

A Plea For Student-Teacher Interaction

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I believe that some kind of reform in our educational system is drastically required. As an individual progresses from the elementary to the secondary and finally the university level, he becomes increasingly aware of the shortcomings of this system.

The main problem as I see it is the lack of student-teacher interaction. In all three levels, students meet in relatively large groups; in elementary and secondary schools classes are usually composed of thirty to forty students; at the university classes range anywhere from thirty to five hundred students. There is little doubt that in these large-group situations, the interaction between pupil and teacher is greatly restricted. Learning, which should be a very personal experience is impersonal and thus ineffective. It is ineffective, because the pupil cannot question, discuss, share, and communicate his ideas. These important aspects of learning can only exist in a small-group where each member of the group can be stimulated and stimulate others and where, each member can become actively involved in his learning. Learning is most effective when the individual is given this chance to "understand" what is being taught.

Considering the fact that ours is an age in which more and more individuals are continuing their education and going on to higher institutions of learning, the problem of large classes is very real. The idea of "breaking up" the large group into smaller conference groups for discussion purposes seems to be a step in the right direction. Unfortunately not all educators take advantage of such a system.

As it exists now, our system might be said to be a failure for most students never develop fully their capacity for learning or understanding and this I think is mainly the fault of the system. In the future, some form of change must be instituted and a more thorough and successful method of learning discovered.

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