THE MUTUAL ROUTES OF MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 came strong and aggressive at all kinds of economic institutions including Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The pandemic actually exposed ailing management systems across the globe especially when human capital performance was measured away from the headquarters of the human resource managers. It is said in many occasions, "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it!" however, though this quote is attributed to Peter Drucker, it happens that he never actually said it. The aim of this writing is to shed light on the dilemma of assessment amid COVID-19 having in mind the wrongly quoted statement above, and the recommendation needed for HEIs to keep performance clear, authentic, reliable and measureable.

Keywords: Measurement, Performance, Management, Quality, Cost of Quality.

MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT

It contends that the requirement to "*measure*" any contemporary quality system "*relies heavily on measurement of several variables including: wastage, efficiency, performance, etc.*" (p. 508). So, it fits the notion that measurement goes hand in hand with the economics of quality, or simply put, "*high quality is a driver of economic performance*". Consequently, one must include the measurement of all aspects of an organization's resources being physical and human in order to accurately and thoroughly assist the control of its activities. Therefore, if we want to consider a higher education institute, then we need to recall the saying that most institutions rely on student-centric or learner-centric systems, though the aforementioned is controversial as it brings forward problems of implementation which leads to failure of the concept. However, Schweisfurth (2019) asserts that "*if we combine the right basis of learner centered education (LCE) with the evidence concerning teaching that stimulates learning, we can create a flexible set of principles (rather than prescriptions) that might be helpful in improving practice everywhere*" (Para 4).

In fact, states that: "*the imperative to 'measure' higher education outputs is part of managerialism*" and remarks that "the increase in managerialism in education has been fueled by the necessity to do more with less." Nevertheless, and according to Drucker (1986), "*Work implies not only that somebody is supposed to do the job, but also accountability, a deadline and, finally, the measurement of results —that is, feedback from results on the work and on the planning process itself.*" Worth noting that Zak (2013), stressed the human side of management of any institution by repeating Drucker's words, "*It is the relationship with people, the development of mutual confidence, the identification of people, and the creation of a community*".

Going back to education and educational institutions, and respecting the human factor [students and instructors] Schweisfurth (2019) asserts that there are 7 factors which lead to better success of a learner-centered system as depicted in Table 1, herein.

Table 1	
SEVEN PRINCIPLES TO MAKE CURRENT INSTRUCTOR PRACTICE MORE LEARNING-ORIENTED	
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.	Lessons should be engaging to students, motivating them to learn. Atmosphere and conduct reflect mutual respect between teachers and learners. Learning challenges build realistically on learners' prior knowledge. Authentic dialogue is used, including open questions. Curriculum is relevant to learners' lives and perceived future needs, in a language accessible to them. Curriculum is based on skills and attitudes but does not ignore content. Assessment follows these principles by testing a wide range of thinking skills.

Source: Schweisfurth, 2019.

Higher education institutions need to rely on its human elements being administrative and academics. Management have to know well who [and what talents] they have and at the same time they need to empower them. "*Empowerment, if achieved within institutions, creates a sense of ownership which is considered a booster of morale when dealing with human capital*" (Hejase, 2020). HEIs have to continuously train and develop their human elements to guarantee strong platform of efficiency and effectiveness. Lines of communication have to be open, transparent and flexible especially amid COVID-19 whereby almost all people are stressed, concerned, anxious and worried about the days to come. Consequently, HEIs also have to tolerate errors provided lessons learned are extracted from them. Having all the above, customers [as well as students] will encounter empathy, passion, flexibility, and an appropriate management system capable to provide focused instruction and capture proper outcomes.

Having instructors who are trained based on the lessons learned from previous semesters, will empower a fair assessment whereby a wide range of higher Bloom's taxonomy competencies are practiced while at the same time capitalizing on the lower level knowledge competencies. In fact, according to Rkein et al. (2020) HEIs, amid COVID-19 and the move towards e-learning, need to rely on upgraded methodologies whereby "*Formative Assessments must be highly considered and regarded in online learning. Online Formative Assessments (OFAs) take many forms including Quizzes, Blogs, Journals, Presentations, Assignments, Group Discussions, Debates, Peer Activities, etc.*" (p. 1). Moreover, Hejase et al. (2020); Smoke Ball (2020), stress as well supporting the management system with ICT as an integrated system which relies on a fully developed IT solution to consider many of the dimensions mentioned earlier.

Finally, as a recommendation, HEIs or businesses must act according to what Drucker (1986) had stressed in his book. He strongly stressed making work suitable for human beings [in this case human capital as well as students or customers]. "*Making the 'person' achieving implies consideration of the human being as an organism having peculiar physiological and psychological characteristics, abilities, and limitations, and a distinct mode of action... human resources are not things... they have personality, citizenship, control over whether they work, how much and how well, and thus requiring responsibility, motivation, participation, satisfaction, incentives and rewards, leadership, status, and function*". That's exactly what Drucker meant in his statement. Measurement is complete when humanely is performed.

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