

Short Paper

# School Culture, Self-Efficacy, and Job Readiness of Student Nurses from a University in Quezon City

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## **Abstract**

This descriptive-correlational study investigated the relationship between school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness among 197 nursing students in Quezon City, Philippines. A modified questionnaire assessed the students' perceptions across the three domains. Results indicated a positive perception of school culture (mean=3.41), emphasizing on the effective learning opportunities. Self-efficacy (mean=3.35) demonstrated student confidence in managing complex situations. Job readiness (mean=3.40) highlighted strong interpersonal skills, while confidence in applying nursing knowledge was relatively lower. Moderate and strong positive correlations were found between school culture and job readiness ( $r=0.393$ ) and self-efficacy and job readiness ( $r=0.571$ ), respectively. These findings underscore the importance of a supportive school culture and strong self-efficacy in preparing nursing students for professional practice. Creating learner-centric educational environments that foster open communication, collaboration, and practical learning can enhance job readiness and facilitate a smoother transition into the healthcare workforce.

**Keywords** – School Culture, Self-Efficacy, Job Readiness, Hybrid Learning, Nursing Students

## **INTRODUCTION**

Filipino nurses are renowned globally, comprising the largest percentage of immigrant registered nurses in the United States. A 2019 U.S. Census reported that 357,300 Filipino immigrants work in the U.S. healthcare system, with 143,000 serving as registered nurses, making the Philippines the top supplier of foreign-born RNs in the country. Additionally, over 300,000 Filipino nurses serve in North America, the Middle East, Europe, and Oceania, recognized for their clinical expertise and high-quality patient care. The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) announced in 2023 that 25,761 graduates passed the nursing licensure exam, signifying a new generation of Filipino nurses preparing to meet the demands of local and international healthcare environments.

As nursing graduates transition into professional roles, their job readiness, comprising clinical knowledge, critical thinking, and technical and communication skills, is essential to meeting workplace expectations. This readiness, influenced by school culture and self-efficacy, is pivotal for career success. School culture encompasses shared values,

beliefs, and practices that shape the learning environment, fostering students' academic and personal growth. Positive school cultures enhance student confidence and motivation, equipping them with the skills to face professional challenges. Self-efficacy, or belief in one's ability to perform tasks, directly impacts a student's resilience, decision-making, and motivation, which are critical for navigating the complexities of healthcare.

The COVID-19 pandemic further reshaped nursing education, transitioning many students to online and hybrid learning models. While these modes offered flexibility, they presented challenges such as limited clinical exposure and reduced interactions, potentially impacting students' preparedness for clinical practice. Nursing students graduating in 2025, who experienced both online and hybrid learning, face unique circumstances in their educational journey compared to peers in traditional learning environments.

While studies have explored the impact of school culture and self-efficacy on various academic outcomes, their specific roles in nursing students' job readiness remain underexplored. This study examines the relationship between school culture, self-efficacy, and the perceived job readiness of nursing students who experienced hybrid learning, addressing gaps in understanding and providing insights to enhance nursing education and professional preparation.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A supportive school culture and strong self-efficacy are essential components in preparing nursing students for professional practice. School culture, defined by shared values, norms, and expectations, significantly shapes academic identity and institutional climate. Kalkan (2020) emphasized that this cultural foundation governs institutional behavior, while Amtu et al. (2020) described it as a guiding framework for interaction and achievement. When students experience psychological safety and trust within a cohesive learning environment, their academic engagement and sense of belonging are enhanced (Chen et al., 2021).

A strong sense of belonging contributes to motivation, skill development, and job readiness. Bayar and Karaduman (2021) linked robust school culture with the development of workplace competencies such as communication and collaboration. Longaretti (2020) further noted that a student's feeling of inclusion reliably predicts academic performance, especially during key transitions. Markham, Green, and Nelson (2021) highlighted how school connectedness reduces bullying and supports psychological well-being in nursing students.

Beyond the classroom, identity is reinforced through extracurricular and experiential learning. Sun (2022) reported that co-curricular programs foster leadership and teamwork.

Clinical immersion, as Calma, Aniceto, and Garcia (2019) found, is particularly effective in strengthening professional identity and internal motivation among nursing students.

Equally critical is self-efficacy—the belief in one’s ability to perform tasks and achieve goals. According to Sabouripour, Ahmadi, and Kazemi (2021), self-efficacy is foundational to academic and professional success. Vaughan-Johnston and Jacobson (2020) differentiated between belief in one’s ability and the expected outcomes of actions, emphasizing the nuanced role this belief system plays in student behavior. Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021) argued that self-efficacy directly supports motivation and performance across contexts.

Empirical findings reinforce the impact of high self-efficacy. Brashi (2022) showed that nursing students with greater self-belief demonstrated better academic outcomes and were more workforce-ready. Gharibi et al. (2021) added that simulation-based training can enhance clinical self-efficacy, while Lyons and Bandura (2019) connected strong self-efficacy to job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Structured support within the clinical learning environment (CLE) further bridges the gap between education and practice. Dudley et al. (2020) found that a positive CLE boosts student confidence and readiness. Mentorship and constructive feedback, as recommended by Van Rooyen et al. (2019), play vital roles in reducing stress and fostering competence during this transition.

Finally, character education enhances employability by promoting ethical reasoning and adaptability. Wiguna et al. (2023) observed that students exposed to such programs demonstrated stronger decision-making and interpersonal skills.

In sum, cultivating a nurturing academic environment and strengthening self-efficacy through experiential learning are crucial strategies in developing job-ready nursing graduates. As Fitriyana, Djiwandono, and Basuki (2021) concluded, students with higher self-efficacy ratings perform better clinically and adjust more effectively to professional demands.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Study Design***

This study utilized a descriptive correlational research design to investigate the relationships among school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness in nursing students. As emphasized by Sage Publications (2007), this design enables the examination of associations between variables without manipulating them or establishing causal effects. It was appropriate for the study as it allowed independent measurement and analysis of

each variable in its natural setting. By focusing on correlation rather than causation, the design provided meaningful insights into how these constructs interact within the educational environment of nursing students.

### ***Setting and Participants***

The study was conducted at a university in Quezon City that offers a comprehensive nursing program. The institution's diverse academic population and strong emphasis on holistic education created a suitable environment for examining the influence of school culture and self-efficacy on job readiness. The participants were incoming senior nursing students who had experienced both online and hybrid learning modalities throughout their academic journey. Their transitional phase toward professional practice made them ideal subjects for exploring perceived job readiness in their educational environment and self-beliefs.

Participants were drawn from the senior cohort and were selected based on specific criteria. Inclusion criteria included official enrollment in the nursing program, presence during data collection, and willingness to provide informed consent. Students were excluded if they had no prior work experience or were members of the researchers' class, to minimize bias.

The sample size was determined to be 197 using the Raosoft sample size calculator, applying a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. Stratified random sampling ensured representation from each of the nine class sections. A total of 22 participants were randomly selected per class using an online randomization tool. This approach ensured that the sample accurately reflected the population of senior nursing students, enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

### ***Research Instrument***

The instrument used was a self-administered, closed-ended questionnaire divided into three sections corresponding to the study variables: school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness. All items employed a 4-point Likert scale to gauge participants' perceptions consistently and efficiently.

School culture was measured using a modified version of the School Culture Triage Survey developed by Wagner (2006). Although originally intended for educators, the tool was adapted to reflect the student perspective by rewording or excluding items related to faculty and administrative roles and emphasizing aspects such as peer interaction, support systems, and classroom climate. Responses ranged from "Never" (1) to "Always" (4).

Self-efficacy was assessed using a revised version of the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) created by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), based on Bandura's theory of self-efficacy. The items were contextualized for nursing education, addressing the students' confidence in managing academic and clinical responsibilities. Responses ranged from "Not at all true" (1) to "Exactly true" (4).

Job readiness was evaluated using a modified version of the Work Readiness Assessment Scale (WRAS) originally developed by Cabrera (2020) for senior high school students. The scale was tailored to reflect the competencies expected of nursing students by modifying terminology and excluding items irrelevant to clinical practice. It measured attributes such as professional behavior, communication skills, and applied knowledge using a relevance scale from 1 (Not Relevant) to 4 (Highly Relevant).

To ensure content validity, the survey underwent review by a panel of five experts in nursing education, psychometrics, and research. Each expert evaluated the relevance, clarity, and alignment of items with the intended constructs. Suggestions were used to refine the wording and structure of the instruments. Following expert validation, a pilot test was conducted with 30 nursing students not included in the main sample. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure internal consistency. Results indicated acceptable reliability: 0.73 for the School Culture section, 0.72 for Self-Efficacy, and 0.70 for Job Readiness. These values meet the standard threshold for reliability in educational research.

## **Data Collection**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the university's Ethics Committee. Additional approval was secured from the Dean of the College of Nursing, the Director of the University Research and Development Center, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Participants were selected using a randomized process from class lists. Informed consent was collected digitally via Google Forms, where students were also provided with a study overview and confidentiality notice.

The survey was administered online using Google Forms. Participants accessed the form through a provided QR code or link. Data collection spanned four weeks, with sessions scheduled according to participants' availability to encourage maximum participation. Confidentiality and data protection were observed throughout the study process.

## **Data Analysis**

Collected responses were organized using Google Forms and Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were used to assess perceptions of school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness. Interpretation of scores was

based on standardized cutoffs: scores between 3.50 and 4.00 indicated a very high perception, 2.50 to 3.49 indicated high, 1.50 to 2.49 indicated average, and 1.00 to 1.49 indicated low levels of perception.

Job readiness scores used a relevance-based interpretation, where 3.50 to 4.00 represented “highly relevant,” 2.50 to 3.49 as “quite relevant,” 1.50 to 2.49 as “somewhat relevant,” and 1.00 to 1.49 as “not relevant.”

To analyze relationships among the variables, Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was applied due to the ordinal nature of the data. Correlation coefficients were interpreted as follows: >0.70 as very strong, 0.40–0.69 as strong, 0.30–0.39 as moderate, 0.20–0.29 as weak, and 0.01–0.19 as negligible. This method provided a robust and reliable measure of association among the key study variables.

## RESULTS

This study investigated the perceived school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness of nursing students, with a particular focus on their transition from academia to professional practice. The research aimed to explore the relationships between these variables and their impact on the students’ preparedness to meet employer expectations upon graduation. The findings underscored the significant correlation among school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness, highlighting their interrelated roles in shaping student outcomes. Each variable was independently evaluated using a comprehensive, four-part modified questionnaire to ensure a detailed assessment.

*Table 1. Overall Mean and Interpretation of Perceived School Culture, Self-Efficacy, and Job Readiness of Student Nurses (n=197)*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Overall Mean Score</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
School Culture	3.41	High
Self-Efficacy	3.35	High
Job Readiness	3.4	Quite relevant

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on student nurses’ perceptions of school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness. Perceived school culture scored a mean of 3.41 (“High”), suggesting that students generally experience a supportive and structured academic environment. This indicates effective institutional practices in promoting collaboration and skill development. However, lower ratings in areas related to student voice and feedback mechanisms point to opportunities for improving participatory engagement.

Self-efficacy received a mean score of 3.35 (“High”), indicating that students feel capable of managing academic and clinical demands. This reflects strong internal motivation and resilience. Still, some uncertainty was noted in dealing with unanticipated clinical scenarios, highlighting a need for more hands-on and scenario-based learning.

Job readiness yielded a mean of 3.40 (“Quite Relevant”), reflecting students’ confidence in their interpersonal skills and motivation to enter the workforce. However, concerns about the application of theory in practice suggest a gap between academic instruction and clinical preparedness.

These findings emphasize the need for integrated educational strategies that strengthen institutional support, enhance experiential learning, and promote student agency, thereby ensuring that graduates are both clinically competent and psychologically prepared for professional nursing roles.

*Table 2. Correlation of Perceived School Culture, Self-Efficacy, and Job Readiness of Student Nurses*

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Job Readiness</b>		<b>Decision</b>
School Culture	Spearman’s Rho	0.393	Moderate Positive Correlation
	p-value	<0.001	
Self-Efficacy	Spearman’s Rho	0.571	Strong Positive Correlation
	p-value	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	

p<0.05

Table 2 presents the correlation analysis among perceived school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness. A moderate positive correlation was found between school culture and job readiness ( $r = 0.393$ ), suggesting that inclusive, collaborative, and supportive academic environments enhance students’ perceived preparedness for clinical roles. A stronger positive correlation emerged between self-efficacy and job readiness ( $r = 0.571$ ), emphasizing the critical role of psychological empowerment in employability. This supports Bandura’s social cognitive theory, wherein belief in one’s abilities fosters motivation, resilience, and performance. The findings indicate that while institutional culture provides foundational support, self-efficacy more directly influences students’ confidence and clinical adaptability. Consequently, nursing education must adopt dual strategies—cultivating a nurturing school culture and promoting self-efficacy through simulation, mentorship, and reflective practice. This integrated approach is essential to prepare student nurses for the complex realities of professional healthcare settings.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are consistent with the existing body of literature, affirming that a positive school culture—marked by a supportive learning environment, strong institutional values, and a sense of camaraderie—plays a significant role in enhancing the skills and knowledge acquisition of nursing students. A culture that promotes belongingness and tradition fosters student engagement and academic focus. However, despite these benefits, a persistent challenge in nursing education involves fostering an open environment where students feel empowered to contribute ideas about institutional practices without fear of reprisal. This issue reflects communication barriers identified in heterogeneous student populations, as highlighted by Chen, Yu, and Chang (2021) and Finneran, O’Neill, and Garvey (2021), who emphasized that inclusive, collaborative environments are often hindered by hierarchical structures or cultural dynamics within nursing schools.

In addition, this study underscores the enduring concern within nursing education regarding clinical preparedness. According to Calma et al. (2019) and Oracion et al. (2019), robust and diverse clinical experiences are crucial for fostering evidence-based practice and cultivating professional maturity. When nursing programs provide extensive, hands-on exposure in real clinical environments, students are better prepared for the complexities of professional practice. Markham, Porter, and Tilson (2021) further emphasize the importance of school connectedness in mitigating stress and encouraging positive academic and social behaviors, which in turn enhance learning outcomes and job readiness.

Self-efficacy also emerged as a key factor in determining how nursing students respond to academic and clinical challenges. Students with high levels of self-efficacy were more likely to demonstrate confidence, persistence, and adaptability—traits that are essential for navigating demanding clinical situations and transitioning effectively into professional roles. As Sabouripour, Roslan, and Samah (2021) assert, self-efficacy contributes to improved stress management and fosters a proactive, goal-oriented mindset. Brashi (2022) likewise supports the view that higher self-efficacy is associated with greater resilience and application of theoretical knowledge in practice. However, findings from this study also point to gaps in psychological preparedness and resourcefulness when facing unexpected clinical scenarios, highlighting an area for curricular enhancement.

This concern resonates with the observations of Moksnes, Espnes, and Haugan (2018), who noted that resilience and adaptability—both nurtured through self-efficacy—are essential coping mechanisms as students transition into the workforce. While nursing students in this study reported confidence in communication and interpersonal interactions, aligned with findings from Jamieson, Taua, and Mitchell (2019), the persistent difficulty in translating classroom knowledge into clinical competence remains a critical

issue. AlMekkawi and El Khalil (2020), as well as Leufer and Cleary-Holdforth (2020), described this theory-practice gap as a central challenge in nursing education.

Bridging this divide requires intentional strategies, such as extended clinical orientations, consistent mentorship by positive role models, and timely, constructive feedback. Baumann, Kolotylo, and Zeytinoglu (2019) and Kurniawan, Fitria, and Prabandari (2019) argue that such measures significantly improve students' confidence and competence, thereby facilitating a smoother transition to practice.

Ultimately, the concept of job readiness must be viewed through a multifaceted lens. It is not merely a function of technical skill acquisition but is shaped by the interplay of personal efficacy and institutional support structures. A well-supported educational environment, enriched with relevant clinical exposure and strengthened by high student self-efficacy, cultivates key professional competencies such as decision-making, problem-solving, and adaptability. As Nurlaela, Hidayat, and Mustakim (2021) suggest, these attributes are essential for thriving in the dynamic, often unpredictable environments of modern healthcare. Curry and Milsom (2022) add that the ability to navigate complexity and uncertainty is a hallmark of job-ready graduates.

The present study reinforces the need for nursing education to evolve beyond the traditional emphasis on knowledge and skill mastery. As Tentama and Abdillah (2019) and Fitriyana, Pratiwi, and Siregar (2021) emphasize, self-efficacy catalyzes professional resilience and independence—qualities that are fundamental to successful clinical integration. By developing confidence, adaptability, and strong interpersonal capabilities alongside technical proficiency, nursing programs can better prepare graduates to deliver high-quality care in high-pressure settings. This holistic approach to job readiness is crucial for sustaining competence, well-being, and long-term career success in today's demanding healthcare systems.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study analyzed responses from 197 student nurses at a private university in Quezon City and established a significant connection between school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness. Respondents rated their job readiness as "Quite Relevant" (mean = 3.40), with favorable perceptions of school culture (mean = 3.41) and self-efficacy (mean = 3.35). These findings affirm that both a supportive educational environment and psychological empowerment are vital in developing competent and confident nursing graduates.

A nurturing academic atmosphere—marked by structured learning opportunities and a strong sense of community—was shown to enhance students' confidence and adaptability. However, challenges emerged, including students' limited confidence in

contributing to institutional improvement (mean = 2.95) and difficulties applying theoretical knowledge in clinical contexts (mean = 3.01). These results highlight the need for educational institutions to adopt learner-centered strategies that promote both technical competence and psychosocial development.

The study proposes five key recommendations. First, institutions should formalize practices that reinforce school culture by maintaining accessible learning resources, promoting collaboration, and encouraging peer mentoring. Student-led seminars and team-based projects can further develop belongingness and cooperative learning.

Second, inclusive dialogue must be promoted through institutionalized feedback platforms. Student-faculty consultative councils and digital suggestion tools can create a culture of shared governance, encouraging students to actively participate in curriculum and policy development.

Third, the clinical curriculum should embed self-efficacy development through scenario-based learning. Simulation training, interdisciplinary exposures, and critical care rotations can improve students' ability to manage unexpected clinical situations. Reflective practice and evidence-based projects should also be integrated to enhance decision-making and real-world application.

Fourth, bridging the gap between knowledge and practice is essential. While students reported high interpersonal effectiveness (mean = 3.80), their confidence in applying theoretical knowledge was lower. Institutions should implement job readiness modules featuring skills workshops, boot camps, and personalized support pathways based on performance data. These should be complemented by academic advising and early intervention strategies.

Fifth, employability skills must be intentionally developed through stress management programs, communication training, mobility drills, and interprofessional collaboration exercises. Career-readiness interventions—such as mock interviews, resume-building workshops, and employer engagement—should be integrated with support from healthcare partners and alumni. Faculty development should include mentorship metrics to ensure accountability in supporting student outcomes.

From a policy standpoint, the establishment of a Center for Student Development and Resilience is recommended. This unit would provide integrated services on mental health, skills development, and career preparation. Regular, data-informed curriculum audits should also be institutionalized to maintain alignment with evolving healthcare standards.

Future research should adopt qualitative or mixed methods to explore the nuanced relationships among school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness. Variables such as

resilience and learning motivation warrant inclusion in future frameworks to offer a more comprehensive understanding of student preparedness for clinical practice. These findings offer actionable insights to refine nursing education and strengthen the transition from student to professional nurse.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

The findings of this study highlight the need for continued research into the complex interplay between school culture, self-efficacy, and job readiness among nursing students. Future investigations should adopt qualitative methodologies, such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and ethnographic case studies, to capture the lived experiences of students as they navigate academic and clinical environments. These approaches can provide richer insights into how institutional culture influences motivation, confidence, and preparedness for professional roles.

There is also a need to explore the mediating and moderating effects of other psychosocial variables, such as resilience, learning motivation, and emotional intelligence, on the development of job readiness. Understanding these relationships could inform the design of more targeted educational interventions that address not only clinical competencies but also the emotional and cognitive aspects of professional formation.

Longitudinal studies tracking students from entry into nursing programs through post-graduation employment may offer valuable data on how self-efficacy and school culture contribute to long-term career outcomes. Additionally, comparative studies across institutions, cultural contexts, or health disciplines could help identify best practices and contextual differences in preparing nursing students for real-world clinical demands.

Furthermore, research that integrates both student and educator perspectives can uncover alignment or gaps in perceptions regarding readiness, support systems, and instructional methods. This multi-stakeholder approach may yield actionable insights for curriculum enhancement, mentorship design, and faculty development programs.

Ultimately, advancing the research agenda in this area is critical to informing evidence-based strategies that promote holistic student development and ensure the production of competent, confident, and resilient nursing professionals ready to meet contemporary healthcare challenges.

## DECLARATIONS

### *Conflict of Interest*

No conflicts of interest exist between the authors that might be deemed significant to the article's content.

### *Informed Consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study before administration of the instrument.

### *Ethics Approval*

Ethics approval from the university IRB was obtained before data gathering.

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## Author's Biography

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Joanna Marie G. Chua is a 27-year-old graduating student from Trinity University of Asia – St. Luke's College of Nursing. Her academic focus is on critical care and intensive care nursing. She is committed to providing evidence-based, empathetic care to critically ill patients and aims to support improvements in ICU nursing.

Reese S. Chua is a 21-year-old graduating nursing student from Trinity University of Asia – St. Luke's College of Nursing. With a strong interest in surgical nursing, he is passionate about becoming an operating room (OR) nurse and is devoted to promoting patient safety and advancing perioperative care practices.

Tashanah Marie N. Cid is a 21-year-old nursing student at Trinity University of Asia – St. Luke's College of Nursing. She is deeply committed to providing quality care, promoting health, and making a meaningful difference in patient lives. Her training has strengthened her dedication to excellence, compassion, and service in the nursing profession.

Hannah Arabella J. Collamar is a 22-year-old graduating student from Trinity University of Asia – St. Luke's College of Nursing. She has a strong academic and clinical interest in operating room nursing and is passionate about pursuing a career in surgical care. Her focus is on providing safe, effective, and patient-centered care in high-acuity settings.

Diana Rose P. Concha is a 22-year-old graduating student from Trinity University of Asia – St. Luke's College of Nursing. She has a particular interest in operating room (OR) and neurocritical care nursing. She is driven to contribute to specialized areas of nursing that demand precision, emotional resilience, and clinical excellence.

Roselene Jane E. Consumo is a 23-year-old nursing student from Trinity University of Asia – St. Luke’s College of Nursing. Her academic and clinical interests are centered on intensive care nursing. She aspires to develop advanced critical care skills and is committed to providing evidence-based care that improves patient outcomes.

Jasper Zeppi C. Cornejo is a 23-year-old graduating nursing student from Trinity University of Asia – St. Luke’s College of Nursing. His academic interests lie in emergency and trauma nursing. He thrives in high-stakes clinical environments and is devoted to delivering timely, compassionate care while supporting innovations in emergency healthcare practices.

Dr. Tristan Jourdan C. Dela Cruz is the Program Chair of Trinity University of Asia – St. Luke’s College of Nursing and serves as an Associate Professor in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. He brings extensive expertise in nursing research, palliative care, disaster nursing, and nursing education. A former emergency room nurse at St. Luke’s Medical Center–Quezon City and a former Dispute Resolution Owner at IBM Philippines, Dr. Dela Cruz integrates clinical and academic experience to advance nursing practice and leadership.