

Research Article

Career Commitment and Academic Motivation of Staff Nurses in the Philippines

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Abstract

Aims: This research specifically determined the perceived degree of career commitment among staff nurses, the level of their academic motivation, and the significant association of career commitment and motivation to pursue postgraduate education amongst them.

Methods: This research utilized a quantitative and predictive approach. A total of 97 staff nurses with at least two years work experience in government tertiary hospital in the Philippine were selected through purposive sampling. Prior to the study, ERB/IRB approval was sought and informed consent was provided. The respondents were then asked to answer the Career Commitment Measurement and Academic Motivation Scale questionnaires that were pretested with a Cronbach alpha of 0.83 and 0.93. Statistical analysis was carried out using Stata 12. Associations were assessed using simple regression analysis. P values less than or equal to 0.05 were considered statistically significant.

Results: The results showed a significant association between career commitment and intrinsic motivation (p -value=0.000). However, career commitment and extrinsic motivation (p -value=0.131) did not display a significant relationship.

Conclusions: The results displayed that staff nurses with high level of career commitment and intrinsic motivation will more likely pursue postgraduate education. Therefore it is imperative to encourage and support nurses to maintain their career commitment in a high level, to keep them motivated to grow and to learn.

Keywords

- Career commitment
- Academic motivation
- Intrinsic motivation
- Extrinsic motivation
- Postgraduate education

ABBREVIATIONS

CCM: Career Commitment Measurement; AMS: Academic Motivation Scale; ERB: Ethics Review Board; IRB: Institutional Ethics Review Board

INTRODUCTION

The Professional Regulation Commission of the Philippines, mandates the implementation of the Continuing Professional Education Development program for all regulated professions. Under the Resolution No. 2013-774 are standardized guidelines and procedures which are known as "Continuing Professional Development Program Guidelines" or CPD Guidelines. The CPD Guidelines are an attempt to ensure the highest standards of professional practice and promote the public interest in safeguarding life, health and property. The revised guidelines of CPD Program originated from Resolution No. 2008-446 series of 2008. Article I, Section 3, highlight the objectives of CPD programs which shall strive to: continuously improve the quality of the country's reservoir of registered professionals by updating them on the latest scientific/ technological/ ethical and other applicable

trends in the local and global practice of the professions; provide support to lifelong learning in the enhancement of Filipino Professional competencies towards delivery or quality and ethical services both locally and globally; and deliver quality continuing professional development (CPD) activities aligned with the Philippine Qualification Framework (PQF) for national relevance and global comparability and competitiveness. The overarching goals shall be the promotion of the general welfare and interest of the public in the course of delivering professional services. Additionally, Section 4 of the same Article provides the definition of terms as used in this Resolution. One of those is the definition of "Postgraduate Academic Studies" as master's or doctoral units/ degree earned from school, college or university, or other institutions recognized by pertinent government bodies [1].

Nurses around the globe represent the largest group of health professionals [2,3] and competition in the job market is tough. Therefore paying attention to the concept of motivation is crucial in clinical education [4]. Also, adult learning is gaining progressive importance in view of current societal developments

and changes. Motivating nurses, aside from acquiring skills for offering appropriate quality health care services to patients with multiple complex health problems, is one of the aims of nursing education. In order to promote adult learning, it is necessary to determine the motivational factors that may influence individual's decision to access a learning opportunity [5].

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) was used to guide this study. Essentially, SDT expounds the motives behind why individuals engaged in a particular activity. Additionally, SDT points out quality distinction between intrinsic motivation (i.e., enjoyment of the task itself) and extrinsic motivation (desire to attain contingent outcomes) [6]. The development of intrinsic motivation is broadly described by interest, enjoyment, and inherent satisfaction. This means that a student has to have a strong intrinsic motivation to continue with his/her studies. In this regard, if students value academic thinking and are interested in learning and not in qualifications as such has the potential to promote intrinsic academic motivation [7]. In contrast extrinsic motivation is considered as an action that is done for external reasons. Physical rewards are the underlying motivation for individuals who are extrinsically motivated. Increased income, job security, improved working conditions, obtainment of material goods, or increased ability to save for retirement are extrinsic factors that may motivate workers to pursue higher education [8]. If the personal goal of studies is primarily vocationally oriented in the sense that the student expects practical knowledge, skills development and a good preparation for the future job, this student is extrinsically motivated. In general, intrinsic motivation, is autonomous when the specific action of an individual is for pleasure and satisfaction. While extrinsic motivation is the individual's performance of an action is for extrinsic award.

Several researchers such as [9-15] have explored some motivators and barriers in pursuit of higher education in nurses and in adult learners. These researchers cited various barriers and challenges that demotivate nurses to engage in postgraduate education or in continuing formal education programmes. Financial considerations and institutional support were identified as one major barrier. There are still numerous organizations that do not provide time and funding for nurses or other professionals to attend continuing education events [12]. Lack of encouragement from managers may take into account. The managers of healthcare systems need to provide nurses with the necessary supports to enable them attend such programs in order to enhance their productivity. Familial responsibilities and commitments such as childcare and others were also identified as deterrents. Marital status or individuals who are married may portend low participation in continuing formal or professional education. This may have in addition to their professional responsibility the need to cater for the immediate family [16]. In addition to these, lack of awareness, staff shortages, and structural barriers such as conditions attached to granting study leave, lack of coherent staff development plans and opportunities for promotion, and lack of a supportive work environment. These hurdles are of great concern and must be addressed by institutions. Based on these studies, nurses indicated the need for motivations in order to engage in continuing professional education program. Particularly, institutions need to give a great

extent of commitment to lifelong education of nurses and other health care providers [12].

Although a great details is known about the implications of motivation of nurses to pursue postgraduate education, no study to date has examined another factor that influence individual's motivation to pursue advanced education such as career commitment. Some organizational behavior models emphasize that various favorable outcomes are positively associated with career commitment, such as skill development, job performance and motivation to career development. Thus the outcomes of career commitment could be another contribution to the pursuit of postgraduate education.

Career commitment is used interchangeably in some literatures [17-19], together with occupational, professional, and employee's commitment. It is consider as a form of work commitment defined as identification with and involvement in one's profession, such as teaching, nursing, or engineering. London's career motivation theory explains that behavior underlies career commitment [20]. It initially presents and integrates individual differences into three disciplines such as career identity, career insight, and career resilience. However, Carson and Bedeian, who developed the Career Commitment Scale that is over a decade old now, revised, expanded, and conceptualized, further the notion of career commitment. They mentioned three dimensions that define career commitment such as: career identity, career planning, which corresponds to London's concept of insight and career resilience. They defined career identity as demonstrating an emotional relation with one's career, where as career planning as an identification of one's developmental needs and setting career goals and finally, career resilience as defying career disruption in the occurrence of adversity [21].

In London's model of career identity conceptualizations, he defined career identity as the importance of the career to the employee's personal identity. According to Nazar [22] professional title appeared to be a fundamental part of career identity, even more so among those whose academic degree is widely recognized and perceived as prestigious. Whilst, the notion of career planning is a generally recognized thought and concept, the construct of individuals career planning currently rising and attracting researchers interest in the different research areas for academic studies in many disciplines as different and diverse perceptions [23]. In human resource management, career planning aims to identify needs, aspirations and opportunities for individuals' career and the implementation of developing human resources programs to support that career [24]. It is deemed as the thoughtful process of identifying the opportunities and constraints that occur in the working environment along with the career related goals involving direction, timing and actions [25]. Thus career planning is deemed as necessary for the success in the professional life and career [25-29]. In regards to this, career resilience is imperative as it is defined as the ability to maintain equilibrium in the face of workplace adversity. Resilience is active and dynamic; it is an ongoing process rather than a state one simply achieves, and allows an individual to cope with stressful transitions and manage life events [30,31]. Furthermore, according to Potgieter [32] career-resilient

individuals are able to adapt to changing situations by accepting job and organisational changes, looking forward to working with different and new people, being willing to take risks, as well as having self-confidence in mastering the challenges posed by a situation or event.

From most of literature reviews, it is evident that there are still advantageous aspects for nurses who embark on postgraduate education and those are related to professional and personal growth. The perspicuous objective of postgraduate education is not only to equip nurses personally and professionally but also to meet the present and future health care demands of the society. However such factors are not enough to encourage a large number nurses to consider the pursuit of postgraduate education as part of their career plan.

Based on the findings of these studies, the researcher outlined the general objective of the study: to examine the significant relationship between career commitment and motivation to pursue postgraduate education among nurses. Specifically, this study answered the ff. questions:

1. What is the perceived degree of career commitment among nurses?
2. What is the perceived level of motivation to pursue postgraduate education among nurses in terms of:
 - 2.1 Intrinsic motivation
 - 2.2 Extrinsic motivation
3. Is there a significant relationship between career commitment and Motivation to pursue postgraduate education in terms of:
 - 3.1 Career commitment and intrinsic motivation
 - 3.2 Career commitment and extrinsic motivation

Research Hypotheses *Please refer to Figure (1)

The following hypotheses present the arguments of the research study:

H1a: The higher the career commitment the higher the intrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education.

H1b: The higher the career commitment the higher the extrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design

This research utilized a quantitative and predictive correlational approach.

The two variables that were measured include degree of career commitment, as independent variables, and the level of the staff nurse's motivation to pursue postgraduate education as dependent variable.

Sample and study site

The sample of this study was drawn from a pool of staff nurses working in one of the government tertiary hospitals in the Philippines. The staff nurses with at least two years working

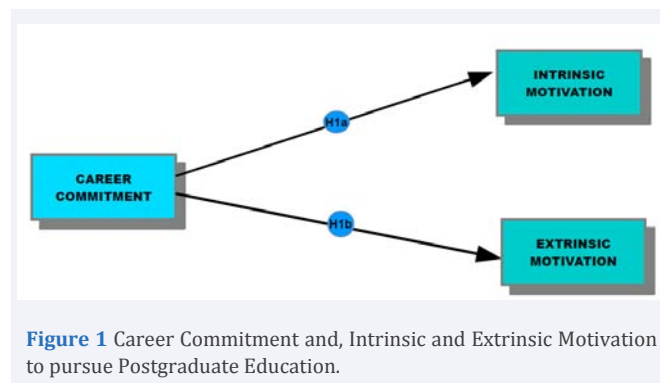


Figure 1 Career Commitment and, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation to pursue Postgraduate Education.

experience were selected. Purposive sampling was used in this research due to the availability constraints occurred. Due to holiday season some of the qualified respondents were on leave. Therefore out of 120 staff nurses from nine selected departments, only 97 participated in the study. Confidence Interval formula was used to form the sample size (n=97).

Sample characteristics are shown in Table (6)

Research instrumentation: The research instruments utilized in the study were validated by the experts in the field of human resources development, business administration, nursing, and nursing education. Authority validation of the instrument was done by the authors of each instrument prior to the implementation of the actual study. To ensure the reliability of each instrument, a pilot testing was conducted and Cronbach Alpha was also computed. The pilot testing was done on a group of 10 nurses and was conducted in one of the tertiary hospitals in Metro Manila, which is not included in the actual study. Participants were asked to identify any items they had difficulty answering, and to specify the length of time it took to complete the questionnaire. The instrument utilized is composed of four parts. Part 1 is comprised of the questions regarding the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. Part 2 is related to the degree of career commitment of the respondents. Part 3 is composed of questions regarding the motivation to pursue postgraduate education of the respondents.

The reliability of the two main parts of the questionnaire was analyzed by a Cronbach's alpha quotient and had high internal reliability [21] with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83 for career commitment measurement while and 0.93 for Academic Motivation Scale. The questionnaire design was then finalized using the scores obtained during the pilot testing.

The three main parts are specifically described as follows:

Career Commitment Measurement (CCM)

Career commitment measurement is a 12-item scale developed by Carson and Bedeian [35]. It was used to measure the three dimensions of career commitment such as career identity, career planning and career resilience. Items number 1 to 3 are comprised of questions that measure career identity, items numbers 4 to 7 measured career resilience, and the last three items numbers 8 to 10 were negatively phrased that measure career planning. The respondents stated their degrees of commitment using a 7-point scale with 1 for strongly disagree

Table 1: Perceived Degree of Career Commitment among the Staff Nurses.

CCM - 10 ITEMS:	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Career Identity			
1. My line of work/career field is important part of who I am.	6.06	1.29	High
2. This line of work/career field has a great deal of personal meaning to me.	6.04	1.21	High
3. I strongly identify with my chosen line of work/career field.	5.86	1.18	High
Career Resilience			
4. The cost associated with my line of work/career field sometimes seem too great.	5.54	1.14	High
5. Given the problem I encounter in this line of work/career field, I sometimes wonder if I get enough out of it.	5.41	1.41	High
6. Given the problems in this line of work/career field, I sometimes wonder if the personal burden is worth it.	5.38	1.24	High
7. The discomforts associated with my line of work/career field sometimes seem to great.	5.04	1.36	High
Career Planning			
8. I do not have strategy for achieving my goals in this line of work/career field.	5.54	1.61	High
9. I do not identify specific goals for my development in this line of work/career field.	5.49	1.54	High
10. I do not often think about my personal development in this line of work/career field.	5.6	1.54	High
OVERALL	5.6	0.82	High
Qualitative Interpretation of Mean:			
1.0	– 3.00		Low
2.0	3.01 – 5.00		Moderate
3.0	5.01 – 7.00		High

Table 2: Level of Intrinsic Motivation to Pursue Postgraduate Education among the Staff Nurses.

AMS - 4 ITEMS:	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
11. Pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.	5.5	1.21	High
12. When I discover new things never seen before.	5.5	1.21	High
13. In broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me	5.5	1.26	High
14. To continue to learn about many things that interests me.	5.6	1.27	High
OVERALL	5.5	1.16	HIGH
Qualitative Interpretation of Mean:			
1.00 – 3.00			Low
3.01 – 5.00			Moderate
5.01 – 7.00			High

Table 3: Level of Extrinsic Motivation to Pursue Postgraduate Education among the Staff Nurses.

AMS - 10 ITEMS:	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
1. ...to obtain a more prestigious job later on.	5.18	1.31	High
2. ...to have "the good life" later on.	5.46	1.35	High
3. ...to have a better salary later on.	5.4	1.38	High
4. ...capable of completing a postgraduate education.	5.23	1.38	High
5. ...when I succeed in school I feel important.	4.68	1.77	Moderate
6...that I am an intelligent person.	4.3	1.60	Moderate
7. ...I can succeed in my studies.	4.93	1.67	Moderate
8. ...a better choice regarding my career orientation.	5.3	1.32	High
9. ...will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.	5.51	1.27	High
10. ...will improve my competence as a worker.	5.51	1.30	High
OVERALL	5.15	1.14	High
Qualitative Interpretation of Mean:			
1.00 – 3.00	Low; 3.01 – 5.00		Moderate; 5.01 – 7.00
High			

Table 4: The relationship between career commitment and motivation to pursue postgraduate education.

Relationship between the Variables	constant	β	R-squared	t-value	p-value	Result	Decision
Career Commitment and Intrinsic Motivation	2.647073	0.5152586	0.1301	3.77	0	Significant	(H1a)Supported
Career Commitment and Extrinsic Motivation	4.175085	0.2081588	0.0239	1.52	0.131	Not Significant	(H1b) Not Supported

Note: p-value significant at <0.05

Table 6: Socio-demographic profile of the respondents.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
GENDER	Male	36	37.1
	Female	61	62.9
	Total	97	100
AGE	30 and less	63	65
	31 to 40	20	20.6
	41 to 50	11	11.3
	51 and more	3	3.1
	Total	97	100
MARITAL STATUS	Single	67	69.1
	Married	30	30.9
	Total	97	100
HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL	BSN	90	92.8
ATTAINMENT	MAN	7	7.2
	Total	97	100
UNIT OF ASSIGNMENT	Emergency Room	8	8.2
	Female Surgery Ward	13	13.4
	Pedia ward	9	9.3
	Male Surgery Ward	8	8.2
	Pay Ward	10	10.3
	Birthing Center	7	7.2
	Medical Ward	10	10.3
	OB Ward	12	12.4
	Delivery Room	20	20.6
	Total	97	100
YEARS OF EMPLOYMENT	2 to 10	74	76.3
	11 to 20	17	17.5
	21 and more	6	6.2
	Total	97	100
YEARS OF TENURE	2 to 10	85	87.6
	11 to 20	8	8.2
	21 and more	4	4.1
	Total	97	100
MONTHLY SALARY	20-Nov	49	50.5
	21-30	44	45.4
	31-40	4	4.1
	Total	97	100

to 7 for strongly agree. Several studies [33-35] validated this instrument and had acceptable scores of reliability, e.g. 0.81 and 0.84. Carson and Bedeian [35] also reports that the coefficient alpha reliabilities for the three components ranged from .79 to .85.

Academic Motivation Scale (AMS)

This scale was utilized to measure the level of motivation of nurses. Robert J. Vallerand [36] designs the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), which is the result of extensive research done in the domain of self determination theory. It has 14-item questions that assessed extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. Items numbers 1 to 10 measured extrinsic motivation while numbers 11 to 14 measured intrinsic motivation. Respondents answered using 7-point Likert scale ranges from 1 for Does not correspond at all to 7 for corresponds exactly. The mean range was computed and the score was verbally interpreted as low, medium and high. The cronbach's coefficient from [37] was resulted and ranged from 0.81 to 0.87 which considered as high reliability [38].

Data gathering procedure

A letter of Intent addressed to the respective chief / head administrative officer was sent to the chosen Government Tertiary Hospital in Quezon City, Philippines. The letter was then forwarded to the IERB (Institutional Ethics Review Board) of the hospital. Selected respondents from nine nursing departments were then asked to sign the informed consent and were assured that all information are protected and are kept confidential. The researcher together with the department heads distributed survey questionnaires. The respondents were expected to genuinely and impartially answer the research instruments within one week to avoid the misplacement of the questionnaire.

Data analysis

Statistical analysis was carried out using Stata 12. Associations were assessed using simple regression analysis. P values less than or equal to 0.05 was considered statistically significant. To describe the level of career commitment and motivation, means and standard deviations were computed and translated into verbal interpretation.

Ethical consideration

The study adopted procedures and principles to minimize the risk of harm, to obtain consent, to protect anonymity and confidentiality, to avoid deceptive practices and to provide the right to withdraw policy of the subjects. Prior to the implementation, the University of Santo Tomas Graduate School Review Board Committee granted the ethical approval. Then the inform consent was provided to the respondents' and it includes the purpose of the study, methods of data collection and the process for protecting the confidentiality of the gathered information. The identities of the respondents were protected through giving the respondents the option to omit the name section in the part of socio-demographic data. All the respondents were informed that any participation is voluntary.

RESULTS

Table (6) shows the demographic characteristics of the

sample. According to the descriptive analysis, 62.9% of the respondents were female. For age, more than 60% of the sample are less than 30 years old. The majority of the sample falls in the category of single with 69.1%. In regards to the educational attainment, 92.8% of the respondents finished the University and present a Bachelor Degree. In terms of unit assignment, nursing service department designated the area where the respondents were selected. Nurses from delivery room represent the 20.6% of the respondents which also the highest among the chosen departments, and the rest were from female surgery ward (13.4%), obward (12.4%), pay ward (10.3%), medical ward (10.3%), pedia ward (9.3%), emergency room (8.2%), male surgicalward (8.2%) and birthing center (7.2%). The majority of the respondents have 2 to 10 years of employment (76.3%). And also, 87.6% of are tenured for less than 10 years. Concerning the salary of staff nurses, 50.5% of the respondents receive less than 20 thousand monthly.

To identify the nurses' level of relation to career commitment, the study used the following interpretation of mean: 1.00 - 3.00 Low, 3.01 - 5.00 Moderate, 5.01 - 7.00 High to have an equal mean distribution on its qualitative interpretation. It is observed that the respondents have high level of career identity. One of the reason behind this is that these people have high level of importance on their line of work ($\mu=6.06$, $\sigma=1.29$), that it have a great deal of personal meaning to them ($\mu=6.04$, $\sigma=1.21$) and that they strongly identify their chosen line of work/career field ($\mu=5.86$, $\sigma=1.18$). High level of career resilience was also found to these nurses citing cost associated with their work ($\mu=5.54$, $\sigma=1.14$) and problems that they encounter such as exhaustion ($\mu=5.54$, $\sigma=1.41$), personal burden ($\mu=5.38$, $\sigma=1.24$) and discomfort ($\mu=5.04$, $\sigma=1.36$). Nurses also found to have high level of strategy in achieving goals ($\mu=5.54$, $\sigma=1.61$), identification of specific goals ($\mu=5.49$, $\sigma=1.54$) and personal development ($\mu=5.60$, $\sigma=1.54$). This indicates that they have high level of obtrusive career planning.

Nurses are also observed to have high level of intrinsic motivation. By examining their responses, nurses are observed to have high pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things ($\mu=5.5$, $\sigma=1.21$), pleasure of discover new things never seen before ($\mu=5.5$, $\sigma=1.21$), high pleasure of broadening of knowledge about appealing subjects ($\mu=5.5$, $\sigma=1.26$), and pleasure in continue to learn about many things that interest them ($\mu=5.6$, $\sigma=1.27$). Overall, nurses have high level of intrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education.

When it comes to extrinsic motivation, prestigious at a later time ($\mu=5.18$, $\sigma=1.31$), promise of good life (5.46, $\sigma=1.35$), higher salary ($\mu=5.40$, $\sigma=1.38$), capability of completing a postgraduate education ($\mu=5.23$, $\sigma=1.38$), good choice of career orientation ($\mu=5.30$, $\sigma=1.32$), career preparation ($\mu=5.51$, $\sigma=1.27$), and improvement of skills and competitiveness ($\mu=5.51$, $\sigma=1.30$) are the main drivers that boost their extrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education. On the other hand, feeling of importance ($\mu=4.68$, $\sigma=1.77$), intellectual capability ($\mu=4.30$, $\sigma=1.60$) and achievement in studies ($\mu=4.93$, $\sigma=1.67$) moderately boost their intrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education.

To compare the relations to career commitment and intrinsic motivation. Career commitment has a significant relationship

with intrinsic motivation ($t=3.77$, $p=0.000$). Given that the research is looking at career commitment as the only predictor of intrinsic motivation, the amount of variance is only 13.01%. A lower r -squared value is very common when the model is not too fitted specially when there is only one independent variable that affects the dependent variable. According to Frost⁷, significance of regression models despite of low r -square value occurs because of high variability within the model. Figure (3) below shows that the data points are scattered within the linear line even though it shows a significant upward trend. However, precise prediction was not expected, provided that the study's focus is on career commitment alone as a predictor and that there are other factors beyond this study that may have an effect or can predict intrinsic motivation. A unit increase in career commitment leads to an increase in intrinsic motivation by 0.5153. The impact of career commitment to intrinsic motivation is shown in the constant value of 2.647 because without career commitment, intrinsic motivation of an individual will be equal to 2.647. Thus, an increase of 0.5153 is indeed significant for intrinsic motivation to increase.

Concerning career commitment and extrinsic motivation. No significant relationship was observed between career commitment and extrinsic motivation ($t=1.52$, $P=0.131$). Career commitment can only explain 2.39% amount of variance to extrinsic motivation which supported by higher constant value of 4.175. Figure (4) shows that insignificant relationship between career commitment and extrinsic motivation is because those with low or high extrinsic motivation still have high career commitment. Therefore, respondents with high career commitment tends to have higher and lower extrinsic motivation. However, this result also showed that there are respondents who have high career commitment who tends to have lower extrinsic motivation.

DISCUSSION

Results for career commitment level denote that nurses from selected government tertiary hospital have a strong sense of identification towards their chosen career, have high adaptation to adversities and have an active involvement to set high career goal for themselves thus proved to have high level of career commitment. This is best explained by Carson's and Bedeian's [39] conceptualization of career commitment, which originated from London's career motivation theory [20]. It mentioned that individuals who are committed to their career are more likely to set high career goals for themselves and put more effort and pursue these even when they have obstacles to achieve their career objectives. This is consistent to several studies [21,40] which stated that career identity, career planning and career resilience appear to be the significant determinant of career commitment. Lumanlan [41] states that Filipinos are known to be resilient people for their capability to adapt especially on adversity. Likewise, the study of Andrade et al. [42], stressed that high levels of career identity and planning would best define the commitment of nurses. They [42] stated that the high level of career planning might indicate that the nurses devise strategies, objectives, plans, and goals, aspects considered as responsible for professional development.

As for intrinsic motivation, majority of nurses have high level

of intrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education. The findings pointed out that nurses are motivated to embark on postgraduate education because of their interest to learn, and the pleasure and satisfaction they may experience when discovering new things. This is similar to the study of [8], which states that an individual performs a task in order to achieve satisfaction, which is internally rewarding. Furthermore, Richardson [10] also emphasized that the reason why people pursue advanced education is because of intrinsic rewards, importance of getting it and the satisfaction of accomplishing it.

In terms of extrinsic motivation, results proved that majority of the nurses were also extrinsically motivated to pursue postgraduate education. Specifically, nurses were motivated to pursue postgraduate education to further improve their competence as a worker and to better prepare for the career they have chosen. This confirms the international findings [9], which emphasized that nurses engaged in continuing formal education to improve quality nursing care, to develop competency to meet their patient's expectation and to attain advanced knowledge and skills. In addition, nurses from selected government tertiary hospital have also the desire for better outcomes of pursuing postgraduate education such as to have a good life and a better salary. This supports previous studies [43,44], which showed that income has positively influenced the students decision to further studies. Likewise, Adamu et al. [16], asserted that aside from enhancement of knowledge, professional advancement, acquisition of credentials, and promotion prospect, pay increase also propelled nurses to embrace continuing formal education.

Whilst, in questions numbers 5 to 7, the results show a moderate level. It means that these types of extrinsic motivation do not have an impact on nurses' motivation to pursue postgraduate education. According to Vallerand [36] who developed the academic motivation scale, these questions are under the introjection variant of extrinsic motivation based on self-determination theory. Introjection is stimulated by several factors; such as, an approval motive, avoidance of shame, contingent self-esteem, and ego-involvements. Particularly, to show the intelligence and capabilities to succeed in taking postgraduate education do not highly motivate nurses. This is aligned with the finding that states that introjected regulations are considered as poor quality student motivation [45].

Regarding the nurses' level of career commitment to intrinsic motivation, can be explained contextually that nurses who present high emotional attachment to their career (career identity), have a clear career plan (career planning) and high capability to resist the career disruption (career resilience) will be more intrinsically motivated to embark on postgraduate education. Consistent to the study [46] which states that career identity proves to have an influence to learning motivation, that students who have a career identity feel more committed to their studies. In terms of career planning, the study of Antoniu [24] emphasized that it contributes to increase employees professional satisfaction thus several studies [15,25,26,28] considered it as necessary for the success in the professional life and career. The findings of the study is also supported by the resilience theory which stressed that individuals, communities and organizations recover from crisis, continue to perform in the

midst of adversities and even radically change to prevent future risk exposure and continue their development process [27]. In contrast the study of Riveros & Tsai [21] states that sometimes too much of emotional attachment and too much of planning might cause a negative effect on commitment, which means less motivation. However, the findings display that nurses with high level of career commitment and intrinsic motivation will more likely pursue postgraduate education. This is consistent with the idea that career commitment of an individual can lead to desirable outcomes within his or her career [34].

As for career commitment and extrinsic motivation, the high level of career commitment among nurses does not necessarily imply high levels extrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education. This can be analyzed that even though nurses have a high level of career commitment still they will not be extrinsically motivated to pursue postgraduate education. Thus, apparently, this relationship between career commitment and extrinsic motivation among nurses from selected government tertiary hospital may have occurred because of the guarantees provided by the hospital. The result found in another study was contrary to the result found in this study. In particular, the study of Richards and Potrieger [9] the strong motivators indicated by the nurses in pursuing continuing formal education were financial, promotional, support from management in the work environment, peer support, and good professional role models. These sorts of physiological rewards serve as motivation to the nurses and not because their career commitment is high. On the other hand, according to some studies [47-49], the organization that provides career commitment procedures and strategy to its employees, e.g. personal learning, career appraisal and career training basically aims to obtain favorable output. And also, it is imperative for an organization to have a work environment that improves the commitment of the employees to their careers as well as with their occupation [33].

CONCLUSION

It was the objective of this research to unveil and measure the motivation that drives staff nurses to pursue postgraduate education, and how the level of their career commitment can influence their decision. Primarily nurses in government tertiary hospital have a strong relation of affection and identification to their career. These professionals can also easily adapt to the adversities associated with their career field. And have a level of involvement in their career goals. It was also found that nurses who possess high degree of career commitment are also intrinsically motivated to pursue postgraduate education. Generally, nurses are motivated to embark on postgraduate education because of their interest to learn, to discover new things, and to broaden their knowledge. However, a level of nurses' career commitment does not influence their level of extrinsic motivation. What motivates them are the extrinsic factors offer inside the hospital. Specifically, nurses have the desire to improve their competence as a worker and to better prepare for the career they have chosen.

Therefore, is it imperative to develop strategies to maintain high level of career commitment for nurses to keep them motivated to grow and to learn more about their chosen career? This includes monthly gathering for self-expression, which aid

each nurse to identify what they are passionate about their job, what assignments that challenge them and what measures they have done to surpass it, how much they value their job, and what insights they made about achieving subjective career outcomes [49]. Such means of reflection could be a prefatory step towards strengthening career commitment. Furthermore, it is also essential to develop assistance programs for excellently performing nurses who have the desire to embark on postgraduate education. This includes a financial assistance to assist them with the costs of postgraduate education. Furthermore, there is a need for assistance on negotiation and funding arrangement with universities who offer postgraduate course. In some countries, the full cost of postgraduate study for their workforce are covered by government funding. In this regard, the high cost of postgraduate courses, which is one of the main sources of frustration and concern amongst those who aspire to pursue postgraduate education will be alleviated by government funding and assistance. This may be taken into account when creating an incentive provision policy.

The researcher perceives that this study will provide significant contribution to the nursing practice. This will serve as guidelines on administrative planning and development in designing effective continuing professional development programs for nurses. Additionally, it will serve as a reference to different fields of human resource management in establishing objectives, policies and procedures in proper implementation and provision of postgraduate education to different levels of employees. Lastly, it will provide significant contribution to future researchers who will conduct a similar study.

LIMITATION

Concerning limitations of the research, this study only determined the underlying relationship between career commitment and academic motivation. Some variables that may also influence the pursuit of post-graduate education in nurses were not included in this research. The researcher highlights the study field being restricted to only one hospital. The study was conducted within boarders as the rules and policies of the organization such as data collection directly from the respondents were not allowed. Finding the appropriate participant could be an additional hurdle as they were chosen based on the specific criteria needed. In data gathering, the allocated time was only limited to one week to avoid the misplacement of the questionnaire. The period of time when the study was conducted was a holiday season thus some of the selected respondents were on leave. The researcher points out the difficulty of comparing the findings to other studies on the same topic, the references and the review of literature on two respective variables of this research were limited. Thus, expanded samples such as regional or national are suggested for future studies so results can be generalized.

Figure (1) demonstrates the relationship between career commitment and motivation to pursue postgraduate education. The research model is based on the result findings of various studies cited and reflected on the following theories that support the study: career motivation theory and self-determination theory.

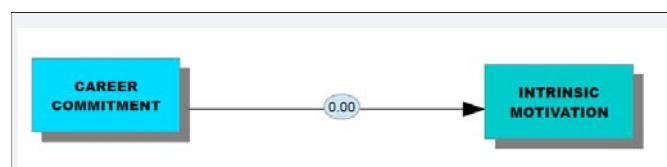


Figure 2 Emerging Model of Career Commitment and Intrinsic Motivation to pursue Postgraduate Education.

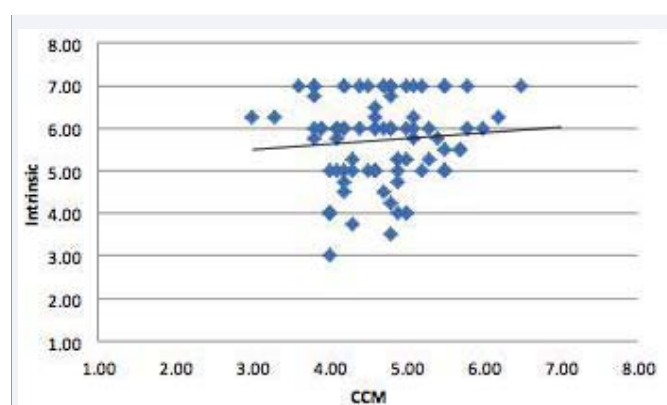


Figure 3 Scatter plot of the relationship between career commitment and intrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education.

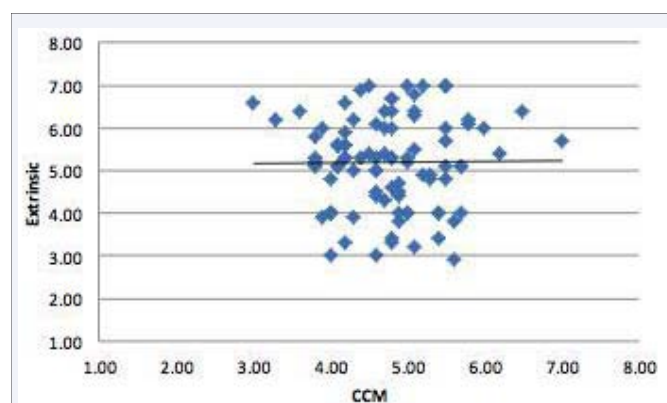


Figure 4 Scatter plot of the relationship between career commitment and extrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education.

Figure (2) demonstrates the relationship between career commitment and intrinsic motivation to pursue postgraduate education among nurses. The research model summarizes the result of this study in which staff nurses with high level of career commitment are also intrinsically motivated to pursue postgraduate education.

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