

Areas of Professional Performance of Nurses Graduated from A Private University in Barranquilla

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Abstract

Introduction: Nursing shapes patient care and procedures across all settings. It goes beyond caregiving, covering various domains, always focusing on patients' humanization and well-being. *Objective:* To identify the work performance areas of nurses graduating from Simón Bolívar University between 2020 and 2022. *Materials and Methods:* This is a quantitative descriptive study that analyzes the areas of work performance of graduate nurses. A sample of 243 graduates was selected, with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, because of the resource constraints; however, ensuring validity and reliability. *Results:* The findings shows that the areas of performance where nursing graduates excel the most is healthcare, followed by the area of administration and then educational and research areas. *Discussion:* The investigation suggests that nursing graduates excel mainly in the area of care giving, which is fundamental, and focuses on patient care as stated by H. Henderson by emphasizing on the importance of understanding the physical, mental, sociocultural, and spiritual needs of patients. *Conclusion:* Graduates from Universidad Privada de Barranquilla can work in hospitals, healthcare facilities, public and private institutions, health education programs, medical-surgical care, in the organization and supervision of health services, teaching, and research.

Keywords: Nursing, Research, Healthcare, Labor, University

INTRODUCTION

Nursing is a profession based on providing high-quality care, supported by ethical and deontological principles and scientific evidence.

Spanning several areas - from healthcare roles to primary health care and public health. Nurses can also work in administrative and educational areas, where training new professionals and research are essential components. Nursing research is essential to improve clinical practice and quality of care. The profession is not limited to caregiving alone, but encompasses a variety of areas with the aim of improving people's quality of life, including community care, health promotion, administrative management, and research. (1) At the same time, nursing professionals can choose different fields to specialize in, the main field being health care. However, currently, and as a consequence of the pandemic, many institutions have invested in primary health care, with the community setting prevailing with prevention and promotion within the different communities or territories.

This study, highlights the role of nurses in administrative processes, such as in the areas of public health, evaluating and improving patient's quality of life, and promulgating interventions aimed at improving the general well-being of patients, guided by nursing theorists, such as Nola Pender and her theoretical model of health promotion, where patients' conditions are evaluated and objectives are set to promote optimal health status. (3) The field also includes educational and research areas that are essential components for improving

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nursing process. This refers to education provided to train new nurses, ensuring that they are capable of performing their duties and improving the field of healthcare and encouraging them to develop their skills, decision-making ability, and teamwork. However, starting from the first semesters of their training, they should be involved in early research as the profession is grounded in solid scientific evidence. (3). Therefore, nursing research is the foundation of care-giving knowledge. It is present in clinical practice and other areas and is a characteristic of the discipline that shapes the procedures and the workings of caring for patient (3). Therefore, the profession should not only be limited to care as presented historically.

Globally, there are approximately 27.9 million nursing professionals, 30% of whom belong to the Americas, primarily from countries, such as Brazil, Canada, and the United States. (1) Based on this information, the Americas region would have around 8.37 million nurses out of the total population. Additionally, it must be noted that 89% of this population are women, and the remaining 11% are men.

According to estimates made during the year 2023, it highlights that there is a deficit of nurses as it was expected that there would be 70.6 nursing professionals for every 10,000 inhabitants in the Caribbean and Americas regions. However, according to the data provided by this organization, there is an average of 44.3 nurses for every 10,000 inhabitants. Thus, the goal that the United Nations health system proposed for 2030 is not being met. (2)

This document provides a rationale that addresses the importance of assessing the performance of graduates from the nursing program as well as the relevance of the accreditation of educational institutions in Colombia to guarantee quality education and contribute to the country's sustainable development.

This systematic review aims to identify the areas of performance of nursing graduates from Simón Bolívar University.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive quantitative cross-sectional study was conducted with 243 students who graduated from the nursing program at Simón Bolívar University between 2020 and 2022 with the aim of determining the areas of performance of these graduates. There was a total population of 507 students who graduated during these periods, of which 48% could be worked with. Participants were selected by convenience or intentional sampling.

This investigation was conducted using a database provided by the private University of Barranquilla, which contained the graduates' contact information. The data collection was carried out between August and September of 2023 and the analysis and subsequent design of the graphs was performed during the month of October.

There were three inclusion criteria: Individuals who completed the academic curriculum of the nursing program at Simón Bolívar University, nursing graduates who obtained their degree in the allotted time period, and graduates who are willing to voluntarily participate in the research.

A form designed by the students who authored this research, which was validated and authorized for its application by the Simón Bolívar University, was applied during the investigation.

The form consisted of 3 sections with 13 multiple choice questions and some open questions. In the first section, the graduates gave their consent to participate in the research. In the second section, their sociodemographic characteristics were investigated. In the last section, contextualization questions were asked. Here, the area where the graduates currently worked, the services they performed, and the company for which they worked were inquired.

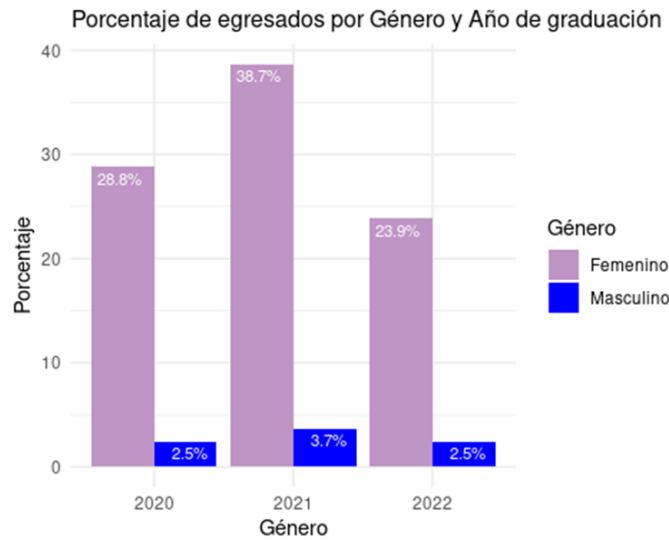
Before collecting the information, the objective of the project was explained to the nursing graduates as well as the ethical principles, confidentiality and veracity of the information, and the right to withdraw whenever they desired. Informed consent was obtained from those who responded to the survey. This data was analyzed using RStudio and Excel software, allowing for the establishment of the percentages corresponding to each variable of the study.

RESULTS

The statistical process was carried out using a form completed by the VI Semester nursing-program students, which was aimed at gathering information related to the performance areas of graduates from the Nursing Program of a private University in Barranquilla during 2020–2022. An analysis was conducted using RStudio statistical software, an Excel database created by the students themselves and another Excel database provided by the University of the nursing graduate program.

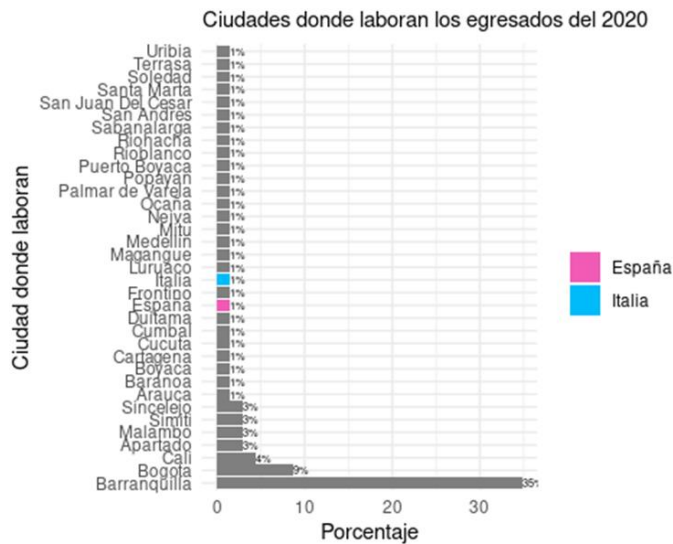
The detailed analysis identified six variables from each variable taken into account in the research process: Sex, cities where they work, socioeconomic stratum, institution where they work, professionalization, and areas of performance. These results are presented below in the following graphs.

Graph 1. Percentage of graduates surveyed based on sex and year of graduation.



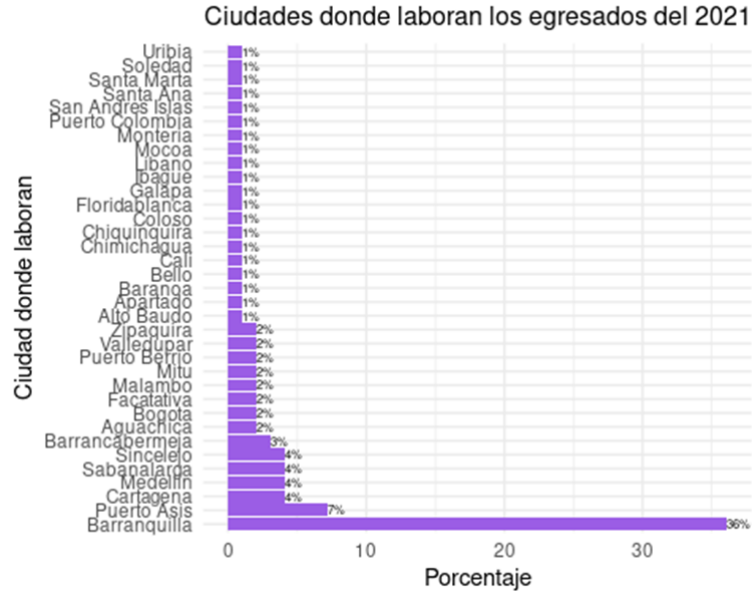
Graph 1 shows that the highest percentage of students surveyed belongs to the year 2021 (42.4%) followed by 2020 (31.3%) and, finally, 2022 (26.4%). Furthermore, women were dominant among the respondents, representing 91.4% (equivalent to 222 graduates in three years), whereas men constitutes only 8.6% (21 respondents).

Graph 2. Main cities where Simón Bolívar University graduates from 2020 working.



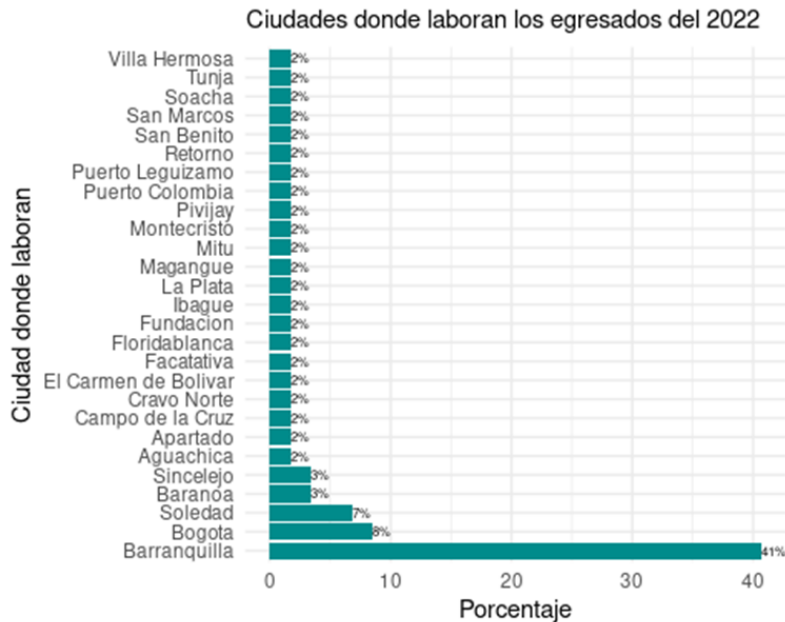
Graph 2 shows that Barranquilla is the city where the most graduates from the 2020 batch worked, representing 35% (24) of the graduates, followed by Bogotá with 9% (6) and Cali with 4% (3). The rest of the cities show a proportional distribution of graduates. It is noted that there are two graduates working outside the country, one in Italy and another in Spain.

Graph 3. Main cities where Simón Bolívar University graduates from 2021 are working.



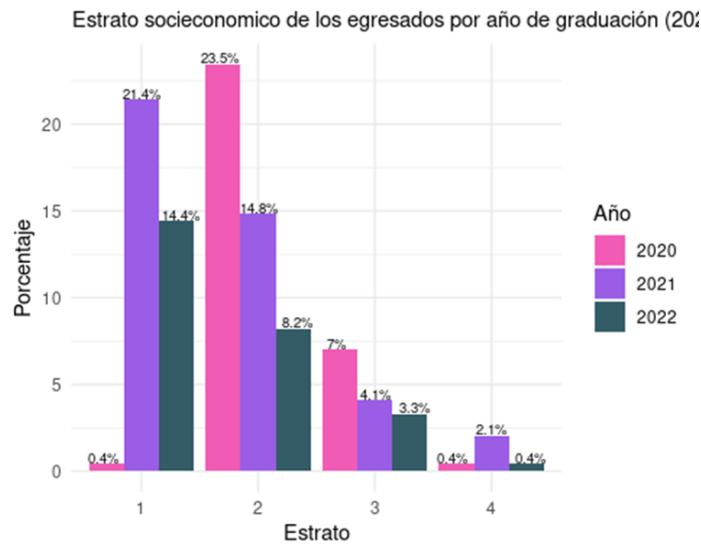
Graph 3 shows that, in 2021, Barranquilla had the most number of working graduates with 36% (35), followed by Puerto Asís with 7% (7). Additionally, Cartagena, Sabanalarga, Medellín, and Sincedejo had 4 graduates each (4%), and these cities were the most representative of this period in terms of the graduates' work.

Graph 4. Main cities where Simón Bolívar University graduates from 2022 are working.



In Graph 4 of the 2022 period, Barranquilla continues to lead with 41% of graduates working there (24 graduates), followed by Bogotá with 8% (5 graduates) and Soledad with 7% (4 graduates). The number of graduates in other cities follows a proportional distribution.

Graph 5. Socioeconomic stratum of nursing graduates from Simón Bolívar University 2020–2022.



Graph 5 shows the percentages of the socioeconomic strata of students who graduated in the corresponding period. In 2021, a significant 21.4% of graduates belonged the socioeconomic stratum 1, followed by 2022 with 14.4%. Regarding stratum 2, 2020 lead with 23.5% graduates, followed by 2021 with 14.8% and 2022 with 8.2%. Strata 3 and 4 had percentages <8% in all periods.

Graph 6. Professionalization of nursing graduates from Simón Bolívar University 2020–2022.



Graph 6 shows the professionalization of graduates considering that there are a total of 32 graduates with postgraduate degrees over the 3 years. In 2020, 46.9% (15) of the graduates had a specialization degree, whereas in 2021 37.5% (12) had this degree, with only 3.1% (1) with a master's degree. In 2022, 12.5% (4) of the graduates had a specialization degree, indicating a decrease compared with the other years.

DISCUSSION

The study reveals that nursing graduates excel mainly in the field of healthcare, which is consistent with the intrinsic nature of the profession. H. Henderson stressed on the importance of understanding patient needs and collaborating to provide comprehensive care, reflecting and emphasizing on direct care and health promotion.

Furthermore, previous research, such as the article on the role of nursing professionals in the Colombian healthcare system, supports the relevance of care activities and the need for scientific knowledge and practical skills to carry them out effectively according to Seguel, Hanna, and Villadiego.

Another study conducted at Francisco de Paula Santander University also agrees with our findings, finding that the majority of graduate's work in the field healthcare or in hospitals. This suggests a consistent trend in the distribution of nursing graduates in different work environments.

Additionally, the results reveal that the majority of nursing professionals work in private companies, hospitals, IPS, and EPS, indicating a wide range of job opportunities in the field of nursing. This diversity of options can be an attractive aspect for students and future nursing professionals, as it broadens their career prospects.

However, the study also identified some limitations, such as difficulties in contacting 2020 graduates because of changes in residence and contact information. Furthermore, the scarcity of articles related to the topic could have limited a comprehensive analysis of the available literature.

In conclusion, this study highlights the relevance of the field of healthcare in the work performance of nursing graduates as well as the diversity of job opportunities available in the field of nursing. Despite some methodological limitations, the findings offer valuable information for students, professionals, and decision-makers in the nursing field.

CONCLUSION

The research "Areas of Work Performance of Nurses who Graduated from a Private University in Barranquilla between 2020 and 2022," offers a detailed and enlightening analysis of the profile and employment trends of graduates of the nursing program of said institution. This study, obtained findings to several significant aspects that deserve to be highlighted.

First, a considerable concentration of graduates was observed in the cities of Barranquilla and Bogotá, which suggests a marked preference for these localities as employment centers in the field of nursing. This geographical distribution reveals the importance of considering regional dynamics when designing training and professional development strategies in nursing.

In terms of areas of professional performance, there is a clear trend toward the healthcare field, with graduates find employment in hospitals, health centers, and primary care units. This underscores the critical role these healthcare professionals play in providing direct patient care and highlights the need to strengthen training in clinical and care-giving areas.

In addition to the healthcare field, there is a significant involvement in administrative roles within hospital and clinical environments, which demonstrates the leadership and resource management skills of nursing graduates. This diversification of work roles reflects the versatility and adaptability of graduates to different professional contexts within the health sector.

Although to a lesser extent, some graduates choose careers in education, working as teachers at nursing training institutions. Although this area has a lower number of professionals, its importance lies in the commitment of these professionals to the training and development of the next generations of nurses.

It is important to note that the study also highlights the employment dynamics in the nursing sector, including the proportion of graduates who are not currently working. These data provides a comprehensive view of employment trends and job opportunities in the nursing field over the years.

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