

Exploring the Lived Experiences of Generation Z Nurses in a Secondary Private Hospital in Quezon City

Patrizia Anne Beatriz P. Lozañes, RN¹, Dr. Joel John Dela Merced²

<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-8286-64851>¹, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1459-5274>²

St. Bernadeth of Lourdes College^{1,2}

plozanes@sbhc.edu.ph¹, jdelamerced@sbhc.edu.ph²

ABSTRACT

This study examined what it's like for Generation Z nurses working in a private hospital in Quezon City. The researcher wanted to know how these nurses see their jobs, what challenges they face, what motivates them, and who supports them. To do this, they talked to eleven Generation Z nurses in depth. The researcher found six things: How Generation Z nurses balance work and life by setting boundaries, managing time, and taking breaks. How Generation Z nurses work with professionals like doctors and other nurses as a team and respect each other. What stops Generation Z nurses from growing in their careers is not a lack of money, being too busy, or feeling burned out. What causes Generation Z nurses stress and burnout is caring for many patients in emergencies and feeling emotionally drained. What values are important to Generation Z nurses, such as kindness, caring about patients, honesty, and respect for others? What support do Generation Z nurses need from their organizations, such as staffing, resources, and training? The study shows that Generation Z nurses are strong and care about their work even when things are tough. They want to grow and learn. They need help from their organizations. The researchers think that hospitals and schools should support Generation Z nurses by providing opportunities to learn and grow and helping them take care of themselves. This will help keep Generation Z nurses happy and doing a job, which is good for patients.

Keywords: *Generation Z nurses, what it is like for Generation Z nurses studying Generation Z nurses, stress at work growing as a support, from organizations*

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, nurses, particularly those belonging to Generation Z, are becoming an essential part of the healthcare workforce. They are often described as technologically inclined, goal-oriented, and compassionate in their approach to work. Globally, Gen. Z nurses have been recognized for their contributions to the healthcare system. Studies conducted in countries such as Saudi Arabia and South Korea highlight that this group exhibits distinct traits in their values, attitudes, and workplace expectations. Despite these positive characteristics, recent data suggest that Generation Z nurses also face challenges with job satisfaction and retention. In the Philippine context, Generation Z nurses are considered a vital part of the future healthcare workforce, as they bring new ideas, digital skills, and innovative approaches to patient care.

Statement of the Problem

The study sought to answer the question: How do Generation Z nurses describe and make sense of their lived experiences while working in a secondary private hospital in Quezon City?

Scope and Delimitations

This study was limited to Generation Z nurses working in a secondary private hospital in Quezon City. The study focused on their lived experiences of work–life balance, workplace relationships, professional growth, and perceptions of organizational support. A total of 11 participants were selected using purposive sampling criteria. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted over a two-month period. The findings of the study are limited to the experiences of nurses in a single hospital setting and may not be generalizable to other healthcare environments. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be influenced by recall and personal bias.

Review of Related Literature

Gen Z nurses value supportive environments, opportunities for growth, teamwork, and inclusivity, but often experience challenges such as bureaucratic systems and feelings of being undervalued. Similarly, studies conducted in high-demand settings, such as emergency departments, reveal that these nurses are exposed to emotional stress, compassion fatigue, and burnout, which may affect both their well-being and professional performance. Coping strategies such as peer support, resilience-building, and maintaining work–life balance are identified as essential in managing these challenges. Furthermore, workplace relationships and organizational support play a crucial role in nurses' professional development and retention. Research indicates that collaboration, effective communication, and supportive leadership contribute to better adaptation and job satisfaction among nurses, while a lack of support and negative work environments increase stress and turnover intentions.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in Duchscher's Stages of Transition Theory, Benner's From Novice to Expert Theory, and Strauss–Howe Generational Theory. These theories provide developmental, professional, and generational perspectives in understanding how nurses transition into practice, develop competence, and express workplace values shaped by their cohort.

Conceptual Framework

This study focuses on the lived experiences of Generation Z nurses working in a secondary private hospital. It considers how their experiences are shaped by workplace challenges such as workload, stress, and organizational conditions, as well as interpersonal factors such as teamwork and professional relationships. In response to these factors, Generation Z nurses develop coping strategies, maintain work–life balance, and rely on support systems, which collectively influence their professional growth, well-being, and the quality of care they provide.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research approach to explore the lived experiences of Generation Z nurses working in a secondary private hospital in Quezon City.

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological research design.

Research Steps

Data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide developed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of open-ended questions focused on the lived experiences of Generation Z nurses, including their motivation, coping mechanisms, and perceptions of organizational support. The use of a semi-structured format allowed participants to share their narratives and personal perspectives freely, providing rich, in-depth insights into their experiences in the clinical setting.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

Participants in this study consisted of eleven Generation Z nurses working in a secondary private hospital in Quezon City. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who met the inclusion criteria. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes and was conducted in a private setting to ensure confidentiality. With the participants' consent, the interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accurate documentation of their responses.

Data Analysis Methods

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis using the framework of Braun and Clarke.

Research Hypotheses and Validation

To ensure the study's rigor, measures of credibility and trustworthiness were employed. The data were carefully transcribed and analyzed to accurately reflect the participants' lived experiences. Themes were reviewed and cross-checked to ensure consistency with the participants' responses. In addition, the use of verbatim statements helped ensure the accuracy of interpretation and grounded the findings in the actual narratives.

Study Limitations and ethical considerations

The study adhered to ethical standards by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality, and allowing participants to withdraw at any time. The researcher also ensured that participants' views were represented accurately and respectfully in the analysis and reporting. However, the study was limited to a small number of participants from a single private hospital, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the use of self-reported data and the researcher's interpretation may introduce potential bias.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The lived experiences of Generation Z nurses revealed six major themes

Theme1: Work–Life Balance Strategies

Setting boundaries, managing time, and prioritizing tasks are shaped by their everyday experiences in the hospital. This suggests that their approach to work–life balance is grounded in experience, particularly in moments when they begin to feel overwhelmed or burned out.

Theme 2. Interprofessional Collaboration

The participants emphasized the importance of teamwork, clear communication, mutual respect, shared responsibility, and professionalism in the workplace. For them, working in a hospital is not an individual task but a collective effort where each person contributes to achieving a common goal.

Theme 3. Professional Growth Constraints

It reflects both the motivation and the discouragement experienced by Generation Z nurses as they pursue their professional development.

Theme 4. Workplace Stress and Burnout

It reflects how nurses experience pressure as a daily part of their work and gradually become aware of its effects on their physical and emotional well-being.

Theme 5. Values in Nursing Practice

It reflects how their actions are shaped not only by clinical responsibilities but also by personal beliefs, ethical standards, and their sense of responsibility toward patients

Theme 6. Organizational Support and Development Needs

Generation Z nurses also expressed the importance of support systems and professional development opportunities in helping them cope and grow.

SUMMARY

The findings revealed that nurses actively manage their work through a combination of personal strategies and professional values as they navigate the demands of clinical practice. Their experiences showed that nursing work involves both physical and emotional challenges that require continuous adjustment and dedication. The study identified several key challenges, including heavy workload, workplace stress, burnout, and limited opportunities for professional growth. These factors affect both their well-being and their ability to consistently perform their roles. Despite these difficulties, Generation Z nurses demonstrated resilience by utilizing coping strategies such as time management, boundary setting, and reliance on teamwork and support systems. The findings also emphasized the importance of interprofessional collaboration and strong professional values such as compassion, accountability, and respect for patient dignity. These values guide nurses in maintaining patient-centered care even in demanding situations. Furthermore, the study highlighted the role of organizational support in shaping nurses' experiences. While support from colleagues and leaders helps them adapt to challenges, gaps in staffing, resources, and professional development opportunities continue to affect their overall work experience. Overall, the study shows that both individual coping mechanisms and organizational conditions significantly influence the well-being, professional development, and performance of Generation Z nurses in healthcare settings.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the findings indicate that the experiences of Generation Z nurses are shaped by a combination of personal effort and organizational factors. While they show resilience and motivation in their roles, their well-being, performance, and professional growth are closely influenced by the conditions within the healthcare environment. The study suggests that the experience of Generation Z nurses reflects a balance between personal motivation and systemic

challenges. While they demonstrate willingness and commitment to their profession, their long-term well-being and retention depend greatly on the support and conditions provided within the healthcare system. This highlights the need for a more supportive, responsive, and development-oriented environment that can sustain both their personal and professional growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Healthcare institutions are encouraged to strengthen organizational support systems by improving staffing levels, ensuring manageable workloads, and fostering a safe, supportive work environment. Addressing these factors may help reduce stress and burnout among Generation Z nurses. Hospitals may also implement structured professional development programs, including mentorship, training, and continuing education opportunities, to support the growth and competence of Generation Z nurses. Providing financial and institutional support for these programs may further enhance their accessibility. Healthcare organizations are encouraged to promote work-life balance by offering flexible scheduling, regular rest periods, and wellness programs that support nurses' physical and emotional well-being. Nurse leaders and supervisors may strengthen communication, teamwork, and support within the workplace to foster a more positive and collaborative environment. Recognizing nurses' efforts and providing guidance may also improve job satisfaction and retention.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The researcher humbly and faithfully expresses her gratitude and joy to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, our GOD, who gave her light through the Holy Spirit, with all the strength, knowledge, wisdom, courage, and determination to surpass all the hardships and to finally achieve her dream. To SBLC and graduate school, respectively, for the faith and support they have provided while I complete this journey. My thesis advisor, for his untiring support and insightful critiques throughout my research journey. Appreciation is likewise given to the panel members for their constructive feedback and recommendations that helped improve the quality of this study. Gratitude is also extended to participants for their valued time, for my colleagues and friends for their encouragement and support. Most importantly to the researcher's family for their unwavering support, patience, and understanding throughout the completion of this research.

AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

REFERENCES

Al-Moteri, M., Althobaiti, E., Aljuaid, G. M., Alotaibe, M. F., Alharthi, R. A., Alboqami, S. F., Berdida, D. J. E., & colleagues. (2025). The workplace expectations and preferences of Gen Z nurses: Exploratory factor analysis. *BMC Nursing*, 24(1).