

EMPLOYABILITY AND TRACER STUDY OF NURSING GRADUATES OF CENTRAL MINDANAO UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Background: Graduates of study programs at universities and colleges contribute significantly to the workforce, and their employability is crucial in both local and global labor markets. Understanding graduate employability and aligning academic preparation with industry needs are essential for improving educational outcomes, particularly in nursing education. **Objective:** This study aimed to determine the profile of nursing graduates, identify their employability status, and ascertain the employability attributes required by employers of nursing graduates from Central Mindanao University. **Method:** This study employed a descriptive research design conducted at Central Mindanao University using an online tracer study platform. The respondents included Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) graduates and their respective employers, who were invited to complete structured survey questionnaires. The study traced graduates employed both locally and internationally. **Results:** Findings revealed that most graduates perceived the overall curriculum—including general education, core courses, electives, and undergraduate thesis—as highly useful for professional practice. The gap between employment and unemployment was largely attributed to graduates pursuing advanced studies or second degrees. Other contributing factors included family-related concerns, preparation for overseas employment, and review for licensure examinations such as NCLEX. Graduates identified key competencies gained from the program, ranked from most to least beneficial: work ethic, interpersonal skills, decision-making skills, teamwork, verbal communication, leadership, problem-solving, written communication, initiative, enthusiasm, and creativity. However, some graduates emphasized the need for increased practical training to enhance real-world readiness. From the employers' perspective, essential competencies to be strengthened in the BSN program include patient-centered care, evidence-based practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, quality improvement, and informatics utilization. **Conclusion:** The BSN curriculum at Central Mindanao University generally equips graduates with relevant competencies for professional practice. However, enhancing practical training and strengthening key employability skills aligned with employer expectations are necessary to further improve graduate readiness and competitiveness in the workforce.

Keywords: *Employability, Tracer Study, Nursing Graduates*

INTRODUCTION

One of the Philippines' most severe and long-standing issues is the need for more suitable work possibilities for its young men and women. As of January 2019, the Philippines had an estimated 5.2% unemployment rate, with 20.9% of the unemployed being college graduates (PSA, 2019, as cited by Albina and Sumagaysay, 2020).

Recognizing this reality, graduates of study programs at universities and colleges contribute significantly to the world of work, and their employability is vital in both the local and worldwide labor markets (Siraye, Abebe, Melese, and Wale, 2018). Various tracer studies have reviewed, monitored, and investigated the training delivered in a program of study and its curriculum, assessing the effectiveness of the teaching-learning methods. Similarly, for an institution to explore changes in course content, teaching-learning techniques, assessment methodologies, or curriculum improvement opportunities (Palomeno, Perez, Pesigan, Piamonte, 2014). Beyond the impact of Higher Education Institutions on their essential role in defining and shaping a well-defined curriculum, graduates' employability is critical (Tumapon, 2016). According to Albina and Sumagaysay, 2020, a defined curriculum of Universities and Colleges carries much weight on the prospect of employment because when parents are faced with the decision of where to send their children to get a degree, employability is heavily based on the relevance and quality of programs offered by Universities and Colleges.

Employment is critical to an individual's physical and mental health because it provides a sense of purpose, direction, and self-esteem (ILO-Asia Pacific, 2009). In this regard, the ability of higher education institutions to prepare their students for the current employment market is critical. It implements the transition from competency-based standards to outcomes-based education in nursing education. It assumes that nursing graduates have the information, abilities, and attitude to provide services in the practice of their profession. Pure nursing skills, on the other hand, are no longer sufficient. To add value to the

workplace, graduates must distinguish themselves by developing skill attributes that allow them to seize and exploit opportunities, take risks, think strategically, work flexibly, manage complexity, and acquire more generic employability skills, such as teamwork, communication skills, and medical/health awareness (Nesta, 2008).

According to various studies, the labor market desired graduates' field-specific and general talents such as communication, teamwork, planning and time management, decision-making skills, innovation and creativity skills, problem-solving skills, computer literacy, work ethic, and mentality (Siraye, Abebe, Melese, and Wale, 2018).

It is critical to identify the employability of Central Mindanao University nursing graduates to determine whether they can compete with other graduates from higher education institutions (HEIs) and meet labor market needs. In addition, the study will provide insights to aid in the development and advancement of the school's curriculum for the benefit of future students to identify policy and program reforms required to further increase the employability of Central Mindanao University nursing graduates.

RATIONALE

There are numerous options for nursing graduates; nevertheless, graduates must be equipped with the essential information, skills, and characteristics for employment. Given that nursing, graduates have risen fast while facing constant stiff competition. As a result, the study will estimate the employability of Central Mindanao University nursing graduates for the years 2016-2019 by detecting graduates' skill gaps and their effectiveness in the labor market. In addition, it will investigate whether or not they are employed, whether or not the graduates' first job is related to their program in college, reasons why some respondents are not yet employed, respondents' employability status, respondents' first job gross monthly earning, length of time that respondents land their first job, and whether or not the curriculum and competencies

learned in college are relevant and valuable in their first job. Employers will also delve into the employability skills and attributes of graduates based on their program study by identifying the graduates' lacking competencies, the appropriateness of the skill imparted through training, what skills are critically needed, and the extent of application in their working environment.

Review of Literature

According to Wickramasinghe and Parera (2010), employable skills are crucial for economic and social growth. Furthermore, from an employer's standpoint, an educated and trained staff is critical to maintaining a competitive advantage in the market. Lin et al. (2012); Batra et al. (2010); Hill et al. (2001). Job-seeking tactics heavily influence college students' initial professional success. They must prepare for themselves as well as other personal traits. The classic struggle between "academic freedom" to develop and teach for the future and "employer needs" and graduate usefulness in the present is all too visible here. Nonetheless, there is a need for learning institutions to rediscover and re-engineer their role as evidence is emerging (Junghagen, 2005; Harvey, 2005).

According to a news release issued by the Philippine Nurses Association in July 2008, many licensed nurses need to be more employed or unemployed due to legislative changes in destination nations, which include an overstock situation and a quality issue. The goal of expanding understanding of factors influencing new graduates' transition into the labor market originates from a real issue that many new graduates face: high unemployment and underemployment rates (Li et al., 2006). Universities may create curricula based on the development of important abilities that employers seek, and students can better position themselves in the marketplace by better understanding the value employers place on employability qualities (e.g., by highlighting specific attributes- such as soft skills- when applying for jobs). While course content and teaching methods may have been appropriate in the past, new teaching and learning tactics will undoubtedly be required to meet the changing needs of the

corporate world, not to mention students' evolving needs and expectations regarding their ongoing lifestyles and professions. As a result, new pedagogical repertoires must be developed for higher education institutions to remain relevant and offer innovative courses (Yorke & Harvey, 2005).

Significantly, awareness extends beyond a purely technical level. To a point, having "skills" connected with having what is required to work well post-graduation is fine. What appears to be more crucial, though, is having the "skills" and "personal characteristics" to know how to evolve and better oneself (Hendry, 2003; Harvey, 2005; Junghagen, 2005). "Employability" will also be influenced by the many interfaces in examining nursing degree programs. As Junghagen (2005) has pointed out, "curriculum development should not be in one direction ...a two-way conversation is necessary. However, more than pursuing a two-way approach may be required. For successful education design and operation, all affected parties must participate in open lines of communication (Yorke and Harvey., 2005).

Mckinsey (2012) found that 40% of employees believe an extensive skills gap exists between graduates and entry-level needs. Mckinsey concluded that there is a problem with education systems that fail to develop future workers with the abilities required by today's organizations and those of tomorrow (Mckinsey, 2012). As a result, graduates should have a collection of accomplishments, abilities, understanding, and personal characteristics that make them more likely to acquire employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, benefiting themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy (Yorke, 2006). A set of characteristics, abilities, and knowledge that all labor market players should possess in order to be effective in the job for the benefit of themselves, their employer, and the larger economy (CBI, 2010).

On the other hand, graduates are not prepared in areas such as "problem-solving, decision making, working in a team, or learning for themselves," as cited by Moley (2001). "Graduates are hardly thought to require emotional intelligence,

political skills, or self-care in the face of occupational stress," according to Moley (2001). Employers frequently remark that graduates are unprepared for the workforce, according to Brown et al. (2003). As a result, employers are taking a risk by recruiting college graduates. Morley (2001) says pupils should "know-how rather than merely knowing that." According to Heldrich (2005), higher education can be enhanced by making it more relevant to the workplace. However, there is a growing belief among students that obtaining a job, becoming marketable, and beginning a career are vital factors in their choice of institutions and courses. As a result, students become pickier about the courses and institutions they attend (Rae, 2007). Therefore, institutions must attempt to give their graduates value, so they are seen as having informed understandings, adequate competence, and consequently, "employability." Institutions must engage in participatory processes, not just Socratic instruction or information transfer (Yorke, 2004).

Meanwhile, Harvey (2003) observes that employability is more than finding work. It is more than just gaining skills, techniques, or experience to help a student find a job or advance in their existing employment. It is about learning, and the emphasis is less on "employ" and more on "ability." The emphasis is on building critical, reflecting capacities to empower and improve the learner. Employability is the acquisition of characteristics (knowledge, skills, and talents) that increase graduates' chances of success in their chosen jobs. It mainly refers to graduate work, but it also encompasses self-employment. A broader definition encompasses any lifestyle choice, while employability is the development of skills to ensure graduates are crucial life-long learners (Cruz & Nuque, 2014).

Entry-level college graduates need more skills for the profession and, as a result, are unprepared for the rigors of industry positions (Peddle, 2000). College students today are required to learn the material faster than ever before. They are expected to develop both "hard" technical talents and "soft" people skills in order to be successful in the workplace (Hofstrand,

1996; Shivpuri and Kim, 2004.). Depending on the type of intermediary engaged, job search tactics have been classified as formal (placement, want advertising) or informal (contacts and networks). Several studies have found that most workers obtain their jobs through informal channels, typically through friends and acquaintances.

Much subsequent research focused on "employability skills," which are underlying elements contributing to graduate employability. For example, cotton's (1993) theoretical framework specifies a set of basic, higher-order, and successful employability abilities required by employers. Cotton's model classified employable skills into three categories: fundamental skills, higher-order cognitive skills, emotional skills, and attributes. Overreliance on skills has been critiqued as a significant flaw in the employability skills model, and it has been the topic of many recent skills plus employability frameworks, which suggest that employability skills are insufficient for meaningful employment (Knight & Yorke, 2004; Knight & Yorke, 2002).

Employability can be included in any topic curriculum without jeopardizing academic independence or stakeholders' expectations of present academic principles. The USEM model offers employability as "a synergetic blend of topic comprehension, personal attributes, and vital abilities." The essential aspect of the USEM model is that its pedagogical approaches do not force academics to compromise subject-specific understanding, so it should get widespread support from the academic and research communities. The skills plus framework outlines why complex learning is necessary for undergraduate programs to increase employability (Knight & Yorke, 2003). It does not call into doubt instructors' attachments to subject matter, but teachers must create positive learning environments that assist students in answering the questions of what, how, and why they learn. The Skills Plus Framework is touted as an ambitious employability effort since it considers the complete academic program while supporting academics' focus on 'excellent learning' (Knight & Yorke, 2003).

The skills plus framework gained traction as a result of a series of studies conducted by ESECT (Enhancing Student Employability Coordination Team) that were designed for teaching staff at higher education institutes interested in enhancing the employability of their students Yorke. 2006). As a result, higher education institutions are under increasing pressure to create graduates who are employable and ambitious enough to start their firms.

Developing employability includes improvements in graduate profile, credentials, attitude, and labor market strategies, as well as managing tensions, pressures, and disappointment. It is also asserted that students no longer see a close relationship between their university academic performance and labor-market benefits. Students see a need to build more aggressive and proactive labor market strategies that go beyond formal academic achievements.

According to a literature review, certain employability studies have been limited to particular countries and their graduate employability. For example, the employability of Sri Lankan university graduates was analyzed, and cross-comparisons revealed that Engineering/ Science/ Management graduates have greater work chances than Social Science/ Humanity graduates (Ariyawansa, 2008). A comparison of educational quality indicated that degrees in social sciences and humanities are higher than some medical and engineering degrees. Ariyawansa's (2008) study contradicts earlier employability studies by stating that IT skills and the English language are not the focus of universities. In a climate where many graduates regard training/experience as a significant factor in the private sector, improving IT skills, leadership traits, teamwork, analytical ability, and interpersonal interactions is critical in addition to university degree-related learning. The mismatch between demand and supply for graduates in the employment sector has resulted in a variation in the employability of Sri Lankan university graduates that appears to be parallel to similar employability studies done overseas, such as the connected model, which takes

into account both the graduate and their environment that interact with each other in creating employability.

According to Valdehueza (2008), employability is "a collection of accomplishments, abilities, comprehension, and individual attributes that make graduates more likely to pick up business and be fruitful in chosen jobs, benefiting themselves, the workforce, the group, and the economy." The employability of alumni of marketing administration is quite essential or advantageous in every country, specifically in the Philippines, to assist with financial troubles and appreciate job advertisement advancement. Each candidate must have the strength and capacity to perform every necessary step and a positive and substantial method of comprehending the concept of the task.

Objectives (indicate % of accomplishment)

1. Determine the profile of the graduates.
2. Identify the graduates' status of employability.
3. Ascertain the employability attributes that employer needs from the nursing graduates.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at Central Mindanao University through an online platform for tracing the graduates employed locally and abroad. The study's respondents were the BSN graduates of Central Mindanao University, and their employers were targeted to answer the survey questionnaires. The data were gathered using the online platform to contact the respondents. In addition, the graduates were provided with an electronic version of the survey questionnaire to gather information about their demographic profile and employment status and the employers who will ascertain graduates' employability attributes and competencies. Data transfer will be in various forms like email, social media, and google forms. *Data analysis* used the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) of the Philippines standard Graduate Tracer Study (GTS) tool, the data gathered were tabulated using the SPSS 20.0 software and Microsoft excel. In addition, descriptive statistics were

employed to analyze the data and describe in percent, frequency, and mean.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following data were gathered and analyzed.

Number of Respondents (n=33)

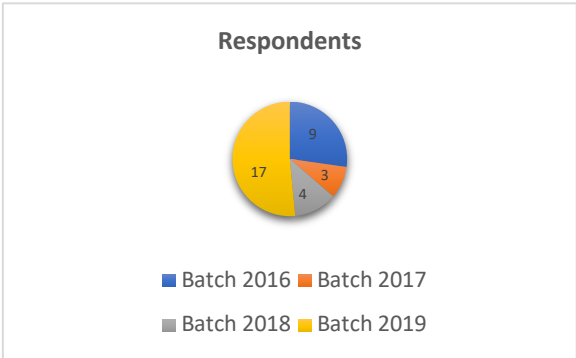


Figure 1. Graphical presentation of the number of respondents in the tracer study.

In this study, the majority of the respondents (17) are graduates of Batch 2019, followed by nine (9) from Batch 2016, four (4) from Batch 2018, and three (3) from Batch 2017.

Sex of Respondents (n=33)

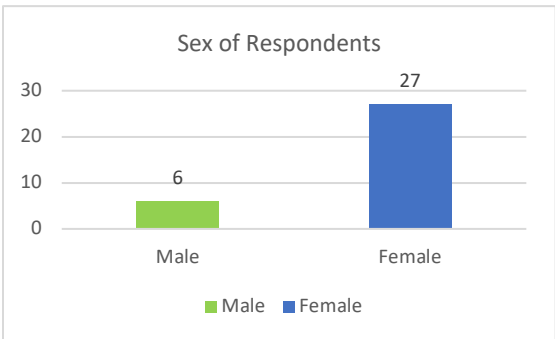


Figure 2. Graphical presentation of the respondents' sex.

Figure 2 shows that most respondents (27) are female, and only six (6) are male. The table shows that males are still employed in culturally bound masculine jobs, although female graduates dominate the discipline. As personal and professional pathways, men disdain care-oriented vocations such as nursing (Croft, 2015). Men care less about nurturing and connection when it comes to roles in society that provide care to others, according to a study by Block (2018). Furthermore, people who strongly embraced agentic concepts tended to give health professions a lower societal value. As the table indicates, nursing is still mainly a female-dominated profession, but this is slowly changing.

Employment Status of Graduates (n=33)

Table 1. Employment status of BSN graduates

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Regular	15	45.45%
Contractual	4	12.12%
Casual	1	3.03%
Unemployed	13	39.40%

In table 1, the employment status of the graduates shows that 45.45% (15) of the respondents have regular employment. 39.40% (13) of the respondents are currently unemployed due to various reasons shown in Table 2. Some are only contractual and casual in their employment. It means that the vast majority of graduates are committed to their current positions, whether they are in public or private organizations.

Reason for Unemployment (n=13)

Table 2. Reasons for Unemployment of Graduates

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Taking advanced studies/second course	7	53.85%
Family/Pregnancy	2	15.38%
Securing Documents for Overseas Employment	2	15.38%
Review for NCLEX	2	15.38%
TOTAL	13	100%

As shown in Table 2, the unemployed graduates, there are various reasons for their Unemployment. The majority have their undertakings in advanced studies/second course (53.85%) or seven (7). Other reasons include family concerns related to pregnancy, securing documents for overseas employment, and review for NCLEX, which accounts for 15.38% of each of these reasons.

Current Occupation (n=20)

Table 3. Current Occupation of the Graduates

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Staff Nurse	13	65%
OR Nurse	2	10%
DOH-NDP	1	5%
ICU Nurse	3	15%
Hemodialysis Nurse	1	5%
TOTAL	20	100%

Table 3 shows the distribution of the current Occupations of the graduates. Sixty-five (65) percent are currently working as staff nurses. Others account for 35% of the respondents assigned to specialized areas, such as OR nurses, community health nurses, ICU nurses, and hemodialysis nurses.

Name of Employing Company/Agency (n=20)

Table 4. Employing Company or Agency of the employed graduates.

Company/Agency	Frequency
Valencia Polymedic General Hospital Inc.	3
Nephrology Center of Valencia Bukidnon (NCVB)	2
Capitol University Medical Center	2
Laviña General Hospital, Inc. Valencia City Bukidnon Provincial Medical Center	1
Department of Health Don Carlos Doctors Hospital	1
Malaybalay Polymedic General Hospital Inc. Southern Philippines Medical Center	2
St. Joseph Southern Bukidnon Hospital Inc.	1
Esther Hospital	1
Chong Hua Hospital	1
St. Ann Medical Hospital	1
McLaren St. Luke's Hospital	1
Qualicare	1

Table 4 shows various companies/agencies where the graduates are employed. Most are local companies, and only a few in overseas. The local companies include both private and government sectors.

Classification of Employment (n=20)

Table 5. Classification of Employment

Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Private	16	80%
Government	3	15%
Semi-private	1	5%
TOTAL	20	100%

In table 5, it is evident that 80% of the graduates' work in local and international private companies. On the other hand, there are only 15% who are currently employed in a government institution and 5% in a semi-private company. It means that most graduates preferred to work for a private company rather than for the government or themselves.

Mode of Obtaining Employment (n=20)

Table 6. Mode of Obtaining Employment

Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Referral/information from friends	10	50%
Personal Qualification	6	30%
Connections	3	15%
Job Posting on Social Media	1	5%
TOTAL	20	100%

There are various modes by which graduates obtain their jobs. Table 6 shows how graduates obtain their jobs, including referrals or information from friends. It accounts for 50% of the respondents. Thirty (30) percent of them got a job because of their qualifications. Others considered their connections when obtaining their jobs, accounting for 15% of the respondents. Finally, only 1 or 5% got the job through posting on social media.

Monthly Income in Present Job (n=20)

Table 7. Monthly Income in Present Job

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
30,000.00 and Above	3	15%
20,000.00 to 24,999.00	4	20%
15,000.00 to 19,999.00	11	55%
10,000.00 to 14,999.00	1	5%
5,000.00 to 9,999.00	1	5%
TOTAL	20	100%

The monthly income of the present job graduates, as shown in Table 7, comes in different ranges. The majority earned 15,000 to 19,999 pesos (55%), followed by 20,000 to 24,999 pesos (20%). Only 15% earned 30,000 and above and 10% earned below the expected compensation for a registered nurse.

Length of Employment in Current Job (n=20)

Table 8. Length of Employment in Current Job

Monthly Income	Frequency
Four years and four mos.	1
3 years and 9 mos.	1
3 years	1
2 years	2
1 year and 3 mos.	1
11 mos.	2
10 mos.	3
9 mos.	2
7 mos.	1
6 mos.	2
5 mos.	1
1 mo.	1
TOTAL	20

Table 8 shows the length of employment in their current jobs. The majority got stayed in their current job for months to 1 year. It can be attributed to the number of respondents who are graduates

of 2019. Only a few of them stayed in their jobs, which range from 2 years to 4 years.

Relevance of Course and Training in College to Current job (n=20)

Table 9. Relevance of the Course and Training in College to Current Job

Relevance	Frequency	Percentage
Relevant	19	95%
Not Relevant	1	5%
Total	20	100%

Based on their perceptions of the relevance of the course and training in college to their current job, in table 9, 95% considered it relevant. Only 5% or 1 said it is irrelevant since the current job is unrelated to the profession.

Length of Time in Obtaining First Job from Graduation (n=33)

Table 10. Length of Time in Obtaining First Job from Graduation

Years/Months	Frequency
One year and six mos.	1
One year and five mos.	1
One year and two mos.	1
Ten mos.	2
Nine mos.	2
Eight mos.	3
Seven mos.	3
Six mos.	10
Five mos.	1
Four mos.	1
Two mos.	2
One mo.	5
Never been employed	1
TOTAL	33

Table 10 shows how long the graduates obtain their jobs after graduation. Most of them got their first job in 6 months. The longest time to obtain the first job after graduation is one year and six months, and the least is one month after graduation. It means that graduates are competitive in job hunting and get employed the soonest as possible after graduation.

First job (n=33)

Table 11. First Job of the Graduates

First Job	Frequency	Percentage
Staff Nurse	26	79%
ICU Nurse	2	6%
Online English Teacher	1	3%
Office Staff	1	3%
Board Review Lecturer	1	3%
Dialysis Nurse	1	3%
Never been employed	1	3%
TOTAL	33	100%

Table 11 shows the first job of the respondents. 79% worked as a staff nurse, 6% directly worked in a particular area as an ICU nurse), and 3 % worked as Dialysis Nurse. Few works are unrelated to the nursing profession and have never been employed. It means that most of the graduates before they were promoted were once staff nurses.

Skills/Competencies Learn from Courses that are Useful in First Job

Table 12. Skill/Competencies Learn from Courses that are Useful in First Job

Aspect	Ranking Score	Rank
Work Ethic	330	1
Interpersonal Skills	297	2
Decision-making Skills	209	3
Teamwork Skills	203	4
Verbal Skills	144	5
Leadership Skills	128	6
Problem-Solving Skills	128	7
Written Skills	121	8
Initiative and Enthusiasm	59	9
Innovative/Creative Skills	53	10
Teaching Skills	46	
Analytical and Critical Skills	38	
Strategic ICT Skills	33	
Research Skills	15	
Ability to apply expert thinking	11	

Table 12 shows the top 10 skills/competencies learned from the course that is useful in the first job. The following competencies are ranked from most beneficial to the least; Work Ethic, Interpersonal Skills, Decision-making Skills, Teamwork Skills, Verbal Skills, Leadership Skills, Problem-Solving Skills, Written Skills, Initiative and Enthusiasm, and Innovative/Creative Skills. The graduates perceive these skills and competencies to be essential in getting a job.

Berman et al. (2016) stated that nursing curricula, through the years, went through a series of revisions to prepare nursing students to work not only in the traditional hospital setting but also in various other settings to assume more diverse roles in response to new scientific knowledge, advances in technology, and cultural, political and socioeconomic changes. For example, in the Philippines, based on RA 9173 and CHED policies and standards for the BSN program, Laurente (2011) opined that students are prepared to become

professional nurses equipped with the following: caring behaviors; legal, ethical-moral, and social responsibilities/accountabilities; and creative-critical thinking skills which are helpful for the promotion of health and prevention of illness, restoration of health, alleviation of suffering, and assisting clients in facing death with dignity and peace.

The usefulness of the overall course curriculum for professional work

Table 13. The usefulness of the overall course curriculum for professional work

Aspect	Mean	Interpretation
General Education/Basic Courses	2.84	High
Core Courses/Major Courses	2.93	High
Elective Courses	2.60	High
Undergraduate Thesis	2.57	High
AVERAGE MEAN	2.74	High

Legend: Scale: 3 – Very Useful; 2 – Useful; 1 – Not Useful

The graduates perceived the usefulness of the overall course curriculum for professional work with an average mean of 2.74 on a 3-point scale, as shown in Table 13. They considered the curriculum to be how highly useful for professional work. Specifically, it also has high usefulness in general education or introductory courses, core courses or major courses, elective courses, and undergraduate thesis.

Perceived Strength of BS Nursing Program

Table 14. Perceived Strength of BS Nursing Program

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
Faculty	4.54	Very High
Curriculum	4.66	Very High
Facilities	3.84	High
Libraries	3.60	High
Others: Student Support (f=1)	5.00	Very High
Average Mean	4.33	Very High

Legend: 4.20 -5.00 – Very High; 3.40-4.19 – High; 2.60-3.39 – Medium; 1.80-2.59 – Low; 1.00-1.79 – Very Low

Table 14 shows the perceived strength of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program, which has an average mean of 4.33 (Very High). Indicators considered to be a very high strength of the program include Faculty, Curriculum, and Student Support, with mean of 4.54, 4.66, and 5.00, respectively. Indicators considered to have high strength include

Facilities and Libraries, with a mean of 3.86 and 3.60, respectively.

Recommendations to Improve the Program

The graduates have the following recommendations:

Facilities /Infrastructure, Materials, and Equipment: 1) Better facilities and more conducive classrooms (classrooms are too hot and humid); 2) Improvement in facilities and the college library; 3) Better facilities for return demonstration; 4) Improve the materials needed in the Return demonstration, 5) Bigger and better facilities; 6) Improved technological facilities, especially during this pandemic; 7) Improve equipment/materials for better learning; 8) Invest in newer equipment.

Integrating Current Trends in Practice:

Incorporate more up-to-date information on medical practices.

Management of Learning: 1) Pursue Ideal Practices; 2) More practices on the most common hospital procedures: suctioning, nebulization, and administration of IV medications thru solusets and different kinds of pumps to further gauge and prepare the student's readiness for their clinical experience; 3) More research opportunities and private hospital exposure; 4) Have a more concrete duty assignment and hours. Moreover, let the students experience rotation in particular areas, and if they could, let students have a rotation in Tertiary hospitals; 5) The college's skills training is already impeccable. However, improving the students' knowledge-based training would help; 6) Consistency and vigorous implementation of the course syllabus; 7) Improve leadership skills, basic skills, interpersonal skills, and educational aspects. RLE is a meaningful and hands-on activity. Build confidence and mastery in every skill attained; 8) Have easy accessibility to practicing hospitals, like having duties in the university hospital, or provide accessible transport for duties/actual clinical setups for student safety, especially during community duties and night shifts.

Technology: Accessible internet to all students.

Employability of the BSN Graduates (n=33)

Table 15. Employability of the BSN Graduates

Level Of Employability	Frequency	Percentage
Very competitive	27	82%
Moderately competitive	5	15%
Not competitive	1	3%
TOTAL	33	100%

Table 15 shows how competitive are the graduates of the BS Nursing program at the university. Eight-two (82) percent are very competitive, followed by 15% who are moderately competitive. Only 1 (3%) consider herself to be not competitive. It means that graduates of CMU are employable based on their competencies developed in the program.

Engagement in Further Studies/ Training (n=33)

Table 16. Engagement in Further Studies/Training

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Engaged in further studies/training	10	30%
Not engaged in any further studies/training	23	70%
TOTAL	33	100%

Table 16 shows that 10 out of 33 respondents, or 30% engaged in further studies/training while unemployed. The remaining 70% refrain from further studies/training since they are employed.

Course Taken (n=10)

Table 17. Course Taken among those who engaged in further studies/training.

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Second Course (Ex. Medicine)	2	6%
Vertically Aligned Masters Course	1	3%
Non-vertically Aligned Masters Course	1	3%
Others: German Language	6	18%
TOTAL	10	30%

Table 17 shows that 30% of graduates pursued further development, with the majority (18%) taking German language courses to support overseas

employment. Smaller proportions pursued a second degree (6%) and master's programs (6%), indicating a stronger focus on international career readiness than academic advancement.

Reason for not pursuing an advanced degree program (n=23)

Table 18. Reason for not pursuing an advanced degree program

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Current Job	12	52%
Funding	7	30%
Others: Plans to work abroad	4	17%
TOTAL	23	100%

Table 18 shows the reasons of 23 respondents did not pursue advanced studies. More than half of the respondents did not pursue advanced studies because they were employed. It comprises 52% of the 23 respondents. On the other hand, 30% considered funding as a reason for not pursuing advanced studies, and 17% had plans to work abroad.

Table 19. Competencies and skills that are relevant to be incorporated into the BSN Curriculum of the University to meet the institution's expectations

Competency/Skills	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Work in interdisciplinary teams	10	67	3rd
Utilize informatics	8	53	5th
Provide patient-centered care	15	100	1st
Employ evidence-based practice	13	87	2nd
Apply quality improvement	9	60	4 th

Employers' perceptions of the competencies and skills that need to be increased and strengthened are influenced by five primary variables, which are reflected in Table 19. First, an essential skill that must be included in the BSN Curriculum (15,100%) is providing patient-centered care. It entailed recognizing, respecting, and caring for patients' differences, values, preferences, and expressed needs; relieving pain and suffering; coordinating continuous care; listening to, clearly informing, communicating with, and educating patients; sharing decision-making and management; and continuously advocating disease prevention, wellness, and the

promotion of healthy lifestyles, with a focus on population health.

Second, to apply evidence-based practices (13,87%), Nursing students must integrate the best research with clinical skills and patient values for optimum treatment and participate in learning and research activities that can be valuable in the workplace.

Third, collaborate in multidisciplinary teams (10,67%). It is critical to acquire interpersonal skills in order to be effective in cooperating, collaborating, communicating, and integrating care in teams to ensure that care is continuous and reliable. Nursing students must be adaptable to effectively collaborate with various departments in the workplace.

Boosting quality is the fourth option (9.60%). To provide high-quality care, nurses must be able to recognize the potential for error, learn and apply fundamental safety design principles like standardization and simplification, measure care quality in terms of structure, process, and outcomes concerning patient and community needs, and develop, implement, and evaluate interventions to alter care processes and systems.

Finally, use informatics (8.53%) to facilitate communication, knowledge management, mistake reduction, and decision-making through the application of IT. In today's modern world, nurses need to be able to use technology effectively in the workplace. Thus, they must learn to do so.

The Quality Chasm report's ideal 21st-century healthcare system inspired the committee's new clinical education vision for the health professions, prioritizing patient needs. The committee recommends that all programs and institutions that train health professionals clinically adopt the following vision and operating principles to achieve it.

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

Key Findings that arose from the data are as follows: 1) Most graduates who participated in the survey study have delved into the usefulness of the overall course curriculum (general education or introductory courses, core courses or major courses, elective courses, and undergraduate thesis) and considered the

curriculum highly useful for professional work; 2) The gap between employment and Unemployment of graduates was due to the pursuit of better career paths as the majority are undertaking advanced studies/second courses. Other reasons include family concerns related to pregnancy, securing documents for overseas employment, and review for NCLEX; 3) As perceived by the graduates, the undertaken undergraduate curriculum provides professional competencies/ skills, among which are ranked from most beneficial to the least; Work Ethic, Interpersonal Skills, Decision-making Skills, Teamwork Skills, Verbal Skills, Leadership Skills, Problem-Solving Skills, Written Skills, Initiative and Enthusiasm, and Innovative/Creative Skills.; 4) Some graduates felt that more practical training during their study period would help significantly in their exposure to the world of work, as described in their recommendations to improve the program of study; 5) Competencies and skills that are relevant to be incorporated and strengthened in the BSN program based on the employers' perception: provide patient-centered care, employ evidence-based practices, work in interdisciplinary teams, apply quality improvement, and utilize informatics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the key findings, the following recommendations are made to help facilitate the development and advancement of the school's program for the benefit of future students, with the end view of identifying policy and program interventions necessary to further improve the employability of the nursing graduates in Central Mindanao University:

1' Practical training is provided in varied settings and various agencies and institutions.

1. Give focus on the teaching-learning strategies that develop the skills and competencies required of the graduates in the transit from university to work both locally and internationally. Teaching students about technological developments as part of the curriculum and utilizing technology to enhance the university experience are critical steps

in preparing students for a world in which these cyber-physical systems are commonplace, which will help the university produce successful graduates. Designed to equip students with the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions about their futures, this curriculum serves as a foundation for a student's professional development.

2. Engaged partner institutions or agencies in designing programs to help students develop professional competencies through Related Learning Experiences. Tracer studies may be conducted at least once every other school year, with graduates and employers serving as respondents. The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree should be promoted to increase enrollment and graduation rates. The development of a system to help currently employed college graduates continue their education is an important area to explore. The school may promote tracer studies like this one to monitor its graduates' success and consider how to enhance its curriculum and pedagogy to produce more successful and deserved alumni.
3. Conduct a study that determines the specific employability skills and attributes of graduates based on their program study will be delved by employers through identifying the lacking competencies of the graduates, appropriateness of the skill imparted through training, what skills are importantly needed, and the extent of application on the imparted knowledge and skills.
4. The College of Nursing may revisit the strategies employed in the curriculum implementation by incorporating the relevant skills in the BSN program. The primary goal is to incorporate patient-centered care in applying the concepts across all levels, help students develop inter/ intrapersonal skills to collaborate with others, and strengthen the integration of research and clinical skills to enhance quality health care delivery and innovations. In addition, the

learning outcomes and strategies may be improved by utilizing informatics.

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