
Enhancing a Survey Instrument re Indian Students for IT field

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Abstract

The NZ learning experience of overseas students is important. Wintec participated in international survey of Indian students and their tutors, using SurveyMonkey. This poster explores possible enhancements for specifics of the IT study environment.

Keywords

International students, Teaching and Learning, Surveying

Overview of survey

The survey was developed as generic instrument regardless of academic discipline, collecting data from students and their tutors. It is based on literature study of learning and teaching with specific consideration of Indian student groups. Several NZ ITPs participated in the March-April 2011 survey.

STUDENT survey screens

India study: Level of study completed (+text), Main area of study (+text)

Current study: Country, Area (+text), Level (+text)

Demographics: Age, Gender, Indian state (+text)

Study here: Why (+text), Arrival (text), Period (+text)

Study habits: India hours study outside class (text), Here hours study outside class (text), How studies in India outside class (text), India teamwork type, India class hours (text)

Preparation: How prepare before coming here (text), Would more preparation help (+text)

Results & Study: Feel about results (text), Most

difficult aspects (text); What helps achievement (+text), What prevent achievement (+text)

Expectations & Perceptions: Different here (text), Where learn best (+text), Preferred method India and here (text); Groupwork with Indians or other (+text); Prefer groups or individually

Your studies: Assessments fair (+text), Things distracting from study (text), English proficiency (+text), Delivery spectrum: Same/different Lesson Contents (text), Teaching style (text), Material/Resources (text), Academic Support (text), Non-Academic support (text)

TUTORS survey screens

Background: Number of students taught (text), General subject areas(+text), Levels of courses (+text), Years experience (text)

Preparation & Achievement: Students properly prepared (text), Indian vs other INT's and domestics (+text), Indian students achieve well (text)

Challenges & Description: Major challenges to teach (text), Major challenges for students (text), Genders performance (+text), How can they improve (text), Adjectives describing students (text)

Learning influences: Spend enough hours studying, Major influences re achievement (+text), Where they learn most (+text), Groupwork with Indian peers or other

Needs & Additional requirements: Issue when marking/assessing (+text), English proficiency (+text), Academic needs prior to and after arrival (+text), Other comments (text)

Critical analysis and suggestions

Topics covered are relevant for IT learning environment, response levels were reasonable (60%+) and students were not negative about the survey. Additional critical issues for IT learning environment include:

- (1) Our Indian students want industry experience and post-graduate courses for new visa requirements
- (2) Students most of day and intensely use IT facilities, also without substantial IT facilities at home
- (3) IT Programming courses are generally more challenging with higher failure than other IT courses
- (4) Industry requires more "soft"-skills, but that learning is also less satisfying and more challenging
- (5) IT degree studies usually include a capstone project of 450 hours of independent work, which is huge challenge for non-English speaking students
- (6) Peer comparisons must accommodate differences: Our IT course all hold overseas degrees (mostly in IT). are advanced (only NQF 7) and 95% Indian students.

Moving forward

First, review findings from the survey, also comparing with local School of Business and other institutions. Then identify action in the School strengthening current liaison roles and review all with IT students. Finally consider enhancing the instrument for IT-specific surveying using the analysis above and other feedback.

References

Potgieter, C., & Ferguson, B. (2009) *Managing international students attendance with consideration of completion and satisfaction.* (NACCQ)

Potgieter, C., & Ferguson, B. (2009) *Analysis of completion and retention of a graduate diploma.* (NZABE)

SurveyMonkey solution by University of Herdforshire, UK. 