



# A Proposed Model for Flexible and Responsive Pre- Admission Criteria

A study of pre-admission criteria in  
Osteopathy

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# Background



- ▶ Investigation into student success in the first year of an osteopathy programme
- ▶ Standard entry requirements are not consistent across similar programmes internationally – some require Chemistry, others emphasise Biology
- ▶ Applicants over 20 years of age can be considered for ‘special admission’ if they provide evidence of aptitude or relevant prior experience



# Research Question

- ▶ Are current academic requirements useful for predicting success, or are they overly restrictive?
  - ▶ Are students meeting the standard academic requirements more likely to succeed?
  - ▶ Can achievement in particular subjects predict student success?
  - ▶ Do students see particular subjects as being necessary or helpful for success?

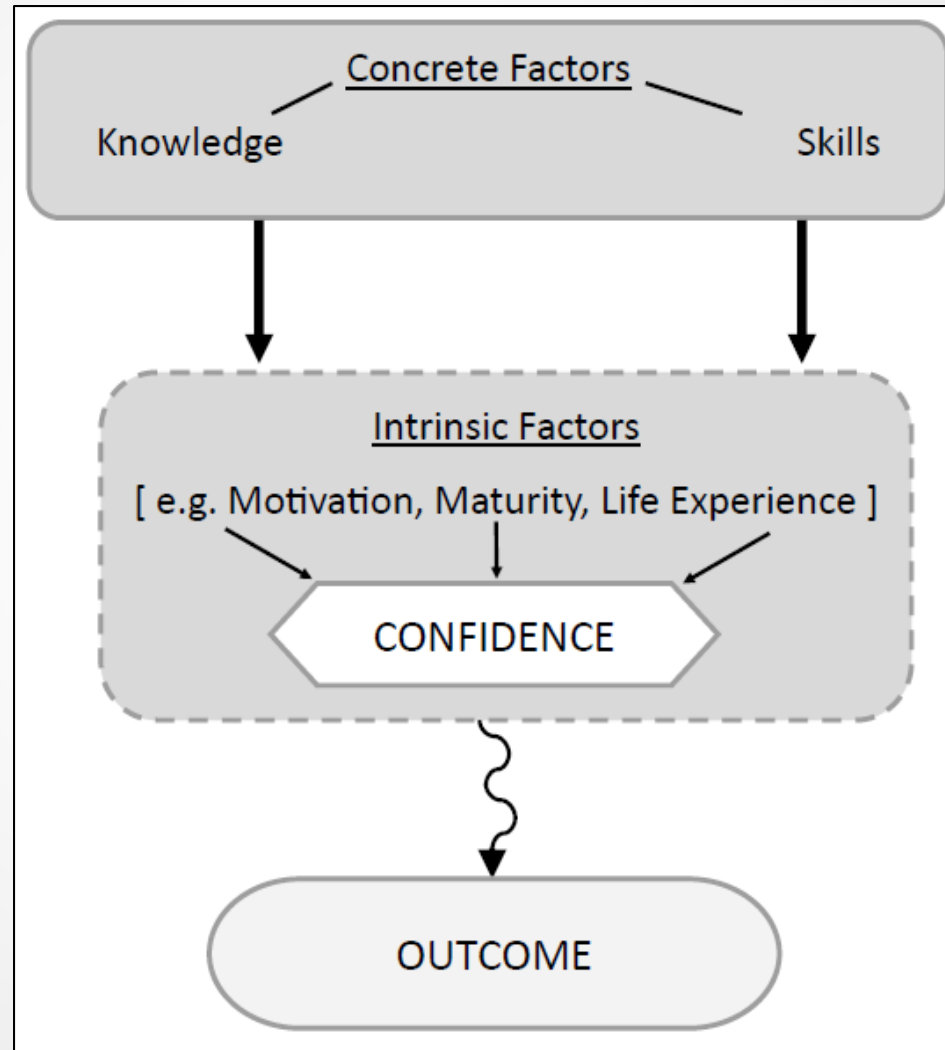


# Methods




- ▶ The study used a mixed methods design.
  - ▶ Part One: a quantitative analysis of preadmission qualifications (subjects and level) and performance in the first year of the Osteopathy programme (measured by GPA).
  - ▶ Part Two: a qualitative approach utilising semi-structured interviews to explore the effects of preadmission qualifications on the students' experiences within the programme.

# The Model





# Implications for Practice

- ▶ Scope to broaden admission criteria to assess knowledge, skill and personal factors
  - ▶ There are potential advantages in broadening admission criteria and admitting students to the programme with a wider mix of knowledge/skills-base, thus widening participation, increasing the diversity of the student population and so ultimately of the profession.
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# Implications for Practice

- ▶ Broader admission criteria also presents an opportunity for providing the richer learning environment afforded by more diverse student cohorts.
- ▶ The need to widen participation is increasingly recognised in wider medical education, with proposals for looking at broader pre-admission criteria when selecting students (Edwards, Elam & Wagoner, 2001)
- ▶ Assessment of concrete and intrinsic factors may more accurately represent what students feel impacts success



# Implications for Practice (cont'd)

- ▶ Loosening pre-requisites for specific knowledge/skill components, will reduce the ability for faculty to assume pre-knowledge, or standardisation of knowledge across cohort.
- ▶ Whilst not insurmountable, course designers and academic staff would need to take this into account, perhaps through diagnostic testing and early intervention/supplementary learning resources for those students without the required academic background.





# Acknowledgement

We'd like to acknowledge the contribution to the study by Claire Tait.

In the short time that Claire was a member of our research team, her boundless energy and 'can-do' attitude ensured that all the interviews took place (often accommodating random requests from participants). She was a great asset to the project.

~ Rest in Peace ~