

Perceived Work Values and Work Ethics of Gen Z Nursing Graduates

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Abstract:

Background: This study analyzed the perceived work values and ethics of Gen Z nurses to have a glimpse of what they expect from their future workplace. Results may help administrators to design a positive work environment for incoming nurses.

Methods: After ethics approval, a non-experimental comparative study was done among 202 purposively-selected new nurse graduates from a private university. This sample size was determined using power analysis by GPower to account for high power (0.8) and medium to large effect size (0.5-0.8) at 0.05 alpha level. Several multivariate analyses were utilized to identify the dimensions of work values and ethics, specifically exploratory factor analysis. Part of the decision rules applied include Keiser-Meyer-Olkin>0.8, factor loading >0.4, eigenvalue>1, variance>4%, and reliability index.0.6. Further comparison of factors generated across demographic profiles were then tested using analysis of variance) ANOVA using SPSS version 26.

Results: A majority of the respondents were female, aged 19 to 21, and are the eldest among one to two siblings. Most of them also selected nursing as their first choice because of their desire to help people. Only the motivation in taking up nursing had a significant difference among the respondents' work values and ethics. When it comes to workplace attributes valued by the respondents, their top priority is a safe and healthy environment. On the other hand, with regard to work ethics, the respondents value honesty and integrity the most.

Conclusion: More than compensation and professional opportunities, Gen Z nurse respondents expect a future where they feel valued for the work that they are doing; they want to be respected not only from patients and their families, but also from their colleagues and the community. This will give them the strength to continue in helping people throughout their nursing profession.

Keywords: Work Values, Work Ethics, Gen Z Nurses, Positive workplace environment

INTRODUCTION

In the Philippines, as of October 2015, a survey reported that there were 42 million Filipinos, aged 15 years old and above, who are part of the labor force. Out of this 42 million, 47.1% are millennials aged 15 to 34 years old (Dela Cruz, 2016). Today, millennials, aged 25 to 38, are classified as Gen Ys while those aged 15 to 24 are considered Gen Zs. Thus, an emerging challenge now in the workplace is generational workforce diversity.

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Values may differ from one generational group to another. Gen Zs may bring with them their values expectations; thus, creating new challenges as they enter the workplace. Most literatures had already examined the characteristics of Gen Zs as a millennial group. However, there is a lack of empirical studies regarding Gen Z nurses, especially on their perceived work ethics and work values, which was identified by George (2005) as a relevant factor to organizational behavior. These perceived work values and work ethics may affect the expectations of Gen Z nurses on their future workplace environment, which could significantly be important for their recruitment and retention. Gen Zs expect the workplace to conform to their needs (Patel, 2017), which may also be applicable to Gen Z nurses. The disparity between their expectations and the actual workplace setting may cause them to quickly leave their first job or worse, leave the nursing profession itself. According to Alcancez (2019), the importance associated with workplace satisfaction among nurses in the Philippines is seen in the increased number of nurses working in the BPO industry. In 2015, around 116,000 healthcare professionals in the Philippines, majority of which are nurses, were attracted to work in the Healthcare BPO industry. Reasons cited were the attractive compensation compared to hospitals, the work-life balance (jobs are dayshift Monday-Friday), generous leave credits, and healthcare benefits. Thus, the importance of having data on what Gen Z nurses expect from their workplace should be given attention because a clear understanding of workplace variables can lead to the modification of their working environment, which may also help with their recruitment and retention within the organization (Labraque, 2018). The aim of this study is to analyze the gap between the perceived work ethics and work values of Gen Z nurses that would impact their workplace expectations vis-a-vis the present work environment among nurses in the Philippines. By knowing their perceived work values and work ethics, organizations can create a workplace where Gen Z nurses are valued; hence, promoting job satisfaction leading to retention.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory (Krumboltz, 1976) was applied in this study to determine the perceived work values and work ethics of Gen Z nurses. This social learning theory is attributed to the development of personal and work values of people through judgments from self-observation and generalizations about the people around them and the world in which they live in. According to Arsenault (2004) generational cohort assumes that people with similar birth years have a shared history and life experiences, attitudes, beliefs, values, and preferences about work and career.

Both work values and work ethics are relevant to organizational behaviors. They are considered as determinants for job satisfaction together with work situations, social influences, and personality (George, J 2005). Therefore, analyzing the perceived work values and work ethics of Gen Z nurses may help construct a guide in creating a positive workplace where the needs and expectations of Gen Z nurses can be met for them to grow professionally and personally, making Gen Z nurses feel more engaged and satisfied with their job.

The most frequent cited reason for the shortage of nurses is the poor and unhealthy work environment that decreases job satisfaction, leading to poor work performance. This causes the alienation of nurses who are driven away from specific work settings, like hospitals, or worse from the nursing profession itself (Bauman, 2007). As such, by applying the Expectancy Theory of Motivation (Jones, 2016), it is presumed that if the work environment is what Gen Z nurses want and expect based on their perceived work values and work ethics, they will be motivated to perform according to their desired results or goals. If the desired outcome is attained, employees will be satisfied and stay in their workplace.

Therefore, based on the social learning theory, Gen Z nurses' socio-demographic profile, such as gender, motivation to take nursing, and intent to practice nursing after graduation may have an influence in the development of their work values and work ethics. On the other hand, the expectancy theory may show the importance that Gen Z nurses would place on their perceived work values and work ethics and in their decisions in choosing their future workplace. By analyzing and understanding their perceived workplace values and ethics, a possible guide in creating a positive work environment may be achieved. This may also help managements to help attract, recruit, retain, and maintain Gen Z nurses in the organization.

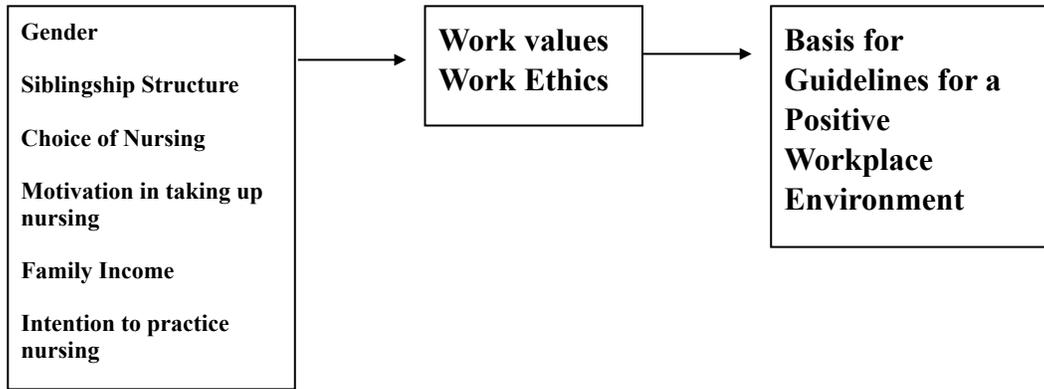


Figure 1: The Research Framework of the Study

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Since this was a single site study, results cannot be used to generalize work values and work ethics of Gen Z nurses. At the same time, due to the fact that the respondents have no work experience yet, the data generated were just based on their perceived beliefs, which may still change once they already have work experience.

METHODS

Research Design

This research employed a non-experimental comparative descriptive design to describe and compare the variables under the study (Burns et al., 2013).

Sampling and Study Site

Two hundred two new nurse graduates from a private Catholic university in Metro Manila were purposively selected. In order to gather the right respondents for this paper, the selection criteria were set: (1) graduates of a BSN Program batch 2019; (2) have never worked; and (3) those who are aged 18 to 24 years old. The said sample size was determined using power analysis by GPower to account for high power (0.8) and medium to large effect size (0.5-0.8) at 0.05 alpha level; hence, addressing types I and II errors.

Data Measures

Data for the study was gathered by using a three-part-researcher-made questionnaire: a Robotfoto, a 42-item questionnaire on work values, and a 32-item questionnaire on work ethics. These questionnaires were developed from an item pool following an extensive review of literature and journals. For better variability, each item was measured using a Likert scale of 1 to 6 where 1 is *disagree to a great extent* and 6 is *agree to a great extent*.

Validation of the Instrument

Content validity was done by peers with doctorate degree and administrative experiences in nursing education and nursing practice. Results of reliability testing generated a cronbach’s alpha of 0.974 and 0.853 for work values and work ethics, respectively. This showed that both questionnaires were highly reliable and that the statements describing every structure of questionnaire were consistent.

Data Gathering Procedure

Approval from the ethics review board of the higher educational institution, where the participants graduated, was obtained prior to data gathering. A letter was then sent to the Dean asking permission to be given the names of the class presidents per section and the list of batch 2019 nursing graduates. To explain the study and get their cooperation, each class president or representative was contacted through their email or messenger accounts. The emails sent to the selected participants contained a cover letter explaining the nature, risks, and benefits of participating in the study; an informed consent; and a link for the Google form questionnaires. Responses from the Google forms were generated, followed by the assignment of numbers that served as the participants' pseudonyms.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics approval from the ethics board of the institution, where the respondents graduated, was sought for filtering any unethical items in the questionnaires. Some personal identification data of the respondents, such as name or student number, were omitted. Instead, control numbers were utilized. Privacy and confidentiality of the participants were also observed throughout the study.

Data Analysis

Several multivariate analyses were utilized in this research. To identify the dimensions of work values and ethics, exploratory factor analysis was employed. Part of the decision's rules applied included the following: Keiser-Meyer-Olkin>0.8, factor loading >0.4, eigenvalue>1, variance>4%, and reliability index.0.6. Further comparison of factors generated across demographic profiles were then tested using analysis of variance) ANOVA using SPSS version 26.

RESULTS

Subject Demographics:

Majority of the respondents are female (73.0%), aged 19 to 21 (91.7%), the eldest (51.5%), among one to two siblings (61%), and most of them selected nursing as their first choice (59.3%) for their tertiary education. The cited reasons which garnered a high percentage for choosing nursing as their course were: their desire to help people (69.6%); influence of their family (69%); and job opportunity abroad (61%). When asked about their plans after graduation, 67% claimed that they will practice bedside nursing. However, a larger number of the participants entertain the idea of taking up the medicine program (76%).

Table 1. Comparison of Work Values and Ethics according to Demographics

Variables	Gender		Sibship Structure						Choice of Nursing						Plans after Graduation				Income				Reasons			
	Male		Female		First Child		Others		1 st Choice		2 nd Choice		Bedside		Other Plans		High		Low		Altruistic		Others			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Factor 1	5.67	0.51	5.77	0.35	5.75	0.56	5.73	0.44	5.71	0.43	5.79	0.56	5.74	0.41	5.74	0.40	5.70	0.46	5.78	0.35	5.75	0.40	5.72	0.40		
F-ratio	2.164																									
Factor 2	5.61	0.50	5.72	0.39	5.69	0.39	5.69	0.46	5.66	0.45	5.74	0.39	5.70	0.42	5.68	0.43	5.68	0.48	5.71	0.38	5.74	0.40	5.58	0.46		
F-ratio	2.957																									
Factor 3	5.54	0.60	5.62	0.51	5.57	0.50	5.62	0.57	5.54	0.57	5.68	0.46	5.59	0.51	5.60	0.59	5.57	0.60	5.62	0.48	5.60	0.55	5.58	0.51		
F-ratio	0.924																									
Factor 4	5.45	0.55	5.58	0.46	5.55	0.46	5.54	0.53	5.52	0.48	5.57	0.51	5.56	0.49	5.50	0.49	5.54	0.51	5.55	0.48	5.59	0.46	5.45	0.54		
F-ratio	2.897																									
Factor 5	5.70	0.45	5.73	0.41	5.73	0.39	5.72	0.45	5.69	0.45	5.78	0.35	5.71	0.43	5.76	0.38	5.70	0.43	5.75	0.41	5.71	0.42	5.76	0.41		
F-ratio	0.189																									
Factor 6	5.44	0.62	5.59	0.47	5.54	0.50	5.56	0.54	5.51	0.57	5.62	0.42	5.55	0.52	5.56	0.52	5.53	0.59	5.58	0.46	5.56	0.53	5.55	0.50		
F-ratio	3.459																									
Work Values	5.58																									
F-ratio	2.116																									
Factor 1	5.60	0.53	5.66	0.41	5.62	0.43	5.67	0.47	5.62	0.45	5.69	0.44	5.68	0.44	5.58	0.45	5.63	0.48	5.66	0.42	5.68	0.44	5.59	0.45		
F-ratio	0.716																									
Factor 2	5.50	0.53	5.47	0.50	5.40	0.57	5.57	0.43	5.46	0.52	5.51	0.49	5.51	0.49	5.42	0.54	5.49	0.52	5.47	0.50	5.54	0.47	5.35	0.57		
F-ratio	0.090																									
Factor 3	5.59	0.50	5.68	0.43	5.63	0.44	5.68	0.46	5.61	0.47	5.72	0.42	5.69	0.42	5.58	0.51	5.68	0.42	5.63	0.48	5.69	0.43	5.57	0.48		
F-ratio	1.611																									
Factor 4	5.36	0.72	5.28	0.68	5.30	0.67	5.31	0.72	5.25	0.72	5.41	0.63	5.36	0.63	5.19	0.79	5.32	0.66	5.29	0.72	5.34	0.64	5.23	0.80		
F-ratio	0.452																									
Work Ethics	5.51																									
F-ratio	0.036																									

* Significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 shows that respondents who chose nursing for altruistic reasons have a higher results of the following: F-ratio= 6.683; p-value< 0.05, WV Factor 2 value for self-realization, mean= 5.74;sd=0.40, and F-ratio=5.882;p-value<0.05, WE Factor 2 moral strength, mean= 5.54 ; sd=0.47; than those with other reasons: mean= 5.35 to 5.58 ; sd=0.46 to 0.57 . Therefore, among all the demographic variables, only the motivation in taking up nursing had a significant difference.

Work Values

Results of the factor analysis on the work values of Gen Z nurses categorized six factors with Eigen values exceeding the cut off at 1.0. This suggests that all items account for one cohesive factor. Factor 1 included 14 items which typify value for self-worth pertains to a need to find one's value as a person and as a professional nurse. The six attributes loaded under Factor 2 are characterized as value for self-realization, and is described as the need to have self-fulfillment and contentment. Factor 3 is tagged as value for self-enhancement. It has four variables relative to the need for a clear advancement program within the organization for self-growth and career progression. Five items reflective of Factor 4 is also indicated as the value to exercise one's volition, the need to have an organization where trust is apparent, and a place that will encourage independence and promote freedom of choice. Factor 5 is described as the value for security and safety, owing to the four variables associated not only for the need of job stability, but also for the safety of the workplace. Lastly, Factor 6 is labeled as the value for empowerment. It has five items reflecting the need for a nurturing environment that will help one to be stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights. At the same time, it would allow one to make confident decisions in the workplace even without supervision.

The results also showed that among the workplace attributes valued by Gen Z nurse respondents, their priorities are: safe and healthy environment (Mean=5.85; sd= 0.373) and economic benefits (Mean= 5.81; sd=0.452). These were followed closely by respect for nurses as professionals (Mean= 5.80; sd= 0.480), environment respecting diversity (Mean= 5.80; sd=0.459), and opportunities to expand their skills and abilities (Mean= 5.79; sd=0.473).

Work Ethics

On the other hand, four main factors were categorized from the work ethics data with Eigen values exceeding the cut off at 1.0. Factor 1 included 11 items which characterize moral conscience, described as one's moral compass that guides one's personal and professional behavior, especially in the practice of one's profession. The seven variables loaded under Factor 2 is labeled as moral strength, described as holding firmly to one's beliefs when confronted with conflicting ethical issues even in the presence of external pressure. Factor 3, tagged as conformity to the standards of the healthcare community, refers to assuming responsibility in promoting and safeguarding patients' health rights and safety. Factor 4, labeled as socialized power, is the effective influence over persons, groups, or communities with the goal of social benefit or for the common good.

In terms of work ethics, nursing graduate respondents claimed to value superiors with honesty and integrity (Mean=5.79; sd=0.493). Similarly, they placed importance in complying with rules to uphold patient rights and dignity (Mean=5.77; sd=0.514) and holding themselves accountable for their decisions and actions (Mean=5.73; sd=0.535). In addition, they also gave importance in respecting the diversity of culture within the institution (Mean=5.73; sd= 5.28). Hence, they value collaboration with other healthcare professionals (Mean=5.69; sd=0.514).

DISCUSSION

Demographics

Among all the demographic variables, only the motivation in taking nursing had a significant difference in the work values and work ethics of respondents. Since altruistic value is a strong trait among Catholics, their four-year stay as a college student in a Catholic university may have instilled values in their minds, which may have influenced and shaped their beliefs as well. Conversely, no significant difference was revealed in the work values and work ethics of the respondents when other demographic variables were taken into consideration. This could be because respondents all belong to the same generational age, and had spent their college life in the same university located in an urban area. Therefore, this supports the social learning theory that values are shaped by experiences and environment where an individual has been exposed to.

Work Values

This study provided insights on the perceptions of work values and work ethics of Gen Z nurses who are now moving into the workforce. Each central factor was represented by a set of specific needs that promoted it. This study recognizes that values are representative of a person's goal which one aims to achieve through the satisfaction of identified needs an individual has associated with one's goals. Among the six factors identified in work values, Factor 1, tagged as value for self-worth, obtained the highest EV (5.615), which signifies that the items under it have a high likelihood of representing this factor. Among the items under Factor 1, the highest factor loading of 0.813 was given to the need for economic stability (e.g., decent competitive salary and economic benefits). Results of this study showed that Gen Z nurse respondents were primarily motivated by paychecks and security rather than purpose. While it is true that altruistic value was the main motivator for Gen Z nurse respondents to take nursing, it may be possible that now that they are entering the workplace and are expected to earn for their own needs, the need for financial security became the priority over the need to help people. It does not mean that their desire to help people is no longer important to them. It may be possible that they have just realized that they must start working for their own survival. This shows that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is indeed true, that physiologic needs are a priority before one's need for self-esteem and self-actualization (George & Jones, 2005). This result also reflects the observations made by Morphy (2018) that Gen Zs equate high salaries with success. Likewise, Gen Z professionals want to have a strong starting salary for their first job out of college (Half, 2019). However, Hampton and Welsh (2019) argued that the number one most important work value of Gen Z nurses in the United States is their altruistic motivation or the need to help people. This may be due to the difference in economic conditions in the United States and the Philippines. While it is true that Gen Z is considered a pragmatic generation, that want to make a difference, their priority is to have a secured life outside of work. This may also be reflective of how they have seen their parents struggling during years of financial crisis and instability in the Philippines (Patel 2017). Gen Zs have also seen their parents working and even going abroad just to give a better future for their children.

The second highest item in Factor 1 is the need for respect for professional nurses within the workplace (f 0.749) and the community (f 0.014). This need for respect is given importance under Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which is the need for self-esteem, the need to feel good about oneself and be respected and appreciated by others. In the code of ethics for Filipino registered nurses, the need of nurses for respect and confidence from their clients, colleagues and members of the community is reflected in section 3 of article 1 (PRC BON RESOLUTION number 220 series of 2004). In the Philippines there is a stereotype that nurses are lower than doctors, and that they are merely doctors' assistants or handmaids. This stereotyping could have possibly come from the fact that doctors have more years of education and training; thus, contributing to the development of a *god complex* attitude that leads to them looking down on nurses especially new graduates (Pastor, 2015). Nurses, by virtue of their knowledge and skills as professionals, have an independent decision-making authority granted by society (Roussel, 2013). However, literatures on sociology of professions claim that nurses are dependent on doctors' orders; hence, limiting their professional autonomy. Consequently, the belief that nurses are handmaids of doctors was reinforced. In an article published in a leading Philippine newspaper, it was reported that besides bullying from doctors and fellow nurses, Filipino nurses are even bullied by patients and relatives,

that is why it is not surprising that the need for respect is one of their priorities. Filipino nurses also complained about being asked to do non-nursing jobs, such as doing staff inventories and running errands on top of their nursing duties (Tan, 2019).

Aside from economic stability and respect, other items identified in Factor 1 that contributes to their self-worth, are professional growth, physical-mental-emotional-spiritual well-being, social sensibility, and acceptability. They expect a working environment that will foster their holistic growth through the sharing of ideas, open lines of communication, and recognition of their individual capabilities and generational characteristics.

For Factor 2, the value for self-realization is reflected in the need for accountability, collegiality, improvement of one's skills and abilities including leadership opportunities. These factors were considered to give Gen Z nurses contentment and self-fulfillment. At the same time, having a work environment that is conducive to having good interpersonal relationships through social interactions also contributes to their self-fulfillment. For Gen Z nurses, besides autonomy, it is also important to discuss with them career goals and provide them with learning opportunities through training for them to develop their skills. According to Bridges, as cited in, Gaidhini (2019) GenZs should be provided with professional development opportunities because they believe that their education has not given them the required skills needed with real life problems.

For Factor 3, self-enhancement, the items that gave the greatest affinity were supportive workplace (e.g., provides work related skills and technical support) and learning environment (e.g., provides a comprehensive orientation program). This need for self-enhancement is embodied in section 7 article 3 of the Code of Ethics for Filipino registered nurses. This section states, that nurses must not only acquire, but most importantly continuous development is necessary in honing competence in their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to effectively render appropriate nursing services in varied situations. This provision also emphasizes that administrators have the responsibility to provide a favorable environment for the growth and development of nurses in their charge. Thus, frequent and honest feedback and evaluation on their performance are expected by the Gen Z nurse respondents. This will help them improve not only their personal growth, but also their professional development. Gen Z nurse respondents, majority of whom are Catholics, also need personal growth and spiritual development as part of their self-enhancement.

In Factor 4, the value to exercise one's volition is reflected in the freedom to make one's decisions, work on their own, or be independent and be judged according to one's own merit. At the same time, they expect to be provided with diverse experiences in the workplace and to have choices, so that they can promote and have work-life balance and participation in social advocacies, especially those initiated by their organization. Similarly, Morphy (2018)'s study was also evident in Factor 4 of the findings where Gen Zs preferred to work alone rather than in groups. They want and expect to be credited for their individual achievements. As such, Gen Zs have a desire for flexible and independent work (Morphy, 2018). Another item in factor 4 is their sense of social responsibility, which was also seen in a study conducted by Robert Half (2018). It was shown that when choosing for a place to work, Gen Z listed the company's impact on society as one of their top considerations.

Factor 5, the value for security and safety, identified that the highest factor loading was an environment that fosters collaboration and teamwork for better health. According to Morphy (2018) although Gen Zs value autonomy, they also see the importance of collaboration and teamwork because they value community, crowd sourcing, and personal connections. This desire for community collaboration may be because they were brought up by baby boomer (born 1946-1964) parents and mentors whose characteristics include leadership, teamwork, and service (Roussel, 2013). Thus, it is not impossible that Gen Z nurse respondents could have adapted and internalized the beliefs and attitudes of the baby boomer generation. This also reflects findings from a previous study (Chicca, 2018) where security and safety pertain not only to attainment of physical safety, but also harmony and stability of self-relationships and society. Therefore, a safe and secure environment for Gen Z nurses may pertain not only on structural elements, but also on the ability of the workplace to promote an environment that will not threaten their thoughts, emotions, and well-being. This is probably because Gen Zs grew up in times of uncertainty, political, social, and/or economic unrest, which made them cautious. This led for their concern for emotional, mental, physical, and financial safety (Chicca, 2018).

As for the stability of self, relationships, and society, this need comes from the fact that Gen Zs are digital natives with underdeveloped social and relationship skills. They may become individualistic, prone to anxiety, depression and insecurity; thus, good working relationships and collaboration with colleagues give them a sense of security (Chicca, 2019). At the same time Gen Z nurse respondents are also looking for security of tenure. This finding is similar to Iorgulescu's (2016) study who revealed that Gen Z nurses value job security, salary, and benefits. This may be because Gen Zs grew up in a decade of economic uncertainty (Tulgan, 2018). They grew in a time of gig economy, which is defined as an economic environment that encourages temporary and flexible job opportunities where companies hire part-time workers instead of full-time permanent employees. This kind of environment undermines the traditional economy where employees are focused on lifetime careers and rarely see changes in jobs (Chappelou, 2019).

Factor 6, the value for empowerment showed that the highest factor loading is an environment that allows them flexibility in scheduling to support personal needs. This is in line with having enough time to pursue graduate studies, do things for other people, allow shared responsibility for decision making, and promote a culture of mentorship. According to Half (2018), Gen Zs appreciate mentoring and coaching from more experienced leaders to help them develop their management potentials. This is because they may be used to the guidance of their parents and teachers. The need for empowerment was also recognized by Birmingham Children's Hospital when they began exploring on shared governance to give their staff more involvement in decision making. At the same time, they encouraged staff empowerment to lead change at all levels (McLoughlin, 2016).

Three items on work values were dropped because they did not meet the required criteria. These items were: (6) "work environment that appreciates accomplishments for a job well done with recognition or awards"; (7) "work environment that supports the principle that a small nurse-patient ratio will bring better outcomes;" and (11) "work environment that allows participation in activities that promote innovation and research for improving patient care". These three values were deemed less important by Gen Z participants of this study. The result of this study regarding item (6) on prestige or award reflects findings of a previous study that prestige and recognition are the least important in the 25 work values among Gen Z nurses (Hampton & Welsh, 2019). Research on the other hand, may probably be not a priority for these Gen Z nurse respondents because this generation has been influenced by easy access to everything through technology and the internet. Based on the findings of Generational White Paper, as cited in Gaidhani (2019), Gen Zs are more likely to have acquired very short attention spans and have become more impatient because of their high dependency on technology. GenZs are used to collecting data and cross referencing from many sources in a short time. Another factor to consider is the possibility that due to the exposure to descriptive-narrative-correlational research of Gen Z nurse respondents while in college.. This is because experimental research involving patients in hospitals were not allowed because of the issue of patient safety. Thus, the limitations on the kind of research they have done, as well as the rigors of doing research make it less appealing for Gen Z respondents. As for the nurse-patient ratio, Gen Z nurse respondents may have not given much attention to this criterion because they still do not have actual professional nursing work experience. Hence, they have not been exposed to caring for different numbers of patients comparing its advantages and disadvantages, in terms of patient outcomes, is not plausible.

Ranking of work values

According to Schwartz's (1987, 2006) Value Theory, values are ranked according to the importance a person places on them. Individuals or groups may vary in the importance they attach to different values. In lieu to this, knowing the priority values of individuals or groups may help in establishing generational norms, which in the case of this study, a norm for work values and ethics for Gen Z Nurses. Lyons (2010) stated that work values are hierarchically ordered in a person's mind and guide individuals in choosing where they want to work.

Results of this study may help managements to get a glimpse of what Gen Z nurses are looking for in the work setting. Their top priority is to have a safe and healthy environment. This need for a safe environment may be because of global events of war, terrorism, violence, and health care issues they experienced in their growing up years (Moore, 2017). Safety could refer to both physical and psychological safety. Physical safety includes provision of adequate equipment aside from having safe physical structures. Psychological safety, on the other hand, may include absence of fear of reprisals, and a non-competitive and abusive climate in the workplace (Baumann, 2007). Finally, a healthy environment may refer to the need of Gen Z nurses to have a healthy work-life balance; thus, preferences on their personal lifestyle must be recognized and respected.

Based on the positive work environment criteria set by Chicca (2018), Kristensens (1999) and Bauman (2007), the other top five priority needs identified in this study are namely: having a competitive salary that would enable them to live decently; sense of respect among colleagues and the community in general; and an environment that promotes professional growth for all. These factors contribute to what Gen Z nurse respondents expect for a safe and healthy workplace.

Work Ethics

For work ethics, Factor 1 was labeled as moral conscience, which got the highest value (EV 4.459). Among the items, the factor loading score of 0.786 was given to the statement “I value honesty and integrity from my superiors”. A possible reason for this is that part of the core values of the respondents’ school (UST College of Nursing website) includes respect, which is defined as treating everyone with outmost dignity in the light of Catholic faith. Aside from honesty and integrity, the following traits were also identified as the foundation of the moral conscience of Gen Z nurses: respect, fairness, humility, lawfulness, accountability, being considerate, and having shared values. Similarly Half’s (2018) study showed that honesty and integrity topped the list of traits that Gen Zs are looking for in a superior. This is also reflected in their need for transparency, honesty, and straightforward evaluations that will help their career growth (Kosterlitz, 2017).

Factor 2, tagged as moral strength, is characterized by prudence, courage, decisiveness, loyalty, compassion, and responsibility. Nurses are often faced with conflicting situations and loyalties, or even violations of patients’ rights that go against their personal and professional moral values. As such, nurses need to have moral strength or courage to speak for their rights as well as their patients’ rights. The strong desire of Gen Z nurse respondents for moral courage may be attributed to the fact that ethics education is part of the nursing curriculum in the Philippines (Maravilla, 2017). At the same time, since the respondents studied in a catholic institution, their religious beliefs may have provided a solid foundation of firmly holding their ethical values despite external pressures. Furthermore, nurses have long considered themselves as moral agents in the healthcare system (Edmundson, 2010).

Factor 3 or the conformity to standards of the healthcare community, considered punctuality, collaboration, innovation, and being patient advocates as desirable traits. This reflects that Gen Z nurse respondents know, understand, and respect the code of ethics that governs the nursing profession. This code of ethics (PRC BON Board Resolution number 220 Series of 2004) for nurses contains the values, responsibilities, and duties that guide Filipino nurses to maintain the highest standards of ethical practice for patients’ health, safety, and welfare. At the same time, section 8 of the code of ethics recognizes a nurse’s role to advocate the safety of patients’ rights and privileges. Furthermore, section 12 emphasizes the need for Filipino nurses to maintain collegial and collaborative working relationships with colleagues and other healthcare providers.

Factor 4 or socialized power, identified participative, committed, and responsible citizenship as significant. This reflects the noble commitment of nurses as responsible members of society to promote local, national, and international efforts in order to meet the health and social needs of people. This is also embodied in sections 14 and 15 of article five of the Code of Ethics of Filipino nurses (PRC BON, 2004): that as responsible citizens, nurses must be involved in community concerns.

Ranking of Work Ethics

With regard to the top five priority of work ethics, nursing graduate respondents claimed to value the following: (1) honesty and integrity; (2) compliance with rules to uphold patient rights and dignity; (3) accountability; (4) respect for the diversity of culture within an institution; and (5) collaboration with other healthcare professionals. Results of this study on work ethics by Gen Z nurses respondents concurred to the fact that Gen Zs possess strong work ethic that is likened to the diligence of baby boomers. Moreover, no matter what generational age, nurses have always held themselves to a high standard of moral behavior and ethical practice because they have their own code of ethics that contains the values, duties, and responsibilities that guide their moral thinking and standards of practice (Marquiz, 2015). As such, this strengthens the notion that a profession is defined in part by the ethics that governs their practice (Baker, 2003). These work ethics are also given emphasis in the mission and vision of the university where the respondents graduated from (UST, College of Nursing Webpage).

If these identified perceived expectations on their work ethics are to be met in the workplace, then it is more likely that this will keep Gen Z nurses happy and satisfied; thus, they will not opt to leave their work. . Overlooking these perceived work ethics of Gen Z nurse respondents may result in frustration, low-morale, and subsequently poor engagement that can be reflected in poor patient care outcomes (Bascha, as cited in Gaidhini, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Considering the altruistic motivation of most respondents on taking nursing, Gen Z nurse respondents give more importance to the feeling of being valued in their future work experience than giving value to the compensation and professional opportunities that they may get.. At the same time, they expect respect not only from patients and their families, but also from their colleagues, other health professionals, and the community. This will give them the strength and the will to further fuel their desire to continue on helping people throughout their nursing profession.

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