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# FLOURISHING AMONG NURSE EDUCATORS IN PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES: DOMAIN PROFILES AND PERSONAL–PROFESSIONAL DIFFERENCES

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**Abstract**

Studies of nursing faculty well-being have relied mostly on measures of burnout and turnover intention. Flourishing is a broader, positive view of well-being that covers happiness, health, meaning, character, relationships, and financial stability. It has rarely been examined among nurse educators, and not at all, to our knowledge, among Filipino nurse educators. To describe nurse educators' well-being across eight flourishing domains and to determine whether well-being differs by personal and professional profile. A cross-sectional descriptive-evaluative and descriptive-comparative survey was conducted among 356 nurse educators in 36 private colleges of nursing in Region IV-A, Philippines. Well-being was measured with a 24-item, 4-point scale adapted from VanderWeele's flourishing framework. Weighted means, standard deviations, t-tests, one-way ANOVA, and post hoc tests were used. Overall well-being was favorable (weighted mean [WM] = 3.37). Character and caring was the highest domain and the only one rated "Strongly Agree" (WM = 3.63), followed by life satisfaction and meaning and purpose (both 3.48). Financial status and stability (3.12) and physical health (3.16) were lowest; confidence about one's financial future was the lowest item (2.99). Weekly working hours were associated with all eight domains, and educators working 12–18 hours per week had the highest means in six of them. These nurse educators show a purpose-rich but resource-thin form of flourishing: strong in character, meaning, and relationships, and weakest in financial security and physical health. Faculty well-being initiatives should address material and physical foundations rather than meaning, which is already high. Effect sizes are needed to confirm the profile differences.

**Keywords:** *flourishing; well-being; nurse educators; meaning and purpose; financial well-being; Philippines*

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background

The well-being of nurse educators matters beyond the individual. Faculty who are satisfied and well are more likely to stay, and faculty retention determines how many nurses can be trained (Boamah et al., 2023). Research on faculty well-being has largely taken a deficit approach, measuring burnout, emotional exhaustion, and intention to leave (Boamah et al., 2022; Christianson et al., 2026). A deficit lens shows what is going wrong. It cannot show which positive aspects of life are going well, and so which strengths institutions can build on and which gaps they should fill.

### Problem and Research Gap

VanderWeele (2017) defines flourishing as a state in which all aspects of a person's life are good. VanderWeele proposed measuring it across five domains: happiness and life satisfaction; mental and physical health; meaning and purpose; character and virtue; and close social relationships. A sixth domain, financial and material stability, captures the means of sustaining flourishing over time (Węziak-Białowolska, McNeely, & VanderWeele, 2019a). This framework now underpins the Global Flourishing Study, a panel of more than 200,000 participants in 22 countries, including the Philippines (VanderWeele et al., 2025). Studies applying flourishing measures to nurses have focused mainly on clinical nurses and nursing students in China and the Middle East (Kong et al., 2024; Shdaifat et al., 2024). To our knowledge, the domain profile of flourishing among nurse educators, and among Filipino nurse educators in particular, has not been described.

### Literature Review

**From ill-being to flourishing.** Well-being research has long distinguished hedonic well-being (life satisfaction and positive affect) from eudaimonic well-being (purpose, growth, and positive relations; Ryff, 1989). Keyes (2002) showed that the absence of mental illness is not the same as the presence of mental health, and introduced flourishing and languishing as states on a positive mental-health continuum. VanderWeele's (2017) framework extends this tradition by adding character, physical health, and financial stability. It argues that each domain is valued almost universally as an end in itself.

**Measurement across cultures and workplaces.** Flourishing indices developed within this framework have been tested across countries including the United States, China, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Mexico (Węziak-Białowolska, McNeely, & VanderWeele, 2019b). In workplace samples, the Flourish and Secure Flourish indices showed good reliability and validity (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2019a). In the first wave of the Global Flourishing Study, flourishing varied by country and by demographic characteristics such as age, and the Philippines was among the countries with high composite scores (VanderWeele et al., 2025).

**Flourishing among nurses.** Among 1,046 Chinese clinical nurses, flourishing level was one of the factors associated with self-care ability, along with sleep quality and relationships with colleagues (Kong et al., 2024). Among 328 Saudi nursing students, flourishing was associated with marital status and with disposition and behavior (Shdaifat et al., 2024). Among Canadian nursing faculty, work-life imbalance was associated with lower job and career satisfaction (Boamah et al., 2023). That evidence concerns job-related outcomes, however, not flourishing across life domains.

### Theoretical Framework

The study is grounded in VanderWeele's (2017) human flourishing framework. The instrument adapts its domains into eight subscales: life satisfaction, physical health, mental health, meaning and purpose, character and caring,

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relationships, financial status and stability, and affect. Two features of the framework guide the interpretation. First, the domains are distinct goods, so a high score in one (for example, meaning) does not compensate for a low score in another (for example, financial stability). Second, financial and material stability is treated as the means by which flourishing is *secured* over time (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2019a). A low financial score therefore signals vulnerability even when other domains are high.

**Research Questions and Hypothesis**

- RQ1: How do nurse educators assess their well-being in terms of life satisfaction, physical health, mental health, meaning and purpose, character and caring, relationships, financial status and stability, and affect?

- RQ2: Does well-being differ when nurse educators are grouped by age, sex, civil status, rank, position, highest educational attainment, years as faculty, weekly working hours, level of students handled, and employment status?

- H0: There is no significant difference in well-being when nurse educators are grouped by profile.

**Contribution**

The study provides (a) a domain-level flourishing profile of nurse educators in a Southeast Asian context; (b) evidence that their weakest domains are financial and physical rather than psychological or relational; and (c) profile-based evidence, especially on working hours, to guide targeted faculty well-being policy.

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## METHODS

### Research Design

This study used a quantitative, observational, cross-sectional survey design with two analytic components: a descriptive component, which estimated the level of well-being in the study population (RQ1), and a comparative component, which tested for differences in well-being between naturally occurring subgroups defined by personal and professional characteristics (RQ2). The study is reported in accordance with the STROBE statement for cross-sectional studies (von Elm et al., 2007).

**Table A. Study Variables and Their Role in the Design**

| Variable | Role | Measurement | Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Well-being: life satisfaction, physical health, mental health, meaning and purpose, character and caring, relationships, financial status and stability, affect | Outcome (8 domain scores) | Mean of 3 items per domain, 1–4 scale | Continuous |
| Overall well-being | Outcome (composite) | Mean of 8 domain means | Continuous |
| Age, sex, civil status, academic rank, position, highest educational attainment, years as faculty, weekly working hours, year level of students handled, employment status | Grouping variables (correlates) | Single-choice items | Categorical |

### Setting

The study was conducted in the 36 private higher education institutions offering nursing programs in the five provinces of Region IV-A (CALABARZON), Philippines: Cavite (12 institutions), Batangas (8), Laguna (7), Rizal (3), and Quezon (6). Data were collected between June 2025 and March 2026.

### Participants and Sampling

The accessible population comprised 942 nurse educators. The sample was stratified by institution and allocated proportionally, so that each institution contributed about 37.8% of its nursing faculty (Cavite 111; Batangas 97; Laguna 71; Rizal 22; Quezon 55; total 356). Every allocated place was filled, giving 356 complete responses. The dissertation describes the selection as stratified random sampling.

Eligible participants were Filipino nurse educators holding a current full- or part-time teaching appointment in classroom or clinical instruction, with at least one year of teaching experience, able to complete an online questionnaire independently, and giving informed consent. Educators in purely administrative or non-teaching roles, those on extended leave, and those unable to consent were excluded. Most participants were female (76.1%), married (61.2%), aged 36–45 (41.3%), and employed full-time (62.1%).

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**Instrument**

The well-being scale (Part IV of the questionnaire; Iglesia, 2026, Appendix A) was adapted by the researcher from VanderWeele's (2017) flourishing framework. It contains 24 positively worded items, three for each of the eight domains, rated on a 4-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree). Each item is presented in English with a Filipino translation; a certificate of translation is held on file. Mean scores were interpreted as 1.00–1.49 strongly disagree, 1.50–2.49 disagree, 2.50–3.49 agree, and 3.50–4.00 strongly agree.

The original flourishing measures use 0–10 response scales and different item wording (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2019a). The present instrument is therefore an adaptation, not the validated Flourish Index, and its scores cannot be compared directly with published Flourish Index norms.

Content validity was certified by four experts between 21 May and 5 June 2025: the dean of a college of allied health sciences, the dean of a graduate school, a clinical instructor-coordinator, and a psychologist. Three were affiliated with a state university and one with a private college. In a pilot with 20 nurse educators, Cronbach's α for the well-being scale was .735.

**Data Collection**

The protocol received ethics approval before any contact with participants. Letters were then sent to the deans, presidents, and research heads of the participating institutions, and non-responding institutions were visited in person. Eligible educators received an electronic information sheet and consent form. Those who consented completed the questionnaire on Google Forms, which took 10–15 minutes. Responses were coded (for example, A-1, A-2) and stored in a password-protected folder with an encrypted backup.

**Data Analysis**

For RQ1, items and domains were summarised with weighted means and standard deviations. For RQ2, domain scores were compared across profile groups with independent-samples t-tests (sex, employment status) and one-way ANOVA followed by post hoc comparisons (all other profile variables), using SPSS with two-tailed $\alpha = .05$.

Because RQ2 involved 80 tests (10 profile variables × 8 domains), the false discovery rate was controlled with the Benjamini–Hochberg procedure (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995) applied to the 80 reported p-values, with $q < .05$ taken as significant. p-values reported as ".000" in the dissertation were entered as .001, which is conservative; results were unchanged when they were entered as .0001.

**Ethical Considerations**

The protocol was approved by the Institutional Ethics Review Committee of Our Lady of Fatima University (Reference No. 2025-IERC2-20188, Version 3) on 6 May 2025, with approval valid until 6 May 2026. Data collection took place within this period. The study followed the 2022 National Ethical Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants. Participation was voluntary and unpaid, consent was given electronically, participants could withdraw at any time, and responses were anonymized by code. Participants who felt distressed could contact the researcher for referral to a counselor.

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## RESULTS

### RQ1: Levels of Well-Being Across Eight Domains

Overall well-being was rated favorably (WM = 3.37, "Agree"). Table 1 ranks the eight domains. Character and caring was the highest domain and the only one rated "Strongly Agree" (WM = 3.63). Life satisfaction and meaning and purpose followed (both 3.48), then relationships (3.46). The lowest domains were mental health (3.24), physical health (3.16), and financial status and stability (3.12).

**Table 1. Well-Being Across Eight Flourishing Domains, Ranked (N = 356)**

| Rank | Domain | WM | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Character and caring | 3.63 | 0.52 | Strongly agree |
| 2 | Life satisfaction | 3.48 | 0.59 | Agree |
| 2 | Meaning and purpose | 3.48 | 0.69 | Agree |
| 4 | Relationships | 3.46 | 0.53 | Agree |
| 5 | Affect | 3.39 | 0.66 | Agree |
| 6 | Mental health | 3.24 | 0.72 | Agree |
| 7 | Physical health | 3.16 | 0.81 | Agree |
| 8 | Financial status and stability | 3.12 | 0.74 | Agree |
| | Overall well-being | 3.37 | — | Agree |

Five items were rated "Strongly Agree" (Table 2): commitment to ethical behavior and integrity (WM = 3.73), feeling supported and loved by family and friends (3.71), showing compassion and empathy (3.67), feeling that one's life has meaning and purpose (3.61), and being motivated to achieve goals (3.59). The lowest items were confidence about one's financial future (2.99), feeling calm and relaxed most of the time (3.04), being generally healthy without major health concerns (3.13), and having enough energy for daily demands (3.13).

**Table 2. Item-Level Well-Being Assessments (N = 356)**

| Domain and item | WM | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Character and caring | | | |

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| Domain and item | WM | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Committed to ethical behavior and integrity | 3.73 | 0.50 | Strongly agree |
| Can show compassion and empathy | 3.67 | 0.52 | Strongly agree |
| Making a positive impact on others' lives | 3.48 | 0.54 | Agree |
| Life satisfaction | | | |
| My life has meaning and purpose | 3.61 | 0.54 | Strongly agree |
| Satisfied with life overall | 3.45 | 0.55 | Agree |
| Generally happy with current situation | 3.37 | 0.67 | Agree |
| Meaning and purpose | | | |
| Motivated to achieve my goals | 3.59 | 0.56 | Strongly agree |
| My work is meaningful and makes a difference | 3.45 | 0.72 | Agree |
| Clear sense of purpose in life | 3.40 | 0.79 | Agree |
| Relationships | | | |
| Supported and loved by family and friends | 3.71 | 0.50 | Strongly agree |
| Strong, satisfying relationships with colleagues | 3.33 | 0.54 | Agree |
| Connected to my community | 3.32 | 0.55 | Agree |
| Affect | | | |
| Can handle my emotions well | 3.40 | 0.61 | Agree |
| Hopeful and optimistic about the future | 3.39 | 0.74 | Agree |
| More positive than negative emotions | 3.37 | 0.62 | Agree |
| Mental health | | | |

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| Domain and item | WM | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive outlook in life | 3.49 | 0.68 | Agree |
| Able to manage stress effectively | 3.17 | 0.72 | Agree |
| Calm and relaxed most of the time | 3.04 | 0.76 | Agree |
| Physical health | | | |
| Can engage in physical activities I enjoy | 3.21 | 0.76 | Agree |
| Generally healthy, no major health concerns | 3.13 | 0.88 | Agree |
| Energized, enough energy for daily demands | 3.13 | 0.77 | Agree |
| Financial status and stability | | | |
| Can provide well for my family | 3.19 | 0.77 | Agree |
| Financially secure, able to meet basic needs | 3.17 | 0.71 | Agree |
| Confident about my financial future | 2.99 | 0.76 | Agree |

**RQ2: Differences in Well-Being by Profile**

Of 80 profile-by-domain comparisons, 54 were significant at $p < .05$ (Table 3). Weekly working hours were associated with all eight domains, and civil status, position, and years as faculty with seven each. Sex was associated with only two domains, character and caring, and financial status, in both cases higher among women. Employment status was associated with meaning and purpose, character and caring, and affect, each higher among full-time educators.

**Table 3. Significance of Differences in Well-Being Domains by Profile (p-values; group with highest mean in brackets)**

| Profile | Life sat. | Physical | Mental | Meaning | Character | Relations | Financial | Affect |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | <.001 [≥56] | .004 [26–35] | .009 [≤25] | .001 [≤25] | .087 | <.001 [≤25] | .015 [36–45] | .044 [≤25] |
| Sex | .223 | .914 | .132 | .656 | .032 [F] | .464 | .002 [F] | .102 |

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| Profile | Life sat. | Physical | Mental | Meaning | Character | Relations | Financial | Affect |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Civil status | <.001 [Wid.] | <.001 [Sing.] | <.001 [Wid.] | <.001 [Sing.] | .012 [Sing.] | .157 | .030 [Wid.] | .002 [Sing.] |
| Rank | .164 | .001 [NI IV] | .001 [NI IV] | .038 [NI IV] | .682 | .125 | .001 [Full Prof.] | .037 [NI IV] |
| Position | <.001 [Dean] | <.001 [CC] | <.001 [CC] | .001 [CC] | .006 [CC] | <.001 [Dean] | .090 | <.001 [CC] |
| Education | .001 [PhD] | .075 | .104 | .018 [PhD] | <.001 [PhD] | <.001 [PhD] | .081 | .001 [PhD] |
| Years as faculty | .001 [16–20] | <.001 [>30] | .047 [>30] | <.001 [11–15] | .109 | .003 [16–20] | .004 [>30] | .014 [>30] |
| Weekly hours | .008 [12–18] | <.001 [12–18] | <.001 [19–24] | <.001 [12–18] | .001 [>35] | .001 [12–18] | <.001 [12–18] | .001 [12–18] |
| Student year level | .042 [1st] | .186 | .396 | .066 | .046 [3rd] | .072 | .258 | .003 [3rd] |
| Employment | .124 | .965 | .518 | <.001 [FT] | <.001 [FT] | .052 | .076 | .020 [FT] |

Weekly working hours gave the most consistent pattern. In the dissertation's post hoc comparisons, educators working 12–18 hours per week reported higher life satisfaction, physical health, meaning and purpose, relationships, financial stability, and affect than those working more than 35 hours. Those working 19–24 hours reported better mental health than those working more than 35 hours. Character and caring ran the other way: it was higher among those working more than 35 hours than among those working 12–18 hours. Educators with more than 30 years as faculty reported better physical health, mental health, financial stability, and affect than those with 5–10 years. Clinical coordinators reported higher physical health, mental health, meaning, character, and affect than instructors. PhD holders reported higher life satisfaction, meaning, character, relationships, and affect than BSN holders.

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## DISCUSSION

### A Purpose-Rich but Resource-Thin Flourishing

The domain profile has a clear shape. Nurse educators scored highest in the domains that VanderWeele (2017) associates with virtue and meaning: character and caring, meaning and purpose, and life satisfaction. The strongest single items were integrity, compassion, family support, and a sense that life has meaning. They scored lowest in the domains that provide the material and bodily *means* of flourishing: financial stability and physical health. Within the financial domain, the weakest item looked to the future: confidence about one's financial future was the lowest item on the scale.

Under the secure-flourishing perspective, which adds financial and material stability as the means of sustaining well-being over time (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2019a), this is a vulnerable profile. A workforce can be meaningful, ethical, and connected and still be insecure if its financial and physical foundations are thin. The pattern is consistent with the high population flourishing reported for the Philippines in the Global Flourishing Study (VanderWeele et al., 2025), which shows that strong meaning and relationships can coexist with modest economic security. Because the present instrument is an adaptation on a 4-point scale, the levels themselves cannot be compared with Global Flourishing Study scores. The comparison concerns the *pattern*, not the numbers.

The two domains that most need attention, financial stability and physical health, also appear among the profile differences. Financial stability differed by age, sex, civil status, rank, years as faculty, and working hours. It was highest among Full Professors and among those with more than 30 years of service. These findings are consistent with financial security accumulating with seniority, which leaves early-career and junior-ranked educators most exposed.

### Working Hours and Flourishing

Weekly working hours were the only profile variable associated with all eight domains. Educators working 12–18 hours per week reported higher scores than those working more than 35 hours in six domains. This is consistent with evidence linking long working hours to poorer health (Pega et al., 2021) and with Canadian findings that work-life imbalance lowers satisfaction among nursing faculty (Boamah et al., 2023). One domain ran the other way: character and caring were highest among those working the longest hours. One interpretation is that the educators who give most to their institutions are also those with the strongest ethical and caring commitments. If so, the very commitment that keeps them working long hours may come at a cost to their other domains of flourishing.

### Other Profile Differences

After correction, sex was associated with only one domain: financial stability was higher among women. Full-time educators reported more meaning, character, and positive affect than part-time educators, which may reflect stronger institutional belonging. Life satisfaction was highest among those aged 56 and above, consistent with the rise of well-being with age reported in several countries in the Global Flourishing Study (VanderWeele et al., 2025). The youngest group (25 and below) scored highest on mental health, meaning, and relationships. This runs against the international pattern, but with only eight respondents in that group, the finding cannot be interpreted on its own.

### Implications for Practice

The findings suggest that faculty well-being programs should not focus mainly on meaning-making or values formation, where nurse educators already score highest. They should focus on the material and physical

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foundations: transparent and competitive compensation, financial literacy and retirement planning (especially for junior and early-career educators), health screening, and time and facilities for physical activity. Working hours above 35 per week should be treated as a well-being risk factor in faculty loading. The high character-and-caring scores among the longest-working educators suggest that institutions should guard against relying on the commitment of their most dedicated faculty.

**Limitations**

The well-being scale is an adaptation, not a validated flourishing index. Its pilot item count does not match the final scale, and dimension-level reliability was not reported. The data are cross-sectional and self-reported, and social desirability may have inflated ratings of character and meaning. The sample comes from private HEIs in one region. The profile comparisons lack effect sizes and correction for multiple testing, and several groups are very small. Within-institution sampling must be clarified.

**Future Research**

Future studies should administer the validated Flourish and Secure Flourish indices on their original 0–10 scale, so that scores can be compared with Global Flourishing Study data from the Philippines. They should also examine compensation and benefit structures as determinants of financial flourishing among faculty, and follow educators over time to test whether reducing working hours improves flourishing.

**Conclusion**

Nurse educators in private colleges of nursing in Region IV-A reported favorable well-being. Their profile is purpose-rich but resource-thin: highest in character, meaning, life satisfaction, and relationships, lowest in financial stability and physical health. Weekly working hours were associated with every well-being domain, and those working fewer hours fared better in six of eight. Faculty well-being policy should strengthen financial and physical foundations, because meaning and values are already the strongest domains for this group.

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