

Bar Passage Rates and Attributing Factors Affecting Minority Students

Michael R. Coté Class of 2024

Issue at Hand and Variables Examined

- LSAC (Law School Admissions Council) released data showing a steady drop in bar passage rates across all groups, gap between ethnicities exists (Sloan, 2023)
- LSAT (Law School Admission Test)
- Undergraduate GPA
- LSGPA (Law School GPA)
- Law School Culture
- Law School Faculty Diversity

The Data on Predictability

Table 1: Semester 1 GPA Quartile and Characteristics and Bar Passage Outcomes (Farley , Swoboda and Chanvisanuruk)

Sem 1 GPA Quartile	n	UGPA	LSAT	Sem1 GPA	Final GPA	Bar Pass %
1	86	3.43	157	2.44	3.01	65
2	101	3.48	158	2.88	3.26	86
3	99	3.47	159	3.22	3.44	94
4	118	3.60	160	3.67	3.72	98

LSAT and Undergraduate GPA Matter Most

LSAT Score

- Heavily weighed
- No significant predictability
- Standardized testing bias
- Only 1/3 of law school curriculum is on LSAT

Undergraduate GPA

- Heavily weighed
- No significant predictability
- Can measure personality and ability to an extent
- Poor preparation in undergrad puts people behind

Racial Bias in LSAT Score

- LSAC data release showed a gap in LSAT scores between ethnicities
- Two studies conducted (Hill, 2019)
- Minority and non-minority students matched at same undergrad institution with GPAs within .10 of each other still had LSAT score gap of 9.2 points on 120-180 scale

Law School Culture

- Minority students face a different world
- Psychological demoralization, ostracization, can result in a lack of confidence
- 2013-2015 UC Berkeley study: students unwilling to ask for help, or participate because of perceived bias by students and faculty (Clydesdale, 2004)

Faculty Diversity

- Lack of diversity can set minority students back
- Many faculty and deans come from very homogenous backgrounds
- Students learn differently, professors need to work with them
- 2020 study found schools with lower entering credentials used ULBC (Upper-Level Bar Courses) to get their students to pass the Bar Exam (Christopher, Muller, 2022)
- Identify in year-one and provide proper help

Law School GPA

- Table 1 showed positive relationship with LSGPA
- Law school curriculum, faculty diversity, and ULBC all effect this final variable and contribute greatly to how a student will fair in law school

Findings and Suggestions

- Some factors capable of predicting better than others
- LSAT and Undergraduate GPA are poor predictors, biased against minority students
- LSGPA, faculty diversity, and law school culture are more predictive of bar passage
- For minority students every stage is more difficult
- Instead of using LSAT, use personality test, found no bias
- More diverse faculty, more inclusive culture, more ULBC

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