Overcoming Informational and Behavioral Obstacles in Access to Tertiary Education in Colombia

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Sizeable Return to Tertiary Education in LAC, Colombia

Colombian students who complete tertiary education earn, on average, 180% per month more than those who only complete secondary education.

Persistent Opportunity Gaps in Tertiary Education Access

Educational Access (%) by Household Income Percentile - Latin America and the Caribbean

Obstacles

Financial

Informational

Behavioral

Action Plan
Financial Obstacles: Insufficient Funding for Tertiary Education
Informational Obstacles: Biased Beliefs

% Students with Correct Beliefs About...

0 20 40 60 80 100

College Financial Aid Rate
College Dropout Rate
Expected College Graduate Earnings ($)
College Access Rate
College Completion Rate
Expected College Dropout Earnings ($)

Source: Colombian baseline survey of high school seniors 2018
Behavioral Obstacles: Overconfidence

All

Female

Male

Real
Expected
Seniors: Mixed Feelings About Tertiary Education

% Seniors who Express these Feelings About College...

- Fearful
- Worried
- Nervous
- Determined
- Happy
- Inspired
- Motivated

Source: Colombian baseline survey of high school seniors 2018
73

Percent of high school seniors who want more information about college but don’t know how to get it

Source: Colombia baseline student survey 2018

Source: Samaritans.org
ICFES-Chatbot Experiment

Research-Practice Partnership with Colombian Government

- Personalized
- AI-powered
- Low cost
- Scalable

Source:
- las2orillas.com.co
- Colprensa
- PSU
- Botlist.co
- EdSurge
Hi! I am the ICFES-Bot

Let's talk about higher education?

- no: Exit survey
- yes: Ask about program of interest

How much do you think a graduate from this program of interest earns?

Show average earnings.

Do you want to know more about this program?

- no: Show me more programs
- yes: Show required info.

Do you want to know more about one of these programs?

Show menu of 4 other programs.
Progress to Date: Student Interactions
Afternoon Prompts Seem to Work Best
A/B Tests on Brain Architecture and Menus

Model used to define best set of options for each student
Student Reactions: Word Cloud
Student Reactions: Testimonials

“Now I have higher salary expectations”

“The information helps us project into the future”

“I learned something about score admissions standards I could not find elsewhere”

“It gives specific answers, although not always about what I really want to know”

“I liked the natural language interaction, but less so when I have to respond with [option] numbers
Next Steps

1. Action planning and application assistant bot
2. Financial aid navigation and application assistant bot
3. Plan for school staff involvement in socialization of bot
4. Tracking educational outcomes
5. Further refinement, testing (e.g. Facebook Live interface)
Our Team

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