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## Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada: Basis for Onboarding Training Program

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### Abstract

**Aim:** This study aimed to assess the competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada which served as a basis for developing an onboarding training program.

**Methodology:** The research employed a descriptive-correlational design and gathered data from five privately-owned hospitals in Rinconada area. The hospitals were selected using stratified random sampling, and total enumeration was used to identify the entry-level nurse respondents. The gathered data were then tallied, tabulated and analyzed using the percentage, weighted mean, and chi-square test of independence.

**Results:** Findings showed that the majority of the workforce is composed of females aged 25 to 34 years, who are the youngest in the family, with most holding bachelor's degrees and fell within the 10,001 to 20,000 pesos family monthly income bracket. Competency areas such as patient care prioritization, decision making, assessment and identifying and addressing medication errors were strongly demonstrated in the study. However, gaps were identified in the areas of stress management, emotional support, and advanced clinical procedures, while factors affecting nurse competencies are confidence in basic nursing skills, access to resources, and the presence of a collaborative work environment. The profile was found to have no significant relationship with the identified competencies. The proposed plan can improve the level of competencies of entry-level nurses in the hospitals of Rinconada.

**Conclusion:** By addressing key competency areas, factors and promoting continuous professional growth, the study underscores the importance of equipping entry-level nurses to meet the demands of quality nursing care effectively in the Rinconada area.

**Keywords:** Entry-Level Nurses, Competencies, Onboarding Training Program, and Nursing Competency Development

### INTRODUCTION

Entry-level nurses play an important role in shaping the patient care experience, serving as the frontline providers in ensuring the quality of healthcare services. Their competencies directly impact patient safety, satisfaction, and overall healthcare outcomes. In this field, where diverse and multidisciplinary challenges arise, providing entry-level nurses with the essential skills and knowledge needed to manage the complexities of patient care is crucial.

World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) describes competencies as the combination of knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed for efficient job performance. In the field of nursing, these competencies are used as standards for assessing clinical capabilities and providing patient care. Additionally, Weeks et al. (2019) emphasize that nursing competencies encompass cognitive, psychomotor, and affective areas, allowing nurses to effectively meet the evolving demands of patient care.

Fukada (2020) identified nursing core competencies as the ability to employ sound judgment and precise nursing skills to meet client needs. These competencies form the foundation for delivering high-quality, patient-centered care. However, a significant challenge in nursing education is the practical application of these

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competencies in real-world settings (Gregersen et al., 2021). To bridge this gap, it is essential to provide entry-level nurses with hands-on opportunities to develop and refine their skills during onboarding and training programs.

As Chunling (2024) emphasized, clinical nurses form the largest group of healthcare providers and are integral to safeguarding patient safety. In delivering comprehensive care and ensuring constant health monitoring, nurses mitigate adverse events and promote patient well-being. Central to this mission is the concept of Patient Safety Competency (PSC), which encompasses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential to preventing harm caused by medical errors.

In the Philippines, nursing laws and standards reinforce the importance of competency among nursing professionals. The Philippine Nursing Act of 2002 (Republic Act No. 9173) outlines the scope of practice, requiring nurses to demonstrate proficiency in delivering safe and effective care. This law underscores the need for continuous professional development and adherence to global nursing standards.

Provided also in Republic Act No. 10912 (Continuing Professional Development Act of 2016) whereby the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), through the Board of Nursing, sets the competencies required for licensure, aligning them with the country's healthcare needs. Additionally, the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) ensures that nursing curricula equip students with the foundational skills needed to transition seamlessly into professional practice.

The Rinconada area, with its unique social challenges and diverse patient demographics, necessitates that entry-level nursing staff should have the skills and knowledge needed to handle the problems of patient care. Patient safety continues to be a significant issue worldwide, regarded as a cornerstone of healthcare quality. Locally, hospitals in the Rinconada area must address the specific challenges faced by entry-level nurses. These challenges include managing diverse patient demographics, understanding cultural sensitivities, and adapting to resource-limited environments. With these global standards with local realities aligned, an effective onboarding program can be developed to enhance nurses' competencies and confidence.

This research holds critical importance for both healthcare institutions and the broader field of nursing profession. By identifying gaps in the competencies of entry-level nurses, hospitals can design and specialize onboarding training programs tailored to address specific deficiencies. Such programs can focus on enhancing clinical competencies, improving patient safety awareness, enhance nurse satisfaction and retention and ultimately fostering a culture of continuous professional development among nurses.

As the healthcare environment evolves with advancements in technology, demographic changes, and policy reforms, the preparedness of entry-level nurses becomes more crucial. This study seeks to provide a foundation for designing an onboarding training program that addresses the specific needs of nurses in the Rinconada area. The need to improve core competencies and readiness gaps to be addressed, this initiative would ultimately improve the quality of care provided, enhance patient satisfaction, and contribute to the professional growth of nursing personnel. This study determined the importance of continuous learning and professional development, ensuring that the healthcare system remains responsive to the needs of the community.

## Objectives

This study aimed to examine the competencies of entry-level nurses towards patient care in selected hospitals within Rinconada.

Specifically, it sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - a. age
  - b. sex
  - c. civil status
  - d. birth order
  - e. year graduated
  - f. family monthly income
2. to identify the extent of competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.
3. to investigate the factors affecting the competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.
4. to test the significant relationship between profile and extent of competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.
5. to test the significant relationship between extent of competencies of entry-level nurses and the



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factors affecting the competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.

6. to propose an action plan to improve the competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.

### Hypothesis

The study has aimed to investigate the following research questions, which translate into the following hypotheses:

Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant relationship between the profile and extent of competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.

Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant relationship between the extent of competencies of entry-level nurses and the factors affecting the competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.

### METHODS

#### Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. Descriptive research aims to provide a detailed account of a particular group, situation, or event. It focuses on understanding the characteristics, behaviors, or occurrences within the subject of study. Essentially, it answers questions like 'what,' 'how,' 'when,' and 'where,' rather than exploring the reasons or causes behind these observations (McCombes, 2022). Meanwhile, correlational research is a type of non-experimental research method used to measure the relationship or association between two or more variables without manipulating them. The goal is to determine whether a relationship exists, the direction of the relationship (positive or negative), and the strength of the relationship.

#### Population and Sampling

All entry-level nurses employed in the selected hospitals, namely Sta. Maria Josefa Hospital Foundation Inc., Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Mediatrix, Villanueva-Tanchuling Maternity and General Hospital, and the Medical Mission Group Hospital and Health Services Cooperative of Cam Sur, were the respondents of this study. Out of 50 respondents, 13 were entry-level nurses in Sta. Maria Josefa Hospital Foundation Inc., 11 from Medical Mission Group Hospital and Health Services Cooperative of Cam Sur, 10 from Our Lady of Mediatrix Hospital, eight from Villanueva-Tanchuling Maternity and another eight from General Hospital, and Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. The study was conducted from August-December 2024.

This study used purposive sampling method, meaning entry-level nurses chosen intentionally because they met certain criteria relevant to the study from the above-mentioned hospitals were included in the research. This approach ensured complete data collection and analysis of their clinical competencies, thereby guaranteeing the reliability and accuracy of the research findings.

#### Instrument

The researchers used a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool, which was designed based on professional standards, Civil Service Commission (CSC) guidelines, and hospital policies for entry-level positions, aligned with the required job qualifications and competencies. Additionally, the factors identified in the study helped guide the creation of relevant questions, ensuring the collection of valuable data from the respondents.

#### Data Collection

After the questionnaire was finalized, the researcher obtained approval from the hospital administrators to distribute the surveys and proceed with the study. The questionnaires were distributed in person to ensure accuracy. After completion, the questionnaires were collected immediately from the respondents once they were fully and anonymously answered. After retrieval, the data was tallied, analyzed, and interpreted.

#### Treatment of Data

Statistical analysis of the collected data involved the use of several methods. These included calculating percentages, determining weighted means, and employing the Chi-Square Test of Independence to analyze the

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## Ethical Considerations

With ethical authorization granted by the hospital administrations, the researchers diligently followed established research ethics guidelines to safeguard the rights and interests of all individuals and entities involved in the study.

## RESULTS and DISCUSSION

### 1. Profile of the Respondents

The profile presented in this section are those of the entry-level nurses in the hospitals in Rinconada.

**Table 1. Profile of the Respondents**

Profile	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
<b>Age</b>	<b>25 years old and below</b>	20	40.00	1
	<b>25-34 years old</b>	14	28.00	2
	<b>35-44 years old</b>	13	26.00	3
	<b>45-54 years old</b>	3	6.00	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Male</b>	11	22.00	2
	<b>Female</b>	39	76.00	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>Civil Status</b>	<b>Single</b>	33	66.00	1
	<b>Married</b>	17	34.00	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>Birth Order</b>	<b>Eldest</b>	8	16.00	3
	<b>Middle</b>	18	36.00	2
	<b>Youngest</b>	22	44.00	1
	<b>Only Child</b>	2	4.00	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>Year Graduated</b>	<b>2023</b>	20	40.00	1
	<b>2022</b>	12	24.00	2
	<b>2021</b>	9	18.00	3
	<b>2020</b>	3	6.00	5
	<b>2019</b>	4	8.00	4
	<b>2018 &amp; below</b>	2	4.00	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>Family Monthly Income</b>	<b>Below Php 10,000.00</b>	6	12.00	3.5
	<b>Php 10,001 - Php 20,000.00</b>	19	38.00	1
	<b>Php 20,001 - Php 40,000.00</b>	16	32.00	2
	<b>Php 40,001- Php 70,000.00</b>	6	12.00	3.5
	<b>Php 70,001- Php 100,000.00</b>	1	2.00	6
	<b>Above Php 100,000.00</b>	2	4.00	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

**a. Age.** Exhibited in Table 1, were the age group of the respondents. Out of fifty (50), twenty (20) or 40 percent belong to the under 25 years old age group; fourteen (14) or 28 percent belong to age group 25–34 years old; thirteen (13) or 26 percent belong to age group 35–44 years old; and three (3) or 6 percent belong to age group 45–54 years old. The results showed a predominantly young and early-career profile among the nurses surveyed. Feliciano (2023) reported that among Filipino nurses, a mean age of 31 years with 60.7 percent have 1 to 30 years of service experience. This suggested that the nursing workforce in the Philippines is predominantly young.



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**b. Sex.** Out of fifty (50) respondents surveyed, a significant majority of thirty-nine (39) or 76 percent are female while only eleven (11) or 22 percent are male. This indicates that entry-level nurses in these hospitals are predominantly a female-dominated field. Elmaco (2022) in his study, revealed that in the Philippines, 74.1 percent of nurses were female, and 25.9 percent were male. This reflects a global trend where nursing is predominantly a female profession.

**c. Civil Status.** Majority of the respondents, thirty-three (33) or 66 percent are single, while seventeen (17) respondents or 34 percent are married. This distribution indicates that a significant portion of the nursing workforce is composed of individuals who are single. This aligns with the study of Fukuzaki et al. (2021) that single nurses often have fewer familial obligations, potentially allowing for greater flexibility in work schedules and participation in professional development activities.

**d. Birth Order.** Of the total respondents, Twenty-two (22) or 44 percent are youngest in the family; eighteen (18) or 36 percent are middle child; eight (8) or 16 percent are eldest; and two (2) or 4 percent are only child. The results highlight a diverse range of family dynamics among the respondents. As discussed on Alfred Adler's birth order theory 2022, he stated that youngest children often develop traits such as sociability and a free-spirited nature, which may make them more receptive to collaborative and adaptable training approaches.

**e. Year Graduated.** Out of fifty (50) respondents, twenty (20) or 40 percent graduated in 2023; twelve (12) or 24 percent graduated in 2022; nine (9) or 18 percent graduated in 2021; four (4) or 8 percent graduated in 2019; three (3) or 6 percent graduated in 2020; and two (2) or 4 percent graduated in 2018 indicating a mix of recent graduates and those with more years of professional exposure. Pertiwi, et al., (2019) emphasized that effective orientation programs for new graduate nurses are crucial in enhancing their competence, confidence, and job satisfaction. The study suggested that orientation programs should be tailored to the specific needs of new graduates, considering factors such as their educational background and prior experience.

**f. Family Monthly Income.** Of the total respondents, nineteen (19) or 38 percent have a family monthly income ranging from Php 10,001 to Php 20,000; sixteen (16) or 32 percent have a family monthly income ranging from Php 20,001 and Php 40,000; earning below Php 10,000 and between Php 40,001 and Php 70,000, both with six (6) respondents or 12 percent; two (2) or 4 percent have family monthly incomes above Php 100,000; and one (1) or 2 percent has a family monthly income between Php 70,001 and Php 100,000 ranked sixth. This income distribution highlights economic diversity among the respondents, which can be significant in designing onboarding training program. Nurses from lower-income brackets might face financial constraints that could affect their ability to participate in unpaid or costly training sessions. This supported by Leedah et al., 2023 exploring lower-income participants' experiences in healthcare training programs found that financial challenges can impede participation and success.

## 2. Extent of Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada

This part revealed the extent of competencies of entry-level nurses on quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada. This evaluation determines whether entry-level nurses possess the necessary competencies and skills to effectively perform their professional duties in a real-world medical setting.

As reflected in table 2 are the responses of entry-level nurses regarding their competencies in various nursing tasks and skills. Among all the indicators, four garnered the highest ranked and these include the ability to prioritize and delegate patient care tasks efficiently; make informed patient care decisions based on established protocols and doctors' orders; effectively assess patient vital signs and symptoms; and promptly identify and address medication administration errors (WM = 4.26, Rank 2.5). These skills are crucial for ensuring quality care and patient safety. Other competencies that scored highly include collaboration with healthcare teams (WM = 4.24, Rank 5) and diligent medication administration (WM = 4.22, Rank 6), both of which are essential for effective teamwork and patient management in a hospital setting. The competencies related to communication, patient safety, and time management also scored highly (WM = 4.18, Rank 7.5), reflecting the importance of clear and timely interactions with patients and colleagues. In contrast, some competencies received relatively lower scores. These include offering emotional support to patients and their families, demonstrate effective leadership skills when required in a clinical setting confidently, accurately assess patients' conditions and identify potential health concerns, and handle interactions with rude and manipulative relatives of patient professionally and calmly (WM = 3.90, Rank 28.5); managing stress effectively in a demanding environment (WM = 3.86, Rank 32); and assisting with more advanced procedures as instructed by doctors (WM = 3.84, Rank 33), respectively.



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**Table 2. The Extent of Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconcada**

Indicators	WM	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Consistently demonstrate competence in performing essential nursing skills (e.g., vital signs, medication administration).	4.18	Competent	11.5
2. Effectively assist with more advanced procedures as instructed by doctors.	3.44	Moderately Competent	33
3. Feel confident in my ability to perform comprehensive health assessments.	3.48	Moderately Competent	31
4. Assess accurately patients' conditions and identify potential health concerns.	3.49	Moderately Competent	28.5
5. Advocate for patient needs with senior staff appropriately.	4.00	Competent	26
6. Efficiently coordinate patient referrals and follow-ups.	4.06	Competent	25
7. Actively participate in health promotion and disease prevention activities.	4.14	Competent	18
8. Use medical equipment commonly found in the hospital unit safely and effectively.	4.16	Competent	15
9. Prioritize and delegate patient care tasks efficiently.	4.26	Competent	2.5
10. Meticulously apply legal and ethical guidelines for nursing practice in the Philippines.	4.14	Competent	18
11. Utilize theoretical knowledge from nursing school effectively in real-life patient care situations.	4.10	Competent	24
12. Make informed patient care decisions efficiently based on established protocols and doctors' orders.	4.26	Competent	2.5
13. Accurately interpret patient data to personalize care and improve patient outcomes.	4.14	Competent	18
14. Assess effectively patient vital signs and symptoms during patient encounters.	4.26	Competent	2.5
15. Efficiently Collaborated with healthcare teams (doctors, nurses, therapists, etc.).	4.24	Competent	5
16. Diligently administer medications following the procedures in patient care.	4.22	Competent	6
17. Promptly identify and address any medication administration errors that occur.	4.26	Competent	2.5
18. Assertively advocate for patients' needs and concerns, even when interacting with more senior staff.	4.14	Competent	18
19. Provide clear and concise documentation of patient care in medical records promptly.	4.18	Competent	11.5
20. Strictly adhere to infection control protocols when providing wound care.	4.18	Competent	11.5
21. Communicate effectively and clearly during emergency response scenarios.	4.20	Competent	7.5
22. Respond swiftly and appropriately to emergency situations as they arise.	4.12	Competent	22
23. Manage stress effectively in a demanding hospital environment.	3.46	Moderately Competent	32
24. Offer emotional support and comfort to patients and their families effectively.	3.49	Moderately Competent	28.5
25. Demonstrate effective communication skills with patient and	4.14	Competent	18





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26. Prioritize patient safety and take appropriate actions to ensure it diligently	4.18	Competent	11.5
27. Manage my time effectively to provide efficient and timely care to patients	4.18	Competent	11.5
28. Ensure that all patient interactions and treatments are documented in a timely manner.	4.20	Competent	7.5
29. Demonstrate effective leadership skills when required in a clinical setting confidently.	3.49	Moderately Competent	28.5
30. Engage in self-care to ensure my well-being and ability to provide quality care to patients.	4.12	Competent	22
31. Actively seek feedback to improve my nursing practice and performance	4.12	Competent	22
32. Handle interactions with rude and manipulative relatives of patients professionally and calmly.	3.49	Moderately Competent	28.5
33. Maintain a professional and respectful tone of voice when dealing with patients' relatives, regardless of their behavior.	4.18	Competent	11.5
<b>Average Weighted Mean</b>	<b>4.11</b>	<b>Competent</b>	

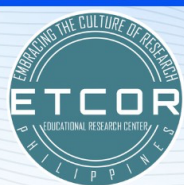
These areas suggest opportunities for improvement in the nurses' ability to handle complex tasks, cope with the pressures of the hospital environment, and provide emotional support. The data reveals that while the nurses demonstrate strong competency in core nursing skills such as patient assessment, medication administration, and teamwork, there is room for growth in certain soft skills and advanced clinical tasks.

The average weighted mean (AWM) of 4.11 reflects that the nurses evaluated in this study possess the ability to perform their duties effectively within the expectations of their role. A rating of competent signifies that the majority of the respondents are adequately prepared to handle the essential skills and responsibilities associated with entry-level nursing. This insight is significant for the research as it highlights areas where onboarding training programs can focus on enhancing the overall competence of entry-level nurses, thereby improving the quality of nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada. A factual study related to this research by Mendoza & Santos (2020) which aimed to evaluate the competencies of newly hired nurses in a public hospital and how these competencies influenced the quality of patient care which has contributed to this interpretation.

### 3. Factors Affecting the Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada

The section presents the determining factors affecting the competencies of the entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada. Table 3 presents that indicators the confidence in performing basic nursing skills, ranked 1 with a weighted mean of 4.20; and confidence in making clinical decisions under supervision ranked 2 with a weighted mean of 4.18. Other significant factors include nurse-to-patient ratio and its impact on safe and effective care and availability of resources such as medications and equipment both ranked 3.5 with a weighted mean of 4.16. This is followed by indicator impact of personal life on care and well-being on patient care abilities ranked 5 with a weighted mean of 4.14. Additionally, hospital culture, which promotes teamwork and collaboration, also plays a significant role, ranked 6.5 with a weighted mean of 4.12. Further, the following four factor affecting competencies of entry level nurses are sufficiency of hands-on experience during clinical rotations; comfort level in seeking clarification or assistance; adequacy of theoretical knowledge from nursing education; and hospital administration shared the same rank of 9.5 with a weighted mean of 4.10. One more factor is ability to manage stress in a fast-paced environment with a weighted mean of 4.08 that falls in rank 12. Hospital environment (facilities, etc) and emotional preparedness to handle patient care challenges are also included in the factor that affects competencies of entry- level nursed with a weighted mean of 4.02 that falls in rank 14.5. Indicator hospital orientation program and hospital culture is another factor that also affect which has weighted mean of 4.00 that falls in rank 16.5.

On the other hand, factors such as the adequacy of salary and benefits for job satisfaction ranked 18



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and well-being ranked 20 with a weighted mean of 3.84 received lower rankings which suggest that while these elements have an impact, they are less influential compared to direct clinical and environmental factors.

The data shows that while personal life and well-being are important, the immediate work environment, resources, and professional confidence are stronger determinants of nursing competencies. This information is crucial for the research, as it underscores the areas where improvements, such as better hospital support systems, training, and resource availability, could enhance entry-level nurses' performance in patient care. The average weighted mean (AWM) of 4.06, with the verbal interpretation "Affect" indicates that the entry-level nurses surveyed are affected by various factors in their ability to provide effective and quality nursing care. Affect refers to the positive emotional and situational factors that shape their performance, including work environment, support systems, personal well-being, and available resources.

These insights can guide the development of more effective onboarding programs tailored to address the key factors affecting nursing competencies in the hospital setting. In a work by Almarwani and Alzahrani (2023), they identified the factors that affect the competency of newly hired nurses in a tertiary hospital setting. It used a descriptive correlational design and assessed factors such as educational background, clinical experience, orientation programs, work environment, and mentorship.

**Table 3. Factors Affecting the Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada**

Indicators		WM	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1.	Adequacy of theoretical knowledge from Nursing Education	4.10	Affect	9.5
2.	Sufficiency of hands-on experience during clinical rotations	4.10	Affect	9.5
3.	Hospital orientation program	4.00	Affect	16.5
4.	Preceptorship program	3.88	Affect	19
5.	Confidence in performing basic nursing skills	4.20	Affect	1
6.	Nurse-to-patient ratio and its impact on safe and effective care	4.16	Affect	3.5
7.	Availability of resources (medications, equipment) for optimal care	4.16	Affect	3.5
8.	Hospital culture fostering teamwork and collaboration	4.12	Affect	6.5
9.	Access to resources and support systems offered by the hospital administration	4.04	Affect	13
10.	Hospital culture	4.00	Affect	16.5
11.	Hospital environment (facilities, etc)	4.02	Affect	14.5
12.	Availability of supportive colleagues and senior nurses	4.12	Affect	6.5
13.	Hospital administration	4.10	Affect	9.5
14.	My personal life and well-being positively impact my ability to care for patients.	3.84	Affect	20
15.	Adequacy of salary and benefits for job satisfaction	3.90	Affect	18
16.	Confidence in making clinical decisions under supervision	4.18	Affect	2
17.	Ability to manage stress in a fast-paced environment	4.08	Affect	12
18.	Emotional preparedness to handle patient care challenges	4.02	Affect	14.5
19.	Comfort level in seeking clarification or assistance	4.10	Affect	9.5
20.	Impact of personal life and well-being on patient care abilities	4.14	Affect	5
<b>Average Weighted Mean</b>		<b>4.06</b>	<b>Affect</b>	




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#### 4. Relationship Between Profile and Extent of Competencies Of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada

Table 4 presents the results of a test for the significant relationship between various profiles and the extent of competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality patient care in the hospitals of Rinconada. The computed chi-square ( $X^2$ ) values for sex, age, civil status, birth order, year graduated, and family monthly income were all compared against their respective p-values. In all cases, the p-values exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.05, ranging from 0.155 to 0.804. The statistical analysis reveals that none of the demographic profile, including sex, age, civil status, birth order, year of graduation and family monthly income, showed a significant relationship with nursing competencies. Thus, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was accepted.

This finding has important implications for the researcher and for hospital administrators. It suggested that profile do not significantly influence the nursing competencies that directly affect patient care quality. Therefore, it highlights that improving nursing competencies should not solely focus on these variables but rather on other areas such as hands-on training, resource availability, clinical experience, and mentorship programs that may have a more direct impact on the nurses' performance.

This is supported by the work of Gatchalian in 2019, he explained the competencies of Filipino nurses and how they align with the core competency standards, as well as their preparedness based on their knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards the regional integration effort. The study found that while Filipino nurses exhibited strong competency was lacking despite a positive attitude toward meeting its challenges.

**Table 4. Relationship between Profile and Extent of Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Patient Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada**

Indicators	Computed $X^2$ -Value	P - Value	Decision on $H_0$	Interpretation
Sex	0.991	0.804	Accepted	Not Significant
Age	7.000	0.637	Accepted	Not Significant
Civil Status	5.210	0.517	Accepted	Not Significant
Birth Order	8.180	0.516	Accepted	Not Significant
Year Graduated	12.90	0.608	Accepted	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income	16.90	0.155	Accepted	Not Significant

#### 5. Relationship Between Extent of Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses and the Factors Affecting the Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada

Table 5 examine the relationship between the extent of competencies of entry-level nurses and the factors affecting their ability to provide quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada. The data assess various indicators, assessing whether these factors significantly affect entry-level nurses' competencies.

The results show that all the indicators, such as the adequacy of theoretical knowledge from nursing education; sufficiency of hands-on clinical experiences; hospital orientation programs; preceptorship programs; confidence in performing basic nursing skills, Nurse-to-patient ratio and its impact on safe and effective care; Availability of resources (medications, equipment) for optimal care; Hospital culture fostering teamwork and collaboration; Access to resources and support systems offered by the hospital administration; Hospital culture; Hospital environment (facilities, etc); Availability of supportive colleagues and senior nurses; Hospital administration; Personal life and well-being impact on patient care abilities; Adequacy of salary and benefits for job satisfaction; Confidence in making clinical decisions under supervision; Ability to manage stress in a fast-paced environment; Emotional preparedness to handle patient care challenges; Comfort level in seeking clarification or assistance; and latly, Impact of personal life and well-being on patient care abilities did not yield significant results based on the yielded computed chi-square ( $X^2$ ) values paired with p-values above the threshold for significance. Therefore, decisions on the null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) for each indicator led to acceptance, signifying that there is no significant relationship between these factors and the extent of entry-level nurse competencies.



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The findings indicate that all examined factors were determined to have no significant relationship with the extent of entry-level nurses' competencies. However, this should not lessen the importance of these factors in providing quality nursing care. In the previous research, such as Twigg et al. (2021), has emphasized the significant impact of nurse staffing levels on patient outcomes and nurse well-being, their study suggests that even in perceived supportive environments, additional factors may influence the development of entry-level nurse competencies. While the results suggest no direct impact, these elements may still play vital roles in shaping nurses' experiences and their overall ability to deliver quality nursing care. The acceptance of the null hypothesis across all indicators highlights the need to approach competency development holistically, taking into account the complex interplay of various factors that could affect nursing outcomes in nuanced or indirect ways.

**Table 5. Relationship Between Extent of Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses and the Factors Affecting the Extent of Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada**

	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Computed X<sup>2</sup>-Value</b>	<b>P - Value</b>	<b>Decision on Ho</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1.	Adequacy of theoretical know-ledge from Nursing Education	4.10	0.249	Accepted	Not Significant
2.	Sufficiency of hands-on experience during clinical rotations	4.10	0.249	Accepted	Not Significant
3.	Hospital orientation program	4.00	0.261	Accepted	Not Significant
4.	Preceptorship program	3.88	0.275	Accepted	Not Significant
5.	Confidence in performing basic nursing skills	4.20	0.238	Accepted	Not Significant
6.	Nurse-to-patient ratio and its impact on safe and effective care	4.16	0.240	Accepted	Not Significant
7.	Availability of resources (medications, equipment) for optimal care	4.16	0.240	Accepted	Not Significant
8.	Hospital culture fostering teamwork and collaboration	4.12	0.244	Accepted	Not Significant
9.	Access to resources and support systems offered by the hospital administration	4.04	0.255	Accepted	Not Significant
10.	Hospital culture	4.00	0.261	Accepted	Not Significant
11.	Hospital environment (facilities, etc)	4.02		Accepted	Not Significant
12.	Availability of supportive colleagues and senior nurses	4.12	0.244	Accepted	Not Significant
13.	Hospital administration	4.10	0.249	Accepted	Not Significant
14.	Personal life and well-being impact on patient care abilities	4.14	0.242	Accepted	Not Significant
15.	Adequacy of salary and benefits for job satisfaction	3.90	0.269	Accepted	Not Significant
16.	Confidence in making clinical decisions under supervision	4.18	0.238	Accepted	Not Significant
17.	Ability to manage stress in a fast-paced environment	4.08	0.252	Accepted	Not Significant
18.	Emotional preparedness to handle patient care challenges	4.02	0.259	Accepted	Not Significant
19.	Comfort level in seeking clarification or assistance	4.10	0.249	Accepted	Not Significant
20.	Impact of personal life and well-being on patient care abilities	4.14	0.242	Accepted	Not Significant



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## 6. Proposed Action Plan to Improve the Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada

The proposed action plan presents a comprehensive approach to improve the competencies of entry-level nurses in the hospitals of Rinconada. It outlines specific interventions designed to equip new nurses with the necessary skills and knowledge to provide safe and effective patient care. By investing in the professional development of our nurses, we can ensure that patients receive the highest quality of care and achieve optimal health outcomes.

**Table 6. Proposed Action Plan to Improve the Competencies of Entry-Level Nurses Towards Quality Nursing Care in the Hospitals of Rinconada**

Areas of Concern	Specific Objectives	Activities/ Strategies	Responsible Person	Expected Output
<b>COMPETENCIES</b>				
a. Effectively assisting with advanced procedures as instructed by doctors	<p>Improve the proficiency of entry-level nurses in performing advanced nursing procedures.</p> <p>Foster effective communication between nurses and doctors to ensure clarity in instructions and patient care.</p>	<p>Organize hands-on training sessions focusing on advanced nursing procedures relevant to the hospitals.</p> <p>Pair entry-level nurses with experienced mentors for guidance and support during their initial practice period.</p>	<p>Entry-Level Nurses</p> <p>Head Nurse</p> <p>Senior Staff Nurse</p> <p>Clinical Supervisors</p>	<p>Entry-level nurses will demonstrate improved skills in advanced procedures, as evidenced by evaluations and feedback.</p> <p>Nurses will report greater confidence in communicating with healthcare teams.</p>
b. Manage stress effectively in a demanding hospital environment	<p>Equip entry-level nurses with effective strategies to manage stress in the workplace.</p> <p>Foster a supportive environment that prioritizes mental health and well-being among nursing staff.</p>	<p>Conduct a regular meeting where nurses can share experiences, challenges, and coping strategies in a supportive environment</p> <p>Pair entry-level nurses with experienced mentors who can provide guidance on managing stress effectively.</p>	<p>Entry-Level Nurses</p> <p>Clinical Supervisors</p> <p>Head nurse</p> <p>Mental Health Professionals</p>	<p>Nurses will report increased confidence in managing stress through self-assessment surveys.</p>
c. Confidence in performing comprehensive health assessments	<p>Enhance the confidence of entry-level nurses in performing comprehensive health assessments.</p>	<p>Conduct training or workshop on physical assessment techniques.</p> <p>Partner entry-level nurses with experienced mentors who can guide her in performing health assessment.</p>	<p>Entry-Level Nurses</p> <p>Clinical Supervisors</p> <p>Head nurse</p>	<p>Nurses can perform thorough health assessments confidently.</p>





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d. Effective emotional support for patients and families

Develop skills in providing empathetic emotional support to patients and families.

Conduct workshops that focused on the soft skills (customer service skills) of the entry level nurses  
  
Incorporate discussions on therapeutic communication and emotional intelligence during onboarding training program

Entry-Level Nurses  
Clinical Supervisors  
Head nurse

Nurses effectively provide emotional support in any situations.

e. Handling challenging interactions with patient relatives

Equip nurses with strategies to professionally manage interactions with rude or manipulative relatives.

Introduce stress-management workshops.  
  
Conduct situational simulation exercises focusing on professional communication in difficult scenarios.

Entry-Level Nurses  
Clinical Supervisors  
Head nurse

Nurses manage difficult interpersonal interactions calmly and professionally.

#### FACTORS

Confidence in performing basic nursing skills

Develop confidence and proficiency in executing essential nursing procedures.

Organize hands-on training focusing on basic nursing skills (e.g., Taking vital signs, Suctioning, IV insertion, wound care etc).

Entry-Level Nurses  
Clinical Supervisors  
Head nurse

Nurses perform basic nursing skills confidently and competently.

Confidence in making clinical decisions under supervision

Enrich decision-making skills while ensuring the presence of supervisory guidance.

Incorporate case-based discussions and reflective practice.  
  
Implement supervised decision-making scenarios in real patient care settings.

Entry-Level Nurses  
Clinical Supervisors  
Head nurse

Nurses make clinical decisions under guidance with growing independence.

Nurse-to-patient ratio and its impact on safe and effective care

To increase awareness of the effects of over workload on care quality and safety.

Conduct seminars on safe staffing and workload management strategies.  
  
Conduct a regular meeting to have feedback sessions and discuss challenges related to nurse-patient ratios.

Nursing Service Office  
Staff nurses  
Hospital administrators

Nurses promote safe workloads and can manage time effectively despite ratios.

Availability of resources (medication or equipment) for optimal care

Ensure nurses understand and utilize available resources to deliver quality care.

Design an orientation program about institutional protocols and introduce the availability resources in the institution.

Entry-Level Nurses  
Clinical Supervisors  
Head nurse  
  
Hospital administrator,  
Department resource managers

Nurses efficiently utilize available resources to provide safe and effective nursing care.



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## Conclusions

On the basis of the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Predominantly the respondents are aged 25 years old and below, females, single, youngest in the family, graduated in the year 2023 and have a family monthly income of 10,001 to 20,000.00.
2. The entry-level nurses demonstrated competence in core nursing skills such as patient care prioritization, decision-making, vital signs assessment, and teamwork, but there is a need for improvement in advanced clinical tasks, stress management, and emotional support to enhance overall performance and patient care quality.
3. The data showed high responses in the factors affecting competency such as confidence in performing basic nursing skills, supported by adequate resources, manageable workloads, and collaborative hospital culture which is pivotal for ensuring quality patient care, while factors like salary and personal well-being play a less dominant but still relevant role in influencing nursing performance.
4. There is no significant relationship between the profile and extent of competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.
5. There is no significant relationship between the extent of competencies of entry-level nurses and the factors affecting the competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.
6. There is plan that can be proposed to improve the competencies of entry-level nurses towards quality nursing care in the hospitals of Rinconada.

## Recommendations

After a thorough and systematic review of data gathered from the research study conducted and with the support of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following were recommended:

1. The hospital should strengthen mentorship programs by assigning senior nurses to guide new nurses in developing advanced skills, managing emotional and stressful aspects of patient care.
2. The nursing training officer should focus on emotional support and stress management by introducing programs that address nurse well-being, emotional intelligence, and stress reduction.
3. The nursing service office should optimize resource allocation and workload management by ensuring adequate staffing and supplies, as well as a supportive work environment to manage workloads effectively.
4. The human resources should revise orientation and training programs to include more hands-on experiences and structured training on protocols, patient care, and teamwork.
5. The nursing supervisor or head nurse should monitor nurse-to-patient ratios and the work environment to reduce burnout and improve care quality by ensuring a manageable workload.
6. Implement the proposed plan on how to improve the level of competencies of entry-level nurses in the hospitals of Rinconada.

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