



# Show-Me

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## Repeat GED® Tests Examinees: Who Persists and Who Passes?

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1

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## » Presentation outline

- Research rationale
- Research purposes and questions
- Research methods
- Research results
- Discussions



## » Research rationale

- More than 700,00 adults without a high school diploma take the GED Tests each year.
- Not everyone passes the GED Tests on his/her first try.
- Examinees who could not pass the GED Tests on their first attempt may need the most help.
- Few studies examined repeat GED examinees.



## » Research purposes

- Provide an accurate description of characteristics and testing histories of repeat GED Tests examinees.
- Investigate individual characteristics and testing center policies in relation to retesting behavior and performance.



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## » Research questions I

1. What proportion of GED Tests candidates was not successful on their first attempt to pass the GED Tests? Of those, what percent made at least one more attempt to pass the GED Tests and eventually succeeded?
2. What proportion of repeat examinees did not pass each of the five subject areas on their first attempt? How many times did they retest in each subject area?



## » Research questions II

- 3. How did the retesting and passing rate differ by GED Tests examinees' social and demographic characteristics?
- 4. More broadly, what were the social and demographic characteristics of repeat test-takers, including age, gender, ethnicity, highest grade level completed, and reasons for testing?



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## » Research questions III

- 5. Which first-time test-takers who did not pass were likely to retest? what individual and test-center factors predicted who would retest?
- 6. Which examinees who retested were likely to pass the tests? What individual and test-center factors predicted who would pass?



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## » Research method

- Data source
  - Data collected by GED Testing Service
  - Including test-takers' demographic, academic, and social characteristics
  - Testing center policies



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## » Testing center policies

- Testing fee
- Required fee for retesting
- Test battery completion required in one day
- Test battery completion allowed in one day
- Test battery completion required in two sessions
- Allowing scheduling one test at a time
- Days waiting before retesting



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## » Research method

- Sample
  - January 2004- December 2006 cohort
  - January 2005- December 2007 cohort
  - January 2006- December 2008 cohort



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» **Table 1. First-Time Test-Takers, by First-Attempt Pass Status**

Cohort	First-Time Test-Takers N	Passed on First Attempt		Did Not Pass on First Attempt	
		N	%	N	%
2004	564,019	334,428	59.29	193,268	34.27
2005	557,208	339,836	60.99	179,721	32.25
2006	549,796	307,957	56.01	199,648	36.31



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## Research results

- Who retested and did not retest among GED Tests candidates who did not pass on the first attempt?



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**Table 2. Retesting and Non-retesting Candidates Among Those Who Did Not Pass on the First Attempt**

Cohort	Did Not Pass on First Attempt	Retested		Did Not Retest	
		N	%	N	%
2004	193,268	102,515	53.04	90,753	46.96
2005	179,721	89,560	49.83	90,161	50.17
2006	199,648	96,475	48.32	103,173	51.68



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## Resting in subject areas

- How many subject areas did repeat examinees retest?
- What was the number of retests for each subject area?



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**Table 3. Number of Subject Areas in Which Repeat Examinees Retested: 2006 Cohort**

Total Number of Subject Areas	N	%
1	50,989	52.85
2	20,175	20.91
3	10,008	10.37
4	5,860	6.07
5	9,443	9.79



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**Table 4. Frequency of Repeat Examinees, by Number of Retests in Five Content Areas: 2006 Cohort**

Times Testing	Language Arts, Writing		Social Studies		Science		Language Arts, Reading		Mathematics	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2	39,375	82.88	27,815	83.01	21,414	84.1	27,420	83.73	40,733	77.57
3	6,815	14.34	4,797	14.32	3,332	13.09	4,441	13.56	9,169	17.46
4	1,018	2.14	698	2.08	541	2.12	684	2.09	1,758	3.35
5	219	0.46	160	0.48	125	0.49	152	0.46	579	1.1
6	72	0.15	27	0.08	35	0.14	39	0.12	189	0.36
7	9	0.02	11	0.03	14	0.05	6	0.02	63	0.12
8	3	0.01	1	0.00	2	0.01	5	0.02	12	0.02
9									3	0.01
<b>Total</b>	47,511	49.25	33,509	34.73	25,463	26.39	27,420	28.42	52,508	54.43



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## Retesting rates by demographic variables

- GED Tests candidates between 16 and 18 years old had the highest retesting rate.
- Forty-nine percent of unsuccessful first-time female test-takers retested, which was lower than those of male test-takers.
- African American test-takers had the lowest retesting rate (42%), compared to Hispanic (48%) and white (50%) candidates.



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## » Retesting rates

- Test-takers whose highest education level was lower than fifth grade level had the lowest retesting rate (44%).
- Test-takers who took the OPT had a higher retesting rate (52%) compared to those who did not take the OPT (41%).



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## » Retesting rate and passing rate by testing center

- A retesting rate as low as 20% for some test centers, while others might have a retesting rate as high as 80%.



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## » Individual characteristics and retesting

- The likelihood of retesting for white test-takers who failed on their first attempt to pass the GED Tests was 26% higher than that of non-white test-takers.
- A GED test-takers who took the Official GED Practice Tests (OPT) had a 13% higher probability of retesting compared to those not taking the OPT.
- “Testing to enter a two-year college” had a significantly positive relationship with the likelihood of retesting.



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## » Testing center policies and retesting

- Testing fee, GED Tests completion required in one day, and allowing test-takers to schedule one test at a time significantly predicted a GED candidate's decision of whether to retest.
- Test centers with a requirement of completing the GED Tests within one day would have a 42% lower retesting rate compared with those test centers that did not require candidates to complete the GED Tests within one day.
- Allowing testing in one content area at a time would reduce the likelihood of retesting by 19%.



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