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Humanities MAMS 11th

10 October 2024

Wanna Be Wise, Wanna win the Prize, You Need To Be Specialized

Have you ever felt disengaged in a classroom? Have you ever felt as though you will never use a certain topic in real life? And most of all, have you felt as though you feel overloaded with the unrelated material you learn in school? It may be since you are studying in a generalized education system. A generalized education system in high school prioritizes exposing students to all subjects and broadening their skill set to allow them to be well-rounded. Although this may seem as a benefit of the system, it is what causes the massive shortfall in many students abilities, careers, and lives in general. It also has many other negative effects on the students which include deteriorating mental health, lack of a refined skill set, lack of a definitive future, and even the lack of success in future careers. Fortunately, all these major issues can be avoided by simply implementing a specialized education system. This would solve all the issues stated above and would provide many more benefits to the students within it. As a result, regardless of the few minor disadvantages it may appear to have, specialized education should be implemented in high schools in order to allow students to thrive in their respective fields while supplementing it with a better conditioned mental health.

The implementation of a specialized education system can greatly benefit the mental health of the students within it. As the acceptance rates of colleges significantly decrease each passing year, the pressure has mounted on the students and their schools to ensure that the next generation will succeed. Unfortunately, this excess amount of pressure can be exacerbated by a

lack of engagement and relevance in school, leading to a decline in mental health. However, this degradation of the mental state of high school students does not need to continue. A specialized education system can solve the two main causes for this mental health decline, relevance and engagement. Many high school students who have decided their college major “agree because when working on subjects [they] don’t like or [are] not interested in [,] it makes [them] feel like [they] [are] wasting [their] time. Like when [they] step into math class every single day knowing that [they] don’t like math, [they] feel a lack of motivation” (King). Unfortunately, this lack of motivation is a driving cause for a decline in mental health alongside a lack of engagement and relevance in classes. Classes are usually not engaging when they are not relevant to what a student wants to learn, which directly correlates with their choice of major. However, others argue that “there really isn’t any way around it – by eschewing the arts and choosing Stem subjects at 16, you are still, by definition, limiting your options. Perhaps not so much as regards future employment, though that is a factor too, but also, potentially, for your future happiness, intellectual growth and well roundedness as an individual” (Cosslett). Although it is true that by limiting the options of a student, it is possible that their happiness level could decline, considering the quality of these options is very important. The limited course options which a student has in this system would be significantly better for their mastery of a topic.

By limiting the number of different subjects in which a student takes classes, the time commitment to a single class can increase, therefore, allowing for a greater mastery of those subjects. As aforementioned, by limiting the number of different subjects in which a student must engage and take classes within, the quality of the student’s understanding of these dramatically increases. A perfect example of this is a student is “a hopeful computer science student, he should be given the choice to double-up in the subjects conducive for his excellence as a

computer scientist, such as math, computer science/programming, physics, economics, etc.” (Joshi). By only allowing each student to specialize in significantly fewer subjects, each student can double the amount of time that they can spend to master each subject. Not only does this significantly increase the time that each student can allocate to each subject, but it also significantly increases the effort that a student can put in to a specific subject. Doing so can allow for students to properly specialize by having a refined skill set in a subject which they plan to major in. This proactive “plan also allows students to attend whichever college corresponds to their major after graduating from high school” (Shih). In other words, students can easily choose a college which is renowned for a program the student wishes to major in. This can also be beneficial to the college education of students as it allows them to thrive in an environment where they belong, rather than being at a college where the values do not align with the students in any way. Such a college can also allow the students to progress in their work life with much more success as they are better prepared due to having attended a college with a very aligned focus.

The specialization of students during high school can also allow for more students to have a definite future. In the United States “20-50% of students enter college undeclared” (Best Colleges). This means that these students have yet to select a major although they have joined a college. This is a very high number of people who do not know what they will be doing this late into their career. This show that not only do students not know which major they plan on taking while in high school, but also show the same level of confusion upon entrance into college. This confusion often even seems to extend throughout a student’s tenure of an undergraduate program as “American students struggle to choose a major even in their latter years of college” (Shih). However, this problem can be entirely avoided with the implementation of a specialized

education system as “these [personalized] systems are based on the belief that declaring a major prior to entering high school” (Shih). As a result, it completely eliminates the possibility that a student could still be contemplating their major during college. This ensures that there is much more definition, stability, and direction involved with a student’s career. Ensuring this can also allow for the next generation to be able to have a better life after finishing their education. This can also be seen in many of the other developed countries in the world such as South Korea, Italy, Portugal, Austria, and more as they have much higher graduation rates than the OECD average (OECD). OECD is an organization which contains most of the developed countries in the world. In all four of these countries along with others, which consistently rank among the top few in the world in terms of graduation rate, “students sometimes as young as 10 are tracked for certain careers” (Schrager). These very high graduation rates show that the students in these systems are able to graduate into college much more often than those in a generalized education system, which in turn allows for them to have a more definite future. As expected, these countries with exceptional graduation rates

As a result, regardless of the few minor disadvantages it may appear to have, specialized education should be implemented in high schools to allow students to thrive in their respective fields while supplementing it with a better conditioned mental health. This sort of education system allows students to successfully build a definitive future that many other countries allow their students to have. This education system also refines a student’s skill set to only what is necessary for their major, increasing the quality and relevance of each class. As a result, students would also see a significant improvement in mental health.

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