

TAKE-HOME EXAM AS THE FORM OF UNSUPERVISED TESTING IN THE REMOTE TEACHING CONTEXT

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Introduction

In the context of distance education, the issue of increasing relevance is student assessment, particularly a final evaluation on student progress. One of such kind of options is a take home exam. This article intends to present definitions, pros and cons, forms, tips, and examples of application of take-home exam.

Definitions

First, let's review *definitions* of this form of final control.

According to the site of the University of Melbourne, "take-home exams are assessments completed by yourself at home with access to all your subject notes, texts and resources" [1].

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching of the Ryerson University makes an accent that "open book exams don't have the same emphasis on memorization, questions can move up Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, and ask students to analyze, evaluate, or synthesize knowledge, rather than just remember it" [2].

"A Guide for Academics" of the Centre for Teaching and Learning of the University of Newcastle defines it as "an assessment method designed in a way that allows students to refer to either class notes and summaries or a "memory aid", textbooks, or other approved material while answering questions" [3].

The **Public Service Commission of Canada designates take-home exam is a test** "is taken in an unsupervised environment, usually with access to reference texts and materials" [4].

As for time limit, it determines by complexity (e.g. a day or more) [1] and “is given to candidates to complete on their own time” [4]. Moreover, students may be “provided with the exam questions prior to sitting the formal exam or are to complete as a ‘take-home’ exam” [3].

Pros and Cons of the Option

To sum up, the following *advantages* may be indicated:

- freedom and flexibility in constructing realistic tasks,
- reducing operational costs,
- de-emphasizing memorization,
- developing new learning strategies (abilities to reason, organize and synthesize, higher-order critical thinking skills, information retrieval skills),
- incorporating more information to prepare,
- including multi-step problems,
- giving possibilities to continue or extend work done in other tasks [2, 4].

Among *disadvantages* are:

- underestimating complexity of tasks,
- difficulties in scoring,
- increasing student’s and instructor’s workload,
- availability of the reference material,
- possibilities for unauthorized consultation, plagiarism and access to unauthorized sources [2, 4].

Forms

The forms are computer-scored, subjectively scored, on-line or paper and pencil [4].

As usual, it may be in the form of essay or constructed response questions (extended response (essay) or restricted response (short answer, problem sets) [4]. But several types of questions appropriate for closed book exam are not acceptable here (questions that ask for definitions, descriptions, or lists of characteristics, etc.) [2].

As for other forms, students may be required to provide summaries, portfolios, posters, mental maps, diagrams, tables, fish bone diagrams, proposals, letters, programs, reports, presentations, projects.

The goal of tasks is to solve a problem, analyze and interpret information/problem, critically analyze a case or scenario [2].

Tips for Students

- **To read** carefully exam instructions,
- to realize how long you should take to work,
- to define authorized sources,
- to define formatting type [5].

Tips for Instructors

- To define the purpose of task,
- to formulate clearly,
- to provide a context or problem/situation.
- to use directive verbs (agree/disagree, analyze, compare/contrast, etc.),
- to indicate the length of responses and format,
- to indicate a time limit [4].

Examples

Examples are provided from practice of teaching of course titled “Migration and Process of Globalization” and designed for the students of the first year of learning (spring semester of 2019-2020 academic year). Tasks for both mid-term and final control were provided in the form of open take-home exam.

The task for mid-term was to make a fish bone diagram on determinants of international migration in the selected country from the certain region (Europe – Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, Northern Europe; Asia – Western Asia, Eastern Asia, Southern Asia, Northern Asia, Middle East; America – Northern, Central, Southern; Africa – Northern Africa, Central Africa, sub-Saharan, Southern; Australia and Oceania). Students had to identify push and pull factors, to range them and provided facts (reasons of the first level, second level, etc.). One of the students’ papers is illustrated (Figure 1).

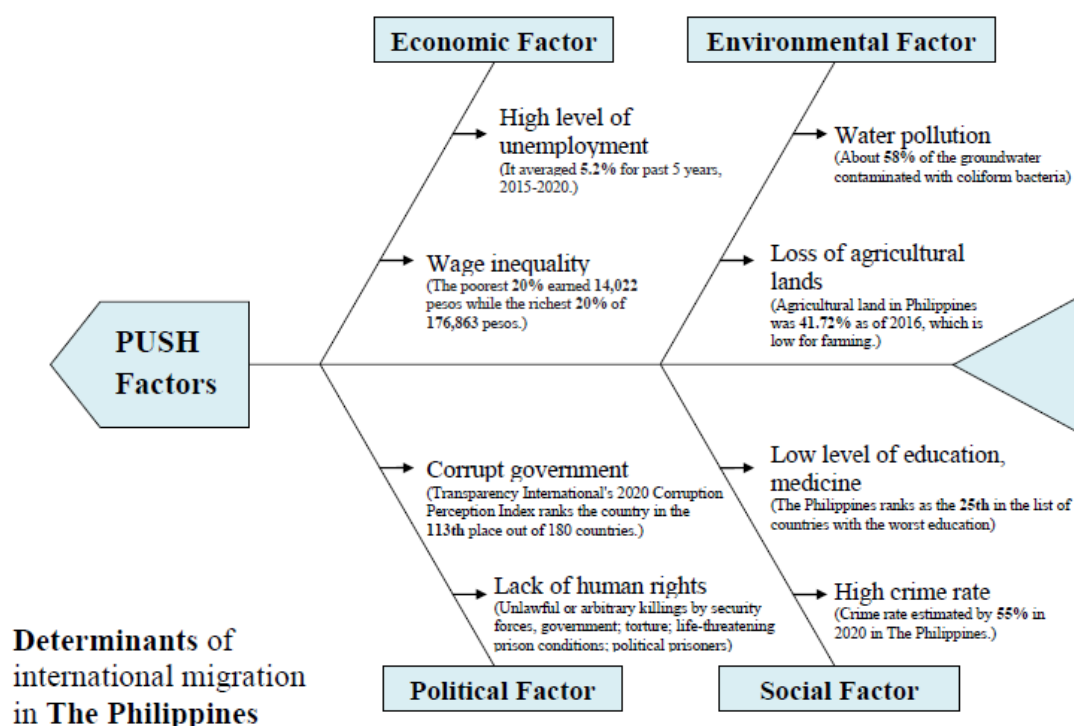
As for final control, the task was to read pages 17-31 and 129-134 in “Migration Profile Guide” [7]. These sections reveal the idea of migration profile and relationship between migration and economic and social development. Each student had to work on migration profile of the certain country (links were provided) and answer all the following questions related to their case:

- 1) Identify main trends of migration in the country,
- 2) Identify main migrant (immigrant and emigrant) characteristics in the country.
- 3) Does migration increased job opportunities in the country?
- 4) Does migration increased/decreased unemployment or underdevelopment?
- 5) Do remittances increased/decreased incentives to develop the economy?

Students were required to provide references.

The exam was to be completed independently, without discussion with other students or individuals within or outside the class.

One of the students’ papers is presented (Figure 2).





Done by: *Abylaikhan Manatov IR-1*

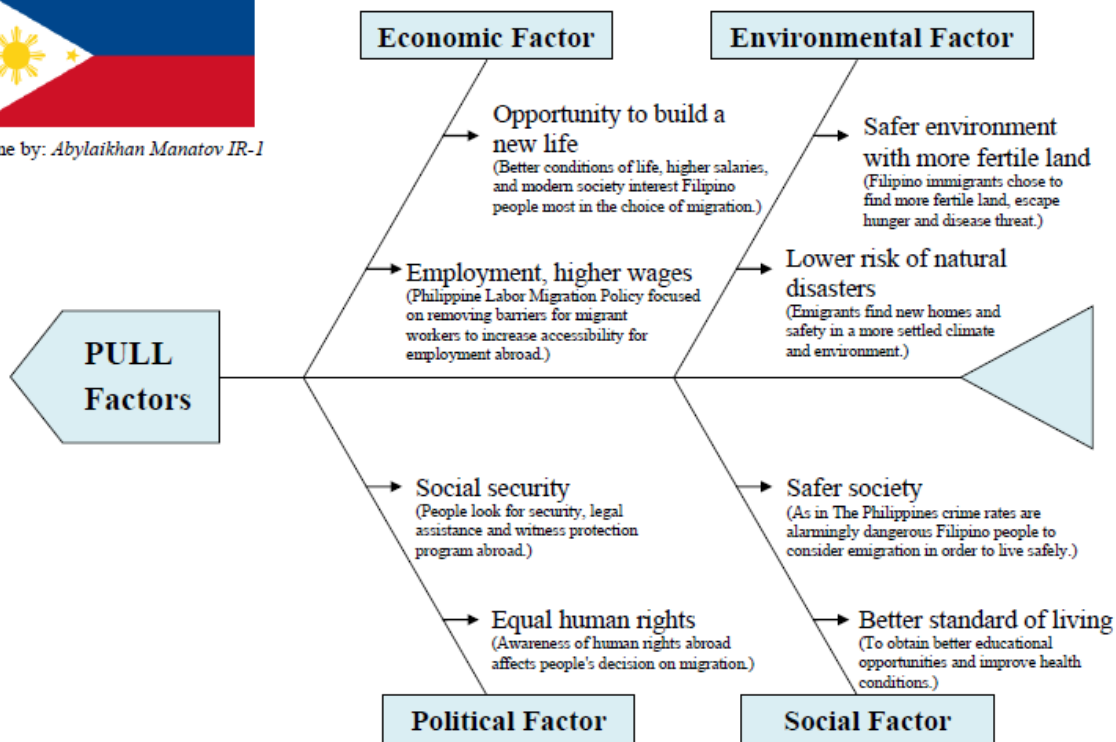
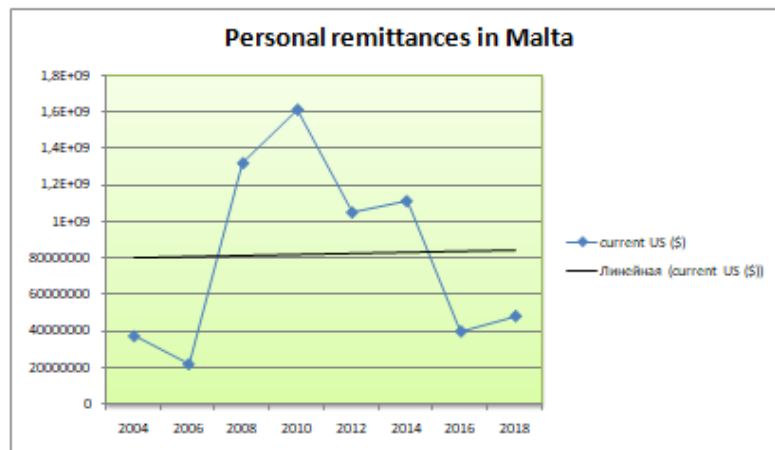


Figure 1 – Fish Bone Diagram on Determinants of International Migration

5. Do remittances increased/decreased incentives to develop the economy?

People resident but not domiciled in Malta are subject to tax in Malta on a remittance basis. This means that they are subject to tax in Malta only on foreign income received in Malta and not on foreign source income not remitted to Malta or on capital gains arising outside. Non-domiciled foreign holders of a PR permit in Malta are taxable on a remittance basis only on income and not foreign source capital remitted to Malta and on income and capital gains arising in Malta.



The value for Personal remittances, paid (current US\$) in Malta was \$485,165,500 as of 2018. As the graph below shows, over the past 47 years this indicator reached a maximum value of \$1,861,274,000 in 2009 and a minimum value of \$1,852,000 in 1993.

Positive: Remittances and extra income from migration may increase propensity and/ or ability to consume and produce, thus potentially increasing overall output. Migration may promote "capitalist" economic activity (e.g. move from subsistence to cash economy) or urbanization. Negative: Support from migrants abroad may reduce incentive to engage in economic activity or invest productively. Migration may affect a government's incentives to develop the domestic economy.

Figure 2 – Migration Profile of the Country

Conclusion

Take-home exam provides opportunities for development of multiple skills on information processing, reasoning and inference, critical thinking, online learning, self-learning, time-management, and creativity.

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