



RECONCEPTUALISING STUDENT SUCCESS

MCN Phewa¹

¹Tuition and Facilitation of Learning, University of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal Province South Africa

ABSTRACT

The phrase 'access for student success' is familiar in the South African Higher Education (SAHE) sector since the formation of the Department of Education in 1994, a result from the desegregation of the then 17 racial departments. Numerous initiatives to address this concept have been instituted in different ways by the Higher Education (HE) institutions. These have taken the form of student support programmes which have, inter alia, included access and/or foundation provision, academic development initiatives, career development and employment preparation programmes. The University of South Africa (Unisa) has not been omitted in taking on similar initiatives. Unisa in its attempt to enhance student success offers academic development (AD) programmes such as the Science Foundation Provision (SFP), amongst others. However, academic development remains an ad-hoc activity being offered by different directorates working in silos and often times duplicating some of the services. This paper aims to present a proposal towards developing an integrated model for learner support whose objective is to identify students' academic and career needs at the point of entry; refer them to appropriate learning and career development programmes; and thereafter enrol them in a job readiness training and placement programme (JRTP) in preparation for work-integrated learning (WIL) placements. This is a mixed methods study, involving a diagnostic academic literacies assessment, student and employer questionnaires as well as focus group discussions. Participants were 'employers' of Unisa students in WIL programmes with and/or without the career development and JRTP experience as well as Unisa students in these programmes. It was found that most senior students view student success as obtaining a qualification, and being able to use such qualification in gainful employment.

Keywords: Academic development, Access, Career development, Employability, Employment preparation, Life-long learning, Success, Work-integrated learning.

Received: 18 June 2015/ **Revised:** 17 December 2015/ **Accepted:** 21 December 2015/ **Published:** 24 December 2015

Contribution/ Originality

This study contributes in the existing literature the notion that students perceive success as a combination of obtaining good grades and employability skills which will lead them to obtaining and retaining good employment. It further hopes to contribute towards development of support programmes that integrate academic development, job-readiness and placement.

1. INTRODUCTION

The SAHE sector has over the years embarked on a number of initiatives which were aimed at providing academic development to learners who were deemed under-prepared for HE (Boughey, 2010). This happened at a time when the previously 'Whites only' universities were allowed by law to admit students from other races. The

latter were found to be lacking in academic skills when compared to their white counterparts, which was to be expected as education standards differed considerably from race to race. Thus the advent of AD intervention programmes.

The AD programmes thus developed were stand-alone, add-on tutorial sessions and extra classes. Unfortunately, the students for which they were meant for did not take kindly to these efforts – to them these seemed to be the perpetuation of apartheid practices, as only 'non-white' students were required to attend them. This attitude necessitated a change of AD provision. Thus the development of the AD movement throughout the ages to what is currently referred to as teaching and learning – with AD components integrated into formal university courses and/or modules. The development of AD has led to more open access to HE in South Africa, for even those students who might not have ordinarily been admitted to university. This has been more the case at Unisa, although this open access has been viewed by others as “an open access [to] a revolving door” (Glennie, 1997). The university management has only now taken a decision to do something about the 'revolving door'; and this is to conduct diagnostic academic literacies assessments to students at point of entry, with a view of responding to students' academic needs through appropriate needs related AD intervention programmes. Such assessments are commissioned to an AD unit within the Directorate for Counselling and Career Development (DCCD). Within the same directorate there is a unit whose personnel deal with the JRTP programme. They are responsible for preparing senior students for the world of work irrespective of their career choices and/or aspirations.

Career development programmes are carried out by career counsellors, who administer career assessments, help students with decision making, career mapping and pathing.

Unisa also has a division that deals with WIL, and this division is located in the Directorate for Instructional Support Services (DISS). It is our opinion that Unisa has all the required ingredients for a strong learner support, to ensure access into the university and most importantly into appropriate learning avenues to ensure student academic success. The only glaring problem is that these ingredients have been located in different 'pots' while the expectation is a holistic preparation for life. One cannot expect the outcome to be a beef stew when one has 5 different pots each with a different ingredient required to cook the stew. To elucidate our point we provide in the following paragraph definitions or explanations of the concepts 'access' and 'success'.

Access for us means allowing students to enter HE at their individual level of preparedness, identify what this level is and customise interventions suited to the identified needs. Success is not only related to good academic performance which leads to graduation and therefore increased throughput rates; we believe that all which is stated above is just part of student success. For us success goes beyond graduation and positive throughput. It means success in life. Some researchers believe that “the degree is not enough” (Montalvo *et al.*, 2007; Tomlinson, 2008; Cuseo, 2011).

In South Africa we have a very high unemployment rate. Numerous studies conducted around this issue state that a sizeable number of the unemployed youth, though the rate is neither growing nor high at less than 6%, are university graduates (Bhorat, 2007; Van and Broekhuizen, 2012; Altbeker and Storme, 2013). These researchers go on to state that most of these are graduates with certificates and diplomas, rather than degrees. There does not seem to be a consensus regarding the reality relating to the statistics provided by Statistics South Africa (STATSSA) in this regard, as asserted to by Posel *et al.* (2013) that such studies only consider the “official rate of unemployment” which take into consideration only the searching [for jobs] unemployed rather than expanding the sample to include the non-searching unemployed. This is one of the reasons why we have embarked on a study that seeks to integrate Unisa learner support and thus develop a model which might be able to address the kind of access to success as defined above. In order to put into perspective the line in which our proposed study has taken we need to spell out questions that we have addressed so as to shed light into and thus gain an understanding into the phenomena of access and success as explained in the sections above. We do this in the following paragraph.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The fact that the high unemployment rate in SA is not only limited to the uneducated and unskilled youth, but includes, as has been stated above, a large number of university graduates raises a number of questions, which we thought we might be able to interrogate through this study. Also, the fact that Unisa has what we would like to believe is a strong learner support system (with tutors, mentors, peer collaborative learners, etc.) and a mediocre throughput rate, added to the questions alluded to above, which are enumerated below.

Unisa is an open distance electronic learning (ODEL) institution. One of the attributes of its openness, as has been stated previously, is that the university opens its doors to students who might not have been ordinarily admitted in traditional universities, especially in this country. The entrance requirements are not as high and stringent (ALDAT, 2013) as those of the other universities, and once admitted, students are allocated e-tutors and mentors. There are a number of AD interventions such as access courses and/or modules and the SFP amongst others. Such interventions, amongst others, have been designed and implemented from a skewed understanding or definition of success, what Jones-White *et al.* (2010) also allude to in the following extract "...these efforts have been based primarily on a narrow definition of student success" (2010).

The questions we have posed are:

1. Could it be that the unimpressive Unisa throughput rates (Van and Van, 2013) may be due to AD interventions that are standard and not related to the students' academic and career related needs?
2. Could it be that students are placed in work-seeking situations without being prepared at least for the 'soft skills' required in the world of work and hence the unemployability which might be the cause of the high rates of unemployed graduates?
3. Is there any contribution made by job preparation and career development initiatives towards students' graduateness and employability?

In order to begin to address these questions, or to consider whether or not they are the right questions to ask, we have formulated a number of research aims which are embedded in a relevant theoretical framework; we will outline this in the methodology section of this paper. The general aims of the proposed study, however, are firstly to find from Unisa students, who have been employed for at least 3 years, what their perceptions are of how they landed and kept their jobs, and whether or not they had participated in the JRTP and/or WIL programmes. Secondly, we would like to find out from Unisa students' employers what their perceptions are of the level of preparedness for the world of work were the Unisa students who were the product of the JRTP against those who were not. To address the first question relating to AD programmes, we selected those students who had participated in the ALDAT and were, as a result of their outcomes in this tool, placed in AD programmes, especially the SFP. We have decided to monitor and track these students' academic performance for at least three years so as to be able to draw some conclusions.

In the following paragraph we provide a summarised account of the literature we have reviewed. This review deals with the different ways in which the concepts 'access' and 'success' have been defined by the different scholars in their different contexts. It also deals with student preparation for the world of work, the soft skills imparted to them in such training, as well as studies related to WIL, and how these relate to increased academic performance.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of carrying out this review is to provide guidance to the study as well as serve as a basis for comparison between its findings and those of previous studies. As stated previously, we hope to shed some light on the questions of student preparation for the world of work, as well as provision of academic and career development interventions, which are not related to students' needs.

We have therefore selected studies on the basis of how closely they address, in different contexts, questions similar to those posed by this current study. We have done literature searches of studies and conference papers,

both published and unpublished. We aim to increase the scope to include those studies relating to the aims of the proposed study, as has already been stated in the paragraph above. For the purpose of the current report, we have decided to omit those studies relating to AD provision with the aim of including them in the final report, when we have our own findings relating thereto. Below I provide a summary of literature findings which relate to student success, graduate employability and employment preparation.

3.1. Student Success

Numerous studies on student retention and throughput portray a 'single-minded' view of student success, that which measures it as successfully attaining a qualification and thus graduating from institutions of higher learning (Lee, 2000; Pauw *et al.*, 2006; Jones-White *et al.*, 2010; Tinto, 2012). This view of student success has been labelled as being institution-centred rather than being student-centred (Jones-White *et al.*, 2010). What Jennings *et al.* (2013) so eloquently capture in the following statement

[W]e will have done our job if our graduates lose themselves in 'general enthusiasms' in 'intellectual discovery' or 'make a difference in the world'.... (2013).

Concurring with this "single-minded [ness]" of this view of student success, these authors further state that:

...no perspective is more prominent, particularly in these tough economic times, than the one that defines college success as landing a good job or gaining admission to a top-ranked graduate or professional school (2013).

Most studies revealed that students do not measure their success by the same tools their institutions do, and neither do they view it using the same lenses (Gonsalves and Vijaya, 2008; Cuseo, 2011; Jennings *et al.*, 2013). It has emerged that students have different ways of 'defining' student success, with emphasis being differentially located. For example, in the Jennings *et al.* study, students list multiple themes when asked to define success in college ... their focus on their success narratives ebbs and flows over time (2013).

Cuseo (2011) defines student success as

[A] Holistic phenomenon that embraces the multiple dimensions of personal development and the multiple goals of higher education.

He identifies the following indicators of students' desirable outcomes:

- Student retention;
- Educational attainment;
- Academic achievement;
- Student advancement; and
- Holistic development

Lee (2000) concurs with the views stated above in the following extract:

A degree may once have been a passport into graduate employment: it was indicative of a level of knowledge and intellectual ability. However, as a result of organisational changes and the expansion in the numbers of graduates, this is no longer the case.

In the following section we provide an outline of research findings relating to employability, graduate unemployment and preparation of students for the world of work.

3.2. Graduate Employability

Knight and Yorke (2004) define graduate employability as

A set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations (22).

This definition seems to link directly employability to academic success and personal development and may

therefore suggest that for individuals to attain employability, they may need to be educated. This notion seems to be supported below.

Both national and international studies on student perceptions and opinions regarding graduate unemployment suggest that students see it as the function of institutions of higher learning to ensure that on qualification, they are employable (Tomlinson, 2008; Pauw *et al.*, 2009; Wu, 2011) as suggested by the following extract:

The results indicate that undergraduates strategically arranged their courses so as to increase their employability to cope with the high college graduate unemployment rate, even though the practical and credential-related courses that they favoured resulted in heavier course loads. Evidently, undergraduates took initiative in increasing and developing their working competencies and employability to strengthen their future competitiveness in a cutthroat labor market (Wu, 2011).

A further support for this notion is illustrated in a study from Taiwan, which found that

Both male and female students believed that credentials increase employability... [and they] indicated that they attempted to obtain credentials while enrolled in college (Wu, 2011).

The same perception of what universities are supposed to do is presented by a study from the UK, where Lord Barker of Dorkin (2011) in his foreword to the EDGDE Foundation Research Report states "... there is no denying that people see higher education as a stepping stone to a good job"(iii). It also emerges from the same foreword that

In 2010, 73% of the students who took part in the Sodexo University Lifestyle Survey¹ said they went to university to improve their job opportunities (iii).

The recommendations from the Lowden *et al.* (2011) study also links the functions of the institutions of higher learning to the development of graduate employability; some of these recommendations are enumerated below:

- Employability should be at the centre of HEIs' strategic planning, both centrally and at the level of individual faculties and departments.
- One of the most crucial measures HEIs can adopt to promote employability is a structured approach to placements, internships and work-based learning opportunities of significant duration
- The design of degree courses (and student experience in general) should articulate with the needs of business and emerge from a strong partnership with employer organisations (30).

Further apparent links between university education and graduate employability emanate from an interview by the Guardian Professional, where Paul Redmond utters the following:

Decent higher education should produce employable graduates, regardless of subject of study or academic discipline. What matters is that students on enrolment are clear about what their employability entitlement is, how their degree subject will approach employability. Alongside this, it's essential that students have access to co-curricular employability opportunities, things they can do as part of their studies without necessarily receiving academic credit; for example, learning to give presentations or work in teams (Redmond, 2011).

Summing up the interface between higher education and the world of work, Lee (2000) states that

The 'New Realities' that ask searching questions about the relationship between higher education and employment are, incidentally, asking about the purpose and structure of higher education. In particular, emphasising the need for the development of critical, reflective, empowered learners raises fundamental questions about traditional forms of teaching in higher education and the priorities of higher educational institutions and governments.

We now provide a summary of literature findings in respect of graduate employment preparation in the section below.

3.3. Graduate Employment Preparation

There is a wide indication in literature that institutions of higher education have over the years increasingly

implemented graduate and undergraduate employment preparation programmes albeit very differentially. These programmes, such as internship, artisanship, placements and other work-based opportunities, are believed to provide students with valuable experience and skills (Lowden et al., 2011). Studies reviewed reveal that participants in graduate employment preparation programmes reported positive experiences with these, citing the benefits of having undergone such training (Lowden et al., 2011; McKinnon and Wood, 2012). According to these authors, the employers too reported satisfaction with the skills expected of the new graduate intake so much that some expressed that they reportedly appreciated the knowledge transfer opportunity and valued their work with the students as a useful recruitment tool.

In the following section we provide an account of how the current study was conducted.

4. METHODOLOGY

In this section we provide summaries of how we have carried out the study in terms of research design, sampling and data generation and analysis methods, which we have applied for the different samples in each category of our research participants. We detail these summaries below in the order stated so as to elucidate how we would extract our research participants' perceptions and lived experiences, as we wanted to find out what we perceive as having been either helpful or not in their university preparation for academic preparedness and the world of work. We provide an account of the methodology conducted below, in the following paragraph.

4.1. Research Design

This is a longitudinal mixed methods study which is hoped to contribute towards development of an integrated learner support model. We envisage that diagnostic academic literacies assessment of learners carried out in conjunction with career assessment as pre-requisite to admission, provides a learner profile for specific, needs-focused academic and career guidance, counselling, mapping and pathing interventions. In this way we hope to develop a model that seeks to provide information about learners' academic and career strengths and areas requiring further development, as well as their career orientation. We then hope to contribute towards the development of academic, career development and employment preparation and/or intervention programmes well suited to address the learners' needs. For the qualitative part of our study we employed a methodological framework, referred to as the phenomenological framework, which underpins this part. We will elucidate what the framework means and justify its appropriateness for the proposed study. For the quantitative part, we have chosen a non-experimental design, specifically descriptive survey, as we believe that it has a close relationship with the phenomenological research. This belief is based on the assertion that descriptive survey is...

...[T]he method of research that looks with intense accuracy at the phenomena of the moment and then describes precisely what the researcher sees Leedy (1997).

4.2. Sampling

We have purposively selected a group of Unisa students who have been through the JRTP programme and have been placed at Unisa as employees for at least 3 years irrespective of their career choices and/or aspirations. This sample forms the first category of students. The second category comprises of Unisa students who had never been part of the JRTP but had been placed in jobs related to their career choices or at least in line with their studies at Unisa, either in internships, apprenticeships, learnerships etc. through the WIL programme. Personnel from the institutions where this latter category of students are placed automatically form samples of employees including Unisa personnel. A third category comprises of first entry level students, who have been subjected to two types of assessments, firstly, an on-line academic literacies diagnostic assessment and secondly, career assessment and development. This category of students will be candidates for the longitudinal study, whilst the first two categories will provide immediate information on which a comparison will be made with the third category students on

completion of the longitudinal study – envisaged to last for three years.

4.3. Data Generation/Collection

As we have stated before in the abstract, this is 2-phase longitudinal mixed methods approach to data generation/collection involving an on-line diagnostic academic literacies assessment, on-line surveys for the students and their employers, as well as focus group discussions. We facilitated three focus group discussions for each of the first 2 categories of students. Our data generation and collection methods imply investigating the participants' perceptions and lived experiences, and therefore lend themselves to a number of ethical considerations. We provide an account of how we dealt with these in the following section.

4.4. Ethical Considerations

We were granted ethical clearance on submission of an application where we declared how we would ensure that participants give consent to partaking in the study by signing a consent letter. We have also ensured participant anonymity by utilising pseudonyms for both participants and their institutions. In focus groups, participants were sworn to secrecy and/or confidentiality. None of the participants have been exposed to any kind of harm as a result of participating in the proposed study. A sample of the consent letter is appended to this paper.

4.5. Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analysed by utilising a computer aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) referred to as Atlas ti, whilst data obtained by quantitative means were analysed by Computer Aided Quantitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) programmes referred to as SPSS and classical item analysis (CIA).

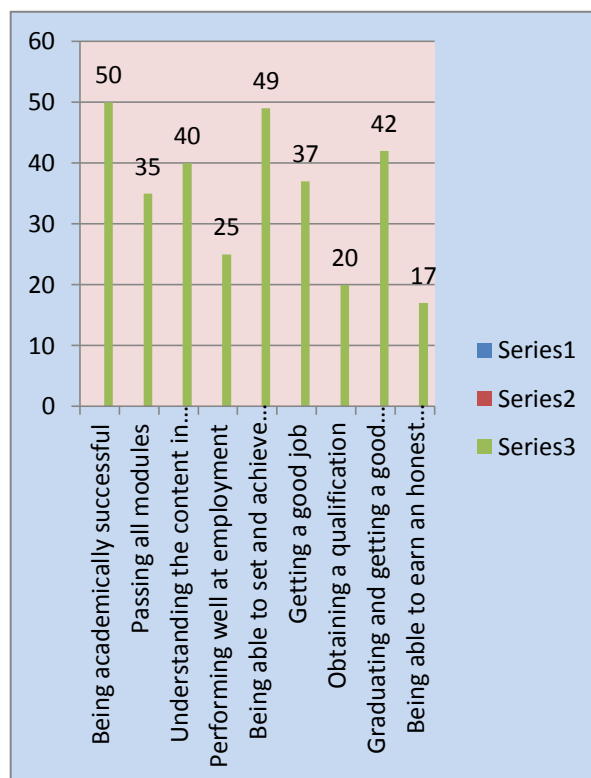
5. FINDINGS

In this section we present findings of the study relating to student success, employability and employment preparation from the students' and 'employers' perspectives. Students had different understandings or definitions of student success. Some seemed to perceive student success with the same lenses as most institutions of higher learning, especially the younger ones – obtaining a qualification. The older students added to their understanding of student success issues of life and citizenry such as reflected in the extract below:

“If Unisa offers us life-long learning, if I am to achieve success in that kind of learning, it should not end when I graduate, it should extend to my full contribution to the economy of the country... and that is by obtaining gainful employment” (BA Hons student)

We found it interesting that of the 120 students that responded, most refer to student success as a combination of academic success and finding employment on graduation.

The following graph illustrates the assertions made in the paragraph above:



This implies that students believe that university education should equip them with the kind of outcomes that can lead to being employed. Such findings corroborate the findings of some of the studies reviewed for this project (Lee, 2000; Gonsalves and Vijaya, 2008; Tomlinson, 2008; Cuseo, 2011).

Most students that have been exposed to the job readiness and placement programme reported positive experiences in their placement institutions. The same positive reports were received from their 'employers' and these compared unfavourably with those who had not been part of the said programme.

Where employers had an opportunity of experiencing student interns from the JRTP and WIL programme provided a comparison of the two groups. They said they preferred the JRTP group for although some of them lacked the expertise of the field content, they had the 'soft skills required to make an employable workforce.

6. CONCLUSION

The choice of a mixed methods study, though leaning heavily on phenomenology, is envisaged as appropriate in bringing about the best of both worlds of qualitative and quantitative research paradigms in terms of offering a rigorous approach to answering research questions (Creswell and Plano, 2007).

It seems evident from the findings of this study that there is some measure of corroboration between previous studies and the current one with regards to the extended definition of student success as going beyond attaining a qualification. The most recent research undertaken in this regard, which was commissioned by the International Council for open and Distance Education, the Tait and Gore (2015) also has similar findings as the current study. This relates to the student centred extended understanding of student success, where 28% of their respondents "select[ed] employment after graduation as a measure of either undergraduate or postgraduate success" (3). Also, 39.58% of the respondents to the same study (ibid), asserted that employment outcomes form student success. Although the same cannot be said about employability, due to the complex nature of the phenomenon, the current study could not elucidate what the students' understanding of employability is.

Most equated employability to employment.

As far as students' preparation for the world of work, most students had mixed feelings about the programmes.

This might be due to the fact that Unisa does not seem to have a single consistent programme that deals with this issue. Those students that had been through the JRTP programme as well as their employers sang praises for the intervention, whereas the same could not be said of those who had not been through this particular programme but had been through the WIL programme.

From this assertion, it is safe to assume that an integration of the programmes would benefit both the students and the employers. It is envisaged that the JRTP programme, due to its nature of imparting 'soft skills' to the students, which most literature reviewed see as essential as a contribution towards employability, should be institutionalised and form part of the WIL programme. The integration of the two work preparation programmes with academic literacies programmes would ensure that students are supported academically, to ensure the attainment of qualifications, whereas the former programmes would ensure employability and therefore answer to the outcomes of life-long learning.

Funding: This study received no specific financial support.

Competing Interests: The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

REFERENCES

- ALDAT, 2013. An Unpublished Study by the Academic Development Division of the Directorate for Counseling and Career Development of the University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Altbeker, A. and E. Storme, 2013. Graduate unemployment in South Africa – a much exaggerated problem. Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise.
- Bhorat, H., 2007. Unemployment in South Africa descriptors & determinants. Available from <http://www.ccma.org>.
- Boughey, C., 2010. Academic development for improved efficiency in the higher education and training system in South Africa. Published by the Development Bank of South Africa.
- Creswell, J.W. and C.V.L. Plano, 2007. Designing and conducting mixed methods research. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication.
- Cuseo, J., 2011. Defining student success: The critical first step in promoting it, esource college transitions. National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition, University of South Carolina.
- Glennie, J., 1997. Distance education: A way of providing cost-effective access to quality education, in education forum. 1st Edn., Pinegowrie: CTP Book Printers, Education Africa.
- Gonsalves, S.V. and R. Vijaya, 2008. First year students definitions of success. Available from <http://www.nyu.edu/frn/publications/defining.success/Gonsalves.Vijaya.html>.
- Jennings, N., S. Lovett, L. Cuba, J. Swingle and H. Lidkivst, 2013. What would make this a successful year for you? How students define success in college. Available from <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/what-would-make-successful>.
- Jones-White, D.R., P.M. Radcliffe, R.L.J. Huesman and J.P. Kellog, 2010. Redefining student success: Applying different multinomial regression techniques for the study of student graduation across institutions of higher education. *Research in Higher Education*, 51(2): 154 - 174.
- Knight, P. and M. Yorke, 2004. Learning curriculum and employability in higher education. London: Routledge.
- Lee, H., 2000. New realities: The relationship between higher education and employment. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 6(1): 3-17. DOI 10.1080/13583883.2000.9967007.
- Leedy, P.D., 1997. Practical research planning and design. 6th Edn., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill an Imprint of Prentice Hall.
- Lord Barker of Dorkin, 2011. A foreword to the EDGDE Foundation Research Report in Lowden et al. University of Glasgow. Published by Edge Foundation 2011, 4 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA. Available from www.edge.co.uk.

- Lowden, K., S. Hall, D. Elliot and J. Lewin, 2011. Employers perceptions of the employability skills of new graduates. London: University of Glasgow SCORE Centre and Edge Foundation.
- McKinnon, S. and B. Wood, 2012. Learning for the real world: Preparing postgraduate design students for employment through embedding work-related learning in the curriculum, design education for future wellbeing. Proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Engineering and Product Design Education, Artesis University College, Antwerp, Belgium 6th - 7th September 2012.
- Montalvo, Y., W. Latorre and T. Cintron, 2007. Defining student success: The starting point to institutional planning, together magazine. The Official Gazette of the Hispanic Educational Telecommunication System HETS. Available from www.hets.org.
- Pauw, K., H. Bhorat, S. Goga, L. Ncube and D.W.C. Van, 2009. Graduate unemployment in the context of skills shortages. Education and Training: Findings from a Firm Survey. Available from <http://ssrn.com/abstract=961353>.
- Pauw, K., M. Oosthuizen and D.W.C. Van, 2006. An Unpublished Conference Presentation at the Accelerated and Shared Growth in South Africa: Determinants, Constraints and Opportunities Conference on the 18 - 20 October 2006 at The Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Posel, D., D. Casale and C. Vermaak, 2013. What is South Africa's real unemployment rate. Available from <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71639?oid=363205&sn=Detail>.
- Redmond, P., 2011. The future of graduate employability: Looking forward to 2012. The higher education network. Available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk> [Accessed 09/11/11].
- Tait, A. and H. Gore, 2015. Student success in open, distance and e-learning: Research findings. The ICDE Reports Series.
- Tinto, V., 2012. An introduction to completing college – rethinking institutional action. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Tomlinson, M., 2008. The degree is not enough: Students perceptions of the role of higher education credentials for graduate work and employability. British Journal of Sociology of Education, 29(1): 49-61.
- Van, D.B.S. and H. Broekhuizen, 2012. Graduate unemployment in South Africa: A much exaggerated problem. CDE Insight. CDE Centre for Development and Enterprise. Available from <http://www.cde.org.za>.
- Van, D.B.S. and B.H. Van, 2013. How high is graduate unemployment in South Africa? A much-needed update. Available from www.econ3x3.org.
- Wu, C.-C., 2011. High graduate unemployment rate and Taiwanese undergraduate education. International Journal of Educational Development 31(2011): 303 – 310.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Emslie, M., 2011. Where's WIL? Including work-integrated learning in descriptions of what it is that academics do. Journal of Cooperative Education and Internships, 45(1): 34-44.
- Mendez, R., 2008. The correlation between industrial placements and final degree results – a study of engineering placement students. Available from http://www.workexperience.org/ncwe,rd/downloads/the_correlation_between_industrial_placements_and_final_degree_results_REVISED.PDF.pdf.
- Unisa, 2013. An institutional profile: Unisa facts & figures HEMIS 2008 – 2012, Unisa's institutional information and analysis portal. Available on the website of the University of South Africa, Department of Institutional Statistics and Analysis. Last Search on November 2013. Available from <http://heda.unisa.ac.za/>.

Views and opinions expressed in this article are the views and opinions of the author(s), International Journal of Education and Practice shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability etc. caused in relation to/arising out of the use of the content.