Factors Likely to Affect the Successful Completion of an Actuarial Qualification in South Africa

Author: Nalen Naidoo

Presented by: Pamela Hellig & Soshan Soobramoney

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Executive Summary

- Factors likely to affect success are both internal and external to a student

- Factors encompass socio-economic factors, support structures, admission rules, and academic, psychological, motivational, social and demographic factors

- The interaction of factors can have significant implications for transformation

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Outline

1. Background

2. Success Factors

   - Exogenous

   - Endogenous

3. Persistency

4. Implications for transformation

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Background

- Small profession

- Race and gender profile skewed (85% White male)

- How to tackle supply of resources

- Benefits:

  - Universities

  - Profession

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Success Factors

Exogenous factors

1. Socio-economic

2. Support structures

3. Admission rules

Socio-economic (1)

- Family socio-economic status

  - Lack of finances means enter job market early

  - Expectation of remittance

  - High costs of studying

- Area of living

  - Rural and urban

  - Isolated regions and distance learning

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Socio-economic (2)

- Quality of school attended

    - Low income classmates

    - Poor performing classmates

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Support structures (1)

- Role-model / mentor

  - Academic self-confidence and motivation

  - Social support and involvement

  - Create interest in profession

- Institutional support

  - Orientation programs

  - Social integration

  - Collaborative initiatives

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Support structures (2)

- Teaching quality

  - High expectations and expanded learning opportunities

  - Diversity affecting education delivery

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Admission rules

- Define population

- Appropriate measurement important

- Learning effect

- Barrier to entry and signal of quality

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Endogenous factors

1. Academic

2. Psychological

3. Motivational

4. Social

5. Demographic

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Academic (1)

- Past academic performance

  - Changing teaching methods over time

  - Disconnect with assessment methods

  - Type of tertiary qualification

- Communication skills

Academic (2)

- Study skills

  - Lead to self-confidence

  - Cannot be predicted from matriculation results

  - Lectures

  - Distance learning and on-campus learning

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Academic (3)

- Exam technique

- Work experience

  - Work-based skills

  - Full-time and part-time studying

- Intelligence

  - Culturally defined

  - Match to assessment methods

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Psychological

- Personality traits

  - OCEAN

  - Self-efficacy, proactive attitude and proactive coping

  - Linking self-esteem to grades

- Thinking styles

  - Depends on stage of study

  - Need teachers and students to have similar styles

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Motivational

- Various sources

- Parental involvement and locus of control

- Performance expectations

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Social

- Conflict with and support academics

- Social integration

- High school performance interacts with institutional commitment

Demographic

- Age

- Race and gender

  - Not being reflected in membership creates doubt

  - Stereotype threat

- Home language

  - First-language less relevant

  - Conceptual understanding of first language

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Persistency

2008 CONVENTION   23 – 24 OCTOBER

Persistency

- Student Integration Model (Tinto, 1975)

    - Different types of leaving behaviour

    - Academic and social integration

    - Three steps to integration

- Perceived institutional support

- Criticisms lead to revised SIM

    - Importance of the classroom

    - Academic integration nested within social integration

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Implications for Transformation

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- Many different factors with complex interactions

- Impediments:

  - Structural issues present

    - Poor socio-economic status

    - Poor school quality

    - Largely rural living area means isolated

  - Role models / mentors not available (first generation)

  - Institutional support lacking

Implications for Transformation

- Impediments (continued):

  - Delivery of education not appropriate

  - Past academic performance not relevant

  - Study skills should focus on self-regulation

  - Assessment of intelligence not relevant

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Implications for Transformation

- Impediments (continued):

  - Thinking styles different to teachers

  - Motivation amidst low expectations

  - Lack of social integration

  - Negative stereotyping and stereotype threat

  - Language skills

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Thank you!

- Questions?

Contact details: nalennaidoo@yahoo.co.uk

pamelahellig@gmail.com

ssoobramoney@gmail.com

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