

Employability Skills of Nurses during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract- Employability skills can be challenging to develop, especially during a pandemic. The researcher aimed to determine the employability skills of nurses, especially the graduates and Registered Nurses, during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines. This research utilized a quantitative survey to collect data from BSN graduates during the pandemic, using a descriptive-evaluative research design. The researcher implemented a purposive sampling method to procure the data from 50 respondents across the province of Pangasinan. The data were converted from Google Forms to Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to determine the significant relationship between the employability skills of the nurses as perceived by the respondents and their profile variables. This study concludes that the participants are primarily female, single, and aged 18 to 25. Their employability skills indicate that there is a significant relationship between the respondents' profile on civil status and the following variables: interpersonal, resource management system thinking, and technology employability skills. Also, there are significant differences between civil status and interpersonal skills, resource management, and communication skills. Both females and males show no significant difference in employability skills. There is also no significant difference between the respondents' age profiles and employability skills. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends nursing schools to create programs to address employability gaps. Also, they may offer free necessary entry-level skills, as well as seminars in partnership with the Philippine Nurses Association (PNA). Moreover, employers can provide activities considering their profile variables.

Indexed Terms- COVID-19, Employability Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Nurses

I. INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 has shifted how one lives because of the COVID-19 virus, which led to a pandemic. The gatherings were affected by different healthcare protocols. Globally, cautionary measures were taken to combat the COVID-19 virus. The public care strategies included observing handwashing, wearing face masks, physical distancing, avoiding mass gatherings, and even conducting assemblies. Everyone was forced to create lockdowns and stay-at-home strategies as needed to flatten the curve and manage the transmission of the disease (Sintema, 2020).

It has also led to drastic changes and challenges in the education sector, even though there have been many pre-pandemic improvements through continuous research to enhance knowledge and teaching techniques. Changes have led to alternative and different modes of teaching and learning. The educational institutions had to devise resolutions to continue working on their business and be instruments of students' dreams, preparing them for their chosen career path.

In the Philippines' pre-pandemic setup, there has been a trend of increasing enrollment of student nurses due to the demand for nurses to work abroad. According to a study by McGill on the Global nursing shortage, a health workforce must be of sufficient capacity to meet the population's health needs, with world health leaders such as the World Health Organization (WHO) predicting an increase in the global demand for both health and social care (Drennan, 2019). As

half the global healthcare workforce comprises nurses, nurses play an important role in prevention of diseases and health by providing care in primary, community, and hospital settings, including emergency and critical care areas (Drennan, 2019; WHO, 2019). However, in 2014, the WHO and the World Bank calculated a global nursing shortage of nine million nurses and midwives (Drennan, 2019, WHO 2019).

Tertiary education offers courses that shape future healthcare workers in Nursing, Medtech, Pharmacy, Medicine, and the like struggle for non-physical teaching of their related learning experiences (RLE), which requires in-depth face-to-face skills return demonstration and hospital exposure duty. Their confidence in the core competencies of nursing might be affected due to lack of hospital exposure, which can lead to their lack of readiness for hospital working fields and other nursing areas compared to the pre-pandemic employability setup.

The nursing core competencies needed to qualify BSN graduates as registered nurses are essential for their employability. The following are the (11) identified core competency areas: Safe and Quality Care, Management of Environment and Resources, Health Education, Legal Responsibility, Ethico-moral Responsibility, Personal and Professional Development, Quality Improvement, Research, Record Management, Communication, and Collaboration and Teamwork.

In the Philippines, according to an article by the Philippines News Agency, Commission on Higher Education Chairperson Prospero “Popoy” De Vera III said the CHED has carefully considered the supply and demand for nurses according to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). In 2022, around 201,265 job positions for nurses must be filled nationwide, implying a huge gap between the UN SDGs ideal number of 300,470 nurses, far higher than the actual number of nurses in the Philippines, around 90,205.

According to the article by Avant Health Professional, the COVID-19 pandemic burdened healthcare organizations and their nursing staff, leaving them with an overflow of patients and an

increased nursing shortage. It also made it difficult for new nursing graduates to perform their jobs adequately. The suspension of in-person clinical experiences and switching to remote education left many new nurse graduates needing more practice.

The pandemic affected new graduates in their education and even in their emotional state. Healthcare organizations are finding new ways to support them. Though there were efforts utilized in different self-regulated learning strategies, graduates might still need to gain transferable abilities that would let them understand essential skill sets to achieve the demands of industry in the modern and be able to transfer abstract skills related to cognitive (Mai, 2018). The student's academic conduct was related to the learning challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially as being in remote learning led to constraints in student learning and professional skill development (Aristeidou & Cross, 2021). Thus, it is challenging to develop the employability of college graduates because of the pandemic (Shiyuan et al., 2022).

Therefore, the researcher conducted this study to know the employability skills of BSN graduates during a pandemic and to find and recommend ways to boost their employability and prepare them confidently for it.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study determined the employability skills of BSN Graduates during the pandemic. To answer the research questions effectively, this study used a descriptive research design to describe the profile of the respondents, whereas a self-assessment method was used to determine employability skills.

The researcher used purposive sampling to determine the study's respondents, specifically from the province of Pangasinan, who graduated during the COVID-19 pandemic year 2020 to 2022. The researcher purposely gathered data from 50 BSN graduates randomly from the graduates of different colleges in Pangasinan. Respondents were contacted via social media and were also referred by colleagues. The primary tool used to gather data was a researcher-constructed questionnaire focusing on

the participants' profiles and self-assessment of their employability skills. The questionnaire has two parts. The first part concerned the respondents' profiles, including their age, sex, and civil status. Additionally, the second part comprised eight questions adopted to measure employability skills: critical thinking skills, interpersonal skills, personal qualities, resource management, information use, communication skills, systems thinking, and technology use.

The following statistical treatments were utilized. To answer question 1, frequency counts and percentages were used to tabulate the information gathered from the profile of the respondents for the data's presentation, interpretation, and analysis. To answer question 2, the Average Weighted Mean (AWM) formula was used to discuss, analyze, and interpret the respondents' perceptions of employability skills.

Legend:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

For question 3, the researcher used Pearson r Correlation to determine the significant relationship between the employability skills of BSN graduates during a pandemic and their profile variables. For question 4, the researcher used t-test to determine the significant difference between the employability skills of nurses during pandemic and their profile variables.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Profile of the Respondents

Age. Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents, 47 (94%) out of 50, are in the age bracket of eighteen to twenty-five years old, and only 3 (6%) are in the age of twenty-six to thirty-five years old. This means that most of the nurses who graduated or recently passed are within the usual age range of graduating students.

Sex. It shows that 39 (78%) of 50 respondents are female, while only 11 (22%) are male. This is consistent with the historical influence of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, who believed it to be an empowering profession for

women since before women are regarded as uneducated (Alligood 2020). Today there is an equal chance regardless if you are male or female.

Civil Status. Table 1 reveals that only five respondents (10%) are married, whereas forty-five (90%) are not. Nursing, the healthcare profession that devotes the most significant amount of time to patient interaction relative to other specialties and where patient outcomes depend on the standard of nursing care delivered, requires a higher degree of commitment and responsibility. Also, it denotes that new nurses during COVID-19 pandemic are not yet settling down to marriage and have more time to devote to themselves and the profession they have chosen.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents (n= 50)

Profile	f	Percentage
Age		
18 - 25 years old	47	94.0
26 - 35 years old	3	6.0
Sex		
Male	11	22.0
Female	39	78.0
Civil Status		
Single	45	90.0
Married	5	10.0

B. Employability Skills

Table 2 shows the mean distribution of the variable for the employability skills of the BSN Graduates along with applied academics. The indicator, "I demonstrate reading skills by interpreting written instructions or project directions and constructing responses, interpreting technical language, using print and online materials as resources, completing worksheets, and seeking clarification about what I have read," has the highest mean score of 4.60 and has a transmuted equivalent of "highly skilled". This implies that respondents have strong reading comprehension. While the statement, "I construct processes to complete a task," has the lowest mean score of 3.52.

An average weighted mean of 3.98 indicates that respondents have a skilled applied academic. According to Scott and Wilson (2021), the claim that employers now require graduates to possess a diverse range of supplementary skills and a degree is substantiated by compelling evidence. Considering the intense competition and swift evolution of the job market, graduate employability is a critical concern

for higher education. Graduating individuals must possess the skills and qualities employers highly regard to increase their employment prospects (Sakar et al., 2020).

Table 2: Employability Skills of Nurses Along Applied Academic

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Transmuted Equivalent
1. I demonstrate reading skills by interpreting written instructions or project directions and constructing responses, interpreting technical language, using print and online materials as resources, completing worksheets, and seeking clarification about what I have read.	4.60	HS
2. I use writing skills to construct lab reports, posters, and presentation materials, take notes, and compose responses to essay questions.	4.00	S
3. I use computational skills appropriately and make logical choices when analyzing and differentiating among available procedures.	3.92	S
4. I follow procedures, experiment, infer, and hypothesize (even as simple as "what if we do it this way").	3.88	S
5. I construct processes to complete a task.	3.52	S
Average Weighted Mean	3.98	S

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

Table 3 shows the mean distribution of variables in terms of critical thinking. The indicator, "I assess problems involving the use of available resources (i.e., personnel and materials) and review multiple strategies for resolving problems," has the highest mean of 4.32, with a transmuted equivalent of "skilled". This implies that respondents can identify and solve their problems using their disposition. On the other hand, the statement, "I display analytical and strategic thinking," has the lowest mean (WM=3.82) which also has a transmuted equivalent of "skilled". The overall weighted mean of the respondents' employability and critical thinking skills is 4.02, with a transmuted equivalent of "skilled". This implies that with the variable, this study's subjects could use their critical thinking skills when seeking jobs. Human relations expertise, communication proficiency, and critical thinking ability are among the competencies that recent graduates consider essential for their initial employment (Abas & Imam, 2016).

Table 3: Employability Skills of Nurses Along Critical Thinking

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Transmuted Equivalent
1. I create innovative and novel ideas or solutions and display divergent thinking.	3.92	S
2. I display analytical and strategic thinking.	3.82	S
3. I differentiate between multiple approaches and assess options.	4.02	S
4. I assess problems involving the use of available resources (i.e., personnel and materials) and review multiple strategies for resolving problems.	4.32	S
5. I plan steps, procedures, or approaches for addressing tasks.	4.00	S
Average Weighted Mean	4.02	S

Legend:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

Table 4 presents the respondent's employability skills along interpersonal ability. The statement, "I keep team members on track, suggest alternatives, and discuss options," has the highest score (WM=4.52) with a transmuted equivalent of "highly skilled". This indicates that respondents can work as a group and improve every team member. According to Cheruvilil et al. (2014), research outcomes produced by effective collaborative teams are significant, surpassing individual efforts' capabilities. Scientists comprise these teams; they hold one another accountable for their adherence to a common objective, methodology, and performance benchmarks. Whereas, the statement, "I help others understand tasks, find resources, and fulfill assigned roles," has the lowest mean score of 3.90, with a "skilled" transmuted rating.

Despite the lowest rating, the table also shows an AWM of 4.14 which indicates a transmuted equivalent of "skilled". This implies that the respondents could apply their interpersonal skills concerning their employability. Interpersonal competencies (IPS) are essential in the modern workplace. Since collaboration is fundamental to business operations, administrators invariably consider interpersonal skills indispensable for an effective workforce. However, post-employment training and development initiatives are insufficient, particularly in light of the reduced funding allocated to soft skills or training across all work domains. This skill has become an important part of the success and development of the technology industry sector globally in the past few years (Fadhil et al., 2021).

Table 4: Employability Skills of Nurses along Interpersonal

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Transmuted Equivalent
1. I participate in cooperative groups or with a partner, contribute fairly to the task, and show respect to others.	4.16	S
2. I help others understand tasks, find resources, and fulfill assigned roles.	3.90	S
3. I participate as a team leader or effective team member in project assignments, organize work, and utilize team roles to meet project goals.	4.00	S
4. I keep team members on track, suggest alternatives, and discuss options.	4.52	HS
5. I listen to and consider all team members' ideas, respond supportively to ideas given in class or in teams, use proactive approaches to prevent conflict or misunderstanding and work well with all teammates.	4.10	S
Average Weighted Mean	4.14	S

Legend:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

Table 5 presents the mean distribution of variables for the employability skills and the respondents' personal qualities. The statement, "I am cooperative and noticeably engaged," has the highest mean which is 4.32 and has a transmuted rating of "skilled". This implies that respondents are effective at work as they are passionate and can work together. This finding was supported by Homeyer et al. (2018) which emphasized that collaboration fosters inter-professional cooperation between the nursing and medical fields. Understanding roles and proficiency in inter-professional communication will be fundamental prerequisites for enhancing patient-centered collaborative care. However, the statement, "I commit to time-on-task during class and begin work without hesitation," shows the lowest mean score of 3.40, which indicates "moderately skilled" as its transmuted equivalent.

The table also shows an overall mean of 3.89 with a transmuted rating of "skilled". This indicates that respondents have employability skills using their personal qualities. Personal qualities can influence how an employee interacts with others. Employers value employability skills because they are linked to how employees get along with co-workers and customers, job performance, and career success of the employee (Mehroliya & Alagarsamy, 2019).

Table 5: Employability Skills of Nurses Along Personal Qualities

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Transmuted Equivalent
1. I actively participate in class, asking questions, volunteering answers, completing and submitting assignments, and working well in groups.	3.92	S
2. I adapt easily to different modes of instruction and different types of assignments.	3.82	S
3. I commit to time-on-task during class and begin work without hesitation.	3.40	MS
4. I am cooperative and noticeably engaged.	4.32	S
5. I treat others with respect and consider all ideas.	4.00	S
Average Weighted Mean	3.89	S

Legend:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

Table 6 presents the employability skills of the respondents along the resource management. The indicator "I demonstrate time management when organizing and planning project activities with a team" has the highest mean (WM=4.50) and a transmuted equivalent of "highly skilled". This suggests that participants can organize and rank tasks essential for the team. This skill set can also be applied to hospital work because urgent situations require a methodical team approach to coordinate concurrent contributions to stabilization, immediate resuscitation, and care prioritization. Multidisciplinary simulation-based resuscitation team training is one type of initiative utilized to enhance collaboration in the healthcare setting (Murphy et al., 2016). On the other hand, the lowest score in these findings is the indicator, "I gain experience managing personnel (i.e., each other) in group projects requiring allocation of limited finances, resources (e.g., materials), and role assignments," with a WM of 4.00 which indicates "skilled" as its transmuted equivalent.

The AWM of 4.28 implies a "skilled" transmuted rating. This shows that this trait or variable identifies the study participants as having employability skills and resource management. In line with these findings, human resources are a critical asset and element of success, making them indispensable for an organization's simultaneous expansion and progress (Sisodia et al., 2017). Given the prevailing need for skilled personnel, organizations are directing resources toward providing employee training.

Table 6: Employability Skills of Nurses Along Resource Management

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Transmuted Equivalent
1. I demonstrate time management when organizing and planning project activities with a team.	4.50	HS
2. I demonstrate time management when organizing and managing individual class assignments and homework.	4.44	S
3. I manage money in group projects requiring the allocation of limited finances and resources.	4.14	S
4. I manage resources in projects requiring the allocation of limited finances, resources (e.g., materials), and personnel.	4.30	S
5. I gain experience managing personnel (i.e., each other) in group projects requiring allocation of limited finances, resources (e.g., materials), and role assignments.	4.00	S
Average Weighted Mean	4.28	S

Legend:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

Table 7 demonstrates participants' employability skills and information use. The highest mean (WM=4.42) is shown in the indicator, "I use any graphic organizer (e.g., outline, concept map, organization chart, or tables) to sort information or data," which has a "skilled" transmuted equivalent. This implies that the participants of this study were creative and inventive and could make plans or illustrations based on their own for a better understanding of data. This finding is supported by the study of Mahrous Abdelhameed Mohammed et al. (2022) which emphasized that an educational method, mind maps, breaks down enormous amounts of material into manageable bits. The trainer connects these little sub-concepts until the knowledge is fully understood. The study found a considerable improvement in nurses' knowledge and practice between the pretest and post-test. A statistically significant difference exists between nurses' understanding of mind mapping and their performance. Meanwhile, the indicator, "I use classification and analytic skills to determine the necessary information to complete the task," has the lowest mean (WM=3.80) with a "skilled" transmuted equivalent.

An overall weighted mean of 4.15 also has a transmuted equivalent of "skilled" which denotes integrating relevant information in finishing the task. Information use is a skill that enables employees to successfully accomplish tasks by understanding, evaluating, and using a variety of information based on the written framework developed in the year 2012.

Table 7: Employability Skills of Nurses along Information Use

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Transmuted Equivalent
1. I use analytical strategies to determine the best medium for finding necessary information.	4.28	S
2. I use any graphic organizer (e.g., outline, concept map, organization chart, or tables) to sort information or data.	4.42	S
3. I use classification and analytic skills to determine the necessary information to complete tasks.	3.80	S
4. I assess information to determine which is relevant.	4.24	S
5. I summarize information to compose written or oral presentations, posters, reports, or slides.	4.00	S
Average Weighted Mean	4.15	S

Legend:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

Based on the gathered data, the statement, "I rely on writing skills to organize lab reports, posters, and presentation materials and to take notes and reply to essay questions," has the highest score (WM=4.26), which has a transmuted equivalent of "skilled". This means that the group could communicate their point effectively in a way the others could also understand. In the healthcare industry, efficient and effective communication is vital. The predominant mode of communication between primary and specialized care continues to be written (Vermeir et al., 2015). The statement, "I interpret verbal and nonverbal communication efforts of others and follow and take directions from teachers or peers," has the lowest mean which is 3.66 and has a transmuted equivalent of "skilled".

This data also revealed an average weighted mean of 3.96, which shows "skilled" as its transmuted equivalent. This means that the participant has communication ability, an essential factor for their employability. This is supported by the study conducted by Ting et al. (2015) wherein findings indicate that language proficiency and communication skills are perceived as distinct attributes by employers in the private sector of Malaysia. In most cases, there are employers who will consider those with average English proficiency who possess strong communication skills, except for customer service and marketing positions requiring extensive English communication. Additionally, the results demonstrated that practical communication skills can increase employability and career advancement opportunities. Universities must prioritize communication skills to equip their

graduates to perform well in job interviews and in the workplace.

Table 8: Employability Skills of Nurses Along Communication

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Transmuted Equivalent
1. I provide excellent oral responses.	3.98	S
2. I am noticeably engaged through note-taking, questioning, and responding.	3.94	S
3. I demonstrate reading skills by following written instructions or project directions, reviewing print and digital resources, completing worksheets, and asking questions about what I have read.	3.94	S
4. I rely on writing skills to organize lab reports, posters, and presentation materials, take notes, and reply to essay questions.	4.26	S
5. I interpret verbal and nonverbal communication efforts of others and follow and take directions from teachers or peers.	3.66	S
Average Weighted Mean	3.96	S

Legend:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

The data in table 9 shows that the statement, “I often rely on various digital technologies for calculating, collecting and displaying data, conducting research, creating presentations, and writing reports,” has the highest mean (WM=4.26) with a transmuted equivalent of “skilled”. This implies that respondents are skilled in using technologies nowadays. According to Arntz et al. (2019), the expansion of computing power is ongoing at an exponential pace. Simultaneously, there has been a notable advancement in machine learning techniques in recent years and a proliferation of higher-quality data. All of this further expands the limits of what machines are capable of doing. A few years ago, it appeared unattainable that duties consisting of increasing complexity could be automated with such precision. However, the statement, “I contribute to the organizational structure and function of the team,” has the lowest mean which is 3.66 and a transmuted equivalent of “skilled”.

Furthermore, the overall mean is 3.96 which has a transmuted equivalent of “skilled”. This implies that the graduates are skilled in using the technologies and the system. In nursing, the existence, usage, and benefits of digital technologies in care are relevant topics considering the current discussion on technologies as possible solutions to problems such as the shortage of skilled workers and the increasing demand for long-term care (Krick et al., 2019).

Table 9: Employability Skills of Nurses Along with Systems Thinking and Technology

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Transmuted Equivalent
1. I understand my roles and assignments when collaborating as a team.	3.98	S
2. I devise methods to assess team progress.	3.94	S
3. I negotiate mid-course corrections and adaptations to team tasks if necessary.	3.94	S
4. I often rely on various digital technologies for calculating, collecting, and displaying data, conducting research, creating presentations, and writing reports.	4.26	S
5. I contribute to the organizational structure and function of the team.	3.66	S
Average Weighted Mean	3.96	S

Legend:

Statistical Range	Descriptive Equivalent	Transmuted Equivalent
4.50 - 5.00	Always	Highly Skilled (HS)
3.50 - 4.49	Often	Skilled (S)
2.50 - 3.49	Sometimes	Moderately Skilled (MS)
1.50 - 2.49	Rarely	Slightly Skilled (SS)
1.00 - 1.49	Never	Not Skilled (NS)

Table 10 indicates the relationship between employability variables and the profile of the respondents using the 0.05 alpha significance level. For civil status, the p-value is less than the critical value of interpersonal, resource management, system thinking, and technology. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that civil status is significantly related to the variable interpersonal, resource management, system thinking and technology employability skills. In line with this study, Adeoye and Fields (2014), emphasized that human resources are the most valuable asset an organization can possess despite their status and the fulcrum of organizational effectiveness. Maintaining a proficient and adequately equipped labor force within an establishment is critical for its development and effectiveness.

Meanwhile, the overall data shows that sex has a computed value of p=0.006 at 0.05 level, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between sex and resource management. In addition, the overall data on sex has a weak positive significance relationship with employability skills among the respondents. According to Cifre et al. (2018), in nations with an exceptionally high unemployment rate such as Spain, it is challenging for young people to enter the workforce. Additionally, the gender-biased nature of this labor market is a concern. This has been repeatedly demonstrated in the literature; women are generally disadvantaged in this regard.

Table 10: Correlation Between the Employability Skills of Nurses across their Profile Variables

Variable		Age	Sex	Civil Status
Applied Academic Skills	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.115 .428	.116 .421	.124 .392
Critical Thinking Skills	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.142 .324	.178 .216	.131 .365
Interpersonal Skills	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.246 .085	.041 .775	-.286* .044
Personal Qualities	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.092 .527	.231 .107	.194 .176
Resource Management	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.088 .542	.383* .006	-.363* .010
Information Use	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.012 .932	.069 .636	-.031 .831
Communication Skills	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.018 .901	-.013 .930	.214 .136
Systems Thinking and Technology Use	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.108 .457	-.042 .772	.290* .041
Overall	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.224 .119	.286* .044	.263 .065

*. Correlation at 0.05 (2-tailed)

Table 11 shows the results obtained from 50 respondents' employability skills. In using the t-test, the findings show that resource management has the highest value (F=4.864); the test statistic is t=0.615 at 48 degrees freedom, p-value=0.032, which is p<0.05. When using the significant alpha levels, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant difference between age and resource management.

Table 11: Significant Difference in the Employability Skills of Nurses Across Age

Profile Variables		F	t	df	Sig
Applied Academic Skills	Equal variances assumed	1.882	.799	48	.176
	Equal variances are not assumed.		1.617	3.578	
Critical Thinking Skills	Equal variances assumed	1.294	.997	48	.261
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.653	2.100	
Interpersonal Skills	Equal variances assumed	1.201	1.758	48	.279
	Equal variances are not assumed.		2.836	2.834	
Personal Qualities	Equal variances assumed	.507	.638	48	.480
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.419	2.101	
Resource Management	Equal variances assumed	4.864	.615	48	.032*
	Equal variances are not assumed.		1.034	2.931	
Information Use	Equal variances assumed	0.13	.085	48	.909
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.086	2.267	
Communication Skills	Equal variances assumed	.864	.125	48	.357
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.082	2.101	
Systems Thinking and Technology Use	Equal variances assumed	.560	.749	48	.457
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.817	2.321	.489
Overall	Equal variances assumed	1.457	1.589	48	.233
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.978	2.087	

*Significant at 0.05 level

Age is a less reliable predictor because people become more diverse as they mature. As a result, age is the most significant factor in predicting employability, and work-related learning may not be chronological age alone (Froehlich et al., 2015).

On the other hand, all other variables were also higher than the significant value of 0.05; thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference between the respondents' age and employability skills. The study of De Lange et al. (2021) identified moderately strong positive relationships between functional age and labor market-based measures. In contrast, strong negative relationships were consistently observed between calendar age and labor market-based measures.

Table 12 shows the results on the significant differences in the employability skills of nurses across sex. The findings display that the interpersonal skills have p-value=0.02, which is lesser than the alpha significance level, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is a significant difference between sex and interpersonal skills. In the study of Ariyani and Hadiani (2019), males achieved marginally higher scores than females on the interpersonal communication scale. Male and female pupils diverged in the most critical aspect of interpersonal communication. Female students predominate in the equality domain, indicating that presenting themselves as equals can establish a stronger rapport with presenters. Men are more likely to be receptive, considerate, helpful, and upbeat, qualities that enable them to inspire and think positively.

Also, resource management has a p-value of 0.01 which is less than 0.05, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is a significant difference between sex and resource management. A lower number of female graduates who identify specific abilities as management-related may hinder their career advancement compared to their male counterparts, according to data from the Office for National Statistics (O'Leary, 2021).

The overall variables shows that all p-value is greater than the critical value of 0.05 thus, accepting the null hypothesis that sex has no significant difference with

employability skills. In the study of Huang et al. (2020), they emphasized that in terms of career impact, men and women publish an equivalent number of papers annually and achieve equivalent levels of recognition for their total publication output.

Table 12: Significant Differences in the Employability Skills of Nurses Across Sex

Profile Variables		F	t	df	Sig
Applied Academic Skills	Equal variances assumed	0.15	-.812	48	.904
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-.761	14.786	
Critical Thinking Skills	Equal variances assumed	.098	-1.253	48	.756
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-1.107	13.862	
Interpersonal Skills	Equal variances assumed	5.892	-.287	48	.019*
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-.395	30.806	
Personal Qualities	Equal variances assumed	2.893	-1.643	48	.095
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-1.867	19.819	
Resource Management	Equal variances assumed	6.959	-2.874	48	.011*
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-3.206	19.148	
Information Use	Equal variances assumed	.392	-.476	48	.534
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-.482	16.397	
Communication Skills	Equal variances assumed	3.595	.088	48	.064
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.109	23.713	
Systems Thinking and Technology Use	Equal variances assumed	.128	.291	48	.722
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.304	17.180	
Overall	Equal variances assumed	1.1730	-2.072	48	.195
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-2.364	19.976	

*Significant at 0.05 level

In using the t-test, the data in table 13 show that interpersonal skills, resource management, and communication skills have a p-value less than the critical value of 0.05; thus, the null hypothesis is **rejected**. Therefore, these variables have significant differences across civil status. This finding can be aligned with the study of Alcorano (2023), wherein civil status has a significant difference especially in being single as they have more time to devote to their hospital duties or tasks.

However, the table shows the overall p-value of some of the variables, which is greater than the critical value, thus accepting the null hypothesis. This means that civil status, in general, does not have a significant difference from the other employability skills. In the article of Rensburg et al. (2019), which indicates that the likelihood of women being

employed is minimal during their marriage, while the likelihood of males being employed is highest during their marriage. The impact of matrimony on women's labor market outcomes is inherently distinct from that of men.

Table 13: Significant Differences in the Employability Skills of Nurses across Civil Status

Profile Variables		F	t	df	Sig
Applied Academic Skills	Equal variances assumed	.312	-.863	48	.579
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-.975	5.279	
Critical Thinking Skills	Equal variances assumed	.503	-.915	48	.481
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-.818	4.702	
Interpersonal Skills	Equal variances assumed	4.094	2.067	48	.049*
	Equal variances are not assumed.		4.989	23.276	
Personal Qualities	Equal variances assumed	1.238	-1.374	48	.271
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-1.086	4.512	
Resource Management	Equal variances assumed	8.841	-2.699	48	.005*
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-4.938	9.457	
Information Use	Equal variances assumed	.419	.215	48	.521
	Equal variances are not assumed.		.163	20.935	
Communication Skills	Equal variances assumed	5.505	-1.515	48	.023*
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-3.573	5.359	
Systems Thinking and Technology Use	Equal variances assumed	.368	-2.098	48	.547
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-2.426	5.359	
Overall	Equal variances assumed	1.888	-1.891	48	.176
	Equal variances are not assumed.		-2.916	7.072	

*Significant at 0.05 level

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions:

The study concludes that majority of the nurses who graduated during the pandemic are female, single and in the age of 18-25 years old. In this regard, though mostly are female it is important to provide an equal opportunity both for male and female in terms of their employability. It was also concluded that newly graduates and Registered Nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic still do not have a family raised and can be seen that they can spend most of their time working as nurses. Having a focus working attitude can enhance their employability skills since the time for families if one is married can affect the said skills. For the employability skills of Nurses along its variables, it concludes that the majority of the Nurses graduated during COVID-19 are moderately skilled. Relating to variables like applied skills, it indicates that most of the Nurses demonstrated a high

percentage of reading skills. They can assess problems with the use of available resources in terms of their critical thinking skills, keep the team members on track, suggest alternatives, and discuss possible options even though they are nurses who graduated during a pandemic. This is very important in achieving the goals of the healthcare institution they are in. Regarding personal qualities variable, most of them are cooperative and know how to be engaging. For the resource management variable, most nurses can manage money in group projects requiring the allocation of limited finances and resources. Also, in relation to information use, they are mostly capable of using any graphic organizer, such as a concept map, organizational chart, or tables, to sort information or data. The communication variable states that most nurses can rely on skills about writing to organize lab reports, posters, and presentation materials, take notes, and reply to essay questions. In terms of systems thinking and technology use, most nurses often rely on various digital technologies for calculating, collecting data, research presentations, or writing reports. This could mean that, though they are in a remote setup, the alternative learning still boosts or meets at least the minimum required skills. It is important that Nurses continue to enhance their knowledge and skills with the help of webinars or seminars, more training and hospital related learning experiences especially those lacking in cases.

Relating the respondent's profile to employability skills, it was observed that there is a significant relationship between the respondents' profiles on civil status and the employability skills of nurses in terms of the following variables: interpersonal, resource management system thinking, and technology employability skills. Also, there is a significant relationship between sex and the employability skills variable, resource management. In addition, the overall data on sex has a weak positive significance relationship with employability skills among the respondents.

There is no significant difference between the respondents' age profiles and employability skills. In terms of sex, there is a significant difference between the variables of interpersonal skills and resource management. Sex has no significant difference with

employability skills. Moreover, interpersonal skills, resource management, and communication skills have significant differences across civil status.

Recommendations:

The researcher recommends that nursing schools offer programs that would help nurses affiliate at healthcare institutions at no cost or at a lesser cost to gain necessary entry-level skills or experiences to improve their employability.

Also, a webinar with topics that enhance the least variables among the employability skills can be organized so that Nurses can acquire more practical tips that they can apply to real-time settings in partnership with a nursing organization like the Philippine Nurses Association (PNA) or school-led activities in the department of Nursing would also allow these Nurses to join and enhance more skills. Examples are face-to-face basic life support training, enhancing therapeutic communication, other communication-driven activities - coordinating with IELTS programs to be globally prepared and competent, expert talks seminars on nursing management, and reviewing case presentations to possible issues on malpractices.

The healthcare institution that hires nurses may also provide team-building activities related to resource management skills. This would allow them to enhance their skills as they play a good role in a team (for example, simulation activities during coding or in managing allocated finances or resources), giving ample time to consider their civil status.

Lastly, this study can also be a guide for future researchers to acquire relevant ideas and further research related to nursing graduates during a pandemic to nurses' employability skills, especially extending the research to other provinces or areas.

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