

Standardized Testing

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Standardized Testing Overview

Standardized testing has been around the United States education system since the mid-1800s (Fletcher, 2009). The test plays a more significant role as part of the assessment tool since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2002, which requires annual mandatory testing in schools (Strauss, 2015). There are arguments for and against the use of standardized tests. Standardized test lacks a comprehensive quality overview of what contributes to the student's success later in the future. It does not account for other factors including socioeconomic, quality of education deliverance, emotional factors, and the availability of resources that reflect the poor results noted from a standardized test.

If the standardized test is such a lousy assessment, why do we continue to rely on it? Since some policymakers see the standardized test as a fair assessment of how students are doing across the country. The standardized test gives accountability to the taxpayers for the spending of their funds, which support and invest in the education system. Whereas, others argue standardized testing limits the measure of critical thinking and creativity side. Additional reasons going against the use of standardized testing include unnecessary testing and the cost of administering the test (Jouriles, 2014). This task done by the teachers delivering regular quizzes and tests weekly.

School Inequality and Standardized Testing

School inequality results from the use of standardized testing which supports the negative aspect and troubling issue in society which is the segregation of students by race and class found

among the classroom (Knoester & Au, 2017). Knoester & Au (2017) find evidence that supports the use of standardized testing, which leads to the separation of students in the classroom by race, ultimately leading to inequality issues. The standardized test is the benchmark where many education policies measured against including teachers' evaluations, school closings, and the challenge where teachers will get tenure. The collected data used as a backdrop for education policymakers to justify resource allocations; make crucial decisions regarding students, teachers, and staff administration (Au, 2009).

Narrowing the Curriculum

Among the challenge where standardized testing comes into action are the narrowing, the options, and availability of the offered curriculum. Many teachers are spending a greater of the class time to make sure students prepped, ready for the exam, and limit the coverage and focus area of the curriculum to tested subjects. The focus on standardized testing has limited teachers the window opportunity to explore other elements of learning so that it creates lasting impressions on the students that can all relate (Au, 2009). Our educational leaders should promote a curriculum that broadens our learning development against the social injustices of racism our society currently is dealing (Au, 2009). The ongoing mission is to help increase the knowledge base of students. It becomes more difficult, especially when teachers need to spend extra time and resources allocated to get students ready for the standardized testing.

Uneven Distribution of Opportunities

When school admission focuses and relies heavily on standardized testing, limiting the opportunities for some while creating a window for others. Parents are concerned about the environment where their children are studying, enhancing the inequalities found in today's school environment (Au, 2009). Also, parents prefer to send their children to a better-funded and resourceful school after touring and looking at the decrepit school building, realizing a dangerous and unsafe learning environment. It is the primary reason why parents would not want to send their children to these schools. The better-funded school has limited spots and tend to rely on standardized testing as an element for the elimination process. This process creates an opportunity for students who are great at taking these exams, penalize test-takers who learn through non-traditional methods. The demand to produce answers instantly can be a disadvantage for reflective students who need time to think about a concept before replying. Also, hurt students who become less focused and develop anxiety when they are around these exams. Even though test preparation is available, but it is an additional burden for families who cannot afford to have their children get an opportunity to improve (Strauss, 2017). This trend continues to exist, pushing the process of segregation among students based on test scores that misrepresent the positive aspects of integrated learning classroom.

Solutions

Some solutions to avoid standardized testing include the traditional method of having school continue to use teachers to report the progress of student's performance. Have an assessment tool that focuses on individualized talents and the use of students' portfolio reviews. The first option is to have the teachers and schools continue the progress of reporting of their

students' progress with the current system and measurement in place. It is best to have an independent reviewer to evaluate the measures to ensure all areas covered in the assessment and recommendation for improvements. The second option is to encourage education policymakers to focus beyond objectivity and accountability and to promote the use of alternative development that focuses on students' needs. There is a need for a disruptive reason only when it helps a student to learn explained by Welby Ings, a design professor at Auckland University of Technology (Gillmore, 2017). Ings encourages teachers to follow the norm until a challenge is needed to help students learn (Gillmore, 2017). Besides, a teacher can use an alternative approach by evaluating the student's performance through a portfolio review of their completed works and a reflection of their accomplishments and achievements.

Conclusion

Our education system needs an assessment tool that can provide comprehensive measurements of all qualities that contribute to one's success later in the future without having to compromise one group of victory over the others. Our society needs an education system that relies on an assessment tool that goes beyond the standardized test in which to showcase an individual's talent, knowledge, content, and creativity.

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