

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT A CROSS-SECTIONAL ANALYSIS

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The students of today are the leaders of tomorrow. It is a challenge for educational leaders who are emerging to meet the demands of the changing society. As the student's starts to progress from one year to another, students are accumulating a lot of assets in them. This is molding the student to face a challenging educational sector. Therefore, student achievement or academic achievement can be defined as the excellence in varied disciplines which consists of behavior, confidence, communication skills, sports, punctuality, assertiveness, arts, culture and other crucial components which are included in the evaluation of the curriculum.

When children are born no one will know what their qualities will be, and, in an open and democratic society, no one will know what way of life they will follow. A person may be dull or brilliant, profound or shallow, rebellious or docile, interested in school or not, rich or poor, female or male, of any political persuasion, with any set of interests, with any aspirations or lack of them. The person may be destined for any walk of life from the humblest to the mightiest, from the active to the contemplative, and for any occupation. It is important to find the most appropriate curriculum that aims to meet these difficult requirements of honoring

individuality while also serving the democratic purposes of society.

So the education we provide must prepare all the students to become equal participating members in a free society in which they will have a future of open-ended possibilities. This is a much different problem, and a much harder one, from designing a technical or vocational program to prepare a specific type of student for a specific career like nursing is important. It is a problem that all teachers, organizational leaders and managers in educational sectors face no matter what subject or level they teach. They must answer the question: What general characteristics should an educated person and a democratic citizen have, and how can it be fostered to them in the classroom?

The organization is the basic unit of analysis, considering it to be a social unit that has an impact on our day-to-day lives. Culture and language play a crucial role in understanding the functioning of organizations around the world. To overcome this complexity, organizations must develop a common framework and concepts whenever they engage in organizational assessments. Organizational Assessment is a Framework for Improving Performance which puts forth a framework for analyzing the strengths and

weaknesses of an organization in relation to its performance. In general, the framework posits that organizational performance is a function of its enabling environment, capacity and organizational motivation. It goes into a great deal of detail in trying to capture the ideas and concepts that underpin each of the four broad organizational ideas (performance, environment, capacity and motivation). In this framework, organizational performance is seen as a result of the organization's work.

All organizations—whether for-profit or not-for-profit, government or civil society, or privately or publicly owned—engage in some form (formal, informal) of organizational assessment. What is not agreed upon are the frameworks, methods and processes that have proven to be successful in informing stakeholders about the status of the organization. Is the organization performing well? Why or why not?

Educational leaders in the schools have a state standard as a goal for student achievement whereas others have a broader, richer picture, and see the state standard as something to be met on the way to the broader goal. (Stephen G. Barkley, 2007). The following are two school settings examining a broader definition. The Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia has listed the following student achievement goals:

1. Academics – all students will obtain, understand, analyze, communicate and apply knowledge and skills to achieve success in school and life.

2. Essential Life Skills – all students will demonstrate the aptitude, attitude, and skills to lead responsible, fulfilling, and respectful lives.
3. Responsibility to the Community – all students will understand and model the important attributes people must have to contribute to an effective and productive community and common good of all.

The second is the Miami Dade College announced a plan to examine each of its 2000+ course offerings to determine what key skills are, and are not, being taught. The goal is to make sure that no student can go through an entire program of study without being exposed to the following ten key skill sets:

1. To communicate effectively using listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
2. To use quantitative analytical skills to evaluate and process numerical data.
3. To solve problems using critical and creative thinking and scientific reasoning.
4. To formulate strategies to locate, evaluate, and apply information.
5. To demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures, including global and historical perspectives.
6. To create strategies that can be used to fulfill personal, civic, and social responsibilities.

7. To demonstrate knowledge of ethical thinking and its application to issues in society.
8. To use computer and emerging technologies effectively.
9. To demonstrate an appreciation for aesthetics and creative activities.
10. To describe how natural systems function, and recognize the impact of human beings on the environment.

A strategy for student achievement brought about by Richard, L. (2001), a special educator and the author of "The Motivation Breakthrough: Six Secrets for Turning on the Turned-Out Child" has illustrated the six motivational strategies: **praise, power, projects, people, prizes, and prestige**. These strategies should be inculcated into the objectives of the course.

Now, let us look into the academic culture which has been fostered in the educational system, analyzing the definition of academy culture, it can be explained by stating that employees are highly skilled and tend to stay in the organization, while working their way up the ranks. The organization provides a stable environment in which employees can develop and exercises their skills. Examples are universities, hospitals, large corporations, etc.

Any academic culture can be recognized by just the look of the particular organization. For example, the infrastructure, the arrangement of the furniture and other variable. Likewise, a curriculum should be

designed by using objectives which are focused. Popham (2007) suggests that objectives be derived from Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives. The students are pretested to see where they are in relation to the objectives chosen. Then instructional decisions regarding means for reaching the objectives are made and executed. Finally, evaluation of measurable changes in student behaviors is made. Objectives, selection, organization, and evaluation procedures are prescribed. Nursing is a science subject. Bloom's taxonomy of learning domains is utilized. In nursing programs, the cognitive, the affective and the psychomotor skills are assessed and evaluated in each course which is mandatory.

Apple(1999), argues that knowledge is a form of cultural capital. Schools legitimize certain kinds of knowledge by including them in the formal curriculum. By defining the knowledge everyone is expected to have, schools place higher value on science and vocational subjects than on the arts or crafts. In teaching history and social studies, harmony and consensus are emphasized and conflict minimized, leaving students with the impression of a society in which people are content, happy, and in agreement on most things. According to Apple, school thus plays a pivotal role in preserving the cultural capital of the dominant economic forces of the society.

Curriculum is a means to an end. In the traditional curriculum design, variables are determined directly by the teacher but also

indirectly by a variety of factors in the school environment that define and constrain the work of students and teachers, such as the school schedule, course syllabi, class size, length of school year, and so on which are called as "frame factors."

Analyzing the most effective curricular designs are the ones which are backward. Backward designs may be thought of as purposeful task analysis. This approach is considered as forward, but backward by conventional habits, whereby many teachers typically begin with textbooks, favored lessons, and time-honored activities rather than deriving them from targeted goals or standards. This backward approach to curricular design departs from another common practice: thinking about assessment as something teachers do at the end, once teaching is completed. The students bring an evidence of their learning through desired understandings and proficiencies. This tames the students to be, "thinking like an assessor" about evidence of learning knowing their goal. Monitoring and assessment involve much more than establishing how far students have traveled. The most important function of monitoring and assessment within the design is to help the teacher find out as much as possible about each student, to establish starting points for teaching, and to use this diagnostic information to drive classroom teaching programs

Pink(2005), states the three key concepts of community, passion and creativity through new forms of self-presentation and identity

which is accomplished is through e-learning. Greater coherence among desired results, key performances, and teaching and learning experiences leads to better student performance. The three stages of the backward design process consists of

Stage 1. Identify Desired Results: The goals.

Stage 2. Determine Acceptable Evidence: Level of achievement.

Stage 3. Plan Learning Experiences and Instruction.

The backward design has its own drawbacks which are as follows:

- 1) The temptation to build units around favored activities is great.
- 2) The assessment often ends up evaluating the specifics of the activity instead of an understanding of the target.

In conclusion, teaching should be a joy. If a teacher is provided with a coordinated set of teaching materials and grading rubrics, teachers and the students will enjoy the process and the students can maximize their potentials.

Dr Van Woert has quoted that "My goal was to help our students, teachers, and parents to become more self-aware and thereby responsible for how they learn. In knowing more about their preferences, they can naturally seek out instructional activities that support them and which will lead to increased student achievement."

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