A survey on Postgraduate students’ attitudes towards exams at the Postgraduate level

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We are Postgraduate students at the University of Technology, Sydney, and we are doing a survey research project which is required for the subject of Management Research Methods. Your help filling out this questionnaire would be greatly appreciated, we are grateful for your time.

Your response to the questionnaire will be confidential and only aggregate results will be in our report. If you would rather not reply to any of the questions, feel free to omit them.

When you have filled out the questionnaire, please fold it, and return to the collector.

If you have any further questions or concerns regarding this research project please contact us on the contact numbers given above. Alternatively, you can contact our Supervisor for this project, Dr Gisselle Gallego, at the University on 9514-3614 (Fax: 9514-3602).

**Introduction:**

**Introduction to the topic;**

The topic of the survey is students’ attitude towards exams at Postgraduate level, and the aim is to explore how Postgraduate students perceive about doing exams.

At Postgraduate level of study, there are various assessment methods and most subjects have its own combination of different assessment approaches such as assignments (individually or in groups) and presentations. Exams are, however, not compulsory in every subjects at the Postgraduate level. Depending on the subject nature and subject area, exams are unnecessary for some subjects.

There is an interesting phenomenon that most students prefer to choose subjects which have no exams. Teachers are also aware of the fact that students have no preference to having exams.

Moreover, by choosing subjects based on without having exams is not only a controversial debate, but it also has some impact on students’ learning styles and strategies. In addition, it can be a negative effect on students’ future career development. Whilst students choose the subjects based on without having exams, it sometimes is irrelevant to their interests, and it can also create negative attitudes towards their learning. This is one reason to carry out the survey.

According to our background knowledge and own experience, our peer students prefer to assignments than exams. There are some reasons why students prefer to do assignments. Doing assignments is less stressed due to the fact that it needs not require memorizing the content of textbook and finishing at limited time. Trying to arrive to exam hall is also a stressful matter. Exams are more stressful for having limited time, demanding more preparation, including memorizing for closed book exams.

**Introduction to Survey**

Having reasons above, we have a passion to carry out a survey on students’ attitude towards exams. The survey is mainly based on questionnaire which has some questions related to find out how students have attitudes towards exams. The questionnaire is based on multiple choices, and easy to understand. They are also easy to choose. There is one open-ended question to find out how they perceive on exams. Furthermore, there are two different types of students: international and local students. There can be some different situations between international and local students. For international students, they live in a different environment from their homeland. It can be more stressful for them in studying than local students that live in a more relaxed environment. Based on this issue, the questionnaire has a question for asking whether they are international or local student.

**Aims and Expectation**

Aim of survey

Our survey aims to explore postgraduate students’ attitudes towards exams at the Postgraduate level. Their point of views towards exams can be different based on social status and background. The type of exams also has impact on their attitude towards exams. According to our experience, many students usually complain about having exams, and they prefer to have at least open book exams. No matter whatever outcome of survey is, favouring positive attitude towards exams or negative attitude towards exams, it is worth doing this survey to explore extent of students’ preference to exams. The survey can be useful at least to discover that exams are in favour or not so as to help students studying at Postgraduate level.

Expectation of Survey

Before doing survey, there is some expectation to the survey. These expectations are based on the aim of the survey and our background knowledge and experience. Whilst we are studying at Postgraduate level, we discover ourselves that most of us have negative attitude towards exams. It can be based on some reasons and assumption like the fact that exams are stressful.

Moreover, exams require for more preparation than other assessments such as assignments and presentation. Definitely, it requires memorization which most people have less interest.

Therefore, we expect that most of Postgraduate students have less favoured attitude towards exams, especially older working students who study part time as they work full time and have less time of preparation for exams.

Questions for questionnaire

1. Do you often have exams?

Yes

No

2. Which are harder for you, exams or assignments? (Please tick one)

Exams

Assignments

3. Do you prefer open book or closed book exams?

Open book

Closed book

4. Which type of exam questions do you prefer? (Please circle on one)

a. multiple choices

b. short answer

c. essay type

5. Are exams stressful for you?

Yes

No

6. What is the average mark you usually get from exams?

\_\_\_\_\_\_%

7. What is your opinion of exams?

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8. You are:

Male

Female

9. You are:

Full time student

Part time student

10. Is English your mother tongue?

Yes

No