

EFFECTS OF DEMOGRAPHICS AND CLASS ATTENDANCE ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE: EVIDENCE FROM PREVIOUSLY DISADVANTAGED UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the effects of demographics and class attendance on student performance in the Department of Finance at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in the 2023 academic session. Student performance is measured by continuous assessments and final marks, while demographic factors are measured by gender, population group¹, marital status, study type, residence type, and rate of attendance. The study employed a dummy regression analysis and found that certain demographic factors impact student performance. Firstly, this study demonstrated that female students outperformed the male students, especially in the undergraduate modules. Secondly, population group 2 emerged as the best performer when compared to group 5². Thirdly, never married students outperformed the single students at undergraduate³ and postgraduate levels. Fourthly, there is no categorical difference in student performance based on residence type. Fifthly, the part-time students underperformed relative to the full-time students despite the former being allowed to register half as many credit units as the latter. Lastly, the performance of students with ≥ 70 per cent class attendance far exceeds their counterpart. These findings support the consideration of additional support for male, population group 5, single and part-time students as well as attraction of group 3 candidates in the Department of Finance by relevant stakeholders, namely the university, funding organisations, family, and partners. Finally, introduction of ≥ 70 per cent attendance as a requirement for student's participation in assessments will boost performance and throughput rate in the discipline of finance. The results of this study speak directly to our learning and teaching (L&T) practices,

¹ Population group: 2- Coloured, 5- African, 3- Indian

² while population group 3 are underrepresented in the student profile

³ This finding at the undergraduate level must be treated with caution because the majority of students are never married

specifically the finding that students who attend classes more perform better than those who attend less frequently. In the context of the post-COVID-19 cohort who were used to distance learning, this finding calls for academics to consider the adoption of more active learning approaches, which motivates more in-class participation that is aimed at increasing lecture attendance.

Keywords: demographics, class attendance, student performance, department of finance

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

While at the UWC Autumn Graduation 11 on 21 April 2023, watching some female Finance Honours students obtain Magna Cum Laude and Cum Laude in Bachelor of Commerce degrees was fascinating. As if that was not enough, the Vice Chancellor provided further intriguing and important statistics in his concluding remarks when he noted that seven women and four men had graduated with a doctoral degree, while two-thirds of the graduates were women (Pretorius, 2023). This observation arouses curiosity and reflection on experiences in the class and interaction with students in the Department of Finance. This prompted the evaluation of the demographic effects (gender, population group, marital status, class attendance, programme stream, study type, university residence) on student performance in the Department of Finance. This research idea is relevant in the South African and UWC context, where equality is of utmost importance and entrenched in the Freedom Charter and the constitution (Obalade, 2022).

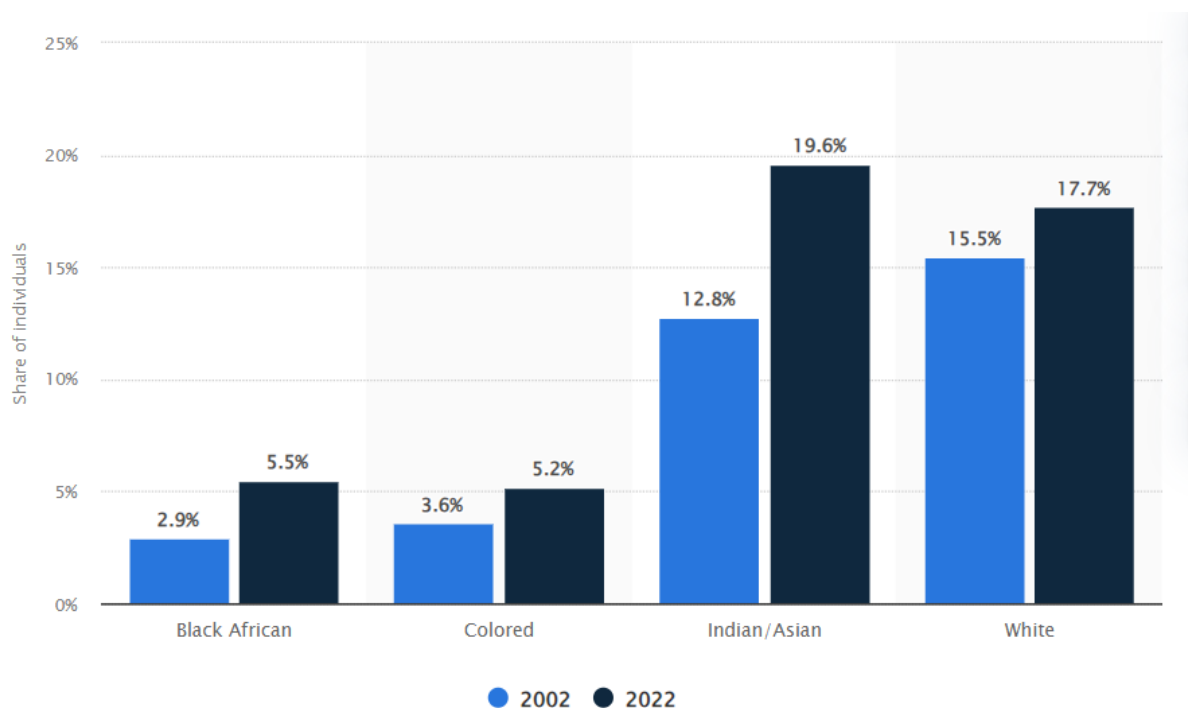


Figure 1: Share of student participation rates for individuals aged 18–29 in South Africa in 2002 and 2022, by population group

Source: Statista (2023)

Establishing an inclusive higher education environment occupies a strategic place in post-apartheid South Africa (Bozalek and Boughey, 2012). Equal access to education is one of the key components of the Freedom Charter. There are three population groups (2, 3, and 5) in the Department of Finance; however, two groups (2 and 5) are dominant. These statistics suggest that the erstwhile disadvantaged population groups are largely represented in the Department of Finance at UWC. This supports the role of UWC as one of the historically disadvantaged universities in South Africa. In South Africa, financial education and literacy constitute two of the scarce skills areas. Departments of Finance and related disciplines are the major suppliers of these critical skills (Bank SETA, 2020).

Investigation of demographic factors and class attendance has become increasingly important in the post-COVID-19 era, with students finding it difficult to return to face-to-face lectures. The year 2023 was selected because it was the year UWC reverted to face-to-face learning after three years of online learning, and the Department of Finance had to deal with numerous student queries, some of which were related to the selected demographic variables. This is evidenced by extracts from four selected students' requests, queries, or explanation emails below:

Student A explained the reasons for not attending first three lectures in the first semester of 2023:

“Thank you for contacting me. I was not aware of that prior to me registering for my honours as I was still under the impression that classes will be conducted online and term tests and final exams will be in person. In January, I had desperately accepted an employment offer in I am the only breadwinner in my household thus this decision was best necessary for the family.”

Student B requested adjustment to continuous assessment in order to qualify for examination:

“.....In addition to these challenges,, and I don't have family in Cape Town. The main reason for my academic fall behind was because I was struggling with transport fare since I am squatting with a friend in Khayelitsha.”

Student C motivated and requested a change from the full-time to part-time programme:

“I have made a horrible mistake by changing my programme from part-time to full-time. This decision has since impacted me negatively.... The third and last reason I would like to defer the two modules is because I am placing my children under pressure as I need to attend class 4 times a week. Please bear in mind that I have four children aged 15, 11, 5 years and one 8-month-old

baby. This does not mean that I will not attend class at all, thus, dropping the 2 courses will alleviate some pressure off my eldest daughter who babysits the baby while I attend.”

Student D motivated and requested online classes:

“I am enquiring about the feasibility of me catching up if in-person classes are missed, or rather to seek permission to attend some online classes ... I work in the and registration is a very busy time – I do not see myself able to travel to campus on time.”

Further to this, students have linked their poor continuous assessment (CAM) performance to their inability to attend lectures due to financial and accommodation challenges. Others have juggled between part-time and full-time study to cope with work, studies, and family responsibilities, such as caring for children, a situation that is more problematic for single parents. At the same time, some students have accepted full-time jobs and study offers, and expected the university to accommodate them through the provision/continuation of online classes. It is difficult to generalise the perception that the above factors will affect performance without empirical evidence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The journey towards understanding the factors that influence student performance is an ongoing one that dates back to the early 1970s with Spady's (1970) and Tinto's (1975) theory, which acknowledged that personal elements such as gender, ethnicity, and family background (amongst others) are role players in academic performance. Five years later, Bean (1980) further developed Tinto's (1975) theory with the Model for Student Attrition (MSA) theory. The MSA theory assessed the reasons behind students dropping out of institutions of higher education through the lens of a student's institutional commitment and satisfaction. The results showed that for women, performance, campus organisation participation, having a job on campus, the availability of alternative opportunities of employment, and being a resident of the state are some of the determinants influencing dropouts. For men, Bean (1980) found that development, routinisation, and student housing are some of the factors that affect dropout rates. Although the theories proposed by Spady (1970), Tinto (1975), and Bean (1980) focus on understanding why students drop out, they also have a strong link to student performance, which is why they are widely cited in studies investigating the factors influencing student performance.

The Biggs 3P model is another commonly cited theory that attempts to explain the determinants of student academic success through three sets of factors, namely: presage,

process, and products or performance (Carpenter and Kraus, 2020). The presage factor is the most relevant for this study as it proposes that academic performance is influenced by elements that are exclusive to the university environment. For instance, gender, age, race, language, and previous academic performance are some of the personal presage factors that the Biggs 3P model posits affect student performance (Kanashiro et al. 2020). All of these aforementioned theories of student performance inspired a wave of literature exploring the applicability of these theories within various tertiary educational contexts. In the South African context, Sommerville and Singaram (2018) assessed whether any relation exists between demographic factors and academic performance for medical students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The study found that race and gender were the only demographics that had a significant relation with academic performance. More specifically, Indian and White students were observed to perform better than Black students, whilst female students demonstrated superior academic results compared to their male peers. Language and age had no relation with academic performance. In contrast to this, Maraschin (2008) who assessed first year psychology students from the University of the Witwatersrand, found that those who spoke English as their home language performed better than those who spoke other languages. The overarching finding of this study was that the socio-economic status of a student heavily influenced their performance. More specifically, students from a middle- and upper-class background outperformed those from a lower socio-economic background. Similarly, the performance of first year students from the University of the Western Cape were found to be impacted by personal factors such as accommodation status, employment status, family matters and language (McGhie, 2012). For second-year nursing students from the UWC, however, ethnicity, gender and age have no relationship with academic performance (Mthimunye, Pedro and Daniels, 2018).

In the international context, the exploration of this topic has been vast. For one, Alhajraf and Alasfour (2014) investigated the elements that impact the performance of Kuwait business students. The results indicated that age and gender have a significant influence on academic performance. Similar to Sommerville and Singaram's (2018) results, Alhajraf and Alasfour (2014) found that female students outperform the males which was related to the women being less socially active than men. There were no detailed results comparing the performance of the different age groups. In a more similar recent study, Tabassum and Akhter (2020) discovered that students of adolescent age (19 years) and those considered to be mature adults (39+) displayed higher performance than students categorised as middle adults (19–39 years). The results of this study also concurred with existing literature that female students show superior academic performance compared to their male counterparts. Interestingly, Tabassum and

Akhter (2020) also found that the difference in the performance of married and unmarried students was not significant for Pakistani students. However, from the results of that article, it was deduced that married students with larger families showed poorer performance than those with smaller families and no children at all. Tabassum and Akhter (2020) further found that the sibling position that the student holds in their family (first born, second born etc.) also played an influential role in a student's performance.

Table 1: Empirical literature review

Authors	Setting	Methods	Measures of EQ and FD	Findings
Luwes and Swartz (2017)	South Africa Engineering students	1998–2013 Descriptive analysis	Demo: gender, age and home languages Compulsory project module	Students with Afrikaans or IsiZulu home language outperformed others (Sesotho, Setswana or Xhosa); students below 21 years outperformed older; males marginally outperformed females.
Schmulian and Coetzee (2011)	South Africa Accounting students	Quantitative and Qualitative (interview) Pearson correlation Kruskal-Wallis	Class attendance; sex CAM and Final	Weak positive correlation between attendance and FA; statistical difference in the CAM of attending and non-attending but not the exam; females on average attend more regularly and perform better.
Khan (2022)	Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, South America, Europe and US Business, Engineering and Science	Quantitative and Qualitative (open-ended questionnaire)	Attendance: card scanning and tutorial attendance	The effect of attendance is positive and significant; staff are favourably disposed to attendance; business students have lowest propensity for attendance.
Almutawa and Suwaidan (2020)	Kuwait Accounting students	questionnaire, descriptive statistics, Pearson's chi-square test and phi test	per cent attendance CGPA	Attendance enhance performance; performance is not independent of attendance; moderate positive relationship between them; female outperform male but gender has no effect on attendance; lecturer-centric approach leads to low class attendance.
Bagwandeem and Singaram (2018)	South Africa Medical Students: UKZN	mixed methods approach; open-ended questionnaire; descriptive statistics; Pearson's Chi Square test	age, gender, home language, discipline and years of training perception on feedback	Male consultants have positive perception on feedback – more than females. Similarly, male registrar perceived that feedback are performance-based, unemotional, fair, specific, non-racial, and gender-neutral than female.
Dube and Mlotshwa (2018)	South Africa UKZN	Questionnaire and descriptive statistics	Perceptions on (1) communication, (2) learning facilities, (3) proper guidance and (4) family stress	Parental involvement, lecturer-student relationship, technology, internet and educational amenities enhance performance while deprived background, lingua franca and peer pressure reduce performance.
Bagwandeem and Singaram (2018)	South Africa Medical Students: UKZN	Quantitative (Descriptive statistics) and qualitative (NVivo)	demographics summative assessment marks	Performance is affected by race, mother tongue and financial funding and not sex and age; Indian and White students perform better than Black and Coloured students.

Authors	Setting	Methods	Measures of EQ and FD	Findings
Ontong, Bruwer and Dreyer (2020)	South Africa Accounting students Stellenbosch	Descriptive statistics and multiple regression	per cent of lecture, tutorial attendance, video, WhatsApp group, mentor session Final mark	Traditional class attendance and additional interventions spurred performance while external mentoring, tutoring and video do not improve performance.
Labador, et. al. (2023)	Philippines Grade 11 at UM Peñaplata College English language	modified demographic questionnaire Descriptive statistics and t-test	Demographic variables (parental educational level and occupation) Average grade	Father's educational level boosts performance.
van der Walt, Hattingh, and H. J. Moolman (2017)	South Africa Hospitality Students: 5 universities	closed-ended questionnaire; Chi-square tests	Gender, age, ethnicity, language (home and instructional), finance, funding, study time, accommodation and living arrangement	Work-study (part-time) and nature of accommodation affect learning experience.
Swanepoel, Beukes and Yu (2021)	South Africa Year 1 Economics Students	OLS	Final exams	Late afternoon and Friday lectures relate negatively to attendance; while residence type, prescribed textbook, transport modes do not significantly affect performance.

This further emphasises the depth at which demographic characteristics impact a student's performance at university. Regarding first year Ecuadorian students, however, Pozo-Burgos et al. (2022) found that gender, age household income, and area of residence do not explain the variation in academic performance but rather that the father's educational level and economic status are directly related to a student's academic performance. Gender and status of Al Ain University students in the United Arab Emirates, on the other hand, had a very minimal influence on academic performance (El Refae, Kaba and Eletter, 2021).

Regarding student attendance, Singh (2020) found that, for accounting students, attendance was the only factor that significantly influenced academic performance. This was the same for accounting students from the University of the Witwatersrand according to the results of Papageorgiou (2019). In an earlier study, Thatcher, Fridjhon and Cockcroft (2007) reached the same conclusion for undergraduate psychology students, with results showing that students who attend regularly show higher performance than those who seldom attend or don't attend at all. This was in line with Khan (2022) whose analysis included students from New Zealand, Australia, Europe, South Africa and the United States. On the contrary, Guleker and Keci (2014), found that attendance is not a predictor of performance as their results showed that Albanian civil engineering students who attend class frequently may still fail and those who do not attend are capable of passing.

The review of existing literature shows that the majority of the studies on this topic concur that demographics do play a key role in student performance. However, the influence of certain demographic factors on student performance seems to differ according to the discipline being observed and the environment in which the university is. This speaks to the rich demographic

diversity, specifically within the South African context, that cannot be generalised. Additionally, finance students have not been observed as closely as other disciplines such as accounting and health sciences. A limit therefore exists in the understanding of whether demographic factors influence the performance of finance students from the UWC. The 2019 COVID pandemic brought about an unprecedented transformation in economic conditions of the average South African household, which had asymmetric effects on the various demographic groups in the country. It is therefore crucial to assess the demographic factors that may have an influence on student performance as this understanding could assist in informing and improving L&T practices.

EMPIRICAL STRATEGY

In order to achieve the objective of this study, we employed cross-sections of student performance data for the 2023 academic year. The year 2023 was selected because UWC reverted to face-to-face learning after three years of online learning and the department had to deal with a lot of queries, some of which are related to the selected demographic variables⁴.

Population and sample

This study focused on the registered students for all undergraduate (MAN234, MAN235, MAN305, MAN307, MAN308, Man312) and postgraduate (FRP711, FRR712, MAN742, MAN745, MAN704, MAN706, FSA712) finance modules⁵ in 2023. Thus, for this study, the registered students for these modules constituted the population and the sampling technique was purposive. Consequently, the sample frame for the study was based on the specific module as presented in Table 2.

⁴ 1-Never Married, 2- Married, 6-Single, 5- Unknow

⁵ Masters and PhD students are excluded because they are full thesis programmes

Table 2: Sample frame

	FIN 211	FIN 212	FIN 213	MAN 234	MAN 235	MAN 305	MAN 307	MAN 308	MAN 312	MAN 706	MAN 742	FSA 712	FRP 711	FRR 712	MAN 787
No of registered students	181	175	172	223	240	191	167	161	191	52	75	73	76	59	55
Male	80	76	80	118	129	90	80	79	88	25	30	30	32	28	23
Female	101	99	92	105	110	101	87	82	103	27	45	43	44	31	32
Coloured	64	63	63	100	108	79	70	70	81	15	14	16	21	18	12
Indian	4	3	5	7	6	4	3	3	4	6	8	6	6	5	3
African	113	109	103	116	126	108	93	88	106	31	53	50	49	36	40
Never	164	160	155	207	220	187	165	160	189	25	36	32	30	33	30
Single	16	14	16	16	20	2	2	1	0	24	36	37	43	23	23
Married	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	3	3	3	2	3	2
Varsity Residence (Y)	34	31	31	35	31	46	38	38	44	2	4	4	4	3	3
Varsity Residence (N)	147	144	141	188	209	145	129	123	147	50	71	69	72	56	52
Full-time	181	175	172	223	240	191	167	161	185	40	60	57	57	49	-
Part-time	-	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	6	12	15	16	19	10	-
Attendance (>70)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	124	-	-	53	53	-	18	26
Attendance (<70)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	-	-	22	20	-	41	29

Source: SASI UWC (2023)

Regression analysis

This study adopted the dummy variable regression. We determined categorical performance of students based on sex, population group, marital status, residence, study type, and class attendance, using regression analysis with dummy variables. Dummy variables are variables that assume values of 0 and 1. When the explanatory variables in a regression model are exclusively dummies, they are called ANOVA models (Gujarati and Porter, 2020). Dummy regression analysis is usually applied to differentiate mutually exclusive or treatment groups (Ekong et al., 2021). This study specified six dummy variable regressions taking cognizance of the sex, population group, marital status, residence TYPE, study type, and class attendance,

$$\text{PERFORMANCE} = +\beta_1 \text{Male}_1 + \beta_2 \text{Female}_2 + \varepsilon_t \quad (1)$$

$$\text{PERFORMANCE} = \beta_1 \text{POPC}_1 + \beta_2 \text{POPI}_2 + \beta_3 \text{POPA}_3 + \varepsilon_t \quad (2)$$

$$\text{PERFORMANCE} = \beta_1 \text{NEVER}_1 + \beta_2 \text{MARRIED}_2 + \beta_3 \text{SINGLE}_3 + \varepsilon_t \quad (3)$$

$$\text{PERFORMANCE} = \beta_1 \text{FULL}_1 + \beta_2 \text{PART}_2 + \varepsilon_t \quad (4)$$

$$\text{PERFORMANCE} = \beta_1 \text{RESIDENCE}_1 + \beta_2 \text{OFFK}_2 + \varepsilon_t \quad (5)$$

$$\text{PERFORMANCE} = \beta_1 \text{ATTENDANCE}_1 + \beta_2 \text{NONATTENDANCE}_2 + \varepsilon_t \quad (6)$$

where PERFORMANCE was the dependent variable proxied using continuous assessment (CAM) and final marks, respectively (FINAL). β_1 and β_2 stand for average performance of male and female (or full- and part-time; attending and nonattending; university resident and off campus⁶) students, respectively in equation 1 (or 4, 5, 6). β_1 , β_2 and β_3 stand for average performance of Coloured, Indian and Black African (or never married, married, and single) students respectively in equation 2 (or 3). Exclusion of the intercept term from equations 1, 2, ..., 6 ensured that our model is free from perfect collinearity or a dummy variable trap. Thus, this study derived the mean performance for each category by including a dummy for each category (Gujarati and Porter, 2020). In equation (1), the dummy is equal to 1 when the performance (CAM or FINAL) belongs to a male or zero otherwise (female). Similarly, the dummy is equal to 1 when the performance (CAM or FINAL) belongs to a female or zero otherwise (male). This principle applies to all other equations.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The regression results from the estimated models (1, 2, ..., 6) are presented in this section. We take into consideration the year level and different demographic factors.

Gender effect in student performance

Table 2A presents the gender effect on student performance for CAM and FINAL. The analysis of the sex effect in the undergraduate modules suggests that female students outperformed their male counterparts, especially at year level 2. This is demonstrated by females' superior performance in 10 out of the 15 mark components. The difference is marginal in the few modules where males outperformed females.

Table 2A: Gender effect on student performance (BCOM)

Dummy Regression	LEVEL 2	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.	Remarks
FIN211 CAM	Variable					
	MALE	73.91488	1.351301	54.69906	0.0000	
	FEMALE	74.38800	1.208640	61.54686	0.0000	Female
FIN212 CAM	MALE	65.67974	1.753920	37.44740	0.0000	
	FEMALE	66.20253	1.536735	43.07999	0.0000	Female
FIN212 FINAL	MALE	64.23631	1.458077	44.05550	0.0000	
	FEMALE	65.09474	1.269360	51.28154	0.0000	Female
FIN213 CAM	MALE	0.442249	0.013357	33.11079	0.0000	
	FEMALE	0.434672	0.012455	34.89900	0.0000	Male
FIN213 FINAL	MALE	39.34995	1.787906	22.00896	0.0000	
	FEMALE	39.36727	1.667231	23.61237	0.0000	Female
MAN234 CAM	MALE	54.57682	1.424314	38.31797	0.0000	
	FEMALE	59.20541	1.502775	39.39740	0.0000	Female
MAN234 FINAL	MALE	63.08491	1.113599	56.64955	0.0000	
	FEMALE	66.35417	1.170163	56.70507	0.0000	Female
MAN235 CAM	MALE	720292.9	910.4907	791.1041	0.0000	
	FEMALE	721775.1	985.9934	732.0283	0.0000	

⁶ Off campus (offk) is used to denote student not living in university residence.

Dummy regression						Remarks
LEVEL 3						
MAN305 CAM	MALE	61.08867	1.475768	41.39448	0.0000	
	FEMALE	59.94376	1.393089	43.02940	0.0000	Male
MAN305 FINAL	MALE	61.54409	1.601029	38.44033	0.0000	
	FEMALE	62.23055	1.511332	41.17596	0.0000	Female
MAN307 CAM	MALE	725073.8	1155.909	627.2757	0.0000	
	FEMALE	722537.5	1108.432	651.8554	0.0000	Male
MAN307 FINAL	MALE	730187.5	0.947693	770489.2	0.0000	
	FEMALE	730186.5	0.907832	804318.6	0.0000	Male
MAN308 CAM	MALE	60.44280	3.120103	19.37205	0.0000	
	FEMALE	60.12659	2.351866	25.56548	0.0000	Male
MAN308 FINAL	MALE	63.10000	2.324150	27.14971	0.0000	
	FEMALE	65.43750	1.837402	35.61414	0.0000	Female
MAN312 CAM	MALE	49.72807	1.776332	27.99481	0.0000	
	FEMALE	53.90588	1.649929	32.67163	0.0000	Female
MAN312 FINAL	MALE	62.83824	1.640527	38.30368	0.0000	
	FEMALE	62.72414	1.450368	43.24704	0.0000	Female

Table 2B shows the gender effect on performance for eight Honours and Postgraduate Diploma modules. In this instance, the performance of males and females was on par in terms of number of modules where they outperformed their counterpart. Moreover, when the undergraduate and postgraduate modules are considered, females have an edge over their male counterpart.

Table 2B: Gender effect on student performance (Honours and PGDip)

HONOURS/PGDIP						Remarks
	Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.	
FRP711 CAM	MALE	56.03000	1.462112	38.32127	0.0000	
	FEMALE	58.47791	1.221257	47.88337	0.0000	Female
FRP711 FINAL	MALE	64.11538	0.890220	72.02197	0.0000	
	FEMALE	65.36842	0.736363	88.77197	0.0000	Female
FRR712 CAM	MALE	53.19857	3.278643	16.22579	0.0000	
	FEMALE	59.56774	3.115963	19.11696	0.0000	Female
FRR712 FINAL	MALE	64.29167	1.183875	54.30612	0.0000	
	FEMALE	66.34483	1.076992	61.60196	0.0000	Female
FSA712 CAM	MALE	64.08000	2.891586	22.16085	0.0000	
	FEMALE	60.66279	2.415253	25.11654	0.0000	Male
FSA712 FINAL	MALE	64.34783	2.440876	26.36260	0.0000	
	FEMALE	61.11111	1.951005	31.32289	0.0000	Male
MAN704 CAM	MALE	60.21194	2.590358	23.24464	0.0000	
	FEMALE	55.73098	2.019554	27.59569	0.0000	Male
MAN704 FINAL	MALE	60.00000	2.070136	28.98360	0.0000	
	FEMALE	57.43590	1.690259	33.98053	0.0000	Male
MAN706 CAM	MALE	64.41200	2.406527	26.76554	0.0000	
	FEMALE	65.69926	2.315682	28.37146	0.0000	Female
MAN706 FINAL	MALE	59.94444	2.333614	25.68738	0.0000	
	FEMALE	57.50000	2.020969	28.45169	0.0000	Male
MAN742 CAM	MALE	50.36900	4.001328	12.58807	0.0000	
	FEMALE	58.79044	3.267071	17.99485	0.0000	Female
MAN742 FINAL	MALE	63.10000	2.324150	27.14971	0.0000	
	FEMALE	65.43750	1.837402	35.61414	0.0000	Female
MAN745 CAM	MALE	52.57536	2.389594	22.00179	0.0000	
	FEMALE	49.73667	1.999278	24.87731	0.0000	Male
MAN745 FINAL	MALE	57.58824	3.862771	14.90853	0.0000	
	FEMALE	51.94000	3.185322	16.30604	0.0000	Male
MAN787 CAM	MALE	60.13783	3.860532	15.57760	0.0000	
	FEMALE	65.49969	3.272926	20.01258	0.0000	Female
MAN787 FINAL	MALE	66.60000	3.426479	19.43686	0.0000	
	FEMALE	66.46429	2.507925	26.50170	0.0000	Male

Population group effect on student performance

Subsequently, the study delved into the population group's effect on student performance. Although extant studies (Luwes and Swart, 2017) considered the effect of home language on performance, the population group provides a more nuanced basis for categorisation and various government parastatals and departments usually adopt it. Table 2 shows that the number of students belonging to group 3 is negligible, hence it was safe to leave the group out of the analysis and concentrate on dominant groups (2 and 5). However, the dummy regression approach employed for our analysis could address the small sample effect such that the outcome for the two dominant groups remained unchanged with or without the marginal group. Incidentally, the results in Table 3A show that group 3 (POPI) appears as the best performer in two and worst performer in 10 of the observed 15 mark components of the undergraduate Finance modules. Similarly, group 3 appears as the best performer in three and worst performer in nine of 16 postgraduate mark components as shown in Table 3B. As a result, it was safe to focus on the two dominant population groups.

Table 3A: Population group effect in student performance (BCOM)

Dummy Regression	LEVEL 2	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.	Remark
FIN211 CAM	Variable					
	POPC	73.51389	2.064003	35.61715	0.0000	1
	POPI	47.79621	7.390433	6.467309	0.0000	3
FIN212 CAM	POPC	68.32937	1.917150	35.64112	0.0000	2
	POPI	69.91333	8.785485	7.957823	0.0000	1
	POPA	64.50661	1.457515	44.25793	0.0000	3
FIN212 FINAL	POPC	66.90345	1.561691	42.84039	0.0000	1
	POPI	66.00000	7.099543	9.296374	0.0000	2
	POPA	63.36275	1.217562	52.04069	0.0000	3
FIN213 CAM	POPC	0.430998	0.017840	24.15955	0.0000	1
	POPI	0.239074	0.058306	4.100297	0.0001	3
	POPA	0.427559	0.013988	30.56711	0.0000	2
FIN213 FINAL	POPC	40.02226	2.180700	18.35295	0.0000	1
	POPI	17.83026	7.127313	2.501680	0.0133	3
	POPA	37.77617	1.709823	22.09361	0.0000	2
MAN234 CAM	POPC	57.84830	1.478976	39.11375	0.0000	1
	POPI	54.67429	5.590004	9.780724	0.0000	3
	POPA	57.13793	1.373195	41.60949	0.0000	2
MAN234 FINAL	POPC	66.21978	1.206586	54.88192	0.0000	1
	POPI	66.16667	4.698979	14.08107	0.0000	2
	POPA	63.18095	1.123271	56.24730	0.0000	3
MAN235 CAM	POPC	709455.8	8362.904	84.83367	0.0000	
	POPI	513098.5	33018.08	15.53992	0.0000	
	POPA	711544.5	7777.618	91.48616	0.0000	
LEVEL 3						
MAN305 CAM	POPC	60.01899	1.570835	38.20833	0.0000	2
	POPI	50.61000	6.980944	7.249736	0.0000	3
	POPA	61.18852	1.343483	45.54468	0.0000	1
MAN305 FINAL	POPC	60.80011	1.708320	35.59059	0.0000	2
	POPI	57.40983	7.591939	7.561945	0.0000	3
	POPA	62.88339	1.461069	43.03929	0.0000	1
MAN307 CAM	POPC	709640.6	11556.21	61.40775	0.0000	2
	POPI	374504.4	48748.38	7.682396	0.0000	3
	POPA	711279.8	10039.06	70.85126	0.0000	1
MAN307 FINAL	POPC	714149.8	12031.94	59.35452	0.0000	2
	POPI	372017.5	49671.83	7.489507	0.0000	3
	POPA	718508.1	10283.32	69.87124	0.0000	1

MAN308 CAM	POPC	65.34692	4.225732	15.46405	0.0000	2
	POPI	67.49000	5.758703	11.71965	0.0000	1
	POPA	57.85102	2.176585	26.57880	0.0000	3
MAN308 FINAL	POPC	73.20000	3.041616	24.06615	0.0000	1
	POPI	61.57143	3.635427	16.93651	0.0000	3
	POPA	62.65714	1.625812	38.53898	0.0000	2
MAN312 CAM	POPC	50.16679	1.859049	26.98519	0.0000	2
	POPI	46.06250	8.365721	5.506100	0.0000	3
	POPA	53.58771	1.632822	32.81909	0.0000	1
MAN312 FINAL	POPC	60.15385	1.655122	36.34405	0.0000	2
	POPI	57.33333	7.704175	7.441853	0.0000	3
	POPA	64.91954	1.430629	45.37831	0.0000	1

It can be seen that population group 2 outperformed group 5 in all seven level two mark components while group 5 outperformed group 2 in six of the eight level three mark components. Furthermore, group 2 outperformed group 5 in 12 of the 16 observed mark components associated with postgraduate modules. This analysis portends a higher rate of performance for population group 2 relative to others.

Table 3B: Population group effect on student performance (Honours and PGDip)

HONOURS/PGDIP						Remarks
	Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.	
FRP711 CAM	POPC	55.67669	3.231049	17.23177	0.0000	1
	POPI	44.91339	5.328417	8.429032	0.0000	3
	POPA	54.52956	2.071944	26.31807	0.0000	2
FRP711 FINAL	POPC	60.05137	3.361110	17.86653	0.0000	2
	POPI	46.82078	5.543723	8.445728	0.0000	3
	POPA	62.20320	2.311892	26.90575	0.0000	1
FRR 712 CAM	POPC	54.15556	4.164166	13.00514	0.0000	3
	POPI	62.30000	7.900949	7.885128	0.0000	1
	POPA	56.94056	2.944510	19.33787	0.0000	2
FRR712 FINAL	POPC	66.87500	1.467034	45.58519	0.0000	1
	POPI	65.00000	2.624309	24.76842	0.0000	2
	POPA	64.75000	1.037349	62.41870	0.0000	3
FSA712 CAM	POPC	61.84249	4.722231	13.09603	0.0000	1
	POPI	50.02999	7.365143	6.792806	0.0000	3
	POPA	57.94760	2.718712	21.31436	0.0000	2
FSA712 FINAL	POPC	58.98447	4.489103	13.13948	0.0000	1
	POPI	48.95651	7.106799	6.888686	0.0000	3
	POPA	58.27648	2.739401	21.27344	0.0000	2
MAN704 CAM	POPC	48.40328	5.188847	9.328331	0.0000	2
	POPI	47.63472	6.645877	7.167560	0.0000	3
	POPA	51.93077	2.895528	17.93482	0.0000	1
MAN704 FINAL	POPC	53.80403	4.336776	12.40646	0.0000	2
	POPI	53.49471	5.133051	10.42162	0.0000	3
	POPA	54.24887	2.468572	21.97581	0.0000	1
MAN706 CAM	POPC	68.43867	2.904933	23.55946	0.0000	2
	POPI	74.42333	4.593103	16.20328	0.0000	1
	POPA	61.64710	2.020696	30.50786	0.0000	3
MAN706 FINAL	POPC	63.90000	2.789917	22.90391	0.0000	2
	POPI	65.66667	3.601767	18.23179	0.0000	1
	POPA	54.84615	1.730233	31.69871	0.0000	3
MAN742 CAM	POPC	60.67929	5.946898	10.20352	0.0000	1
	POPI	59.05375	7.867006	7.506509	0.0000	2
	POPA	53.48491	3.056445	17.49906	0.0000	3
MAN742 FINAL	POPC	73.20000	3.041616	24.06615	0.0000	1
	POPI	61.57143	3.635427	16.93651	0.0000	3
	POPA	62.65714	1.625812	38.53898	0.0000	2

MAN745 CAM	POPC	48.87859	4.061774	12.03380	0.0000	1
	POPI	48.56432	5.565272	8.726315	0.0000	2
	POPA	46.68022	2.288092	20.40137	0.0000	3
MAN745 FINAL	POPC	49.71710	6.728009	7.389571	0.0000	1
	POPI	48.16728	7.894694	6.101222	0.0000	2
	POPA	46.94462	4.448562	10.55276	0.0000	3
MAN787 CAM	POPC	64.45250	5.441481	11.84466	0.0000	1
	POPI	58.83333	10.88296	5.406004	0.0000	3
	POPA	63.23075	2.980422	21.21537	0.0000	2
MAN787 FINAL	POPC	71.80000	4.087552	17.56552	0.0000	1
	POPI	57.66667	7.462815	7.727200	0.0000	3
	POPA	65.63333	2.359949	27.81133	0.0000	2

Marital status effect on student performance

Table 4 reveals that the majority of undergraduate students were never married as none of the students registered for certain modules are single or married. This made it extremely difficult to assess marital status at the undergraduate level. Consequently, the interpretation was limited to the comparison of never-married and single categories while certain modules (MAN308, MAN312, ...) were excluded. The undergraduate results presented in Table 4A show that those who were never married generally outperformed their single counterparts. This could be due to extra responsibility of singlehood who may have to attend to the need of the child/children in addition to the demand of being a full-time student.

Table 4A: Marital status effect on student performance (BCOM modules)

Dummy Regression	LEVEL 2	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.	Remarks
FIN211 CAM	Variable					
	NEVER	74.76939	0.880881	84.88025	0.0000	
	SINGLE	71.83750	2.811583	25.55055	0.0000	
	MARRIED	15.18000	11.24633	1.349773	0.1788	Never
FIN212 CAM	NEVER	66.38544	1.141670	58.14764	0.0000	
	SINGLE	66.00286	3.859551	17.10118	0.0000	Never
FIN212 FINAL	NEVER	64.67983	1.000757	64.63088	0.0000	
	SINGLE	65.21429	3.308343	19.71207	0.0000	Single
FIN213 CAM	NEVER	0.447367	0.009061	49.37481	0.0000	
	SINGLE	0.376738	0.028201	13.35900	0.0000	Never
FIN213 FINAL	NEVER	40.48076	1.241280	32.61211	0.0000	
	SINGLE	30.95425	3.863453	8.012068	0.0000	Never
MAN234 CAM	NEVER	57.51324	1.025930	56.05959	0.0000	
	SINGLE	55.64437	3.690142	15.07920	0.0000	Never
MAN234 FINAL	NEVER	64.36316	0.836439	76.94902	0.0000	
	SINGLE	69.00000	3.328284	20.73140	0.0000	Single
MAN235 CAM	NEVER	720761.8	696.6078	1034.674	0.0000	
	SINGLE	723051.0	2310.387	312.9567	0.0000	
	LEVEL 3					
MAN305 CAM	NEVER	60.70620	1.009676	60.12445	0.0000	
	MARRIED	64.42000	9.763100	6.598314	0.0000	
	SINGLE	35.70000	9.763100	3.656625	0.0003	Never
MAN305 FINAL	NEVER	62.18183	1.089895	57.05305	0.0000	
	MARRIED	66.30632	10.53878	6.291649	0.0000	
	SINGLE	31.82000	10.53878	3.019324	0.0029	Never
MAN307 CAM	NEVER	723765.2	810.9158	892.5282	0.0000	
	SINGLE	722702.0	7365.509	98.11977	0.0000	
MAN307 F*INAL	NEVER	730187.1	0.655049	1114707.	0.0000	
	SINGLE	730177.0	5.877214	124238.6	0.0000	Never

MAN308 CAM	NEVER	60.99065	2.783757	21.90947	0.0000	
	MARRIED	71.00000	8.948527	7.934267	0.0000	
	SINGLE	58.65514	2.619860	22.38865	0.0000	Never
MAN308 FINAL	NEVER	64.31818	2.196107	29.28737	0.0000	
	MARRIED	73.66667	5.947085	12.38702	0.0000	
	SINGLE	63.70370	1.982362	32.13526	0.0000	Never
MAN312 CAM	NEVER	52.10197	1.221320	42.66037	0.0000	
	MARRIED	39.65000	11.84114	3.348496	0.0010	Never
MAN312 FINAL	NEVER	62.83766	1.088265	57.74116	0.0000	
	MARRIED	53.00000	13.50501	3.924470	0.0001	Never

At the postgraduate level, never-married students performed relatively better than their single counterparts in 10 of the 16 mark components. The result is similar to what was obtained in the undergraduate modules; however, the performance of single students at postgraduate level was better than the performance of single students at undergraduate level.

Table 4B: Marital status effect on student performance (Honours/PGDIP modules)

HONOURS/PGDIP						Remarks
	Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.	
FRP711 CAM	NEVER	57.75000	1.476297	39.11816	0.0000	
	MARRIED	63.40000	5.621570	11.27799	0.0000	
	SINGLE	57.72564	1.273035	45.34490	0.0000	Never
FRR 712 CAM	NEVER	51.33333	2.906751	17.66004	0.0000	
	MARRIED	57.60000	9.640602	5.974730	0.0000	
	SINGLE	63.88522	3.481776	18.34845	0.0000	Single
FRR712 FINAL	NEVER	64.85185	1.135241	57.12607	0.0000	
	MARRIED	64.00000	3.405723	18.79190	0.0000	
	SINGLE	66.26087	1.230003	53.87051	0.0000	Single
FSA712 CAM	NEVER	62.05313	2.830145	21.92578	0.0000	
	MARRIED	71.36667	9.243214	7.720980	0.0000	
	SINGLE	61.15405	2.631981	23.23499	0.0000	Never
FSA712 FINAL	NEVER	62.00000	2.266771	27.35168	0.0000	
	MARRIED	79.50000	8.172960	9.727198	0.0000	
	SINGLE	61.60000	2.110249	29.19087	0.0000	Never
MAN704 CAM	NEVER	59.22424	3.616870	16.37445	0.0000	
	MARRIED	-105.4218	7.078301	-14.89366	0.0000	
	SINGLE	56.23256	3.168514	17.74730	0.0000	Never
MAN706 CAM	NEVER	65.21440	2.405291	27.11290	0.0000	
	MARRIED	72.11000	6.943476	10.38529	0.0000	
	SINGLE	64.06208	2.454889	26.09571	0.0000	Never
MAN706 FINAL	NEVER	58.00000	2.314232	25.06231	0.0000	
	MARRIED	60.00000	5.824022	10.30216	0.0000	
	SINGLE	58.85000	2.255634	26.09023	0.0000	Single
MAN742 CAM	NEVER	64.31818	2.196107	29.28737	0.0000	
	MARRIED	73.66667	5.947085	12.38702	0.0000	
	SINGLE	63.70370	1.982362	32.13526	0.0000	Never
MAN742 FINAL	NEVER	52.51972	3.685976	14.24853	0.0000	
	MARRIED	71.00000	12.76859	5.560518	0.0000	
	SINGLE	57.02583	3.685976	15.47103	0.0000	Single
MAN745 CAM	NEVER	51.29905	2.547571	20.13645	0.0000	
	SINGLE	51.14490	2.311883	22.12261	0.0000	
	MARRIED	49.92933	6.028654	8.282003	0.0000	Never
MAN745 FINAL	NEVER	54.11111	3.837835	14.09938	0.0000	
	MARRIED	62.00000	11.51351	5.384980	0.0000	
	SINGLE	53.61364	3.471453	15.44415	0.0000	Never
MAN787 CAM	NEVER	59.41967	3.355139	17.71005	0.0000	
	MARRIED	64.87500	12.99440	4.992537	0.0000	
	SINGLE	68.12261	3.831838	17.77805	0.0000	Single
MAN787 FINAL	NEVER	66.20000	2.928139	22.60821	0.0000	
	MARRIED	54.00000	9.259590	5.831792	0.0000	
	SINGLE	68.00000	2.857571	23.79643	0.0000	Single

Residence effect on student performance

Table 5 reveals that the majority of students did not live in the university residence. Consequently, the outcome of this analysis had to be treated with caution. Table 5A shows that BCom Finance students residing outside campus performed well in nine mark components compared to those living in the university residence who outperformed in seven components. At postgraduate level, students living in a university residence outperformed their counterpart in five components and those living off-campus outperformed in four components. This suggests that there is no significant difference when one considers the fact that the majority are not accommodated in the university residence.

Table 5A: Residence effect on student performance

Dummy Regression	LEVEL 2					Remarks
	Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.	
FIN211 CAM	CAMPUS	72.00697	2.096659	34.34368	0.0000	
	OFFK	74.66503	0.993404	75.16077	0.0000	Offk
FIN212 CAM	CAMPUS	63.56581	2.739186	23.20609	0.0000	
	OFFK	66.49424	1.270928	52.31942	0.0000	Offk
FIN212 FINAL	CAMPUS	63.17857	2.335798	27.04796	0.0000	
	OFFK	65.03607	1.048352	62.03651	0.0000	Offk
FIN213 CAM	CAMPUS	0.431342	0.021460	20.10014	0.0000	
	OFFK	0.439703	0.010062	43.69843	0.0000	Offk
FIN213 FINAL	CAMPUS	38.15148	2.870339	13.29163	0.0000	
	OFFK	39.62475	1.345874	29.44165	0.0000	Offk
MAN234 CAM	CAMPUS	59.09086	2.493183	23.70097	0.0000	
	OFFK	57.06048	1.075745	53.04276	0.0000	Campus
MAN234 FINAL	CAMPUS	65.03030	2.015943	32.25801	0.0000	
	OFFK	64.56213	0.890824	72.47463	0.0000	Campus
MAN235 CAM	CAMPUS	720515.1	1859.005	387.5812	0.0000	
	OFFK	721017.4	715.9590	1007.065	0.0000	Offk
LEVEL 3						
MAN305 CAM	CAMPUS	61.14478	2.065241	29.60662	0.0000	
	OFFK	60.27338	1.163230	51.81554	0.0000	Campus
MAN305 FINAL	CAMPUS	63.16159	2.237578	28.22766	0.0000	
	OFFK	61.50911	1.260297	48.80524	0.0000	Campus
MAN307 CAM	CAMPUS	722582.3	1686.687	428.4033	0.0000	
	OFFK	724097.2	915.4433	790.9799	0.0000	Offk
MAN307 FINAL	CAMPUS	730187.6	1.377425	530110.7	0.0000	
	OFFK	730186.8	0.746420	978251.4	0.0000	Campus
MAN308 CAM	CAMPUS	54.40500	7.765970	7.005564	0.0000	
	OFFK	60.60031	1.926500	31.45617	0.0000	Offk
MAN308 FINAL	CAMPUS	53.00000	5.799460	9.138781	0.0000	
	OFFK	65.24490	1.434994	45.46701	0.0000	Offk
MAN312 CAM	CAMPUS	52.71233	2.560408	20.58747	0.0000	Campus
	OFFK	51.75401	1.384793	37.37311	0.0000	
MAN312 FINAL	CAMPUS	64.25000	2.250594	28.54802	0.0000	Campus
	OFFK	62.32773	1.237870	50.35081	0.0000	

Table 5B: Residence effect on student performance

Dummy Regression	HONOURS/PGDIP					Remarks
	Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.	
FRP711 CAM	CAMPUS	61.00000	3.955723	15.42070	0.0000	Campus
	OFFK	57.70985	0.973832	59.26060	0.0000	
FRR712 CAM	CAMPUS	65.16667	10.12150	6.438438	0.0000	Campus
	OFFK	56.08321	2.342673	23.93984	0.0000	
FRR712 FINAL	CAMPUS	67.66667	3.386581	19.98082	0.0000	Campus
	OFFK	65.28000	0.829540	78.69425	0.0000	
MAN706 CAM	CAMPUS	78.99000	8.281480	9.538150	0.0000	Campus
	OFFK	64.52400	1.656296	38.95680	0.0000	
MAN706 FINAL	CAMPUS	71.00000	6.760894	10.50157	0.0000	Campus
	OFFK	57.92500	1.511782	38.31571	0.0000	
MAN742 CAM	CAMPUS	54.40500	11.15511	4.877135	0.0000	
	OFFK	55.47915	2.647737	20.95342	0.0000	Offk
MAN742 FINAL	CAMPUS	53.00000	5.799460	9.138781	0.0000	
	OFFK	65.24490	1.434994	45.46701	0.0000	Offk
MAN787 CAM	CAMPUS	60.86000	10.79661	5.636957	0.0000	
	OFFK	63.39577	2.593261	24.44635	0.0000	Offk
MAN787 FINAL	CAMPUS	53.33333	7.358788	7.247570	0.0000	
	OFFK	67.50000	2.015287	33.49399	0.0000	Offk

Attendance effect on student performance

There is abundant literature on the positive influence of class attendance on student performance. Interestingly, certain universities, including UWC, have no clear institutional policy on class attendance. The results in Table 6 are limited to six modules with complete attendance registers throughout 2023. The results revealed that students with greater than 70 per cent class attendance outperformed their counterparts with fewer than 70 per cent class attendance in both CAM and final marks. Specifically, the magnitude of outperformance ranges from 21 to 14, 10, 8, 7 and 4 marks depending on the modules and assessments. Ontong, Bruwer and Dreyer (2020) also revealed that traditional class and tutorial attendance induce performance.

Table 6: Attendance effect on performance

HONOURS/PGDIP						Remarks
MAN308 CAM	>70% ATTENDANCE	70.08972	1.070117	65.49724	0.0000	7%
	<70% ATTENDANCE	63.29886	2.014226	31.42590	0.0000	
MAN308 FINAL	>70% ATTENDANCE	71.63333	0.895580	79.98544	0.0000	6%
	<70% ATTENDANCE	65.78788	1.707803	38.52193	0.0000	
MAN742 CAM	>70% ATTENDANCE	65.24577	1.778619	36.68339	0.0000	21%
	<70% ATTENDANCE	44.93294	3.110714	14.44457	0.0000	
MAN742 FINAL	>70% ATTENDANCE	65.46809	1.465417	44.67539	0.0000	10%
	<70% ATTENDANCE	55.80000	4.492884	12.41964	0.0000	
MAN787 CAM	>70% ATTENDANCE	71.62115	2.964648	24.15840	0.0000	14%
	<70% ATTENDANCE	57.75036	2.856806	20.21501	0.0000	
MAN787 FINAL	>70% ATTENDANCE	68.00000	2.576241	26.39505	0.0000	4%
	<70% ATTENDANCE	64.23529	3.186021	20.16160	0.0000	
FRR 712 CAM	>70% ATTENDANCE	67.53667	1.061571	63.61956	0.0000	7%
	<70% ATTENDANCE	60.01212	0.784022	76.54392	0.0000	
FRR712 FINAL	>70% ATTENDANCE	70.16667	1.121911	62.54212	0.0000	8%
	<70% ATTENDANCE	62.97143	0.804564	78.26779	0.0000	

Study type effects on student performance

Table 7 shows that part-time study is not popular at the undergraduate level while postgraduate students are able to register for full-time and part-time studies. Table 7 presents the categorical differences in performance of postgraduate students based on study types. The results show that full-time students performed better than part-time students in seven of the 12 mark components but the reverse is the case in three of the components while there is no significant difference in the remaining two mark components. Although, the number of students registered on full time basis were more than the latter, a categorical difference in performance was not expected because part-time students are only permitted to register for half as many module as full-time students.

Table 7: Study type effect on performance

Dummy Regression	LEVEL 3					Remarks
HONOURS/PGDIP						
FRP711 CAM	FULL	58.21944	1.071316	54.34384	0.0000	Full
	PART	57.52000	2.032680	28.29762	0.0000	
FRP711 FINAL	FULL	64.82353	0.641544	101.0430	0.0000	
	PART	65.00000	1.270691	51.15328	0.0000	Part
FRR712 CAM	FULL	56.19714	2.518674	22.31220	0.0000	
	PART	58.25000	5.575322	10.44783	0.0000	Part
FRR712 FINAL	FULL	65.38636	0.888291	73.60914	0.0000	
	PART	65.55556	1.964086	33.37713	0.0000	-
FSA712 CAM	FULL	62.30702	2.109019	29.54313	0.0000	Full
	PART	61.21250	3.980686	15.37738	0.0000	
FSA712 FINAL	FULL	61.35556	1.739522	35.27151	0.0000	
	PART	65.64286	3.118689	21.04822	0.0000	Part
MAN704 CAM	FULL	59.32000	1.838519	32.26510	0.0000	Full
	PART	52.25682	3.036214	17.21118	0.0000	
MAN704 FINAL	FULL	59.41667	1.516523	39.17953	0.0000	Full
	PART	55.76471	2.548269	21.88337	0.0000	
MAN706 CAM	FULL	65.98525	1.886638	34.97505	0.0000	Full
	PART	62.06417	3.444513	18.01827	0.0000	
MAN706 FINAL	FULL	59.78125	1.717981	34.79738	0.0000	Full
	PART	54.60000	3.073218	17.76639	0.0000	
MAN742 CAM	FULL	58.00783	2.799775	20.71875	0.0000	Full
	PART	45.07800	5.599550	8.050289	0.0000	
MAN742 FINAL	FULL	64.48889	1.558931	41.36737	0.0000	
	PART	64.85714	3.952613	16.40868	0.0000	-

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the categorical association between demographics and student performance, as well as ascertaining the influence of the class attendance on performance in the Department of Finance at UWC. The research employed the quantitative method in achieving the aims by using dummy multiple regressions as statistical techniques. Results of the dummy regression output presented showed that female CA and final marks performance on average exceeded that of males. This study contradicts Luwes and Swartz (2017) who

submitted that males marginally outperform female engineering students in South Africa; and Bagwandeem and Singaram (2018) who showed that there is no statistical difference based on gender. However, our finding is consistent with Schmulian and Coetzee (2011) and Almutawa and Suwaidan (2020) who demonstrated that female accounting students outperform males in South Africa and Kuwait respectively. This finding is also consistent with Alhajraf and Alasfour (2014), Sommerville and Singaram (2018), Tabassum and Akhter (2020) who also found females often display superior performance to male students. Although this gender performance gap is deemed challenging to quantify, Van Broekhuizen and Spaul (2017) and Hofmeyr (2022) attributed this gap to previous high school performance which is also superior to the males. Female outperformance could be traced to their activeness in academic help seeking behaviour (Cheng, Yu and Sun, 2024) and diligence (Bagwandeem and Singaram, 2018). Traditionally, males tend to be self-dependent while females do not shy away from seeking help where necessary. Additionally, South African females generally have a more positive attitude towards reading and education than their male peers. There is also a running theme in literature that females perform better because they are involved in various housework chores, therefore making them capable of managing and excelling at multiple courses in university. However, in the South African context, specifically among the demographic observed in this study, males also have various housework duties to juggle, therefore this argument may not fit well in the South African context. Further exploration of this gender gap is necessary.

The regression output revealed that the 2-group performs better than population groups 5 and 3 respectively. The concentration of Black and Coloured students in the Department of Finance is in line with the mission of UWC to give access to groups with lower levels of post-school education. Figure 1 showed that Black students' participation rate was lower in 2002 and higher in 2022 compared to the Coloured students. However, the increase in enrolment of group 5 did not translate to better performance when compared to group 2. Considering the marital status effect on student performance, never married students outperformed the single students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. While the findings should be treated with caution at the undergraduate level due to dominance of never-married students, the Honours and PGDip programme has a considerable number of single students. Our findings contradict Gishiwa and Muktar (2021) and Hiko, Cakici Es and Baysen (2023) who submitted that single childrearing does not affect students' academic achievement in Nigeria. The rate of single motherhood is high in Southern Africa (Chadoka-Mutanda and Mbanefo, 2015), hence students in this category will need a lot of support if they must excel in their studies. This could include

parental support as Dube and Mlotshwa (2018) showed that parental involvement enhances performance.

Punctual students exhibit better performance than their unpunctual counterparts. In this context, the performance of students with ≥ 70 per cent class attendance far exceeded their counterparts. Academics in the Department of Finance shared the same sentiment with Khan (2022) who found that academics are favourably disposed to class attendance. This finding is consistent with Ontong et al. (2020) and Schmulian and Coetzee (2011) who demonstrated that class attendance increased the final mark and continuous assessment respectively of accounting students in Stellenbosch. This finding supports the need to introduce class attendance as a prerequisite for participation in assessments. There was no significant categorical difference among the students in a university residence and those who were not. This revelation confirms the findings of Swanepoel et al. (2021) who demonstrated that residence type and transport modes do not significantly affect performance in the ECO year level one course. It is interesting to note that the part-time students underperformed relative to the full-time students, despite the former being allowed to register half as many credit units as the latter. This suggests that it is difficult to combine work and study in the Department of Finance because part-time students usually work during the day and attend evening classes. This calls for consideration of alternative lecture arrangements such as different modes of block teaching that allow students to concentrate on studies during certain periods of the year.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effect of demographics and class attendance on student performance in the Department of Finance. There are interesting findings from the dummy regression analysis. First, the females outperformed the male students especially in the undergraduate modules. Second, population group 2 performed better than group 5. Third, students who never married outperformed the single students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Fourth, there was no categorical difference in student performance based on residence type. Fifth, the part-time students underperformed relative to the full-time students despite the former being allowed to register half as many credit units as the latter. Lastly, the performance of students with ≥ 70 per cent class attendance far exceeds their counterparts. The current findings support Tinto's (1975) theory and Biggs 3P model by discovering that for finance students enrolled at UWC, demographic characteristics are influential in the academic performance of a student.

Based on the findings of the study, we conclude that the four demographic features that explain student performance are gender, marital status, population group, and programme type,

while there is no categorical difference based on university residence. In addition, student performance is a positive function of class attendance. In terms of policy implications, these findings favour the consideration of additional support for male, population group 5, single and part-time students as well as attraction of group 3 students in the Department of Finance by relevant stakeholders, namely the university, funding organisations, family and partners and government ministries. University, faculty and similar departments must consider introducing ≥ 70 per cent class or tutorial attendance as a requirement for participation in assessments to boost performance and throughput rate. The results of this study speak directly to our L&T practices, specifically the finding that students who attend classes more perform better than those who attend less frequently. In the context of the post-COVID-19 cohort who were used to distance learning, this finding calls for academics to consider the adoption of more active learning approaches, which motivate more in-class participation that is aimed at increasing lecture attendance. It remains to be seen whether consultation, group assessment and similar practices inform students' performance in the Department of Finance. This is essentially a question for future empirical analysis.

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