Evaluating Factors Associated with Interest in Healthcare or STEM Professions Among Rising 9th and 10th Graders  
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INTRODUCTION

- Evidence suggests that health workforce diversification helps to reduce health care disparities.
- According to the Seventeenth report of the Council on Graduate Medical Education addressing Minorities in Medicine, minorities have some of the worst health conditions in the country. However, they also experience significant health disparities in comparison to the white population.
- The purpose of the Howard University National Workforce Diversity Program (HU-NWDP) is to promote the development of competitive underrepresented minorities to pursue careers in STEM, biomedical sciences and health care professions.
- There are three High School programs namely the Junior URM Mentoring Program (JUMP), the Health Occupation Program (HOP), and the STEM Career Intervention Program (SCIP).

METHODS

- To determine the bivariable associations between the study’s outcomes and independent variables, chi square tests were conducted.
- The SPSS software was used to conduct the analysis at an alpha of 0.05.

RESULTS

- A total of 76 rising 9th and 10th graders were included in this evaluation. The mean age was 14.3 years and 69.7% of the participants were female.
- Bivariable analysis showed a statistically significant association between gender and interest in STEM professions (p<0.05) with male participants having a higher odds of high/extreme interest compared to females.
- No significant gender differences were found with regards to interest in healthcare professions.
- The majority of students rated influence of family members in their pursuit of these careers as important/extremely important.
- In addition to this, the majority of students reported high income, job security, helping people, spending time with family and work flexibility as factors that are important/extremely important.

CONCLUSION

- This study found that there were gender specific differences in interest particularly in STEM professions.
- Family members were found to be key influencers in career selection within the early high school age group.

LIMITATIONS

- Reporting bias is a limitation that may have potentially influenced the outcome of this study.
- Information was gathered from the participants by self-reporting.

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REFERENCES


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