



---

## CHAPTER 14

### IDENTIFICATION AND EDUCATION OF GIFTED CHILDREN IN NIGERIA

**Unegbu Justina Ifeoma, Ph.D**

*Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Sciences  
University of Jos.*

#### **Introduction**

Young gifted children can be underserved as any other minority. Although giftedness in young children is less well investigated and defined compared with older children. It is widely believed that early recognition and intervention of gifted children is crucial. This is supported by Pfeiffer & Petscher (2008) who stated that early identification and service are important to help children learn during their primary years and to prevent boredom and the development of negative attitudes toward school, both detrimental outcomes that can occur when children lack quality school experience in their early years in school. Furthermore, children from low-income and minority families are less likely to be recognized later. (Moon & Brighton, 2008).

The US Department of Education (1993) defines gifted children as children with outstanding talent, perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience or environment. These children exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative and or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school. Outstanding talents are present in these children from all cultural groups, across all economic strata and in all human endeavors. The definition provides basic criteria in identifying gifted children. It delivers the information of different characteristics of young gifted children and recognizes these children to provide them with optimal intervention and educational opportunities (Harrison, 2004).

Education occupies a centre state in the socio-economic development of a country. Education of gifted children provides them with an educational environment designed specifically for their social, emotional and academic needs. According to Oluseyi & Olujide (2014), gifted children require differentiated educational programmes in order to develop their potentials, equity, discoveries, invention and for political issues. The UNESCO (2015) and World Education Forum (1990) recognized the global momentum of achieving accessible and quality education for gifted children. This awareness has grown steadily and metamorphosed into an objective embraced within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (United Nations, 2015). Education of the gifted children will create

---



---

more awareness if the curriculum is modified to suit different needs of these gifted children. Curriculum consists of all situations which are consistently organized for the purpose of bringing about changes in the behavior of the gifted children. Dammam (2005) considered curriculum as a planned and organized activity provided by the school to enable learners to become useful members of the society. Vantessel-Basker (2003) pointed out that concept curriculum is an enrichment tool because it provides the gifted with an intellectual framework that is not available in studying only one content area and exposes them to many not covered in traditional curricula.

Curriculum therefore equips the teacher with the means of describing and analyzing teaching in relation to what is relevant to gifted children. Thus, gifted education teachers understand the effects that gifts can have on a child's learning in school and throughout life. In the quest to achieve Basic Education for All, the Federal Government of Nigeria introduced the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme to provide free universal and compulsory basic education for every Nigerian, including the gifted children. Therefore, thesis statements include the identification of gifted children, education of the gifted children (curriculum, teachers and classroom management for gifted children), challenges included in identifying and educating gifted children, prospects of gifted children in Nigeria and implications of gifted education to gifted children, conclusion, summary and suggestions.

### **Strategies in Identification of Gifted Children**

Identifying a gifted child is a difficult process that requires the effort of both the teachers and parents alike. In some cases, parents are the first to notice if their child is performing ahead of schedule in their development. The child may learn to read or write faster than the kids around them, or they just have an outstanding potential to learn a new task. It leaves parents curious as to whether their child might be gifted. However, teachers and schools are the next to identify giftedness in children. Teachers may pick up on some of the same signs that parents do, but schools may also employ testing that is designed to identify potential gifted children. Hence, identifying giftedness is not a single process. It's the collaborative effort of many people coming together to identify different types of evidence that indicate giftedness. The National Association for Gifted Children defines giftedness as children demonstrating abilities significantly above average when compared against their peers. These potentials may be demonstrated in different areas from leadership to intellect or artistic ability. Some of these gifted children manifest an outstanding aptitude in a specific area like mathematics or science. One additional point or emphasis is that giftedness requires more than just talent. It refers to children who both have talent and the ability to use that talent at a notably high level. Children due to a variety of circumstances at times fail to live up to their potential because of some circumstances that do negatively impact their performances.



---

As a result of this, there are times when it is important to determine to what degree gifted children can perform. Environment can negatively affect performance among underserved populations. Loveless (2012) states that parts of the children's population may be hindered because their school lacks resources, teacher turnover being high or because the environment is unsafe for one reason or another. This creates conditions in which it is hard for most gifted children to maximize their potential. However, it is necessary for teachers and schools to provide all children with the highest quality education which includes identifying particularly gifted children and finding ways of guiding them towards programmes that will help them reach their maximum potential.

According to the Blueprint on Education of Gifted (1986), identification processes of gifted children were based mainly on the use of intelligence tests since giftedness was perceived mainly in terms of high intellectual performance and ability. Carter (2005) stated that the first stage in the identification work is searching for the best valid selection procedures. A set of identification procedures contains Intelligent Quotient (IQ) measurement tests, tests for special abilities, and teachers' appreciation. Identification procedures depend on hypotheses related to the label of gifted. Rube (2021) stated various ways we can identify a gifted child which includes;

- i. Paying attention to your child's memory. Gifted children tend to have greater memory than average children. Oftentimes, you may notice memory in unexpected, somewhat subtle ways, keep an eye for signs of a superior memory. Gifted children often memorize facts very young for their own fulfillment.
- ii. Looking into reading skills. Early reading is often a sign of a gifted child, especially if a child teaches themselves to read and to write. You may also notice your child reading at an advanced level. They may score high on standardized tests for reading and comprehension. Keep in mind however, that some gifted children may struggle with reading early on. It is commonly known that they work at their own pace. If your child is not advanced, but shows other signs of being gifted, they may still be gifted.
- iii. Evaluate mathematical abilities. Many gifted children are highly skilled in mathematics. As with reading, watch for high test scores and high academic achievement in mathematics. At home, children may enjoy puzzles and playing logic games in their spare time. Keep in mind that, like reading, not all gifted children will be mathematics prodigies. Gifted children have different areas of interest and skill. While mathematics is certainly a common area of interest for gifted children, a child who struggles with mathematics may still be gifted.
- iv. Consider your child's early development. Gifted children tend to reach developmental milestones earlier than their peers. They may also have had a high vocabulary very young and was able to engage in



---

conversation and ask questions earlier than other children. If the child seems to develop faster than peers, they may be gifted.

- v. Think about your child's knowledge of the world. Gifted children are marked by genuine interest in learning about the world. A gifted child may know a lot about politics and world events. (Rube, 2021). However, Yang (2004) stated that a review was made of the last 10 years of mental measurement yearbooks that indicate an increase in the number of intelligence tests that can be used for identification purposes. They are all individually-administered tests in evaluating intelligence and/or cognitive abilities. They includes, Stanford-Binet Intelligence test, Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence test, Slosson Full-range Intelligence test, Kaufman Brief Intelligence test and HOPE Scale Test (Having Opportunities Promotes Excellence), (Peters & Gentry, 2009), (Roid, 2003).

Keleman (2008) stated that gifted children are identified through nominations made by parents and teachers, IQ evaluation through tests and standardized/non-standardized methods, analysis of school scores and nominations made by pupils. It is pertinent to note that gifted children are characterized with self-discipline, independent, able to resist group pressure, more adaptable and more adventurous, greater tolerance for ambiguity, little tolerance for boredom, preference for complexity, high in memory, good attention to details, unusual alertness, unusual large vocabulary and advanced comprehension of words, metaphors and abstract ideas. (Uwagboi, 2018).

### **Strategies in Education of the Gifted Children**

Education of the gifted children is a broad group of special practices, procedures and theories used in the education of children who have been identified as gifted. It helps the gifted children to socially adapt to a world of non-gifted and non-understanding peers and adults. Gifted children require a curriculum that intentionally aligns with their advanced abilities to ensure engagement at the appropriate level of intensity and depth. A curriculum is the instructional and educative programme by which pupils/children achieve their goals, ideals and aspirations of life. Salaudeen (2013) postulated that curricular objectives for the gifted children includes;

### **Teachers of the Gifted Children**

Deciding on a career in gifted education allows one to reach and teach a demography of students who enjoy creative and academic challenges. Gifted teachers are not limited to the traditional classroom and they are able to work within a number of learning environments. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) states that to become a certified gifted educator one must pass through programmes that require students to have prior teaching certification. It is the responsibility of classroom teachers, especially the gifted teachers, to both

---



---

identify and serve gifted and talented children. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) further pointed out that it is of the highest priority that teachers recognize high ability students and provide them with in-depth or complex instruction. It is also crucial for all gifted teachers to familiarize themselves with the research, curriculum strategies, pedagogy, theories and educational practice in place to enhance learning in high ability students. The National Association for the Gifted provides standards in teacher preparation, gifted education programmes and knowledge for all gifted teachers to ensure high quality teaching and learning within all gifted and talented education programmes.

Gifted education teachers understand the effects that gifts and talents can have on an individual's learning in school and throughout life. Moreover, gifted education teachers are active and resourceful in seeking to understand how language, culture and family background interact with an individual's predispositions to affect academic and social behaviour, attitudes, values and interest. The knowledge of these learning differences and their interactions provide the foundation upon which gifted education teachers plan instructions to provide a meaningful and challenging learning (The National Association for Gifted Education Children, 1989).

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) (2011) developed some research based standards for gifted education teacher preparation. They stressed that foundation is a crucial thing for teachers of the gifted because of the need to understand the field as an evolving and changing discipline based on philosophies, evidence-based principles and theories, relevant laws and policies, diverse and historical points of view and human issues. The teachers of the gifted know and demonstrate respect for their students as unique human beings. They also understand variations in characteristics and development between and among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs and capabilities. Educators of the gifted also understand how families and communities contribute to the development of individuals with gifts and talents.

Regarding the issue of language and communication, gifted education teachers understand the role of language and communication in talent development and the ways in which exceptional conditions can hinder such development. They therefore use relevant strategies to teach oral and written communication skills to gifted and talented students. Furthermore, educators of the gifted are familiar with assistive technologies to support and enhance communication of individuals with exceptional needs (National Association for Gifted Children and Council for Exceptional Children, 2011). In the area of assessment, teachers of the gifted understand the process of identification, legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment related to referral, eligibility, programme planning, instruction and placement for individuals with gifts and talents. Teachers are guided by the professor's ethical and professional practice standards. The teachers engage in professional activities that promote

---



---

growth in individuals with gifts and talents and update themselves on evidence based on best practices. Gifted education teachers also collaborate with families, other educators and related service providers in teaching the gifted. This collaboration enhances articulated programme options across educational levels and engagement of individuals with gifts and talents in meaningful learning activities and interactions (National Association for Gifted Children and Council for Exceptional Children, 2011).

Johnson further stated that a teacher is a person who provides schooling for pupils and children. Teachers' aim is to make students learn effectively and efficiently, especially the gifted students. An ideal teacher in a gifted classroom setting is then expected to be competent in his/her teaching. To buttress this fact, Kiymet (2010) said that teachers need to improve knowledge and skills in order to enhance, improve and explore their teaching practices. A gifted teacher is one who is creative, personally gifted and an original thinker. Teaching gifted students can be challenging to teachers accustomed to teaching in regular classrooms. However, since teachers are responsible for operating the educational system and they need strong and efficient professional competencies they should therefore develop the skills for teaching the gifted. Competency of a gifted teacher can be classified into two, namely, management function and instructional function. This is supported by Onwuadiebere (2010) who stated that the management function deals with setting up learning activities in the classroom by the teacher. The teacher plays a managerial role which includes motivating, organizing the learning group, classroom management and evaluation.

Instructional function, on the other hand, deals with different presentations and communication skills like teaching, explaining, using audio visual aids and all that can enhance leading and learning. Ozoji (2005) outlined some competencies needed by a teacher as: ability to figure out informally what skills a student needs to succeed and the ability to take advantage of students' interest and use their internal motivation for developing needs. The ability to collaborate and team up with other professionals to be successful in the classroom, is also a competency a teacher should not lack, especially the teacher of the gifted.

Murphy, Delli& Edwards (2004) stated that effective teachers in a gifted classroom should be patient, respect their students, organize their classrooms, be tolerant, painstaking and committed. The teacher must be caring and knowledgeable in fostering creativity, have unusual ability and talents, be alert, hardworking and faster in thinking. The competency of a gifted teacher cannot be overlooked and that is why it is important that before a teacher is taken in as a teacher, he/she should be well prepared both academically and psychologically to avoid problems. Saleh (2008) wrote that teachers' competencies help in the development of the potential of gifted students for the future and for the teacher himself. Thus, teachers' competencies through training in teaching methodology, psychological knowledge, audio-visual aids and evaluation techniques help them to handle gifted students effectively.



---

According to the National Association for Gifted Children and the Council for Exceptional Children, education standards for all teachers of the gifted and talented include the facts that:

- i) All teachers should understand issues in definitions, theories and identification of gifted and talented students, including those from diverse backgrounds.
- ii) All teachers should recognize the learning differences, developmental milestones and cognitive/affective characteristics of gifted and talented students, including those from diverse backgrounds, and identify their related academic and social-emotional needs.
- iii) all teachers should understand, plan and implement a range of evidence-based strategies to assess gifted and talented students, to differentiate instruction, content and assignment for them, and to nominate them for advanced programmes.

In an attempt to enhance the learning needs of gifted children through the teaching of the gifted, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) set the bar for quality instruction in a variety of specifications, except a certificate devoted to the gifted teacher. According to the Board, gifted teachers must be more insightful when choosing which certificate will best benefit their careers in gifted education. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) further suggests that educators who want to work with gifted learners could benefit from the generalist certificate. This broader approach to certification allows the teacher to display his/her competencies in teaching gifted children.

Davidson Institute for Talent Development recommended some practical suggestions for gifted children teachers that will help the gifted to overcome his challenges. Some of the recommendations are:

- i) The teacher of the gifted will first get to know the unique characteristics of his gifted children; it's about catering for the needs of the individuals.
- ii) Forget your concept of normal gifted students, among other things, challenge the status quo and invite new avenues of pedagogical methodology.
- iii) Rely on on-going one-on-one assessments.
- iv) Become familiar with Piaget's and Bloom's development theories; you will better understand what "gifted" means.
- v) Bring parents (resource locations) into the picture.
- vi) Understand the parameters of acceleration.
- vii) Learn from previous educators.
- viii) Rely on key resources.

(Davidson Institute for Talent Development, 2002)

Westbwrq, Archambault, Dobyms & Salvin in Kolo (2007) gave some suggestions that will help the gifted teacher develop a classroom environment that will challenge and nurture gifted learners. This suggestion is in line with the

---



---

suggestions made by the National Association of Gifted Children and the Council for Exceptional Children (2011). They are:

- i. Create an Independent Project Activity: Gifted children tend to have extra time in the classroom because they finish their work fast. Teachers should therefore use this time to help them develop their creativity by giving them space to explore their interest on the related topic being studied.
- ii. Involve them in an Academic Competition: Some competitive activities can be motivating and can take place in the school. Children are to be challenged academically while the opportunity for the development of skills in leadership and group will also be provided.
- iii. Plan Vertical Enrichment Activities with them: Teachers should design assignments and projects that will challenge them and it has to go beyond what is covered in the regular classroom. Such activities should be geared towards developing their higher level thinking skills and problem solving abilities.
- iv. When working with the gifted, teachers' approach should be changed: Rather than just disseminating information, teachers should assist them to cover things by themselves. Teachers who see themselves as facilitators of learning can offer these children tangible things. The teachers present the conditions for learning, help the children to develop the skills necessary to learn as well as understand and interpret appropriate differentiated curriculum.
- v. Teachers should make Bloom Taxonomy their Guide in Teaching Gifted Children: Bloom Taxonomy is recommended because the model is frequently used as a guide when designing theme units, lessons and assignments that promote higher level thinking. A way to understand levels of thinking in the life of the gifted is provided through Bloom's taxonomy, so teachers can design questions that promote higher level thinking through the taxonomy model and the gifted students will have the opportunity of actualizing the upper three levels-analysis, synthesis and evaluation, as a model of critical thinking that proceeds from the most basic level of the most complex.
- vi. Incorporate Multiple Intelligence into Lessons: The theory of multiple intelligence stipulates that all people possess at least seven different kinds of intelligences which include, linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, body-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal and intrapersonal. Applying this theory to classroom activities ensures that every student is individually challenged in more specific areas.
- vii. Setting up a learning centre in the classroom so that the gifted Students can work at their own pace or speed: The accelerated pace at which the gifted learn information requires that flexible strategies such as skill grouping, curricular competing and contracting be integrated into



---

classroom management formats. The challenge of the teacher is to identify children's needs, develop and gain access to programmes and curricula that match those needs. Johnson (2000) averred that the teacher should make provisions for assessments that allow for difference in understanding, creativity and accomplishment.

The development of an effective learning environment is based on both structure and support. Teachers can foster an effective learning environment for gifted children by requiring high expectations, predictable classroom schedules, clear guidance, creating a safe and optimal learning environment with positive teacher-children and peer relationships. Such a learning environment can provide gifted children with opportunities to take risks and challenge themselves, helping them achieve at a high level and fulfill their potential. (American Psychological Association, 2018).

However, Davidson Institute (2020) stipulated some tips that will help in classroom management. They include:

- i. Familiarize yourself with the characteristics of intellectually gifted children.
- ii. Let go of "Normal".
- iii. Conduct informal assessments
- iv. Re-familiarize yourself with Piaget & Bloom.
- v. Involve parents as resource locators.
- vi. Learn about distance learning opportunities.

### **Challenges included in Identifying Gifted Children**

Issues relative to identification of gifted students are examined in relation to the use of outcomes derived from standardized art, intelligence, achievement and creativity tests. There are also factors of children's backgrounds, personalities, values, ages, and use of multiple criteria identification systems. Vantassel (2000) states that problems associated with identification of the gifted are related to the concept of absolute versus relative notions of giftedness. This is as a result of the nature of the children's background, and the demands of the programme in order to make decisions about gifted learners.

The second issue is recognition of the range of individual differences within the group of learners who might be designated as gifted. The nagging concern however, is that underrepresented groups are not adequately assessed for inclusion in gifted programmes. These issues would be sufficient to keep identification at the top of concerns for local school districts in planning and implementing gifted education programmes. Another issue in identification of the gifted is a disregard for theoretical knowledge of intelligence which is multifaceted, developmental, and dynamic and can be inhibited by experiences. When emphasis is on a single criterion such as an IQ score to act as a gatekeeper with the little empirical grounding, the identification practices will not reflect in the understanding of intelligence.



Inappropriate use of statistical formula during identification of gifted students is, yet another problem. When identification procedures require the use of cut off scores and or formulas that combine scores from a variety of measures into a single score (or an IQ score combined with an achievement score and a performance score from a checklist), sound statistical methods and the data are violated and they are no longer valid. Sternberg (1991) states that the use of IQ tests for identification is problematic and has become increasingly controversial. Identification issue in this case, has to do with the nature of IQ tests and what they measure and the appropriateness of using them for certain populations, and whether the IQ scores contribute to the understanding of the children or programming decisions for them. Ramosford & Gardner (1991) are of the opinion that the reliance on IQ scores to identify gifted children are questionable. One issue of concern is that intelligence tests measure a limited range of abilities, hence, many gifted students will be overlooked if the tests do not include their own range of abilities.

Another issue on identification is that a global measure of ability is not particularly helpful for educational programming. This is supported by Durden & Tangherlini (1993) that some children can be gifted in specific areas like mathematics, written expression. Furthermore, Brody & Mills (1997) states that it is wrong to say that giftedness is identified only through IQ scores as the federal definitions of giftedness require assessment of ability, aptitude, and achievement in a variety of gifted areas. Therefore, the critical issue for gifted students is that without some measure of high ability and recognition of a discrepancy between that ability and achievement, few will be identified. From Vantassel's (2000) point of view therefore, it can be argued that problems associated with identification of the gifted are related to the concept of absolute versus relative notions of giftedness. The gifted can equally be identified through his/her manifested potentials and through screening, diagnosis, assessment and labeling as postulated by Okeke (2001).

### **Prospects of Gifted Education in Nigeria**

Research indicates that at the elementary school level, gifted children who benefitted in the general gifted education curricula can benefit socially and academically without facing the problem of backgrounds, personalities, values, ages and use of multiple criteria identification systems. Hence, standards for behavior and instruction are higher, and gifted children with classifications have more opportunity to reach higher standards and become independent learners. However, providing a conducive environment and modified curriculum to suit their different needs enables gifted children to be fully integrated in the gifted education programmes. These would be sufficient to keep identification at the top of concerns for local school districts in planning and implementing gifted education programmes. It is pertinent to note that the basic identification procedures around the world involve some assessment of intellectual or academic aptitude even in



---

nations where psychological assessment is still at a relatively primitive state. Few nations use instruments purportedly measuring general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creativity, leadership and visual performing aptitude for various age-groups. Thus, identification procedures and techniques are usually tied to the prevailing concept of giftedness. (Passow, 1984). Therefore, children whether, mentally challenged or gifted with potential, require specific knowledge and attention from parents, teachers, school authority and governments, both state and federal.

Furthermore, fund allocation has remained inconsistent with the goals, vision and mission of education for the gifted. In relation to the proposals in the Special Education Policy Manual (2004), Adelowo (2006 a), suggested that because of equipment and other municipalities, the corresponding funding must be such that special pay incentives form part of the budgetary provisions. This implies that Nigeria should diversify her sources of fund for special education so that gifted students will benefit. Vantassel-Baska & Stanbaugh, Umolu & Jurmang in Adelowo (2006) seemed to have similar views concerning the barriers to gifted education. The problem in the regular classroom practices seemed to be pronounced and was stipulated in the NPE that gifted education be provided with necessary facilities. The reason for not focusing on the issue as a major fund barrier lies in the evidence of the statement given by Adelowo (2007) that fund allocation remained inconsistent. That is to say that the issue of funding has been an existing problem in gifted education programme. Ferguson, (2001) stated that the most potent and pervasive barrier to gifted education programme is that of social injustices that effectively undermine the potential, self-perception, and opportunity for the gifted to achieve in academic settings. The researcher is of the opinion that the issues in identification procedures and policy provisions by the society, teaching process and parenting of the gifted student also serve as barriers to gifted education programmes as giftedness is known to manifest in what is perceived to be high intellectual functioning.

Treffinger & Renzulli (1986) stated that the definition and conceptualization of giftedness was greatly limited to cognitive functioning and intellectual scores, and the manifestation in giftedness leads to criticism of 1Q test scores, and other cognitive tests cutoffs as bases for the selection of gifted individuals. Renzulli's definition recognizes giftedness as possessing outstanding and generally all round abilities for high performances and achievement. The major characteristics of giftedness being high motivation, task commitment and creativity, therefore bring about the need to adopt a definition based on accumulation of research facts on the characteristics of giftedness.

Another barrier to gifted education programmes in Nigeria is the issue of policy implementation constraints. Policy implementation is the most difficult part of governance because it involves a lot of technicalities, logistics, resources, acceptability and sustainability. One thing is to formulate a policy, another thing is to be able to implement it. Tajuddeen (2008) observed that most policies on persons

---



---

with special needs are not backed by legislation; they were only statements from the government which oftentimes lack focus. He further stressed that some of the provisions in the National Policy on Education plan are shrouded in secrecy and are contradictions to the realities on ground. This is supported by Odebed (2000) who averred that some special schools are pitiable and demoralizing. Philips in Tajuddeen (2008) stated that policies have failed at virtually every stage of policy management process in the areas of identification and articulation of the problem, design of strategies and policy instruments, specification of objectives and targets, implementation, evaluation and feedback. He further stressed that because of the failures at these stages of the policy management process, Nigeria has continued to be an underdeveloped country as a result of poor policy formulation, inadequate financial resources, frequent policy shifts and lack of political will on the part of leadership.

There were several curriculum models in the field of gifted education which contributed to the challenges gifted education is facing. Eleven curricular models were critiqued according to the key features that each model contributed to student learning, teacher use and contextual fitness. They found that six of the models showed some evidence of being effective with gifted learners as data on the six models favoured a discipline-specific approach. Most of the models favoured inquiry based on higher order processes and independent study which yielded few studies of student impacts and those were not consistent. VanTassel-Basker & Stambaugh (2005) summarized the research studies of the past decade on the states of differentiation in the regular classroom and noted that the pattern of little differentiation is virtually unchanged. They found several major barriers that prevent educators from implementing effective differentiation for gifted learners. The issue of lack of sufficient matter knowledge served as a barrier to the gifted education programme as gifted students bring an advanced knowledge base to the classroom and need educators who can accelerate them (Vantassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2005).

Another barrier is that of ineffective classroom management. When teachers are incompetent in classroom management, they do not have flexibility and skill to manage the range of learning tasks and organizational responsibilities needed to have a variety of tasks ongoing at the same time and many end up quitting after a few tries. Vantassel-Baska & Stambaugh (2005) further found that attitudes and beliefs about learning may hinder a teacher's ability to differentiate if teachers believe that gifted students have varied learning needs and learn at different rates. Teachers are challenged by students who are exceptional in more than one area and may be ill-equipped to deal with these additional challenges coupled with a student's gifted characteristics.

### **Implications of Gifted Education Program to Gifted Children**

1. To identify gifted children using any instrument, comparisons should be made among children who are from similar backgrounds by using tests with



- similar normative samples. These tests, instruments, scales and checklists should have evidence of rigorous psychometric evaluation concerning their ability to measure what it is supposed to measure and yield valid and reliable results. However, using local norms and comparing students with similar learning opportunities, cultural or socio economic backgrounds even when they love to take the same test is more appropriate than to compare a nation's sample that includes more Caucasian children. The use of HOPE Scale, (Having Opportunities Promotes Excellence) to make within group comparison on children from low-income, non low-income or minority groups is preferred so that all will benefit as stipulated in the National Policy of Education, Education for All (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). (Lohman, 2006 & Peters, 2009).
2. Another implication of this programme to gifted children is that through the review, educators should realize the limitations of each assessment measure and use multiple measures in their efforts to identify young children as gifted. In addition, using multiple measures should be considered separately, not cumulatively with any high score considered as a potential score for inclusion, instead of requiring multiple high scores on multiple instruments. Looking at the identification data, which includes nurturing the needs of gifted children, they should be inclusive rather than exclusive so that the needs and potentials of the children would be addressed.
  3. If gifted children suffer negligence at schools, within curriculum and with teachers, serious implications can emerge. The result of underachieving, depression, anxiety with one's academic ability, self-worth and behavioural aggressive behaviours are just a few factors which can occur from this negligence.
  4. Another implication is that acceptance among peers especially when certain gifts are deemed unpopular. Gifted children begin to mask their capabilities and demoralize their cognitive potentials and in turn pseudo learning difficulties can occur.

## **Conclusion**

Identifying giftedness in children is not easy to achieve. Children may have the talent/gift to be identified as gifted but due to several circumstances, they may not display that gift in their schooling. Inadequate resources or even disabilities may lead to underperformance and only significant testing may reveal that they have the potential to vastly outperform their peers. Parents and teachers should come together in a combined effort to use observations and test results to identify gifted children before their potential goes untapped. Thus, school can be seen as a lonely, isolated place for the gifted children if they are disengaged and unchallenged which can leave them feeling frustrated. This leads to low self-esteem and self worth of intellectual ability and can lead to serious maladaptive coping mechanisms.

---



---

## Summary

A concern for the identification and encouragement of gifted children from low-background or culturally different populations is evident and is a concern which is apparently growing. Some systems recognize that the ethnically different and the economically disadvantaged populations represent. Gifted education must not be thought of as simply the pullout programme, the special class, the enrichment activities, but as part of a general school plan for the pursuit of excellence and the encouragement of individual talent potential. Hence, the education of the children's glass is half-empty or half-full. However, it has some way to go before it can be pronounced sound, healthy and stable.

Giving gifted children appropriate attention, careful nurturing of their gifts, ambitions, suitable education and support are of paramount importance because they have potential to make a unique and terrific contribution to their various communities and to the society at large. But if they are ignored, they will use their gifts in a wrong way or become delinquent youths and the communities and society in which they live will lose their noble services.

## Suggestions

1. Using these instruments to identify gifted children should be with extreme caution. Understanding the usefulness and weaknesses of rating scales before using them is very necessary for available school programmes.
2. Teachers who know their children well can identify children who do not perform well on tests. Thus, teachers who are culturally aware and sensitive can also be very good evaluators of children from low-income families and or diverse backgrounds.
3. An overhaul of Nigerian primary, post primary and tertiary school curricula to become talent seeking and source of motivation for the gifted.
4. Our society should change her negative attitude towards the gifted in order to lend breath to their aspiration for scientific, technological and economic self-reliance.
5. Parents, teachers, special educators and psychologists should make an effort to identify the gifted children and the government should be ready to invest intensively and extensively in the education of the gifted children.
6. Awareness should be created in the education curriculum for gifted children so they do not see themselves as outcast of the society and the society should encourage special education as an occupation and it should be embedded in the constitution of the country.
7. A flexible system of identification should involve several approaches, ways and instruments so that equal study opportunities be given to gifted children without discrimination.



- 
8. Information collected with parents and teachers as well as indicators of children's achievement in various contexts and not just solely scores on psychological tests.

### Reference

- Adelowo, T.O. (2006). Education for all beyond the present: *Minimum standards etc.* Lead paper, Annual Conference School of Arts and Social Sciences, F.C.E. (sp). Oyo.
- Adelowo, T.O. (2007). Special needs education for the future: Challenges of achieving education for all (EFA) in Nigeria. In E.D. Ozoji & J.M. Okuoyibo (Eds.), *The practice and future of special needs education in Nigeria. (A book of readings in Honour of Prof. (Rev. sr) T.B. Abang)*. Jos: Dekka Publication.
- Adewole, A. (1990). Education of the gifted child in Nigeria: *The prospects and its problems*. Jos: University Press.
- American Psychological Association. (2018). Classroom management: Teaching principles for creative, talented and gifted students. Retrieved on 11/9/22 from <https://www.apa.org/top-twenty>
- Blueprint, (1986). Education for the gifted and talented person. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.
- Brody, L.E. & Mills, C.J. (1997). Gifted children with learning disabilities: A review of the issues. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 30 (3):282-286.
- Carter, P. (2005). Taste de intelligent sipsihometric:meteor pre. 150 - 153.
- Damar, D.N. (2005). Basic issues in curriculum planning and development. Abuja: Ya-Byangs Press.
- Davidson Institute (2020). Tips for teachers: Successful strategies for teaching gifted children. Retrieved on 11/9/22 from <https://www.davidsongifted.org>
- Durden, W.G., & Taugherlini, A.E. (1993). *Smart-kids:How academic talents are developed and nurtured in America*. Seattle, WA: Hogrefe & Huber.
- Federal Ministry of Education (1986). Blue print on education for the gifted and talented persons. Lagos: Government Press.
- Ferguson, R.F. (2001). Analysis of black-white gap disparities in shaker Heights Ohio. New York: Brookings institute, *papers on educational policy*.
- Harrison, C. (2004). Giftedness in early childhood: The search for complexity and connection. *Roeper Review*. 26(2), 78-84.
- Jason, T.O. (2000). Standards for evaluating educational programmes. Boston: J.E. Publishing Company.
- Keleman, G. (2008).  
Pedagogiasupradotarri.identificareasieducareacopiilorSupradotati.Arddi:EdituraUniversitatiiAurel.
- Kiymet, S. (2010). Teacher's Competencies. *International Journal of philosophy of culture and Axiology*, 7(1): 150
- Kolo, I.A. (2007). The education of gifted children in Nigeria: *The journey so far and future perspectives*. In E.D. Ozoji& J.M. Okuoyibo. (Eds.), *the practice and*
-



- 
- future of special needs Education in Nigeria. (A book of reading in honour of Prof. (Rev. Sr) T.B. Abang). Jos: Deka Publications.
- Kranse, K., Bochner, S., & Duchesne, S. (2003), Educational Psychology for Learning and Teaching. Southabnk. Victoria: Thomson. 23-25.
- Langrehir, J. (2006). New Ways for Identifying Gifted Thinkers. *Journal of Gifted Education*. 26-32.
- Lohman. D.F. (2006). Gifted today but not tomorrow? Longitudinal changes in ability and achievement during elementary school. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 29(4), 451-486.
- Loveless, B. (2012). Guide on identifying gifted children. *Journal of Education Corner*. Retrieved on 10/9/2022 from <https://www.educationcorner.com/identifying-gifted-children.html>.
- Moon, R.R. & Brighton, C.M. (2008). Primary teachers in conception of giftedness. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*. 31(4), 447-480.
- Murphy, P.K; Delli, L.A., & Edwards, M. (2004). The good teacher good teaching: Comparing beliefs of second grade students, pre-service teachers, and in-service teachers. *The Journal of Experimental Education*. 72(2):69-92.
- Odebedi, D. (2000). Evaluating service delivery in special education in Nigeria. *The exceptional child*. 4:34 - 35.
- Okeke, B.A. (2001). *Essentials of special education*. Nsukka: Afro-Orbis publication.
- Oluseyi, A.D. & Olujide, F.O. (2014). Education of the gifted/talented students in Nigeria: A justification. *Journal of Education and Practice*. 5(33).
- Onwuadiebere, U.C. (2011). Teacher competencies for inclusive education classroom. Unpublished paper presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for course EDSC (501) *contemporary issues in special education*.
- Ozaji, E.D. (2005). Demystifying inclusive education for special needs children in Nigeria's primary schools. *Journal of childhood and primary education*, 1(1). 30-32.
- Paje, J.S. (2010). Challenges Faced by Gifted Learners in School and Beyond. *Journal of student Pulse*. Vol (2) 11.
- Passow, H. (1984). Prospects: Education of the gifted. 15(2).
- Peter, S.J. (2009). Practical instrument for identifying low-income, minority and ethnically diverse students for gifted and talented programs: The HOPE Teacher Rating Scale. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Purdue University, Indiana.
- Peters, S.J. & Gentry, M. (2009). Identifying gifted talents and high-ability students from low-income families. Paper presented at the 18<sup>th</sup> World Conference for Gifted and Talented Children, Vancouver, Canada.
- Pfeiffer, S.I. & Petscher, Y. (2008). Identifying young gifted children using the gifted rating scales – preschool/kindergarten from gifted Child Quarterly, 52(1), 19-29.
- Roid, G.H. (2003). Primary teacher conceptions of giftedness: Image, evidence and non evidences. *Journal for Education of the Gifted*. 18(3), 269-283.
-



- 
- Rube, T. (2021). How to identify a gifted child. Retrieved on 10/9/2022 from <https://www.forbes.com/2008/10/22/solutions-education-gifted-oped-cx-ura>
- Salaudeen, G.O. (2013). Curriculum development for the gifted and talented persons. In T. Ajobiwe & K. Adebisi (Eds). Access and quality of special educational needs services delivery in Nigeria. Ibadan: Gloryland Publishing Company
- Saleh, M. (2008). Attitudes and perceived information, Semarang: UNNES press. 60-62.
- Sternberg, R.J. (1991). Giftedness according to the triarchic theory of human intelligence. In W. Colangelo & G.A. Davis (Eds.). *Handbook of gifted education* (pp. 45-54). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Tajuddeen, S.M. (2008). Policy issues and constraints in plan implementation for persons with special needs education in Nigeria. In E.O. Adeniyi, O.Y. Giwa & T. Ajobiwe. (Eds.). *Special needs education development in Nigeria: Past, present and future*. Ibadan: Glory-Land Publication. 126-130.
- The National Association for Gifted Children (1989). Patterns of influence on gifted learners. *Journal of Sage*. 33(4), 201-206.
- Treffinger, D.J. and Renzulli, J.S. (1986). Giftedness as potential for creative productivity; Transcending I.Q scores. *Roeper Review*, 8, (3):1951-64.
- United Nations (2015). Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.
- United State of America (1993). Society for the gifted and talented. US Department of Education. P. 3
- Uwagboi, J. (2018). Gifted education in Nigeria. Retrieved on 10/9/22 from <https://steemit.com/education/gif>.
- Vantassel, B.J. (2000). Assessment characteristics, identification, support: gifted research. *Journal of college of William and Mary center for gifted education*. 31 (3): 314-315.
- Vantassel-Baska, J. (2003). Curriculum Planning and Instructional Design for Gifted Learners. Denner, Co: Lore Publishing Co. 46-49.
- Van-Tassel-Baske, J. (2005). Gifted programme and services: *What are the non-negotiables?* A theory into practice, U.S.A: 44(2):90-97.
- World Conference on Education for All (1990). Meeting basic learning needs: A vision for the 1990's. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.org/images/0009/>
- Yang, Y.W. (2004). Identification of young gifted children: An analysis of instruments and recommendations for practice. Retrieved on 10/9/22 from <https://geri.educationn.purdue.Ardd>EdituraUniversitatiiAurel>.
-