

# TRANSCENDENTAL FORMATION AMONG BICOLANO NURSE ADMINISTRATORS

**Ruby Loterina Mediona**

College of Nursing  
Bicol University  
Legazpi City, Philippines  
rubymediona@yahoo.com

**Abstract - This study dwelt on spirituality as experienced, understood and practiced by the nurse administrators in Bicol, Philippines. Through a combination of Grounded theory and Descriptive method, was derived the description and ways of living out spirituality as reflected in the behaviors at work and the performed roles both as managers and leaders. Participants were from the 48 private and public hospitals and nursing schools located in all the six provinces of Bicol. A total of 160 participants were selected through theoretical and purposive samplings. With the Strauss and Corbin method validated by statistical treatments, the analyzed information created the model that visualized spirituality as a means to improve health services through enhanced administration in the realm of nursing education and practice. The emerged model referred to as Transcendental Formation, is a triple triangle which symbolizes the process of continued encounter of the nurse administrators with God that develops their work values and outcomes.**

**Index Terms - nurse, leader, manager, spirituality, model**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Life is a unique phenomenon. It is a quest to understand the entirety of a person. Comprising a person are three dimensions [1]. Physical is that which relates to the world through the senses, whereas psychosocial is to the self and others that involve emotion, moral, intellect and will. The dimension that transcends the two which relates to a higher being is the spiritual.

Spirituality of a person is yet to be fully explored specifically the extent of depth and breadth in relation to work. Its understanding is necessary since a person does not work alone. There are other people to interact with.

The scriptures mention that administration is a spiritual gift [2]. A person who has administrative work focuses on the needs, relationships and usefulness of the people. Having been vested with the responsibilities to look after the welfare of the people, an administrator is a manager and leader at the same time.

A nurse administrator in the Philippines faces enormous problems. Increase demand for nurses abroad resulted in the proliferation of nursing schools from 170 in 1999 to 470 by 2005 [3]. This is believed to have caused the deteriorating quality of nursing graduates [4]. As most of the highly-trained nurses opt to work abroad, Filipinos are left under the care of those who still lack nursing competencies [5]. With the limited plantilla positions for nurses in the country, the ratio is one nurse to a population of 20,000 [6]. And, it is said that nurses are now primarily motivated by the need to make money [7]. In these situations, a nurse administrator manages and leads in addressing the concerns of the nursing workforce. As such, it is interesting to understand the spiritual gift of nursing administration.

A cross-sectional survey [8] reveals that nurses have an average level of spirituality. In the context of nursing administration, literature about spirituality is scarce.

## II. MAIN TEXT

Understanding spirituality evolves as the connectedness of its aspects is explored. The emphasis is on the descriptions and living out of spirituality in terms of its practices in the workplace, managerial roles and leadership roles. From this surfaces the process experienced in the spiritual dimension.

As presented in Table I, the Bicolano nurse administrators' spirituality centers on God and the self. They believe in an omnipotent supreme being, called God and related to transcendence [9]. This radiates from within which arises at the person's inner level [10]. It is the heart knowledge that lights up the divine self [11] that gives the capacity to see

**TABLE I. DESCRIPTION OF SPIRITUALITY**

Spirituality Centers on God and Self	Weighted Mean Interpretation	Description
<i>"It is an acknowledgement that there is the presence of someone above called God or Supreme Being in whom everyone believes."</i>	3.93 Strongly Agree	A belief in a God
<i>"It is what I believe in – that I exist because of God – and therefore anything that I do every day and the rest of my days I offer to God."</i>	3.92 Strongly Agree	The self as an offering of love
<i>"It is how I go about my everyday life focusing on loving God and others as myself."</i>	3.86 Strongly Agree	

deeper levels of reality and the larger unity which transcend egocentric nature [12]. It is the encounter of God with the self; God as the powerful source, while self as the empowered recipient. This develops into gestures of love for God, the self and to others.

Living out spirituality is evident in the workplaces. This is by individual and communal spiritual practices as shown in Table II. Highly personal as it is, spirituality is revealed through values towards others and work. Integration of the spiritual value aids in the better performance of work and so provides better personal and professional lives [13]. It is manifested in good interrelationships among personnel.

**TABLE II. SPIRITUAL PRACTICES IN THE WORKPLACE**

Spirituality Live out by Individual and	Weighted Mean	Description
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Communal Practices	Interpretation	
"Having good relationship with others."	3.70 Strongly Agree	Harmonious interaction in the community
"Integrating good values in work."	3.69 Strongly Agree	Individual acts of goodness
"Giving privilege or chance to believe in my capacity that can make me confident to do something good in return."	3.64 Strongly Agree	

Spirituality influences work performance. In Table III, the Bicolano nurse administrators actualize spirituality both in short term (e.g., situations of the here and now such as quick decisions) and long term (e.g., situations requiring a longer time horizon or more stable and continuing actions based on deep seated beliefs such as capacitating hard work) managerial roles. At critical times, spirituality is considered a factor to release tension and pressure

TABLE III. MANAGERIAL ROLE

Spirituality Live out in Short Term and Long Term Managerial Roles	Weighted Mean Interpretation	Description
"Provides me with qualities such as love, compassion, responsibility and harmony."	3.78 Strongly Agree	Values at work instilled overtime
	3.76 Strongly Agree	
"Enlightens me during the dark hours of decision making when I am feeling hopeless with all the negatives that I receive and feel that things I have done are not acceptable to everybody."	3.75 Strongly Agree	Aid in critical moments

[14]. It stimulates the cognition [15] intuition and perception [16] that aids to construct psychological perspectives [17]. As an inner voice that motivates the self-consciousness [18], it is associated with love, attachment, care, [19] commitment and job satisfaction [20]. The energy and control it gives out [21] can make people feel more responsible on their jobs bringing fidelity to the company's values [22]. Hence, spirituality leads to productivity, sustainable performance and competitive advantage [23].

The Bicolano nurse administrators live out spirituality through interpersonal (e.g., relationship with others such as in dealing with the problems of the personnel) and intrapersonal (e.g., individual actions that affect others such as in decision making) leadership roles as shown in Table IV. Accordingly, spirituality facilitates a connection between the person, surroundings, life and other people [24]. It positively impacts in dealing with relationships [25] because it cultivates moral and ethical consciousness [26, 27]. Moreover, spirituality tends to make individuals more inclined towards self-reflection and attentive to the relationship with inner self and with others [28].

TABLE IV. LEADERSHIP ROLE

Spirituality Live out through Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Leadership Roles	Weighted Mean Interpretation	Description
"Leads me to respect others in order to have harmonious relationships and collaborative efforts with others."	3.72 Strongly Agree	Influences in ethically and morally dealing with others
"Encourages open communication."	3.71 Strongly Agree	
"Guides me to understand others as I weigh things and reflect on how to approach problem."	3.70 Strongly Agree	A source for personal discernment
"Provides for self-reflection regarding decisions made."		

Figure 1. that illustrates the model which symbolizes the spirituality among Bicolano nurse administrators is a triple triangle. Three different sized broken-lined triangles in which the smaller triangles with outward directions are inside the larger triangle represent the process of transcendental formation.



Figure 3. Emerged Model for Spirituality among Bicolano Nurse Administrators: A Transcendental Formation

Fig. 1. Transcendental Formation Model for Bicolano Nurse Administrators

Transcendental formation begins to occur as spirituality emanates within the nurse administrators as a belief of an encounter that leads to a relationship with a God. It further develops in the 'visible worldly self' as it is actively live out by the nurse administrators in terms of individual and communal spiritual practices, in the short term and long term managerial role, and through interpersonal and intrapersonal leadership role. Eventually, it shapes the nurse administrators into the 'virtuous spiritual self' as it is reflected in the work values. Unlike the worldly self, the spiritual self is no longer primarily visible in terms of behaviors but exceeds the physical and psychosocial that influences systems and people.

As the nurse administrators continue to have a deeper and closer encounter with God, they also live out their spirituality more intensely and as they do so, they positively affect many other work values and outcomes.

Although no prior researches on the spirituality of nurse administrators were found, some studies on spirituality of leaders exist. A spirituality that is God-driven is a characteristic of the outstanding leaders of religious orders in

the United States. These leaders are described as men and women who “are rooted in an awareness that they act with and on behalf of God” [29]. The spirituality of the religious leaders is similar with the spirituality among nurse administrators since both centers on God.

A close association to the transcendental formation among Bicolano nurse administrators is the concept of self-transcendence [30]. Accordingly, self-transcendence is a process instrumental in finding true meaning and purpose in life. In transcendental formation, nurse administrators in encounters with God through spirituality experience positive effects of values and outcome in work.

#### CONCLUSION

Spirituality is described by the Bicolano nurse administrators in relation to a God. It is lived out by spiritual practices in the workplace, in managerial role and through leadership role. Their spirituality is a model of transcendental formation.

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