

SCHOOLING OUTCOMES SCALE (SOS) REPORT

Report Description: IMPORTANT - IN AUGUST 2012 DURING OUR DATABASE BUILD & TEST PHASE THIS REPORT IS FREE . IF DATA IS INCOMPLETE PLEASE CONTACT US & TRY AGAIN LATER.

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Introduction:

The Student Outcomes Scale (SOS) report is adapted for use at home and in schools from a more extensive questionnaire assembled as part of a UWA doctoral thesis on Student-School Suitability. The SOS gives a global perception of the suitability of the current school evaluated in terms of comparing a broad range of schooling outcomes such as; measures of participants' cognitive (satisfaction), motivation (engagement), achievement (performance) and overall wellbeing, with those of their peer cohort.

Purpose:

In addition to the standardised skills-based achievement assessment already embedded in contemporary schools, the Schooling Outcomes Scale (SOS) provides data on less observable psychological indicators including; student satisfaction, motivation, engagement and wellbeing that are pre-requisite for success at school. Students who are well matched with their schooling context are characterised by higher scores on these psychosocial outcomes.

Philosophy:

The SOS report data measures school suitability in terms of individual student schooling outcomes compared with those of their peer cohort. Students who are well suited to their school have better outcomes. The basis of this positive, strengths based examination of the student-school interaction suggests that motivation is at the heart of success at school. Motivation is influenced by the quality of interactions between student, school personnel and the culture of school. When these interactions are perceived as suitable, motivation rises and student performance on achievement tasks improves. Thus, motivated students optimise their potential. The reciprocal, however, does not hold for students who are capable but who find their context unmotivating. Thus, evaluating both un-observable cognitive (satisfaction), affective (motivation) and overall wellbeing as well as observable achievement (performance) outcomes contributes to a more meaningful understanding of schooling suitability for individual students.

Report Format:

The SOS charts are self-explanatory. The visual format of the *graphical dashboard* outputs in the report are designed to communicate to parents and teachers as much information about each student as is possible in a

snap-shot profile. Data on each of seven (7) components that influence student satisfaction, engagement, performance and overall wellbeing perceptions as well as levels of school anxiety and dropout ideation are plotted against peer cohort means. This gives an indication of the suitability *fit* of students with the peer cohort profile in their current school. SOS psycho-social and performance indicators give parents and teachers an instant appraisal of the relative standing of each student relative to their peers.

There are two graphs and one table in the report. The first graph plots student suitability perceptions with those of the cohort. The second plots the percentile ranking of the individual with their peer cohort which shows the proportion of peers that the student has scored higher than on each indicator. The Table shows significant differences between the outcomes of individual students and their peer cohort on each of the SOS suitability indicators.

A definition of terms is provided to assist in the interpretation of these outputs.

Definition Of Terms:

School Satisfaction - student perceptions about the relative suitability of a school

Dropout Ideation - the level of student disengagement ideation

School Anxiety - student perceptions of stress related to schooling

Academic Performance - student expectations for current school success

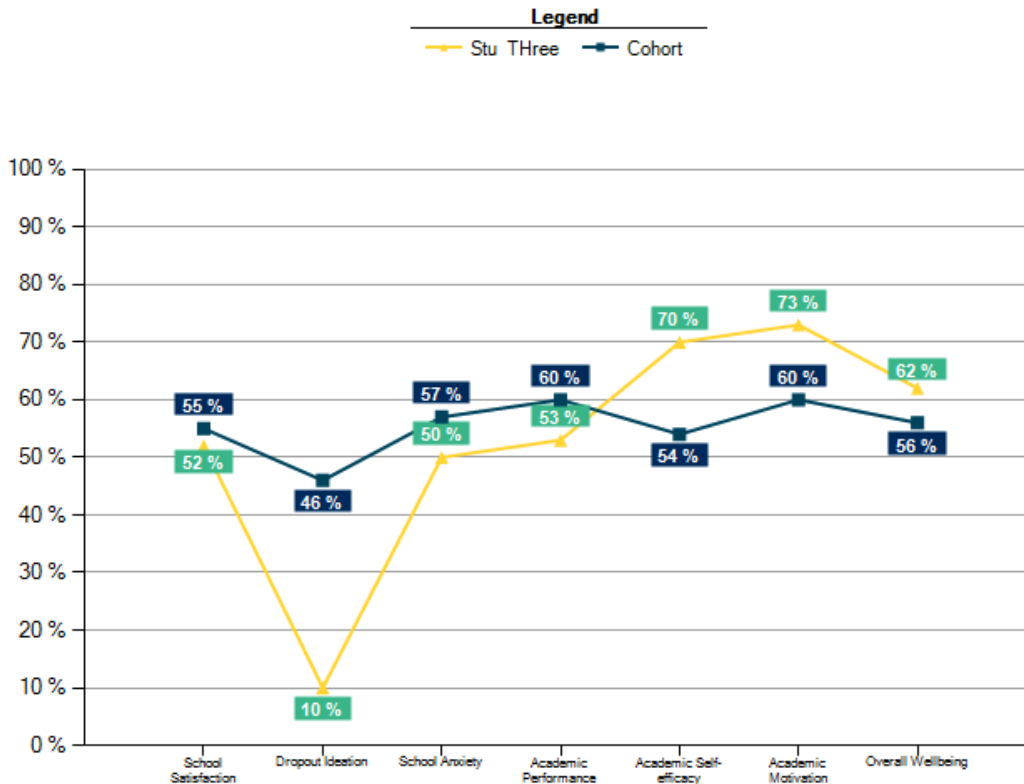
Academic Self-efficacy - student perceptions on the influence of schooling on future life outcomes

Strength of Academic Motivation - the motivational force to achieve at school

Overall Wellbeing - student satisfaction with the key aspects of their overall life

Results

GRAPH1: STUDENT SCHOOLING OUTCOMES

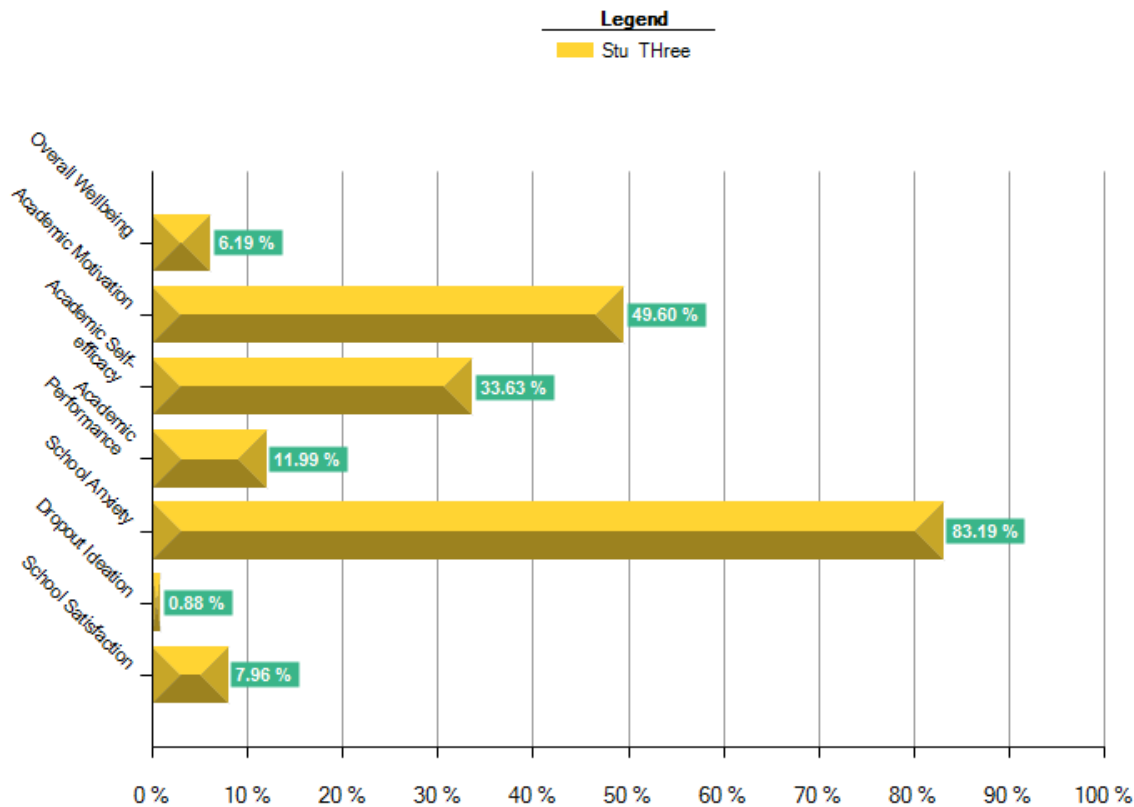


Interpretation of Graph1

Graph one shows student outcomes in relation to their peer cohort. Generally, scores higher than the cohort indicate greater suitability. When interpreting the suitability of the current school, keep in mind that some effects of the student-school interaction are temporal (immediate) and others are more enduring. The order of effect generally maps that temporal experiences (e.g. feelings of success or failure) influence the more enduring traits in the motivation causal pathway over time. For example, student satisfaction on a moment to moment basis is important because it influences the individual's motivation orientation through this sense of achievement or failure. In turn, motivation influences engagement and engagement influences achievement. Therefore, if the essential elements of student satisfaction, motivation and engagement are ignored in the student-schooling interaction due to a prevailing culture that focuses predominantly on achievement outcomes, this will prove unsuitable for many students. Only highly compliant students will likely find such contexts suitable.

Parents should not be unduly concerned if their child's achievement scores are within normal range (see Table one) as long as high scores in the pre-requisite elements of this motivation causal pathway are maintained during transition then optimal academic achievement will likely eventuate over time.

GRAPH2: STUDENT PERCENTILE RANKING WITH THEIR PEER COHORT



Interpretation of Graph2

Graph two outputs show the percentile ranking of the student compared to their peer cohort on each outcome. Percentile ranking is the proportion of the peer cohort that the student scored higher than on each indicator of school suitability. An average cohort ranking is a score of 50%. Scores ranked above average can generally be interpreted as indicating higher suitability. The reciprocal is also true for rankings below 50%. Low rankings may be cause for concern.

Table 1. Significant Differences in Student - Peer Cohort Schooling Outcomes

Student Need	Deviation Std.Dev.	Standardized Scores Z-score	HiScore Sig.higher than group...	LowScore Sig.lower than group...
School Satisfaction	14.5278	-1.3218	FALSE	FALSE
Dropout Ideation	11.7443	-2.4919	FALSE	TRUE
School Anxiety	14.5073	0.779	FALSE	FALSE
Academic Performance	12.9086	-0.9598	FALSE	FALSE

Academic Self-efficacy	17.6034	-0.2805	FALSE	FALSE
Academic Motivation	15.2741	0.2474	FALSE	FALSE
Overall Wellbeing	14.4227	-1.7156	FALSE	TRUE

Interpretation Table1

Table one displays individual student variance from the cohort mean on each school outcome indicator. The HiScore column indicates student scores above the cohort mean. A "FALSE" output indicates that the score is within normal range. A "TRUE" output indicates a score that is significantly higher than the cohort measured at a 90 percent level of confidence. The LoScore column indicates student scores below the cohort mean. A "FALSE" output indicates that the score is within normal range. A "TRUE" output indicates a score that is significantly lower than the cohort mean, measured at a 90 percent level of confidence.

Background:

Recent research has shown that, to the extent schooling contexts fulfil student needs, this influences student outcomes. Furthermore, students have distinct preferences for particular styles of schooling. Schools also have unique socialising styles with supports that characterise the relative demandingness and responsiveness of their school culture. Student-school interactions have a causal pathway of fulfilment or thwarting that influences student satisfaction perceptions at an immediate temporal level. Satisfied students are more motivated and engaged with schooling. Over time satisfied students develop positive traits that are enduring. Given schooling expectations that are appropriately differentiated for individual ability levels, students' will optimise their schooling outcomes. Student motivation is central to this causal pathway. It is for this reason that a broad range of outcomes based on the endogenous (within the student) and exogenous (within the school context) are provided in the SOS report to determine relative school suitability. Only when student aspirations and contextual supports are aligned can a school be considered suitable for a student. High scores on SOS report outcomes suggests alignment within the student-school interaction.

Application:

Parents and school personnel can apply the SOS report to track change in student satisfaction, motivation, engagement, performance and wellbeing over time.

A preliminary evaluation of schooling suitability can be made from the examination of difference between individual student outcomes and those of their peer cohort. Significant positive differences indicate relative suitability while scores below the cohort mean may indicate that discussion with school personnel is required.

School personnel can apply the SOS report data to monitor the progress of students between formal testing periods throughout the year. These data can be an early indicator of students being left behind. Furthermore, school personnel may find the SOS data provides useful points for discussion at parent-teacher interview,

particularly when student academic progress is unremarkable.

Concluding Statement:

Interpreting relative school suitability using SOS outcomes can be difficult because the characteristics of the peer cohort at each school differ and sometimes students are mismatched with their cohort. Although we know that student-school alignment influences schooling outcomes, some able students who are highly satisfied, motivated and engaged, may *dumb-down* their achievement to *fit in* while others who are less able may *stretch to fit in* by over-engagement but report low satisfaction perceptions. Parents, are generally well aware of the *un-observable* traits of their children are best placed to interpret the SOS data. Discussion with school personnel may result in a better match of the child with a different cohort within the existing context thus avoiding the need to change schools. The SOS report data can be applied to monitor the effectiveness of such interventions.

About the Author

HiScore conducts research in applied school settings and seeks input from school leaders, practicing teachers, school psychologists and the community.

Disclaimer

- I. Our surveys are of a self-report format, therefore the author makes no claims about their reliability
- II. Our database is a dynamic build design, as survey data comes in, report reliability is auto-updated
- III. Relevant information is provided in each report but interpretation is made in context by the reader
- IV. In the analysis of these data significantly high and low findings are reported at a 90% confidence level. This means that outputs have a 1 in10 statistical probability of error.