

Student perceptions of surveying & built environment professional bodies: An international comparison.

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Overview

- Rationale
- The survey
- Research methodology
- Data analysis and results
- Conclusions

Research Aims

- **3rd Stage of research**
 1. 661 Australian students perceptions of built environment professional bodies showed that students value professional qualifications but that there is a lack of understanding of the role of professional bodies (Warren & Wilkinson 2008).
 2. Examined perceptions of Australian employers towards surveying, property and construction students and graduates and their membership of professional bodies. Identified measures that were adopted by some to encourage professional body membership in the workplace.
 3. Broaden original survey to include students studying surveying and built environment courses from developed and developing countries. The aim was to establish whether students have different perceptions of professional body membership either as a result of country of domicile, gender, age, course of study, or mode of study.

Background

- Professionals representing land & built environment have depended upon and trusted their professional bodies
 1. to **uphold** educational and professional **standards** among its members and
 2. to **regulate** the profession for the **benefit** of **members and society**.

'specific and definable knowledge and skills base that has to be acquired and tested; a high degree of self-control of behaviour via codes of ethics; and a recognised social responsibility that gives a primary and selfless orientation to the community interest.' (Grimshaw 2001;55).

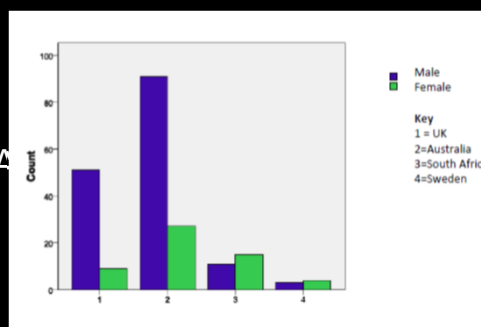
- Students value professional qualifications but not professional body membership to same degree
- Global context of work issue
- Members question value for money aspect
- Expectations of membership not necessarily aligned to employers priorities
- Has to deliver opportunities for career advancement
- Profile of surveying professions; ageing and gendered

Research method

- Survey
- Developed and developing countries
- Australia, Sweden, South Africa and UK
- Europe, Africa, & Oceania
- 3 part questionnaire – about you, about professional bodies (importance and expectations), about APC & fees

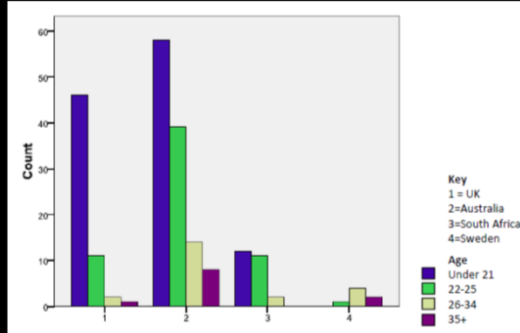
Results

- 73.9% male
- 26.1% female
- More female respondents from SA and Sweden
- Most respondents from Australia

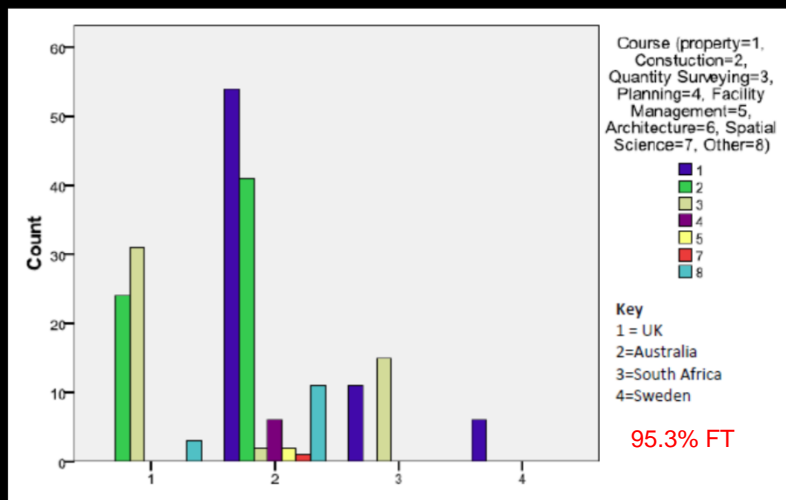


Age

- Most under 21 yrs (55%)
- Swedish group had highest proportion of older students
- UK had highest proportion of youngest students
- Australian students were most likely to be 22-25 years group



Course & country



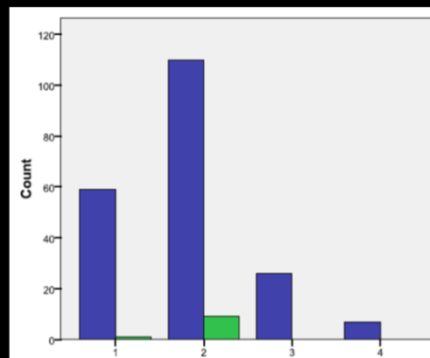
Career intentions

Table 1: 'Is your country of origin the only country you intend to work in during the first 2 years after graduation?'

Country	Count/ % of total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
UK	Count	18	14	27	59
	% of Total	8.5%	6.6%	12.8%	28.0%
Australia	Count	65	16	38	119
	% of Total	30.8%	7.6%	18%	56.4%
South Africa	Count	12	6	8	26
	% of Total	5.7%	2.8%	3.7%	12.3%
Sweden	Count	3	0	4	7
	% of Total	1.4%	0%	1.9%	3.3%
Total	Count	98	36	77	211
	% of total	46.4%	17.1%	36.5%	100.0%

Source: *Authors*

Work outside country of study within 2 years



Key
 1 = UK
 2 = Australia
 3 = South Africa
 4 = Sweden

1 Intend to work in country of study
 2 Intend to work in another country

Intention to work overseas during career

Table 2: Respondents intentions to work outside your country of study

Country	Count/ % of total	Yes	Probably	Not likely	Definitely not	Don't know	Total
UK	Count	28	18	3	2	8	59
	% of Total	13.3%	8.5%	1.4%	.9%	3.8%	28.0%
Australia	Count	44	34	14	3	24	119
	% of Total	20.9%	16.1%	6.6%	1.4%	11.4%	56.4%
South Africa	Count	13	9	1	1	2	26
	% of Total	6.2%	4.3%	.5%	.5%	.9%	12.3%
Sweden	Count	0	3	2	0	2	7
	% of Total	.0%	1.4%	.9%	.0%	.9%	3.3%
Total	Count	85	64	20	6	36	211
	% of total	40.3%	30.3	9.5%	2.8%	17.1%	100.0%

Source: *Authors*

Importance of professional qualifications

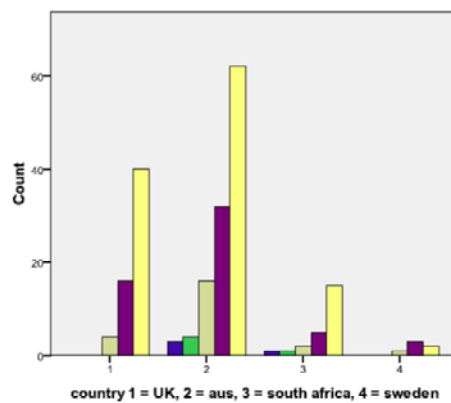
- 95.2% viewed professional qualifications as very important (64.9%) or of some importance (30.3%).
- 4.3% viewed qualifications as of no or limited importance
- 0.5% were unsure.
- Swedes and South Africans had the highest esteem for professional bodies.
- South Africans had the highest rates of membership, followed by the UK, Sweden and Australia. Many were members of more than one body.
- Most intended to join their local professional body in their area which did not fully reflect the proportion of respondents intending to practice overseas.

Reasons for joining

Reason	Mean	Rank
Enhances my career prospects	4.23	1
Provides access to professional networks	3.99	2
Will keep me up to date	3.98	3
Increases promotion	3.96	4
Increases employability	3.94	5
Improves my salary	3.81	6
Increases employability outside home country	3.80	7
Improves benefits paid by employers	3.69	8
A benchmark of professional skills and knowledge	3.69	8
Provides access to CPD	3.68	10

Source: *Authors*

Figure 7: Respondents by country and professional body membership enhances career prospects



Key:
 1 Agree strongly
 2 Agree
 3 Neutral
 4 Disagree
 5 Disagree strongly

(Source: *Authors*)

Expectations of professions

Table 5 Expectations of professional institutions

Expectation	Mean	Rank
Networking opportunities	4.28	1
Career development and mentoring opportunities	4.18	2
Access to state of the art knowledge	4.09	3
Structured training	3.99	4
Enhanced salary	3.83	5

Source: *Authors*

Why don't students progress to full membership of professional bodies?

- professional qualifications are perceived as important, but membership is less important.
- membership takes too long, such as via a complex APC process taking over two years where fee levels are relatively high.
- the expectations of what membership offers in terms of career advancement and networking opportunities are not necessarily the same priorities that employers might perceive of the membership organisations.
- the implications can be summarised as - *young surveying professionals entering practice are focused on career development and will only link themselves with professional bodies 'if' that membership provides value for money in delivering career goals and opportunities for advancement.*
- findings echoed those found concerning other professional areas and the challenges that member professional institutions will be required to address and overcome.

Differences and similarities

- Swedish students - less likely to want to work overseas than others.
- Swedes and South Africans had the highest esteem for the importance of professional bodies.
- South African students had the highest rates of professional body membership.
- When it came to views about whether membership enhanced career prospects, UK students did not agree whereas Australian, South African and Swedish students felt that professional body membership was very positive.
- Swedish students did not agree that networking opportunities were a high expectation of professional body membership compared to Australian, South African and UK students
- Swedish, then South African students were most likely to consider that employers expected professional body membership from employees.

Conclusions

- The sample
- Students from all countries valued professional qualifications, however some lack of understanding about the role of the bodies.
- International outlook shows that professional institutions need to service members in a global context.
- On a country basis there are similarities and differences between students views and expectations.
- However given the difference of some of the country groups in terms of age and mode of study and so on; it is unwise to draw hard conclusions from this sample.

- Thank you for listening – any questions?