



meritocratic screening found today is the college degree. Higher education is an imperfect meritocratic screening system for various reasons, such as lack of uniform standards worldwide,¹¹ lack of scope (not all occupations and processes are included), and lack of access (some talented people never have an opportunity to participate because of the expense, most especially in developing countries)¹². However, academic degrees serve some amount of meritocratic screening purpose in the absence of more refined methodology. Education alone, however, does not constitute a complete system, as meritocracy must automatically confer power and authority, which a degree independently does not accomplish.¹³

According to Kishore Mahbubani, "the simplest way of understanding the virtues of meritocracy is to ask the question: why is Brazil a soccer superpower and an economic middle power? The answer is that when it looks for soccer talent, it searches for it in all sectors of the population, from upper classes to the slums. A boy from the slums is not discriminated against if he has soccer talent. But in the economic field, Brazil looks for talent in a far smaller base of the population, primarily the upper and middle classes." This idea is an example on how he perceives the concept of meritocracy. Each one of us has its own impression of what meritocracy is. The perception that we give matters in terms of attitudes and characteristics, more so with the intelligence level. Likewise, according to Scott Belsky¹⁴, "Imagine a world where the best ideas have the best chance to succeed. No more favoritism that places the wrong people on creative projects. Cut out the middlemen that arbitrarily recommend cost-efficient talent over the most deserving talent. Forget the corporate nepotism that appoints leaders based on relationships over merit. Every individual, team, and industry would benefit from a world where the most talented people got the most opportunity". He implies that we dream a reality in the near future as far as meritocracy is concerned.

Questions for discussion:

1. What is meritocracy? Use your own words / opinions to support your answer.
2. How does a meritocratic government system function? Give an example.
3. Give your insights about this phrase "Every selection of one is a rejection of many".
4. Why is meritocracy an ideology?
5. When do we say that our society is meritocratic?

References:

- 1Young, Michael (1958). *The rise of the meritocracy, 1870-2033: An essay on education and inequality*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- 2http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meritocracy#cite_note-riseofmeri-0
- 3Casey, Wilson (2009). *Firsts: Origins of Everyday Things That Changed the World*. Penguin USA.
- 4Kazin, Edwards, and Rothman (2010), 142.
- 5Schwarz (1996), 229
- 6http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=145
- 7"Definition of Meritocracy". *Oxford Dictionary*. Oxford University Press. <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/meritocracy>. Retrieved 12 September 2011.
- 8Fontana *Dictionary of Modern Thought*. Fontana Press. 1988. pp. 521.
- 9Aristot. *Pol.* 2.1261b
- 10Aristotle, (351 BCE) *Politics*. Book Three Part IV. (Jowett, B., Trans)
- 11*What's College For?: The Struggle To Define American Higher Education*; Zachary Karabell.
- 12*Journal of College Teaching & Learning* – May 2008 Volume 5, Number 5 AACSB Accreditation
- 13Furlong, Andy; Cartmel, Fred. *Higher education and social justice*. Maidenhead: Open University Press
- 14<http://the99percent.com/articles/6732/Welcome-to-the-Era-of-Creative-Meritocracy>