hillage's (2005) explanation that employability pertains to gaining employment and getting and keeping fulfilling work. It depends on the knowledge, knowledge, skills, and attitude an individual possesses, how they use those assets and present them to employers, and the context within which they seek work. It is not just about vocational and academic skills; individuals need relevant job market options (Hillage, 2005).

Career choice is an expression of, or an extension of, personality in the world of work. Individuals search for environments that let them exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles. People tend to choose a career that is reflective of their personality. People tend to be attracted to specific jobs, and the environment reflects their personality (Zunker, 2002).

In addition, eighty-eight (88), or 76.50% of the respondents were working locally, and only twenty-six (26), or 22.60%, were also employed abroad. These data emphasize that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program graduates at the University of Cebu-Banilad from 2014 to 2017 were still working in the Philippines in various sectors to gain experience for future career opportunities. However, it is known that most were planning to work abroad as nurses.

Table 8 shows the data about the significant line of business of the company wherein the respondents were presently employed at the time of the survey.

Table 8. Major Line of Business of the Company Presently Employed (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
○ Financial intermediation	16	13.90
○ Real estate, renting and business activities	16	13.90
○ Health and social work	82	71.30

This segment exposed that eighty-two (82), or 71.30% of the respondents were working in a company wherein the nature of business is in health and social work, while only sixteen (16), or 13.90%, were working in the entity in which the nature of business is financial intermediation. Also, another sixteen (16), or 13.90%, worked in real estate, renting, and business activities. It can be deduced that most Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the University of Cebu-Banilad worked in line with their college degree, although some worked in various related and unrelated healthcare fields.



Boundaryless career explained this as a series of employment opportunities beyond the boundary of a single employment environment". The theory's background was due to the following: First, career changes rapidly due to industrial restructuring and technical upgrading. Second, the influence of organizational transformation is due to the rapid development of information technology and knowledge economy since the 1990s, and third, the influence of the rise of services has led to diverse development trends (Liu & Chen, 2013).

Table 9 shows the respondents' reasons for staying on the job.

Table 9. Reasons for Staying on the Job (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
○ Salaries and benefits	21	2
○ Career challenge	20	3
○ Related to special skill	18	4
○ Related to course or program of study	24	1
○ Proximity to residence	12	5
○ Peer influence	10	7
○ Family influence	11	6

The data in Table 9 displays why Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad stay on the job. The top three (3) reasons why the respondents stayed in their jobs were related to the course or program of study (ranked 1st), salaries and benefits (ranked 2nd), and career challenges (ranked third).

Career satisfaction considers the individuals' belief that career progress aligns with their goals, values, and preferences. Career satisfaction is related to subjective career success, which is the individuals' judgment of their career progression, accomplishments, and anticipated outcomes (Seibert & Kramer, 2001). People with a proactive nature tend to see opportunities and follow them, persevering until they influence their environment. Proactive personalities positively correlate with career satisfaction and management behaviors (Seibert & Kramer, 2001).

Table 10 shows the information on the relatedness of the first job to the course/program taken in college according to the respondents.

Table 10. Relatedness of the First Job to the Course (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
○ Related	81	70.40
○ Not Related	34	29.50

The figure in Table 10 shows the data about the relatedness of the respondent's first job to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) course. Eighty-one (81), or 70.4% of the respondents, revealed that their college course relates to their first job, while thirty-four (34), or 29.50%, worked in a job unrelated to nursing. It can be gleaned from these findings that the majority of the BSN graduates divulged that after they graduated and passed the board examination, they could find a job related to nursing.

Individuals are attracted to a particular occupation that meets their needs and provides satisfaction. It deals with factors influencing career choice and is based on congruence: the fit. Career choice is an expression of, or an extension of, personality in the world of work. Individuals search for environments that let them exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles. People tend to be attracted to specific jobs, and the environment reflects personality (Zunker, 2002).

This section presented the reasons why nursing graduates accepted the job. Salaries and benefits ranked first. This is then followed by relatedness to special skills. Third was career challenge, and the last ranked was proximity to residence.

Table 11 presents the reasons for the respondent's acceptance of the job..

Table 11. Reasons for Accepting the Job (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
○ Salaries and benefits	29	1
○ Career challenge	24	3
○ Related to special skill	25	2
○ Proximity to residence	17	4

The respondents reveals tha the reasons for accepting their job are salaries (ranked 1st), related to special skill (ranked 2nd) and career challenge (ranked 3rd). This facts were reinforced by the Theory of Career Choice by John Holland which postulated that individuals are attracted to a particular occupation that meets their personal needs and provides them satisfaction. It deals with factors influencing career choice and is based on the congruence: that is, the fit. Career choice is an expression of, or an extension of personality into the world of work. Individuals search for environments that will let them exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitude and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles. People tend to be attracted to certain jobs, the environment then reflects personality (Zunker, 2002).

Table 12 shows the data about the respondents' reasons for changing jobs.

Table 12. Reasons for Changing Jobs (n=115)

Reasons for changing the job	Frequency	Rank
○ Salaries and benefits	47	1
○ Career challenge	41	2
○ Related to special skill	14	3
○ Proximity to residence	13	4

The top three (3) reasons why they transferred to another job are salaries and benefits (ranked first), career challenge (ranked second), and transferring to a job that is related to skill (ranked third). This information indicates that Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates would like to work in a job that commensurates their profession and expertise.

The choice of a vocation is an expression of personality, and the six-factor typology articulated by the latter could describe both persons and work environments. Understanding Holland's theory will help make good choices – deciding which occupations, careers, majors, or training programs best fit an individual (Zunker, 2002).

Table 13 presents information about the respondents' length of stay as nursing graduates in their first job.

Table 13. Length of Stay for the First Job (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Rank
○ 1 to 6 months	30	26.09
○ 7 to 11 months	20	17.39
○ 1 year to less than 2 years	6	5.22
○ 2 years to less than 3 years	34	29.57
○ 3 years to less than 4 years	23	20.00
○ Non-response	2	1.74



Of the one hundred fifteen (115) respondents, thirty-four (34), or 29.57, stayed in their first job for two years to less than three years, while six (6), or 5.22%, stayed for one year to less than two years. Usually, registered nurses in the Philippines work in hospitals for experience, and they apply for a nursing job that offers higher pay or go abroad since the salaries are higher than if they work in the Philippines. This means they did not intend to work in Philippine hospitals for long due to low salary levels.

Careers typically progress through stages of exploration: early career (trial and establishment), middle career (growth and maintenance), and later career (plateau and decline). The exploration stage involves identifying the right career and getting the appropriate education. An early career involves getting the first job, adjusting to a daily work routine, choosing a specialty, and transferring or promotion, which broadens one's perspective of the organization and profession. During the middle career, people establish their professional identity, choose among alternative career paths, and take on more responsibility. In their later careers, people develop others, shape the organization's future and retirement plan, deal with a reduced workload and less power, and may help develop their replacement (Tomey, 2004).

Table 14 shows the data about the reference tool or material that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad utilized in looking for their first job.

Table 14. Respondent's Reference Tool in Looking for the First Job (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
○ As walk-in applicant	26	3
○ Recommended by someone	39	1
○ Information from friends	36	2
○ Job fair or Public Employment Service Office (PESO)	14	4

Table 14 presents the respondents' reference tool when looking for the first job. The top three (3) means by which the respondents were able to find a job were: recommendation by someone (ranked first), information from friends (ranked second), and as a walk-in applicant (ranked third). The demand is high in nursing, especially in hospitals, healthcare facilities, and even in business process outsourcing companies (BPO). Hence, recommendation is the standard means of finding a job across sectors and industries related to healthcare and those not.

Career management skills and life skills are commonly identified as self-awareness, such as diagnosing occupational interests and abilities and opportunity awareness (knowing what work opportunities exist and their entry requirements). Decision-making skills (to develop a strategy of getting from where one is to where one wants to be) and transition skills, which include job search skills (Brown & Hesketh, 2004)

Table 15 presents the information about the respondents' job-level position.

Table 15. Job Level Position for the First Job (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
○ Rank-and-file	67	58.20
○ Professional, technical, and supervisory	48	41.70

It can be viewed that of the one hundred fifteen (115) respondents, sixty-seven (67), or 58.20%, worked as rank-and-file employees, and forty-eight (48), or 41.70% worked at the professional, technical, and supervisory levels. This information indicates that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad started at the lower level in the organization's structure at their first work.

Careers typically progress through stages of exploration: early career (trial and establishment), middle career (growth and maintenance), and later career (plateau and decline). The exploration stage involves identifying the right career and getting the appropriate education. An early career involves getting the first



job, adjusting to a daily work routine, choosing a specialty, and transferring or promotion, which broadens one's perspective of the organization and profession. During the middle career, people establish their professional identity, choose among alternative career paths, and take on more responsibility. In their later careers, people develop others, shape the organization's future and retirement plan, deal with a reduced workload and less power, and may help develop their replacement (Tomey, 2004).

Table 16 unveils the respondents' current job-level positions during the time of the survey.

Table 16. Job Level Position for the Present Job (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
○ Rank-and-file	60	52.10
○ Professional, technical, and supervisory	55	47.80

At the time of the study, sixty (60), equivalent to 52.10%, were in the rank-and-file position, while fifty-five (55), or 47.80%, were in the professional, technical, and supervisory levels. It can be deduced from this information that most Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad preferred to stay in their core job as nurses rather than take supervisory or administrative nursing positions, which is much more complicated.

Careers typically progress through stages of exploration: early career (trial and establishment), middle career (growth and maintenance), and later career (plateau and decline). The exploration stage involves identifying the right career and getting the appropriate education. An early career involves getting the first job, adjusting to a daily work routine, choosing a specialty, and transferring or promotion, which broadens one's perspective of the organization and profession. During the middle career, people establish their professional identity, choose among alternative career paths, and take on more responsibility. In their later careers, people develop others, shape the organization's future and retirement plan, deal with a reduced workload and less power, and may help develop their replacement (Tomey, 2004).

Table 17 confers the respondents' initial gross monthly salary on their first job after college.

Table 17. Initial Gross Monthly Earning (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
○ Below P5, 000.00	10	8.60
○ P5,000.00 to less than P10000.00	29	25.20
○ P10,000.00 to less than P15,000.00	39	33.90
○ P15,000.00 to less than P20,000.00	12	10.40
○ P20,000.00 to less than P25,000.00	12	10.40
○ P25,000.00 and above	12	10.40

It can be seen that thirty-nine (39), or 33.90%, earned earning Php10,000.00 to less than P15,000.00, while ten (10), or 8.60%, earned below Php5,000.00. This data indicates that more of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad had initial gross monthly earnings of the first job after that is within the minimum wage level because hospitals in the Philippines usually provide low pay to nurses since the administration knew that these nurses would not stay long. They will just use their hospital experience in their application to work abroad.

The evolution of labor market conditions has 'raised the bar' regarding accessing the job market. Indeed, in previous decades, the job market required cognitive skills and routine and non-routine annual abilities; hence, possessing a high school degree was already a strong indicator of human capital accumulation and a reasonable basis for getting a job. However, the requirements for accessing the professions have changed, and individual success depends more on non-routine analytic and interactive skills. Thus, the choice of university program and the quality of university training is increasingly important



for individual future careers. For example, Freeman and Hirsch (2008) empirically show a strong relationship between the choice of education type and observed labor market conditions (Palvin, 2012).

Table 18 presents the respondents' current initial gross monthly salary.

Table 18. Initial Gross Monthly Earning of the Current Job (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
○ P5, 000.00 to less than P10, 000.00	40	34.7
○ P10, 000.00 to less than P15, 000.00	51	44.3
○ P25, 000.00 and above	24	20.8

Fifty-one (51), or 44.30 % of the respondents, Php10,000.00 to less than Php15,000.00, while only twenty-four (24), or 20.80%, earned Php25,000.00 per month and above. This information indicates that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu-Banilad earned an income level within the minimum wage level, which was much lower than the salary level in the hospitals and nursing homes abroad. This salary level is also lower than their salary if they work in business process outsourcing (BPO) companies.

Individuals are attracted to a particular occupation that meets their needs and provides satisfaction. It deals with factors influencing career choice and is based on congruence: the fit. Career choice is an expression of, or an extension of, personality in the world of work. Individuals search for environments that let them exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles. People tend to be attracted to specific jobs, and the environment reflects personality (Zunker, 2002).

Table 19 shows the information about the relevance of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing curriculum taken by the respondents on their first job.

Table 19. Relevance of the College Curriculum on the Respondent's First Job (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
○ Relevant	86	74.7
○ Not relevant	29	25.2

It can be viewed that eighty-six (86) or 74.70% of the respondents revealed that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University of Cebu were relevant to their first job, while only twenty-nine (29) of 25.20% negated. These results explain that the BSN alums viewed that the different courses contained in the curriculum prepared them not only to pass the Philippine Nurse Board Examination (PNLE) but also for the nursing profession.

Job seekers with higher education are presumably more adaptive, motivated, and have more excellent learning abilities. According to this theory, students who perform better during an educational career (continue education to a higher level, graduate from a better school, receive higher grades) are assumed to perform better in the labor market in terms of demonstrating higher productivity, a better perception of new skills and are more attractive to employers as candidates for employment and investment in training. Education is, therefore, only a signal to the employer that a potential candidate is better quality (Wigley et al., 2012).

Table 20 displays the competencies that the respondents learned at the University of Cebu-Banilad that were utilized in their jobs.

Table 20. Competencies Learned in College (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Rank
○ Communication skills	43	1
○ Human relations skills	40	2
○ Entrepreneurial skills	23	6
○ Information technology skills	31	5
○ Problem solving skills	39	3
○ Critical thinking skills	37	4

The top three (3) skills that the respondents learned while they were studying at the University of Cebu-Banilad were communication skills (ranked first), human relations (ranked second), and problem-solving skills (ranked third). This means that the educational institution's academic training enabled them to develop the soft and hard skills essential to performing their job as nurses and providers of patient care. Also, nursing work is very dynamic, and various skills are not only professional skills but also interpersonal skills that are required to do their job effectively.

The USEM model of Knight and Yorke provides a framework for thinking about how to embed employability into the curriculum and acknowledges that the needs of students, employers, and other stakeholders must be considered. It encourages the individual to reflect on how curricula include assessment that develops the student's efficacy and metacognition and relate this to developing subject knowledge and professional skills that are transferrable to the practice context. The model attempts to think about employability more scientifically, partly because of the need to appeal to academic staff on their terms by referring to research evidence and theory (Cole & Tibby, 2013).

The different higher education institutions in the country have been guided by provisions and objectives set forth by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). These are to provide a general educational program that will develop the potential of students, to train them in the skills required for national development, and to instill and foster the appropriate and relevant skills and attitudes to enable them to become useful, productive, and gainfully employed members of the society (Medium Term Philippines Development Plan, 2004).

Moreover, competencies are defined as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable one to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation or function to the standards expected in employment. Moreover, competencies can be considered along a spectrum, from the essential competencies needed to survive in the workplace to a range of advanced competencies needed to sustain employability and advance one's career (Marquis & Huston, 2009). Based on the Commission on Higher Education [CHED] graduate tracer study, these competencies learned in college include communication, human relations, entrepreneurship, information technology, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.

Table 21 shows the soft skills the respondents learned in college that were useful in their job.

Table 21. Soft Skills Learned in College (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Rank
○ Self-motivation	48	1
○ Leadership ability	41	4
○ Personality traits	45	3
○ Social skills	47	2

The top three (3) soft skills the respondents' learned while studying at the University of Cebu-Banilad were the following: self-motivation (ranked 1st), social skills (ranked 2nd), and personality traits (ranked

3rd). These results mean that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates were able to develop their personal and interpersonal abilities, which prepared them when they do their duty as professional nurses.

Soft skills are qualities, personality traits, and social skills which everyone possesses in varying degrees. Some people make friends easily. Others are incredibly punctual, or able to make decisions under pressure. A person may also have the innate ability to work with co-workers from other cultures, or learn a new language quickly. This would be considered valuable soft skills. Soft skills are job-related techniques and interactions that help a person to become a more effective communicator.

Table 22 shows the data about the respondents' hard skills learned in college, which they found useful in their job.

Table 22. Hard Skills Learned in College (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
○ Mathematical ability	36	3
○ Mechanical aptitude or technical skills	38	2
○ Experience	52	1

The respondents revealed the hard skills that they learned and utilized in their job, particularly experience in the performance of the nursing job (ranked 1st), mechanical aptitude or technical skills (ranked 2nd), and mathematical ability (ranked 3rd). This information indicates that the practical skills learned in the related learning experience (RLE) were primordial skills they could apply to their job.

Discovering an applicant's soft skills can be tricky for specific hard skills such as mathematical ability or mechanical aptitude. A new employee may have the technical skills and experience to work on a customer support team but lack the soft skills such as patience or the ability to work under stressful conditions to be effective in the position.

Table 23 shows the data about nursing competencies the respondents learned in college.

Table 23. Nursing Competencies Learned in College (n=115)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Rank
○ Safe and quality nursing care	50	1
○ Management of resources and environment	38	9
○ Health education	42	5
○ Legal responsibility	39	8
○ Ethico-moral responsibility	40	7
○ Personal and professional development	43	4
○ Quality improvement	48	2
○ Research	32	11
○ Records management	37	10
○ Communication	41	6
○ Collaboration and teamwork	46	3
Relevance of the Nursing Competencies on the First Job		
○ Relevant	115	100

Table 21 expresses the varied nursing competencies that the nursing graduates learned and found helpful in their jobs. It can be noticed that the top five (5) nursing competencies that were found helpful by the respondents were the following: safe and quality nursing (ranked first); quality improvement (ranked 2nd); collaboration and teamwork (ranked third); personal and professional development (ranked fourth); and health education (ranked fifth). It can be inferred that the curriculum aligns with the nursing profession's requirements since it contains courses that prepare the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students to possess the essential skills needed for the job.



Also, all of the research respondents assessed that the nursing competencies taught at the University of Cebu-Banilad relate to the requirements of their first job. Hence, these BSN graduates were able to develop skills that they were able to apply in their work.

Employability depends not only on whether one can fulfill the requirements of a specific job but also on how a person can excel among job seekers. However, focusing on obtaining skills, knowledge, and attitude to gain suitable employment has led to an oversupply of graduates and many contenders chasing the same job (Brown & Hesketh, 2004).

Marquis and Huston (2009) pointed out that managers should appraise each employee's competency level for career development. This appraisal should lead to the development. This appraisal should lead to developing a plan that outlines what the employee must do to achieve desired competencies in current and future positions.

Moreover, Article IV, Section 5 of the Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 14, series 2009, graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program must be able to apply analytical and critical thinking in nursing practice. The nurse must be competent in the following Key Areas of Responsibility and their respective core competency standards and indicators. The following areas of competency are safe and quality nursing care, management of resources and environment, health education, legal responsibility, ethical-moral responsibility, personal and professional development, and personal and professional development. Research records management; communication, collaboration, and teamwork (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2009).

Conclusion

The Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN) graduates of the University for the academic year 2014-2017 were found to be employable. The concern seen in these graduates was the absence of job opportunities. Another issue was the mismatch of their current job and the course they have acquired. Majority of the nursing graduates lacked entrepreneurial skills and was having problems with research comprehension. However, despite some nursing graduates who were experiencing unemployment, the graduates still managed to maintain a status of employment due to competencies they had acquired in college, which were expedient when they sought employment from other industries.

Translational Research

Based on the salient results of this investigation, the proposed enhancement and updating of the Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN) curricula is advanced. Also, the Placement Office of the University of Cebu-Banilad shall devise a comprehensive program of activities to enhance the BSN graduate's employment prospects, especially in research and entrepreneurship. Benchmarking with other established education institutions offering the BSN program shall be integrated into the program to update the curriculum and ensure that it addresses the real needs of the nursing profession. Moreover, the personal and interpersonal development of the BSN students shall also be included so that they are very much ready for the job market.

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