



Research Article

Charting The Virtual Landscape: Netnographic Insights into The Structure of Nursing Online Communities

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About Article

Article History

Submission: May 10, 2024

Acceptance : May 24, 2024

Publication : June 23, 2024

Keywords

Netnography, Social Media, Nursing Online Communities, Nature of Actors, Group of Actors

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed into the structural dynamics of the selected nursing online communities (SNOCs), with a particular focus on understanding the nature and groups of actors involved. Social media (SM) profoundly impacts nursing by facilitating information exchange, networking, and socio-political engagement. It transforms education, enhances professional growth, and influences healthcare policy discussions. Despite benefits ethical concerns persist, urging standardized guidelines for responsible SM use. SM misuse risks patient confidentiality breaches and professional repercussions. This underscores SM's potential for nurses while advocating for ethical management, emphasizing the need for standardized guidelines in navigating its complex landscape. This study employed qualitative-interpretive Netnography to investigate online communities and cultures, focusing specifically on conducting structural analysis within SNOCs. The study examined two prominent SNOCs managed by Filipino registered nurses. Data comprised archived posts, comments, and images extracted from January 2011 to April 2020, utilizing both technical and manual methods. Rigorous coding and thematic categorization were applied, employing constant comparative analysis for thorough examination. The findings reveal two primary structural categories within the SNOCs— the Nature of Actors and Group of Actors. The Nature of Actors unfolds through five thematic dimensions represented by the acronym NURSE: Nihilist, Uplifter, Rabble rouser, Supporter, and Enquirer. The Nihilists express disappointment and distrust towards authorities and organizations, highlighting grievances and disillusionment. The Uplifters radiate hope and positivity, offering prayers and well-wishes for a brighter future. The Rabble-Rousers incite arguments with criticism and sarcasm, often resorting to insults and offensive language. The Supporters foster healthy discourse, offering solutions and defending against misinformation, while extending commendations for achievements. Lastly, the Enquirers seek government and organizational support, requesting updates and verification on various nursing-related matters, and they aim to stay informed and engaged within the community. Simultaneously, the Group of Actors comprises two distinct personas— Goodwill Promoters

Citation Style:

Milan, J. M. (2024). Charting The Virtual Landscape: Netnographic Insights into The Structure of Nursing Online Communities. *Journal of Education, Learning, and Management*, 1(1), 6-16.



and Disruptive Agents. The Goodwill Promoters champion collective benefit through constructive engagement, fostering unity for common goals – striving for harmony and progress. In contrast, the Disruptive Agents sow discord by inciting conflict, undermining discourse with negativity, which hinders constructive dialogue and impedes collective advancement. The study's comprehensive approach provides a deeper understanding of the diverse roles and behaviors exhibited within these virtual spaces, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of interactions and relationships among participants in the digital nursing community.

1. INTRODUCTION

The pervasive influence of social media (SM) in the nursing domain extends beyond conventional communication, serving as a multifaceted tool for information exchange, networking, and socio-political engagement. It facilitates real-time connections through various digital platforms, offering users instant sharing capabilities for a myriad of content. Within nursing, SM presents extensive advantages, acting as a virtual arena for professionals to engage with colleagues, patients, and a global audience. From discussions on patient care to educational enhancement, the impact of SM is transformative. It reshapes the educational landscape by providing readily available information, fostering learning communities, and influencing learner behavior.

Amidst the technological era, SM serves as a virtual hub for diverse populations, providing an outlet for expressing grievances and seeking support. This paper delves into the intricate structure of selected nursing online communities (SNOCs), particularly on Facebook. These SNOCs have become vital platforms for socio-political participation, enabling nursing professionals to challenge policies and advocate for change. It explores the Nature of Actors by unveiling how individual participants' distinct needs and behaviors collectively shape SNOCs social structures. Simultaneously, it delves into the Group of Actors, uncovering emergent patterns, group formations, and shared behaviors that contribute to the overarching social dynamics.

The central locus of this investigation, Facebook is more than a social platform. it empowers individuals and groups to forge connections and create spaces that unite diverse communities, providing them an ability to establish virtual heterogeneous communities together. As the study navigates the landscape of nursing online communities, it seeks a comprehensive understanding of the intricate interplay between individuality and collective identity. The research endeavors to unveil the social structures within these communities, shedding light on the nuanced relationships that shape the nursing profession's virtual landscape.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

"Think before you click" emphasizes internet safety and responsible use. The literature analysis shows the complex role of social media (SM) in nursing, including communication, information exchange, and professional networking (Fraser, 2011; Fox, 2011). Facebook's global reach is important for job-seeking and self-promotion (Facebook, 2019). Nurses can provide health information on social media for marketing,

consultation, and patient support (Fox, 2011). Despite its benefits, ethical issues, risks, and lack of rules provide hurdles (Mohamed, 2018). Healthcare leaders and organizations must work together to standardize SM use (Ryan, 2016).

Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have played a major role in social revolutions and knowledge diffusion, encouraging a sense of belonging and involvement (Kidd & McIntosh, 2016; Rotman *et al.*, 2011). User participation, transparency, and community make SM platforms useful for health education, professional growth, and patient engagement (Nelson *et al.*, 2013; Siegmund, 2020). SM helps professionals network, share health information, and discuss healthcare policy (Ventola, 2014; Lachman, 2013).

However, SM can be misused in healthcare, highlighting the need for professional organization standards to manage its pros and cons (Chretien & Kind, 2013). In socio-political movements, SM helps people vent complaints and create new identities (Cammaerts, 2015). Due to knowledge drawn from research and extensive practice, senior nurses and nursing leaders shape guidelines for responsible SM use (McLemore *et al.*, 2015). Some nurses utilize SM for personal and professional objectives, while others worry about patient privacy (Gennaro, 2015).

Lack of defined personal-professional boundaries can lead to patient confidentiality breaches and errors (Jackson *et al.*, 2014; Mohamed, 2018). Mariano *et al.* (2017) notes that frequent SM use by nurses may hamper patient involvement and healthcare delivery. The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) warns that imprudent SM usage can risk present and future employment, and on a worse case, the revocation of one's professional license (NCSBN, 2018; Balestra, 2018). Similarly critical issues are the deliberate or inadvertent social media breaches of patient privacy, as well as healthcare professional cyberbullying (Ventola, 2014; Hall & Lewis, 2014). All these, and more, lead to a recommendation that nurses should fully understand and execute a professional management of SM, keeping in mind ethico-legal norms of its personal and corporate usage (NCSBN, 2018; Cronquist & Spector, 2011).

In summary, this literature review covers the many advantages of SM for nurses, while emphasizing the need for a standardized guidelines on ethical and responsible management of this influential virtual tool, ultimately preparing the SNOC structure for a netnographic exploration.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study used qualitative-interpretive Netnography to explore social media, online communities, and computer-mediated cultural communications. Netnography studies digital meanings, consumption habits, and cultural information (Kozinets, 1998; 2010; 2015). This study method was appropriate for SNOCs structural analysis.

3.2. Research Locale

The study focused on the two most influential nursing online communities managed by Filipino registered nurses, having garnered the highest number of followers. The non-profit organization, FB Group Page A, was created in 2011, and is presently managed by six administrators. Its fervid defense



of nurses' rights attracted over 115K followers. In 2013, five individuals created FB Group Page B to advocate for nurses' rights even without the backing of external affiliates. Currently, the group has reached 94K followers.

3.3. Data Sources

Employing total population, sources of archival data were all postings and comments, including text and images, from January 18, 2011, to April 14, 2020.

3.4. Research Instrument

The researcher utilized FacePager App to extract all postings and comments, with the addition of a smartphone to take screenshots. Microsoft Excel served ease with data management, and NVivo software for processing and coding. Fieldnotes complemented archival and observational data by capturing the researcher's reflections and observations.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

An administrative clearance through the Institutional Ethics Review Committee (IERC) approval was obtained before the study. To establish formality between the researcher and participants, initiating entrée was done through self-introduction, explanation of the research purpose, process, and privacy assurance.

3.6. Data Analysis Procedure

The data was coded, categorized into themes, interpreted, and concluded using constant comparative analysis with three levels of coding analyses: open, axial, and selective (dams *et al.*, 2007; Hoyos & Barnes, 2012; Strauss & Corbin, 2008). Coding and thematic categorization were completed using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software.

3.7. Ensuring Trustworthiness

Credibility was ensured through collecting archival data via direct observation and fieldnotes in two SNOCs, thereby enriching accounts of structural dynamics. (Connelly, 2016). Inclusion of rephrased or translated excerpts from participants' posts and comments were done to support researcher's interpretations and to strengthen further the study's credibility (Noble & Smith, 2015). This also upheld confirmability by ensuring that interpretations are grounded in the data rather than opinion. Transferability was guaranteed through observing and maintaining participants' anonymity and confidentiality (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses research questions answered by comprehensive data analysis and interpretation. To protect source identity, the posts and comments from SNOCs were lifted and translated into Tagalog, which were later paraphrased into English.

A. Structure of SOCs among Nurses

Social structure includes an individual, group, or position whose needs, values, interests, social norms, lifestyle, and

agreed conduct shape identity (Cimmins *et al.*, 2015). According to Giddens *et al.* (2018), social structure is "the underlying regularities or patterns in how people behave in their relationships with one another". These concepts define SNOC structure as online actors and groups, categorizing SNOCs into two: Nature of Actors and Group of Actors.

4.1. Nature of Actors

This study uses Merriam-Webster (2021), Cambridge Dictionary (2021), and Encyclopedia Britannica (2016)'s definition of human nature as the natural and fundamental dispositions, traits, behavior, and feelings of people, which are reflected in SNOCs. Five categories emerged based on actor characteristics—Nihilist, Uplifter, Rabble-Rouser, Supporter, and Enquirer, better recalled through the acronym N.U.R.S.E.

4.1.1. The Nihilist

Netizens' discontent with personal, professional, and societal issues leads to SNOC nurses' nihilism. These include corrupt nurse politicians, nepotism in authorities, nurse rights violations, and inadequate healthcare resources. Nihilism intensifies when politicians devalue the nursing profession and dismiss pleas for trainings and salary increase. Disillusionment was exacerbated especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, where frontline nurses have been easily exposed to, or died from, infection, due to inadequate protective equipment. Despite efforts by the Ang Nars Partylist (ANP) to advocate for nurses, government recognition remains elusive. After years of socio-economic and political struggles, including healthcare issues, ANP administrators regard securing nursing employment in the country as ambitious, if not impossible. Netizens despair over nursing circumstances, some surrendering licenses due to unrealistic government demands and others seeking jobs abroad with little hope. The following can be read from the SNOCs:

"Finally let go of my PRC ID after six years because of this CPD law. I can't renew my license anymore. After spending thousands of pesos on tuition fees, learning materials, internship, and projects in college, nursing graduates need to spend additional thousands for this license."

"Wala talagang pake ang gobyerno sa mga nurses (The government does not care for nurses at all). They are really pushing nurses to go abroad."

"Why do nurses choose to stay here in the country? Because they are hoping that the healthcare system will improve. But sadly, it isn't."

Nihilist netizens exhibit doubtfulness and defeatism, expressing negativity and a readiness to accept failure. They express doubt and distrust, showing uncertainty, dread, and a tendency to question reality. In the study, nihilism emerges as a response to perceived inadequate actions by administrators in improving nurses' status. This leads to calls for nurses to leave the country, skepticism about ANP's efficiency, a push to cease voting for ANP, condemnation of nepotism, and a belief in nursing's return to underrepresentation post-pandemic. Nihilists distrust Philippine Nurses Association (PNA), Department of Health



(DOH), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and the President, doubting the government's prioritization of nurses' needs and realization of nursing laws and programs.

Comments that support this allegation include *"impossible"*, *"wala din yan"* [that's nothing/that's not occurring], and *"Wala na talagang katapusan"* [there's no end to this]. Regarding contractualization, one commenter called PNA *"Bulag, Pipi, at Bingi"* [Blind, Mute, and Deaf], another called it *"walang kwenta"* [good-for-nothing], and another called DOLE *"ningas kugon,"* the tendency to start a project or advocacy with enthusiasm but abandon it. Concerns arise when these nurses discuss the division of national funding for a health care initiative. Statements like *"ngek ngek yan cgurado ako wla ding pondo yan"* [that's nonsense, I'm sure there's no budget], *"I doubt di naman priority sa budget ang health"* [health isn't a budget priority], and *"I doubt the President will listen"*. Also, a comment criticized nurses who work despite obvious issues. *"No hope in this rotting nation, the day will soon come when there's nothing but yourselves to care for your own a**es."*

4.1.2. The Uplifter

In contrast to nihilists, uplifters focus on enhancing moral and spiritual well-being through hopefulness and optimism. They applaud ANP's commendable work, honor Filipino nurses, and encourage local hospital employment. Expressing confidence in achieving goals like salary increase, regularization, and job opportunities, they appreciate the administration's efforts in supporting the nursing profession. Rep. Dr. Leah S. Paquiz and ANP supporters praise the Duterte administration for addressing nurses' concerns, fostering hope and aspirations for improved nursing welfare, fair treatment, job opportunities, and adequate protection for health workers during and after the pandemic.

Amidst the dispute over nurses' unjust compensation and false volunteerism in the Philippines, comments reflecting an uplifter perspective often use expressions like *"I hope"* or *"sana."* Many surfaced during the administration change in 2016, expressing hope for addressing nurses' persistent issues, particularly in salary. Uplifting netizens encourage peers to preserve their passion, emphasizing unity to voice concerns and directing positive requests to the government for protection. These netizens project an uplifter perspective to exhibit emotional control, avoiding provocations and maintaining professionalism, fostering a positive atmosphere in SNOCs. Their optimistic outlook, inspired by the vision of *"better days,"* creates a cheerful environment that uplifts others and suggests a deeper self-understanding and resilience, fostering a positive environment within the online nursing community.

4.1.3. The Rabble-Rouser

Rabble-rousers, unlike nihilists and uplifters, criticize salary increases and equipment deficiencies in SNOCs. They attack the government, healthcare system, nurses, and nursing organizations with corrective tones. Rabble-rousers would sound angry and violent, as opposed to nihilists, appearing to *"correct"* legal, individual, and COVID-19 emergency claims and criticize the PNA. For one, they insist on changing the organization's name in the conviction that it lacks social

responsibility and sympathy to nurses' concerns. In the SNOCs, negative influences in the nursing community yield to nihilists and rabble-rousers.

Sarcasm and humor are used to criticize politicians, frustrated promises, and new nursing graduates, in statements that often end with the catchphrase, *"only in the Philippines."* A notable example to this is Negros Oriental Representative Arnulfo Teves' insistence that government hospitals should post in tarpaulins: *"BAWAL ANG MASUNGIT NA NURSE AT DOKTOR,"* as a form of encouraging patient care. A netizen facetiously challenged the Congressman to perform a nurse's duty without Local Government Unit support, saying, *"TINGNAN NATIN HINDE MAUBOS ANG BUHOK MO SA KAKAMOT NG ULO MO* [Let's see if you won't lose your hair with all the head scratching]. While discussing true public service and relocating overseas, one commenter asked, *"How will you serve the country if you're taken for granted?"* before an ironic, *"Lols patawa kayo [Lols (laughing out loud)] you're funny"*. Another responded by spelling out laughter, referencing the three-year service in the country before going abroad, and saying, *"Lol! Patawa tong si angkol!"* [Angkol (thwarted spelling of 'Uncle', a jocular allusion to any male individual and not necessarily a family relative) is funny!]

Amid discussions on wage hike and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) units, a netizen humorously predicted that by 2050, flying cars may be possible but nurses in the Philippines would still lack recognition. Responders to the comments likewise use metaphorical language and humor, such as the prolific Filipino gay term *"charot"* to lighten the tone. A notable comment shared a father's conversation with his daughter, advising her to pursue a different career after revealing the challenges faced by nurses, emphasizing the need to work abroad.

Argumentative rabble-rousers exchange rhetorical expressions and views to convince or persuade others. This refers to social media nitpickers and provocateurs. They discuss salary hikes, personal experiences, the unjust treatment of local nurses, and their value in healthcare. These netizens criticize fellow nurses, hospitals, and government incompetence, comparing the difficulty of work between doctors and nurses, and discuss political prejudice towards the profession. They question the party-list's contribution, demand equal treatment for nurses, expose corruption, encourage optimism, correct disinformation, express political hope, and emphasize unity between nurses. After Congressman Teves' resolution, a heated exchange occurred between non-nursing supporters and offended nurses, revealing conflicting perspectives.

Expletive rabble-rousers use obscene language to express fury. They rant against the government, politicians, and others, portraying the government as *"greedy, useless, corrupt and criminal."* At the time, netizens criticized Senator Cynthia Villar, former Senator Antonio Trillanes, and former Solicitor General Jose Calida. Expletive acts include criticizing overseas worker decisions, the CPD law, and blocking salary increase requests; one comment satirically renamed PNA to Pera-Pera Nurses Agency. Profane language is common in such comments, such as *"F*** Philippine politics! F*** all politicians who are making puppets out of us!"*



Offenders are disrespectful and hurtful netizens who use foul language. These rabble-rousers insult authorities for incompetence, negligence, and corruption. A notable comment is “walang kwenta ang PNA” (the PNA is useless).

4.1.4. The Supporter

Supporters within SNOCs display multifaceted roles, actively engaging in cooperation, empathy, mediation, defense, and appreciation, contributing to the dynamic landscape of the online nursing community. These individuals play a pivotal role in achieving common goals and fostering socio-political engagement. Supporters use SNOCs to share valuable job information, patient care advice, and expert knowledge, showcasing their active cooperation. Their engagement extends to virtual events, participating in national and international nursing commemorations, campaigns, protests, signature drives, and government advocacy promotions. Prior to the pandemic, cooperation among nurses was evident in photos shared during the International Nurses' Week and wage hike protests. Supporters effectively endorse initiatives like ANP and the Comprehensive Nursing Law (CNL), utilizing terms like “share” and “support” to broaden their reach through reposting. Filipino nurses exercise their freedom of speech, expressing enthusiastic support for ANP and acknowledging the need for increased backing in the crusade against mistreatment of nurses, reflecting the exercise of freedom of expression in the Philippines.

Empathetic supporters engage in various activities to uplift nurses, offering reminders, encouragement, and practical advice. They address issues as those of “False Volunteerism” and precarious work conditions, urging action with hashtags like “#SpeakUp!”. An example involves ANP supporting nurses who filed cases against exploitative hospitals, emphasizing the need to not tolerate unlawful conduct. Empathetic supporters extend their concerns to broader issues, such as the well-being of medical practitioners during the Marawi siege. Additionally, they share practical coping strategies during pandemic, emphasizing rest, healthy food, and maintaining connections. Recognizing the challenges nurses face, a supportive netizen and doctor by profession, advocates for understanding and legislative assistance, stating, “*they [nurses] need understanding too, compassion and a little help from our friend legislators.*” These instances exemplify empathetic supporters actively addressing challenges and advocating positive change within the nursing community.

Supporters acting as mediators in SNOCs play a crucial role in fostering a positive and constructive environment within the nursing community. They promote respectful discourse, reminding nurses to value diverse opinions and urging patience. Mediators employ strategies to diffuse tensions, emphasizing diplomacy, respect, and understanding. Their role extends to encouraging self-reflection and discouraging blame within the nursing profession, urging nurses to be open-minded and professional in receiving comments. Overall, these mediators guide the nursing community towards a more harmonious and constructive discourse, fostering unity and professionalism amid challenges.

Defenders in SNOCs emerge as steadfast supporters,

safeguarding individuals, ideas, and opinions against attacks and criticism. They actively counter harassment or “bashing” directed at individuals and stand firm in supporting nurses' rights in various debates. Defenders not only protect but also affirm others, defending nurses' rights and expressing belief in divine intervention. They advocate for the government, political leaders, nursing associations, colleagues, patients' innocence, and their rights. Overall, defenders play a vital role in maintaining a balanced and respectful discourse within the online nursing community.

Supporters within SNOCs express appreciation in various forms, thanking nurses, government initiatives, ANP efforts, and other contributors to the nursing profession's growth. Their activities reflect a commitment to the collective well-being of nurses, advocacy for change, and gratitude for those contributing to the nursing profession. Specific instances include thanking Rep. Paquiz for opposing the CNL and proposing the Salary Grade (SG) 15.

In summary, Supporters in SNOCs play diverse and vital roles, creating a supportive, informed, and engaged online nursing community.

4.1.5. The Enquirer

An enquirer is one who inquires, requests information, and performs research to satisfy their curiosity. In SNOCs, a myriad of inquiries spans nurse regularization and support system, party-list updates, nursing organization initiatives, CNL updates, DOH programs and mandates, filing of complaints, combating false volunteerism, healthcare delivery enhancements, and addressing constitutional concerns of POEA ban. Negative questions, especially about politics, can spark “Rabble-rousers,” fostering intense debates and disagreements. The diverse topics in SNOCs show collective interest in shaping the profession and addressing socio-political concerns.

One of the characteristics of enquirers is being inquisitive or curious. They seek clarification on legislative bills like House Bill 151 and Republic Act No. 9173, practical issues like nurse regularization, and partylist standings. The evolving inquiries on CNL highlight adaptability to changing circumstances, such as President Aquino's unexpected veto. These netizens question violators and seek understanding on nurse-patient ratios. Safety concerns during events (e.g., Labor Day rally) showcase their thoroughness and dedication to grasping potential consequences and organizational defenses. These enquirers are proactive contributors who navigate complex nursing issues online by staying informed and addressing uncertainties.

Other characteristics of enquirers include seeking support, assistance, and participation from members in SNOCs, such as towards the advocacies they are defending. They encourage nurses to join in petitions, campaigns, and offline events to promote shared involvement. Requests extend to higher authorities, imploring Presidents Noynoy and Digong to approve legislations like the CNL. These enquirers address broader issues, appealing to nursing organizations, party lists, and leaders for advocacy. In response to the Covid-19 crisis, they condemn violence against healthcare workers, urging government intervention and public education. Their proactive stance underscores commitment to collective well-being,



recognizing frontliners' vital role and needs.

4.2. Group of Actors

This study examines SNOCs emphasizing the diverse dynamics within the Group of Actors. Inspired by Howard Rheingold's 1993 insights on virtual communities, it examines these online venues' complex nature, vital to Philippine political and civic engagement. Aligning with research typologies (Füller *et al.*, 2014; Nonnecke *et al.*, 2004, 2006; Füller *et al.*, 2007), participants are classified as "Good Will Promoters," actively contributing positively, and "Disruptive Agents," engaging in challenging interactions. This detailed view highlights SNOCs' intricate behaviors and virtual community involvement.

4.2.1. The Goodwill Promoters

In SNOCs, Goodwill Promoters are steadfast advocates for unity and support for active and non-active members. These netizens express ardent support, appreciation, and gratitude. They leverage hashtags like *#NursesUnited* and *#ForTheHealthOfFilipinos* to amplify their cause and challenge the status quo.

Such advocates believe Filipino nurses can change, so they spend personal resources to campaign for change. Despite Ang NARS' lesser-known status, one netizen passionately campaigned for the party-list, citing a commitment to nursing focused bills and the pursuit of decent wages.

Goodwill Promoters extend appreciation to the government, supporting figures and fellow nurses. Comments expressing gratitude are abundant, such as, "*I couldn't ask for any other nurses... so sa lahat ng nurses, thank you!*". This heartfelt appreciation reflects their commitment to acknowledging excellence within the nursing community.

Their support goes beyond words as they invest personal resources and organize events like the "*2018 NATIONAL DAY OF PROTEST*" to effect change. Their strategic use of hashtags like *#SG15forNurses* and *#Plantilla4Nurses* shows their commitment and advocacy for regularization and proper compensation. They are the driving force within SNOCs, shaping culture of support, gratitude, and collective action, altogether inspiring a positive change within the profession.

4.2.2 The Disruptive Agents

Disruptive agents, unlike goodwill promoters, cause friction and slow plan progress within SNOCs. These agents slander and degrade the government, nursing organizations, community leaders, and other members. They nitpick, antagonize, oppose, provoke, and create a hostile environment by employing challenging questions.

Protests and insults target the PNA for failing to fulfill its mandates, which allegedly encourages migration. PNA is also accused of misrepresentation and financial corruption, such as that portrayed in a comment in 2012 denouncing the CPD unit requirement as "*business making*," labeling administrators as "*parasites*" and "*mukhang pera*" (money greedy).

Online community leaders are accused by disruptive agents of neglecting the nursing population. It is argued in the comments that unity primarily benefit government-employed nurses, and such netizens use expletives and unprofessional language like

"*Gago ka pala eh*" (You're an asshole after all) and "*Kalbo ka, ang pangit mo*" (You're bald and ugly) to oppose initiatives like posting "*BAWAL ANG MASUNGIT NA DOKTOR AT NURSE*" in tarpaulins around public hospitals. This disruptive behavior creates a hostile atmosphere in SNOCs, obstructing constructive discourse and encouraging disagreement.

4.3. Discussion

The structure of selected nursing online communities (SNOCs) revolves around the diverse nature of actors, categorized into five thematic dimensions: Nihilist, Uplifter, Rabble-rouser, Supporter, and Enquirer (N.U.R.S.E.). Additionally, two distinct personas, Goodwill Promoters and Disruptive Agents, play significant roles in shaping the dynamics of online discussions. The Nihilists evoke a cascade of negative sentiments, expressing disappointments, disagreements, frustration, hopelessness, distrust, hesitation, as well as grief. These sentiments are directed towards the government, specific political leaders, nursing associations, and fellow nurses, creating an atmosphere of collective disillusionment and discontent within the online nursing community. Nihilism, as defined by Lexico.com (2021), stems from sorrow, disappointment, and misfortunes, leading to unhappiness, frustration, disagreement, and disapproval. According to Nolen Gertz (2019), nihilism is an ideology associated with destructiveness and violence, while Pratt (n.d.) defines it as extreme pessimism, radical skepticism, and a belief in nothing. Recent discussions on social media reflect netizens' dissatisfaction with the Philippines' economic, political, and social challenges, fostering a sense of hopelessness and driving a surge in overseas Filipino workers seeking better opportunities abroad (Yumol, 2009). According to the International Council of Nurses (ICN, 2007) and Kingma (2006), nurses migrate due to push factors like low salary, poor working conditions, and socio-political instability, as well as pull factors such as better compensation, professional advancement, and improved socio-political stability (Lorenzo *et al.*, 2007; Kingma, 2006). This migration trend underscores domestic employment issues (Yumol, 2009).

The Uplifters radiate optimism and positive expectations for the future, often manifesting through the offering of prayers and well-wishes. Their hopeful demeanor contributes to a constructive atmosphere, fostering a sense of encouragement and positivity within the online nursing community. According to Carver and Scheier (2014), optimism, a cognitive construct, motivates positive expectations, influencing behavior to make right choices and avoid wrong ones. This trait enables individuals to build better social connections, handle challenges, and foster adaptive behavior, enhancing interpersonal relationships. Carver *et al.* (2010) assert that optimism correlates with improved emotional well-being and effective coping, allowing positive responses to adversity. Uplifters, as characterized by Carver *et al.* (2010), engage productively in problem-solving, maintaining relationships and developing optimistic expectations for personal competence, productivity, and well-being (Segerstrom, 2006; Martínez *et al.*, 2006; Reis, 2019; Prawitz, 2014).

The Rabble-rousers deliberately spark online conflicts using accusations, sarcasm, insults, criticism, and ridicule. They are



characterized by slanderous remarks and frequently resort to issuing threats, expressing ill will, and using offensive language. Bergen (2016) emphasizes the emotional potency of profanity, providing a direct line for expressing or causing pain. Offensive rabble-rousers, who utilize foul language to accuse or insult, align with this notion (Jay *et al.*, 2000). Foul language, defined as swearing or uttering emotionally powerful, offensive words, serves as a socially unacceptable public expression (Bailey, 2006). Expletive members target wrongdoings such as political corruption and nurse exploitation, prompting criticism within the nursing community (Sood *et al.*, 2012). Free speech rights protect their expressions, affirmed by senators and legal experts (Lalu, 2019, 2020). Rabble-rousers aim to persuade aggressively, functioning at the intersection of performance feedback and interpersonal mistreatment, with a potential for manipulation by elites (Raver *et al.*, 2011; Brzezicka, 2020). Despite their role in discourse, their actions pose threats to civil rights and the rule of law.

The Supporters support nursing advocacy and encourage pleasant contacts with alternative options and guidance. They avoid conflict in comment threads by regulating emotions. They praise prominent individuals and organizations and defend the government and nursing agencies from misrepresentation. In this study, nursing netizens, particularly those in the SNOCs, are shown as varied contributors who are crucial to online conversations. They use social media and the internet to motivate, promote, and advocate for socio-political movements (Bakker & de Vreese, 2011). Filipino nurses use their freedom of expression for peaceful purposes and civic activity, following the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Netizens see themselves as a voice for nurses, promoting solidarity and good change (Terry & Bowman, 2019). Their understanding, compassion, and generosity support empathy's role in developing social interactions (Rivero, 2020). Netizen mediators promote critical thinking, peaceful virtual communication, and human dignity (Moore, 2014). The study encourages nurses to be politically involved and knowledgeable as advocates for social justice and healthcare change, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite nurses' vulnerability to online transgressions, the study shows online defenders. Many supportive netizens express gratitude, approbation, and salutations to nurses, maintaining the good emotional link of appreciation (Adler & Fagley, 2005). The study suggests that nursing netizens democratically shape healthcare policies and create a supportive virtual environment for nurses.

The Enquirers frequently request personal and professional assistance from government and nursing organizations. Beyond generic information, they ask about nursing group memberships and legislation. These people carefully verify announcements, trends, and claims, using administrators and other nurses as sources. Enquirers seek complete insight to enlighten and engage the nursing community, demonstrating a dedication to accuracy and clarity in navigating the changing nursing world. Enquirers use Facebook to find, verify, and discuss nursing information, demonstrating a curiosity beyond personal interest (Abdu *et al.*, 2017). Facebook is a vital digital venue for socio-political conversations and SNOc relationships (Conroy *et al.*, 2012; McCorkindale, 2010). In social media,

inquisitiveness drives political expression and interest, with Facebook facilitating real-time political knowledge exchange (Yamamoto & Kushin, 2014; Masiha *et al.*, 2018). Enquirers seek help, support, and understanding of frontliner circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating a united front (Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004; Gray *et al.*, 2013). Enquirers' use of social media for mobilization is crucial to social change, justice, and capital.

As we delve into the group of actors within SNOCs, it's essential to recognize the broader roles that extend beyond individual thematic dimensions. The Goodwill Promoters passionately initiate, support, and promote initiatives for the majority. Their commitment promotes solidarity and advocacy in nursing online groups, providing mutual support and shared purpose. Social media allows horizontal information interchange and collective action, including protests and socio-political engagement (Zhuravskaya *et al.*, 2020). Lim (2012) found that social media affected 54 of 70 street protests in Egypt from 2004 to 2011. Social media is more than a technology advancement; it fosters social movements seeking social change. Beyond activism, social media gives lawmakers and nurse groups quick feedback on public happiness and discontent, which helps policymakers (Lim, 2012). Social media affects socio-political landscapes and provides a responsive platform for collective interaction and input.

However, Disruptive Agents actively participate in online forums to provoke, criticize, or assault. Their participation involves intentionally sowing strife and disagreement online to interrupt conversation. They utilize harsh rhetoric and provocative questions to sour internet debate. This disruptive activity commonly targets government organizations, nursing associations, community leaders, and online community members, creating a hostile climate and inhibiting fruitful communication. Disruptive agents in SNOCs actively criticize the government, political leaders, nursing organizations, and coworkers through posts and comments. This disruptive behavior may be due to negative judgment and mistreatment from authorities and workplaces. Social disputes and battles are symbolized by antagonism (Laclau, 2014; Marchart, 2018; Modonesi, 2019). The provocation tactics match Wahlström (2011) "provocation plots." Violence as defense is seen in responses to perceived harm or harassment. Retaliation entails retaliating for provocation and settling accounts. Opportunistic violence uses provocation to reframe the circumstance and allow violence. These schemes are revealed by disruptive agents' vulgar posts and comments. Disruptive agents can use social media, especially Facebook, to voice their concerns, petition authorities, and get global support. These agents employ profanity to promote their cause and highlight perceived injustices. Salehi and Davulcu (2018) say social media animosities stem from community aims and beliefs.

Understanding political antagonism, whether left or right populism, requires recognizing structural causes of social problems. Left populism targets elites, global capital, and bankers, while right populism targets immigrants, minorities, and other marginalized groups. This contentious narrative often portrays undeservingness, contempt, and violence, mirroring societal tensions (Ostiguy & Casullo, 2017). These aggressive



tactics are used by disruptive agents in nursing online forums to dispute perceived injustices and promote their cause.

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is bordered along textual and photographic content, mainly posts and comments, within SNOCs. It excluded videos, clips, gifs, and emoticons. The study also acknowledges the limits of the researcher's interpretive skill, online informant identifiers that can make it difficult to generalize results to groups outside the population, and literature on nurses' social media participation and netnographic research design.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The study shows that SNOCs are structured by the different nature and group of actors, including Nihilists, Uplifters, Rabble-rousers, Supporters, Enquirers, Goodwill Promoters, and Disruptive Agents. These dynamic platforms allow grievances, transformative advocacy, mutual support, and fearlessly confronting social norms. In online interactions, they reflect the nursing community and drive socio-political landscapes. These SNOCs become active vessels where narratives meet, alliances are forged, and nurses' collective spirit harmonizes with the greater nursing community.

7. IMPLICATION

This study holds significant implications for nursing practice and education. It emphasizes the changing nature of professional communication within online communities, offering insights into diverse roles like Nihilists, Uplifters, Rabble-rousers, Supporters, Enquirers, and influential personas such as Goodwill Promoters and Disruptive Agents. Nursing educators can integrate these findings into curricula to cultivate critical thinking, ethical online conduct, professionalism, and positive engagement. The study prompts nursing organizations to tailor professional development initiatives, addressing challenges posed by disruptive agents while fostering mutual support. The study helps nurses navigate and contribute to nursing online communities' dynamic landscape.

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