

**PARADIGM SHIFT IN ASSESSMENT FOR GIFTEDNESS AND TALENT: A
CATHOLICON FOR REALISTIC GIFTED EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Since 1983, the national policy on education recognized the need to identify and nurture children who are gifted and talented in the interest of the nation's economic and technology advancement. It is however unfortunate that this laudable policy was compromised due to many reasons of which inappropriate screening instrument and procedure for testing are considered major impediments. The inappropriate screening and identification procedures have been blamed on ineffective testing and assessment in addition to unhealthy political influences that have centered on academic intellectual capacity only. Consequently, the gifted education programmes have failed in achieving the national desired goal for 33 years. This paper therefore positioned that a paradigm shift in testing for giftedness is a panacea to achieving appropriate gifted education for attaining the desired national development. Suggestions and recommendations were highlighted for experts in special education, measurement and evaluation and psychological testing to be considered for the development and validation of effective scaling and testing procedure for identifying all categories of gifted and talented individuals for potential realization.

Key word: Testing for Giftedness, Gifted Education

INTRODUCTION

Human capacity of any nation has been found to correlate highly with the development of the nation. It also depends on the quality of the education and training offered to the citizenry. Quality education however is not only in the volume, richness and value captured in the philosophy of the education provided in the education policy but more importantly in the process. In the same vein, neither the amount of fund allocated to the education industry nor the qualifications of the teachers alone could guarantee quality education for all learners but in the quality provisions of the learners needs for optimum realization of potentials.

Therefore, for national development and realistic sustenance of national development, differentiated education must be provided for those (Gifted and Talented) who can accelerate the development. Nigeria as one of the developing nations is in need of nurtured people with special gifts and talents who are capable of improving and advancing the nation for sustainable development. Thousands of these people exist among our children and youth across the nation and within our diverse cultural and ethnic groups. The major concern and challenge then lies in the identification of these gifted and talented individuals for appropriate nurturance to circumvent the various challenges in the nation.

Identification of the gifted and talented students in Nigeria has remained a serious concern for the many professionals in the field of educational psychology, regular and special teachers, guiding counselors as well as parents and government. Since the recognition of the special education for gifted and talented in the national policy and the commencement of its implementation in 1989, the identification of who is qualified to attend the only school for the gifted has been a serious challenge. The initial problem was purely political where various states of the nation were agitating for equal representation as against merit. This problem became worse when the “who is who” in the country wanted their children in the school without minding the cognitive ability of the children and the purpose of the establishment of the school.

A solution offered in reducing the high competition was to improve the standard of the unity schools to serve the same purpose which the gifted school served. This proposed solution however jeopardized the aim and objective of the gifted and talented nurturance as only intellectual development became the centre of focus and all kinds of learners were admitted into unity schools. The major problem remains as the highly potential and talented are left out and uncared for within the mainstream of the regular classroom. The problem of identifying the gifted through appropriate and unbiased testing became the source of motivation for this paper. Therefore, the paper sought to open the eyes of regular and special education teachers, school administrators, education managers and particularly educational researchers, and evaluators to the urgent attention to the paradigm shift in the identification and nurturance of the gifted learners.

Gifted Education in Nigeria: The Grace, Gap and Gain

The first political pronouncement with respect to gifted education (an aspect of special education) in Nigeria was made in 1976. This was what brought about the 1st ever that led to the policy statement concerning the Nigerian gifted child in the National Policy on Education in 1977. In the statement, the government observed that there were specially gifted children who were intellectually precious and can profit the nation, but found themselves insufficiently challenged by the normal school programmes, and that they may develop stubbornness and apathy, and also, show resistance towards such programmes. The government then directed that all gifted individuals must be provided for under the country’s educational system. This is a

wonderful grace that if had been properly and effectively explored and implemented would have launched Nigeria far beyond her present state of development. The policy sound interesting but then serious gaps exit as the nation failed to provide appropriate answers to the following challenging questions:

- a. who are these gifted individuals (definition)?
- b. where can they be found (geographical scope) ?
- c. who will locate them (identification crew)?
- d. how would they be located (identification procedure)?
- e. what instrument will be used in locating them (identification test instruments)?
- f. how many are they (population)?
- g. how many are they in their categories (distribution in their gifted areas)?
- h. what is the rationale for catering for them (philosophy, goals, aims and objective)?how many of them do we need to cater for at a time (sample size/set)?
- i. what level(s) is/are to be catered for (children, youth or adult)?
- j. who will cater for them (Ministry or Commission, private or public agent)?
- k. how do we cater for them (administration, curriculum and experts)?
- l. how do we ensure realization of the programme (monitoring, evaluation, and re-strategizing) and finally?
- m. what do we get in return for our effort and input on them (national expectations from the programme) ?

To show government seriousness towards the policy statement, a committee was set up in 1982 tagged “Operation Catch the Genius”. The committee’s task was to design a programme for the early detection of gifted children and the provision of gifted education for them. The committee submitted their report to run *special education programme for the gifted Nigerian child* (SEPGINIC) which was launched by the Federal Ministry of Education in 1986. Another committee was set up as a result of change in leadership in 1986 by the Federal Ministry of Education (FMoE) with the task of producing a blueprint for the gifted education and one of the committee’s recommendations was that pilot schools for them should be established. In 1989, yet another committee was inaugurated with the task of ensuring the setting up of the pilot schools. Five Federal Government Colleges across the country served as the pilot schools and their curriculum and learning facilities were enriched for the commencement. The 1989 committee was also tasked with devising an instrument for screening the students on the basis of their *academic/intellectual ability only*. This is grossly inadequate. Students were chosen after taking standardized achievement tests which was conducted by WAEC. Afterwards, on realization that the gifted children required a school specially designed for them, the then Federal College of Arts and Science in Suleja was renamed as The Suleja Academy for the Gifted and Talented. Presently, the school is known as the Federal Government Academy, Suleja. Another committee was set up in 2001 to further champion the cause of gifted children’s education, and lastly. The FGN (2008), in its revised National Policy on Education, articulated the need of gifted children to the right to education by observing that the purpose and objectives of gifted education should be to give concrete meaning to the idea of equalizing educational opportunities by providing adequate education for all gifted children, youths and adults so that they may fully play their roles in the development of the nation. Meanwhile, the identification of who is this gifted/talented child remains questionable and constitutes a serious challenge to the expected result of the programme and perhaps potential wastages.

Who are the Gifted Learners?

Who the young people who are gifted/talented are, is still a disturbing question to many parents, educationists and government due to its relativeness to profession, cultures, values, diverse characteristics and uniqueness to individual. James Gallagher, a noted expert in the gifted area, believes that some people are born with neurological constitution that allows them to learn faster, remember more, process information more effectively, and generate more new and unusual ideas than their age peers given favourable environment (Gallagher, 2000). No Child is Left Behind (NCLB), (2002) posited that the gifted individual are children or youths who ***are professionally identified*** and give evidence of high capability in areas such as intellectual, creativity, artists or leadership, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities. These definitions recognise the natural existence of the potential ability and also that the ability should be identified and nurtured by special provisions.

The Colorado Department of Education (2010) submitted that ***gifted individuals are identified*** through one/more of the following domains; general Intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, visual/performing arts, musical/dance/psychomotor capabilities, creative/productive thinking and leadership abilities. Marland (1972) also defined gifted individuals as those ***identified by professionally qualified personnel*** as having outstanding abilities, capable of high performance, and have demonstrated achievement and/or potential/capability in one or more of any of the following – general intellectual capability, specific academic aptitude, creative/productive thinking, visual/performing arts/psychomotor capabilities, and leadership abilities. In Javits Gifted/Talented Education Act of 1988, gifted individuals are those ***who demonstrate/have the potential to demonstrate high levels of accomplishment*** in areas bordering on intellectual, creative, autistics or leadership fields, and the demonstration/potential to demonstrate requires additional services reflecting their individual needs. Clark (2002) defined gifted individuals as those ***labeled by the society*** as a result of having ***actualized their ability to an unusually high degree/given evidence*** that such achievement is imminent, and such individuals need instructions/development opportunity to expand their minds in order to be useful to themselves and society. Gagne (2003) in his own idea conceptualized gifted individuals as those in possession and use of untrained and spontaneously expressed natural abilities, in at least one ability domain, to a degree which places the individual in at least the top 10% of his/her age peers and the ability domain in areas such as; intellectual, creative, socio-affective and sensorimotor.

It can then be deduced from all these definition that giftedness can be defined but relatively. Particularly when we are looking at the exact domain at which an individual is gifted. Hence, while certain attributes can be found across gifted people, certain other attributes can be said to be unique to some individuals as valued by the society. This is one of the major gaps in the current identification process. Although, factors such as intelligence, creativity, and talent are keys to many definitions, they are not universal to all definitions nor do all available definitions use these terms exclusively (Dada, 2015). This is important to note so as not to undermine the screening procedure during identification process. It is also paramount to note that, most definitions agreed that students who are gifted need services not ordinarily provided by the schools.

This is a good premise to adopt in any worthwhile definition, consequently, the need for identification. Again, gifted children or youths though have the capability of high achievement;

they may not attain the achievement ordinarily. This is another reason why their identification for specialized learning is necessary, if optimum learning achievement is a priority. The present national target is that gifted children should be nurtured in the interest of the nation's economic and technological advancement. Then the question is that; is this laudable objective realistic if there is a discrepancy between what a child is capable of doing and what the child is been trained to do? Again, the national expectation can never be realized if the non-gifted were taken for the gifted or area of the giftedness was not captured.

Achievement Testing and Gifted Identification

Many students who are gifted benefit from differentiated educational experiences which allow maximum growth of potential in school if appropriately identified. If these students are already proficient in areas of the curriculum, they have little to gain from the general education. The passage of PL 95-561 in 1978 and PL 100-297 of the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students' Education Act of 1988, and NCLB in 2002 congress incorporated Marland's conceptualization into law. One can adapt the PL 95-561 and its similarly worded mate, PL 100-297 of the US, to refer to gifted people as children, and whenever possible, youths who are identified at the pre-school (pre-primary), elementary (primary) or secondary school level as possessing demonstrated (*intelligence*) or potential abilities (*aptitude*) and give evidence of high performance capability (*achievement*) in area such as intellectual, creative, specific academy or leadership ability, or in the performing or visual art and who by reason therefore require service or activities not ordinarily provided in the school. This then implies that screening for giftedness should be from pre-primary through primary to secondary schools as opposes to the policy of identifying gifted students at the entry point into secondary school level. Outstanding talents are present in students and youth of all cultural groups, across all economic strata and in all areas of human endeavour (U.S Department of Education, 2004 p. 26). Renzull (2000) expanded the definition to include students who might not achieve high IQ scores, but who demonstrate above average ability (*potential ability*) in an area, combined with task commitment and creativity. Thus, the current practice for gifted students identification is grossly inadequate in Nigeria where academic achievement scores is the principal criterion for determining giftedness (Dada, 2016). There is therefore need for a complete shift in the measurement process of who is gifted in Nigeria.

To those who share Gallagher's view, environment can inhibit or facilitate the development of individual's talent, but without some innate predisposition for accelerated achievement or performance, exceptional development is not possible (Dada, 2015). On the contrary, it was believed that enhanced educational services should be available to as many students as possible, to all who have potential to be productive, beyond the 3 to 5 percent of students typically identified (Reizull, 2004). So, it can be concluded that giftedness is multidimensional and that high academic aptitude and intelligence are facets of it that should not be undermined in its identification.

The characteristics of giftedness are shown in the various definitions of gifted individuals. Although there is a unique addition that worthy note in the various definitions. All the definitions acknowledge the characteristics of giftedness but at the same time, a pointer worthy of note in all of them is the consensus that gifted individuals need to be identified and specially trained in order to optimize their potentials for both self and society gains. The identification should then be based on the various characteristics of the gifted and talented people.

Characteristics of Giftedness

The characteristics of giftedness amongst children/adults have been viewed from various perspectives as put forward by various scholars/bodies. According to Blum (1985), the characteristics of giftedness can be explained in three domains. They are; (i) general behavior; (ii) learning, and (iii) creative characteristics

General Behaviour

- They often read widely, quickly, intensely, and have a wide range of vocabularies.
- They learn basic skills better, more quickly, and with less practice.
- They have a high ability of constructing and handling abstractions.
- They usually take less for granted, often inquiring the “whats”, “whys”, and “hows”.
- They have high abilities of picking up and interpreting nonverbal cues, thus drawing inferences where less gifted ones will require explanations for.
- They usually work independently at early ages and have very long concentration spans.
- They have wildly eclectic interests and are usually intensely focused.
- They usually have boundless energy which could atimes lead to a misdiagnosis of hyperactivity.
- They usually prefer the company of older ones than their peers as they respond and relate well with them.
- They love learning new things, are willing to examine the unusual, and are highly inquisitive.
- They tackle tasks and problems in well-organized, goal-directed and efficient ways.

Learning Characteristics

- They usually read a lot on their own, showing preference for books/magazines meant for persons older than they are.
- They usually exhibit an intrinsic motivation to learn, inquire, or explore and are mostly very persistent and determined.
- They usually show keen powers of observation, a high sense of the significant, and a keen eye for important details.
- They mostly take great pleasure in intellectual activities.
- They have highly developed powers of abstraction, conceptualization and synthesis.
- They easily see cause-effect relationships.
- They mostly display an inquisitive attitude and demand information for the sake of its practical application.
- They are often very quick to spot inconsistencies as a result of their skeptical, critical and evaluative reasoning abilities.
- They usually have a large warehouse of information concerning a wide range of topics which they recall quickly when needed.
- They easily grasp underlying principles and mostly make valid generalizations concerning objects, events and people.
- They often perceive similarities, differences and anomalies very quickly.
- They often discern complicated material by separating such into components before analyzing such systematically.

Creative Characteristics

- They also think in flexible ways, thus having the ability to use many different alternatives and approaches to solve problems.
- They have novel thoughts as they always seek new, unusual or unconventional associations/combinations among items of information.
- They easily see relationships among seemingly unrelated objects, ideas/facts.
- They usually think elaborately, thus producing novel steps, ideas, and responses to basic situations/problems.
- They often entertain complex issues willingly and seem to thrive on problem solving.
- They are usually good guessers and can easily construct “what if” questions.
- They are usually aware of their own impulsiveness/irrationality and they show emotional sensitivity.
- They usually display extreme curiosity concerning objects, ideas, situations or events
- They enjoy intellectual playfulness and like fantasizing/imaginings.
- They could easily express their opinions/ideas with less intellectual inhibitions than less gifted ones and they usually disagree spiritedly with others’ statements with clear and logical arguments.
- They display a high sense of sensitivity to beauty and have an attraction towards aesthetic values.

According to the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2010), there are five characteristics of giftedness. They are; (i) learning; (ii) self-determination; (iii) creative thinking; (iv) social leadership, and; (v) motivational characteristics

Learning

- Sees patterns/relationships quickly
- Exhibits logical and analytical thinking
- Masters information quickly
- Seeks accurate/valid solutions to problems
- Grasps underlying principles easily
- Enjoys intellectual challenges
- Jumps stages in learning
- Strives to redefine problems, pose ideas and formulate “what if” questions
- Seeks for, as well as solves problems
- Reasons things out for his/herself
- Formulates/supports ideas with evidence
- Can recall a wide range of knowledge
- Independently strives to discover the what, why and how of things

Creative thinking

- Displays intellectual imaginings, playfulness and fantasies
- Strive to produce original ideas
- Creates original write-ups/invents things
- Sees humour in the unusual and also has a keen sense of humour
- Generates unusual insights
- Loves speculating and thinking about the future

- Exhibits awareness of aesthetics
- Shows no fear of being different
- Generates lots of ideas
- Shows great resolve to experiment with novel ideas and risk being wrong
- strives for the unusual rather than the conventional relationships

Motivational

- Displays/shows self-directedness
- Exhibits high level of self-motivation and sets personal goals
- Exhibits persistence in carrying out tasks to completion
- Shows commitment to, and becomes absorbed in tasks
- Tends to display self-criticism and evaluation
- Is reliable
- Prefers to work independently

Self-Determination

- Displays skepticism towards authoritarian pronouncement
- Questions arbitrary decisions
- Probes teachers/adults for explanations
- Exhibits a precocious interest in “adult” problems
- Reluctantly practices already mastered skills
- Expresses ideas, opinions and preferences forthrightly
- Prefers company of older ones and relates well with them
- Asks searching questions

Social Leadership

- Take initiative in social situations
- Is popular amongst his/her peers
- Communicates well with others
- Seeks leadership actively in social situations
- Displays capability to inspire others to meet goals
- Persuades others to adopt ideas/methods
- Exhibits self-confidence
- Displays adaptability/flexibility in novel situations
- Exhibits social maturity
- Shows willingness to take responsibility
- Synthesizes ideas/opinions from others to formulate a plan of action

It is very clear from these lists of characteristics that a single achievement test cannot identify gifted/talented people. A combination of the characteristics and others yet to be mentioned should form the basis of the test battery (instrument) and the testing procedure. Looking at the characteristics critically, it would be observed that some of them are of the personality traits. This implies that ability tests (intelligence, aptitude and achievement) must be combined with personality tests (social and psychological scales) to achieve the expected goal.

Problem with the Current in Identification plan

The identification procedure for determining gifted/talented students that is presently in use in Nigeria is characterized with so many problems that cannot ensure the realization of the national goal as pointed out earlier. The major problem can be summarized as follow

1. Unhealthy political influence
2. Non comprehensive testing instrument
3. Poor testing procedure
4. Unrealistic quota system
5. Unstable objective focus

Unhealthy Political Influence

The Nigerian government has witnessed unhealthy political influences as she experience a transition from one hand to the other. There is no serious follow up of government programmes and policies as we experience change in people in the government. This has grossly affected the gifted programme particularly in the identification and service provision. The identification was taken seriously and perhaps religiously only when the first government who initiated the move was in power. The successive government was too cold and do not look into the admission of the students into the school for gifted. There were influences from the political juggins and the identification process was watered down. So, every influential person can bring their child and be admitted just for the sake of class and the good label of the school. The fund for the identification was not adequately provided (reason not known) as this is evidence in the coverage of the testing process. Only selected schools were given opportunity to participate in the selection. The worst is in the non-release of the result as many parents complained. Only the selected students are pasted with high percentage of supplementary names from the top politicians.

Non-Comprehensive Testing Instrument

It has been pointed out that only achievement test currently in use for identifying the gifted/talented cannot yield the expected result in the stated policy on education. The current instrument makes no adequate provision for testing all the abilities in terms of intelligence, aptitude and achievement ability. The personality test is not at all considered. Meanwhile a best way to optimize the potential of the gifted individual is to allow their interest and pace (Dada, 2015). This can only be possible if assessment of their personalities is considered. Other things lacking and making the instrument not comprehensive is the absence of the background of the child, determination of the actual area of strength and weakness of the child. *“Albert Einstein has learning disability (dyscalculia) yet he contributed to the invention of electricity”*.

Poor Testing Procedure

The screening procedure for the gifted /talented was faulty because the global standard template was not followed. The consensus of the professionals in gifted education is that identification must be pluralistic. This means that it should involve not just an aspect of testing but preliminary screening through nominations, examining anecdotal records, various abilities testing and personality assessment. This is not in place in Nigeria procedure. Selections are only made by the popular term ‘*my connection*’. Only few takes achievement test which are considered on vacancy.

Unrealistic Quota System

In Nigeria, two major conditions characterized a candidate qualification for the gifted school. The first is two best students from each state and the second is the quota of equal representation of the states in the federation. The following are few of the short coming in the system:

1. Only 2 students is not proportionate to the 2-3% estimated by professionals to be gifted in the students population at any level of learning. In fact, in the blue print submitted by the committee of 1986, 5% of the students' population was estimated.
2. There is no consideration for children from the rural areas as the screening is only given to pupils in the cities with registered schools they provide information about the exercise.
3. All local government areas are not beneficiaries especially those in the rural locations.
4. Concentration was only on academic achievement at the expense of other gifted and talented areas.
5. Merit does not count as children of the high class citizens and high ranked public office holders dominate the admission list.

Lack of objectivity

It is worth of note to ask why those so called 'gifted/talented' selected or what special thing do we need them for apart from their right to appropriate equal education. If there is a good reason, then we would have a sharp focus on what should characterize the instrument and the testing process consequently their education curriculum. For instance, it is stated in the policy that they should be nurtured in the interest of the nation's economic and technological advancement (FGN, 2014). If we are really serious about this policy, then we should develop a scale to identify more students with science and technological potential.

Paradigm Shift in the Assessment

The background above call for a serious concerted effort of the education managers, measurement /assessment experts, educational psychologist and gifted education experts to develop battery and procedure that will provide a better shift in the current assessment process for the identification of the gifted/talented child in Nigeria. Various plans, designs and models have been put forward, but the consensus among the professionals in the field of gifted education is that effective identification should be multidimensional.

The following gives the various criteria that should inform appropriate identification.

Preliminary Screening: This should involve the following;

1. Nominations-from teachers, parents, counsellor, psychologist, parents, peers, self and school Head.
2. Teacher reports of student's functioning-this should include intellectual, physical, social and emotional functioning; learning style and motivation.
3. Family history and candidate's background-provided by parents-including historical and developmental data on the student, the health and medical records of the student and the family, the educational and occupational backgrounds of the parents, a description of the family unit, anecdotes of the student in the home that indicate unusual capacity and early development, family activities and interest, and students' extra curriculum activities and interest;

4. Peer identification- with reasons for such nomination.
5. A student personality inventory-of self-concept, values, interests, and attitudes toward school and out-of-school activities and the objectives of the gifted programme.
6. The student's work and achievements.;

Confirmatory Testing: This should involve the traditional and non traditional constructs/values and should be a battery of the following combination.


1. Intelligence scale
2. Aptitude scale
3. Achievement scale
4. Personality scale
5. Goal objective scale

For best result, none of these data should be used alone; instead, all should be used in combination as part of the data bank for the identification process. This is a welcome and pragmatic shift that can enhanced the appropriate and effective identification of gifted/talented children and youths.

Assessment instruments are essential tools required to gather information for the purpose of screening, classification/selection, curriculum planning/diagnosis, program planning and progress evaluation (Johnsen, 2004). It should be bored in mind that there is a wide range of gifted potentials; consequently, multiple assessment instruments is needed as against the single achievement test currently in use. Assessing gifted potentials in individuals should therefore recognize all the ability domain of the gifted individual. Gifted identification instruments should also be from multiple sources, multiple types and multiple times. Two of the models that can be adapted in to have a better paradigm shift the gifted identification in Nigeria are:

1. Renzulli Identification Model (1990)
2. Munich Model of Giftedness (2001)

IDENTIFYING GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN

Test Score Criteria [Approximately 50% of the Talent Pool]	Step 1	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin-bottom: 10px;">99th %ile</div> <p align="center"> Test Score Nominations [Automatic, and Based on Local Norms] </p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 10px;">92nd %ile</div>	Total Talent Pool Consists of Approximately 15% of the General Population
	Non-Test Criteria [Approximately 50% of the Talent Pool]	Step 2	
Step 3		<p align="center"> Alternative Pathways → Case Study </p>	
Step 4		<p align="center"> Special Nominations → Case Study </p>	
Step 5		<p align="center"> Notification of Parents </p>	
Step 6		<p align="center"> Action Information Nominations </p>	

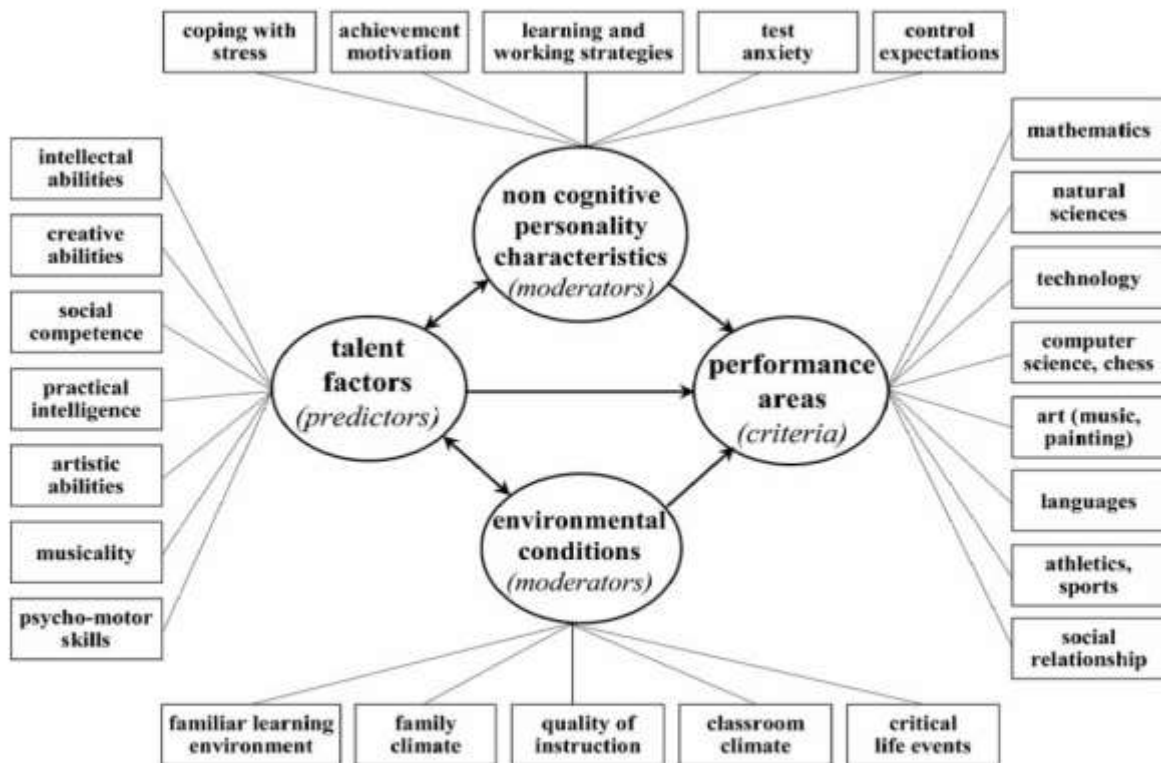


Figure 1:
The Munich Model of Giftedness (MMG) as an example of multidimensional, typological conceptions
(according to Heller et al. 1992, 2001)

Looking at the two models critically, a common feature in them is the recognition of multidimensionality of giftedness. This implies that giftedness should be viewed as multidimensional construct. Meanwhile, Renzulli's model emphasized external judgment through norm and teacher test score nomination, Munich model placed the judgment of giftedness on the internal judgment of the child. But since our advocacy is to make the identification plan comprehensive as much as possible, it is quite important to combine the two models for a better result.

Therefore, the identification of gifted and talented children depends not only on the theoretical basis but also on the purpose of the identification. The main function of identification could be differentiated into Talents Search and Single Case Analysis in the diagnosis of giftedness. It is frequently possible to assert that ignorance of gifted individuals is more to be blamed on our poor national development than evil intention. If experts' estimations are correct that more than 70% of the gifted individuals are not recognize as gifted, then it is easy to judge the omission on poor instrument or experts' procedure. However, with regards to the policy of equal opportunity for all to education, the problem of identification of gifted children persists. The problem ranges from instrument, to procedure implementation.

Conclusion

The contribution of gifted and talented individuals to the development of the society is such that countries such as the U.S, China, and many other countries have tapped in so much that

the entire globe has witnessed. This is so because such countries identify and nurture the potentials of their gifted individuals. The challenges of gifted and talented education in Nigeria have seriously undermined and constitute to our poor the nation's development when compared with other nations of the world with similar opportunities. As seen in the first model used to depict the process of nominating students into a school for gifted and talented. Students with such gifts are very susceptible to "turning-off" and becoming less interested in displaying their giftedness and talents after becoming disillusioned with not having a platform to display such. The appropriate identification is the first step towards effective planning and implementation of gifted education in the country. It is an area which could help provide the country with the needed persons to propel it to greatness.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are therefore considered very useful in ensuring a paradigm shift in the assessment for gifted /talented education in Nigeria.

1. A new committee for identification of the gifted/talented should be set up by the federal ministry of education. This committee should include experts in gifted education, psychological testing, measurement and evaluation, education sociologist, education administration and other relevant field that have handsome experience in the area of gifted education and perhaps work with gifted learners.
2. A good number of the expert highlighted in recommendation 1 above should be sent out of the country by the government to have international exposure on the skill for the identification of the gifted and talented
3. Government should design realistic objectives and rationale for such objectives and saddle the constituted committee to develop identification measures in terms of instrument, procedure and quota in line with the objectives.
4. Government should ensure strict compliance to the identification process without fear or favour by a commission or agency that will monitor the exercise.

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