

ability is reflected in how well the student does at school. If the student does well it is assumed that he or she should be rewarded both in school and in the opportunities he or she has based on his or her performance at school.

What realities challenge the myth that education is equitable? It has been shown over and over again that the quality of education varies significantly from one school to another, and even within each school. In most cases the quality depends on how closely a child approximates the ideal student on which the school curriculum and pedagogical methods are structured.

Curriculum is usually based on the presumption that the child's intellectual "raw matter", outlined in popular taxonomies, is more or less the same for all students and, therefore, equally shared by all students. This presumption forms, to a large extent, the distinguishing features of the "ideal" student who is targeted by the education system through the curriculum content and pedagogical methods.

In cultivating these intellectual properties, the purpose of the education system is to bring the "ideal" student, latent in every child, from the potential to the actual state. This is like assuming that every kernel of corn starts off with the same potential to be a perfect piece of popcorn. Of course, this is a circular argument based on the false presumption that nature distributes intellectual raw matter in an equitable manner in the first place. But, as we know, not every kernel of corn has the same potential to pop, for many reasons. Even if all kernels are subjected to the same conditions of heat, oil and distribution in the pot, they will not necessarily pop in an identical manner.

The self-fulfilling prophesy inherent in this process should not be overlooked. When it is argued that a supposedly fair spectrum of qualities will be targeted in education, and when students rise to those expectations, there is an illusion that people are being educated properly and that people who fail are legitimately failures. The structure of the process makes