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Underachievement among students in the faculty
of arts and humanities (girls section)
King Abdul Aziz University
A Case Study

By

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Abstract

Today's students live in an ever-changing technologically based world where the parameters of knowledge are redefining themselves almost daily. Research has clearly shown that young people who possess confidence, persistence, organization, and getting along skills are likely to achieve to the best of their ability and possess good mental health in comparison to under-achieving, unhappy young people who have not acquired these capabilities. There is a need to focus a lot more on developing within students these characteristics that are essential for a student to not only develop their academic potential, but to perform at their very best in all fields of life. Conversely, under achievement, which creates low self-esteem, could be the underlying cause of generally failing to cope. The problem of underachievement has often been restricted to schools only and has been seldom addressed at the university level.

The present study was undertaken to understand the problem of under achievement in the faculty of Arts and Humanities (girls section) of King Abdul Aziz University

The objectives of the study were:

- To find which subject (major) has the most underachievers and why?
- What are the most common causes of underachievement?
- What are the necessary measures needed to prevent underachievement?

All the eight majors in the faculty of arts and humanities were included in the study. Underachievers were identified through the transcript record of students. Underachievers are considered those students whose

GPA is between 2 and 2.50. Students with a GPA less than 2.50 were identified from their transcripts and their academic progress was analyzed since entry into the university. results indicate that the highest number of underachievers are in the majors of History (120) and Islamic studies (80) followed by Geography, Sociology and Psychology. An analysis of the transcripts showed some characteristic problems of underachievers across majors as follows:

- Most of them had difficulties in the general subjects like Arabic language and Islamic studies in the first year.
- Students failed more in the subjects of English and Arabic in the first year.
- The subjects not cleared in the first year affected performance in the first year of majors chosen.
- The underachievers tend to be absent from lectures most of the time or withdraw from the semester.
- Some of the under achievers were identified as extreme cases who failed in all subjects in two consecutive semesters.
- Some of the under achievers failed to acquire nearly 50% of the credit hours she registered for.

A general conclusion of the study is that most of the majors need to be redesigned and made more practical and relevant to the present situation in the world. A more interdisciplinary approach focusing on developing skills needs to be adopted. Two important proposals are suggested which aim at improving the teacher's role from merely imparting knowledge to the overall well being of the student:

The first proposal is to develop organized teaching skills and student counseling programs and the second is to introduce a new major of Liberal Arts to resolve the issue of lack of interest in a major and giving students a wider choice.

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Introduction

A healthy and productive society of successful and happy young people resides in their positive mental make-up. Today's students live in an ever changing technologically based world where the parameters of knowledge are redefining themselves almost daily. Research has clearly shown that young people who possess confidence, persistence, organization, and getting along skills are likely to achieve to the best of their ability and possess good mental health in comparison to underachieving, unhappy young people who have not acquired these capabilities. Recent research conducted in the western countries (Bernard 2005) also found that young

people with achievement problems often have behavioral problems. In comparison with the relatively normal achieving problem-free young people underachievers also demonstrate, higher degrees of anxiety/low self-esteem, general work avoidance, general disorganization, and anger/rebelliousness.

Review of Literature

The underachieving students show a significant gap between their ability and what they actually produce and achieve in school. They are usually not working up to their potential and for a variety of reasons they continue to do much less than they are capable of doing. The problem of underachievement has often been restricted to schools only and has been seldom addressed at the university level. Studies (Coil, 2001) comparing underachievers and high achievers in schools, reported a significant difference in the self-concept, school attitudes, and out-of-school pursuits is shown between the two groups. Underachievers usually have low self-esteem and a fear of failure. Behaviorally, they are often described as "immature" or as having "behavior problems". Most lack motivation for schoolwork and say that they are bored with school. Therefore the big question of underachievement isn't what, but WHY?

Sometimes underachievement is attributed to teachers for having impossible standards while others may have low expectations of their students. Other teachers are too strict or repressive and lack patience with students who ask difficult questions, do not conform, are divergent rather than convergent thinkers, etc. Either way, underachievement can result. Gifted students may also become underachievers when the grade level curriculum does not challenge them and meet their needs.

According to Coil, (2004) underachievers often come from homes where there is considerable instability within the family unit. Well meaning parents who place a high priority on educational achievement sometimes put too much pressure on their children to achieve in school. "Counter-identification" may result, where a parent overly identifies with the successes and failures of a child. In this situation, the parent may almost be living his or her life through the child, and the child may feel he or she could never live up to parental expectations. Many times, one child in such a family will become a high achiever while the other will rebel against the pressure to succeed and will be an underachiever.

Learning is an activity of one who learns. It may be intentional or random; it may involve acquiring new information or skills, new attitudes, understandings or values. Education can be defined as "the organized, systematic effort to foster learning, to establish the conditions and to provide the activities through which learning can occur. So we do not learn just facts. We also learn attitudes and values. Bloom (1981) identified three main learning outcomes into three "domains:" Affective outcomes (Feelings, preferences, values), Psychomotor (physical and perceptual activities like rate of learning), and Cognitive (Thinking, evaluating and synthesizing information and level achievement). Within each domain are different factors described below that influence these student learning outcomes and achievement.

1. Quality of Instruction (teacher effectiveness),
2. Cognitive Entry Characteristics of Students (e.g., reading comprehension, cognitive style, pre-requisite knowledge, meta-cognitive skills), and

3. Affective-motivational Entry characteristics of students (e.g. attitudes towards math or a healthy academic self-concept)

Thus, according to Bloom student achievement is directly influenced by both the cognitive entry skills that a student brings with him and the motivation to achieve along with a healthy attitude to learning. These in turn interact with the learning tasks and instructional method to determine the overall level of student achievement (Figure 1)

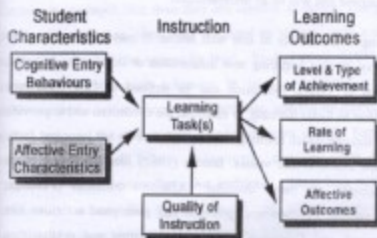


Figure 1 Bloom's Model

Students who are achieving to the best of their ability possess high amounts of the following characteristics: Confidence, Persistence, Organization and Getting Along. There is a need to focus a lot more on developing within students these characteristics that are essential for a

student to not only develop their academic potential, but to perform at their very best in all fields of life. These characteristics determine among other things the extent of student engagement in their academic work as well as their motivation. Conversely, under achievement which creates low self-esteem could be the underlying cause of generally failing to cope (Barnard, 2005).

Adnan Hamza Zahid (2005) has explored the problem of under achievement among engineering students where he found the major reasons related to students as:

- Lack of skills in creative thinking.
- Inadequate basic skills and knowledge at school level.
- Lack of second language.
- Inability to adapt and cope with the university environment.
- Lack of motivation and interest in academic work due to no clear goals
- Students do not adhere to the study plan.

Some of the external reasons of underachievement identified by the study were:

- Teaching styles where teachers do not stimulate the analytical thinking and research abilities of the students and depend more on handouts.
- Lack of practical application
- No job prospects
- Family problems

The present study was undertaken to further understand the problem and suggest relevant programs for dealing with it in general and in particular in the King Abdul Aziz University

Statement of the Problem

To identify the causes of underachievement in the faculty of Arts and Humanities (girls section) of King AbdulAziz University

The objectives of the study are:

- To find which subject (major) has the most underachievers and why?
- What are the most common causes of underachievement?
- What are the necessary measures needed to prevent underachievement?

Importance of the Study

Under achievement in itself is a source of low self esteem which in turn affects the overall ability of a person to deal with other problems in life effectively. College campuses are places where scholarly pursuits occur solely for the sake of learning but the economic structure of society also pressures colleges to be a place where career training and preparation for life's challenges occurs.

There is a need to identify and deal with problems of underachievement among girls in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to encourage higher education.

It was also observed by the researcher, as a teacher of educational psychology, that there is a lack of appropriate attitude, if not rejection, by teachers to apply student counseling. It was also reported in the National

newspaper that students have expressed a lack of understanding and counseling in universities. This has been attributed to the following:

- Teachers having a full teaching load.
- Research is only undertaken for promotion.
- The students are either not aware or not motivated to seek help.
- The teacher student relation is restricted only to the classroom.
- Both teachers and students do not perceive university education as an opportunity for overall development of a student.

This study will also directly help in understanding the problems associated with underachievement and developing strategies to deal with it. Additionally, the need for international accretion and preparing our students for a global market makes it imperative that we identify some important areas in the teaching system that need to be improved which will also help develop training programs and workshops to increase teaching and learning skills.

This study aims to:

- Identify the major reasons of underachievement in students from the College of Arts and Humanities.
- Apply student counseling to overcome underachievement and also make the student aware of the broader goals of education and their responsibility in developing themselves by active participation both within and outside the university.
- Suggest a holistic practical program of counseling to be implemented by teachers.

Research Questions

- What is the percentage of underachievement since 2005 in all the eight majors in the College of Arts & Humanities?

- What are the major socio-psychological causes of underachievement?
- Determine the academic difficulties that students face.

Definition of Key terms:

1. **Underachievement:** Students with GPA of 2.50 or below.
2. **Academic/student counseling:** involves meeting with an academic professional to have ones academic strengths and weaknesses assessed.
3. **Affective characteristics:** Characteristics of Students (e.g. attitudes, emotions, motivation and a healthy academic self-concept).
4. **Cognitive entry behavior:** Characteristics of Students (e.g., reading comprehension, cognitive style, pre-requisite knowledge, meta-cognitive skills).

Methodology

Sample: All the underachievers (365 students) from eight majors in the faculty of arts and humanities were included in the study. Underachievers were identified through the transcript record of students. Underachievers are considered those students whose GPA is between 2 and 2.50. While interventions for improvement could be made for those above 2 those who were below a GPA of 2 were considered beyond rescue.

Tools of the study:

- o Transcripts of GPAs of the students under 2.50.
- o Interviews with underachieving students to collect personal and background information, to identify the reasons for low grades.
- o Interviews with the concerned teachers.

Limitations of the study:

- The study was limited to the students from the eight majors of the faculty of Arts and Humanities at the King Abdul Aziz University.
- In applying student counseling the researcher developed, through lectures and informal meetings, among teachers both the awareness and the importance of understanding student

needs and problems and methods of dealing with underachievement. No program was specifically designed

Procedure

Firstly, students with a GPA less than 2.50 were identified from their transcripts and their academic progress was analyzed since entry into the university.

Two cases have been given as examples of how the transcripts were analyzed.

Case No. 1 Student No. 9910721

The student began in the academic year 1998/1999. She registered for 150 hours in 13 semesters. She acquired 84 credit hours with a GPA of 2.3 with a loss of 66 hours. Her grades are shown below in the Figure 2 (case 1). A further analysis of her transcript showed that she has not been a regular student although she never withdrew formally from any semester of study. It also revealed that in two semesters she failed in all subjects despite the fact that she was not given a DN or denied from attending the final exam for lack of attendance.

Case No. 2 student 0100771

This student began in 2000/2001. She took 9 semesters and registered for 128 hours. She gained 102 credit hours with a GPA of 2.42. Figure 3 shows that she got mostly 'D' and 'C' grades and very few 'B' in both majors and other subjects. An analysis of the transcript showed that this student failed twice in subjects outside her major like Islamic studies and Statistics.

Figure 2: Grades of Case 1

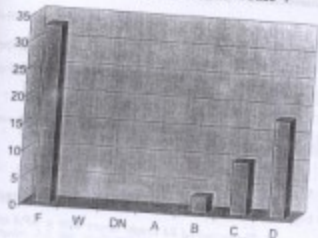
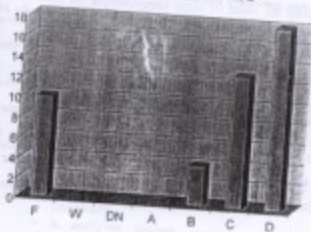


Figure 3: Grades of Case 2



Secondly, the under achieving students were interviewed to investigate more deeply into the case as well as to confirm the available written information.

Thirdly the teachers were interviewed to understand some extreme cases. For example some students who failed a subject more than five times despite taking the same subject with different teachers.

Fourthly, the researcher helped the instructors in the eight Departments to apply student counseling. Confidential counseling is provided free of charge in a private setting. The teacher/counselors worked sensitively and respectfully with students to assist them to identify and resolve their problems or concerns. When necessary, counselors referred students to the appropriate service or agency in the community for further assistance.

Results and Discussion

An initial survey of the eight majoes in the faculty of Arts and Humanities in the academic year of 2005 revealed the following results:

The results in Table 1 indicate that the highest number of underachievers are in the majoes of History (120) and Islamic studies (80) followed by Geography, Sociology and Psychology. An analysis of the transcripts showed some characteristic problems of underachievers across majoes as follows:

- Most of them had difficulties in the general subjects like Arabic language and Islamic studies in the first year.
- Students failed more in the subjects of English and Arabic in the first year.
- The subjects not cleared in the first year affected performance in the first year of majoes chosen.

- The underachievers tend to be absent from lectures most of the time or withdraw from the semester.
- Some of the under achievers were identified as extreme cases who failed in all subjects in two consecutive semesters.
- Some of the under achievers failed to acquire nearly 50% of the credits hours she registered for.

Some common concerns identified among students are feeling worried, anxious, stressed or depressed, having relationship/family difficulties, assault/abuse, anger management, grief, financial problems or failure/underachievement in their studies

Table 1 Descriptives of under achievers according to Majors

Major	No.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Percentage
Geography	40	2.28	0.15	11%
Sociology	33	2.27	0.14	9%
Psychology	29	2.29	0.15	8%
History	120	2.29	0.13	33%
Islamic Studies	82	2.34	0.18	23%
European Lang.	19	2.28	0.14	5%
Library Sciences	23	2.28	0.13	6%
Arabic	19	2.29	0.14	5%
Total	305	2.28	0.15	100%

An investigation based on the majors revealed that in the Department of History the most important reason was lack of interest in the subject. This is obviously because the major does not have any relevance to the job market except in schools where it has reached a saturation point. Most of the under achievers in History reported that they accept it only when they fail to get

into the major of their choice either because of a low GPA or because the registration is full.

In the major of Islamic Studies it was found that under achievement was high in the first year of the major and improved by the time the students reached the fifth or sixth semester perhaps because the students adapted themselves to the university environment.

In the social sciences all three majors, geography, sociology and psychology involve certain courses, like Statistics which require scientific reasoning and Terminology in English. It was found that most of the under achievers attributed their low GPA to frequent failings in these subjects.

Interviews with underachieving students revealed that some of the causes of under achievement are either due to the nature of the subject or the lack of adjustment of the student to the academic demands of the university. Failing frequently, in some cases 5 to 6 times in a single subject, calls for an intervention policy to deal with such cases. Under achievement has also been attributed to family problems and ill health besides psychological reasons like fear of exams (anxiety) or lack of rapport with teachers.

Students were also asked to give suggestions regarding how they could be helped to overcome their academic situation. Some important suggestions were:

- Tests should contain questions in different forms (short essay type, objective etc.)
- Students known for having test anxiety should be given other opportunities to prove themselves.
- More than one teacher should teach a course.
- Teachers should be more understanding of the social and personal problems that prevent a student from achieving to the best of her ability.

The problem of underachievement is also considered as an undesirable consequence of a weak student teacher relationship. Therefore it is considered imperative that teachers develop more creative approaches and help students realize their potential. The old tried and true methods of instruction no longer are by themselves sufficient and effective tools for teaching. The learning process has changed and teachers have been challenged to change as well, or be left behind. Teachers also need to become more aware of the research that clearly identifies the "attitudinal-affective-motivational" characteristics of students as one critical factor in determining student success in their academic work. There are several questions that serve the purpose of clarifying just what goals the teacher wishes to accomplish:

- What specific knowledge am I trying to impart to my students?
- What value will my students gain from mastering this knowledge?
- What are my expectations for them as they are learning?
- What responses am I looking for from my students?

Aims of the Follow-up study

The findings of the study were communicated to the teachers of all departments. The researcher conducted workshops for each department in order to develop an awareness of the problem of underachievement and also how to deal with it by applying student counseling.

A follow-up of the study was conducted in the academic year 2006 in order to assess the effects of developing awareness among the teachers about student underachievement and applying student counseling. Table 2 shows that there is a considerable decrease in the number of under achievers in four majors; sociology, psychology, history and Islamic studies. This is attributed

mainly to the awareness on the part of the students regarding their responsibility towards themselves. Moreover, the interest shown by teachers in the welfare of the student through counseling was also perhaps a contributing factor in the decrease of under achievers. A slight increase is observed in the majors of the European languages and library Science. A sizable increase of under achievers in the majors of geography and Arabic language indicates a strong need to improve student counseling. The increase in these two majors was found to be due to failing in the general subjects which perhaps affected their overall performance in the major. The follow up investigation also revealed that there were no underachievers among graduating students. This is mainly due to student counseling and also perhaps because students generally are more adapted and tend to improve their GPA by the sixth or seventh semester realizing the importance of graduating with a respectable grade.

Table 2 Percentage of under achievers in the follow up study 2006

	2005/6	2006/7
Geography	11	21
Sociology	9	5
Psychology	8	5
History	33	28
Islamic Studies	23	16
European Lang.	5	7
Library Sciences	6	8
Arabic	5	10
Total	100%	100%

General suggestions

In order to prevent the under achievement syndrome it is considered imperative to adopt the following strategies:

1. Teachers should adopt a broader perspective of teaching and learning by not limiting themselves to academic goals. The focus should be on identifying students who need special attention and helping them overcome their problems so that they are in a receptive and motivated state of mind to benefit from learning.
2. Tests should be constructed in an increasing order of difficulty where the first 50% of the questions should be solvable by about 70% of the students.
3. Tests for improvement to be included in the final exam.
4. A committee should be established to investigate special cases like frequent failures and other cases where students are not able to complete the course due to personal reasons.
5. In subjects which require mathematical or other scientific skills an extra hour a week should be allotted for students who need a different approach of teaching.
6. In order to increase interest, subjects should be made less theoretical and more relevant to the present technological changes and information needs.
7. Studying in small groups or one-on-one with friends helps elevate some of the anxiety related to grades. Teachers pair students in study or work groups. This helps students find encouragement and support from others.

The freshman year of college, as also observed by Adnan (2005) is often difficult because students come with a lack of cognitive skills, like problem solving, critical thinking, and proficiency in English language. After a year of struggle, however, an informational base has been created which makes further learning easier. Under achievement should be dealt with at school level. In fact the final year of school (year 12) should prepare students for either higher education or job oriented skills. This requires the subjects, in the last year of school, to be highly focused. For example

subjects like English, computers and accounting should be emphasized more than pure literary subjects like grammar. We need learner centered programs which means that the emphasis is more on what activities the learners will be doing rather than what the instructor will be doing to achieve the goal of learning. Presently it has been observed that most subjects are taught without much consideration for practical application. The instruction often assumes a pattern of talk, you listen and take notes. Emphasis is on the parts of the subjects the teacher likes best or knows most about with no opportunities to practice skills needed to accomplish a job.

The best way, as described by "Teacher expectation and student achievement program" (TESA, 2000), in order to ensure active participation is to plan for overt learning activity, which means:

Well designed courses:

- Clear objectives.
- Relevant material.
- Properly sequenced.
- Active, relevant student participation.

Qualified instructor:

- Relates well.
- Able to teach.
- Knows the subject.

Thus, we need instructors to spend time designing learning activities to maintain active involvement of learners. The focus is on how to provide learners with information and practice effectively. The eight basic characteristics of effective instructors as identified by TESA (2000) are:

- 1- Gain the learner's attention.
- 2- Present learning objectives.
- 3- Review knowledge and skill requisites to the lesson.
- 4- Present informational content of the lesson.
- 5- Elicit learner response (provide practice).

- 6- Provide prompt feedback.
- 7- Provide for assessments of learner progress.
- 8- Provide for job transfer and reinforcements of skill.

Specific Suggestions

This research aimed at understanding the nature and causes of under achievement. A general conclusion is that most of the majors need to be redesigned and made more practical and relevant to the present situation in the world. A more interdisciplinary approach focusing on developing skills needs to be adopted. Two important proposals are suggested which aim at improving the teacher's role from merely imparting knowledge to the overall well being of the student:

The first proposal is to develop organized teaching skills and student counseling programs and the second is to introduce a new major of Liberal Arts to resolve the issue of lack of interest in a major and giving students a wider choice.

Proposa' for Developing Teaching Skills

Both teachers and students are frustrated and disillusioned. Teachers are challenged daily by students who don't seem interested in learning. Teachers struggle with discipline issues, and with meeting the needs of students at widely differing ability/achievement levels. Students are discouraged, told they must learn material they don't perceive as applicable to their lives, bored, and starting to believe that they are failures or stupid. Many are labeled at-risk, learning disabled, underachieving, or simply trouble. There is no doubt that home and social factors can have an enormous impact on achievement. Many students come to the classroom facing problems that cannot be fixed by changes in instruction. Teachers are

not psychologists and social workers, and issues from outside of school often negatively impact students' ability to learn. On the other hand, some clear assumptions of this study are that classroom practice plays a role in both underachievement and achievement, and that changing instruction to better meet the needs of underachieving students can help reverse negative achievement patterns. Further, classroom practice is one of the few factors impacting achievement over which teachers have direct control.

One of the most persistent questions facing individual teachers is, "How do I motivate all students to learn?" The key idea of motivation is getting people to do something. Within an educational setting, the desired outcome is learning. The key components of optimal learning are conceptual understanding and the ability to use knowledge flexibly; so the goal of motivating students does not stop with simply getting students to participate in class activities, but with developing conceptual understanding and the flexible use of knowledge. Ideally, this learning would become self-directed and self-regulated (Mike Muir, 2001).

Educators often speak of improving classroom climate, closing the achievement gap, collaboration, teacher empowerment, high expectations, and raising self-esteem. Usually our concept of improvement involves fixing someone but the surest way to create change is to change ourselves. A behavioral change staff development program for all educators in all subject areas is designed to modify the way teachers interact with students through heightened awareness of how perceptions affect their expectations.

It is suggested that every teacher attend a workshop to be conducted by the department of psychology during the beginning of the annual summer vacation. Each workshop will be for a period of three days and attendance is

mandatory. The certification of attendance will be recorded in the teachers performance appraisal file.

The workshop will aim at the following:

1. **Develop among teachers the belief that:**

- All students can learn.
- Students learn best when challenged by high standards.
- Proficiency in the English language is desirable for both teachers and students.
- Teaching and learning are to be accommodated to the needs of the individual.
- Under achievement in a student is the responsibility of the teacher. (this is because it affects the overall development of the student)

2. **Experience and Context**

Understanding what motivates learning is based on the assumption that learning is an active endeavor, and that learning builds on what the learner already knows. This is based on the notion that knowledge is the result of a learner's activity rather than that of the passive reception of information or instruction.

3. **Interest and Goals:**

What drives our learning? What motivates students to learn some material and not other material? Many motivation theories distinguish between internal and external motivating factors. According to Lepper (1988) a student who is intrinsically motivated undertakes an activity "for its own sake, for the enjoyment it provides, the learning it permits, or the feelings of accomplishment it evokes." The mind searches for answers to questions that arise from the individual's interests or goals, and tends to ignore things that don't relate to those questions and curiosities. It is easy to see that students

who perceive that the subject is interesting or matches their personal goals are more likely to achieve than students who do not.

4. **Autonomy and Choice**

Teachers can do many things to try to make learning more intrinsically motivating for students, but it is not possible to do this for every person all the time. How can educators motivate students to learn when they are not intrinsically interested in learning? The work people do in the real world is often regulated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. People need to learn and do things which they may not find interesting or aligned with their goals. Under what conditions will students learn when they are not intrinsically motivated? Students in classrooms with autonomy-supportive teachers displayed more intrinsic motivation, and more perceived competence and self-esteem than did students in classrooms with controlling teachers. When teachers are pressured or controlled by administrators, or the system in general, they are more likely to control their students (Deci, Spiegel, Ryan, Koester, & Kauffman, 1982). Teachers' beliefs about students' levels of motivation also impact whether they support autonomy or attempt to control students, and can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy with regard to motivation (Deci, et. al., 1991).

5. **Learning Styles**

A long held assumption about learning is that some children learn well, and others do not; some students are bright and others are slow. This assumption is based, in part, on the idea that there is one general intelligence (often measured by IQ tests, and referred to as the "g" or the general factor), that people possess in varying degrees, and that we cannot essentially change through educational interventions. There is growing evidence that there is no single way to be smart. Gould (1996) shows how IQ testing grew from

invalid assumptions and research procedures, and how data supporting g can be interpreted differently to show multiple intelligences.

6. The Student/Teacher Relationship

Students need to feel safe and respected before they will learn. The importance of relationship, trust, and respect in the classroom is often ignored. Emerick's study (1992) found that underachieving students "expressed a need for personal involvement with and respect for the abilities of those directing their education" Whitmore (1980) advocates for supportive strategies that help a student feel more like they are in a "family" than a "factory." How teachers make students feel about themselves and their abilities will also impact achievement. Students' beliefs about their abilities determine how they feel, think, and behave (Bandura, 1993; Schunk, 1989; Weiner, 1984, 1985). Whether students attribute their successes or failures to their effort (changeable) or ability (unchangeable) will impact their achievement (Weiner, 1984, 1985).

7. Student Counseling

The following are the steps that need to be adopted for preventing underachievement through counseling.

1. Identification of students prone towards underachievement in the first year of university.
2. Helping the student understand the importance of developing the needed skills.
3. Help the student discover her own strengths and weaknesses
4. Give the student honest feedback on her performance. For example discussing the mistakes in a test.
5. Finally, the teacher evaluates herself as a counselor with respect to each student. This evaluation Performa was adapted from Rashid Bin Mohamad Al Shoolan's *Supervising techniques and educational terminology* (center of educational intervention; Ministry of Education, UAE) is given below

At the end of the training/workshop the teacher will develop the following abilities:

- ✓ The teacher learns how to provide an opportunity for all students to respond or perform in classroom learning situations.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to give feedback to students about their classroom performance.
- ✓ The teacher learns the significance of being physically close to students as they work.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to provide individual help to each student.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to praise the students' learning performance.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to use expressions of courtesy in interactions with students.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to allow the student enough time to think over a question before assisting the student or ending the opportunity to respond.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to give useful feedback for the students' learning performance.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to ask questions, give compliments or make statements related to a student's personal interests or experiences.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to provide additional information to help the student respond to a question.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to apply active listening techniques with students.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to touch students in a respectful, appropriate and friendly manner.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to ask challenging questions that require students to do more than simply recall information.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to recognize and accept students' feelings in a non-evaluative manner.
- ✓ The teacher learns how to stop a student's misbehavior in a calm and courteous manner.

Proposal for Liberal Arts Course

A liberal arts education refers to studies in a college or university intended to provide general knowledge and develop intellectual capacities by

studying a variety of subjects along with focusing on a subject of interest. A liberal arts education prepares students to work in a variety of jobs. This is different from other types of education where students develop professional or vocational skills for a specific job by studying one major. Students with a liberal arts education are prepared for today's evolving world of work.

Knowledge of many subject areas provides a cross fertilization of ideas, a fullness of mind that produces new ideas and better understanding. The greater the storehouse of knowledge, and the wider its range, the more creative one can be. As friend, spouse, and parent everyone is a teacher, sharing life's knowledge and understanding with another. In fact, any time two human beings get together, teaching and learning are going on. Attitudes, perceptions, understandings, generalizations, reasons, information—all these are exchanged even if not discussed.

Requirements for Liberal Arts

The liberal arts degree program consists of courses taken from all the available faculties in the university. No recruitment of new teachers. However, part time teachers may be required where there is an overload.

The first requirement is the involvement of all the faculties in KAAU which could contribute to the program:

- College of Arts and Humanities
- College of Home Economics
- College of Management and Economics
- College of Science
- Computer Science
- College of Nursing
- Center for Social work

Different programs can be developed wherein every program will focus on one of the above fields. For example if a student wishes to focus on psychology then the program will consist of 10 courses out of a total of 30 courses (3 credit hours per course) of psychology spread over 6 semesters. A chief coordinator for the Department of Liberal Arts with sub-coordinators in each faculty.

Certain courses will be the 'core' of every program. They are:

1. Computer skills.
2. Basis maths or statistics.
3. Health and nursing skills.
4. Social work

All the courses chosen from different fields will be those that help the student develop skills while gaining knowledge. Thus, the courses will be made more practical and relevant to everyday life and the type of job market available. Besides conducting research on social issues and problems students will be required to get a hands down experience in a place of work of their choice. For example a student may choose to work in a hospital administration or a school or a library or a bank for a period of one month.

Model Program : Liberal Arts

Focus Psychology	
	Credit hours = 3
1. General psychology	
2. Social Psychology	
3. Developmental Psychology	
4. Child psychology	
5. Educational psychology	
6. Mental Health	
7. Vocational psychology	
8. Special Education	
9. Counseling and guidance	
10. Psychological tests	
Total	30 hrs

Care Subjects	Credit hours
11. Computer	6
12. Maths /statistics	6
13. Administration and economics	6
14. Home economics	6
15. Library science	6
16. Sociology	9
17. Islamic studies	6
18. English conversation and writing	9
19. Health and Nursing	6
20. Geography	6
21. History	3
22. Arabic	6
23. Communication skills	3
24. Internet	3
25. Research methods	3
26. Field Research	3
27. Free choice	14
Total	98 Hours
Total	30 + 98 hrs = 128 hour

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