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Graduate School of Technology Management

consulta panel
your survey

Postgraduate research experience

The purpose of this questionnaire is to ascertain as reliably as possible how persons who recently obtained master's or doctoral degrees evaluate their research training and the outcomes of their research.

The items in this questionnaire probe the shared as well as unique perceptions of graduates that have successfully completed a dissertation/thesis since 2006. **Your** responses to the items in this questionnaire are important to us.

We have commissioned ConsultaPanel, an independent and accredited Panel- and Community Research provider, to manage and conduct our internet fieldwork for our survey on your post-graduate research experience.

Please respond to all the items below as accurately as possible by selecting the response choice that best describes your experience.

Please return the completed questionnaire no later than 17 February 2011 by clicking on the **SUBMIT** button at the end of the questionnaire.

If you have any queries regarding your participation in this questionnaire, please contact Prof. Marais at **hc.marais@up.ac.za** or **marais.stnetwork@gmail.com** for more information.

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4%

Postgraduate research experience

<u>Academic information</u>

Please indicate your response to each of the following questions by selecting the appropriate option.

1. What is your highest qualification
- ○ Masters degree
- ○ Doctoral degree

<u>2. In which year was your degree awarded</u>
| (Click here to choose) ▾ |

3. Please indicate which one of the focus areas in the drop-down menu best describes your area of specialisation for the above degree.

Please select only one option
| (Click here to choose) ▾ |

4. Which university from the drop-down list awarded the above degree?

Please select the appropriate option

| (Click here to choose) ▾ |

5. Are you currently (2011) enrolled for further studies or do you intend to do so in the next year?

- ○ Yes, currently enrolled for further studies
- ○ Yes, intend to do so in the next year
- ○ No

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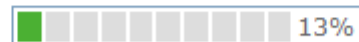
8%

Postgraduate research experience

Purpose of research

6. Please describe in your own words the primary purpose of research for a dissertation/thesis (not more than 100 characters please).

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13%

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Training in research methodology

7. Which do you think are the three most important reasons why persons undertake research:

From the list below please identify the **three** most important reasons in your view, the **most important** reason being **1**, the **second most important** one **2** and the **third most important** one being **3**.

Reason for undertaking research:

To solve a scientific problem | (Click here to choose) ▼

To solve a practical problem | (Click here to choose) ▼

To inform decision making | (Click here to choose) ▼

To meet a requirement for a postgraduate degree | (Click here to choose) ▼

To fulfil a requirement of a job description | (Click here to choose) ▼

To develop new solutions to emerging challenges | (Click here to choose) ▼

To produce new knowledge | (Click here to choose) ▼

To ensure promotion | (Click here to choose) ▼

Curiosity | (Click here to choose) ▼

To help predict the future | (Click here to choose) ▼

As a form of quality control | (Click here to choose) ▼

To test a new approach, procedure, or solution | (Click here to choose) ▼

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■■■■■■■■■■ 17%

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8. Did your exposure to research methodology for your degree, in other words including doing research for your %[1. What is your highest qualification]Q1LBL% dissertation/thesis, prepare you to do independent research on your own **after** graduation?

- ⊙ 5 Absolutely yes
- ⊙ 4 To an extent
- ⊙ 3 Not sure
- ⊙ 2 Hardly
- ⊙ 1 Absolutely not

9. Please elaborate on the rating you gave above (please restrict your response to a maximum of 100 characters).

Alternatively please indicate N/A if you have no comment.

10. Did the curriculum of your most recent %[1. What is your highest qualification]Q1LBL% include a formal course (e.g. lectures) in research methodology?
- ⊙ Yes
- ⊙ No
- ⊙ Unsure

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21%

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11. Please describe in your own words the most beneficial aspects of the course (please restrict your response to a maximum of 100 characters).

Alternatively please indicate N/A if you have no comment.

12. Please describe in your own words the most negative elements of the course (please restrict your response to a maximum of 100 characters).

Alternatively please indicate N/A if you have no comment.

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26%

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Postgraduate research experience

13. Please select the statement which best describes your rating of the course in research methodology.

- Helped me in one or two parts of my research project
- Not of any practically value in doing research for my dissertation/thesis
- Would not have been possible to undertake the research otherwise
- Helped me in understanding what research was about
- Excellent preparation for all components of my research

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■■■□□□□□□□ 30%

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14. Has your training in research methodology at any stage showed you how the information in your dissertation/thesis can be converted into any of the following outcomes?

Outcome of a dissertation/thesis refers to any use that has been made of information, such as literature survey, findings and recommendations, in your dissertation/thesis after its completion.

Indicate Yes / No to each of the below outcomes.

	Yes	No
Publication of an academic article, chapter, or book or presentation of a paper at a conference	○	○
Technology, engineering of a prototype, improvement of a technical design	○	○
Application of research results to the solution of practical problems (e.g. job related, environmental, social or economic)	○	○
Utilisation of research findings to influence policy (at national, local or institutional levels)	○	○
Development of future scenarios	○	○
Influencing of decision makers	○	○
Sensitization to the potential economic value of research	○	○
The course did not address any steps beyond finishing the dissertation	○	○

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███████████ 34%

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15. Which one of the following statements best describes your research skills **before** you enrolled for your %[1. What is your highest qualification]Q1LBL% course?

- I had already undertaken one or more research projects on my own
- I had already contributed to one or two research projects
- My research skills were extremely limited
- I did not have any research skills at all

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■■■■ 39%

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Postgraduate research experience

Own research project

16. What was the primary stimulus for the research topic of your dissertation/thesis?

Select the appropriate option; (**you may choose more than one option**)

- ☐ Advice by lecturer /academic supervisor
- ☐ Something I recalled from a lecture
- ☐ Something I read in an academic textbook or journal
- ☐ Suggestion by a fellow student, friend, or family member
- ☐ Mass media (e.g. TV, Internet, magazine, newspaper, etc.)
- ☐ Problem that was encountered in my work
- ☐ Formed a sub-project of a comprehensive research programme
- ☐ A problem I experienced in the past

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▓▓▓▓▓░░░░░░ 43%

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17. Did your dissertation/thesis research address a specific problem in your job situation?

○ Yes, directly
○ Yes, indirectly
○ No

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47 %

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18. Was your dissertation/thesis concluded with a recommendation(s) addressing a specific problem in your work environment?

- Yes extensively
- Yes in part
- No

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19. Please describe as briefly as possible (less than 200 characters) the essence of your recommendation(s).

Alternatively please indicate N/A if you have no comment.

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20. Did your recommendations include implementation plans/schedules, in other words, specific plans and steps to follow in the implementation of the recommendations?

○ Yes
○ No
○ NA; no recommendations

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▮▮▮▮▮▮▯▯▯▯ 60%

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21. Were the recommendations in your dissertation/thesis implemented in any way by your employer (profession / stakeholder / sector)?

- ⊙ Fully
- ⊙ Partially
- ⊙ Not yet, but plan to do so
- ⊙ No and there are no intentions to do so
- ⊙ N/A

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████████ 65%

Postgraduate research experience

22. Please explain the reason(s) that the recommendations have not / not yet been implemented in less than 200 characters.

Alternatively please indicate N/A if you have no comment.

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69%

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23. What form did the implementation of recommendations take?

- New procedure
- New approach
- New technology
- Once-off solution

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73%

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Postgraduate research experience

24. Have you disseminated any information from your dissertation/thesis, since its completion?

Please select those modes of dissemination, if any, that you have utilised since obtaining your %[1. What is your highest qualification] Q1LBL%

Indicate Yes / No to each of the following outcomes

	Yes	No
Published a popular article in, e.g., a newspaper	○	○
Published an article(s) in a professional/academic journal	○	○
Published some of the information in a book or chapter of a book	○	○
Delivered a paper at a professional/academic conference	○	○
Made a presentation at an informal in-house and/or work-related meeting	○	○
Sent copies of the dissertation/thesis to interest group/individuals	○	○
Incorporated some of the findings and/or implication in my work procedures	○	○
Shared some of my dissertation findings informally with colleagues	○	○
No, I have not (yet) disseminated any dissertation information after graduation	○	○

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25. Please complete the following statement by selecting the most appropriate phrase;

"After my graduation ...

- ⊙ I started my own business
- ⊙ I independently started a major project at the company that employed me
- ⊙ I did both
- ⊙ I did none of the above

26. What have been the outcomes of your dissertation/thesis?

"Outcome" of a dissertation/thesis refers to any use that has been made of information (e.g. findings and recommendations) in your dissertation/thesis after its completion.

Please select the appropriate outcomes you can confidently attribute to information from your dissertation; **you may select more than one option**.

- ☐ Establishment of a business (SME or larger)
- ☐ Application of research results to the solution of practical job-related problems
- ☐ Utilisation of research findings to influence policy (at national, local or institutional levels)
- ☐ Solution of environmental, social or economic problems
- ☐ Development of future scenarios
- ☐ Influencing of decision makers
- ☐ Technology (product, process or other forms)
- ☐ Engineering of a prototype
- ☐ Filing for a patent
- ☐ Improvement of technical designs
- ☐ Publication of an academic article
- ☐ Presentation of a paper at a conference

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███████ 82%

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27. Did you receive any explicit recognition for your dissertation/thesis/contribution from your employer (or market / profession / stakeholder / sector) after the %[1. What is your highest qualification]Q1LBL% had been awarded

You may select more than one option

☐ Salary increase
☐ Promotion
☐ Letter of acknowledgement
☐ Award (e.g. special bonus)
☐ No acknowledgement to date

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86%

Postgraduate research experience

Professional information

28. In which of the following sectors are you currently employed?

Please select the appropriate option
- Agriculture, forestry and fisheries
- Mining and quarrying
- Manufacturing
- Information technology and telecommunications
- Financial intermediation, insurance, real estate, business services
- Energy (incl. nuclear, electricity, gas and water)
- Construction
- Wholesale and retail trade
- Transport
- Communication (e.g. radio, TV, printed media)
- Education
- Medical services
- Other cultural and social services
- Other, please specify: [_____]

29. What is your current position in your organisation?

(Not more than 20 characters, please)

30. How long have you now been employed in your current position?
- Less than 1 yr
- 1-5 years
- More than 5 yrs

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Additional comments

31. Would you be willing to participate in future research undertaken by the Graduate School of Technology Management of the University of Pretoria?

○ Yes
○ No

32. We would appreciate further comments from you on research in general or on your particular experience in undertaking research for your dissertation/thesis; please try to restrict your response to not more than 300 characters.

Alternatively please indicate N/A if you have no comment.

33. Would you be willing to become a member of ConsultaPanel and contribute to other research studies in future?

○ Yes
○ No

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Thank you for your participation in this survey.

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