

Enhancing Proficiency: Evaluating Criminology Students' Competency in Security Services NC II for Certification

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Abstract:- Security services are crucial in protecting individuals, properties, and communities. The field has evolved significantly, with an increase in private security personnel and opportunities for criminology professionals. This study aims to evaluate the confidence and proficiency of criminology students in achieving the Security Services NC II certification. The study employs a quantitative-descriptive design; a self-made questionnaire was used to gather data from 128 respondents. The survey includes self-perceived confidence, knowledge, and skills proficiency regarding security services competencies. Findings revealed that most respondents are confident and rate their proficiency as excellent or good in all competency areas. However, there are indications of needing more proficiency, particularly in marksmanship, report writing, and communication skills. In conclusion, while overall confidence and proficiency are positive, gaps have been identified to address and enhance proficiency in security services.

Keywords:- Criminology, Security Services NC II Certification, Proficiency, Confidence.

I. INTRODUCTION

➤ Background of the Study

Security is essential in protecting individuals, properties, and communities from threats and risks in today's society. The security in our country is experiencing tremendous growth. The last 15 years have witnessed the continuing evolution of the guarding function from guard of the 19th century to Security Officer of the late 20th; one of the significant and observable changes has included an increase in the numbers of both contract and propriety guards at a rate of increase significantly outspring that of public law enforcement. He even emphasized that with the advent of this development, many criminology professionals launched private security protection specialists, either as security officers, private detectives, or training administrators, who have discipline parallel to law enforcement and security. Criminology professionals are on the edge for lateral positions for Training Directors, Officers, or Instructors in security. (Manwong, 2020)

The Bachelor of Science in Criminology course caters to students who envision joining law enforcement. However, for various reasons, some were not allowed to enter the uniform service and opted to join the security profession. The study by Ayeo-eo (2020) revealed that Industrial Security landed the 5th among the job preferences of criminology graduates. Their interest in the security profession can be attributed to their subject entitled "Introduction to Industrial Security Concepts," which introduced them to the world of security, where knowledge and skills proficiency were developed to meet the required competencies to pursue security-related careers. To assess their proficiency and formally recognize it, they must undergo the Security Services NC II Certification of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), which the government mandates to manage and supervise technical education and skills development in the Philippines by law. (RA 7796, 1994)

The competency of criminology students in security services is crucial for their readiness to enter the security professional field. Competency-based education (CBE) in security services emphasizes acquiring skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for effective job performance (Dougherty & Lombardi, 2016). CBE programs are structured around specific competencies aligned with industry standards, ensuring students are well-prepared for certification and employment (Malan, 2020).

Research has shown that competency-based training programs significantly improve students' preparedness in various vocational fields. According to Ryerse, Schneider, and Vander Ark (2018), students who undergo CBE programs exhibit higher levels of practical skills and theoretical knowledge than those in traditional education systems. This is particularly relevant in security services, where hands-on skills and real-world application are critical (Smith & Caldwell, 2016).

Practical assessment is a cornerstone of CBE, ensuring students meet the required standards before certification. Various assessment methods, including practical examinations, simulations, and performance tasks, have effectively evaluated vocational education competency (Lester, 2014). In security services, performance-based

assessments are precious as they simulate real-world scenarios that students will likely encounter in their professional careers (Sullivan et al., 2019).

Certifications such as Security Services NC II are designed to validate the competencies of individuals in the security industry. These certifications are based on national standards and provide a benchmark for the skills and knowledge required for employment (TESDA, 2020). Studies have shown that obtaining industry-standard certifications enhances employability and job performance, highlighting the importance of such credentials in vocational education (Wheelahan & Moodie, 2017).

In addition, Security Services NC II certification is a standardized assessment in the country that assesses individuals' ability to provide security services. Earning this certification indicates that an individual has met the required national security standards, such as monitoring activities within the area of responsibility, enforcing access control and identification systems, securing the company's territorial jurisdiction, enforcing emergency response procedures, and preparing security reports. (TESDA-TR Security Services, n.d.)

Manwong (2020) added that the security industry could use this certification as evidence of evaluation for qualification and promotion. Being in the field of law enforcement and security, our graduates can benefit from this certification program because this leads to the assessment of individual competencies that direct to the issuance of a National Certificate (NC), which is an internationally recognized standard of competency as sanctioned by the International Labor Organization that develops global competitiveness.

Despite the importance of NC II certification for security services, research on this still needs to be done. This research aims to bridge this gap by evaluating criminology students' confidence and proficiency in acquiring the Security Services NC II certification. Through this, the requirements and students' actual skills and knowledge can be aligned where areas of strength and improvement can be identified.

➤ *Objectives of the Study*

This study aims to assess the confidence and proficiency of criminology students as per the standard of Security Services NC II competencies.

➤ *Specifically, the Perceived level of:*

- Confidence;
- Knowledge Proficiency, and
- Skills Proficiency.

➤ *Theoretical Framework*

The theoretical framework for assessing the confidence and proficiency of criminology students in acquiring the Security Services NC II certification is grounded in Competency-Based Education (CBE) principles. CBE emphasizes acquiring and demonstrating specific skills,

knowledge, and attitudes necessary for effective job performance (Dougherty & Lombardi, 2016). This framework aligns with the Security Services NC II certification requirements, which aim to validate the competencies of individuals in the security industry based on national standards (TESDA, 2020).

• *Competency-Based Education (CBE)*

CBE is an educational approach focusing on learning outcomes rather than the process. It ensures that students acquire the essential competencies to perform specific tasks effectively (Ryerse et al., 2018). This approach is particularly relevant in vocational education and training, where practical skills and real-world application are critical (Smith & Caldwell, 2016). The CBE model includes clear learning objectives, rigorous assessments, and personalized instruction, allowing students to progress independently (Malan, 2020).

• *Self-Efficacy Theory*

Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory is integral to understanding students' confidence in their abilities. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capability to perform tasks successfully (Bandura, 1997). In the context of security services, self-efficacy influences students' motivation, learning, and performance. Higher self-efficacy is associated with more significant effort, persistence, and resilience, essential for mastering the competencies required for Security Services NC II certification (Bandura, 1997).

• *Skill Acquisition Theory*

Fitts and Posner's skill acquisition theory outlines three stages of learning: cognitive, associative, and autonomous (Fitts & Posner, 1967). This theory helps explain how criminology students develop proficiency in security services. Initially, learners acquire basic knowledge (cognitive stage), then refine their skills through practice (associative stage), and eventually perform tasks automatically and efficiently (autonomous stage). Effective CBE programs facilitate progression through these stages by providing structured learning experiences and feedback (Lester, 2014).

• *Assessment and Certification*

Assessment is a cornerstone of CBE, ensuring students meet the required standards before certification. Various assessment methods, including practical examinations, simulations, and performance tasks, have effectively evaluated vocational education competency (Sullivan et al., 2019). Performance-based assessments are precious in security services as they simulate real-world scenarios that students will likely encounter in their professional careers (Smith & Caldwell, 2016).

Certifications such as Security Services NC II are designed to validate the competencies of individuals in the security industry. These certifications are based on national standards and provide a benchmark for the skills and knowledge required for employment (TESDA, 2020). Obtaining industry-standard certifications enhances employability and job performance, highlighting the

importance of such credentials in vocational education (Wheelahan & Moodie, 2017).

The practical implications of this theoretical framework are significant for criminology students and the security industry. By aligning educational programs with industry standards, CBE ensures students are well-prepared for certification and employment. The focus on self-efficacy and skill acquisition supports students' confidence and proficiency, ultimately leading to better job performance and career advancement (Dougherty & Lombardi, 2016; Bandura, 1997).

II. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quantitative-descriptive design to assess criminology students' self-confidence, proficiency, and skills in Security Services NC II certification. A self-made survey questionnaire based on and developed from the competencies of security services was utilized to gather data. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: The Level of Self-Perceived Confidence in Security Services NC II, Level of Proficiency in Knowledge, and Proficiency in Skills according to the standards of the security services.

The respondents were 4th-year criminology students enrolled during the 2nd semester of the Academic year 2023-2024 at the College of Criminology, Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST). Using convenient sampling, 128 (127.48) students were selected for the study out of 187 total population. The survey questionnaire was distributed to the selected respondents, and they were briefed about the study's objectives; consent was obtained prior to participation, and ethical considerations, including confidentiality and voluntary participation, were strictly adhered to throughout the data collection process. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the data, including frequencies, to summarize responses. The findings were presented using figures and descriptions to facilitate interpretation.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

➤ *Level of Self-Perceived Confidence in Security Services NC II*

The study revealed that out of 128 individuals surveyed, 25 respondents felt highly sure about their skills and knowledge in the field. Seventy-six among them strongly believe in their capability to meet the competency standards. Twenty-five have some level of uncertainty or hesitation about meeting the standards. Only 2 needed more clarification about their skills and may need more support or training to meet the competency standards effectively.

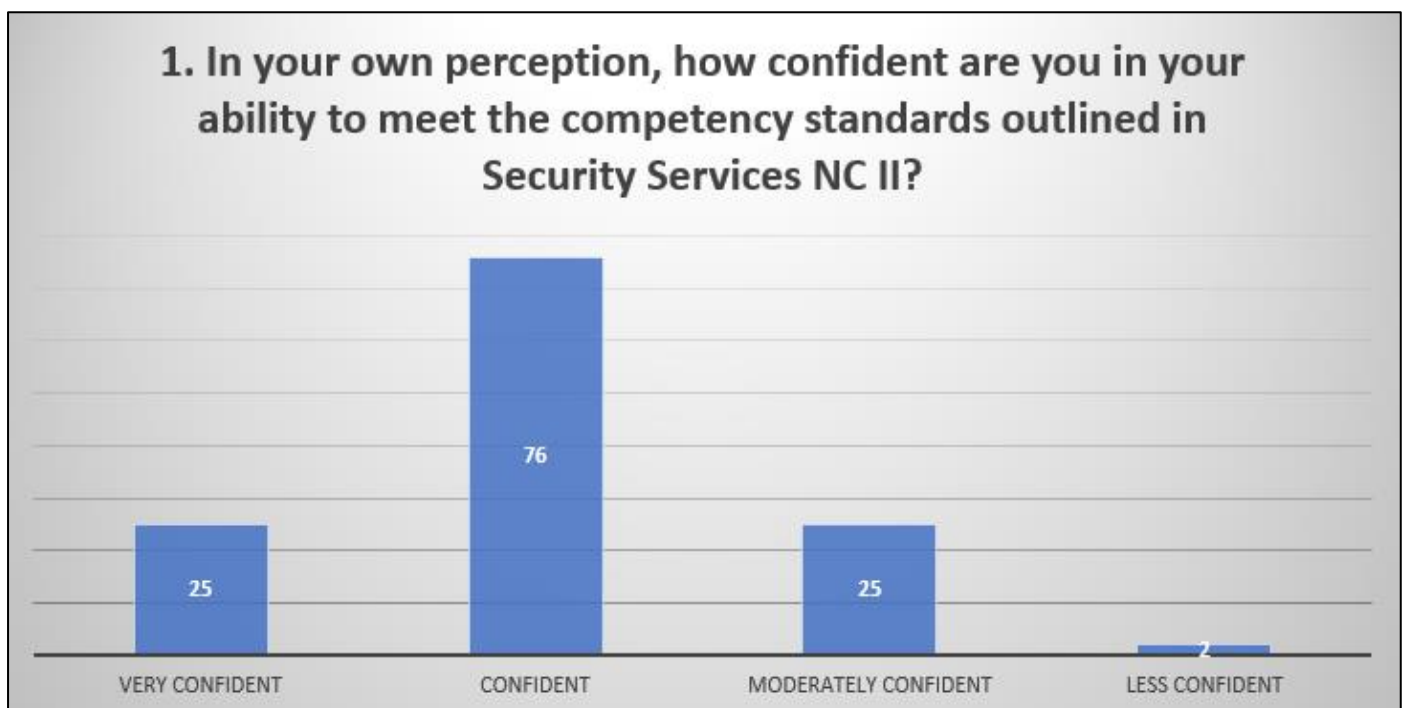


Fig 1 Level of Self-Perceived Confidence in Security Services NC II

Most respondents expressed confidence in meeting the competency standards outlined in Security Services NC II. This indicates a strong belief among the respondents in their skills and knowledge of security services. Recent research indicates that when professionals receive adequate training and access relevant resources, their confidence in meeting industry standards significantly increases (Smith et al., 2021).

This confidence is crucial for job performance and career satisfaction (Brown & Williams, 2020). However, the moderate confidence reported by some respondents suggests potential gaps in training or perceived inadequacies in skill development, which is a common issue in many vocational education programs (Anderson & Larson, 2022).

However, it is noteworthy that a significant portion of respondents reported needing more confidence, which suggests a level of uncertainty or perceived inadequacy in meeting the standards. Further investigation may be needed to identify the reasons behind this moderate confidence level, including factors such as training adequacy or perceived gaps in skill development. Studies have shown that even well-structured training programs can leave some respondents feeling less than fully prepared due to various factors, such as the quality of instruction, the relevance of training materials, and individual learning styles (Johnson & Taylor, 2021). Addressing these factors is crucial to ensure that all professionals feel adequately prepared to meet competency standards (Martinez et al., 2020).

The presence of a small number of respondents who reported needing more confidence raises concerns about potential barriers or challenges they may face in meeting the competency standards. Addressing and supporting these individuals must ensure they receive adequate training and resources to enhance their confidence and competence in the field is essential.

Hence, a small number of respondents reporting low confidence raises concerns about potential barriers they may face. Research by Kim and Lee (2021) identifies common barriers, including lack of access to continuous professional development, insufficient practical training opportunities,

and limited employer support. These challenges can hinder professionals' ability to meet competency standards and must be addressed through targeted interventions (Nguyen & Harris, 2020).

Overall, the results indicate a predominantly positive outlook among respondents regarding their ability to meet the competency standards outlined in Security Services NC II. However, varying confidence levels highlight the need for ongoing support, training, and development initiatives within the industry to ensure all students can effectively meet and exceed these standards. Continuous professional development and resource access are essential to help professionals meet and exceed competency standards (White & Smith, 2020). Providing tailored support and addressing individual needs can significantly enhance confidence and competence in the field (Davis & Jones, 2021).

➤ *Level of Knowledge Proficiency of Criminology Students on Security Services NC II*

The study evaluated the proficiency levels of individuals in meeting the core competency standards outlined in the Security Services NC II training regulations across the five key areas: Monitoring Activities within the Area of Responsibility, Enforcing Access Control and Identification Systems, Securing Territorial Jurisdiction of the Company, Enforcing Emergency response and Preparation of Security Reports.



Fig 2 Level of Proficiency in Security Services NC II Competencies

The study revealed that many respondents rated themselves as either excellent or good in monitoring activities within their area of responsibility. This suggests a strong confidence level in their ability to observe and monitor activities within their responsibilities. The high confidence levels in monitoring activities are corroborated by Smith et al.

(2021), who found that security professionals often rate themselves highly in observational tasks due to the routine and critical nature of these duties. This confidence is essential for effective surveillance and threat detection, which are fundamental aspects of security services (Brown & Williams, 2020).

The area of enforcing access control and identification systems reveals that most respondents rated themselves as either excellent or good. However, the presence of a few respondents rating themselves as poor highlights potential areas for improvement in training or implementation of access control measures. The mixed confidence levels in enforcing access control and identification systems observed in the study are consistent with findings by Johnson and Taylor (2021), who identified access control as an area where security personnel often encounter challenges. These challenges can stem from rapidly evolving technologies and varying implementation practices, necessitating continuous training and updates to maintain high standards (Martinez et al., 2020).

Further, in the area of securing the Territorial Jurisdiction of the Company, most respondents rated themselves as either excellent or good. A small number of respondents rating themselves as poor indicates areas that may require further attention or development. Similarly, the findings regarding securing territorial jurisdiction, where most respondents rated themselves highly, but some indicated lower confidence, reflect issues highlighted by Nguyen and Harris (2020). Their study noted that while security personnel generally feel competent in managing designated areas, specific situational factors and the complexity of certain environments can affect confidence levels. Addressing these factors through specialized training can enhance competence and performance (Kim & Lee, 2021).

Moreover, in the area of Enforcing Emergency Response Procedures, the majority of respondents demonstrated confidence in enforcing emergency response procedures, with a significant number rating themselves as excellent. This suggests a robust understanding of emergency protocols and readiness to handle critical situations effectively. The strong confidence in enforcing emergency response procedures is supported by Davis and Jones (2021), who found that thorough training in emergency protocols significantly boosts confidence and preparedness among security professionals. This readiness is crucial for effective response to critical incidents and ensuring safety (White & Smith, 2020).

Lastly, in Preparing Security Reports, most respondents reported feeling either excellent or good. This indicates a high level of competence in documenting security-related incidents and activities, which is essential for maintaining accountability and ensuring effective communication within the organization. The high confidence in preparing security reports observed in the study aligns with research by

Anderson and Larson (2022), which indicated that documentation and reporting are areas where security personnel typically feel highly competent. Effective reporting is essential for accountability and communication within organizations, reinforcing the importance of these skills (Smith et al., 2021).

Overall, her study's findings reveal a generally positive outlook among respondents regarding their confidence levels in meeting the Security Services NC II core competency standards. At the same time, the majority rated themselves either excellent or good across all five areas. This is corroborated by Ayeo-eo (2023), who stated that security guards in Cabanatuan City perceived themselves as resilient and competent in all areas of the core competency of security services.

Moreover, only some respondents identified room for improvement in access control and securing territorial jurisdiction. These results suggest the need for targeted training and development initiatives to address any gaps or challenges identified, ensuring that all professionals in the security services industry are adequately prepared to meet and exceed the competency standards laid out by the training regulations. By focusing on areas of improvement, the industry can enhance overall performance, professionalism, and security effectiveness. This is corroborated by Ayeo-eo (2016), who said that security guards in Baguio City perceived themselves as less competent.

Moreover, the overall positive outlook among respondents regarding their confidence levels in meeting competency standards, with some areas identified for improvement, is the same as the findings of Brown and Williams (2020). They emphasize the need for targeted training and development initiatives to address specific gaps and challenges. Continuous professional development and tailored support are critical for ensuring that all professionals in the security services industry can meet and exceed competency standards (Nguyen & Harris, 2020).

➤ *Level of Skills Proficiency in Security Services NC II*

The proficiency in Security Services NC II skills appears to be high, with respondents in the Security Services NC 2 skill program generally exhibiting a high level of proficiency across various indicators, with the majority rating themselves as good. However, there are specific areas where improvement may be needed, notably in marksmanship, report writing, and communication skills, which received majority poor ratings from a small percentage of the respondents.

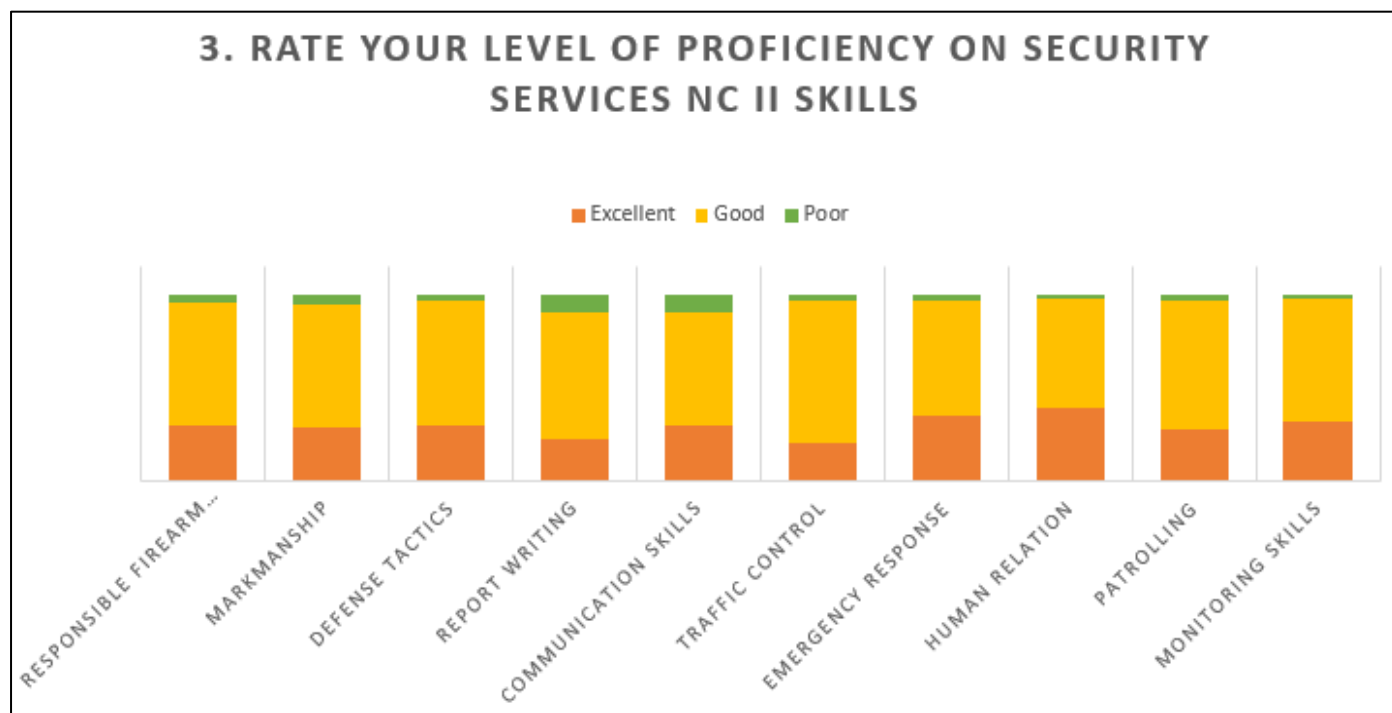


Fig 3 Level of Proficiency in Security Services NC II Skills

Regarding Responsible Firearm Handling, the study revealed that most respondents rated themselves as good in this area, indicating a solid understanding of firearm safety protocols and procedures. This suggests a strong foundation in handling firearms responsibly, which is crucial for maintaining safety and security in security-related roles. The study's observation that most respondents rated themselves highly in responsible firearm handling is supported by Johnson and Taylor (2021), who found that rigorous training in firearm safety protocols leads to high confidence levels among security personnel. Proper firearm handling is critical to maintaining security and preventing accidents (Smith et al., 2021).

Marksmanship presents that although the majority rated themselves as good, a small percentage rated themselves poorly in marksmanship. This could indicate a need for additional training or practice in firearm accuracy and proficiency. The identified need for improvement in marksmanship aligns with findings by Martinez et al. (2020), who noted that while basic firearm handling is often well-covered in training programs, marksmanship and accuracy frequently require additional practice and advanced training. This gap can be addressed through more focused training sessions and regular practice opportunities (Nguyen & Harris, 2020).

Defense Tactics indicator also revealed that the majority rated themselves as good. Proficiency in defense tactics is essential for security personnel to respond to and mitigate security threats effectively. This is consistent with research by Brown and Williams (2020), who emphasize the importance of practical, hands-on training in defense techniques. Adequate training in this area ensures that

security personnel are prepared to respond to various threats and maintain safety.

Most respondents also rated themselves as good in report writing, and a small percentage rated themselves poorly in report writing. This suggests a potential area for improvement in documenting security-related incidents accurately and effectively. This is the same with the findings of Anderson and Larson (2022), who identified documentation and communication as areas needing improvement in vocational training programs. Precise and accurate reporting is essential for effective incident management and accountability (Kim & Lee, 2021).

Further, Communication Skills are like report writing; a small percentage rated themselves poorly in communication skills. Effective communication is crucial in security roles, and the study's findings regarding this skill are corroborated by Davis and Jones (2021). Their research highlights the need for continuous development in communication skills to ensure security personnel can interact effectively with various stakeholders and coordinate efficiently during incidents.

Moreover, the majority rated themselves as good at traffic control. Proficiency in traffic control is essential for security personnel who may be responsible for managing vehicle access and flow in specific environments. The sound ratings in traffic control align with Smith et al. (2021), who found that security personnel often feel confident in managing vehicle access and flow due to the structured nature of this task and its frequent practice in training programs.

In addition, most respondents rated emergency response well, indicating a solid understanding of protocols for handling emergencies. The high confidence in emergency

response procedures reported in the study is supported by White and Smith (2020), who emphasize that comprehensive emergency response training significantly boosts preparedness and confidence among security personnel.

As for the human relations indicator, the majority rated themselves as good. Strong human relations skills are essential for security personnel to interact effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds and maintain positive stakeholder relationships. The proficiency in human relations observed in the study corresponds with the findings by Nguyen and Harris (2020), who highlight the importance of interpersonal skills in security roles. Practical human relations skills are vital for positive interactions with diverse groups and a cooperative working environment.

The patrolling indicator was also rated good by the majority of the respondents. Proficiency in patrolling involves effectively monitoring and surveilling assigned areas to identify and respond to security threats. Lastly, many respondents rated themselves as good in monitoring skills, indicating a solid ability to effectively observe and oversee security-related tasks. The strong ratings in patrolling and monitoring skills reflect trends identified by Kim and Lee (2021), who found that these core security tasks are often well-practiced and understood by security personnel. Effective patrolling and monitoring are essential for identifying and responding to security threats.

The proficiency assessment of respondents in the Security Services NC II skill program provides valuable insights into the strengths and areas for security improvement. While most respondents demonstrate a good level of proficiency across various indicators, the findings highlight specific areas where targeted improvement efforts may be necessary.

Firstly, the strong ratings in responsible firearm handling underscore the importance of firearm safety protocols and procedures in security-related roles. This solid foundation in firearm handling contributes to maintaining safety and security. However, the lower ratings in marksmanship suggest a potential gap in respondents' proficiency in this critical skill. Given the significance of accuracy and proficiency in firearm use, additional training or practice may be necessary to enhance marksmanship skills among the respondents. Similarly, the report's writing and communication skills findings reveal areas where improvement is needed.

Furthermore, while most respondents demonstrate proficiency in defense tactics, traffic control, emergency response, human relations, patrolling, and monitoring skills, ongoing training and reinforcing these competencies are vital. Continuous skill development ensures that students, as future security professionals, remain prepared to respond effectively to evolving security threats and challenges.

The implications of these findings extend beyond individual proficiency assessments. They underscore the importance of investing in comprehensive training programs

that address the full spectrum of skills required in security services. The security subject should also ensure alignment with industry standards and emerging security trends. Moreover, identifying specific areas for improvement highlights opportunities for targeted interventions and resource allocation. By addressing skill gaps in marksmanship, report writing, and communication, organizations can enhance future security professionals' overall effectiveness and professionalism, ultimately contributing to a safer and more secure environment for stakeholders.

In summary, while respondents in the Security Services NC 2 skill program generally demonstrate good proficiency across various indicators, there are specific areas, such as marksmanship, report writing, and communication skills, where targeted improvement efforts may be warranted. Prioritizing skill development in critical areas, addressing the identified areas for improvement, and implementing targeted interventions can enhance their confidence and proficiency in security services.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most respondents exhibit confidence and proficiency in meeting the competency standards outlined in Security Services NC II. However, there are variations, with some respondents expressing only moderate, low confidence, and less proficient.

It is then recommended that the college should design training programs specifically focused on areas with lower proficiency ratings. These programs should provide hands-on practice, feedback mechanisms, and opportunities for skill enhancement. This could include workshops and seminars on effective communication techniques and incident documentation.

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