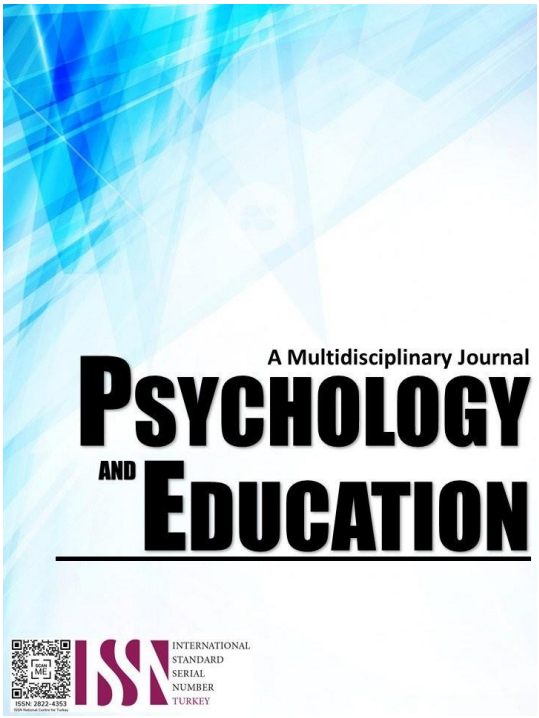
BRIDGING PERCEPTIONS: A TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS OF NURSING FACULTY COMPETENCIES AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES



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Research Article

Bridging Perceptions: A Training Needs Analysis of Nursing Faculty Competencies and Its Impact on Student Learning Outcomes

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Abstract

This study examines nursing faculty or clinical instructor competencies, focusing on how perceptions from both faculty and students influence teaching efficacy and student outcomes. Recognizing the critical role of faculty competencies in shaping student learning, this research investigates eight core areas: nursing knowledge, teaching pedagogy, preparation of learning activities, professional values, learning environment management, educator ethics, assessment of learning outcomes, and instructional planning. Grounded in theories of educational competency and teaching effectiveness, a descriptive quantitative design was utilized, collecting data from 11 nursing faculty members and 102 students via a cross-sectional survey. Analysis revealed that students rated faculty competencies higher than the self-assessments provided by faculty members, particularly in nursing knowledge and ethics, indicating perceptual gaps. Fisher's Exact Test results showed no statistically significant differences between faculty and student perceptions across competencies, with p-values ranging from 0.09 to 0.94. These findings suggest general alignment in views on faculty competencies, emphasizing the importance of targeted faculty development programs to address minor perception gaps, thereby enhancing teaching efficacy and student outcomes.

Keywords: *faculty competencies, nursing education, student outcomes, competency assessment, teaching pedagogy, professional development*

Introduction

Nursing education in the Philippines is critical in preparing healthcare professionals (Adamson et al., 2011; Badil, 2024; Parial & Locsin, 2024) to meet the demands of an evolving healthcare landscape (T. Adamson et al., 2011; Riffat, 2023). The quality of nursing education depends mainly on the competency of faculty members (Altmiller & Armstrong, 2017; Appiah, 2020; Dhandapani & L., 2020; McNamara et al., 2012; Quintana Alonso et al., 2023a; Shimony Kant & Woloski Wruble, 2022), as their skills and expertise directly impact the effectiveness of teaching and student learning outcomes (Ali et al., 2021; Eason, 2010; Hunter et al., 2023; Talsma, 2023). As the healthcare industry continues to grow and evolve, nursing education must remain aligned with current standards through continuous professional development (CPD) of educators (Palma et al., 2020; Parial & Locsin, 2024) to ensure they provide students with the knowledge and skills required for professional success (Appiah, 2020; Cabangal et al., 2023).

To achieve high-quality education, nursing faculty must demonstrate competence in critical areas, including nursing knowledge (Franco-Tantuico, 2022; McMillian-Bohler & Tornwall, 2023; Wanchai et al., 2022), teaching pedagogy (Henderson et al., 2018; McMillian-Bohler & Tornwall, 2023; Quintana Alonso et al., 2023b), preparation of learning activities (Kim-Godwin et al., 2022; Letcher et al., 2020; Love, 2014), professional values (Letcher et al., 2020), learning environment management (Pivač et al., 2021; Turner & Harder, 2018), educator ethics (Hallas et al., 2021), assessment of learning outcomes (Ivicek et al., 2011; Xia et al., 2016), and instructional planning (Ghezzi et al., 2021). Nursing knowledge ensures the delivery of accurate (Bordbar et al., 2022; Ricks & Ten Ham, 2015) and up-to-date clinical information (Farokhzadian et al., 2024; Park et al., 2022). Teaching pedagogy provides strategies for effective instruction (Gupta, 2019; Wahyujati, 2006) and student engagement (Van De Kamp et al., 2016), while the preparation of learning activities bridges theoretical concepts with practical applications (Ibrahim & Johnson, 2021; Sonia Gouri, 2020), equipping students to handle real-world challenges (Hill et al., 2023).

Professional values guide faculty (Zic, 2024) in modeling ethical (Eby et al., 2017) and compassionate behavior (E. Adamson, 2018; Bradley et al., 2019), which is critical for the development of future nurses (Bradley et al., 2019; Zic, 2024). Managing the learning environment helps create supportive spaces (Mukurunge et al., 2020) that foster student participation (McGough & Heslop, 2021), motivation (Noone, 2022), and engagement (Noone, 2022). Educator ethics ensure faculty demonstrate integrity in their teaching (DeSimone, 2016; Wilk & Bowllan, 2011) and student interactions (Shirin Caldwell et al., 2010). Accurate assessment of learning outcomes allows faculty to track student progress and tailor their instruction to meet learning objectives, while instructional planning ensures that courses align with institutional goals and industry standards.

Institutions can design effective faculty development programs by understanding these competencies (Carrington et al., 2024) from the perspectives of both the faculty (Sparacino, 2015) and students (Orta et al., 2016). The alignment of faculty development efforts with student learning needs (Conner et al., 2023; Hardin et al., 2022) ensures that educators and students benefit from continuous improvement in teaching practices (Makowski et al., 2022; McClenny, 2018; Mloka et al., 2024).

A dual-assessment approach (Wilsom Mukan et al., 2021) is essential because faculty and students may have different perceptions of teaching effectiveness (Price et al., 2016) and faculty competencies (Hababeh & Lalithabai, 2020) due to their distinct roles and experiences (ElIdrissi et al., 2022) within the educational process. Faculty members may prioritize certain areas, such as pedagogy or

professional values (Giddens & Mansfield, 2023), while students may value competencies more closely linked to their learning experiences (Aase et al., 2022), such as the relevance of instructional activities (Whittaker et al., 2023) or the learning environment (Dickison et al., 2019). Identifying these perceptual gaps provides insight into misalignments that could hinder educational progress.

By comparing these perspectives (Acosta & Ackerman-Barger, 2017), this study aims to identify areas where faculty training programs may not meet the expectations of students. Addressing these misalignments (McPherson & Candela, 2019) is crucial for enhancing professional development efforts (Poncelet et al., 2014) and ensuring that they respond to the needs of both faculty and students (Gonzalo et al., 2019). Understanding these perceptual gaps also contributes to creating a feedback loop where faculty can refine their teaching practices based on student input, ultimately leading to better student learning outcomes and professional readiness.

This study examines the competencies of nursing faculty, focusing on perceptions from faculty members and students in critical areas: nursing knowledge (Franco-Tantuico, 2022; McMillian-Bohler & Tornwall, 2023; Wanchai et al., 2022), teaching pedagogy (Henderson et al., 2018; McMillian-Bohler & Tornwall, 2023; Quintana Alonso et al., 2023b), preparation of learning activities (Kim-Godwin et al., 2022; Letcher et al., 2020; Love, 2014), professional values (Letcher et al., 2020), learning environment management (Pivač et al., 2021; Turner & Harder, 2018), educator ethics (Hallas et al., 2021), assessment of learning outcomes (Ivicek et al., 2011; Xia et al., 2016), and instructional planning (Ghezzi et al., 2021). Understanding these competencies and their influence on student learning outcomes is essential for identifying gaps and strengths, which can guide the development of targeted faculty training programs. Optimizing these programs ensures that nursing education aligns with the healthcare industry's student needs and professional standards.

However, the challenge of aligning faculty development with both faculty needs and student expectations persists. While faculty competence significantly impacts student learning outcomes, limited research has explored the alignment between faculty and student perceptions of these competencies. Without this alignment, development programs may overlook critical areas, reducing their effectiveness in improving teaching practices and learning outcomes.

Research Questions

Specifically, this study sought to answer:

1. What are the perceived competency levels of nursing faculty based on faculty and student perspectives?
2. What are the priority training needs of nursing faculty as identified by faculty and students?

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative descriptive research design to assess nursing faculty's competencies as perceived by faculty members and students. The descriptive approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive overview of faculty competencies, including nursing knowledge, teaching pedagogy, preparation of learning activities, professional values, learning environment management, educator ethics, assessment of learning outcomes, and instructional planning. The study focuses on capturing and describing participants' perceptions at a single time, utilizing a cross-sectional survey to collect data efficiently. This approach enables the identification of areas of strength and development needs, informing future faculty development programs.

Data were collected from 11 nursing faculty members and 102 nursing students at Dr. Carlos S. Lanting College using purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of participants directly involved in the teaching and learning processes. Although the sample size limited the use of parametric analysis, the data gathered provided meaningful insights into the competencies of faculty members from both perspectives, offering a foundation for targeted faculty development.

The primary instrument was a structured questionnaire designed in parallel so faculty members and students could compare perceptions directly. The questionnaire assessed the eight core domains of faculty competence, with five items representing each domain, totaling 40 items. Responses were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), to measure the extent of agreement with statements related to faculty competencies. Moreover, to interpret the level of competencies, the mean scores range from very low to very high.

The questionnaire underwent content validation by subject matter experts to ensure clarity and relevance to the study context. A pilot test was conducted to assess the instrument's reliability, and necessary adjustments were made based on the feedback to ensure accurate and reliable data collection. This structured approach allows for meaningful comparisons between faculty and student responses, contributing valuable insights for enhancing faculty development programs and improving teaching effectiveness.

The survey data were analyzed using IBM SPSS to ensure accurate and systematic processing. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize faculty and student perceptions of competencies, including means, frequencies, and percentages. Fisher's Exact Test was employed to examine associations between faculty competencies and respondent categories (faculty vs. students) to identify significant differences in perception. This analysis provided insights into areas of alignment and potential divergence between faculty and student views, offering valuable guidance for future faculty development programs.

Given the involvement of human participants, the study adhered to strict ethical standards. Participation was voluntary, and informed

consent was obtained before data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by excluding identifying information, and all data were securely stored for research purposes only. The study underwent review and approval by the institution's ethics review board to ensure compliance with ethical principles. The principles of non-maleficence and respect for autonomy guided the process, ensuring participants' well-being and freedom from harm or coercion.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. *Clinical Instructor Demographic Profile*

Indicators		*Frequency*	*Percentage*
C.I.s Age	(25-54 y.o.) those in their prime working lives	8	72.7%
	(55-64 y.o.) those passing the peak of their career and approaching retirement	3	27.3%
	Total	11	100.0%
C.I.s Gender	Male	2	18.2%
	Female	9	81.8%
	Total	11	100.0%
Cis Years in Service (as licensed nurse)	0-5 years	3	27.3%
	6-10 years	1	9.1%
	more than 10 years	7	63.6%
	Total	11	100.0%
C.I.s Years in Service (as an educator/ faculty member)	0-5 years	4	36.4%
	6-10 years	0	0.0%
	more than 10 years	7	63.6%
	Total	11	100.0%
C.I.s educational attainment	College Graduate	1	9.1%
	Masters Degree (ongoing)	2	18.2%
	Masters Degree Holder	5	45.5%
	Doctorate Degree (ongoing)	2	18.2%
	Doctorate Degree	1	9.1%
	Total	11	100.0%

**Mean (S.D.); Age=46.5 (12.3), Years in Service (as licensed nurse)=15.4 (11.01), Years in Service (as an educator/faculty member)=12.41 (9.04)*

Table 1 presents the study's demographic profile of the clinical instructors (CIs). Most C.I.s (72.7%) fall within the 25-54 age range, aligning with the prime working age, while 27.3% are aged 55-64, indicating some nearing retirement age. Regarding gender, 81.8% of C.I.s are female, and 18.2% are male, reflecting a female-dominant profession in this sample. Regarding years in service as licensed nurses, 63.6% have over 10 years of experience, 27.3% have 0-5 years, and 9.1% have 6-10 years. Similarly, when examining years of service as educators, a majority (63.6%) have more than 10 years of teaching experience, whereas 36.4% have 0-5 years, and none fall within the 6-10 year category.

In terms of educational attainment, 45.5% hold a master's degree, while 18.2% are pursuing master's studies. Additionally, 9.1% are doctorate holders, and 18.2% are working toward a doctorate. A minority (9.1%) have only a college degree. The average age of C.I.s is 46.5 years (SD = 12.3), with a mean of 15.4 years (SD = 11.01) in service as licensed nurses and an average of 12.41 years (SD = 9.04) as educators. This demographic profile underscores an experienced faculty with extensive professional practice and a strong commitment to ongoing academic advancement, which may contribute positively to their instructional and clinical teaching roles.

Table 2. *Student Demographic Profile*

Indicators		*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Students Age	17 y.o & below	8	7.8%
	18 y.o.	55	53.9%
	19 y.o.	24	23.5%
	20 y.o. & above	15	14.7%
	Total	102	100.0%
Students gender	Male	21	20.6%
	Female	81	79.4%
	Total	102	100.0%
Students year level	1st year	102	100.0%
	Total	102	100.0%

Table 2 provides an overview of the demographic profile of the students participating in the study. The majority of students (53.9%) are 18 years old, followed by 23.5% who are 19 years old, 14.7% who are 20 years or older, and 7.8% who are 17 years or younger. This age distribution aligns with the typical age range for first-year college students. The sample is predominantly female, with 79.4% of participants identifying as female and 20.6% as male. Notably, all students (100%) are in their first year of study, providing a uniform

perspective from those at the entry-level stage of their academic and clinical training.

This demographic profile illustrates a youthful, female-majority cohort, primarily comprised of first-year students, which may influence their perspectives and experiences within the nursing education program (Jenkins et al., 2021; Pardue & Morgan, 2008; D. Porteous, 2015; D. J. Porteous & Machin, 2018).

Table 3. *Competency Assessment of Nursing Faculty by Students and Faculty Perspectives*

	Clinical Instructors				*Student*			
	M	*SD*	*Rank*	*Interpretation*	*M*	*SD*	*Rank*	*Interpretation*
Nursing Knowledge	3.86	.53	8	High Competency	4.35	0.65	1	Very High Competency
Teaching Pedagogy	4.05	.61	7	High Competency	4.22	0.71	5	Very High Competency
Preparation of Learning Activities	4.06	.62	6	High Competency	4.19	0.73	7	High Competency
Professional Values	4.18	.49	2	High Competency	4.28	0.71	3	Very High Competency
Building a Learning Atmosphere	4.23	.59	1	Very High Competency	4.34	0.78	2	Very High Competency
Educator Professional Ethics	4.06	.58	6	High Competency	4.22	0.76	4	Very High Competency
Measurement of Learning Outcomes	4.08	.63	4	High Competency	4.19	0.74	8	High Competency
Learning Plan Development	4.08	.61	4	High Competency	4.21	0.76	6	Very High Competency

Legend: 1.00-1.50=low competency, 1.51-2.50=low competency, 2.51-3.50=moderate competency, 3.51-4.50=high competency, 4.51-5.00=very high competency

Table 3 presents the competency assessment of nursing faculty from student and faculty perspectives across various competency areas. The results indicate that students generally rated faculty competencies higher than the clinical instructors rated themselves. For example, students perceived the highest competency in "Nursing Knowledge" (M = 4.35, SD = 0.65, Rank = 1), classifying it as "Very High Competency," while clinical instructors rated this area lower, with a mean of 3.86 (SD = 0.53, Rank = 8), indicating "High Competency."

The area of "Building a Learning Atmosphere" was rated as the highest competency by clinical instructors (M = 4.23, SD = 0.59, Rank = 1) and also received high ratings from students (M = 4.34, SD = 0.78, Rank = 2), with both groups considering it a "Very High Competency." Other competencies, such as "Teaching Pedagogy" and "Professional Values," were consistently rated as high by both groups, with students again rating these competencies slightly higher.

Areas such as "Preparation of Learning Activities" and "Measurement of Learning Outcomes" were assessed similarly by both students and faculty, with both groups interpreting these as "High Competency" (e.g., students: M = 4.19, SD = 0.73; clinical instructors: M = 4.06, SD = 0.62). Overall, the results suggest that students have a slightly more favorable perception of faculty competencies across all areas. These findings highlight potential areas for faculty development, particularly aligning self-assessment with student perceptions to ensure effective teaching practices are recognized and enhanced within the nursing program.

Table 4. *Fisher's Exact Test Results for the Association Between Faculty Competencies and Respondent Category (Faculty vs. Students)*

	Fisher's Exact Test	*df*
Nursing Knowledge	18.18	.09
Teaching Pedagogy	14.12	.44
Preparation of Learning Activities	12.97	.69
Professional Values	25.00	.23
Building a Learning Atmosphere	14.59	.47
Educator Professional Ethics	14.66	.39
Measurement of Learning Outcomes	9.55	.94
Learning Plan Development	14.89	.30

**significant at .05 level of alpha*

Table 4 presents the results of the Fisher's Exact Test assessing the association between faculty competencies and the respondent category (faculty versus students). The findings indicate no statistically significant associations between the assessed competencies and the respondent category, as all p-values exceed the .05 significance threshold. Specifically, the association for "Nursing Knowledge" yielded a Fisher's Exact Test value of 18.18 with p=.09p=.09, while "Teaching Pedagogy" resulted in a value of 14.12 with p=.44p=.44. Similarly, "Preparation of Learning Activities" (Fisher's Exact = 12.97, p=.69p=.69) and "Professional Values" (Fisher's Exact = 25.00, p=.23p=.23) also showed non-significant associations, as did "Building a Learning Atmosphere," "Educator Professional Ethics," "Measurement of Learning Outcomes," and "Learning Plan Development" with p-values ranging from .30 to .94.

These results suggest that differences in competency ratings between faculty and students are not statistically significant across any of the competency areas assessed. This lack of significant association may imply a shared general perception of competencies between faculty and students, with no substantial discrepancies in views (Malechwanzi et al., 2016; Ramesh et al., 2019). Consequently, faculty development initiatives can focus on enhancing competencies without necessarily needing to address significant perceptual differences between these two respondent categories.

Conclusions

The study shows that nursing faculty are perceived by both faculty and students as highly competent, particularly in areas such as building a supportive learning atmosphere and upholding professional values. These competencies are critical to creating an environment conducive to effective nursing education and promoting student engagement and ethical awareness. Slight differences in self-assessments, particularly regarding nursing knowledge and lesson planning, suggest areas where teachers could benefit from further professional development. Faculty members' recognition of these areas for improvement underscores the importance of ongoing training to maintain alignment with evolving healthcare standards. The consensus between faculty and student perceptions highlights the need for development programs that meet the expectations of both groups and promote a balanced approach to faculty growth. Investing in targeted training programs strengthens current skills while addressing specific areas for improvement. This ensures that nursing education meets industry needs and effectively prepares students for the healthcare field.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Prioritize training in lesson planning and the preparation of learning activities: Given the somewhat lower ratings in these areas, teacher development programs should emphasize lesson planning skills and the creation of effective learning activities to ensure that teaching methods are well suited to the needs of students and the Industry expectations are aligned.

Improve knowledge-based workshops: Although students highly rated nursing knowledge, faculty self-evaluations indicate a need for ongoing knowledge-building sessions. This could include workshops on new healthcare trends, evidence-based practices, and advanced nursing techniques to strengthen this core competency further.

Support ethical and professional development: While both groups value professional ethics and professional values, ongoing professional development related to ethical practices should continue to be strengthened. Programs that focus on educator ethics and fostering a supportive learning environment are critical to maintaining and enhancing these competencies as crucial strengths in nursing education.

Conduct Regular Competency Assessments: It is advised that faculty competency be periodically evaluated from the viewpoints of both faculty and students to stay up to date with changing nursing education standards. This continuous feedback loop would allow for timely adjustment of training emphases and ensure that nursing faculty competencies meet academic and professional standards.

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