
AP[®] Research Academic Paper

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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Sample F

- Scoring Guideline**
- Student Samples**
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AP[®] RESEARCH — ACADEMIC PAPER

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

The Response...				
Score of 1 Report on Existing Knowledge	Score of 2 Report on Existing Knowledge with Simplistic Use of a Research Method	Score of 3 Ineffectual Argument for a New Understanding	Score of 4 Well-Supported, Articulate Argument Conveying a New Understanding	Score of 5 Rich Analysis of a New Understanding Addressing a Gap in the Research Base
Presents an overly broad topic of inquiry.	Presents a topic of inquiry with narrowing scope or focus, that is NOT carried through either in the method or in the overall line of reasoning.	Carries the focus or scope of a topic of inquiry through the method AND overall line of reasoning, even though the focus or scope might still be narrowing.	Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.	Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.
Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works OR through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.	Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works OR through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.	Situates a topic of inquiry within relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives, although connections to some works may be unclear.	Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives AND logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.	Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives AND logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.
Describes a search and report process.	Describes a nonreplicable research method OR provides an oversimplified description of a method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.	Describes a reasonably replicable research method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.	Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.	Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.
Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.	Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.	Conveys a new understanding or conclusion, with an underdeveloped line of reasoning OR insufficient evidence.	Supports a new understanding or conclusion through a logically organized line of reasoning AND sufficient evidence. The limitations and/or implications, if present, of the new understanding or conclusion are oversimplified.	Justifies a new understanding or conclusion through a logical progression of inquiry choices, sufficient evidence, explanation of the limitations of the conclusion, and an explanation of the implications to the community of practice.
Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.	Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.	Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.	Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.	Enhances the communication of the student’s ideas through organization, use of design elements, conventions of grammar, style, mechanics, and word precision, with few to no errors.
Cites AND/OR attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.	Cites AND/OR attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.	Cites AND attributes sources, using a discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND in-text), with few errors or inconsistencies.	Cites AND attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND in-text), with few to no errors.	Cites AND attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND in-text), with few to no errors.

AP[®] RESEARCH 2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

Academic Paper

Overview

This performance task was intended to assess students' ability to conduct scholarly and responsible research and articulate an evidence-based argument that clearly communicates the conclusion, solution, or answer to their stated research question. More specifically, this performance task was intended to assess students' ability to:

- Generate a focused research question that is situated within or connected to a larger scholarly context or community;
- Explore relationships between and among multiple works representing multiple perspectives within the scholarly literature related to the topic of inquiry;
- Articulate what approach, method, or process they have chosen to use to address their research question, why they have chosen that approach to answering their question, and how they employed it;
- Develop and present their own argument, conclusion, or new understanding while acknowledging its limitations and discussing implications;
- Support their conclusion through the compilation, use, and synthesis of relevant and significant evidence generated by their research;
- Use organizational and design elements to effectively convey the paper's message;
- Consistently and accurately cite, attribute, and integrate the knowledge and work of others, while distinguishing between the student's voice and that of others;
- Generate a paper in which word choice and syntax enhance communication by adhering to established conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

RUNNING HEAD: WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL
EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

What are the Motivations for Earning a High School Equivalency Degree

Word Count: 4117

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

Abstract

In 1942, the United States started a program that allows soldiers who had not finished their high school education to earn a General Education Diploma (GED), which is equivalent to that of a general high school diploma. Several decades later, the need to obtain a GED had become a necessity for both the general population and military personnel (Chase, 1987). Research studies have shown that more people are completing high school with a diploma now more than ever before; nevertheless, there is still a part of the population in the United States that does not finish high school and are not taking any steps to enrolled in any Adult Education Classes to earn a GED. This investigative research study focused on the reasons why students were unable to earn a high school diploma, and the motivations of GED students that enrolled in GED class after not completing or dropping out of high school, along with investigating reasons why students don't finish high school in the first place and what is the best way to inform the public about available Adult Education Classes. The experimental group consisted of adults who are currently enrolled in tutorial and prep courses to help them pass the GED exam. This group was given a 10 question, anonymous survey; however, only seven students were able to start the study, with only six completing it. Once the surveys were completed, they were compared with one another and used to determine the primary motivations.

Introduction

Over the past few decades, the United State's education and schooling system have become more of a priority. According to the United States Government Spending, in 1944, the United States government's Gross Domestic Product (also known as the GDP, which means the total value of goods and services provided in a country for a single fiscal year) for education was

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at 1.25%(Chantrill, 2019). However, as time went on and education became a matter of greater importance, the government started spending more money on the public school systems. The GDP percentage proceeded to reached its peak in 2010 at a high of 6.1%, much higher than it was sixty-six years earlier.

This increased amount of funding can be attributed to the more vigorous standards most careers require. During the time of the 1940s, a vast majority of occupations did not require much education; if the job even required any at all. As Kenny Buchanan, a high school dropout struggling to find work, said "Back then, I could get a job anywhere. I could work at Burger King, quit that job and have a job the next day without an education." This is not the case in the workforce today, as Buchanan explained. "[Those] good paying jobs, I could've had, but because I didn't have a high school diploma, they wouldn't even consider me," Buchanan says (Sanchez, 2011). The numbers also support the message Buchanan is trying to express. According to the United States Census Bureau (1940), about seventy-six percent of the population ages twenty-five and older did not complete high school in the year 1940; as compared with today's data that shows that number to be at only ten percent.

Although studies have shown that more people are completing high school with a traditional diploma, there are still millions of Americans who haven't. According to Claudio Sanchez, a reporter on the National Public Radio, there were still 40 million Americans who did not finish high school (Sanchez, 2011). This is an issue because the quality of life for these millions of people is much lower when compared to diploma-earners. The most known and discussed difference between the two groups (people with high school diplomas and people without) is yearly salary. The United States Department of Labor emphasizes that high school

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graduates with no college degree will earn about 26,000 more dollars yearly than those without a diploma.

There is also a multitude of other consequences (and causes) of dropping out of high school, with single motherhood is one of them. More specifically, Wandrei (2016) stated that "Among women aged 16 to 24, high school dropouts were the group most likely to be single mothers, with 22.6 percent of this group being single mothers." Dropouts are also more likely to have health-related complications. One of these diseases is diabetes, which is 8 percent more likely to be seen in a high school drop out than someone who earned their college degree (United Press International, 2014). People without a diploma will also have on average higher medical costs, and they tend to be less productive at work (United Press International, 2014).

Studies conducted by Georgetown University have shown that life for this 10 percent will only become more difficult as time goes on. According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 35 percent of jobs will require at least a bachelor degree, and another 30 percent will need at least some college by the year 2020 (2018). So, going back to school seems like a non-diploma earner's best option; thus, the reasoning for GED (General Education Diploma) classes. These classes are a way for high-school dropouts (and anyone else who doesn't have their high school diploma) to get an education that is equivalent to a graduation certificate.

If an individual is, for any number of reasons, unable to earn a traditional diploma, then a GED is one of the best options available for them. According to Adult Education Works, more than 90 percent of employers in the United States consider individuals with a GED the same as traditional high school diploma earners in regards to hiring, promotions, and salary (Adult

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Education Works, n.d.). Even if the Adult Education course graduate decided that they did not want to go to the workforce right away and instead wanted to pursue a higher level of education, a vast majority of universities accept GED diploma into their schools (Moldoff, n.d.).

The purpose of this research is to investigate the reasons and motivations for adults to want to obtain an adult high school diploma, also known as a GED, and to gather data as to why students do not complete high school in the first place. This information could then be applied to others who have yet to earn either a traditional diploma or a GED, and help their quality of life and prevent them from being apart of the 10 percent.

Hypothesis

The researcher initially hypothesized that the primary motivation(s) would be related to employment requirements, employment promotion, or job security; with motives concerning the social status and their societal environment being the second most common motivation. This is on the basis of the idea that the type of job someone has correlates to that person's quality of life. The reasoning behind the researcher hypothesizing that an individual's societal environment would cause them to enroll in GED classes is because, according to the University of Minnesota, we seek psychological comfort. If we do not have that, we will then begin to try to change our surroundings, and GED classes offer said change (Kretizer, 2016)

Literature Review

Given the nature of this study, there was a single of literature that would help the researcher with the research study. The study, titled "Reasons Students Enrolled in Adult

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Education ABE and GED Preparation Classes," discusses the results of a 1987 survey that essentially asked the participants their reasoning(s) for earning their GED.

In 1987, Elaine Chase published a research paper titled "Reasons Students Enrolled in Adult Education ABE and GED Preparation Classes," focusing on the reasons individuals take GED classes and attempt the GED exam. In her research, she surveyed three different class programs, all in the Chesapeake, Virginia area. What Chase found was that the main motivation was that everyone had different reasons, but some motivations were recurrent in all three classes. In the first group, the main motivation was "relating to other people and sharing information." However, all the motivations she gave as options were selected. In the second group, the main motivation was different than the first group; with "Family situations" and "recreation and leisure opportunities" being the students' main factors that pushed them to be apart of the class. It should be mentioned that some comments from this second group said other reasons were to further their education, and for their self-fulfillment. The final group credited job-related reasons, such as assisting with their current job or trying to change careers.

Chase also conducted this survey to figure out how the students heard about the program. According to her results, a vast majority of the students heard about the class through family and friends (which is to be expected in individuals with healthy family and friend ties), with another large sum learning about the courses available through brochures. However, because this study was conducted in 1987, this section of the study is severely outdated as we have a better and more efficient ways of sharing information; the internet and cellular phones.

Methodology

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This study was conducted in South Florida. Using an online survey software known as "SurveyMonkey," the researcher created a survey with ten questions, which completed adults who are currently enrolled in GED classes. There were only 6 respondents to the survey.

The survey was designed to make sure that the participant could articulate his or her perspectives in reference to each question; therefore, multiple format of questions were utilized in order to ascertain specific response. Some questions and answer choices from this study influenced the questions asked in this study.

The survey was designed to make sure that the participant could properly voice how they felt about each question. For example, questions four and five were asking with text box entries. This is because of these types of questions ("why and explain" type of questions) do not have a certain number of answers that could apply to everyone. Everyone has a different reason and explanation, so everyone must be able to answer the questions differently. The researcher also limited the survey to 10 questions. This is because if they were too long, the participants would get lazy while answering, and this could lead to answers that are not true. A survey that is too long also gives a chance for the participant to get distracted, resulting in the participant not giving their full attention. However, the questionnaire cannot be too short; otherwise, the researcher would not be able to gather enough information.

There are several reasons as to why the researcher chose an electronic survey rather than a survey sent through the postal service (also called a postal survey). According to research done by Jones, Baxter, and Khanduja (year 2013) stating that using an electronic investigation allows a broader audience to answer, can use visual aids, and they tend to be completed much quicker. However, electronic surveys tend to have more people not complete them, and not accessible to

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everyone as some people do not have access to the internet (Jones, Baxter, & Khanduja, 2013). Even with these disadvantages, the researcher decided that the advantages outweigh them, and thus went with using an online survey.

The researcher expected the survey to take about 5 to 10 minutes; however, there was no time limit. The participants were able to complete the survey whenever and wherever they felt comfortable, as the survey was an online link and could be completed on any electronic device that has access to the internet.

Questions

Each question was needed for a specific reason. There are no "filler questions" to make the essay seem longer or anything of that nature. Some of the questions were based on other surveys, and the others were designed by the researcher to ensure all of the needed information was gathered.

Questions 1-3 are about the participant's background and some personal information. Question 1 asks the participant about their age, and question number 2 asks about their race. The reasoning behind this is to see if there is a correlation between race and age and if they are enrolled in a GED class. Question 3 asks what years did they attend high school. This was asked for multiple reasons. The first was to see how long the respondents stayed in school before they dropped out. The second and more important reason is to see how the era in which they attended school possibly affected their decision. As previously mentioned, during the 1940s, over 70 percent of adults (ages 25 and older) didn't even have a diploma. So, it is entirely possible that

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the periods of when the respondents when to school could have played a role in them not finish high school.

Question 4 proceeds to ask "Why did you decide to drop out when you did?". The purpose of asking this query is to see why did they wait to take a GED class, and not take one as soon as they possibly could. The sooner someone obtains their education, the better and easier it is for someone to start their life. Question 5 asks them to "explain why you did not properly complete high-school? If you dropped out, what was the reason(s) for you dropping out." This question is very similar to number 4, as the researcher designed. The reason for this is to confirm why the participants didn't finish school and to make the individual is answering the survey and not putting just anything to complete their task.

Questions 6 and 7 questions the respondent's popularity. Question 6 asks " How popular would you say you were in high school." To get a proper answer, this question uses a "slide bar" and asks the participants about their popularity on a scale of 1 through 100. Question 7 follows number 6 by asking "Would you say the level of your popularity affected your decision in not earning a high school diploma." The purpose of this question is to see how popularity plays a role in the drop out rate. Since question 6 uses the "slide- bar tool," it is essential to classify what each number is categorized into. Anyone who choose 20 or below would be considered an outcast, 20-40 means they were not popular, 40-60 means the average level of popularity, 60-80 equates to being popular, and 80-100 says they were very popular.

Question 8 is arguably the most critical question in the survey. The question asks "What made you decide to earn a GED (select all that apply)." The reason this question is asked in a "select all that apply" manner is that there can be multiple is because they could have been

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multiple reasons that cause someone to drop out. All of the answer choices provided came from other surveys conducted in the late 1900s that asked the same question. Some of these answer choices include but not limited too Professional Advancement(such as job confidence and security), Cognitive Interest (having a passion or joy to learn), and more. There is also an "Other" option for if there is a reason not listed.

Question 9 asks "How did you hear about this class." It is important to know the most efficient way to spread information about GED classes, so more people join them. The final question, question 10, asked "How do you plan on using your GED once you complete the course." This question is just another way of asking why they got the GED in the first place. Once the participants submitted their responses, the researcher began analyzing the data with the assistance of SurveyMonkey and began concluding.

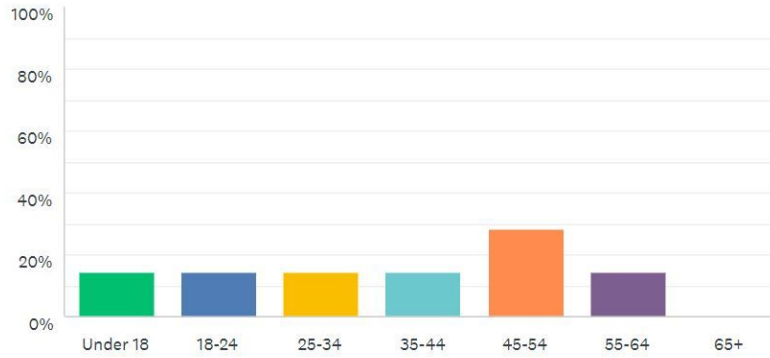
Data Analysis/Results

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

Question 1:

Age

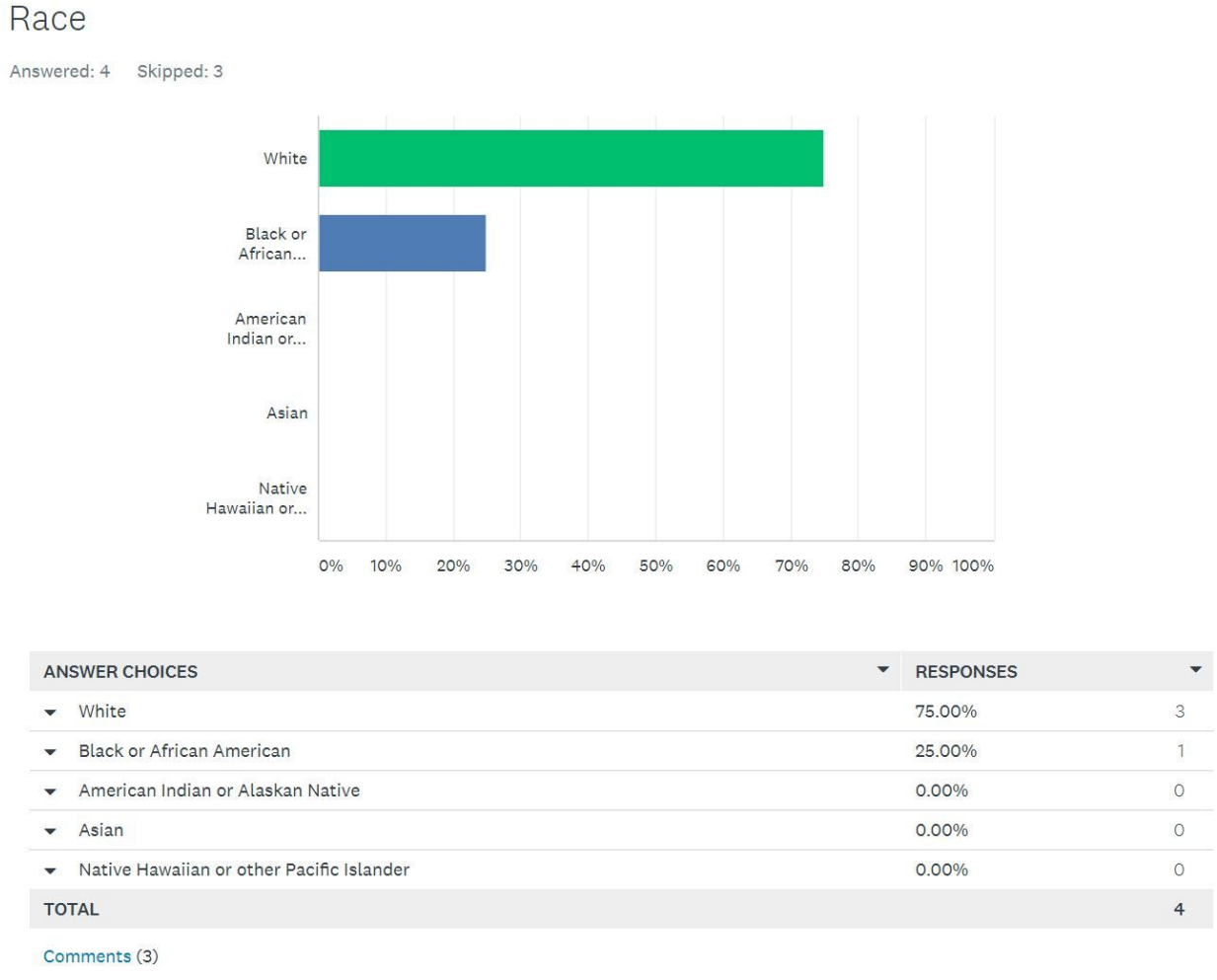
Answered: 7 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Under 18	14.29% 1
18-24	14.29% 1
25-34	14.29% 1
35-44	14.29% 1
45-54	28.57% 2
55-64	14.29% 1
65+	0.00% 0
TOTAL	7

Question 2:

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE



Comments from Question 2:

Showing 3 responses

- Latin**
 4/2/2019 7:25 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#)

- Hispanic black**
 2/27/2019 6:48 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#)

- latino american**
 2/27/2019 6:38 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#)

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

Question 3:

What years you attended high-school (year started- year ended)

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

RESPONSES (7) WORD CLOUD TAGS (0) Sentin

Apply to selected ▼ Filter by tag ▼ Search response

Showing 7 responses

<input type="checkbox"/>	Started in 1980 and finished in 1984 in the Dominican Republic	4/2/2019 7:25 PM	View respondent's answers
<input type="checkbox"/>	2014-2018	4/2/2019 7:16 PM	View respondent's answers
<input type="checkbox"/>	2009-2011	4/2/2019 6:46 PM	View respondent's answers
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-11	2/27/2019 6:48 PM	View respondent's answers
<input type="checkbox"/>	1996 - 1998	2/27/2019 6:38 PM	View respondent's answers Add tags ▼
<input type="checkbox"/>	1985 - 1986	2/27/2019 6:36 PM	View respondent's answers Add tags ▼
<input type="checkbox"/>	1979	2/27/2019 6:03 PM	View respondent's answers Add tags ▼

Question 4:

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

Why did you decide to enter take a GED class when you did?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

RESPONSES (7) WORD CLOUD TAGS (0)

 Sentiment

Apply to selected ▼ Filter by tag ▼

Search responses

Showing 7 responses

I wanted to get a more solid foundation for my education, so I can go to college.

4/2/2019 7:25 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

to complete my goals and vision

4/2/2019 7:16 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Wanting to finally do something with passion career wise

4/2/2019 6:46 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

because i thought the real world was easy to get ahead, but it was a lot harder than i expected. So i decided to get my GED and go to technical school for H VAC (ac installation, maintenance, and a certification). I started about 3 months ago.

2/27/2019 6:48 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

working at and dead end job and living from pay check to pay check and not being able to save money

2/27/2019 6:38 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

To further my education to get a better career.

2/27/2019 6:36 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

becuse i want to get a job

2/27/2019 6:03 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

Question 5:

Explain why did you not properly complete high-school? If you dropped out, what was the reason(s) for you dropping out?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 1

RESPONSES (6) WORD CLOUD TAGS (0)

Sentiments: OFF

Apply to selected Filter by tag

Search responses

Showing 6 responses

I didn't drop out, but I studied in another country.

4/2/2019 7:25 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

[Add tags](#)

had to find a job

4/2/2019 7:16 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

[Add tags](#)

Got an I.E.P. scholarship to a private school who turned out to be fake (credits weren't valid) and with that i tried to go to an off campus learning center and from there i couldn't concentrate by just looking at a computer and from there i tried going to an adult school but it was the same thing with a computer and thats it. I know the way my brain takes information and i figured to give it this one last shot.

4/2/2019 6:46 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

[Add tags](#)

The reason I dropped out of high school was because my mother and father were separated and my mother found a new husband. Then one thing lead to another and I began living with my grandmother also i tried working for 10 an hour at a Wendy's, I quit within the second week. So i decided to go back to school get my certification and start my own business servicing and installing

i was born and raised in the US i moved to Puerto Rico at the age of 15 and i did not know how to write or read in Spanish so it was hard for me to do the work and under stand

2/27/2019 6:38 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

[Add](#)

I was forced to go to an Agricultural School not of my choice, but if i knew then i would have complete my studies.

2/27/2019 6:36 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

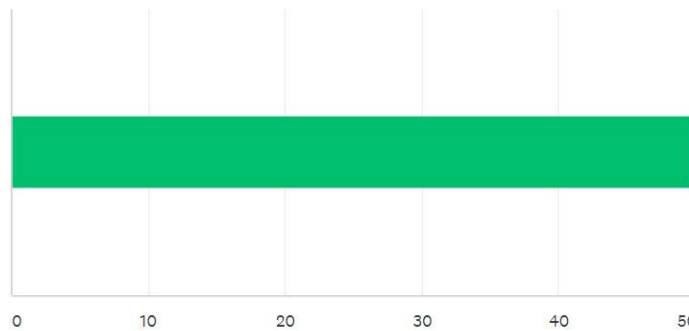
[Add](#)

Question 6:

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

How popular would you say you were in high-school?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 1

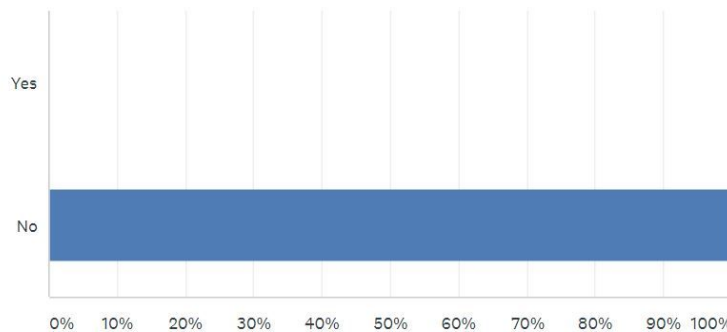


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
Responses	50	298	6
Total Respondents: 6			

Question 7:

Would you say the level of your popularity affected your decision in not earning a high school diploma?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0.00% 0
No	100.00% 6
TOTAL	6

Comments from Question 7:

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

I finished high school in the Dominican Republic.

4/2/2019 7:25 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Because most my friends in high school were losers so i really didn't care that much about school.

2/27/2019 6:48 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

I was only popular because i used to ran track and field

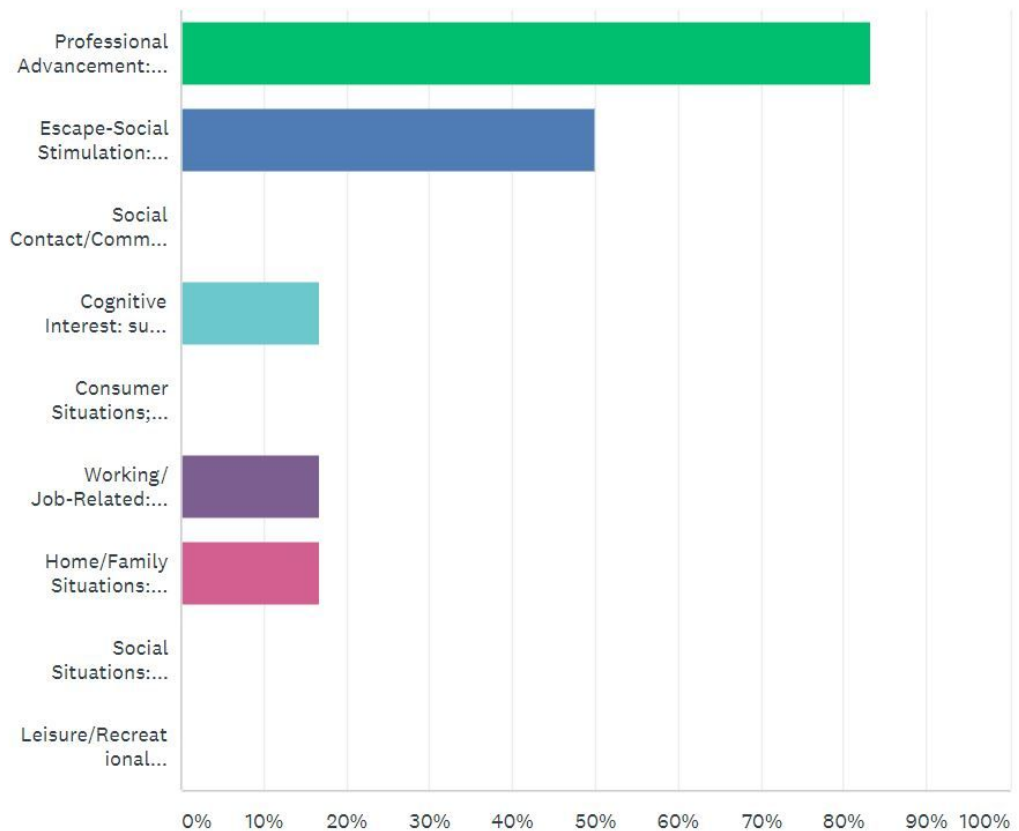
2/27/2019 6:36 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Question 8:

What made you decide to earn a GED(select all that apply)?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 1



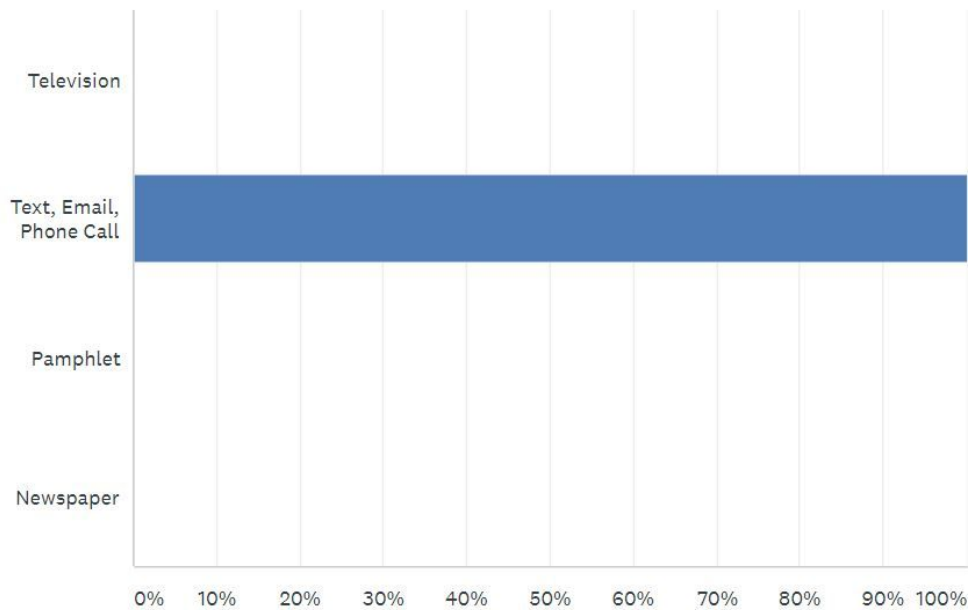
WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Professional Advancement: such as job confidence, securing professional advancement, earning a degree, meeting formal requirements, & carrying out recommendations of some authority.	83.33% 5
Escape-Social Stimulation: such as getting relief from boredom, overcoming frustrations of day-to-day living, escaping an unhappy relationship, escaping television, and sharing a common interest with someone	50.00% 3
Social Contact/Community Service/External Expectations: such as improving social relationships, to make new friends, improving social positions, preparing for community service, and participation in group activity	0.00% 0
Cognitive Interest: such as for the joy of learning, learning for the sake of learning, seeking knowledge for it's own sake, satisfying an inquiring mind, and providing a contrast to the rest of one's life	16.67% 1
Consumer Situations; such as reading for menus, shopping, and filling out credit applications	0.00% 0
Working/ Job-Related: such as reading applications, and reading materials for jobs	16.67% 1
Home/Family Situations: such as helping children with homework and reading	16.67% 1
Social Situations: such as reading in front of others and sharing information with others	0.00% 0
Leisure/Recreational Situations: such as learning to read for a recreational pursuit and to read for pleasure	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 6	

Question 9:

How did you hear about this class (select all that apply)

Answered: 1 Skipped: 6



WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

My husband.

4/2/2019 7:25 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

home research

4/2/2019 7:16 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

neighbor

4/2/2019 6:46 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

I knew about it because my cousin has one.

2/27/2019 6:48 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

my GED teacher

2/27/2019 6:38 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DEGREE

Question 10:

How do you plan on using your GED once you complete the course

Answered: 6 Skipped: 1

RESPONSES (6) WORD CLOUD TAGS (0)

 Sentinel

Apply to selected ▼

Filter by tag ▼

Search response

Showing 6 responses

Going to college!!!!

4/2/2019 7:25 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

taking visual art

4/2/2019 7:16 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Continuing my education

4/2/2019 6:46 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Applying for technical school and starting my own business and learning how language arts work.

2/27/2019 6:48 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

finding a better job to better my living situations for my family and myself

2/27/2019 6:38 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Go to college to persue higher studies

2/27/2019 6:36 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Discussion

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Seven different individuals opened the survey; however, only six of them were able to complete the questionnaire in its entirety. These participants were of all ages, as is shown by all of the age groups were only selected one time, except in regards to the 65+ group (zero times) and the 45-55 age group (two times). This is significant because it shows that GED classes are for all age groups, and that anyone who is trying to earn an equivalency degree can have the opportunity to. The graph and comments for table two show that the majority of people in GED classes white caucasian, with Hispanics and then African Americans following behind. However, due to the small sample size, some races were not selected. If more people participated in the survey, it is possible that different races would have completed the questionnaire.

Questions three through five were all "comment box questions," allowing the participants to type an answer specific to them. Although, there are some essential things to note from all of the answers. Question three reflects the same central point as question one, showing the broad age range of participants in GED. The oldest individual started high school in 1979, and the youngest participant starting high school in 2014. As previously mentioned, this goes to show that GED classes are for anyone trying to further their education. Question four shows that five of the participants decided to sign up for a GED class for job-related reasons, which is supported by the responses to question 8 (which will be discussed later). Other participants wanted to go back to school to fulfill their dreams, with the rest trying to pursue higher learning at a university. The study also revealed multiple reasons as to why these individuals dropped out, ranging from going to a school whose credits were not valid, to going to high school in another country. Another answer as to why the participants didn't properly finish high school was

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because they needed a job. This goes to show that everyone has a different reason for not completing high school, and it is never a certainty that anyone will finish until they do.

The average number for "popularity levels" in Question 6 was about 50, which would categorize the average participant at an average level of popularity. However, 100% of the participants who answered question 7 said that their popularity had no influence on them not finishing high school. One of the comments shows that their friends didn't even try and get the student to stay in school because they were "losers." With this information, high schools can determine new, efficient ways to try to get as many students as possible to finish their high school careers on time.

As previously stated, the data shows that a majority of students in GED classes signed up for them because of professional and career advancement reasons, such as earning a promotion, job confidence (feeling more secure in your position and lowering your chance of getting fired), or listening to their boss. The second reason selected was escaping social stimulation, which includes avoiding a troubled relationship, overcoming the frustration of day-to-day living, and to share a common interest with someone. With this information, these classes can be advertised to try and notify individuals in similar situations about available GED classes, helping them reach their goals.

In terms of how to advertise the class, the primary way of communication was through friends and family. Only five participants selected an option available (the text, email, or phone call option). Four of the other respondents stated that they heard about the class through another person, such as a husband or a cousin. The last respondent said they discovered the course through their home research using a computer. It can be concluded that using technology is the

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best way to advertise the GED classes, as everyone who did not hear about the course from someone else discovered the course using today's technology.

The responses to the final question highlight another motivation that was not shown in the previous issues. A majority of the respondents responded to question 10 by saying that they would be trying to pursue a higher level of education. This could be another primary motivation for going back and earning a GED, and this does fit into the aspect of job-related reasons. By gaining a higher level of schooling, it is possible to get a better occupation then or earn a promotion. The other participants answered with job-related reasons, which matches the responses to the other questions.

Limitations

Throughout the research, there were two significant limitations that prevented the researcher from collecting more data. The first limitation was that the survey could only be sent to GED students in the area of Broward County, Florida. If the research were also to include students from other regions, then the researcher would be able to look at more students, increasing the statistical significance and validity of the data. The researcher could also then examine how the location of the student and classes possibly affected the results, and if where the participant lives change their motivations and how they heard of the classes.

Another limitation the researcher faced was the lack of available participants. The only way the researcher was able to send the surveys was through an administrator that also teaches at an Adult Education Course. However, said administrator was unable to pass on the study to individual participants, due to specific regulations, scheduling conflicts, and miscommunications, only 7 participants were able to access the survey.

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Even though is an easier, more convenient way to gather information, there are still some flaws. Some data experts estimate that 50 percent of give at least one dishonest answer on surveys (mTAB, 2018). This is because people can become defensive when asked about certain topics, which leads to them not being entirely truthful.

Solutions

To solve the first limitation, the researcher would need access to other participants, which just was not accessible. The researcher would either have to travel to a GED class in another area or be able to communicate with a worker at another level in a different city. The solution to the second limitation would be to give out the survey as soon as possible; that way there's more time before or after any inconveniences occur. This limitation could also be solved if the researcher was able to personally send the links to the willing participants, rather than relying on a third party. This would minimize the chances of any miscommunications occurring.

To give the chance for participants to answer the survey with more honesty, the survey was made anonymous. This was to provide a sense of security for the GED student, which will lead to more honesty on the survey.

Conclusion/Implications

The researcher's hypothesis was correct; the main motivation for people registering to take the GED test was professional and career related reasons, with social reasons being the second highest motivation.

With this in mind, GED classes can be advertised as a way to improve someone's career; if that someone has not earned their degree. It was also shown that although the best way these classes are advertised is through word-of-mouth from family or friends, technology is still an

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efficient way to share information about the GED. According to the most recent data, about 90% of people in North America have some form of internet access (Internet World Stats, n.d.). By using the internet as a way to advertise the classes, (instead of newspapers and magazines, which are becoming a dying industry), more people will then sign up for these classes. Another possibility is that the individual might hear about the GEd service online, and then a friend or family member about it.

The professional advancement motivation is also related to the hardships that come with not having a diploma. There are millions of other Americans who are going through the same struggles as Buchanan. Most of them are just trying to find a job and have a comfortable life. However, this is incredibly difficult without the right education. GED classes offer a path to these people, who are trying to enter the workforce right away, or to even go to college to get an even better job

Future research should be done to get a deeper understanding of the different motivation. Although this research provides a deep insight this topic, there is still more information that can be uncovered. For example, as mentioned in the limitations, location could have some influence over the results. Every area has a different culture, which in turn could cause a different mindset in different area. So, it is important that different areas are surveyed, to see how different locations hear about the classes, and what is the most efficient way to inform the general area.

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AP[®] RESEARCH 2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

Academic Paper

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Sample: F

Score: 3

This paper scored a 3. The focus narrows and becomes clear on page 5: “The purpose of this research is to investigate the reasons and motivations for adults to want to obtain an adult high school diploma, also known as a GED, and to gather data as to why students do not complete high school in the first place.” The paper states a hypothesis about primary motivations for getting a GED. The method — survey research — is reasonably replicable, which is the reason why the paper did not earn a score of 2.

The response makes clear the source of the data (page 7), the questions asked (pages 8–10), and the responses from the survey (pages 11–20). The questions appear to be taken from a study conducted by Chase in 1987. The paper engages with a few credible sources. The paper comes to a conclusion on the basis of the data collected; however, this conclusion (page 23: “The researcher’s hypothesis was correct; the main motivation for people registering to take the GED test was professional and career related reasons, with social reasons being the second highest motivation.”) is broad and not supported by sufficient evidence (seven people in a GED class). For this reason, the paper did not earn a score of 4.