

## Graduate Students' Perceptions and Attitudes of Peer Assessment on Academic Writing

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### ABSTRACT

*The main objectives of this research are analyzed about the perceptions of graduate students in peer assessment of academic writing, the graduate students' attitudes towards peer assessment, also challenges and benefits on graduate students' writing in their practice of peer assessment. Thirty graduate students from different disciplines of Faculty of Educational Sciences at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University were enrolled to participate in this research. The current study adheres to the qualitative method, and its data collected via two questionnaires of perception and attitude toward peer assessment, and semi-structured interviews with the tenth graduate students selected voluntarily. Findings showed that the graduate students' perception and attitude towards peer assessment is slightly positive. In addition, the benefits of peer assessment are increased learning, transferable skills, authentic assessment, feedback skills, understanding standards, and peer assessment provided learning from others and team-group while the challenges of peer assessment are lacked time and cost needed, graduate students' motivation, and feedback skills.*

*Keywords: Peer Assessment, Academic Writing, Graduate Students*

### INTRODUCTION

Peer assessment is a way to provide feedback on peers' work, which intended to improve students' learning experience. The purpose of peer assessment helps students with each other to give feedback and assessment of others work (Wanner & Palmer, 2018). The process of giving constructive feedback involves the students' activity in understanding the standard of judging their work. Additionally, peer assessment can help the students to conceive an assessment process and promote their skill in assessing their works (Seifert & Felix, 2019). Peer assessment is a technique of assessment by asking students to assess each other related to a lesson. The benefits of peer assessment are improving learning outcomes, increasing collaborative learning through peer feedback, students can help each other in the process of understanding material, and students can comment on the performance of their friends. Hence, peer assessment is helpful to improve students' writing ability because they can express their ideas about their friends' work.

In this article, peer assessment related to students' writing improvement. That is to say, writing is a crucial part of language learning, especially in the graduate program. It becomes an ability that should be mastered by graduate students. Through writing, they can share

their ideas and thoughts critically. For instance, they should write academic writing, such as a published journal article (Arsyad & Adila, 2018). In addition, their writing should be assessed before they publish it to any English journals. In assessing writing, a proper assessment is conducting a peer assessment of a published-journal article to make the graduate students' research article writing will be apparent, readable, and acceptable (Bagci Ayranci & Mete, 2017). Therefore, students in the graduate program will know how to prepare their academic writing task as well because it makes the students will be aware of implementing peer assessment appropriately.

Through peer assessment, graduate students will obtain purposeful writing because they get constructive feedback from their peers. In identifying graduate students' work, peers can work together while revising the stages of the writing process (Barrett & Wright, 2017). These peers can help students in learning parts of their writing that are not clear (Yu & Hu, 2017), find which elements are considered attractive (Xu & Yu, 2018), and get some suggestions for adding other things (Yang, 2018). Moreover, peer assessment in writing will guide graduate students to revise their writing preferable (Lyman & Keyes, 2019). Therefore, peer assessment of writing is still very interesting to discuss. That is to say, it is still challenging to conduct a research because some studies seem to indicate that the focus on the study has been primarily centered on the grading peer assessment in writing and it still limited on the perception and attitude in higher education. Hence, we would like to conduct this research on graduate students.

Related to the topic, some researchers have been conducted the research qualitatively and quantitatively. One of them showed that students are able to assess their peer learning outcomes accurately and consistently, which is oriented towards a formative assessment of the components of group work process (Sridharan, Tai, & Boud, 2019). However, the findings proposed to the bias that compilation colleagues have significant peer score contributing to the final score. In addition, the students are hesitated to be honest in assessing their peers when they realize that their behavior can impact on other students, and they will be punished for those who do not contribute. Then, the results of this quantitative and qualitative research are interesting to follow up with qualitative research only to see how the graduate students' perspective in peer assessment.

Besides implementing peer assessment, there is a quantitative study which examined the effect of peer assessment training as a catalyst for increasing student assessment knowledge and the ability to effectively evaluate the task of writing reflective journals when using Expertiza's online peer assessment tool. The result of the study showed that there was no significant increase observed in the knowledge of student assessment when participating in peer assessment training (Hoffman, 2019). It also revealed that after controlling for existing writing skills (comparison of matched participant samples), students participating in peer assessment rated reflective writing assignments significantly lower than the assessment assessed by instructors from students who were not given peer assessment participation. Hence, the results of this quantitative study are still appealing to discuss by implementing a qualitative method to know the perspective of graduate students' in writing.

Regarding to the study of peer assessment training of reflective writing, another qualitative research has been conducted on peer assessment of writing. The research involves twenty-five Chinese English writing tutors (10 men and 15 women) from five colleges and universities in two large cities in southern China. The study examined about exploring perceptions of English writing tutors' of the suitability in peer assessment for tertiary EFL writing instruction in China. Based on the interview data

shows limited tutors' knowledge about peer assessment and unanimous hesitation in using it because of inadequate instruction and training in peer assessment itself (Zhao, 2018). Also, the finding relates to the differences in peer assessment with the exam-oriented education system, students' low English language proficiency and learning motivation, and peer assessment conflicts based on the teacher-centered learning culture. Different from the previous study, this study attempts to identify the perceptions and attitudes in peer assessment on academic writing assignment among graduate students.

Being informed with the previous research, we hypothesize that graduate students will be aware of peer assessment, which relies on their own perceptions, attitudes, challenges, and benefits in implementing peer assessment. It is crucial to be addressed because they can support their academic writing project in-depth and being critical such as, they have an open-minded to be evaluated by others (Balu et al., 2018) and they will have a greater understanding through peer assessment (To & Panadero, 2019). That said, the considerable literature of peer assessment should be mastered by graduate students to foster lifelong learning and to implement peer assessment in academic writing.

In line with these ideas, this article attempts to address the graduate students' perceptions and attitudes on peer assessment of writing. Our study targets at Year 2 students because academic writing challenge will be possessed in this year, and they are almost writing an academic project. We try to explore how peers could inform the process in conducting peer assessment and what kind of challenges and benefits associated with peer assessment when implementing the process of it by triangulating data from a questionnaire of graduate students' perception and attitude, and students' interviews about perception in peer assessment activity. The significance of this article lies on finding out the perceptions of graduate students in peer assessment of academic writing, the graduate students' attitudes toward peer assessment, the challenges, and benefits on graduate students' writing in their practice of peer assessment.

## METHODS

We conducted qualitative research using two questionnaires on perceptions and attitudes of peer assessment in academic writing, and semi-structured interviews to collect in-depth data on the practice of peer-assessment activity actually carried out by graduate students.

### Participants

Thirty graduate students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University which purposefully selected were enrolled to participate in our research project. The total of 30 students participated in the research wherein they are studying in the second year of a graduate program. Of the 30, only 9 were male. About two-thirds were aged 22-42 years. The profile of the participants is displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Demographics of the Participants**

Demographics of the Participants		
	Frequency	
Gender		
Male	9	30%

Female	21	70%
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
21-25	15	50%
26-30	7	23.3%
31-35	4	13.3%
36-40	1	3.3%
41-45	3	10%
<b>Doing Peer Assessment in Graduate Class</b>		
Ever	23	76.7%
Never	7	23.3%
<b>Doing Peer Assessment (in a month)</b>		
1-2 times	22	73.3%
3-4 times	4	13.3%
More than 4 times	4	13.3%

### Data collection

This research primarily adheres to qualitative research, therefore, the collection of the data can be obtained from different methods. In order to accomplish the objectives of this research, the primary methods used were questionnaires of perceptions and attitudes of peer assessment in academic writing, and semi-structured interviews of perceptions about peer assessment. Also, we provided two questionnaires (perception and attitude) toward peer assessment, and semi-structured interviews were in *Bahasa* (Indonesian Language) because some of the participants were not from the graduate program of English Education. Yet, they were from Management Education, Arabic Education, and Islamic Education.

### Assessing perceptions about peer assessment

We adapted questionnaire items created by Lee & Norbaizura (2016). The consideration of using 16 items is based on the findings related to concerns of graduate students about peer assessments in the literature review. For these questionnaire items, we used a five-point Likert scale in the questionnaire in ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The questionnaire was sent by social media tool (WhatsApp Application) to 30 department members in the graduate program of faculty of educational sciences Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University. A total of 30 valid responses were obtained in three weeks.

### Examining attitudes towards peer assessment

In examining graduate students' attitudes towards peer assessment, a

questionnaire was distributed at the end of the semester. This questionnaire was originally created by McGarr and Clifford (2013) and used to assess graduate students' attitudes towards peer assessment. Their questionnaire consisted of 16 Likert items. We adopted 16 Likert items that fitted peer assessment format in the current research. The scale is used in this research was in a 5-point format, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Thirty graduate students completed the questionnaire online through *Google Form*.

### **Semi-structured interviews**

For the sake of the current research, we conducted face-to-face interviews with graduate students. A total of 10 graduate students volunteered to talk about their perceptions of peer assessment in the academic writing assignment. They come from four departments at the university – English Education (3), Management Education (3), Arabic Education (2), and Islamic Education (2). The people interviewed included five women and five men, with estimated ages ranging from 23 to 35. Each interview lasted approximately 15 minutes.

The interview questions with ten graduate students were carefully constructed and reviewed on the basis of the research objectives. The interviews were recorded in the smartphone by the side of note-taking. The interviews were recorded then precisely transcribed based on the exact words and opinions of the participants. In semi-structured interviews, the participants provided further information and a comprehensive description of their feelings, opinion, experiences, etc.

With semi-structured interviews, we still have a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. However, with the semi-structured interview, it is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order wherein the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewees expand their ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researchers. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewees elaborating points of interest (Denscombe, 2014).

In this way, the interviewees' verbal and non-verbal communications were observed. This includes ten graduate students facial expressions, gestures, voice level, hand movements, etc. Right after the interview, the researchers jotted down the notes about the setting, duration of time, and how the interviews went on. These notes helped the interviewers very much to write clear summaries of the current educational situation.

### **Data analysis**

This research adopted a qualitative design for data analysis. To answer the three research questions, the descriptive analysis of the perception and attitude questionnaires, and also semi structured interviews were conducted.

## **RESULTS ANF DISCUSSION**

### **Graduate students' perceptions on peer assessments**

There are 10 items to examine graduate students' perception about peer assessment which consisted of a 5-point Likert scale. Table 2 shows the frequencies for each item. Based on the questionnaire that we have received, graduate students were have slightly positive perception on practicing peer assessment in academic writing class. About 20 (66.7%) graduate students were *neutral* in terms of *Item 10* and *Item 9*, which were their peers would not be as demanding as the instructor(s) in their assessment, and about 19 (63.3%) graduate students stated that they thought their

peers would be more subjective in their assessment (not following predetermined and representative criteria for the activity being assessed) than the instructor(s). In addition, 15 (50%) graduate students were *neutral*, they showed that they had the necessary skills to participate in a peer-assessment process (Item 1). About 11 (36.7%) graduate students were *neutral* and *agree*, they stated that peer assessment means a lot responsibility for them as graduate students (Item 4).

Besides, 15 (50%) graduate students were *agree*, they believed that peer assessment would allow them to detect their own mistakes and learn from them (Item 7). About 14 (46.7%) graduate students were *strongly agree*, they asserted that peer assessment will make them prepare their work better (Item 5), and about 13 (43.3%) graduate students were *strongly agree*, they thought that peer assessment will force them to look for more and broader information on the contents of the module or activity (Item 6). Also, about 11 (36.7%) graduate students were *agree* and *strongly agree* about peer assessment will allow them to view learning critically and constructively (Item 8). However, some of the students were *strongly disagree*, they expressed that the instructor(s) made the tools and instruments available to them to perform effective peer assessment (Item 3), and the instructor(s) clearly explained the procedure for effective peer assessment (Item 2).

**Table 2**  
**Frequencies of Responses in the Perception Questionnaire**

No	Description	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I have the necessary skills to participate in a peer-assessment process.	3.3%	3.3%	50%	20%	23.3%
2	The instructor(s) clearly explained the procedure for effective peer assessment.	3.3%	3.3%	36.7%	30%	26.7%
3	The instructor(s) made the tools and instruments available to me to perform effective peer assessment.	6.7%	10%	26.7%	26.7%	30%
4	Peer assessment means a lot responsibility for us, as a graduate student.	0%	3.3%	36.7%	36.7%	23.3%
5	Peer assessment will make me prepare my work better.	0%	0%	23.3%	30%	46.7%
6	Peer assessment will force me to look for more and broader information on the contents of the module or activity.	0%	3.3%	23.3%	30%	43.3%
7	Peer assessment will allow me to detect my own mistakes and	0%	3.3%	16.7%	30%	50%

	learn from them.					
8	Peer assessment will allow me to view learning critically and constructively.	0%	3.3%	23.3%	36.7%	36.7%
9	I think my peers will be more subjective in their assessment (not following predetermined and representative criteria for the activity being assessed) than the instructor(s).	0%	16.7%	63.3%	10%	10%
10	My peers will not be as demanding as the instructor(s) in their assessment.	0%	3.3%	66.7%	23.3%	6.7%

### Attitudes towards peer assessment

Graduate students' attitudes towards peer assessment were assessed using a questionnaire that consisted of a 5-point Likert scale. For the Likert scale, items 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14 were reverse-coded, and higher scores denoted more positive attitudes. Table 3 shows the frequencies for each item. Overall, graduate students' attitudes towards peer assessment were slightly positive. About 14 (46.7%) graduate students were *neutral*, they expressed that the task of peer assessment was difficult (Item 13), and it was unfair (Item 14). Besides, about 13 (43.3%) graduate students were *neutral*, they did not feel nervous about peer assessment (Item 1), and their peers did not assess their works accurately (Item 12). In addition, about 12 (40%) graduate students were stated that they felt reluctant to be critical to peers (Item 4), they felt reluctant to give their peers low marks (Item 8), they did not like being assessed by peers (Item 9), and they preferred the instructor grade only (Item 11). Also, about 9 (30%) graduate students did not have the skills and knowledge to assess peers (Item 7). However, about half of the students expressed that peer assessment had limited educational value.

**Table 3**  
**Frequencies of Responses in the Attitude Questionnaire**

No	Description	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Nervous about peer assessment.	13.3%	20%	43.3%	16.7%	6.7%
2	Limited educational value.	10%	6.7%	60%	13.3%	10%
3	Enjoyed being peer assessed.	3.3%	0%	26.7%	46.7%	23.3%
4	Reluctant to be critical to peers.	20%	13.3%	40%	20%	6.7%
5	A fairer assessment method.	0%	13.3%	46.7%	26.7%	13.3%

6	Enjoyed assessing peers.	0%	0%	50%	36.7%	13.3%
7	I did not have the skills and knowledge to assess peers.	16.7%	30%	30%	20%	3.3%
8	Reluctant to give my peers low marks.	13.3%	10%	40%	26.7%	10%
9	Did not like being assessed by peers.	26.7%	13.3%	40%	13.3%	6.7%
10	Peer assessment made the assessment more accurate.	0%	20%	43.3%	26.7%	10%
11	Prefer the instructor grade only.	6.7%	10%	30%	40%	13.3%
12	My peers did not assess my work accurately.	10%	26.7%	43.3%	10%	10%
13	The task of peer assessment was difficult.	10%	16.7%	46.7%	20%	6.7%
14	Peer assessment is unfair.	16.7%	23.3%	46.7%	6.7%	6.7%
15	Peer assessment is valuable exercise.	0%	0%	33.3%	40%	26.7%
16	My peers should have a greater say in mark.	20%	16.7%	50%	6.7%	6.7%

Note.  $N = 30$ . Items 1-16 assess the attitude towards peer assessment.

### Interviews of perceptions in peer assessment

For the sake of analyzing the interviews, ten graduate students' interviews were translated into English, and then transcribed. The translations were revised and the English transcriptions were read several times in order to get the exact meaning of what the participants said. After reading the participants' responses, the researchers fully examined each piece of information in order to make sense of the data as a whole. We narrowed down the collected data to develop the codes that precisely described the participants' responses. While coding, the researchers asked questions, made comparisons, examined words, phrases, etc. Because the researchers did not follow a linear process, we went back and forth between the stages of the data analysis and formulated the final codes which were closely related to the research objectives. Finally, we used our background knowledge, experiences and opinions to interpret and represent the findings of the study. Six key themes of benefits for peer assessment and three themes of challenges emerged in this research.

### Benefits

#### *Increased learning*

Overall, all of our participants believed that peer assessment generally increased their learning in some ways, which was not surprising, given that all our participants are willing to take part in our research project:



Interviewee #2: 'Actually, I feel that peer assessment is really helpful for me because I can revise my academic writing better. Also, it's beneficial to be more sensitive of my mistakes in writing'.

Interviewee #3: 'Absolutely, it actually helps me to learn, and that's why I feel more confident to write my writing assignment'.

These statements above lead to a discussion of all the skills involved in peer assessment that graduate students guide in developing their academic writing.

**Transferable skills – evaluative judgement, communication, reflective/critical thinking** The participants showed strong confidence in the value of developing transferable/soft skills, which peer assessments provided opportunities for graduate students to learn and acquire, which were also generally noted in the literature:

Interviewee #1: 'You know as lifelong learners, we need to encourage ourselves to be more critical and develop our skill in writing. That's why, peer assessment can provide us to learn and acquire incredibly especially in academic writing'.

Communication skills related to both effectively providing and receiving feedback were also noted:

Interviewee #7: 'It's very awesome for having peer assessment in our writing process because it gives us the outstanding feedback from our friends'.

Students critically reflected on the process of conducting peer assessment was also noted:

Interviewee #4: 'In academic writing, peer assessment helps me to reflect on my writing critically because it can show the quality of my writing, if it is good or not'.

Interviewee #10: 'In peer assessment, we are needed to think critically to assess about our work and others' work.'

### **Authentic assessment**

These skills are often built as part of the learning outcomes of graduate students. Because these skills are needed in the real world, and in the future workplace where graduate students' careers will be built, peer assessment is seen as authentic:

Interviewee #2: 'In doing this peer assessment in my class, I really get constructive feedback from my peers and it allows me to revise my writing task to be understandable. Also, the feedback that my peers given to me can encourage my ability and it happens in our real life'.

### **Feedback skills**

The way peer assessment is perceived as the power of feedback provided to graduate students. In accordance with the literature, graduate students can provide and receive more relevant feedback using the language that suits them:

Interviewee #1: 'I really get involved when peer feedback is implemented in my class because I can listen and take notes the constructive feedback from my classmates and it is use our own language so it makes me easy to understand to what they suggested to me'.

The importance of feedback that is authentic in nature is outlined:

Interviewee #5: 'In English education, peer assessment is a big part of my department, and I think that we can talk to each other and give feedback to others about our work'.

### **Understanding standards**

One of the most crucial aspects identified by graduate students in interviews as the value of peer assessment is about the importance of understanding graduate students' standards and assessment criteria. Some graduate students suggested that

peer evaluations enhance the involvement of them with rubrics and standards, as stated by graduate students:

Interviewee #6: 'What I certainly found this year is that a number of my friends as graduate students have asked a lot of detailed questions about assignments and things like the criteria for the rubric or what the criteria for assignments are and so on to the instructors'.

Graduate students compared the significance of understanding standards to the power of feedback:

Interviewee #7: 'Whether they provide useful feedback is especially not as important as they truly understand their own assessment criteria, and then have the opportunity to reflect on their own work'.

### **Peer assessment – learning from others, teamwork**

Focusing specifically on peer assessment, our participants jotted down benefits in the form of peer learning and learned how to work in teams. Peer assessment is sometimes carried out specifically because it allows an assessment of something that the instructor cannot observe: the process of teamwork (as opposed to teamwork products). Graduate students indicated that peer assessment brings up positive learning, and it plays an essential role in effective teamwork that gives graduate students a voice:

Interviewee #9: 'Graduate students learn how it occurs to each other. Because of this, they also learn the language of assessment to others. All of these things, I think are integrated. That if there is a formative assessment culture or peer review in a unit, hopefully there is also an effective culture of group work and relationship building'.

### **Challenges**

Some aspects of value can overlap with challenges, for example, graduate students 'understanding standards' are critical values but difficult to achieve. It also becomes clear that graduate students find the challenge of the practice in peer assessment to balance or even outweigh the benefits. In this section, we explored three main themes of challenges that appear as prevalent in our interviews.

#### **Time and cost**

One of the most important challenges is faced by graduate students who related to the lack of time, and the costs needed to make successful peer-assessment.

Interviewee #10: 'As a graduate student it would be great to do [peer assessment] if you have time ... Time is something we usually don't have'.

Some graduate students also talk about how actually implementing peer assessments succeed requires effort and context. It is not just about saving time for graduate students, just because they give feedback to each other rather than graduate students doing the work, but more about how peer assessment is intended and implemented:

Interviewee #5: 'We also talk about it in terms of saving time. It depends on how it works. There are a number of situations wherein peer assessment can save our time, but the main thing we are actually getting involved with the criteria, so it's actually useful, and also

really getting us to engage with the feedback our friends give it. It's more about the time we spend being valuable, than about saving time, but in some cases it saves time. This can also take longer, depending on how we run it.'

#### **Graduate students' motivation**

Motivation in understanding why graduate students (need/want to) involve with

peer assessment plays a pivotal role:

Interviewee #1: 'Peer assessment is something useful for us because we need to be the part of that practice in the learning process and we have to feel the success of it'.

Furthermore, the challenge of getting support from other graduate students for the use of peer assessments is also noted:

Interviewee #7: 'My challenge is to change the mindset [of colleagues] and the process and way of working, but I don't want to change the way that works because I think it works better until someone can show me differently'.

This element leads to the challenge that graduate students are less involved with peer assessment when they do not 'have' an assessment and understand 'why' they are asked for it.

### **Feedback skills – non-completion of feedback loops and feedback literacy**

Although previous feedback is noted as strong value, we also found frustration associated with the idea that feedback was given by peers. For example, unresolved feedback loops are noted as a disappointment by graduate students:

Interviewee #1: 'I am disappointed that they don't meaningfully and deeply engage with that peer feedback in the final assessment task'.

The lack of literacy of graduate student feedback was also a challenge for peer assessment, especially their skills with empathy and affect. As some of our participants point out, because the act of giving and receiving feedback involves very humanistic interactions, namely communication, this requires interpersonal skills that are nuanced and rather difficult to explain explicitly. On the topic of feedback skills needed to provide feedback, a graduate student mentioned:

Interviewee #4: 'and we need empathy ... We have to be understanding of the emotions of other people and act accordingly. So being up to putting ourselves in other people's shoes and that would, "If I got this feedback, how would that affect me?"'

Further, receiving feedback brought a set of skills, for example, a graduate student mentioned that they need politeness to receive feedback:

Interviewee #8: 'Modesty. I mean that I can accept that repairs are something that is on everyone's plate. This is a terrible thing ... Again our culture is not a culture that tends to accept criticism'.

Thus, receiving peer feedback required a complex set of cognitive and affective skills from graduate students:

Interviewee #9: 'Sometimes it's not good to take everything. We must have a filter too. I think the idea of how we receive feedback is far more complicated than what we actually think. This is complicated because there is an emotional element – the affective side'.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Perception**

The result of the questionnaire of this research indicates that graduate students' perception has slightly positive outcomes in practicing peer assessment. A large number of graduate students agree that peer assessment gives a good impact for their learning process, such as making them look for more information on the content of the activity and allowing them to detect their mistakes. Furthermore, most of the graduate students love to have peer assessment to revise their final writing projects before submitting it to their instructor it is helpful to make sure what they did is based on the

teacher's instruction. However, some graduate students think peer assessment could not be applied properly for their writing process because some of their peers did not follow the instructions as their teacher demanded. The peer assessment questionnaire of this research has the same result to the research that was conducted by Sridharan, Tai, & Boud (2019) in qualitative and quantitative research which stated that there are positive outcomes of conducting peer assessment in the teaching-learning process.

### **Attitude**

The attitude questionnaire results were similar to the statement of Wanner & Palmer (2018), they state that peer assessment helps students with each other to give feedback and assessment of others work. Likewise, it is related to the idea of Sridharan, Tai, & Boud (2019) who stated that students could assess their peer learning outcomes accurately and consistently, which is oriented towards the formative assessment of the components of group work process (Sridharan, Tai, & Boud, 2019). In general, graduate students considered peer assessment to be useful, but they were not strongly supported.

In addition, participants in this research were very confident in their skills to assess peers. Because most of them already have experience with peer assessment in other education classes. Some items that reduce the overall average are related to the problems identified. The Likert questionnaire showed that although most graduate students believed in the ability of their peer to assess their work, they do not want peer assessment to affect too much of their overall value. However, a large number of positive statements indicated that the benefits they feel more influential on their concerns. One of the main benefits is related to their future profession because almost the participants of this research were teachers. Furthermore, half of the graduate students stated that peer-assessment should not be integrated into all college courses. Some students who support peer assessment also mentioned that it depends on how it is applied. Peer assessment could take various formats. To improve the positive attitude of graduate students, instructors must design a peer assessment that is appropriate in accordance with the field of study and type of assignment.

### **Interview**

This research supported by the statement of Seifert & Felix (2019) in peer assessment, which is perceived as an authentic assessment that leads to improving graduate students learning and a better understanding of standards, while developing transferable skills and feedback. It also added detail in several aspects: a specific theme for peer to appear; collaborative learning opportunities in peer assessment. However, we did not identify the benefits of 'active learning' which benefits to improve the feedback for graduate students or time-saving peer assessments. This may be due to the type of peer assessment that our participants have previously experienced, and the context in which they operate. Failure to provide feedback as a benefit may also be caused by graduate students who acknowledge that participating in peer assessment and providing feedback can benefit more feedback from recipients (Stegmann et al., 2012).

Graduate students in our research focus more on motivation from graduate students that lead to a variety of quality learning through peer assessment that is graduate students' motivation, superficial learning, and related feedback skills. Some of these differences should be explained by different academic and/or cultural contexts from the research. It is also possible that attitudes have changed because peer assessment has become somewhat more general.

With regards to the challenge and peer assessment, it was understood that this was deemed challenging to replicate in online learning environments. As also noted in, challenges with peer assessment were with complexes and insufficiencies of the platforms and their associated required supported, rather than merely the lack of tools. One possible interpretation for this in our data is that our graduate students mostly implemented peer assessment for formative purposes.

The solution to this challenge is not within the scope of our research. However, the dilemma for peer-assessment consists of aspects of motivation and skill development, so this is a field that can be overcome to reduce barriers to implementation. Given that the benefits of peer assessment in a sense are for graduate students, and in successfully developing generic skills and lifelong discipline, the big-picture approach to motivating graduate students may be appropriate. Although there was little significant evidence to prove that participation in peer-assessment can lead to increased performance in work, linking these concepts (and skills that must be learned for and as part of conducting peer-assessment – for example, feedback) can result in increased involvement with peer-assessment activities. Furthermore, we also note that developing graduate students' skills in providing feedback may need to occur as part of orientation.

### **Limitation**

A limitation of this research is that it was conducted with a small number of participants at a single university, and, while our abstracted themes may seem generalizable, they have not been tested amongst a broader audience with deeper understanding of their contextual information. Although we included participants across all four departments in one faculty at our university, our research is limited in capturing different disciplinary uses of peer assessment in academic writing.

### **CONCLUSION**

Peer assessments as a method of learning for students, have multiple benefits. Though the outcome of the questionnaires in this research suggests a multitude of disapproving and critical views of various graduate students about peer assessments, the results of an analysis of the data gathered from peer assessments of graduate students indicate the presence of having slightly positive among them while assessing peers. In addition, this research indicates that increasing graduate student engagement in peer assessment and repeated practice is to be more critical. Therefore, instructors should provide a rubric and standard in assessing peer assessment, also several opportunities for peer assessment to reinforce the skill of writing effective feedback throughout a course. Further, graduate students enhance positive learning experiences. In this research, peer assessment increased the extent of critical feedback. The results of both questionnaires indicate that students do not want to criticize their friends critically. Thus, especially if the class size is relatively small, and graduate students seem to have strong friendships, providing specific grading criteria for feedback quality is strongly recommended.

Lastly, participants in this research were mostly graduate students, which as the teachers. Therefore, the study should be replicated with more diverse subject samples and settings. Future research could discuss the extent in assessing the quality of feedback in the grading rubric influences the amount of critical feedback. In addition, the current research explored the benefits and challenges that peer assessment provides in higher education through the lenses of graduate students. While the

previous literature lacks evidence in the area of peer assessment perception, attitude, and practice from graduate students' point of view, this paper highlights what inhibits graduate students from carrying out peer assessment by exploring the challenges that they face.

Future work should develop on this research by expanding our sample beyond one institution and further investigating the potential links between graduate students' attitudes towards peer assessment and their backgrounds and contexts – e.g., the extent of their previous experience with peer assessment and their disciplinary areas. Another subsequent research might also involve those graduate students who have never implemented peer assessment to compare findings and identify what might prevent graduate students from implementing peer assessment in the first place. Investigating what motivates graduate students to participate and engage fully with peer assessment will also be valuable for successful implementation in the future.

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