Achievement Test Analysis

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Achievement tests comprise the formal and informal assessments administered to students at different points of learning. These tests are measures of student's knowledge and skills acquired over a given period of the learning. Formal tests include various standardized assessments such as the STAR early assessment, the Iowa Test of basic skills, and the American College Test (ACT). ACT is one type of standardized used to provide an accurate assessment of students learning comparable across students of the same learning grades. ACT scores are based on percentage, where aggregate and subject-based scores are expressed as a percentage.

The theoretical basis for standardized tests is the functionalism theory, which emphasizes individual capacities for future performance. The functionalist school of thought argues that schools are designed to train students to perform their societal functions.

Schools are the mechanisms of sorting and grouping students based on their measured abilities through standardized tests such as the ACT (Edwards, 2006). Therefore, standardized tests are designed to facilitate the grouping of students based on academic ability and job-related categories.

My ACT results from the four test scores (reading, English, mathematics, and science) indicate a composite score of 56%. These results are slightly above the average, and a pass mark score of 18 points needed to enter the college. These results imply that I have a 50% chance to score a B and above in collect exams and a 75% chance to score a C and above. However, the results came as a surprise because I expected higher scores than those I received. Since I am considering a college that requires these tests, gaining higher scores would give me confidence in my college learning. Nevertheless, the scores are enough to get me a chance as a student in the college.

I have faith in the ACT because it is standardized for students of college entry-level. The tests provide a metric for checking the quality of the curriculum. The test is also reliable because it comes from a neutral source and provides comparable data between schools and international schools. The test also instills massive pressure on learning and teaching as educators teach to the test to gain higher performance. However, the test may not reveal students' actual intellectual ability due to cultural factors, test anxiety, illness, and unfamiliarity with testing methods can adversely influence student's test scores (Borghans et al. 2016). Hence, a low score may not reflect an accurate knowledge about the subject in standardized tests. I propose that the interpretation of test scores should look deeper into these factors. Besides, I suggest doing away with multiple choice questions because they may not reflect students' actual ability. For example, an excellent writer could still struggle to select the correct answer in a multiple-choice punctuation and grammar questions. However, the same writer could excel in writing a logical and well thought out essay on literature they read in class. ACT scores are taken online, and computers make the best tool for carrying out these tests as it leaves no room for cheating compared to class-based testing using paper and pencil. However, paper and pencil can also be used for students who are not conversant with computers and the internet.

**References**

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