

Contrast assessments in education



Portfolios and standardized testing have different ways of assessing individual student's progress. Both can assess on individual basis, however portfolios type of assessment make it very difficult to compare one learner to another. To make it the same using a large pool of students in a meaningful way would be too subjective. Standardized tests like ACT and SAT are usually better for comparing one learner to another because they decrease the bias. Standardized testing is a better methods for assess learner from different schools. Different methods of assessing learners are helpful in different variety of settings and for a range of purposes.

David Boyanton (2009) and a group of educators conducted a study to determine if the emotions felt by a student could affect the outcome of the student's learning. Although emotion usually is not considered in assessing learning, this study showed that emotion played a significant role in the learning process. Emotions are used during the procedure of learning, and as a result of learning. " When a student is truly engaged in learning, he will naturally produce some emotion during or at the end of the class. Further, this emotional involvement does not have to be always positive. Rather, it can be either positive or negative" (Boyanton, 2009, p. 67). The study encompassed a type of learning system that students engaged in. The students were then assessed using portfolios based upon this system, known as CES. " CES proposes that student learning can be inferred through three student characteristics: cognitive continuity, emotional involvement, and social harmony" (Boyanton, 2009, p. 69). Most students engage in conversations or communicate with each other outside of the classroom. Cognitive continuity refers to this type of interaction. A display of strong

emotion, either negative or positive, incorporates the emotional involvement component. Social develops when students feel a sense of belonging and the students feel a connection to each other (Boyanton, 2009). According to the study, these three characteristics are reliable indicators of classroom learning.

Traditional assessments judge the students' performance by comparing them to others (norm-referenced testing) or by criterion-referenced testing which uses certain standards (Boyanton, 2009). CES examines learning on an individual level by observing changes made by each student. These changes are compared and assessed to determine growth. The CES model evaluates student learning inside of the classroom as well as behavior outside the classroom (Boyanton, 2009). Learning takes on many forms and constantly changes. The perspective of an individual differs from one person to the next. Common learning assessment tools generally look at learning as stable and within a whole group. CES takes the approach to learning as a changing, individualized, and building experience (Boyanton, 2009). "CES was to provide a model for instructors to determine how well the students have learned, it does not indicate what the students have learned, how much they have learned, or how well they are able to apply what they have learned" (Boyanton, 2009, p. 70). Furthermore, CES does not consider whether the knowledge will be retained, whether student behavior will be influenced or whether students will be able to generalize the information they learned (Boyanton, 2009).

Motivation can be a powerful emotion as related to learning. The relationship between student's motivation to read and their performance on standardized

testing is one factor to consider in assessment (Mucherah, 2008). Students who are motivated in some way to read at school or at home, often score higher on certain standardized tests (Mucherah, 2008). “ Students who had high self-efficacy in reading, enjoyed reading challenging material, and who enjoyed reading different kinds of literary material [are the ones who] performed better”(Mucherah, 2008, p. 229). However, those who were motivated to read more for social reasons did not do as well on the test. Mucherah (2008) points out that reading motivation itself does not necessarily predict performance on a standardized test in reading. While reading for personal interest does not improve performance on standardized tests, reading challenging materials and different types of books does have a positive effect on reading tests (Mucherah, 2008). Even though motivation to read might increase achievement, students should not always be rewarded for reading. Teachers may want to increase intrinsic motivation by varying the ways students are rewarded. “ Further understanding of middle school students’ reading motivation will contribute to the design of classroom and school contexts that expand and strengthen readers’ intrinsic reading motivation and the benefits it provides” (Mucherah, 2008, p. 230).

Some critics believe there are several faults with standardized testing. Often these tests mainly assess “ rote memorization and dead facts” (Eisner, 1999, p. 568). Eisner believes that it can be difficult for standardized tests to assess a student’s ability to think critically or problem solve. This type of testing only tells how well the students can store and retrieve information, but not apply the information to different settings (Eisner, 1999). Because of these limitations, a learning assessment model based on learning

experiences and projects in the classroom may reflect a more individualized assessment.

Other critics of criterion referenced testing, such as Dr. Douglas Reeves, believe that such testing can be detrimental. During the assessment and evaluation symposium Dr. Reeves delivered a presentation titled, “ Toxic Grading Practices.” In the presentation, he described how zeros, big final exam, and using an average for a final grade are harmful to students. Dr. Reeves (2008) strongly advocated teachers to make students accountable by making them complete the assignment rather than giving a zero for the missed work. Dr. Reeves point out his approach by making the student “ get her done” students complain all the way to b honor roll. The thanks for his type of teaching style comes years later. Jay McClain, principal at Bailey’s Elementary School in Fairfax County, Virginia has similar opinions. In a podcast on PBS. org he explained, “ Data is dangerous if it’s not data that is built on what you feel is important to look at” (2008). When students take a test once a year and you get the results back later, it does not help the teacher to go back and retest. The education reform bill known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), has intensified accountability for teachers. The focus should be on the whole child rather than on what the child has been taught. McClain believes that NCLB is too restrictive and does not allow for individual expression (Renaud, 2006).

Throughout history, there have been many different ways to educate students. Progressive Education philosophers include John Dewey and William Heard Kilpatrick (Gutek, 2009). Both Dewey and Kilpatrick believed that education should be more than textbooks. Students should be engaged

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in learning and teachers should consider different aspects of the individual child. Kilpatrick was a strong advocate for a project-based learning environment. Students had hands-on opportunities and developed important skills such as cooperation and analytical thinking (Guttek, 2009). The teaching method developed by John Dewey incorporated some similar concepts. Dewey believed that students learned best through the scientific method and experiences within their environment (Guttek, 2009). Both philosophers seem to embrace a portfolio type of assessment that would more accurately reflect individual learning. Because progressive education ideas center on being engaged, portfolio assessment would closely fit with these ideals.

Accountability has become an increasingly integral part of education. Most states in the United States embrace a system of accountability for teachers and schools. As the accountability system increases, standardized and norm-referenced testing seems to be the assessments of choice for data collection. This method is generally better for collecting data that compares one student to another or one school to another. Many aspect of education are tied to the results of testing. Funding for schools and teacher salary is often a large component of the data results. Freedom of expression and individualism appear to be lost when schools embrace numerical growth rather than student growth. Each assessment method has a purpose and a specific use. Finding the right balance can be difficult, but is important in order to accurately reflect progress and individual growth.

Standardized tests

often do not reflect a student's reading ability, but rather a limited set of subskills (Farr,

1992). Standardized test result in math can't tell you on two learners with the same score if one had problem with subtraction versus one careless add numbers wrong. The pressure of accountability is also encouraging teachers, to focus their

instruction on preparing their students for these tests (Elmore, 1991). This preparatory

instruction (teaching the test or teaching to the test) often has little to do with how

students learn or with preparing students to effectively demonstrate the knowledge and

skills they have acquired.

The use of portfolio-based assessment allows

students to reflect, evaluate, and set future learning goals by thoughtfully selecting

samples from different areas to be included (Tierney, 1992). Implementation of such

authentic assessments allows parents, teacher, administrators, students, and other

stakeholders to be provided with directly observable products and understandable

evidence concerning student performance (Widgeons, 1990).

portfolios must not only reflect teacher and/or school-based

standards, but also student interest and individual learning styles.

Yancey (1992) supports the notion that portfolios should be designed by teachers

and students. The author also states that a periodic portfolio review by which one can

learn more about teaching and learning is a necessity.

. Parents and parental

feedback are a vital part of this type of assessment approach. In order to work and be

effective, parents must play a major role. In addition, goals for a particular session must

reflect philosophy as well as the individual needs of children.

Conclusion

To conclude, human capital development is used to maximize business profit by developing its employees to perform at their full potential to accomplish the goals of the organization. “ Training and development is an investment in

the workforce, which enable the organization to position itself for success in future". (Buhler, 2002) It is more cost effective to cross train and educate team members, than recruit other candidates. Employees feel job satisfaction when they are involved in the decision making process. Some areas I feel are important incorporating performance and evaluation, training and development, and value added HR.