Employer Feedback on Wesleyan University-Philippines Nursing Graduates

Dr. Juanito C. Leabres Jr.
College of NursingWesleyan University –Phils.
junfaithbap@gmail.com

Abstract

This study sought to determine employer's feedback of College of Nursing and Allied Medical Sciences (CONAMS) graduates of Wesleyan University – Philippines.The study utilized the descriptive correlation research design with the questionnaire as the primary instrument for data gathering. Fifty five (55) nursing graduates who are presently working in different government hospitals in Nueva Ecija were respondents of the study.Results of the study showed that majority of respondents are staff nurses, wherein most of them hold the rank of Nurse I, who have been in the institution for 3 years and less. Likewise, majority of the registered nurses hold permanent status in the institution they belong to and most of them belong to batch 2011. In terms of the rater/evaluator, more than half are head nurses.The respondents' performance indicators of interpersonal skills, professionalism and integrity were the most evident among the graduates. However, the professional traits of confidence, competence, communication skills and flexibility and adaptability were the least apparent.Correlation results showed that respondents who have lower rank are better in organizing skills and have shown greater integrity.Overall, employers agree that graduates have demonstrated needed skills and traits necessary for the performance of their job at all times.

Keywords: Wesleyan university graduates, employer's feedback, nurses, performance

Introduction

Since its founding in 1946, Wesleyan University-Philippines (WUP) has long strived and wielded all possible efforts towards the realization of its vision, mission and goals. From its humble beginning which sprung from an ecclesiastic mission of Methodist brethren, it has now regarded as one of the best universities that offer top-notch academic degree programs, not only in the province of Nueva Ecija, but also, in Central Luzon. Recently it was granted institutional accreditation status by the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) thru the Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities – Accrediting Agency, Inc. (ACSCU– AAI) (Wesleyan. 2014). Among its many academic degree offerings with a Level III accreditation status, the WUP Nursing program stands out as the best nursing school in the locale producing the finest and most number of highly qualified professionalnurses. Theperceived exceptional quality of nursing graduates, program and instruction that WUP claims is supported by a history of board passing rates that surpass the national rating year after year and a long list of nursing graduates who have topped the nurse licensure examination.

Nursinggraduates of Wesleyan University are being recognized for their success and outstanding performance in their chosen field of practice both here and abroad. But, despite the accomplishments that Wesleyan has already achieved and maintained over the years, the University up to this day continues to strive for mastery and excellence in its pursuit and realization of its trifocal goals: scholarship, service and

character. Realizing that high standards must be maintained, it's a responsibility that for an institution of higher education like Wesleyan to strive and keep abreast despite the changing times and challenges.

Story (2010), a healthcare innovator and author, describes hospitals, specifically, and the healthcare delivery system in general, as "*dynamic systems*" which "*must be analyzed and managed as such.*" The healthcare world is a complex web of people and systems that constantly change on a daily basis in which care to the clients must be updated and improved incessantly in order to meet the needs of every individual, whether healthy, sick or dying. With the rapid increase in newly discovered diseases, advances in medicine and technology, and the expanding moral and legal responsibilities of healthcare professionals, these changes in health care mandates that future health care providers be educated and trained in such a way that enables and equips them to conform with these changes. It was the Institute of Medicine (Stanley, 2010) that charged all health professions, including Nursing, in the United States to change the ways providers are educated and to include new required competencies.

Competency refers to an individual's ability to perform activities related to work, life skills, or learning. Although there is no clear and accepted definition of the term in the context of nursing education and practice, there exists a common goal; which is to ensure that nurses have the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected and required for their practice settings. The need to investigate competency in both nursing education and practice has been widely discussed nowadays. This is due to the gap that exists and continues to widen between the two (Tilley, 2008). Competency-based education addresses the need to have graduates of nursing and other health-related degrees prepared for entry-level positions in their practice area (Anema and McCoy, 2009).

In the hospital setting, nurse graduates are expected to already possess basic and beginner level of competencies that must be applied when they perform direct patient care. Developing valid and reliable assessments to demonstrate what graduates know and can do is the key to assure competence. In New Zealand, Hodges and Burchell (2003) investigatedon how employers view the preparedness of business graduates for the workplace. They maintain that the prime function of education programs is to prepare students for the professional responsibility in the workplace by "developing generic and specific competencies"that educators' believe will be useful to future employers. Results of the study showed that employers want "well-rounded" graduates with a broad range of competencies including their ability and willingness to learn (which was considered to be the most important competency in the workplace). The study also showed that not only the discipline-based knowledge and technical skills are important, but employers place a great emphasis on graduates' "soft" skills which include their ability to deal empathetically and effectively with customer and client needs. Some of the competencies that scored low among the graduates include poor communication skills, especially in written form, and their lack of commitment to the organization – something that many employers have identified as a relevant issue.

Within the context of Philippine society, a nurse is viewed as both an independent and collaborative agent of care from womb to tomb. The nurse delivers health services to individuals, families and communities in a holistic approach with *caring* as its foundation and primary purpose. In order to achieve this resolution of providing appropriate and quality health for the Filipino people, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) promulgated and adopted policies and standards to regulate nursing programs. As mandated by the CHED Memorandum Order No. 14, series of 2009, certain core values should be highlighted in the BSN program. A professional Filipino nurse must assume a love of God, people and country, and embody caring as the core of nursing, emphasizing on compassion, competence, confidence, conscience, and commitment.

Upon the completion of the nursing program, a nurse is expected to demonstrate beginning professional competencies in the following key areas of responsibility: safe and quality nursing care, management of resources and environment, health education, legal responsibility, ethico-moral responsibility, personal and professional development, quality improvement, research, record management, communication, and collaboration and teamwork.

The nursing curriculum was designed in such a way that these core competencies are expected to be translated from the classroom setting to the professional realm, creating highly proficient health

workers with relevant knowledge, skills and attitude reflective of the graduate's alma mater. Lazarte (2016) studied 30 beginning staff nurses (those who have worked for a maximum of six months in different hospital settings) and 17 head nurses (those who have at least 6 months experience in managerial position) employed in an ISO-accredited tertiary private hospital in Manila, Philippines to determine the levels of competencies of nurse beginners through self-assessment and superior evaluation. The results showed that beginning staff nurses perceive themselves to be very highly competent in the areas of legal responsibilities, ethico-moral responsibilities, and safe and quality care. Health education, personal and professional development, and research were the weak points that they identified amongst themselves. Head nurses agree that the beginning staff nurses were very highly competent in legal responsibilities, safe and quality care, and communication. In addition, they have identified health education and research as the weakest competencies of their subordinates as well. Lazarte also emphasized that establishing a comprehensive staff development training program should include shared cognition strategies to focuson the areas identified as weak and improve them to meet the standards.

Nurse administrators also recognize the importance of mastering the said competencies in order to deliver optimum patient care. In 2010, the Association of Nursing Service Administrators of the Philippines commissioned a project that aims to establish the occupational profiles of nurses along the core competency areas set by the Board of Nursing. The study compared the level of proficiency of staff nurses to nurse administrators in performing their functions along the core competencies. The study applied Benner's stages of clinical competence in describing the participant's competency level and revealed the following findings:1) that proficient nurses (more than 3 years in the same position/job) are most competent in the use of the nursing process in the delivery of patient care (F value=3.704); 2) that expert nurses (nurses with intuitive grasp of clinical situations) were the most fitting resource and role model (F value=7.263); 3) that both proficient and expert nurses were the most flexible and adaptive in working within the changing health care delivery situations (F value=4.024); and 4) that expert nurses were the most competent in conducting nursing research (F value=3.33). The results imply that competencies are developed as the nurse goes up in the levels of his/her nursing experience.

This research endeavor acknowledges that the University's role as an institution of higher learning does not end and is simply not confined within the four walls of a classroom but extends its social responsibility of ensuring the competence and high level of professionalism of its graduatesserving the public in accordance with the standards of nursing care as well as maintaining the compassion-driven character that Wesleyan upholds. It is the intent of this study to evaluate the effectiveness of the university in preparing its former students for the workplace by soliciting employers' feedback on their job performance. The results of this study will not only provide a way to assess the individual job performances of nurse graduates of Wesleyan University-Philippines in their chosen area of practice, but will also pave the way for unifying the framework for nursing education, nursing practice and regulation.

The intent of this study is to assess the job performance of staff nurses who have graduated from Wesleyan University-Philippines as perceived by their employers. Specifically, this research endeavor seeks to achieve the following objectives:
1. Describe the nurse employees in terms of:
   a. Position in the company/institution
   b. Rank
   c. Number of service in the company/institution
   d. Year graduated
   e. Employment status
2. Describe the nurse employeesby their employers in the following areas:
   a. Interpersonal skills
   b. Communication skills
   c. Competence
   d. Organizing skills
   e. Flexibility and adaptability
   f. Enthusiasm and initiatives
   g. Commitment
   h. Confidence

    i.   Reliability
    j.   Integrity
    k.   Leadership
    l.   Professionalism

Methodology

This research workutilizeda descriptive correlational design with a mix of quantitative and qualitative approach. Fifty five (55) registered nurses were chosen via purposive sampling as respondents of the study. The following criteria were used in selecting respondents: a registered nurse, graduates of Wesleyan University and is currently employed.Self-administered semi structured questionnaireswas used to gather pertinent data. The first part of questionnaire contains the socio-demographic profile of the respondents consisting of position in the company/institution, rank, and number of years of stay in the company/institution, year graduated, employment status and position of rater. The lastpart consists of performance indicators that evaluate the staff nurses' skills, traits and competencies. These indicators include interpersonal skills, communication skills, competence, organizing skills, flexibility and adaptability, enthusiasm and initiatives, commitment, confidence, reliable, integrity, leadership and professionalism.

Open-ended questions were also included. The study was confined in the following major government hospitals in Cabanatuan City namely Dr. Paulino J. Garcia Memorial Research and Medical Center, Eduardo L. Joson Memorial Hospital, and Manuel V. Gallego Cabanatuan City General Hospital. Respondentswerechosen purposively and werelimited to head nurses, nursing supervisors and chief nurses of the abovementioned hospitals.The instrument was pre-tested at the Wesleyan University Medical Center for reliability and validity with the alpha coefficient of .805 for 49 items.

Results and Discussions

Socio-demographic profile of graduates

Table 1 depicts the socio demographic profiles of the nurses evaluated from the three hospitals were data gathering was conducted. Of the fifty five (55)Wesleyan graduates evaluated, majority are staff nurses (89%), wherein most of them hold the rank of Nurse I (65.5%), who have been in the institution for 3 years and less(34%)and 23.6% of these nurses graduated in 2011. Majority of the registered nurses holds permanent status (78.2%) in the institution they belong to.In terms of the rater/evaluator, more than half are head nurses (56.4%).

Table 1 – Profile of Nurse Respondents (N = 55)

Position in the company/institution	f	%	Position of Rater	f	%
Staff Nurse	49	89.1	Supervisor	18	32.7
Head Nurse	3	5.5	Head Nurse	31	56.4
Nurse Attendant	3	5.5	Staff Nurse/Leader	6	10.9
Total	**55**	**100**	**Total**	**55**	**100**
Rank	f	%	Year Graduated	f	%
Nurse I	36	65.5	2014	2	3.6
Nurse II	16	29.1	2013	6	10.9
Nurse Attendant	3	5.5	2012	7	12.7
Total	**55**	**100**	2011	13	23.6
No. of years of stay in the company/institution	f	%	2010	5	9.1
			2009	6	10.9
1 - 3 years	34	61.8	2008	2	3.6
4 - 7 years	16	29.1	2007	1	1.8
8 - 11 years	4	7.3	2006	9	16.4
12 – above	1	1.8	2005	4	7.3
Total	**55**	**100**	**Total**	**55**	**100**

Employment Status	f	%
Permanent	43	78.2
Job order	10	18.2
Contractual/Casual	2	3.6
Total	**55**	**100**

Performance Indicators

The results of the survey for the performance indicators in Table 2 showed that interpersonal skills as the item most agreed upon by the nurse managers with a weighted mean of 4.52. This most important trait was obtained based from the rater's responses who agreed as the most significant. This is closely followed by professionalism with a weighted mean of 4.47 and integrity with a weighted mean of 4.45.

Table 2–Performance Indicators of Nurse Respondents in Terms of Interpersonal Skills, Professionalism and Integrity

Interpersonal Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1 Works well with others.	4.46	AT
2 Relates with co-workers in warm and friendly manner.	4.55	AT
3 Extends help with others after accomplishing his/her tasks.	4.45	AT
4 Treats superiors and subordinates with respect.	4.61	AT
Overall Weighted Mean	4.52	AT
Professionalism	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1 Dresses appropriately.	4.48	AT
2 Uses decent language/does not use foul words.	4.50	AT
3 Observes decorum when dealing with others	4.45	AT
4 Commands respects from others	4.45	AT
Overall Weighted Mean	4.47	AT
Integrity	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1 Have track record of honesty	4.59	AT
2 Honest with oneself and with others and is willing to admit strengths and weaknesses	4.30	AT
3 Does not say negative remarks about previous employers	4.23	AT
4 Does not use company resources for personal purposes	4.66	AT
Overall Weighted Mean	4.45	AT

Legend: AT – All the time; MT – Most of the time

Nurse graduates were rated according to performance variables as observed by the nurse managers. Raters agreed that majority of the registered nurses currently employed by their institution have demonstrated needed skills and traits necessary for the performance of their job at all times and integrity, being one of the most essential trait that an employee must have. This includes being honest at work, one that is trust worthy and truthful to others. Being able to well harmoniously with others and keeping the peace in the work area was also notable among the nurse respondents. It is also said that graduates from Wesleyan university are known to be decent and does not use foul language during and outside of work.

One of the missions of the college of nursing is" to develop and train nurses who perform multifarious task of caregiving with Christian integrity who upholds Filipino values" (WUP Nursing Student Handbook, 2011). This is demonstrated more by activities geared towards developing moral biblical values to would be nurses such as prayers at the start of every classes and duties, weekly chapel devotions and active participation in college outreach. This developed a strong spiritual character among nursing graduates exemplified in their performance in the workplace. Bakibinga (2013) in her study about the role of faith and religion among Ugandan nurses showed that despite nurses living in highly stressful

environment and underpaid, they managed to stay on the job and thrive. The nurses revealed that religious values affected their performance positively enabling them to find meaning even in the face of adversity.

Furthermore, Table 3 shows that the performance indicators namely leadership (WM – 4.40), organizing skills (WM – 4.35), enthusiasm and initiatives (WM – 4.32), reliability (4.31) and commitment (WM - 4.24) were also evident to the nurses at all times.

Table 3– Performance Indicators of Nurse Respondents in Terms of Leadership, Organizing Skills, Enthusiasm and Initiative, Reliability and Commitment

Leadership		Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1	Willingly accepts responsibility	4.46	AT
2	Accepts accountability for the results of assigned task	4.41	AT
3	Accepts tasks even when there is possibility of failure	4.36	AT
4	Makes sound decisions	4.38	AT
	Overall Weighted Mean	4.40	AT
Organizing Skills		Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1	Obtains and processes information relevant in the accomplishment of the assigned tsk	4.25	AT
2	Performs variety of works simultaneously and systematically	4.39	AT
3	Accomplishes the tasks on time	4.46	AT
4	Sets priorities and focus on what is urgent	4.30	AT
	Overall Weighted Mean	4.35	AT
Enthusiasm and Initiative		Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1	Learns new things with ease and passion	4.36	AT
2	Shows excitement in their career path in the institution	4.38	AT
3	Accomplishes the work without needs of constant praise	4.20	AT
4	Figures out what needs to be done and then do it	4.34	AT
	Overall Weighted Mean	4.32	AT
Reliability		Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1	Comes to work on time	4.36	AT
2	Does not abuse flexible schedule	4.39	AT
3	Seldom uses vacation/sick leave	4.29	AT
4	Does not take leave during busy season	4.23	AT
5	Accomplishes the tasks with minimum supervision	4.30	AT
	Overall Weighted Mean	4.31	AT
Commitment		Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1	Shows high level of interest in achieving the mission of the institution.	4.21	AT
2	Performs beyond what is expected/required in the job	4.32	AT
3	Offers suggestions to achieve organizational goals	4.20	AT
4	Exhibits interest to stay in the company and progress into more serious role	4.21	AT
	Overall Weighted Mean	4.24	AT

Legend: AT – All the time; MT – Most of the time

However, Table 5 shows that competence, confidence, communication skills and flexibility and adaptability were less evident trait and the latter being the least trait agreed upon by the raters with a weighted mean of 4.17. commitment (WM – 4.24), On the other hand, respondents agreed that nurse graduates "*expresses oneself clearly and accurately in written communication*" most of the time only with a weighted mean of 4.13. The respondents on the other hand agreed that the items "*possesses technical knowledge needed for the job*" (WM – 4.14) and "*commits none or just few mistakes in accomplishing assigned work*" (WM – 4.09) were evident most of the time. Meanwhile in terms of flexibility and adaptability, raters have agreed that nurse graduates "*can refocus and re-prioritize when needed*" (WM - 4.11) and "*can work in different environment and adapt to new challenges*" (WM – 4.05) most of the times.

Table 4– Performance Indicators of Nurse Respondents in Terms of Competence, Confidence,
Communication Skills and Flexibilty and Adaptability

Competence	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1 Effectively deals with day to day challenges of the job	4.41	AT
2 Possesses technical knowledge needed in the job	4.14	MT
3 Commits none or just few mistakes in accomplishing assigned work	4.09	MT
4 Knows what needs to be done and how to do it.	4.39	AT
Overall Weighted Mean	4.26	AT
Confidence	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1 Comfortable with one-self, knew who he/she is and what he/she wants	4.36	AT
2 Confident in one's skills, self-assured but not arrogant	4.25	AT
3 Shows strong personality, cannot be intimidated easily	4.29	AT
4 Believes in his/her capacity without assuming that he/she is better than anyone else	4.13	MT
Overall Weighted Mean	4.25	AT
Communication Skills	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1 Expresses oneself clearly and accurately in written communication.	4.13	MT
2 Expresses oneself clearly and accurately in oral communication.	4.23	AT
3 Listens attentively to others.	4.27	AT
4 Shows versatility in using different communications media (email, chat, messaging, phone and face-to-face).	4.21	AT
Overall Weighted Mean	4.21	AT
Flexibility and Adaptability	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1 Adapts with the organizational culture (not stuck in their ways, can go with the flow	4.23	AT
2 Adapts with new technology or procedures with ease (Not locked into a set of doing things)	4.29	AT
3 Can refocus and re-prioritize when needed	4.11	MT
4 Can work in different environment and adapt to new challenges	4.05	MT
Overall Weighted Mean	4.17	MT

Legend: AT – All the time; MT – Most of the time

In terms of competence, findings have shown that nurse graduates did not always possess the technical knowledge needed in the job in terms of utilizing and operating equipment in the hospital. Medical equipment and apparatus if not operated properly and timely could undermine the effective delivery of care. Respondents have also shown to commit some if not few mistakes in the performance of their duty. Factors could be attributed to it such as being novice or lack of confidence. It is important that nurses perform at the highest level of functioning and exhibit competence. An error in omission or commission could spell life or death for the patient assigned to their care. Despite these results, competence in the work place is not a one way street. It is accepted that new nursing graduates have limitations in what they are expected to know or perform. These hospitals have a responsibility and obligation to make sure that these registered nurses hone their skills and expertise through trainings, seminars and updates. This was further corroborated by a study by Tabari-Khomeiran(2007) that although the nurse is the key player in the process of his or her own competence development, employers have a pivotal responsibility in facilitating the nurse's progress toward ongoing professional competence, which is a key element of the quality of care.

Furthermore, nurses have also shown difficulties expressing themselves through written communication. Nursing care is dependent upon accurate and reliable information not only through verbal communication but most importantly through written forms. Physician's orders play an integral part in the care and treatment of the client.Also, written and verbal documents are part of the medical records kept and are considered legal documents. Effective communication amongst members of the health team assures smooth delivery of care while subsequently poor communication or inaccurate conveyance of messages could lead to errors or misinterpretation. Braaf (2011) in a study supports this when it was

found out communication practices of healthcare professionals have been strongly implicated in the sequence of events that could lead into potentially adverse patient outcomes. The desired result of patient care is the return of the patient to his/her optimum level of functioning and this could be possible if the right messages are being conveyed in the delivery of care. Hall et al. (2014) on the other hand concluded that there is considerable evidence that inter-professional teamwork and enhanced communication reduce errors (Mann, Marcus, & Sachs, 2006; Morey et al., 2002) and improve patient outcomes (Lau, Banaszak-Holl, & Nigam, 2007; Pronovost, Berenholtz, & Dorman, 2003).

Nurse Managers have agreed that utmost confidence have not always been exhibited by these nurse graduates. Belief in one's capacity without assuming that he/she is better than anyone else was observed only at all times. It is normal that anxiety or being nervous in the performance of a skill be seen in newly hired or new graduates. Being novice or beginners, correct decision making develops through time and through the acquisition of real life experience. Pfaff (2014) in her research further explained this that interventions that provide support for interprofessional collaboration at the team and organizational levels, and develop new graduate nurse knowledge and experiences regarding collaborative practice, are essential for enhancing new graduate nurse confidence in interprofessional collaboration.

Moreover, nurse graduates have also exhibited some inability to work in different environment and adapt to new challenges as well as to refocus and re-prioritize when needed. To work in a hospital setting entails that nurse's exercise flexibility as they are assigned to different units in the ward or function different aspects of nursing care. Adjustment must come quickly because the demands and requirements of the unit will not wait that for these nurses to acclimatize. Change is constant in the workplace especially in the hospital. The only aspect that that should remain constant if not improve more is the care that nurses render to their patients. Adaptability is thus required for a nurse in the fulfillment of his/her function. Adaptability is the process of modifying behavior as indicated to changing circumstances. It is the ability of the nurse to respond quickly to unexpected events, utilize problem-solving, contribute to innovative solutions, and to think creatively.

Relationship of Socio-demographic Profile and Performance Indicators

Table 6 shows the relationship between the profile and performance indicators as evaluated by the employers/raters. Among the profile variables tested for correlation, there are two variable found significantly correlated. Rank and organizational skills (r = -.288) and integrity (r = -.293) at .05 level. The hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected.

Table 5 – Relationship of the Socio-demographic Profile and Performance Indicators of Respondents

Variables	IS		CS		COMP		OS		FAA		EAI	
	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI
Position in the company	-0.073	NS	-0.088	NS	-0.06	NS	-0.227	NS	-0.118	NS	-0.162	NS
Rank	-0.113	NS	-0.008	NS	-0.144	NS	-.288*	S	-0.073	NS	-0.187	NS
No. of Years in service	-0.103	NS	-0.012	NS	0.169	NS	0.094	NS	0.077	NS	-0.021	NS
Year graduated	-0.228	NS	-0.067	NS	0.033	NS	-0.073	NS	0.03	NS	-0.014	NS
Employment status	0.01	NS	-0.061	NS	-0.056	NS	0.102	NS	0.004	NS	-0.012	NS
Position of Rater	-0.09	NS	0.219	NS	-0.031	NS	-0.221	NS	0.011	NS	0.119	NS

Variables	COMM		CONF		REL		INT		LEA		PRO	
	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI	(r value)	VI
Position in the company	-0.017	NS	-0.069	NS	-0.091	NS	-0.15	NS	0.013	NS	-0.083	NS
Rank	0.04	NS	-0.002	NS	0.01	NS	-.293*	S	0.025	NS	-0.143	NS
No. of Years in service	0.002	NS	0.086	NS	0.047	NS	0.03	NS	0.144	NS	0.07	NS
Year graduated	0.008	NS	-0.12	NS	0.081	NS	-0.153	NS	-0.03	NS	-0.066	NS
Employment status	-0.036	NS	0.088	NS	0.034	NS	0.114	NS	-0.029	NS	-0.037	NS
Position of Rater	0.038	NS	0.094	NS	-0.074	NS	0.038	NS	-0.212	NS	-0.132	NS

Legend: COMM- Commitment; CONF – Confidence; REL – Reliability; INT – Integrity; LEA – Leadership; PRO - Professionalism; VI – Verbal Interpretation; S – Significant; NS – Not significant

Further analysis of the outcomes have shown that the rank of the nurse graduates have been observed as having a negative correlation with the performance indicator organizing skills and integrity.

The higher the nurses ascend the organizational hierarchy the lesser effective they become in terms of organizing skills and integrity.

Organizing and administration skills are traits not necessarily required in going up the ladder in these institutions. Promotions are seldom about managerial abilities but by virtue of ranking which includes variables like years of service, performance evaluations and educational qualifications among others. Having the ability to manage people or a unit are necessary for being assigned to supervisory roles which requires additional responsibilities. Most of these nurses may not perceive these traits or characteristics as necessary since they could ascend the position or rank without having been assigned managerial roles.Despite of this, a very important organizing trait which is required for all nurses is time management. Being able to perform responsibilities and duties in the earliest and most prudent time possible is a managerial attribute. It is also affected by different factors such as shifting, education level attained, crowdedness of research environment, high workload, stressful conflicts of head nurses and staff nurses, the factors affecting concentration, subjects' demographic characteristics, and mental and psychological conditions, and the difference in individuals' attitude toward nursing. In the case of level of education, MS nurses considered their head nurses' time management less than BS nurses (Ebrahimi, 2011).

However, integrity has been also observed to have a negative effect on rank of the employees. This means that the higher the rank of these nurse graduates, the less these employees exhibit integrity. Honesty and trustworthiness are two very important character traits that registered nurses must have as they perform their duties. Performing their roles faithfully and reporting truthfully may affect the success of treatment of patients. Employees working in government institutions such as hospitals have been observed to have issues in following policies, regulations and protocols. Cases such as utilizing hospital equipment (e.g. computer, BP apparatus), and supplies (e.g. sterile gauze, cotton balls, syringes) for personal useas well as using the hospital ambulance for unofficial travels have been reported. Incorrect entry in the medication records and charts has also been a common area of concern. According to Staples (2012) having a high level of integrity is one of the most important characteristics a nurse can possess, not only in the work setting, but also in their personal lives. It is a core value in nursing and coming from a place of integrity means being truthful and honest. Kelly (2002) also described in her study how newly registered nurses experienced moral distress after practicing nursing for a few years. Moral distress was an acute form of psychological disorientation in which the nurses questioned their professional knowledge, what kind of nurses they were and what kind of nurses they were becoming. It was a struggle about how they their moral values and ethical roles were affected and have adapted after seeing the "real world" of hospital nursing.

Conclusion

There is a perceived room for improvement as can be seen in the findings of this study. Wesleyan University College of Nursing graduates have exhibited competence, traits and abilities in their respective workplace but there are also areas for development.

Nursing graduates need to be accurate and clear in conveying message either verbal or written forms. Clarity in communicating should be emphasized in the classrooms and whenever they are on their duties during their undergraduate studies. Further evaluation of the performance of nursing students and in their basic education subjects specifically oral and written skills should be given attention so that improvement and or steps could be implemented.

Nursing educators should make sure that the transfer of knowledge specifically the operating of hospital equipment and tools should also be reinforced. This could be done by an upgraded nursing skills laboratory or virtual lab. Instructors need to clearly demonstrate to the students how to properly operate this equipment.

Nurse trainers should emphasize that nursing students have a clear grasp of the concepts and the skills necessary for them to perform nursing functions in the right and timely way. Reinforcements should

also be done in the concept of management and administration. It is to inculcate the highest level of professionalism and integrity in the students to better prepare them when they graduate.

Finally, the university has a great role to perform in making sure that these nursing graduates will be at par and will excel in the institution that they belong. As the producer of quality nursing graduates, strategic planning and benchmarking should be done to evaluate present institutional status with other colleges and universities and strive for world excellence.

References

Anema, M.& McCoy, J. (2009).*Competency based nursing education: Guide to achieving outstanding learner outcomes.*Springer Publishing Company.

Association of Nursing Service Administrators of the Philippines. (2010). *Clinical ladder competencies of Filipino nurses: A basis for capability building programs.*

Bakibinga, P, Vinje, H.F. &Mittelmark, M. (2013). The role of religion in the work lives and coping strategies of Ugandan nurses. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 53, 5, 1342 - 1352

Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 14, s. 2009. Policies and standards for bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) program.

Hodges, D. &Burchell, N. (2003). Business graduate competencies: Employers' views on importance and performance. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education, 4, 2,* 16 – 22.

Lazarte, F. C. (2016). Core competencies of beginning staff nurses: A basis for staff development training program. *Journal of Advanced Management Science, 4, 2.*

Wesleyan University – Philippines, College of Nursing (2011). Everything you need to know: Nursing Student handbook.

Stanley, J. M. (2010). *Advanced practice nursing: Emphasizing common roles.* F. A. Davis.

Story, P. (2010). *Dynamic capacity management for healthcare: Advanced methods and tools for optimization.* CRC Press.

Tilley, D. S. (2008). Competency in nursing: A concept analysis. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing, 39, 2,* 58 – 64.