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Education Management: Case Study to Turnaround Academic Performance of Underperforming Students

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this case study is to describe the actual handling experience of a Business School in turning around underperforming students studying in various degree programs. The Business School management found the number of underperforming students was rapidly increasing and their academic performance (Cumulative Grade Point Average) declined overtime. The Business School management had to take corrective measures at the earliest to reverse the fast deteriorating academic performance of the students while keeping its likely impact on the students/parents and on the declared policies of the institution. The options considered included the following:

i) Underperforming students must be dropped from their respective program of studies or

ii) They must be given one more trimester to show positive results.

A high powered well-disciplined Monitoring Team (from within Business School management) was devised by the Business School and given the charge of the situation to plan and execute all that was required to turnaround underperforming students at the earliest. After a thorough study of the various possible techniques used in handling under performing students in other indigenous and foreign educational institutions, the Monitoring Team came to the conclusion, that given the environmental and cultural setup of the students of the Business School, no piecemeal remedy will be effective to reverse the academic performance trend of the low performing students. The Monitoring Team decided to involve a range of stakeholders—the concerned students, their guardian/parents, their teachers, and the student counselor to ensure that all parties were aware of their respective roles.

As a first step, the Monitoring Team considered both the above options crucial. These options were tested and later the first option was dropped while the second option was adopted and refined to create a monitoring system, which ultimately delivered a feasible solution to the problems faced by the Business School and the students.

The design and methodology adopted by the Business School in handling the underperforming students was tested over a period of seven trimesters. The students' performance record showed that the low performing students charismatically regained their confidence and capability; with the result that the majority of them completed their degree programs without further delay and monetary loss. The underperforming students were treated on case-to-case basis and their program of studies was accordingly designed to suit their individual circumstances. This was essential because the intelligence level of such students varied widely and needed customized guidance and monitoring plan.

The approach adopted by the Business School in turning around low-performing students was unique on several accounts. Firstly, it required all the stakeholders to play their specific role. Secondly, all the stakeholders were consulted and they agreed to discharge the desired responsibilities. Thirdly, all the stakeholders were required to perform their role strictly on time. Fourthly, to ensure proper execution of the monitoring plan, the Monitoring Team played a key role in its coordination, monitoring and reporting. Finally, the Business School took the failure of the students as a test of Business Schools' own performance. To make the Case Study a useful document for replication in similar situations elsewhere, a complete sequence of activities supported with a time frame and a road map is included for reference and consultation.

Key Words: Underperforming students, Education Management, Student Counselor, Academic Performance, and Student Performance Monitoring.

1. INTRODUCTION

There is an urgent need to turnaround underperforming students in countries, where financial and material resources in relation to their population are very scarce, adequate trained teachers are very few, literacy among parents is very low and majority of the people are living below the poverty line. A high dropout rate in such circumstances is unaffordable and unjustified. Such circumstances are to result in an unending vicious circle of national illiteracy.

The role of educational institutions in improving the performance of low performing schools and students is of crucial importance. These institutions can play a leading role in promoting students learning capability. In fact, student's academic performance is a reflection of student's own intellectual ability, academic environment, quality of teaching, parent's interest, and timely handling of all these matters by the student counselors. It should be the responsibility of the educational institutions to see that the students once admitted in an educational institution are trained enough to uphold the quality standard and are passed out successfully completing their program of studies.

The size of enrollment in educational institutions in Pakistan is increasing exponentially. This is an important indicator of a change in the priorities of the common man's interest. The media revolution seems to have made people aware of the ways and means to acquire better standards of life for their families. As a result, a large number of families are migrating from rural to urban areas in search of jobs and amenities. In fact, as parents every family wants their children to be educated and therefore number of students seeking admission to various schools and colleges/universities has increased significantly.

Table-1

Urbanization in Pakistan

Period	Total Population (Million))	Urban Population (Million)	Urban As a % of Total Population
1990	111 845	35 400	31.6%
2000	144 522	49 081	34.0%
2010	173 593	66 318	38.2%
2015	189 648	77 420	40.8%

Source: World Urbanization Prospects: The 2009 Revision Population Database. United Nations Population division.

In response to growing demand for education, the private educational institutions in major cities and towns have increased in quantity and quality to cater for all levels of admission seekers, particularly this is especially true in case of institutions of higher learning (see Table 1.2).

Table -2 *Educational Institutions in Pakistan (Public ad Private)*

Institutions	Year 2000/01	Year 2009/10
Primary Schools (000)	147.7	156.4
Secondary Schools (000)	40.3	66.3
Colleges/ Universities	1769	3531
Professional Colleges	366	1275

Source: Economic Survey of Pakistan-Year 2010-2011.
Government of Pakistan, Finance Division.

Due to tense competition among public and private educational institutions, the quality of education has improved significantly. At least three factors have played dominant role in enhancing awareness for quality education in Pakistan:

1. Rapid increase in urban families and the ability of parents to afford education in Pakistan.
2. Globalization providing incentives to earn better life.
3. Enhanced competition among Job seekers.

To build competitive strength among business schools in the region, a business school in Lahore (Pakistan), established in 1991 in collaboration with a reputed foreign university, decided to create a setup where quality education would become its hallmark among the rest of the business schools in the region. This mission was upheld successfully by bringing the best possible faculty to teach the courses, limiting the class size to ensure adequate attention for each student admitted in the course, maintaining regularity and discipline in holding classes in accordance with the announced Class Schedules, and adopting cheating free system of holding exams and tests throughout course deliveries. The performance of the Business School seems to have been appreciated by all concerned, as the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, the supreme authority to monitor higher education in Pakistan, has awarded category "W" to this Business School (a symbol meant to reflect the highest quality level of an educational institution).

To maintain the quality performance of students, admitted in various programs, the Business School has student advisory and counseling programs to watch students progress on a regular basis. However, while looking at exam results, the management of the Business School found that far many students were falling below the acceptance level considered necessary for the students to stay in the program. This raised serious concern for all those responsible for providing advisory and counseling services to the students of various academic programs.

The management of the Business School was convinced that the students were not paying adequate attention to their responsibilities possibly the parents were not fully aware of their declining performance. In fact, the Business School decided to review the entire program of

the student advisory and counseling system, which seemed to be showing unsatisfactory results that hinted at the declining quality of performance at the Business School.

This case study is to describe the result-oriented strategy adopted by the Business School to reverse the academic performance of STD (Subject to Dismissal) students in various programs. The strategy and the sequence of monitoring the underperforming students by a team of senior executives of the Business School in this respect was considered very effective with the result that the STD students regained their confidence and capability, and majority of them completed their degree programs without further delay and monetary loss. This being a successful experiment, the Business School decided to continue this program on a permanent basis.

2. HANDLING OF UNDERPERFORMING STUDENTS ELSEWHERE

We see several studies and policy papers undertaken by schools and colleges in North America and Europe, trying to suggest ways and means to improve the performance of low academic performing students and institutions. American States customarily categorize schools as "low-performing" or "failing" by virtue of persistently subpar scores on standardized tests, sometimes along with low graduation and high dropout rates (Seder, 2000). Recently in United States of America, School Improvement Grants (SIG) was released to turn around low-performing schools. However, the experience of parents and people connected with this effort showed their concern and suggested better alternatives to improve the performance of low performing students and schools. The suggestions in this respect were many, including the following:

1) To really counsel children in identifying their issues at home and school, instead of firing, hiring, adding too many extra programs, we should let the counselors counsel properly.

2) To improve the performance of low performing students, we have to look at the student's environment, culture, and many other factors.

3) The only way our nations' education to improve is to make parents accountable.

(*Voices from Turnaround (Low-Performing) Schools (May 6, 2010 by Pkickbush-U.S. Education Department)

A Policy Brief by McREL (Bryan Gladwin) published in 2000 revealed that changing the odds for student success does not necessarily demand a wholesale review of the system nor technology-driven innovations, but rather, a clear focus on simply, what matters most for raising student achievement.

Bryan Goodwin (May 2000) claimed that African-American Latino, and Native American students (minority group)--- regardless of socio-economic status and parent education ---are performing at lower academic levels than their White and Asian counterparts (majority group). Hence the minority students are much less likely to receive college diplomas than

Whites and Asians. In an effort to assist minority students to meet required standards, Mid continent Research for Education and Learning has commissioned nationally known experts for their guidance. The experts crucial recommendations for policy makers in this respect included the following:

Provide all students with rigorous curricula.
Help teachers improve instructions.
Provide support to students.
Increase parent involvement.

Evidence Available to Turn-Around Low-performing Students

Janine Bempechat (1999), a Harvard researcher, on the basis of his studies came to the conclusion that low-performing students are facing an unending vicious circle in which failure results due to lack of effort, and thus more failure. Bempechat findings also revealed that high performing students are of the view that low-performance is not necessarily the outcome of lack of students ability. Bempechat's evidence is sufficient to suggest that the role of the teacher is very crucial to motivate low-performing students and to make them believe that they have the ability to succeed and can maximize their ability through effort.

Kati Haycock at an Education Trust press conference (December 3, 1998) remarked that students of color tend to be concentrated in low-performing schools, a place where they are given less rigorous curricula. Apparently, it was stated to show that their low-performance is a cause as well as a consequence of less rigorous curricula. In fact, even in places where the low performing students are given admissions in high performing schools, such students fail to keep up with required standards and their rate dropout is usually very high.

The authors Nelson-Barber. S in their Report on "A Better Education for Every Child" 1999 argued that techniques that work well with high performing students may not work as well with the low-performing students.

There is a sufficient evidence available from a large number of studies and reports undertaken by educational institutions in United States and Europe, which suggests that due to non-availability of well trained and qualified teachers in adequate numbers, good teachers are attracted to high performing schools. As a result of which the low-performing students are denied rigorous curricula and good teachers as well. The available evidence also suggests that in places where the low performing students are given admissions in high performing schools; such students fail to maintain the required standards.

Some of the studies (Gay, Nelson-Barber 1999) pinpoint that the way the teacher's manage their class rooms also has a profound impact on student achievement. This relates to negligence in handling low performing students while delivering lectures. It is argued that in low performing schools, teachers have a tendency to appreciate and encourage relatively better performing students, while the low performing students are seen shy and non-responsive in class discussions. Even in high performing schools, the low performing students are found reluctant to take initiative in asking questions or taking part in the class discussions. It is further suggested by some researchers that it all depends on the way teachers conduct their classroom discussions. The incentive and motivation for students to remain attentive in the class depends a great deal on the way teachers manage their classroom

environment. To provide necessary support to different levels of students, the teacher must know what capability each student has to understand his/her lecture.

All this seems to suggest that the role of teachers in turning around low-performing students is of crucial importance. The lack of interest and negligence by the teachers in handling low-performing students may have instigated the failure of such students to show improvement in their academic performance.

Calderon M. (1999) While preparing a Report for McREL's Diversity Roundtable I (pp. 23-46) while referring to immigrant and other at-risk students, pointed out that such students may also under-perform because they fail to understand and appreciate the "culture of opportunity". He explains that these students may not know about, know how, or feel entitled to take advantage of certain academic opportunities, like college-preparatory courses, college entrance exams, and extracurricular learning opportunities.

Several educational institutions working in developing countries have experienced a similar situation. They found that the students coming from rural school environment often feel uncomfortable in urban school setup. This is very much the case with those children who have their primary and secondary schooling in rural areas and they migrate to urban areas for higher learning programs.

Balster-Liontos (1992) wrote a Paper "At- risk Families and Schools: Becoming Partners" and provided sufficient evidence to suggest that a strong link exists between parents' emphasis on education and student achievement. Many schools in United States recognized that traditional venues for parent involvement often are impractical for parents who may speak little English, work multiple jobs, or be intimidated by going to their children's schools. He recommended school administrations to keep up the link between school and the parents and to find out new ways to reach out to parents by creating activities to address the needs of at-risk parents.

Seder, Richard C. (2000) summing up his findings wrote that in uncovering key components of successfully run schools in U.S.A, the research points to strong instructional leadership, a clear focus on academics, regular measures of academic progress, high-quality teaching, and good community and parent relations.

Brewer, D. J., Rees, D.I., & Argys, L.M. (1995) agued that low-achieving students learn more when they are placed in more rigorous, heterogeneously grouped courses. A recommendation, which seems to have been practiced by a number of schools in U.S. Nevertheless, providing students with equal opportunities require more than good intentions---it require making some fundamental changes to our current approaches to educating students.

3. CASE STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This Case Study presents actual evidence of all that has been successfully experimented in turning around underperforming students registered in MBA, BBA (Honors) and Executive MBA programs, at a business school in Lahore (Pakistan).
As the number of students failing to maintain a minimum acceptable level of Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) increased, the Business School management announced its intention to rigorously follow a minimum acceptable level of academic performance from each student in their respective program of studies. In accordance with the policy announcement the students were required to maintain their Cumulative Grade Point average (C. GPA)as follows:

Table- 3

Policy Guidelines: Minimum C. GPA Required To Continue in the Program of Studies

Academic Programs	# Of Credit Hours Attended	Minimum C. GPA Required	Adjustment Period Allowed	Subject to Dismissal (STD) Stage
Graduate Programs	16 or Less	2.00	1 Trimester	1.50 or Less
	17 or Less	2.50	2 Trimesters	2.00 or Less
Executive Programs	8 or Less	2.00	1 Trimester	1.50 or Less
	9 or Less	2.50	2 Trimesters	2.00 or Less
Undergraduate Programs	13 or Less	1.25	1 Trimester	1.00 or Less
	14-41	1.75	2 Trimesters	1.50 or Less
	42 or more	2.00	3 Trimesters	1.75 or Less

Source: Policy Announcement of the Business School.

While examining various alternatives to handle the situation, the business school management decided to place low performing students on probation. At the end of Spring (May) 2008 trimester, these students were given a last and final warning to improve or face dismissal from their respective academic programs. Before the commencement of the Fall 2008 (September) trimester, the Business School Administration found that there were about 35 students failing to maintain a minimum acceptable Cumulative GPA required in the program of studies they were attending. More serious was the case of 15 students who seemed to be non- responsive to the warning given to them in Spring 2008 trimester. In fact, their CGPA further declined. All of these 15 students were placed on the STD (Subject to Dismissal) List and were refused registration for Fall 2008 trimester. Meanwhile the matter was referred to a small Sub-committee, headed by the Dean of the Business School to review all the STD cases for follow-up action.

The sub-committee after examining individual cases of STD students gave their findings and recommended that majority of students falling in the category of STD had the ability to qualify in the degree programs in which they were registered. The Sub-committee was of the view that the STD students could successfully complete their program of studies, provided they were given a well planned and agreed course load and their class performance was checked at regular intervals.

The Faculty Council of the Business School fully endorsed the views of the Sub-committee and recommended that the Dean should be given the complete responsibility to formulate and execute a program to turnaround the performance of STD students. Accordingly the Sub-committee, consisting of the Dean, Associate Dean and the staff of the Record Office, drew a road map to accomplish the tasks.

ROAD MAP
STD-Students Performance Reporting
Spring 2009 Trimester
SCHEDULE

1.	Performance Reporting	8th Lecture
	First Turning-in Reports	February 2, 2009 or Before
	(Immediately after 8th Lecture)	
	Brief Review of the Performance Indicators;	Feb. 4, 2009 (Wednesday)
2.	Performance Reporting Mid Term Exam	
	Second Turning-in Reports	Feb. 24, 2009 or Before
	Brief Review of the Performance Indicators:	Feb. 27, 2009 (Friday)
3.	**Performance Reporting End Term Exam**	
	Third Turning –in Reports	April 14, 2009 or Before
	Comprehensive Review of the Performance Indicators	April 22, 2009 (Wednesday)

The Sub-committee decided to undertake following steps to monitor the academic performance of underperforming students:

1. In depth study of the causes of low performance of students.
2. Carryout comprehensive plan to monitor Low-performing students.
3. Arrange meeting schedule with the parents of the Low-performing students.
4. Prepare meeting plan with Faculty teaching Low-performing students.
5. Communicate Results of the Monitoring Effort to the Faculty Council.

The individual cases of underperforming students were examined to find out:

1. Scholastic level of students at the time of their admission to the Business School.
2. Test score received at the Entrance Exam.
3. Trimester-wise record of past Grade Point Averages.
4. Class attendance record
5. Participation in the Extracurricular activities.

The workload relating to the monitoring of underperforming students was divided among the members to include the following responsibilities:

Dean:
Driving force and lead role in devising the monitoring plan, coordination, student counseling, parent's parleys, course offerings, reporting of student academic performance at different stages of their course achievements. Drafting and circulating results of the monitoring exercise for the information of all concerned.

Associate Dean:
Organization, coordination and follow-up of students and parents counseling sessions. Devising and closely following turning-in of student performance reports/midterm/end term exam results. Sharing course-offering exercise to monitor STD student's academic performance. Coordination and follow-up of faculty related student performance reports and holding extra sessions for the STD students. Sharing responsibilities of reporting academic performance of STD students at different stages of their class performance.

The sequence of handling the entire exercise of monitoring STD students was drawn and tested to ensure better results of the efforts put in at different levels and at different time periods. The steps included the following:

Step-1

The low academic performing students were identified and the basic data relating to their Cumulative GPA in the past trimesters was collected. The performance level of these students was placed in three categories:

Red List: Students having Cumulative GPA of less than acceptable level in the last three consecutive trimesters.
Yellow List: Students having Cumulative GPA of less than acceptable level in the two consecutive previous trimesters.
Green List; Students having Cumulative GPA of less than acceptable level in one trimester only (last trimester).

Step-2
Designed the following monitoring policy to keep all the participants (students, parents and College Admin) fully alert on all possible checkpoints, before reaching the Sad End of Students Dismissal.

Faculty Reports:
At the end of 8^{th} Lecture, 16^{th}Lecture Mid-term Exam, End-term Exam, the concerned faculty was requested to fill out a brief STD Student Performance Report. The contents of the Report included the following:
Attendance Status: Lectures Delivered_____. # of Lectures Missed_____.

Quizzes Status: # of Quizzes Given_____. # Of Quizzes Missed _____.
Average Letter Grade____.
Class Participation/Presentations: Average Letter Grade_____.
Likely Performance Status so far (Check): A/B/C/D/F

Students Counseling:
Senior Program Coordinator with the help of Senior Faculty was required to meet the STD students to keep them informed about their current academic status after having received Faculty Reports. The frequency and the subject of these meetings depended upon the performance status of the STD students. Seriously underperforming students were given more time and were called more frequently.

Parents/Guardian Consultation
First Parents/guardian meetings to keep them informed about the seriousness of the matter were scheduled immediately after the Mid-term exam results. The dates of these meeting were announced and letters were sent in advance.

Final Result –Status Report
Immediately after the compilation of final results, Senior Program Coordinator presented performance report to the Faculty Council of the Business School for review and recommendations. The final decision with regard to dismissal of STD students rested with the Rector of the Business School.

4. STUDENTS PERFORMANCE REVEALED

The main objective of designing a strategy to handle underperforming students was to provide timely assistance of teachers, parents, and Business School management to STD (Subject to Dismissal) students, so that they can successfully complete their degree programs. The Business School, where this Case Study was carried out, had uncompromising commitment to maintain academic quality of the highest order to distinguish itself as one of the top ranking educational institutions in the region.

The Business School while offering MBA, BBA (Honors) and Executive MBA programs in accordance with the laid down course curricula of Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, was taking all the necessary steps to admit students to various academic programs by prescribing high admission standards. Thus the enrollment to its various academic programs was small and its average class size did not exceed 30 students.

The Business School in order to maintain its distinctive position among the competitive educational institutions of the region took serious note of the declining performance of students studying in various academic programs and appointed a Sub-committee to formulate and execute a program of reforms to turnaround the academic performance of underperforming students.

The Sub-committee after meeting the underperforming students and reviewing their past performance, was of the view that a large number of students failed to maintain the required scholastic level due to their own negligence. However, according to the findings of the Sub-committee the most common factors related to the STD student's underperformance included the following:

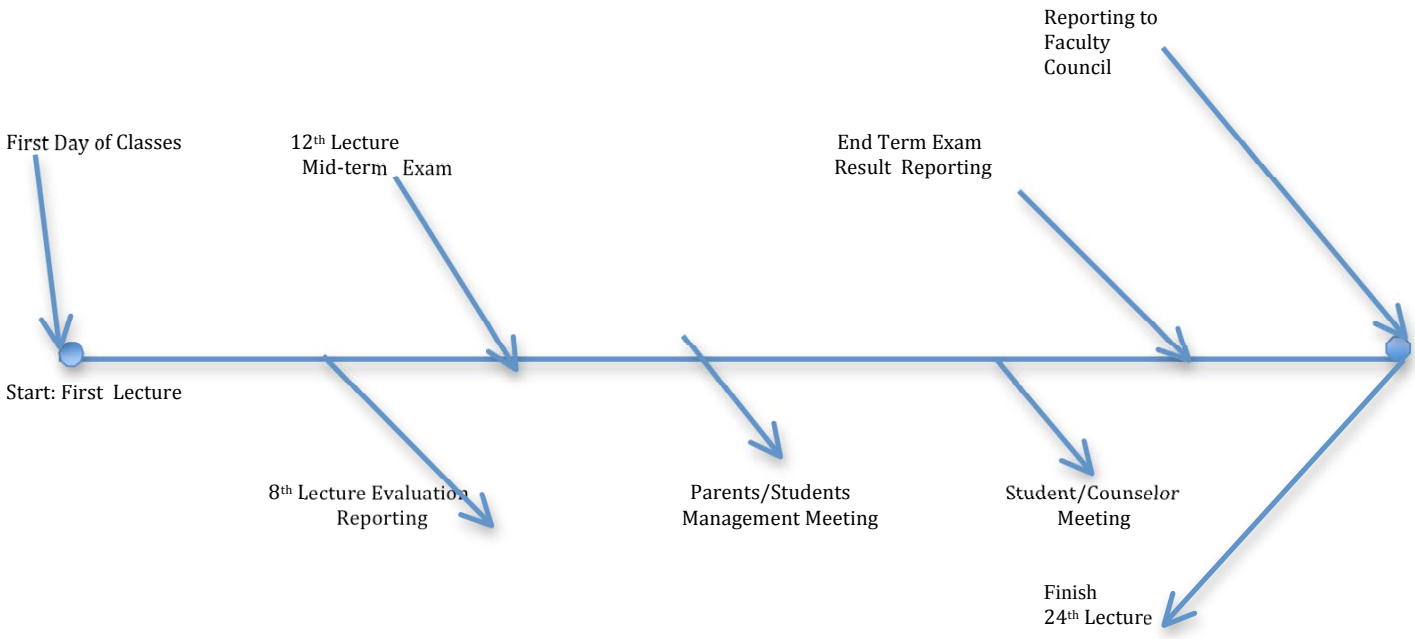
1. Poor class attendance.
2. Inactive in class participations and discussions.
3. Poor performance in quizzes/exams
4. Teacher's negligence in paying attention to such students.
5. Lack of follow-up by the student counselor to hold advising sessions with the students.
6. Parent's negligence to keep watch on the student's performance record.
7. Lack of good study habits.
8. Inability to adjust in the changed environment in an urban setup.

The Sub-committee in the light of various methods and techniques used by national and international educational institutions to turnaround underperforming students redefined the role and responsibilities of all concerned dealing with STD students. The key players in the mission to turnaround underperforming students included the following:

Student Counselor
Course Instructor
Parents/Guardian
Business School Management (Dean/Associate Dean – Student Affairs)

The Sub-committee's main contribution was to provide a well disciplined driving force to execute a plan of action and check its execution on regular intervals. It created seriousness and a sense of accomplishment among all concerned. In this attempt the major emphasis was to activate everyone involved in this exercise, to deliver results on time. The Sub-committee strictly followed the following sequence of activities:

Spring 2009 Trimester: Jan-May 2011
STD Students Performance Monitoring Schedule
Schematic Diagram: Sequence of Event



Action Plan:
The Action Plan laid major emphasis on coordination and teamwork of all concerned. The Sub-committee for reporting to the Faculty Council performed the monitoring and coordination of the Action Plan. A brief account of the work assigned to each member of the Group is given below:

Student Counselor:
At the commencement of Spring 2008 trimester, the student counselor prepared a watch list of all those students who failed to maintain the required scholastic level in the first trimester. Students who failed to maintain the required scholastic level over the two consecutive trimesters were placed on probation. In case a student failed to maintain the required scholastic level over three or more consecutive trimesters, he/she was placed on STD (Subject to Dismissal).

All underperforming students were given less than the full load of courses in the Spring 2009 trimester. Maximum restrictions were put on STD students, while the students on probation were under mild restrictions. The Student Counselor after reviewing the past performance of each underperforming student recommended the courses and course load to ensure achievement of better grades in the courses taken.

Course Instructor Reporting:
Each Course Instructor was required to report (filling standard designed format) the class performance of the underperforming students registered in his/her course to the Student Counselor. The schedule of turning in these reports was as follows:

i) Immediately after 8th Lecture in the Course
   (This information was used to push the students to get better performance in the mid-term exam.)
ii) Immediately after the mid-term exam results -after 12th Lecture.
   (This information was crucial to see if they need to reduce course load to do better in the End Term exam and also to see what more should be done to assist the students to do better in the end-term exam.)
iii) End-term exam results --after 24th Lecture.
   (This information was used to guide the students in selecting courses and course load in the next trimester and to make the decision about their continuity in the program of studies.)

Parents/Guardian Involvement:
The Student Counselor after receiving class performance reports after the 8th lecture held exclusive sessions with the STD students in the presence of their parents/guardian. The parents were given briefing to make them aware of the students' class performance so that they can take the responsibility of supervising study/work schedule of the STD student in the best possible way.

Business School Management:
The student counselor and the sub-committee played the most crucial role in monitoring and coordinating the efforts needed to turnaround the performance of the underperforming students. The Dean, being the driving force, was available to meet the underperforming students, their parents and the faculty teaching the courses. The Faculty Council was given

regular briefing according to the set Road Map (see Design/Methodology Section 3) prepared in advance for seeking their guidance and approval.

Turnaround Model

The monitoring of underperforming students started in Spring 2009 trimester at the Business School and since then it has become a regular feature each trimester. To reveal the success of this exercise, a simplified model of the results of Spring 2009 trimester exercise are given below:

Spring 2009 Results:
There were in all 43 STD students in the follow-up program. The distribution was as follows:

MBA Program	18	STD Students
BBA/BBA (Honors) Program	15	STD Students
Ex. MBA Program	10	STD Students
Total:	43	

Table-4

Underperforming Students
Results of Performance –Spring 2009 Trimester

Degree Programs	Positive Performance	No Change Observed	Performance Declined	Total STD Students
MBA	14	2	2	18
BBA (Honors)	15	0	0	15
Ex. MBA	8	1	1	10
Total	37	3	3	43
Percentage	86.0	7.0	7.0	100

(Positive Performance is defined as improvement over the previous trimester's Cumulative GPA. Similarly No Change refers to no significant improvement/decline in the C.GPA, while Performance Decline simply reflects drop in the C. GPA over the previous trimester's C.GPA.)

In majority of cases, underperforming students responded on time all what was advised by the Student Counselor. The parents had shown keen interest in attending counseling/advising sessions with the Sub Committee, and they provided adequate support to motivate the STD students to accomplish all what was required to improve their academic performance. The outcome of all this was astonishing and fruitful for all concerned. The summary results of their course work during Spring 2009 trimester are given below:

Table-5

STD Students-MBA Program of Studies
(Minimum Cumulative GPA required to stay in the Program=2.5)

Degree Program	Student ID #	C. GPA Beginning Fall/2008 Trimester	C. GPA Ending Fall/2008 Trimester	Performance Rating (%)
MBA	C05105	2.43	2.54	PP: Positive Performance
MBA	C06113	2.55	2.65	PP:
MBA	B07100	2.38	2.54	PP:
MBA	C07108	2.69	3.25	PP:
MBA	A07112	1.50	1.27	PD: Performance Declined
MBA	C07125	2.26	2.44	PP
MBA	C05115	2.49	2.51	NC: No Change
MBA	C07111	2.09	2.27	PP:
MBA	A07105	2.38	2.48	PP:
MBA	A07611	2.39	2.30	PD:
MBA	C05125	2.41	2.44	PP:
MBA	C06122	2.48	2.68	PP:
MBA	C07116	2.30	2.54	PP:
MBA	A07100	2.66	2.95	PP:
MBA	C06133	2.50	2.63	PP:
MBA	A07102	2.40	2.60	PP:
MBA	B07105	2.27	2.56	PP:
MBA	C05102	2.49	2.51	NC:

Source: Actual performance records of the Business School

Table-6

STD Students -BBA (Honors) Program of Studies
(Minimum Cumulative GPA required to stay in the Program=2.00)

Degree Program	Student ID #	C. GPA Beginning Fall/2008 Trimester	C. GPA Ending Fall/2008 Trimester	Performance Rating (%)
BBA (Honors)	B06204	1.43	1.66	PP: Positive Performance
BBA (Honors)	A08202	1.44	2.59	PP:
BBA (Honors)	B07205	1.83	2.09	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C05218	1.93	2.06	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C06228	1.91	2.24	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C06223	1.70	2.23	PP:
BBA (Honors)	A06210	1.67	1.94	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C07206	1.91	2.46	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C07209	1.32	2.11	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C05210	1.86	2.14	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C07223	1.82	2.32	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C07207	1.62	2.31	PP:
BBA (Honors)	C07204	1.75	2.48	PP:

Source: Actual performance records of the Business School.

Table-7

STD Students- Executive MBA Program of Studies
(Minimum Cumulative GPA required to stay in the Program=2.5)

Degree Program	Student ID #	C. GPA Beginning Fall/2008 Trimester	C. GPA Ending Fall/2008 Trimester	Performance Rating (%)
EX. MBA	C05312	2.40	2.54	PP: Positive Performance
EX. MBA	A07300	2.38	2.57	PP:
EX. MBA	A06304	2.21	2.34	PP:
EX. MBA	A06315	2.51	2.51	NC: No Change
EX. MBA	A07306	2.02	2.17	PP:
EX. MBA	B06302	2.26	2.52	PP:
EX. MBA	C06304	2.22	2.55	PP:
EX. MBA	A06306	2.26	2.46	PP:
EX. MBA	A07302	1.83	2.33	PP:
EX. MBA	C05333	2.04	2.03	PD: Performance Decline

Source: Actual performance records of the Business School.

The overwhelming positive performance of STD students (86 %) indicated very effective response of the students who were identified as weak and ineligible to continue in the academic programs. Looking at the success of the system of monitoring STD students' performance, the Faculty Council strongly recommended further strengthening of student counseling/advisory role to improve the overall academic performance of underperforming students. Since then the monitoring and coordination system of STD students at the Business School has become a regular feature to earn better image and support for increasing enrollment at the Business School.

5. Solutions and Conclusions

The underperforming of students and educational institutions need to be addressed by all the concerned agencies. In this respect the primary role is to be played by the educational institutions on their own to uphold the quality and image of the institution. . It is teamwork, the educational institutions are to ensure that the students when admitted to a program of studies are provided necessary training and advise from the teachers and student counselors, so that they can complete their studies successfully. The parents and guardians of students must be equally informed and kept fully in picture for various outcomes of the efforts put in by the management of the educational institution.

The present Case Study has described the precise role played by the Business School in coordinating all the efforts needed to turn around STD (Subject to Dismissal) students. The program of upgrading academic performance of STD students was seen highly effective and

it has become a regular activity of the Business School since Spring 2009 trimester. The STD monitoring exercise was carried out by a team, in which the management of the Business School served as a driving force, while the parents and course instructors were assigned specific responsibilities to accelerate the class performance of STD students.

All the evidence gathered so far indicate that the poor academic performance of STD students was largely on account of negligence of students, parents, course instructors, and student counselors. It is true that:

i) Lack of interest and negligence by the teachers in handling the underperforming students may have accelerated the failure of such students.
ii) Lack of effort on the part of low performing students results in vicious circle – failure-feeding failure (Janine Bempechat).
iii) Low performance is a cause as well as a consequence of less rigorous Curricula (Kati Haycock).
iv) Students coming from rural school environment often feel uncomfortable in urban school setup and cannot concentrate on their studies.
v) There exists a strong link between parents' emphasis on education and student achievement (Balster-Liontos).
vi) Low performing students learn more when they are placed in more rigorous, heterogeneously grouped courses (Brewer, D.J., Rees, D.I., & Argys, L.M.).
vii) Low performance is not necessarily the outcome of lack of student's ability (Janine Bempechat).

Apparently the findings of various research studies in handling underperforming students are useful and need to be considered when taking practical steps to upgrade the academic performance of underperforming students. However, the actual handling experience of the STD students at the Business School, presented in the form of a Case Study, shows more concrete steps and responsibilities undertaken by the Monitoring Team to bring about positive change in the academic performance of STD students. The Case Study also provided sufficient evidence to suggest that the educational institutions are to play a leading role in upgrading academic performance of STD students. This included employing better qualified and capable teachers, creating awareness about the extra help required to be given to the low performing students, regular monitoring of students performance, while keeping close liaison with the low-performing students and their parents.

All this can result in achieving the desired goal provided "the whole exercise is taken as a team work under a well disciplined driving force to provide coordination and timely monitoring of all the affairs according to a laid down Road Map".

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