

Exam preparation

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN
SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FROM THE
PERSPECTIVE OF THE THEORY OF
PLANNED BEHAVIOR:

THE CASE OF EXAM PREPARATION
SEMINARS

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EFYE, May 2025 – Leuven

Context



Massification
Diversity



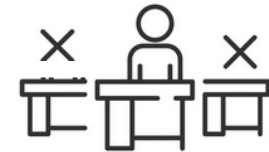
A challenge

(Kift, 2015)



Support programs

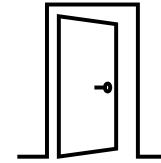
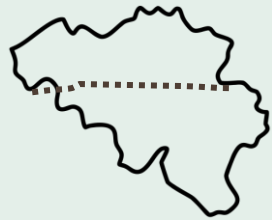
(Pariat & Lafont, 2018)



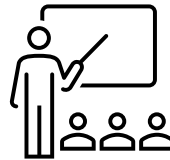
Low attendance

(Bornschlegl et al., 2020)

Context

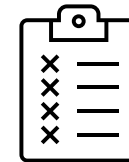


HE highly accessible
(no entry requirement, low fees)



75% of students enter HE

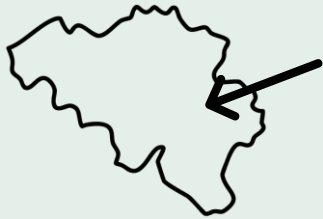
(ARES., 2013)



68% failure/drop out

(ARES., 2013)

Context



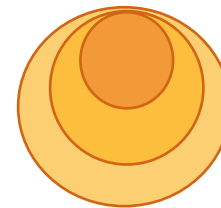
Promoting
success of
maximum
number and
diversity of
students



*Success
for/by
everyone*

Variety of
people acting
in partnership
- professors,
buddies,
pedagogists

Micro
Meso
Macro



Individuals
Groups
All students

Interfaculty Learning Support Service

Personalized
interviews

Individual
activities

Collective
activities

Newsletter
"Hebdo
MéthodO"

Remote activites

Face-to-face

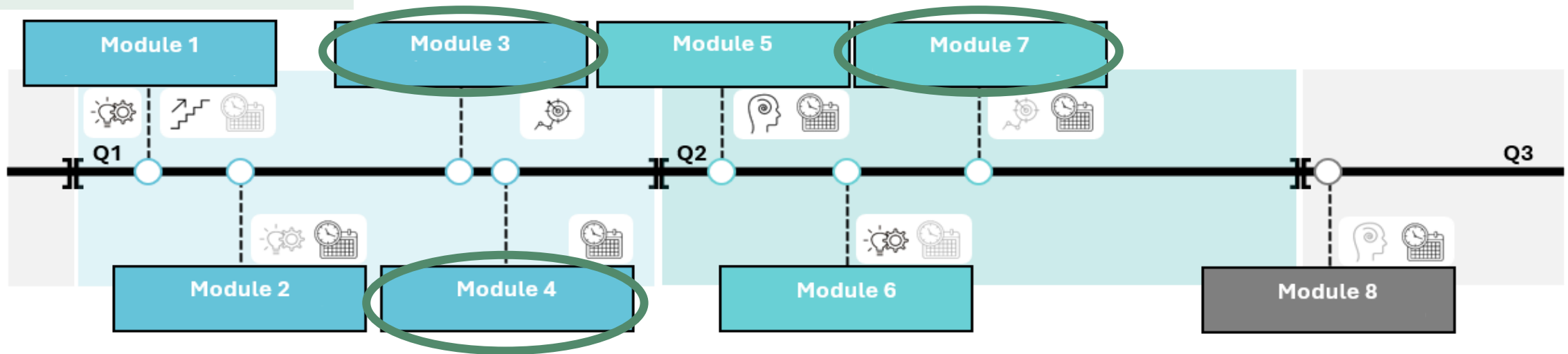
Seminars

Seminars

1st semester

2nd semester

3rd semester



LÉGENDE



working methods



academic pace



work planning



Exams preparation



Review of the session

Why exam preparation seminars ?



Test anxiety

- < Performance
(interferences, Wine, 1971)
- > Drop out
(avoidance, Schaefer et al., 2007)



Lack of information

- exam preparation
 - work organization
 - learning strategies
 - time management
- (Neuderth, et al., 2009)

How can
seminars be
organised to

encourage
student
attendance?



To avoid
conflict with
courses
(anxiety)



To provide
all tips in
one
session



To allow
students to
go back
home

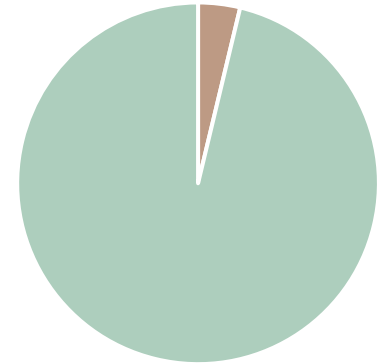


To avoid
parking
difficulties in
the center
(2 campuses)

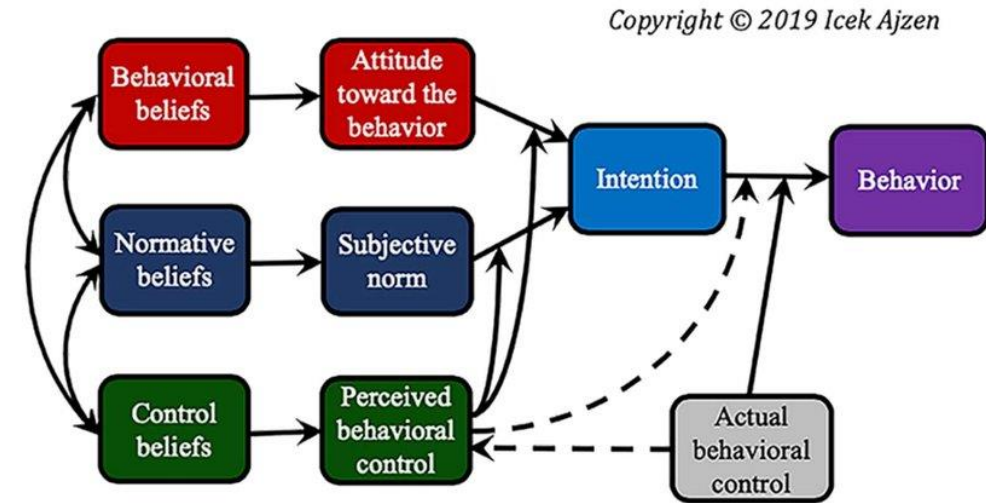
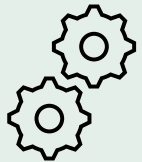
However,
attendance is
low



100-150/seminar
± 4000 first-year
students



What are
the barriers
and levers
to student
attendance
?



Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)
(Ajzen, 1991, 2020)

Why the Theory of Planned Behavior ?

(TPB)

Google Scholar

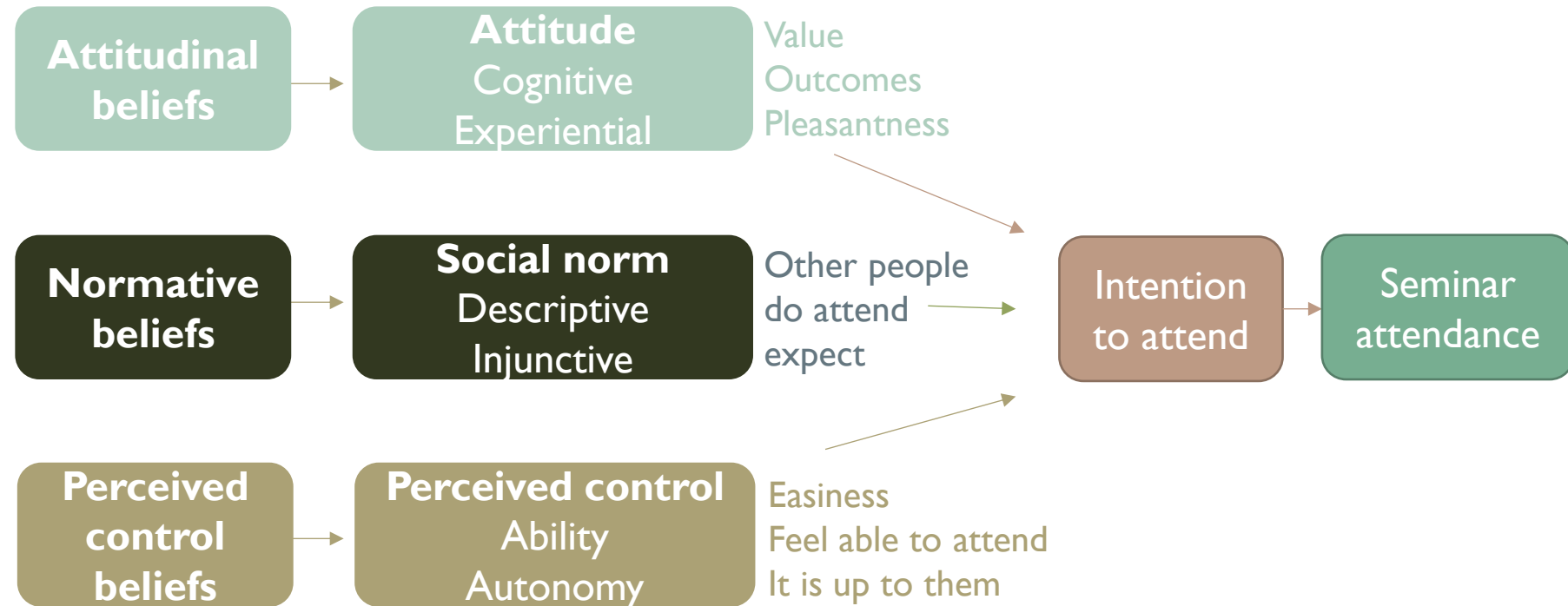
Theory of planned behavior

Articles

Environ 5 580 000 résultats (0,17 s)

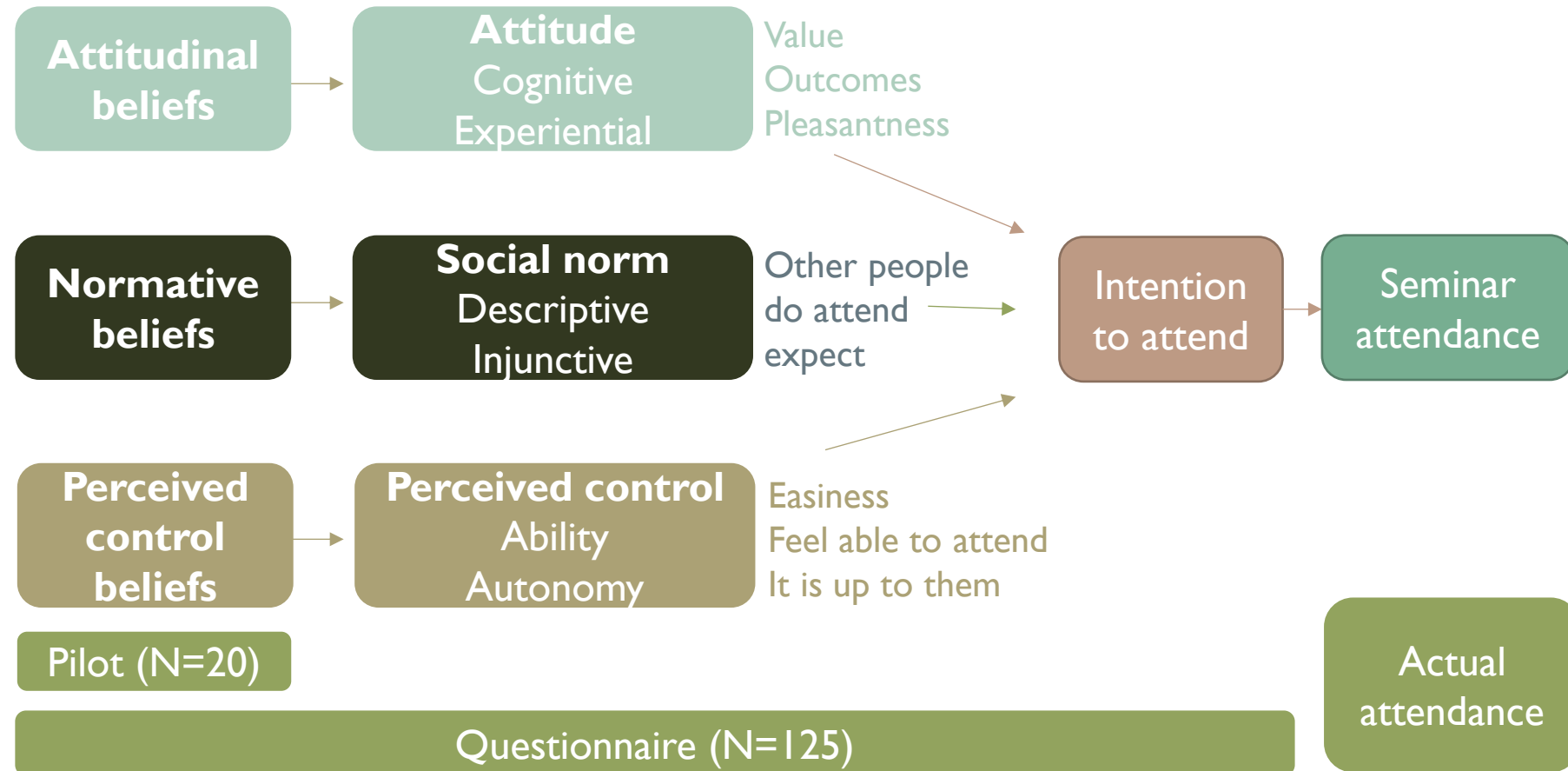
- Used in many fields (health, safety...)
- Scientific validity and predictive power (Armitage & Conner, 2001)
- A method that takes account of the context and population
- Barriers/levers that can be acted upon
- Promising ideas for adaptations for other support activities at ULiège (Dardenne et al., 2025; Huart et al., 2022, 2023, 2025)

TPB applied to exam preparation seminars attendance



3 steps procedure

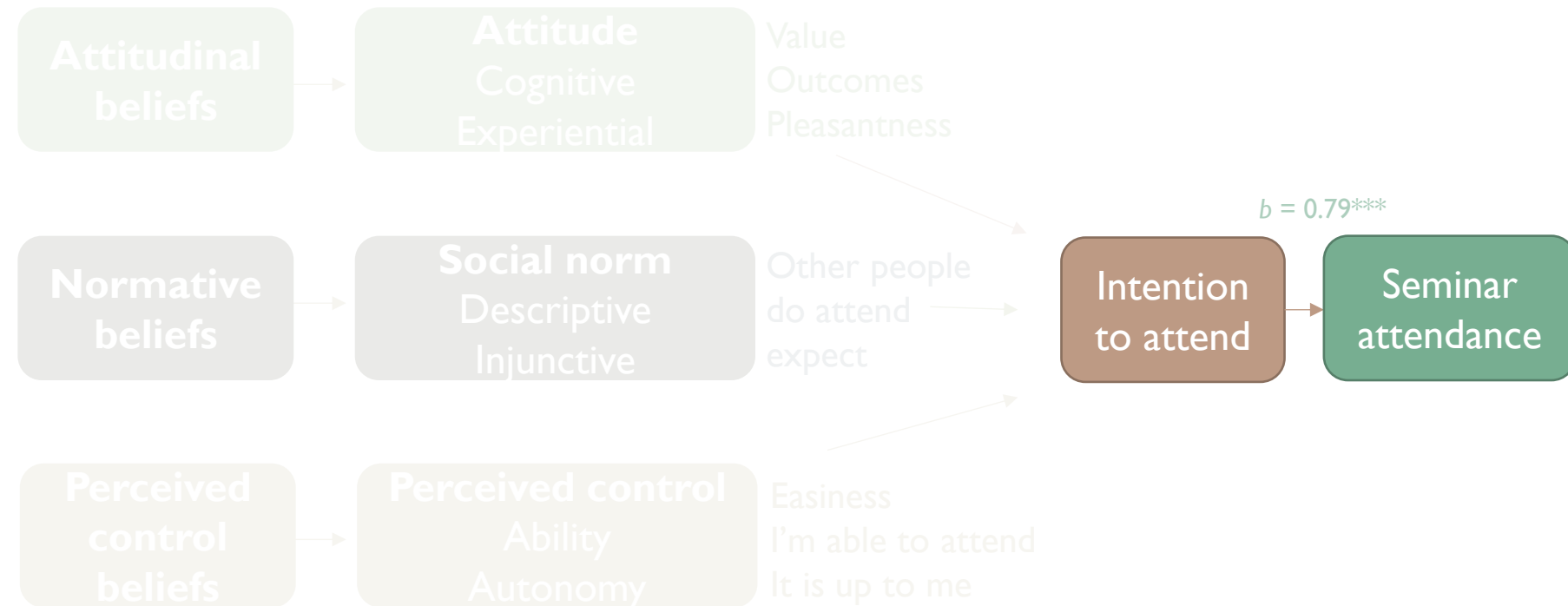
(Ajzen, 2006)



Predicting attendance by students' intention to attend

von Haeften et al.
(2001)

Logistic regression
 $b = .79, z = .38, p < .001$

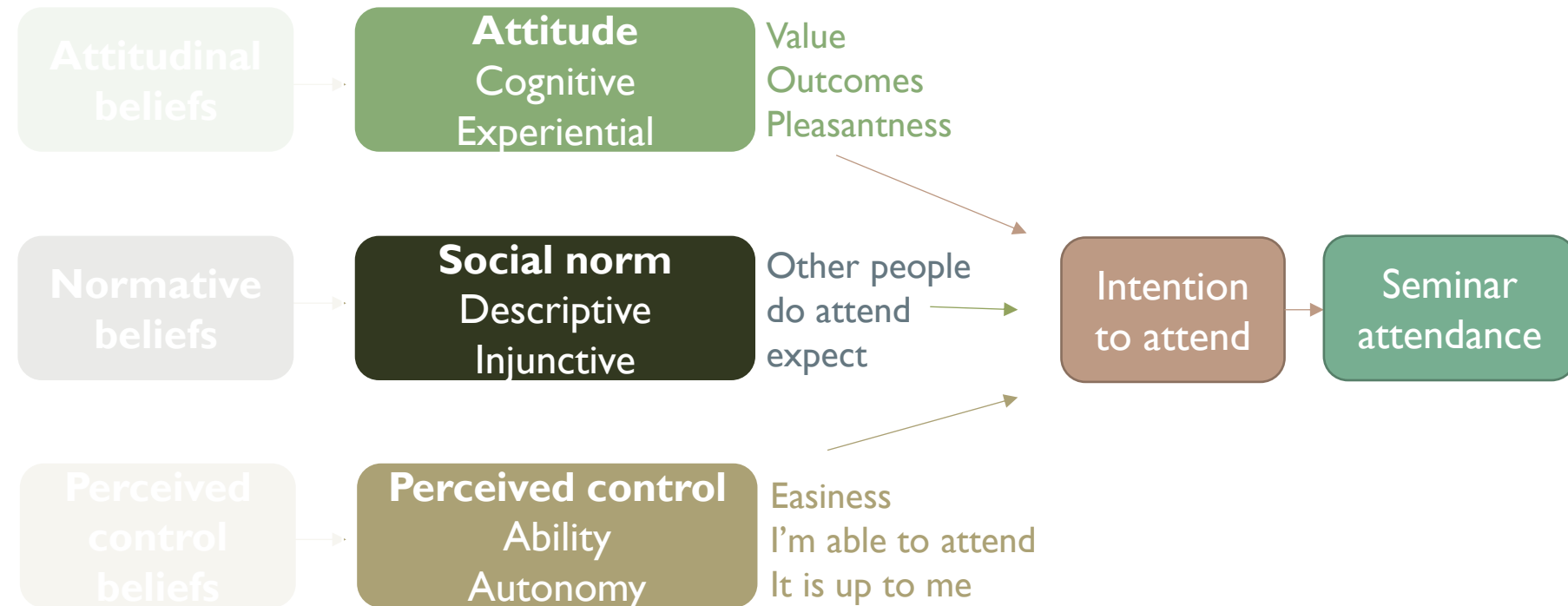


The determinants of intention

von Haeften et al.
(2001)

Multiple regression analysis

$R^2\text{-aj} = .44$ $F(5, 116) = 20.2, p < .001$

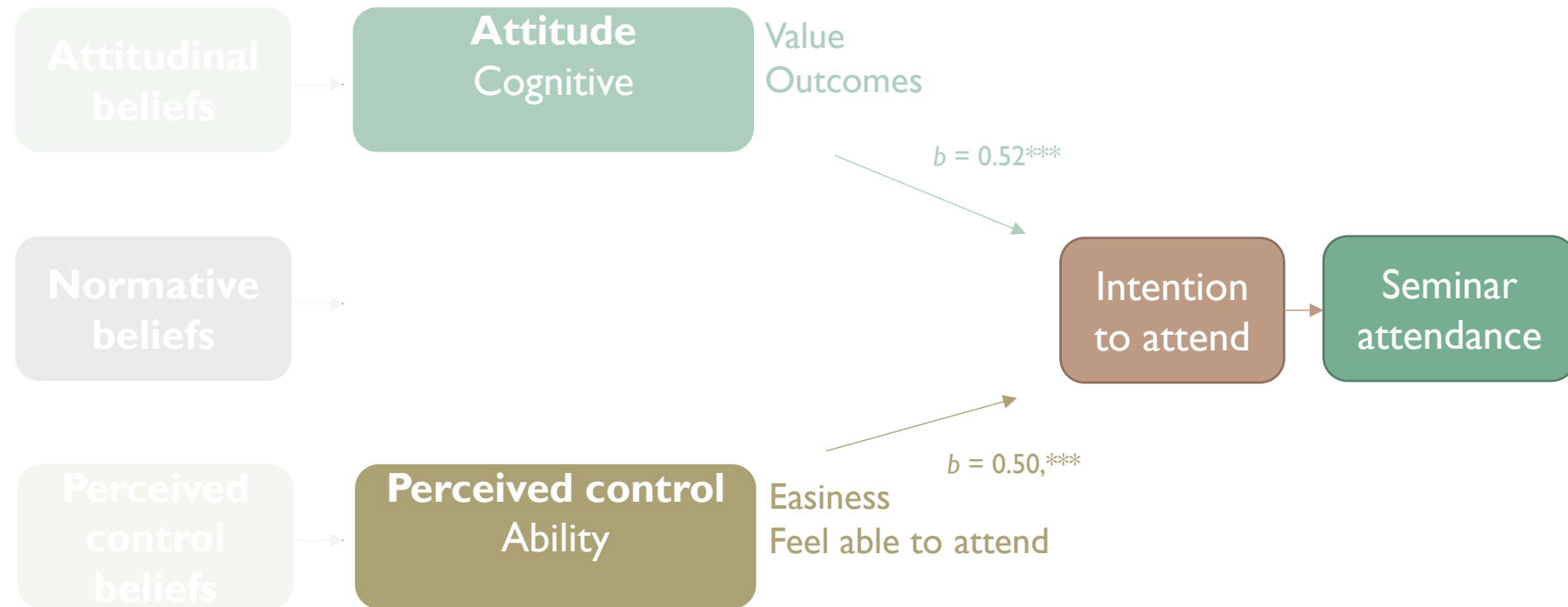


The determinants of intention

von Haeften et al.
(2001)

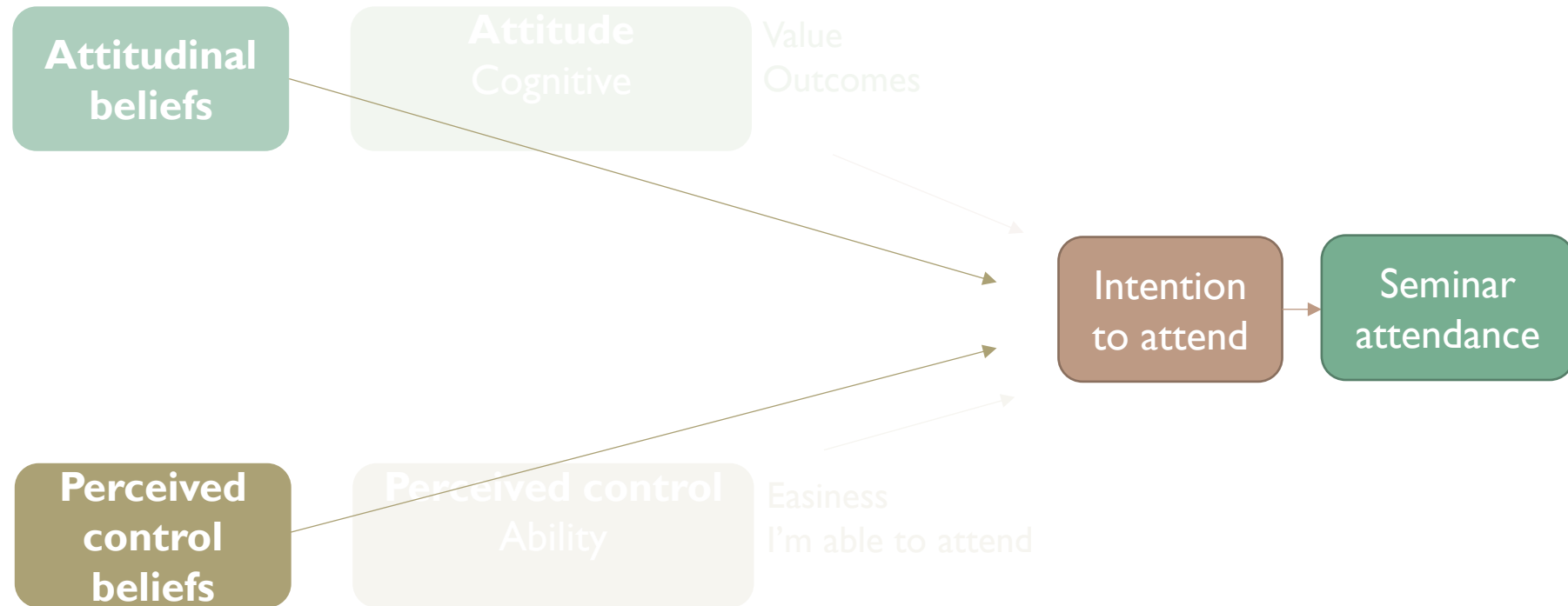
Multiple regression analysis

$R^2\text{-aj} = .44$ $F(5, 116) = 20.2, p < .001$



Underlying beliefs

von Haeften et al.
(2001)



Underlying beliefs

von Haeften et al.
(2001)

Multiple regression analyses

- Knowing better what to expect
- Knowing more about the requirements and types of university exams
- Getting tips and tricks I hadn't thought of before
- Better organisation/planning of my work
- Telling myself that I've done everything I needed to
- Feeling less alone when facing exams
- Feeling calmer, more confident, less stressed
- Feeling anxious about what I need to do
- Telling myself that I'm responsible for the results I get
- Being deprived of contact with loved ones
- Being deprived of an activity that's important to me
- Feeling that I'm wasting my time

- Being overworked
- Living in a student room and going home to the family on w-e
- Depending on others or public transport for the journey
- Seminars last 3 hours
- Seminars take place on Saturdays
- Having an important concurrent activity
- Seminars take place in the morning
- Seminars take place far from the city center
- Not being obliged to take part in seminars

Intention
to attend

Seminar
attendance

Underlying beliefs

von Haeften et al.
(2001)

Multiple regression analyses

$R^2_{-aj} = 0.25$ $F(9,108) = 5.36, p < .001$

$R^2_{-aj} = 0.20, F(4,111) = 8.31, p < .001$

- Reduced feelings of loneliness in the face of exams
- Deprived of an important activity
- Wasting time

$b = .041^*$

$b = .050^*$

$b = .067^*$

- Living in student housing and going home to family on w-e
- Saturday scheduling

$b = .048^{**}$

$b = .053^{***}$

Intention
to attend

Underlying beliefs

von Haeften et al.
(2001)

Multiple regression analysis

$R^2\text{-aj} = 0.39, F(5, 109) = 15.72, p < .001$



- Reduced feelings of loneliness in the face of exams
- Deprived of an important activity
- Wasting time

- Living in student housing and going home to family on w-e
- Saturday scheduling

Intention
to attend

Critical targets for interventions

von Haeften et al.
(2001)

Multiple regression analysis

$R^2\text{-aj} = 0.39, F(5, 109) = 15.72, p < .001$

- Reduced feelings of loneliness in the face of exams
- Deprived of an important activity

$b = .052^{***}$

$b = .050^{**}$

- Living in student housing and going home to family on w-e
- Saturday scheduling

$b = .046^{**}$

$b = .068^{***}$

Intention
to attend

Alternative targets for interventions

von Haeften et al.
(2001)

EFA's

- Reduced feelings of loneliness in the face of exams
- Deprived of an important activity

- Telling themselves that they have done everything was needed to succeed
- Feeling calmer, more confident
- Deprived of contact with loved ones

- Living in student housing and going home to family on w-e
- Saturday scheduling

- Depending on others or public transport for the journey
- Seminars last 3 hours

What do we learn about students ?

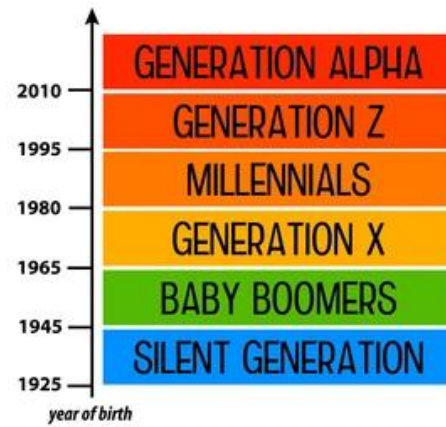
More than tips,
reassurance and
social connection

Gen. Z is quite
paradoxical and
prefers to work
alone (Mohr & Mohr,
2017)... But not
feeling alone
facing exams!

Studies are not
their one and
only priority

Gen. Z is less
ambitious about
career but more
about **personal
development** and
social links (Ryndak
& Saldaeva, 2020)

Under- standing students & TPB



How can
seminars be
organised to

encourage
student
attendance?



Conflict
with
activities and
social
contacts



Too long!



Wanna go
home for
the entire
weekend



Access
difficulties
(public
transport)

2024-2025:

Two
adaptations

(Amphi already
booked)



You're not
alone!
Join us!



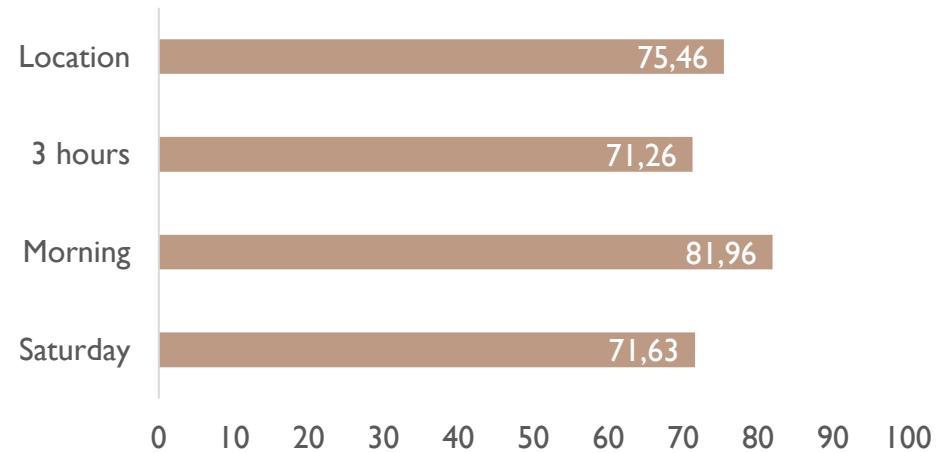
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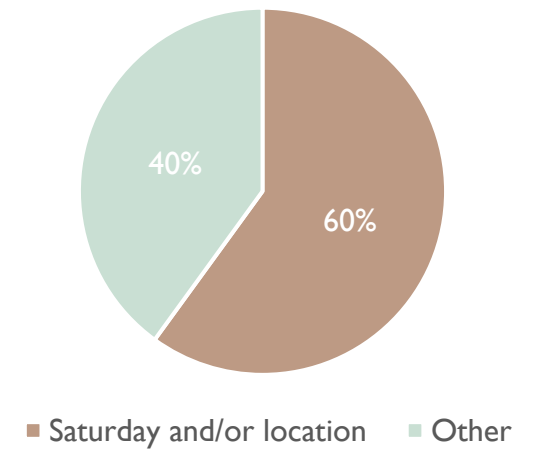
Feedback
from
attendees

Organization
*ok but ... could
be better*

Convenience



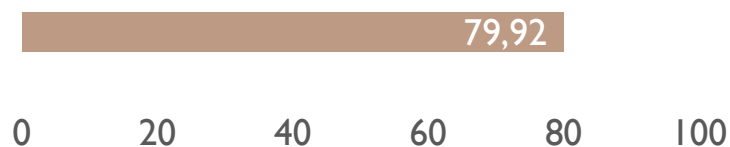
Open comments



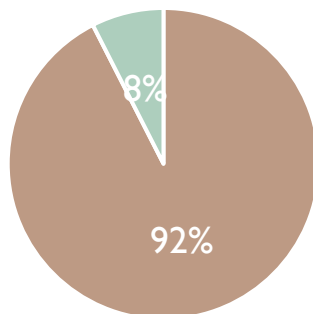
Feedback from attendees

*They seem to
find what they
came for*

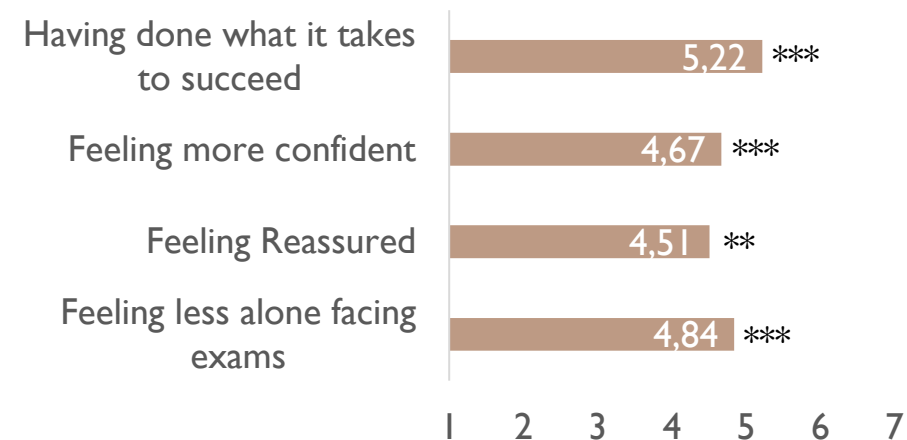
Overall satisfaction



Would recommend



Evaluation of the targets



Next year

Three
adaptations

*More
attendance ?*

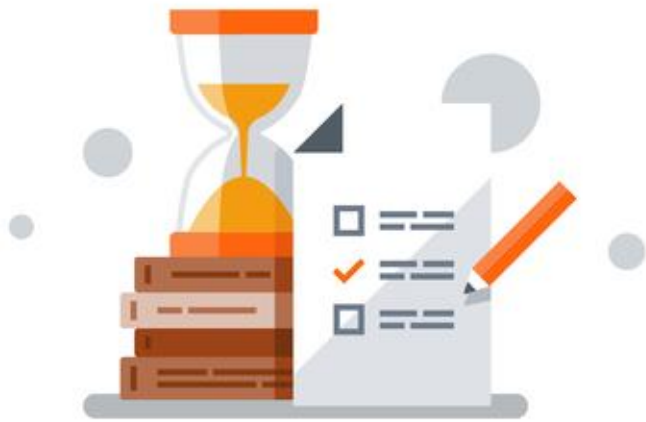


You're not
alone!
Join us!



+ |





Exam preparation



Thanks for your attention