Measuring individual transitions and trajectories: a methodology to inform targeted policy implementation

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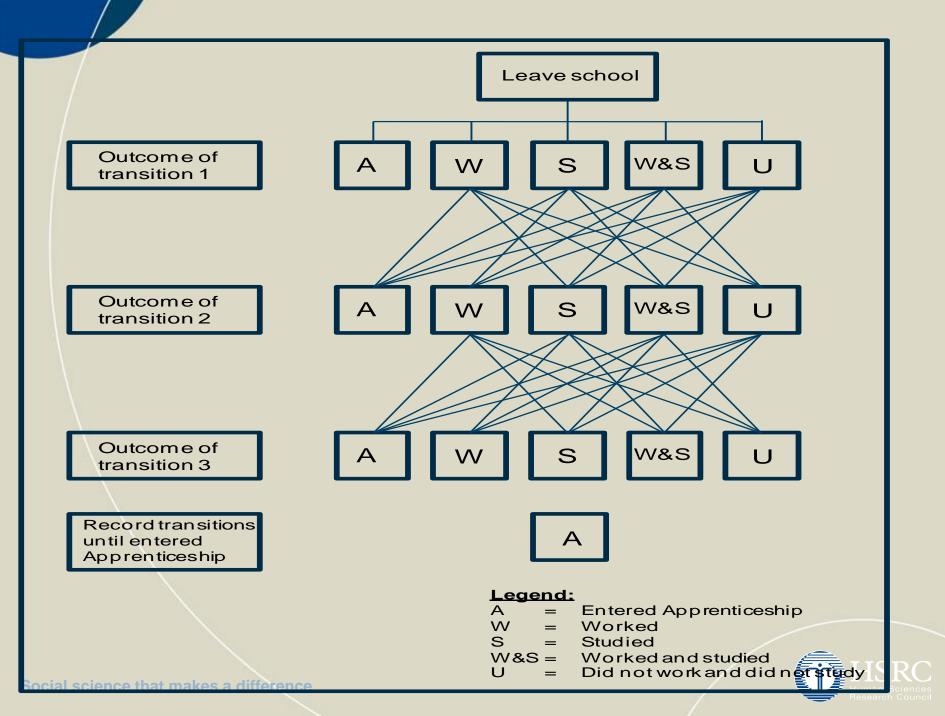Research Council

Aggregate performance is a blunt measure

- Typical method of impact assessment is census-like counts of enrolments, completions, or at best, placement

- Using such measures, may assume learnership and apprenticeship systems are 'successful':

  - They meet NSDSII targets for ENROLMENT:

    - Learnership targets for both unemployed and employed exceeded

    - Apprenticeship targets close to being met for employed

  - Result in a high rate of COMPLETION

    - 86% of sample for learnership

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Limited insight, less reliable

- These typical measures assume a linear progression: school -> learnership -> labour market

- BUT individuals have more complex trajectories or journeys, with multiple transitions, especially those who are most economically and socially vulnerable

school -> unemployed -> training -> unemployed -> learnership -> further study -> labour market

- How do we trace individual journeys into, through, and out of skills development systems, to assess the efficiency and success of a system, in order to inform policy interventions in a more valid and reliable manner?

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Legend:
A = Entered Apprenticeship
W = Worked
S = Studied
W&S = Worked and studied
U = Did not work and did not study

Trajectories technique leads to significant insights for policy intervention

- Apprenticeships: 70% experienced a smooth transition directly into employment (76% eventually)

- Learnerships: 86% of those who completed were employed, 79% immediately after completing

- Propensity for un/complicated trajectories and outcomes informed by race, gender, age, socio-economic status, eg:

  - Africans over-represented and Whites under-represented, in the learnership group that remains unemployed

  - White males more likely to move directly into an apprenticeship after school

- Sectoral differences

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A more nuanced, targeted approach

⇒ Positive impact on employment

⇒ But systems have limited scale and reach

⇒ And profiles of participation and success are not equitable

- *How can these systems offer alternative skills development pathways on a larger scale?*

- *How can we do so in a way that is targeted to facilitate equitable access, throughput and success to critical and scarce skills development programmes?*

- Allows more accurate assessment to target appropriate policy interventions

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