

Assessing Students' Merits

We have long held that the present system of end-of-the-term external examinations is not indicative of a student's attainment. Various factors contribute to this, some of which may be the mood of the student at the time of sitting for an examination, his health, climatic and environmental conditions. A student naturally intelligent in his class-work may fail miserably in giving correct answers which are set for the purpose. The time factor alone can have an adverse effect on his results, as he may be apprehensive and unduly anxious about getting them down in the scheduled time. The more intelligent a student is, the more sensitive in most cases, to which this kind of test can act as a deterrent rather than an impetus to succeed.

Class teachers are in a much better position to assess the merits of their respective students, and reports based on their daily progress are more likely to be valid as to the knowledgeability and general intelligence of a student, than the definitive end-of-the-term examination. Qualified teachers too who are really interested in education will have some psychological knowledge to guide them, in assessing merits of their class students. The future career of any student should not be based on such slender or tenuous means as external examinations provide. You cannot sum up the capabilities of anybody in such a short duration of time.

What we need to do is to get the best brains working in the country's interest, and not the most superficial, and, for that purpose, a true assessment is needed of the mental progress that a student has made during the years of his study in the classroom. Many educationists would agree with this, as has done Dr. Abdul Haque, former Chairman of the Dhaka Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, whose article on this subject recently appeared and was repeated in this paper.