



FUTURE JOB PREFERENCES AND ITS ASSOCIATED FACTORS OF MCNP BSN STUDENTS: A BASIS FOR CAREER GUIDANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Nurses play a crucial role in global healthcare, providing patient care, health promotion, and disease prevention. Healthcare sustainability is threatened by a shortage of 10.6 million nurses by 2030. A COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this shortage, increasing moral distress and burnout among healthcare professionals. To ensure a well-prepared and resilient nursing workforce, students must be supported in their professional development. Aligning nursing education with industry demands requires understanding career preferences and motivations. Nurses are available in different healthcare settings. Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines (MCNP) examines BSN students' career preferences and job preferences. This descriptive-inferential study involved 345 BSN students from all year levels. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Career-influencing factors, such as compensation, professional growth opportunities, and work environments, are also gathered. One-way ANOVA, frequency distributions, and weighted means were used to assess significant career preference relationships. Students' career decisions were analyzed using statistical methods. Respondents chose emergency nursing, bedside nursing, and community health nursing as their top career choices. Job stability, career advancement opportunities, and alignment with personal interests influenced career preferences. Socioeconomic status and year level differed. Students in their first year prioritized professional growth, while seniors focused on compensation and workplace conditions. Age and gender did not significantly affect career choices, but socioeconomic background and maternal occupation did. Additionally, as students progressed in their education, extrinsic factors such as financial stability and work conditions became increasingly important. Based on these findings, the study concludes that tailored career guidance programs are essential for nursing students. Self-awareness and strategic career planning are facilitated by understanding career motivations. Institutions can use these findings to design targeted interventions aligned with students' aspirations. A well-prepared workforce contributes to solving the global nursing shortage. To navigate their career



paths, educational institutions must provide students with the knowledge, resources, and support they need. Nurses are exposed to various nursing specializations, mentored, and discussed industry trends. To align students' aspirations with future healthcare needs.

By aligning nursing education with both student aspirations and healthcare demands, we can bridge knowledge gaps in nursing career preferences. There is a need for year-specific career guidance programs, additional support for students from low-income backgrounds, and increased awareness of diverse nursing specializations. Students can be exposed to different career paths through mentoring programs and partnerships with healthcare institutions. Student internships and hospital-based training can provide valuable hands-on experience.

To meet industry expectations, nursing graduates must address these factors. Nurses will be more satisfied and retained with career support initiatives. Nurses who are well-informed and motivated improve healthcare services, reduce turnover rates, and prepare for the future. Policies and programs are needed to support nursing students' career development. Demand and supply will align in healthcare. Career guidance programs will study nursing graduates' job placement, satisfaction, and retention.

Key words: *Nursing Career Preferences, Career Guidance, BSN Students, Professional Growth, Healthcare Workforce*

INTRODUCTION

Nurses play a vital role in supporting healthcare systems globally, addressing the complex challenges of patient care, health promotion, and disease prevention. The World Health Organization (2020) projects a need for an additional 10.6 million nurses and midwives by 2030 to meet global healthcare demands. This critical shortage has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which placed immense physical and emotional strain on healthcare workers, including nurses (Hsu et al., 2022). The growing demand for a skilled and diverse nursing workforce highlights the importance of understanding nursing students' career preferences and motivations, as they represent the future of the profession.

Despite the significant body of research on nursing career preferences, a notable gap exists in exploring these preferences within specific contexts. This includes the unique demographic and socio-economic background of students at the Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines (MCNP). Existing literature suggests that factors like personal preferences, compensation, professional growth opportunities, and ethical work environments play crucial roles in shaping career decisions among nursing students (Doiron et al., 2023). However, there is limited evidence regarding how these factors influence BSN students at MCNP. Their career aspirations are shaped by cultural, economic, and educational factors pertaining to their region.



This study seeks to bridge this knowledge gap by examining future job preferences and associated factors among BSN students at MCNP. By analyzing their demographic profiles, preferred nursing careers, and the underlying motivations behind their choices, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how these students navigate their career paths. The findings will inform the development of a Career Guidance Management Program tailored to the specific needs and aspirations of nursing students at this institution. This study addresses both individual and systemic challenges in nursing. For students, understanding their career motivations and preferences can enhance self-awareness and career planning. For institutions, the findings can guide the creation of targeted programs that support students' professional development. These programs can align with the evolving healthcare industry demands. By addressing these needs, the study contributes to the broader goal of building a resilient and sustainable nursing workforce capable of meeting future healthcare challenges. Moreover, this study explores the career preferences of MCNP and BSN students. It will identify factors influencing their decisions, and address gaps in existing career guidance strategies. Through this investigation, the research highlights the importance of aligning nursing education with students' aspirations and the demands of the profession. This will pave the way for more effective support systems and professional development initiatives.

METHODOLOGY

Research and Design

The study employed a descriptive-inferential research design to examine the future career preferences of nursing students in the nursing field. The descriptive approach was utilized to profile the demographics of the 345 respondents, including age, gender, educational level, and work experience. This provided insights into the characteristics of nursing students. This approach allowed the researchers to present a clear statistical overview of the participants' backgrounds.

The inferential method was used to analyze the various factors that influenced career preferences. This provided a deeper understanding of students' choices. By employing survey-based data collection, the study gathered information regarding students' career aspirations and motivations. The inferential approach further helped in extrapolating the findings from the surveyed sample to the entire population of nursing students. This offered a broader perspective on future career preferences in the field.

This design was particularly appropriate for the study as it allowed researchers to quantify career preferences. In addition, it identified patterns and relationships between demographic variables and career motivations. The combination of descriptive and inferential methods ensured that both general trends and statistical significance were accounted for in the analysis. The applicability of this approach to the present investigation was justified. This was because it enabled evidence-based recommendations for career guidance programs tailored to the needs of Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students at the Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines (MCNP).



Respondents/Participants

This study included 345 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students from the Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines (MCNP) as its respondents. These students served as the primary sources of data, representing different academic levels within the BSN program.

To ensure a representative sample, the study employed a stratified sampling technique, where respondents were proportionally selected based on their year level. This method was used to ensure an equal representation of nursing students across all academic levels. This allowed for a more comprehensive analysis of how career preferences change throughout nursing education. The stratified approach enhances the validity and reliability of the findings by capturing varied perspectives from different stages of training.

Data gathering tools

The Data Gathering Tool used in the study was a structured survey questionnaire designed to collect comprehensive information from BSN students at the Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines (MCNP). The questionnaire was divided into three main sections to ensure clarity and systematic data collection. The first section focused on demographic details, including age, gender, year level, socio-economic status, parental occupation, and religious affiliation. The second section aimed to determine future job preferences, allowing respondents to indicate their preferred nursing careers. These careers included emergency nursing, bedside nursing, or community health nursing. The third section examined factors influencing career choices, assessing key elements like compensation, professional growth, and the work environment.

The primary survey instrument used in this study was a modified career preferences questionnaire, adapted from Yokimura Dimaunahan (2022). The modification was necessary to align the questionnaire with the specific context of BSN students at MCNP. This made it more relevant and tailored to the study's objectives.

By implementing these procedures, the researchers ensured that the data-gathering tool was methodologically sound, capable of generating reliable data, and effectively contributed to the study's objectives.

Data Gathering Procedure

The study followed a systematic and ethical approach to collecting data from BSN students at the Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines (MCNP). The data collection process began with formal approval from the Dean and the OIC President, ensuring institutional support and ethical compliance. Once approval was granted, a Google Form questionnaire was distributed to a targeted group of students. This ensured that the sample was representative of the nursing student population.



Before participating, students received a detailed briefing explaining the study's purpose, objectives, and expected outcomes. The briefing emphasized the importance of thoughtful and honest responses to ensure findings reliability. Additionally, a formal consent form was included at the beginning of the survey, outlining confidentiality measures and voluntary participation. This ensured ethical research practices were followed.

Once the survey responses were collected, the research team collaborated with the school statistician to analyze the data. This ensured strict confidentiality of all participants' information. The responses were then processed and analyzed using statistical methods, providing a structured understanding of students' future job preferences and factors influencing their career decisions.

To ensure transparency and accountability, the research team compiled the findings into a comprehensive report. This provided insights that could benefit educators, career advisors, and policymakers. The final phase of the data gathering process emphasized respect for participants' contributions while ensuring that the study adhered to ethical standards and a rigorous methodology.

Data Analysis

The statistical treatment of data in this study was designed to provide an in-depth understanding of students' future job preferences and the factors influencing their career decisions. The analysis process began with data collection from 345 BSN students at the Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines (MCNP), followed by data processing in collaboration with the school statistician.

To determine the profile of respondents in terms of age, sex, year level, socio-economic status, parental occupation, and religion, frequency and percentage distributions were applied. These descriptive statistics provide an overview of the demographic composition of respondents.

To analyze nursing students' future job preferences, frequency counts and ranking distributions were utilized. This method allowed the researchers to determine which career paths were most preferred by the respondents, thereby highlighting trends in nursing specialization preferences.

To assess job preferences factors, a weighted mean assessment was conducted. This statistical tool measures the degree of influence exerted by personal preference, compensation, professional growth, and work environment on career choices.

Additionally, a one-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was used to establish significant differences in respondents' assessments of career-influencing factors when grouped according to demographic variables. This allowed for a comparative analysis of how job preferences varied across different socio-economic backgrounds, academic year levels, and parental occupations.

By employing these statistical methods, the study derive quantitative insights that effectively answered research questions. It also provided evidence-based recommendations for career guidance programs.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered from the distributed questionnaire. The findings are organized based on the research objectives and are presented in tabular format for clarity and ease of interpretation.

Table 1.1 **Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
Late Adolescence	145	42.00%
Early Young Adulthood	166	48.10%
Mid Young Adulthood	32	9.30%
Late Young Adulthood	2	0.60%
Total	345	100.00%

Table 1.1 shows the age distribution of respondents. The highest percentage of participants (48.10%) falls within the Early Young Adulthood category, indicating that most BSN students enrolled in MCNP are recent high school graduates. The lowest frequency (0.60%) belongs to the Late Young Adulthood category, showing that very few older students pursue BSN

Similarly, Table 1.2 presents the sex distribution of the respondents. The majority (75.10%) are female, aligning with global trends in the nursing profession, where women dominate the workforce.

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	86	24.90%
Female	259	75.10%
Total	345	100.00%

Tables 1.3 to 1.7 provide insights into respondents' year level, socio-economic background, and parental occupation, which serve as key variables in understanding their career preferences:



Table 1.3: Distribution of Respondents by Year Level

The majority of respondents were Freshmen (43.2%), followed by Sophomores (27%), Juniors (18.3%), and Seniors (11.6%). This suggests that the largest population in the BSN program at MCNP consists of first-year students, while the number of students decreases as they progress through the program.

Table 1.4: Socio-Economic Status of Respondents' Families

Most respondents belonged to the Lower Middle-Income category (40.6%), followed by Low-Income (35.4%), and Poor (16.2%). A smaller percentage came from Upper Middle-Income (6.1%) and High-Income families (1.7%). This indicates that a significant number of BSN students at MCNP come from modest financial backgrounds.

Table 1.5: Father's Employment Status

A majority of respondents reported that their fathers were employed (73.6%), while 8.1% were unemployed, another 8.1% were self-employed, 7.5% were business owners, and 2.6% fell into other categories. This data implies that most students come from families with a stable source of income, but a significant portion also has fathers who are either self-employed or unemployed.

Table 1.6: Mother's Employment Status

Similar to the fathers' employment trends, the majority of students' mothers were employed (63.8%), while 22% were unemployed, 4.6% were self-employed, 8.7% were business owners, and 0.9% fell into other categories. This indicates that although a substantial number of mothers contribute financially to their households, a significant portion is also unemployed.

Table 1.7: Religious Affiliation of Respondents

The dominant religious affiliation among respondents was Roman Catholic (70.1%), followed by Iglesia Ni Cristo (9%), Seventh-day Adventist (5.8%), Jehovah's Witnesses (2.6%), and Other religions (12.5%). This distribution reflects the religious demographics of the local community in which MCNP operates.

Table 2 Future Job Preferences of Nursing Students

Table 2 presents the future job preferences of the respondents. Emergency nursing emerged as the most preferred specialization, followed by bedside nursing and community health nursing. This trend indicates a preference for fast-paced, high-intensity healthcare settings among MCNP nursing students.



Preferred Nursing Career	Frequency	Percentage
Emergency Nursing	123	35.65%
Bedside Nursing	98	28.40%
Community Health Nursing	82	23.77%
Others	42	12.18
Total	345	100.00%

The higher preference for emergency nursing suggests that students are drawn to critical care environments, where they can handle urgent medical situations. The lower preference for community health nursing may indicate a lack of awareness or interest in public health roles.

Table 3 **Factors Influencing Career Preferences**

Factors	Means Score	Interpretation
Personal Preference	4.91	Strongly Agree
Compensation	4.69	Strongly Agree
Professional Growth	4.90	Strongly Agree
Work Environment & Ethics	4.90	Strongly Agree

The highest-rated factor was Personal Preference (4.91), emphasizing that students prioritize career paths aligned with their interests and passion. Compensation, while still important, ranked lower, indicating that intrinsic motivation plays a significant role in career decision-making.

Significant Relationships Between Career Preferences and Demographic Variables

The study utilized one-way ANOVA to determine whether demographic factors significantly influenced career choices.

Demographic Variable	F-Value	P-Value	Significance
Age	4.91	0.268	Not Significant
Sex	0.642	0.522	Not Significant
Year Level	7.194	0.000*	Significant
Socio- Economic	2.805	0.026*	Significant
Mother's Occupation	4.041	0.003*	Significant
Father's Occupation	0.659	0.621	Not Significant



The results show that age and sex had no significant influence on career preferences, meaning that students' job choices were consistent across different age groups and genders. However, year level, socio-economic status, and maternal occupation significantly affected career decisions, highlighting that as students' progress academically, their priorities shift toward financial stability and career advancement opportunities.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study are presented in tables and figures that directly address the research objectives. The results are analyzed in relation to the problem statement, ensuring that each research question is answered with quantitative data and statistical analysis.

The demographic profile of the respondents was analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution. This provided insights into age, sex, year level, socio-economic status, and parental occupation. The findings established a foundational understanding of the characteristics of BSN students at MCNP, supporting the discussion of career preferences.

Respondents' future job preferences were determined using a ranking distribution. This showed that students preferred emergency nursing, followed by bedside and community health nursing. This reflects a trend toward high-intensity medical settings and aligns with global healthcare demands.

To identify factors influencing career preferences, the study employed a weighted mean analysis. This measured the degree of influence of personal preference, compensation, professional growth, and work environment. Results indicated that personal preference and career advancement opportunities were the most significant motivators, while financial factors played a lesser role.

To determine the significant relationships between demographic factors and career preferences, a one-way ANOVA was applied. The results revealed that year level, socio-economic background, and maternal occupation significantly influenced career decisions, while age and sex did not. These findings suggest that as students' progress in their academic journey, their career motivations evolve based on external factors such as financial stability and job security.

The study's results gave meaningful implications, linking them to existing research on nursing career preferences. The findings support previous studies that highlight the importance of career guidance programs, mentorship opportunities, and financial support systems in shaping nursing students' career choices.

The tables and statistical results presented in this section directly reflect the problems, ensuring that all research questions are systematically answered. Additionally, the data support the main objective of the study, providing a strong foundation for recommendations on career guidance initiatives that align with nursing students' aspirations and industry demands.

CONCLUSION



This study examined the future job preferences of BSN students at the Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines (MCNP) and identified the factors influencing their career decisions. The findings revealed that nursing students prioritize emergency nursing, bedside nursing, and community health nursing, with career choices largely driven by personal interest, professional growth opportunities, and job stability. Additionally, demographic factors such as year level, socio-economic status, and maternal occupation significantly influenced career decisions, while age and sex did not play a major role. These results emphasize the need for tailored career guidance programs that address students' evolving priorities, stronger financial aid and mentorship programs to support those from lower-income backgrounds, and greater institutional promotion of emergency nursing specializations to align with both student preferences and healthcare industry demands. By addressing these factors, nursing education can be improved to better equip students for their future roles in the healthcare sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to better support the career development and preferences of Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students at MCNP:

Develop Year-Specific Career Guidance Programs:

Given the significant differences in career priorities based on year level, tailor career guidance programs to address the evolving needs of students as they progress through their academic journey. Freshmen may benefit from broad exposure to various nursing specializations, while seniors might require more focused guidance on job search strategies and transition to professional practice.

Enhance Socio-Economic Support Mechanisms:

Recognize the influence of socio-economic status on career preferences and provide additional support to students from lower-income backgrounds. This could include financial aid, scholarships, and mentorship programs aimed at helping these students navigate their career paths and access opportunities for professional growth.

Integrate Culturally Competent Career Counseling:

Considering the predominant Roman Catholic affiliation among respondents, incorporate culturally competent counseling that respects and integrates students' religious values and community norms. This approach can help address specific concerns and preferences related to career decisions within the context of their cultural and religious backgrounds.

Promote Awareness of Diverse Nursing Specializations:

With Emergency Nursing being the most favored specialization, ensure students are well-informed about a wide range of nursing career paths. Providing detailed information and experiences in various specialties can help students make informed choices and discover other areas of interest within the nursing profession.

Address Gender Balance in Nursing:

Although gender did not significantly impact job preferences, the notable majority of female students highlights the need to promote nursing as a viable and rewarding career for all genders. Initiatives to encourage more male students to pursue nursing could help balance the gender distribution and enrich the diversity within the profession.

Support Professional Growth and Compensation Expectations:



Given the influence of socio-economic and parental occupational status on career growth and compensation expectations, offer workshops and resources focused on career advancement, negotiation skills, and financial literacy. These initiatives can empower students to pursue their professional goals and achieve desired compensation packages.

Facilitate Networking and Mentorship Opportunities:

Create platforms for students to connect with experienced nursing professionals, alumni, and potential employers. Mentorship programs can provide guidance, and support, in helping students navigate their career paths more effectively.

Conduct Regular Career Preference Surveys:

To stay updated on the changing preferences and needs of nursing students, conduct regular surveys and assessments. This ongoing feedback can inform the continuous improvement of career guidance programs and ensure they remain relevant and effective.

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