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Influencers on the Choice of Nursing as a Career in Underrepresented Populations: An Integrative Review

Michelle L. Gee

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ABSTRACT

The importance of diversity in the nursing workforce lies in the relationship between increased diversity of nurses and the provision of culturally competent nursing care. Nursing care must address health needs of minority populations that experience significant health disparities in the United States. Despite this importance, nursing continues to lack representation of the population that it serves. In developing strategies to combat this issue, it is important to consider what influences members of underrepresented populations to choose or disregard nursing as a career. This integrative literature review analyzes the current literature to gain insight regarding motivations and deterrents that affect nursing as the career choice of underrepresented populations. To conduct this integrative literature review, electronic databases consulted include CINHAL, ERIC, PsychINFO, Science Direct, PubMed, ProQuest, and EBSCOHost. Keywords used were related to racial/ethnic minorities, gender/sexuality minorities, disability status, and the nursing profession. Twenty articles met inclusion criteria. Motivations to become a nurse included altruism, interactions with nurses, socioeconomic opportunities, positive social network influence, and desire to represent culture/community. Deterrents included lack of social status (including autonomy, power, respect, and professional status), pay, negative social network influence, physical/emotional aspects, perceived difficulty of nursing school, and sociocultural influences. This integrated literature review highlights the importance of representation in nursing as a diverse and high-status career, as well as the need for research on invisible minorities and their views on nursing as a profession.

INTRODUCTION

- There is a relationship between the diversity of nurses and the provision of competent care that addresses the individual and cultural health needs of patient populations in the United States (AACN, 2019; NLN, 2016; Phillips & Malone, 2014).
- The nursing workforce currently identifies as predominately white and female (NCSBN, 2017), with no statistics regarding non-binary gender identities, sexuality, or disability status.
- Efforts are underway to diversify the nursing workforce, including assessment of barriers for acceptance into nursing schools and successful completion of the NCLEX (Loftin et al., 2013; Murray et al., 2016).
- One important aspect regarding recruitment of underrepresented populations is the perceptions of nursing as either an ideal or undesirable career.
- The purpose of this integrative review is to explore what factors have been reported in underrepresented populations in either choosing or rejecting nursing as a career.

METHODOLOGY

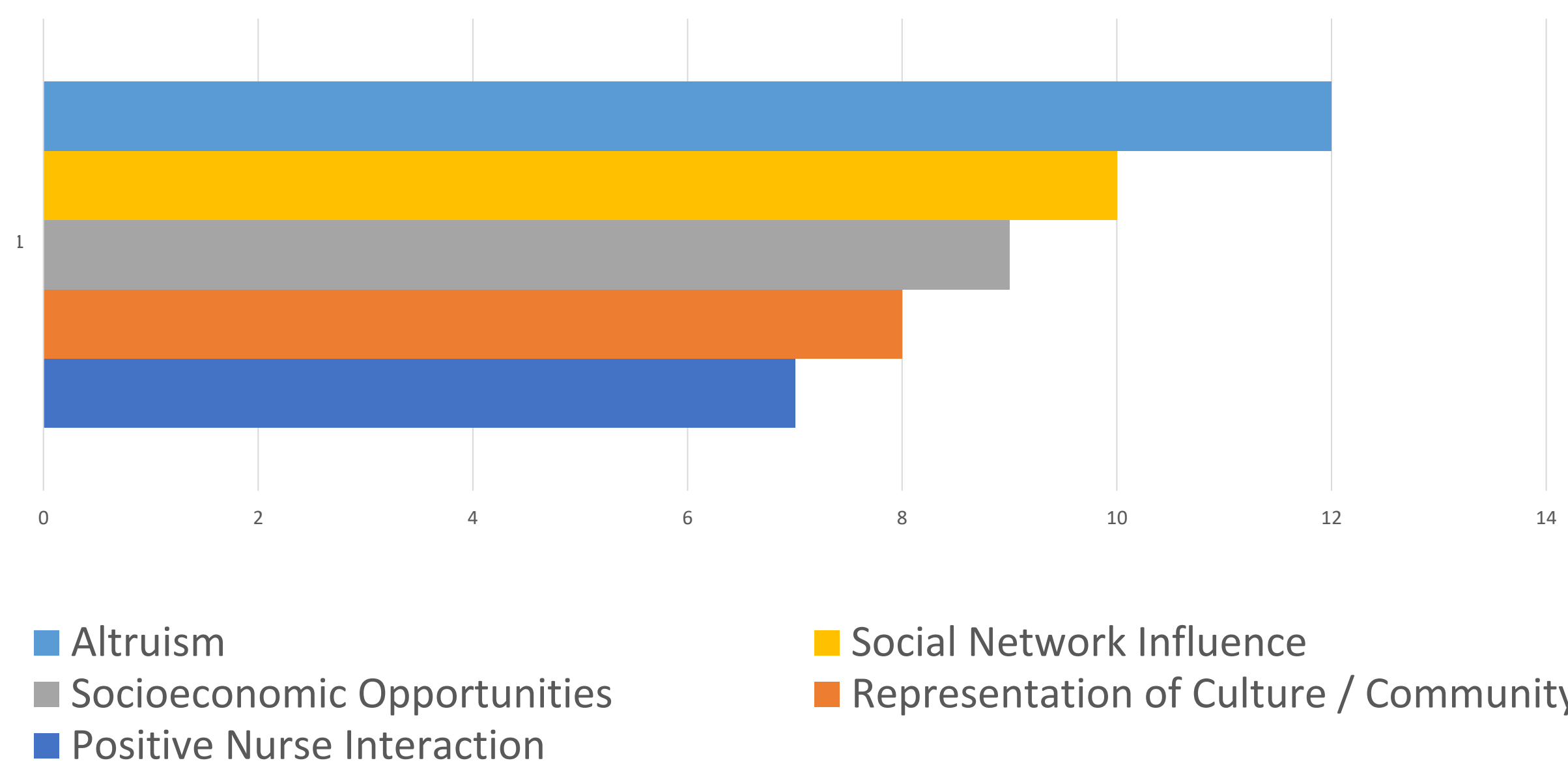
- An integrative review strategy was chosen to synthesize published research of both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the phenomenon of choice of nursing as a career (Schmidt & Brown, 2019).
- Grey literature was included to help represent populations not included in mainstream journals.
- Databases: CINHAL, ERIC, PsychINFO, Science Direct, PubMed, ProQuest, EBSCOHost
- Inclusion Criteria: research conducted with populations in the United States; underrepresented populations (non-white, non-female, non-binary) as the dominant reported demographic; English language.
- 1879 records screened, 20 included in review.

INTEGRATIVE REVIEW RESULTS

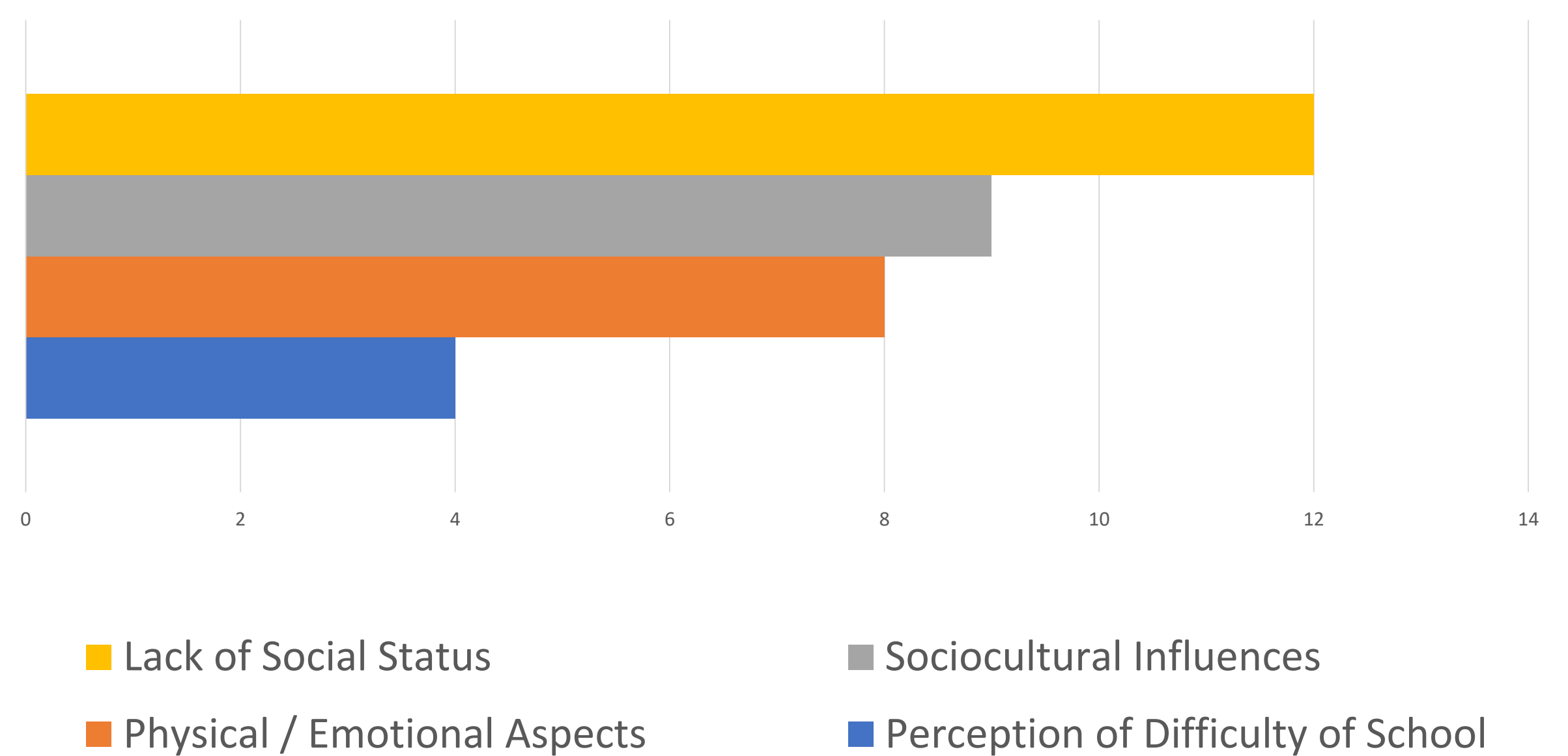
Source	LOE	Demo-graphics	MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCES					DETERRENTS				
			Altruism	Positive Nurse Interaction	Socioeconomic Opportunities	Social Network Influence	Representation of Culture / Community	Lack of Social Status	Physical / Emotional Aspects	Perception of Difficulty of School	Sociocultural Influences	
Alexander & Diefenbeck (2020)	VI	AA		X	X			X				
Askew (1994)	IV	AA, NA, H, A, W	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X		
Bagley (2019)	VI	AA, NA, H	X	X		X	X					X
Brooks et al. (2013)	IV	AA, H, O		X								
Degazon et al. (2015)	IV	AA, NA, H, A	X		X			X	X			
Degazon & Shaw (2007)	IV	AA, H, A, W, O	X					X	X			
Dubas (2020)	VI	T	X				X					X
Harrigan et al. (2003)	VI	NH, S, F	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Katz (2007)	III	NA					X	X				
Katz et al. (2011)	VI	NA	X			X	X	X			X	X
Kelly et al. (2017)	VI	AA, H	X		X	X	X					
LaRocco (2008)	VI	M	X	X	X	X			X			X
McGee et al. (2019)	VI	AA, L			X	X		X	X	X		X
O'Lynn et al. (2020)	VI	M	X	X		X						X
Ortiz-Moraels (2010)	IV	H	X		X	X	X					
Owens (2011)	IV	AA			X	X	X	X	X			
Reiskin & Haussler (1994)	IV	AA, L, A, W, O	X					X				
Stevens (2004)	VI	AA	X	X	X	X	X					
Williams (2012)	VI	H, L	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X		X
Woods-Giscombe et al. (2020)	VI	U		X				X				X

Key: AA = African American, NA = Native American, H = Hispanic, L = Latino, A = Asian, W = White, O = Other, NH = Native Hawaiian, S = Samoan, F = Filipino, M = Male, T = Trans, U = Unknown. -- this area was not reported in this study LOE determined using Gray et al. Levels of Evidence process.

MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCES



DETERRENTS



DISCUSSION

- Altruism is the dominant motivational factor for deciding to become a nurse, followed closely by social network influence (friends/family suggesting to become a nurse), perception of upward socioeconomic movement, and desire to represent their culture and community.
- Positive interactions with nurses was moderately influential, leading to questions regarding negative interactions with nursing, or no interaction with nursing because of lack of access to care.
- The major deterrent reported was the perception of nursing as a career of low social status, including lack of autonomy, power, respect, professional status, and pay. This may imply that minority populations seek roles that they perceive have high social status, of which nursing is not included.
- Sociocultural influences that detract from nursing as an ideal career include feelings of isolation (no representation of themselves in nursing), nursing as a largely female-gendered role, nursing only practicing Western-style medicine, perceived inability to leave home for college, and nursing not deemed suitable by social network.
- Some find both nursing as a career and nursing school difficult to deal with, including factors such as long hours, difficult / stressful / laborious work, and dealing with the sick/dying.
- Of the 20 studies, the two studies that sampled men were the only studies to report sexuality.
- Representation within nursing provided both motivational and nonmotivational factors in the decision to become a nurse, highlighting the importance of positive representation in nursing as a powerful, high-status career.
- Invisible populations, such as those that identify as having a disability, gender and sexual minorities, and racial identities who must choose "white" or "other" are overwhelming underreported and require future research to explore these population's perception of nursing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

Thank you to Kathleen Dunem for sponsoring this work. A complete reference list is available as a separate handout.