

Employability of College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences Graduates from 2020-2022 of NONESCOST

Roselo A. Ocampo Jr.¹, Dane Emmanuel D. Rosel², Ailene A. Dequilato³, Janique Joy G. Vasquez⁴,
Mary Jane C. Quilla⁵, Kent Brian P. Continedo⁶

¹State University of Northern Negros, Philippines

Corresponding email: roselojr@sunn.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the employability and educational outcomes of graduates from the Northern Negros State College of Science and Technology – College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (NONESCOST–CONAHS), specifically Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Diploma in Midwifery (DM) graduates from batches 2020 and 2022. Using a quantitative descriptive design, total sampling was applied to 214 graduates, with 97 respondents participating through a Commission on Higher Education (CHED)-based online survey. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions. Findings revealed that most graduates were female and single, reflecting global nursing demographics. BSN graduates were primarily motivated by economic opportunities, while DM graduates cited program availability and affordability. High licensure examination passing rates indicated strong academic preparation. Most graduates completed relevant professional training and secured employment within nine months, demonstrating high employability despite pandemic-related disruptions. Employment was largely aligned with their field, with many holding regular positions in the health sector. However, initial salaries were generally below standard government rates. While most graduates were employed locally, some pursued international opportunities, indicating global competitiveness. The study concludes that NONESCOST–CONAHS effectively prepares graduates for the workforce but highlights the need to enhance career support, industry linkages, and professional development opportunities. Continuous curriculum improvement and tracer studies are recommended to sustain and further improve graduate outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

Graduate tracers are a means to monitor graduates and measure the success of tertiary educational institutions in producing high quality, globally competitive graduates. Graduates from educational institutions need to be ready to participate in a globalized workforce that may present a variety of opportunities and challenges. More than just academic brilliance is needed to produce graduates who are globally competitive; cross-cultural communication, flexibility, cultural competency, and critical thinking are also essential, especially in the Nursing Field.

The university introduced the students to their vision, mission, core values, and program, through the nursing faculty and dean of College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (CONAHS) that prepared them to become internationally competitive nurses and to adapt to the changing requirements and advancements in the nursing sector. It is one of the responsibilities of a university and one of the requirements in getting accreditations. This assessment is carried out by the State University as part of its duties, accountability to stakeholders, and priorities that may aid in developing their programs. This study aims to find whether the curricula are successfully applied in the classroom and whether they have a good impact on students' academic performance and employability is the goal. It is important for educational establishments to offer workforce- oriented training that corresponds with the demands made by companies. Industries may have different requirements, but they all look for candidates who have a set of qualities that support company goals (Hipona et al., 2021).

Accreditation serves as a crucial benchmark for nursing and midwifery programs, ensuring that they meet rigorous educational standards and provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in their professional careers (Appiah, 2019). Accredited programs not only attract high-quality students but also enhance the reputation and credibility of the nursing department and the institution as a whole (Malolos & Tullao, 2018). Consequently, it is imperative for the CONAHS to identify areas of improvement and implement strategies to meet accreditation requirements effectively. The need for this study arises from the recognition that graduate studies in nursing have the potential to address the specific requirements of Area III and IV within the nursing department, ultimately leading to improved accreditation outcomes. Through this study, a survey of the graduates will let the researchers' data to be given to the dean of CONAHS to improve the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Diploma in Midwifery (DM) curriculum. This also aimed to assess the educational experiences, employment, and achievement of CONAHS graduates.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Generally, the study determined the employability of the Northern Negros State College of Science and Technology – College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (NONESTCOST – CONAHS) Graduates of Batch 2020 and 2022.

Specifically, this aimed to find the following:

1. What is the demographic profile of the graduates in terms of
 - 1.1. sex,
 - 1.2. civil status,
 - 1.3. year of graduation, and reason for taking up the course;
 - 1.4. educational attainment of the respondents in terms of
 - 1.4.1. last school attended,
 - 1.4.2. last post graduate degree held,
 - 1.4.3. reason for pursuing advanced studies,
 - 1.4.4. Licensure examination outcomes of NONESCOST BSN and DM graduates, specifically the Nursing Licensure Examination and the Midwifery Licensure Examination.
2. What is the employment profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 2.1 waiting time to get a job after graduation,
 - 2.2 present employment status, time employed,
 - 2.3 methods used to find the first job,

2.4 reasons for accepting the first job, current position, nature of industry, initial salary of the respondent?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The researchers used a quantitative descriptive design to trace all 168 BSN and 46 DM graduates of NONESCOST from 2020 to 2022. The total sampling method was utilized, and all graduates were included in the said survey.

Research Instrument

A standardized survey questionnaire provided by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to assess the employability of the graduates was used in this study. The survey questionnaire was converted into a Google forms format and was disseminated through social messaging apps and email.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers requested a list of all graduates from the BSN and DM programs from 2020 to 2022. The graduates were contacted through their cellular phone numbers and social media accounts. The researchers searched for the respondents' names on social media platforms and manually sent the informed consent form and survey questionnaire through Google Forms via Messenger and email. However, only 82 BSN graduates and 15 DM graduates responded to the survey. A 100% response rate was not achieved due to several reasons, including unsearchable social media accounts, deactivated accounts, restrictions on receiving message requests, lack of response to message requests, and refusal or non-participation in the study.

Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage distributions were used to describe the respondents' demographic profile, reasons for taking the course, educational attainment, last postgraduate degree obtained, reasons for pursuing advanced studies, professional licensure examinations passed by NONESCOST BSN and DM graduates, employment profile, present employment status, time to first employment, methods used to obtain the first job, reasons for accepting the first job, current position, nature of the industry, and initial salary.

Ethical Considerations

The consent form was attached to the letter for the respondents. The consent form stated the possible risk and benefits of the study. The respondents were also informed of their rights not to participate and withdraw anytime from the research study. To maintain the respondents' anonymity, no names were collected in the entire study. This study strictly adhered to Republic Act 10173 to protect the fundamental human right of privacy in communication of the respondents while ensuring the free flow of information to promote innovation and growth, which consisted of five stages: gathering, storing, transmission, usage, retention, and destruction of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents

	n	percentage, %
Sex		
Male	13	13.40
Female	84	86.60

Total	97	100
Civil Status		
Single	89	91.75
Married	5	5.15
Separated	2	2.06
Widower	1	1.03
Total	97	100
Course		
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	82	84.54
Diploma in Midwifery	15	15.46
Total	97	100
Year of Graduation		
2020		
BSN	8	8.25
2022		
BSN	74	83.15
DM	15	16.85
Total	97	100
<i>As a whole</i>	97	100

Table 1 shows that there were no graduates during 2021 due to COPVID-19 pandemic disruption in higher education, this result is congruent with the findings of Aristovnik, A., et al; 2023 where in there was a worldwide disruption in teaching delivery, student progression and graduation. Majority of the respondents are females and are single. Given historical and cultural standards of the profession, the result is consistent with global trends in the nursing profession (International Council of Nurses, 2024). Additionally, this aligns with the result of Teresa-Morales et al., 2023, that new nursing graduates who are usually in their early to mid-20s, frequently put their careers before their personal obligations.

Table 2. Reason for taking up the course (*multiple choice*)

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
High grades in the course/subject	12	14.63
Good grades in high school	15	18.29
Influence of Parents and Relatives	35	42.68
Peer Influence	7	8.54
Inspired by a role model	20	24.39
Strong passion for profession	40	48.78
Prospect for immediate employment	19	23.17
Status or prestige of the profession	16	19.51
Availability of the course offering in chosen institution	30	36.9
Prospect of career advancement	25	30.49
Affordable for the family	25	30.49
Prospect of attractive compensation	52	63.41
Opportunity for employment abroad	16	19.51
No particular choice or no better idea	5	6.10
DM		
High grades in the course/subject	5	33.33
Influence of parents and relatives	1	6.66
Availability of course offering in chosen institution	12	80
Affordable for the family	7	46.6

Table 2 shows that among the BSN graduates, 63.41% reported that the prospect of attractive compensation

influenced their decision to pursue the program. Additionally, 48.78% indicated that they were motivated by a strong passion for the nursing profession, while 42.68% stated that their choice was influenced by their parents and relatives.

In contrast, 80% of the DM graduates identified the availability of the program in their chosen institution as the primary reason for enrolling in the course. Meanwhile, 46.6% reported that the program was affordable for their families, and 33.33% indicated that their decision was influenced by their high grades in relevant subjects.

These findings suggest that BSN graduates were primarily motivated by economic considerations, particularly the potential for higher salaries and employment opportunities abroad, which is consistent with the findings of Bentulan et al. (2022). In addition, personal factors such as passion, attitude, and discipline have been identified as significant contributors to persistence and success in higher education (Vuong et al.). Family influence also plays a crucial role in students' choice of academic programs, reflecting the strong role of familial expectations in career decision-making (Sullera et al.). Furthermore, the institution remains the only higher education institution in Northern Negros offering the Doctor of Medicine (DM) program, which likely contributed to the high proportion of graduates citing program availability as a determining factor in their enrollment.

Table 3. Educational attainment in terms of Last School attended

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
Northern Negros State College of Science and Technology	81	98.71
MN		
Riverside	1	1.03
DM		
Northern Negros State College of Science and Technology	15	100
<i>As a whole</i>	97	100

Table 4. Educational Attainment in terms of Post-Graduate Degree Held

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
Master's in Nursing	1	1.03

The table 3 and 4 shows that while the majority of the graduates responded NONESCOST, there is one who pursue master's degree in Riverside College. Higher educational attainment in nursing is frequently sought after to improve clinical skills, leadership potential, and professional progression chances, according to Haddad et al. (2022). Furthermore, more professional recognition and improved patient outcomes are two benefits of advanced nursing degrees (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2020).

Table 5. Educational Attainment in terms of Reason for pursuing advanced study (*multiple choice*)

	n	percentage, %
Reason of Pursuance of Advanced Study		
For professional development	1	1.03
For promotion	1	1.03

The above table shows that the reason for pursuing higher education is for professional development and for a promotion. Akmadul & Agga (2023) states that higher education is essential for nurses to succeed in their careers because it equips them with the skills required for leadership and specialty clinical jobs.

Furthermore, Maier (2022) indicates that in the healthcare industry, having more qualifications is associated with more prospects for promotions and career progression.

Table 6. Educational Attainment in terms of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates professional licensure examination outcome

	n	percentage, %
BSN Graduates Professional Examination Outcome		
NLE 2021 (17/23)	8	9.76
NLE 2022 (105/126)	69	84.15
NLE 2023 (97/112)	4	4.88
NCLEX 2022	2	2.44
NCLEX 2023	1	1.22
Underboard	3	3.66
DM Graduates Professional Examination Outcome		
MLBE 2023 (24/33)	12	80
Underboard (13)	3	20

As shown on Table 6, 84.15% of the nursing graduates passed their boards in the NLE 2022, while 3.66% of them have yet to take the board exam. Moreover, 3.66% of them had taken the NCLEX. Meanwhile, 80% of DM graduates passed their MLBE in 2023. This implies that the Nursing and Midwifery education in NONESCOST delivers quality education as the passing rate of graduates licensure exceeds the national passing rate.

Table 7. Educational Attainment in terms of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates Training Received

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
BLS	82	100%
IV Training	76	92.68
OR Training	10	12.20
Disaster Management	2	2.43
Epidemiology Disease Case Surveillance	1	1.22
Renal Nurse Training	3	3.66
Endoscopic Nurse Training	1	1.22
DM		
BLS	15	100

Table 7 shows that all graduates of BSN and DM graduates underwent BLS training, as well as 92.68% of BSN graduates got into intravenous therapy training. Furthermore, few of the BSN graduates underwent disaster management, epidemiology disease case surveillance and endoscopic training. These training programs complement their official education and are crucial to the graduates' professional development. This comprehensive training approach aligns with the goal of producing highly trained and adaptive healthcare personnel who can meet the diverse demands of patients and healthcare systems (Careers, 2023).

Table 8. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of Waiting time to get the first job after Graduation

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
1 month to less than 3 months	2	2.44
6 months to less than 9 months	55	67.07
9 months to less than 2 years	16	19.51
More than 2 years	7	8.54
Not employed	2	2.44
Total	82	100

DM		
3 months to less than 6 months	5	33.33
6 months to less than 9 months	7	46.67
Not Employed	3	20
Total	15	100

Table 8 shows that majority of BSN and DM graduates were employed in less than 9 months from graduation. This implies that NONESCOST BSN and DM graduates have high employability rate. As graduation and licensure exams halted during pandemic, waiting times to be employed were prolonged as some students were delayed for more than a year (University of the Philippines, 2020).

Table 9. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of Present Employment Status

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
Regular/Permanent	59	71.95
Job Order	4	4.88
Contractual	14	17.07
Self-employed	3	3.66
Not employed	2	2.44
Total	82	100
DM		
Regular/Permanent	2	13.33
Job Order	8	53.33
Contractual	2	13.33
Not employed	3	20
Total	15	100

Table 9 shows that majority of the graduates were employed as regular or permanent employee. And some were job order and contractual status. This further support the high employability rate of the graduate of NONESCOST BSN and DM. These findings align with the study of Sanchez & Diamate, 2019 which revealed that more than 70% of nursing graduates are regular employees, and a fourth are contractual. Despite the difficult job market, the ability to gain such posts indicates the considerable demand for nurses within the Philippine healthcare system. The growing population's need for healthcare has resulted in a constant demand for nursing experts (Crispino, 2021). Contractual positions often offer less job security and fewer benefits compared to permanent roles. Short-term contracts are frequently used to address specific healthcare needs and projects, particularly in rural and underserved areas (Muduli & Trivedi, 2020).

Table 10. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of Years employed in present job

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
1 month to less than 3 months	3	3.66
3 months to less than 6 months	12	14.63
6 months to less than 9 months	47	57.32
9 months to less than 2 years	13	15.85
More than 2 years	5	6.1
Did not answer	2	2.44
DM		
1 month to less than 3 months	4	26.66

3 months to less than 6 months	4	26.66
6 months to less than 9 months	2	13.33
More than 2 years	2	13.33
Did not answer	3	20

Table 10 presents that majority of NONESCOST BSN and DM graduates are employed for more than six months. This only implies that graduates of BSN and DM of NONESCOST are able to land a job after graduation. This finding agrees with the results of the study of Alemu & Yismaw, 2022, which states that the median waiting time for the first employment of graduates was 35 weeks, showing that 50% of graduates managed to secure their first job 35 weeks after graduation.

Table 11. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of Method used to find job

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
Response to an advertisement	3	3.66
Walk in applicant	37	45.12
Recommended by someone	14	17.07
Information from friends	9	10.98
Arranged by school's job placer	6	7.32
Family Business	3	3.66
Job fair or Public employment	5	6.10
Review Center Grant	3	3.66
Did not Answer	2	2.44
DM		
Walk in applicant	10	36.26
Recommended by someone	2	27.27
Did not answer	3	22.73
<i>Total</i>	97	100

Table 11 shows that most of the graduates are walk-in applicants which is the most popular way for recent BSN and DM graduates to get work. This implies that the graduates of NONESCOST BSN and DM graduates secure their first job even without referral. Graduates approach prospective employers directly with a hands-on attitude, hoping to increase their chances of being given first dibs on open employment (Muduli & Trivedi, 2020).

Table 12. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of Reasons for accepting first job

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
Salaries and benefits	20	24.39
Career challenges	3	3.66
Related to Nursing Profession	40	48.78
Proximity to residences	17	20.73
DM		
Related to special skills	8	50
Proximity to residences	4	22.73
Not Applicable	3	13.64
<i>As a whole</i>	97	100

Table 12 shows that graduates accept their first employment because it is related to their profession. These responses implies how closely the graduates' professional roles and educational backgrounds matched, particularly for those who valued employment that made use of their unique skills. Both BSN and DM degree graduates choose careers that are closely related to their education and field of study. According to the Crispino (2021), graduates of

allied health and nursing programs frequently look for jobs that let them use their specialized knowledge and abilities. Furthermore, professionals who work in roles that correspond with their training and interests tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction, which can result in improved job performance and longer career longevity (Farzi et al., 2018).

Table 13. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of current position

	n	percentage, %
Current Position		
Clinical Admin	2	1.92
ER Nurse	2	1.92
Renal Nurse	3	2.88
Staff Nurse	67	64.42
Clinic Nurse	2	1.75
Google Specialist	2	1.92
Barangay Midwife	5	4.81
Birthing Midwife	6	6.19
Self Employed	4	3.85
OFW	1	1.03
Did not answer	5	9.62
<i>Total</i>	97	100

Table 13 shows that 64.42% of the BSN graduates are staff nurses, while few are handling administrative positions and others were already assigned in special areas, while DM graduates 6.19% are birthing midwives and 4.81% are barangay midwives. This implies that NONESCOST BSN and DM graduates can compete globally and locally in the pursue of their chosen career. According to (Cheng, 2022), people may choose to pursue occupations outside of their original field of study due to personal interests, career aspirations, the need for a better work-life balance, or the desire for higher wages.

Table 14. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of Nature of Industry

	n	percentage, %
Nature of Industry		
Health and Social Work	88	90.72
Advertising	2	2.06
Administrative	2	2.06
Private Firms	5	5.14

In terms of the nature of industry where the graduates are employed, Table 14 shows that 90.72% of them work under the Health and Social Work, which implies that graduates choose to align their job to their undergraduate course. This is in agreement with the study of Cheng (2022), most career goals of graduates are much aligned to what their courses were.

Table 15. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of initial salary of graduates at first job

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
Below Php 5, 000		
Php 5, 001.00 to Php 10, 000.00	10	12.20
Php 10, 001.00 to Php 15, 000.00	38	46.34
Php 15, 001.00 to Php 20, 000.00	7	8.54
Php 20, 001 to Php 25, 000.00	7	8.54

Php 25, 000 and above.	8	9.76
Confidential	10	12.20
Did not answer	2	2.44
DM		
Php 5, 001.00 to Php 10, 000.00	10	45.45
Php 10, 001.00 to Php 15, 000.00	2	18.18
Did not answer	3	36.36

In terms of the graduates first salary, table 15 shows that for BSN graduates 46.34% were earning Php 10,001.00 to Php 15,000.00, some are earning more than Php 15,000.00. Majority of Diploma of Midwifery graduates on the other hand earns Php 5,000.00 to 10,000.00. During the COVID-19 pandemic and using the rates stipulated in RA 11466, which amends the pay scale for civilian government employees, the starting salary for nurses is anticipated to be ₱ 32,053.00 at the very least, effective January 2020, according to Department of Budget and Management Circular 2020-4 (DBM, 2020). However, it should be emphasized that, depending on their classification, certain local government bodies may pay less than what is specified in RA 11466.

Table 16. Employment Profile of NONESCOST CONAHS Graduates in terms of Place of Work

	n	percentage, %
BSN		
Local	76	92.68
Abroad	4	4.88
Did not answer	2	2.44
DM		
Local	11	73.33
Abroad	1	6.66
Did not answer	3	20

Table 16 shows that majority of the graduates are working locally, and few are already working abroad. This implies that the graduates of NONESCOST BSN and DM are competitive in terms of their employability both locally and abroad. This finding aligns with the study of Bentulan, et al., 2022 that sometimes, unobtainable local career progression chances are the main draws for people looking to work overseas especially for medical personnel.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted higher education, resulting in no graduates in 2021. The majority of respondents were female and single, consistent with global nursing demographics. Program choice among BSN graduates was largely influenced by economic opportunities, personal interest, and family factors, whereas DM graduates were primarily influenced by program availability and affordability. Although only a few pursued advanced studies, graduates demonstrated strong academic preparation, as evidenced by high licensure examination passing rates. Most respondents acquired relevant professional training and secured employment within nine months, indicating high employability despite pandemic-related delays. Employment was generally aligned with their field of study, particularly within the health sector, with many holding regular positions. However, initial salaries were often below standard government rates, highlighting disparities in compensation. While most graduates were employed locally, some pursued opportunities abroad, reflecting both local relevance and global competitiveness. These findings underscore the need to strengthen academic resilience, career support systems, industry linkages, and professional development opportunities to further enhance graduate outcomes.

RECOMMEDATION

In light of the findings, it is recommended that the institution strengthen its contingency planning and flexible learning systems to ensure continuity of education during future disruptions. Career guidance and counseling services should

be enhanced to support informed academic and professional decision-making among students. The institution is likewise encouraged to promote advanced education through scholarships and strategic partnerships, while sustaining review and enhancement programs to maintain or improve licensure examination performance. To further increase graduates' competitiveness, additional skills training and certification opportunities should be provided. Strengthening linkages with healthcare institutions and industry partners is also essential to expand employment opportunities and improve job placement outcomes. In addition, career placement services and alumni tracking systems should be reinforced to support graduates in securing stable employment. The institution should also advocate for fair and standardized compensation across employment sectors. Moreover, programs that prepare graduates for international practice should be intensified to enhance global competitiveness. Finally, regular tracer studies should be conducted to continuously monitor graduate outcomes and inform curriculum development and institutional improvement.

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