The Complex Tapestry of Educational Success: Internal and External Factors IntertwinedEducational success, often measured by academic achievement, is a complex phenomenon influenced by a multitude of factors. It's not simply a reflection of individual effort or innate ability, but rather a product of intricate interactions between internal and external forces. While these forces may seem distinct, they are inextricably linked, creating a dynamic and often challenging landscape for learners.Internal Factors:Internal factors reside within the individual, encompassing their personal characteristics, motivations, and cognitive abilities. These factors can be broadly categorized as:Cognitive Abilities: This refers to an individual's mental capabilities, including memory, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. Students with strong cognitive abilities often excel academically, demonstrating higher levels of understanding and retention.Motivation and Learning Styles: Motivation, driven by intrinsic interests and goals, plays a crucial role in driving academic success. Learning styles, such as visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, can also influence how effectively an individual processes information.Personal Values and Beliefs: Students' values and beliefs, such as a strong work ethic, a desire for knowledge, and a belief in their own ability to learn, can significantly impact their academic performance.Self-Efficacy: A student's belief in their ability to succeed in their studies is a powerful internal factor. Individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to persevere through challenges and strive for academic excellence.External Factors:External factors encompass the environment surrounding the individual, including societal, cultural, and institutional influences. These factors can be broadly categorized as:Socioeconomic Status: Socioeconomic status (SES) profoundly impacts educational success. Students from families with higher SES often have access to better schools, resources, and opportunities, leading to higher levels of achievement. Family and Home Environment: The home environment, including parental involvement, educational expectations, and access to learning materials, can significantly influence a student's academic success. School Environment: The quality of the school, including resources, teacher quality, and school climate, can have a significant impact on student learning. Schools with supportive environments and experienced teachers often foster higher academic achievement.Peer Group: The influence of peers can be both positive and negative. Peers who value academic success can motivate and support their peers, while those who prioritize other activities may have a detrimental effect.Cultural and Societal Influences: Cultural perspectives on education, societal expectations for success, and access to opportunities can shape a student's educational journey.The Interplay of Internal and External Factors:While internal and external factors are distinct, they are not independent. They interact in complex ways, often reinforcing or mitigating each other's impact. For example, a student with strong cognitive abilities may face significant challenges in a school with limited resources, while a student from a disadvantaged background with high motivation and self-efficacy may still succeed despite the obstacles.Addressing Inequalities and Promoting Success:Recognizing the intricate interplay of internal and external factors is crucial for understanding and addressing educational inequalities. To create a more equitable educational system, interventions need to target both internal and external factors. This includes:Early Childhood Development: Investing in early childhood development programs can foster cognitive abilities and create a foundation for future success.Supportive School Environments: Providing schools with adequate resources, qualified teachers, and supportive learning environments can create a more equitable playing field.Family and Community Engagement: Encouraging family involvement and community partnerships can foster a sense of support and responsibility for student achievement.Addressing Socioeconomic Disparities: Policies focused on reducing poverty and promoting economic mobility can create a more equitable society and level the playing field for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.Conclusion:Educational success is not a simple equation of individual effort and ability. It's a complex tapestry woven together by a multitude of internal and external factors. Understanding this interplay is essential for creating a more equitable and supportive educational system that empowers all students to reach their full potential. By addressing both internal and external factors, fostering a supportive environment, and promoting equitable opportunities, we can create a society where educational success is not a matter of luck, but a right for all. Share this: Facebook Twitter Reddit LinkedIn WhatsApp Central to the effectiveness and efficiency of the education system and various education reforms is the identification of key internal and external factors of effective learning. To explain the causes of the achievement gap, researchers have explored genetic, socioeconomic, psychological, social-contextual, and emotional factors as possible explanatory variables. For example, Lee and Shute (2010) through their extensive literature review constructed a four-factor framework of personal and social-contextual factors targeted at K-12 education. In a different vein, through the synthesis of more than 800 studies of over 50,000 studies involving approximately 146,000 what he calls effect sizes, Professor John Hattie (2009) of University of Melbourne measured the contributions of various effects to quantifiable student achievements and classified the most significant ones into six major factor groups: the child, the home, the school, the teacher, the curriculum, and teaching approaches.Building on Hatties six factor framework and combining the latest research in the field, this paper explores both the internal and external factors of effective learning. Here, internal factors are defined as those that the student brings with him or her to a particular learning situation, including attitude, aptitude, perception, and motivation. External factors are those that characterize a particular learning situation. Both internal and external factors can be further divided into two classes: those that can be influenced in schools, such as parental expectations and classroom climates, and those that cannot, such as social and context effects. Hattie omitted discussion of the latter class of factors, even while admitting that they are equally, if not more, important than the former. This deficiency will be supplemented in this paper through the incorporation of the latest findings. A discussion of the rarely addressed issue of interaction and interrelation between the factors will follow.The ChildUnsurprisingly, the student himself is the single most important factor in student achievement, accounting for approximately 50% of the achievement variance (Hattie). Hattie identified six effects associated with the child: prior knowledge of learning; expectations; degree of openness to experiences; emerging beliefs about the value and worth to them from investing in learning; engagement; and the ability to build a sense of self from engagement in learning, and a reputation as a learner (Hattie 2009, p. 31).Student expectation is the single most important internal factor in achieving effective learning. In his synthesis, Hattie (undated) identified self-reported grades as the No. 1 influence in student achievement, with an effect size of 1.44, calculated from 209 studies and 305 effects (the cutoff size for influential policies is 0.4). Low self-reported grades-and consequently low expectations of performance-will result in self-imposed restraints on what students see as attainable goals and self-fulfilling prophesies (Hattie, 2009). It is therefore imperative for teachers to set and encourage more challenging goals. Engagement is perhaps one of the most important prerequisites to effective learning. For the engagement problem is not simply one of education, but also a more general barometer of adolescent malaise (Steinberg, Brown & Dornbusch, 1997, p.63). Student engagement is broadly defined as commitment or involvement. Fredricks, Bluemfeld, & Paris (2004) define engagement as a multifaceted construct of three elements: behavior, cognition, and affect. Of these, behavioral engagement-for example, consistent and punctual class attendance, completion of assignments on-time, discipline problems-is consistently associated with higher achievements in terms of grades and standardized test scores across all samples and stages of K-12 education. While limited in its number, research on cognitive and emotional engagement links certain aspects of each to higher achievements. Studies show a positive correlation between meta-cognitive strategy use-such as the regulation of attention and effort and the active monitoring of comprehension-and student achievements in middle and high school (Fredricks, Bluemfeld, & Paris, 2004). In terms of emotional engagement, Voelkl (1997) reported significant correlation between school identification and achievement test scores in certain grades and certain races.The HomeHattie (2008) named two influences on student learning from the home: parental expectations and aspirations for their child, and parental knowledge of the language of schooling (p. 33). Surprisingly, in a meta-analysis of 25 empirical studies and 92 correlations, Fan and Chen (2001) found that the effect size of overall parental involvement is medium, with an r index of .25 from a sample of 133,577. However, in their examination of subcomponents of parental involvement, parental expectations and aspirations displayed a higher correlation to academic achievement, with r=.40, than other subcomponents, including parent participation in school activities (r=.32), communication (r=.19), and home supervision (r=.09).Hattie did not include factors that cannot be influenced in schools in his synthesis, as mentioned previously. However, these external factors are equally, if not more, important in influencing effective learning. Hartas (2011) shows that, while socio-economic status is not a predictor of the extent to which parents engage in their childrens non-reading learning activities, socio-economic factors such as family income and maternal education level are found to have an impact on childrens achievements, especially in terms of literacy for children three to seven years of age. As the socio-economic gap widen in countries across the world, these findings poses serious equity implications for parents, educators, and policymakers alike.The SchoolThe influence the school wields over students academic achievements varies across developed and developing countries.In developed countries, the role of the school in determining student achievement may be exaggerated. This can be attributed to the fact that differences between schools are largely structural or working-condition-related-such as scheduling differences and class sizes- with no substantial variance in features within the schools, according to Hattie (2009). Features with the largest contributions to effective learning are the climate of the classroom, such as welcoming errors, and providing a safe, caring environment (p.33). Hattie (2009) cites University of North Carolina at Greensboro Professor Emeritus William Watson Purkeys Invitational Learning as one approach to creating an exciting, engaging, and enduring environment for learning (p.34). Another contributing feature within the school is peer influence. To illustrate its effects, Gonzales, Cacuce, Friedman, and Mason (1996) found that peer support, with =.23 and p

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