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Why are so many Black, Hispanic and White students lacking basic skills such as reading and arithmetic? Why do so many of them drop out of school?

There are many reasons, but the public education system is the primary cause as it is no longer effective and needs to be drastically modified or replaced. I just saw the results of this year's California achievement tests. The scores declined for all students but the Blacks and Latinos had the biggest. In math 69% of Asians met the state's target, 49% of the whites, 21% of the Latinos and 16% of the blacks. This is after more than a decade of educators focusing on helping black and Latino to perform as well as the white and Asians students. The achievement pattern of students in California isn't unique as the same student achievement pattern appears in all the states. Could it be that the methods and programs don't work especially for low income whites and minorities? I don't think there is any question the current education isn't working.

I worked for 13 years as a psychologist, teacher and administrator in rich, poor, all white and in integrated schools. I spent over 20 years as Professor, the Head of Elementary & Secondary Teacher Education Program, and Director of Research, Head of Education Administration and Interim Dean of Education in a State University in the 4th largest city in the country. When I started the student body and faculty was almost 100 percent Black. To my knowledge I was the first White administrator. As I had done in the public school system I helped integrate the schools in the university.

During my tenure I worked with thousands of students and teachers. A large percent were inner-city students and teachers. We also had one of the largest foreign student enrollments. We had students from 63 countries with a large percent from Africa and the Middle East. What bothered me was that the Blacks from Africa tended to do better than the American Blacks. I wanted to know why so I started doing some research to determine why the difference in American Blacks American Blacks and African Blacks.

Here is what I found with the college students. The African Black students had good academic skills, reading, and writing, and math, study habits and were highly motivated. The few American Black students with similar skills did almost as well, but most lacked the motivation which affected their achievement.

Here is what I found with public students in public schools. Inner city schools had a much higher percent of Blacks and Hispanic students than White. There was little difference in the academic education programs in inner city and suburban schools. The text books and teaching methods were very similar. The few motivated Black, Hispanic and White students from similar backgrounds, socio-economic status and intelligence showed little difference in achievement. Most Black and Hispanic students were from a much lower socio-economic background and with little experience and motivation and parental support. White students from and with similar conditions did about the same.

The public school's education programs were rigid and geared to students with the academic ability to follow the program. In most cases once a student got behind he is left behind. The major problem was and still is that the traditional education program wasn't and isn't geared for a large percent of the pupils and students, the slow learners

and gifted.

Most schools had remedial programs but few had programs for the gifted. Few of the remedial programs were effective in helping able students overcome gaps in their development. Most of these were structured more for slow learners than for remediation. The students dropping out of school were often those that were so far behind academically they had no hope of succeeding. What was surprising was the large number of bright students dropping out. They felt that the programs were boring and weren't helping them.

Is there a realistic solution to the problem? Yes it is a program which insures that every student that has the ability will learn to read, write and do simple math. The program is the Objective Diagnostic Prescriptive Program which was based on Strong's Education Model. The program developed by Dr. Strong's Team. It evolved from the 3 year research and development program, "Teacher Development Program" which involved 14 school districts and 79 schools. The program showed that most students, regardless of race, background or ability, can and will learn the academic skills necessary to be independent and meet the requirements of most jobs. The Program was found to financial feasible, produced superior academic achievement and could be implemented into any education program.

Why isn't the Program used? Most people don't know about it as it was developed in the 70s. It requires most teachers to be retrained as their role will be changed from a dispenser of information to a professional educator who has the diagnostic skills for individual analysis and breadth of knowledge of programs and technology to be able to prescribe a program or strategy to meet individual's needs.

Where can one find more information about this program? There is a website "**strongoneducation.net**" which provides information on the development, implementation, operation, and results of the program. Click on Strong's Papers and scroll down to Teacher Development Program for information on how the program trained teachers and other items.