

“PYGMALLION EFFECT”, DO TEACHERS EXPECTATIONS AFFECT LEARNERS’ PERFORMANCE AND ACHIEVEMENT? IT DOES!

by:

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Like all students, pupils from varied cultural backgrounds are vulnerable to teacher expectations. According to Rosenthal and Jacobson study of 1968 even reveal that teacher expectations, those based on erroneous information can have an impact on students' academic achievement. Commonly known as the Pygmalion Effect.

What does the Pygmalion effect refer to? The Pygmalion effect, sometimes referred to as the Rosenthal effect or the self-fulfilling prophesy, is the phenomena wherein raising people's expectations causes them to perform better. In an educational context, this effect can greatly impact the performance of learners.

Remarkable research conducted by psychologist Robert Rosenthal in 1965, teachers in primary schools were told that some of their pupils had been classified as late bloomers, (even though they had not yet demonstrated academic success). Teachers started treating these pupils differently from the other children. This comes as a result, as the "late bloomers" started to see themselves distinctively. They outperformed the other children by significantly for some reason. The teacher's high expectations had a tangible transformational impact on pupils.

It was first suggested by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) that teacher expectations could become self-fulfilling since student accomplishment reflected expectations. Once expectations have been established, teachers communicate them to pupils by making eye contact, smiling, and acting in a nice and encouraging manner. Low teacher expectations have been identified as a significant obstacle to the academic performance of those in need pupils.

It makes it difficult to set aside our biases about the aptitude of disadvantaged pupils, but doing so is an essential first step in effectively educating disenfranchised children. Teachers must approach the classroom with the conviction that every student can and will learn. Academic standards are being lowered, and children are being given easy, watered-down assignments, which sets the way for lower student accomplishment. Teachers shouldn't put up with students' poor performance and shouldn't set expectations based on racial background, family money, or any other non-performance-related criteria.

When teachers have high expectations for their students and convey those goals to them, whether explicitly or implicitly, students internalize those expectations and strive to reach them. Thus, it leads the students to perform well and achieve more in their studies. Low expectations, on the other hand, might have a detrimental impact on student performance because students may not feel inspired or supported to achieve their full potential.

There is no doubt that teacher enthusiasm and motivation influence student motivation and performance. If all of the teachers they encounter are externally motivated, students might conclude that learning in general is meaningless." (Csikszentmihalyi 1997:7)

It is important to note that the Pygmalion effect can work both positively and negatively. Negative expectations can lead to self-doubt, reduced motivation, and poorer performance. Therefore, it is crucial for educators to be aware of their own biases and strive to maintain high expectations for all students, providing them with the necessary support and resources to succeed.

References:

<https://gwern.net/doc/statistics/bias/1968-rosenthal-pygmalionintheclassroom.pdf>

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[What Is the Pygmalion Effect? | Definition & Examples \(scribbr.com\)](#)

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