

NURSES' IMPLICIT ATTITUDES REGARDING THE LGBTQ POPULATION

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BACKGROUND

- The LGBTQ population suffers from multiple health disparities, disproportionate mental health issues, and high suicide rates^{1,2,4,5,7}.
- There are mixed results regarding healthcare professionals' attitudes toward LGBTQ individuals, but very few studies have focused on nurses and implicit bias³.

PURPOSE/AIMS

The purpose of the study was to:

- Compare US nurses' Transgender Implicit Association Test (IAT) scores with other groups,
- Determine if a significant difference existed between nurses' Transgender IAT scores and reported explicit attitudes, and
- Identify whether nurses' implicit attitudes on sexuality had changed over time.

METHODS & DESIGN

- Similar to a 2015 study⁶, this study used retrospective secondary data from Project Implicit, which provides global access to IATs.
- Implicit attitudes were measured using the Transgender IAT and Sexuality IAT.
- The study included US residents with a completed IAT score.

KEY FINDINGS

- Of all the groups, nurses had the strongest implicit preferences for cisgender people.
- No significant difference was found between nurses' mean IAT scores and explicit scores ($p = .052$). Nurses may be aware of their biases.
- Nurses' attitudes about sexuality are trending toward less biased scores.

DUAL-PROCESS THEORY

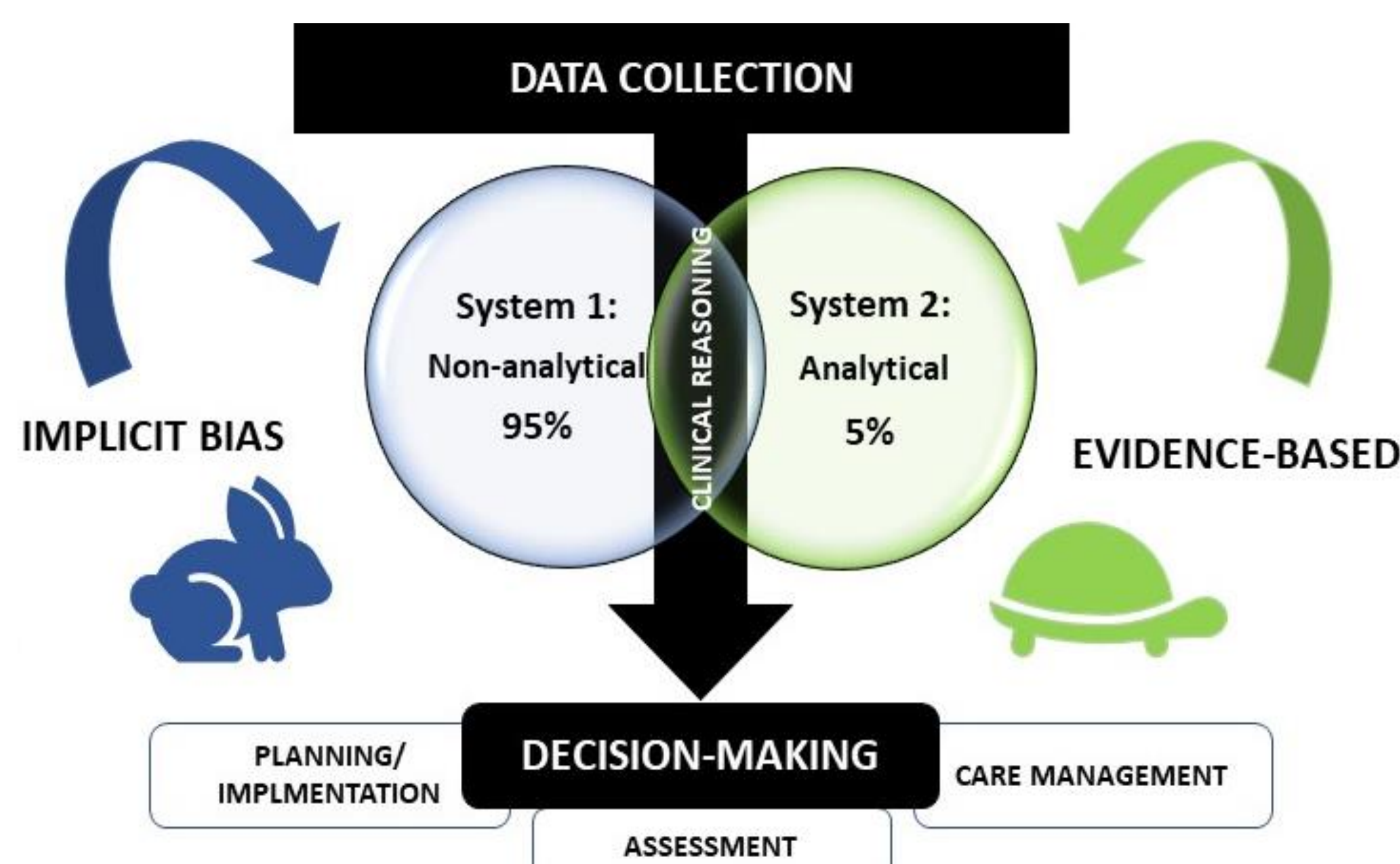
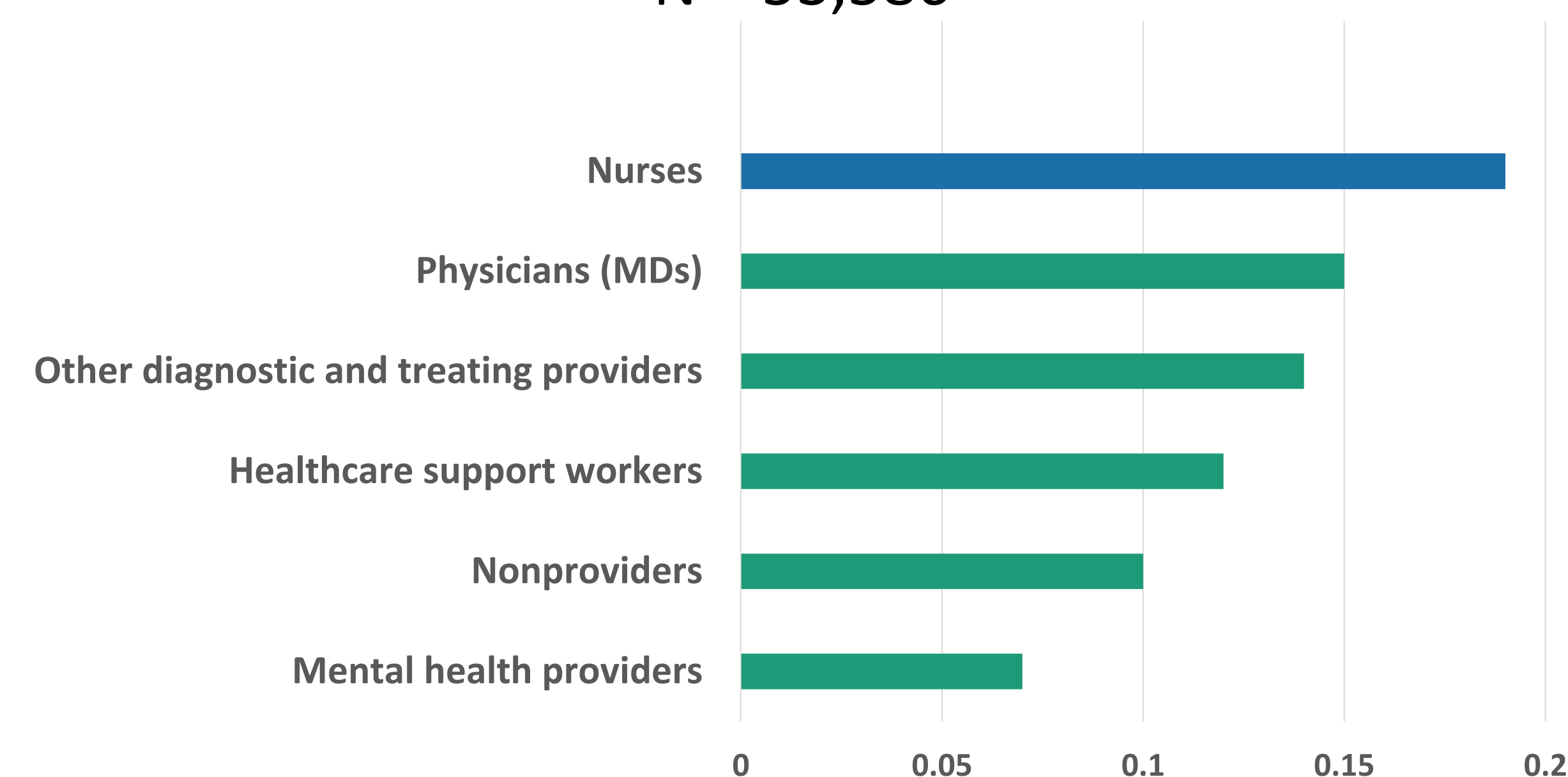


Figure: Dual process theory⁸

RESULTS

Mean Transgender IAT Scores

N = 53,586



Nurses' IAT & Explicit Scores

N = 1558



Mean Sexuality IAT Scores 2006 - 2020

N = 25,791



CONCLUSIONS

- Overall, nurses' attitudes about the LGBTQ population are improving; however, continued opportunities for professional growth exist.
- Awareness of biases and additional education are needed to ensure that nurses can provide competent LGBTQ patient care.
- A potential limitation included recoding explicit scores to align with IAT scores, which may have affected the reported outcomes.
- Further studies should consider implicit bias and its impact on patient outcomes, as well as how these attitudes influence LGBTQ health disparities.

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- Figure adapted from Quaresma, A., Xavier, D., & Cezar-Vaz, M. (2019). Nurses' clinical reasoning: A dual process theory approach. *Revista Enfermagem UERJ*, 27, e37682. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12957/reuerj.2019.37862>