

THE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF GIFTEDNESS AMONG NIGERIA STUDENTS: A STUDY OF FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (SPECIA), OYO

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Abstract: The menace constituted by culture in the education of gifted and talented children cannot be underestimated. The cultural values and norms have affected the pace at which children can show their potentials. In some part of Nigeria, children are not to question or ask question their parents on issues; it is tantamount to being disrespectful to elders. However, one of the personal attribute of giftedness is inquisitiveness. Furthermore, gifted children are not supernatural individuals as many taught, the need for them to clarify issues bordering their minds can be borne out of questioning. Hence, the purpose of this study is to examine the extent of cultural belief on the concept of giftedness and examine the relationship that could exist between giftedness and cultural values. In order to achieve these stated aims, thirty (30) samples, both students and lecturers in the Department of Education for the Gifted and Talented, Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo were used in the study. Among the findings is that 26(86.7%) of the respondents show favorable attitude toward cultural belief of giftedness. This results indicates that majority of the people belief in the cultural beliefs which however might negate the stands of gifted and talented individuals. It was however concluded that tribal cultures and customs have implications on the development of the gifted and talented children. It was recommended among others that societal norms must be bends sometimes in order to maintain and sustain the potentials of gifted children.

Keywords: Impact, Culture, Development, Giftedness, Oyo.

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INTRODUCTION

In order to effectively treat the issue of effect of societal cultural on development of giftedness among Nigerian children, the concept of culture should be properly defined. Culture refers to the totality of the way of life of a particular group of people, which differentiate them from other people from outside societies. This ranges from ideas, knowledge, and way of doing things, habits, values and attitude which one generation passes onto another.

Since it is the concentration of individuals that constitute a society, therefore it should recognize the originality of individual differences. An adage says "all fingers are not equal", therefore; we should recognize the fact that all human beings are not equally endowed.

The gifted and talented individuals are not supernatural beings, as some people think them to be, rather, they are individuals endowed with exception ability to perform exceedingly in one or more than one area of human endeavours.

To give a more vivid picture about this group of people, it should be noted that these individuals demonstrate ability to perform credibility, they are creative, they have courage to bear risks and they are task committed. They also demonstrate high degree of efficiency in maintaining social relations and they have the ability to adapt quickly to changing environments.

When talking about the effect that a [articular event is having on the others, it should be borne in mind that, this effect can

either be positive or negative; therefore, attempt will be made to examine the effect on societal culture towards the gifted and talented individuals.

Characteristics of Giftedness

Several researchers have studied the characteristics of the children whose some call high ability and some call gifted and talented. Silverman and Wasters (2000) conducted studies between 1981 – 1996 to determine the validity of their set of characteristics and found the following to be valid.

- Good problem solving abilities
- Extensive vocabulary
- Good memory
- Long attention span
- Sensitivity
- Compassion for others
- Perfectionism
- High degree of energy
- Preference for older companions
- Wide range of interests
- Excellent sense of humor
- Early or avid reading ability
- Ability in puzzles, mazes and numbers
- At times, seems mature for ages and
- Perseverance in the area of interests

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study includes the following

- To examine the extent of cultural belief on the concept of giftedness
- To examine the relationship that could exist between giftedness and cultural values.

Significance of the Study

The result of this research will be significant in the following ways:

- It will improve the knowledge of the people on the emergence of giftedness
- It will further explain the nature / nurture controversy as it affects giftedness
- The teachers will have a better method of approaching the teaching of giftedness

Research Questions

- What percentage of the samples shows favourable attitudes toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?
- What percentage of the samples shows unfavourable attitudes toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?
- What percentage of male samples favourable attitude toward cultural belief of constituents of giftedness?
- What percentage of female samples shows unfavourable attitude toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?

Literature Review

It is apparent that the success of any even lies in the attitude of people toward the particular event. This implies that giftedness trait can only thrive in culture that is favourable to it. Since, these gifted individuals are human beings; they are likely not to perform well in a hostile environment.

It is obvious that culture cannot but affect the totality of the way of life of all people in an environment. For example, in Yoruba community, a young child is forbidden to ask too many questions and any child that does this will be quickly rebuked.

Critically looking at this kind of nurturance, one could deduce that all these customs are having implications on the development of the gifted and talented children. The reason for this is because these children possess some characteristics which mismatched some of the societal issues.

The above issue can be more explained by approaching the issue of giftedness and talentedness etymologically. It is worthy of note that the Nigerian society is made up of heterogeneous population. That is, the country is made up of more than two hundred and fifty tribes. These tribes have different cultures which has taken toll on the overall development of the country. Therefore, we cannot but notice ambiguity about the understanding of people concerning the gifted and talented individuals, since culture forms an integral part of the attitude of the people in that political setting.

Therefore, facilitators of gifted education have emphasized that the society as a whole should be able to recognize the fact that this group of people need acceptability and accommodation,

though, some of the behavioural characteristics of these individuals are unusual.

As a way of addressing the issue at hand, Noble (1999) claimed that family characteristics can serve as flags identifying and assisting students who are at risk of not doing well in school. He further suggested that early intervention programme for at – risk students helps to increase the likelihood of their success in schools.

However, it is evident that majority of societies forming this nation have one a more customs which contrast some of these behaviours and even consider them as being deviated from the norms (Silverman and Waster, 2000). For instance, a cultured Yoruba youth is expected to be cool-headed, not ask too much questions and if such youth find themselves in a new environment, they are supposed to be slow in the choice of friend and relationship with people.

The Nigerian culture seems not to favour the development of the gifted and talented children since their education requires adequate materials capable of stimulating their learning. For instance, large percentage of Nigerian school children especially in rural areas is yet to be computer literate.

The Impact of Culture on Giftedness Education

Every human being is a product of culture; he/she is bred, nourished, and guided by it. Culture influences his/her activities, lifestyle, attitude and thought patterns, and even education. This influence on education has been the root reason why education has lagged behind in some areas and progressed in some. It is the reason why science progresses in some quarters of the world and retrogresses in others. The difference in culture is also the reason why funding of education is higher in some countries of the world and lower in others. It is the reason why much funds are spent in some areas on research and little or nothing is spent in others. As shall be evident in this work, almost all aspects of culture have a direct bearing on giftedness education. This is not to say that, education does not itself exert an influence on culture. Education for instance could change the dressing style of people. It could also change the language of the people as well as their custom, as the stopping of the killing of twins in, by Mary Slessor attests to. The relationship between education and culture is therefore, a symmetrical one; they both influence each other in turns. Thus, it could be said that, in every education, there is a mark of culture, and in every culture there is a mark of education.

In other words, looking at the contents, quality, goals, etc of education, one could discern the kind of culture that produces such an education. Also looking at a culture, one could discern the level of education of the people of that culture. The difference between the primitive culture and the civilized culture is in the level of education in each stage. This paper focuses more on the attempt to unravel the influence of culture on education, with a view to determining the reason why education has taken a snail speed (as captured by Bisong) in the continent (Bisong 2018). The understanding of the impact of culture on giftedness education would enable stakeholders to devise better means for the provision of quality education to the citizens. This could be better done through the provision and proper implementation of good laws – laws that would force everybody to the right.

Culture is the sum total of a given society's way of life as moulded and shaped by prevailing circumstances and environment

IRASS Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies Vol-2, Iss-8 (August-2025): 9-14 (Brown, 2021). Culture is a derivative of the Latin term - cultura meaning "cultivation" (Harper, Online Etymology Dictionary). Etymologically therefore, culture denotes a process of cultivation or improvement. According to Batista Mondin (2022) "culture signifies, the totality of custom, techniques, and values that distinguish a social group, a tribe, a people, a nation". It is an integral part of every society, and creates a feeling of belonging and solidarity among the people of that society. Culture encompasses various aspects of communications, attitudes, etiquettes, beliefs, values, customs, norms, foods, arts, jewelleryes, clothing styles, dance styles etc. It is culture that distinguishes a French man from a Spaniard, an Igbo from a Yoruba, and an Italian from an American (Chimakonam & Bisong, 2023). Culture is therefore, all those learned behaviours that characterise a people of a particular society (Duke 2016). It is learned from parents, guardians, relatives, and other peoples in the surrounding environment.

The Influence of Culture On Education of Giftedness in Nigeria

Different aspects of culture like beliefs, values, customs, dressing styles, techniques, tongues, ideologies etc exert powerful impact on educational standard of a society. This is perhaps the reason, why educational standard is not the same everywhere. It is also the reason why the quality, quantity, content and funding of education differ from place to place. This section therefore, examines the different ways culture impacts on education in Nigeria.

Culture impacts on the direction of Education: The world-view of a people determines how or what kind of education succeeds in that locality. For example, science education has remained stunted in Nigeria because of its peculiar understanding of causal relations. In Nigeria, almost all causal events are explained in terms of the transcendental. This view of causality is influenced by the Nigerian general perception of the world. Nigerians conceptualize the world as that of "extraordinary harmony, one of synthetic unity and compatibility among all things (Unah, 2019). They see it as a world where everything is "dovetailing into one another" (Ijiomah, 2016). In this world therefore, the Nigerians see events as being "determined by the will of spiritual beings, the operation of automatic forces, and the self-willed actions of men and other animals, which follow in orderly and comprehensive sequence" (Akpan, 2011: 54). Sogolo (2024) believes that and Nigerian healer may attribute a disease to both a natural and supernatural cause at the same time. He will then go about treating the disease in these two apparently incompatible ways. This means that "an Nigerian believes in the empirical (natural) idea of causation following the Western rules of causation and also believes in supernatural causation, which is not analyzable in empirical terms" (Asira & Bisong, 2015).

Sogolo divided these levels of causation into primary and secondary levels. The primary causes of diseases are ascribed to supernatural entities like the spirits, deities, witches, wizards, ancestors etc and the secondary causes are similar to the empirical causation of the Western type – that is, bacteria, virus, fungi etc. A typical Nigerian therefore, explains causation from the point of view of secondary (empirical) and primary (supernatural) causes. It is thus, not uncommon to see a traditional healer, identify for instance, the secondary cause of an ailment as the consumption of some poisonous food, and also locate the primary cause to a

malicious spirit or witch who influenced the individual to eat the poison. This tendency to explain events in terms of the spirit inhibits the growth of science in Nigeria. The logic is simple: if the cause of event A is the spirit, and the world of the spirit is accessible only to few gifted people, then it is useless to attempt an empirical investigation of the cause of the event. This tendency to explain events transcendently is arguably the reason why science is less developed in Nigeria than the West.

This is so because, "ultimate explanation of cause and effect based on mythological-metaphysical approach erects an artificial barrier ability between what is empirically demonstrable and what is considered humanly impenetrable areas (Gyekye, 2017). When causes are attributed to the spirits, then the mind tends to relax its quest for unravelling the cause, because the world of the spirits is considered humanly impenetrable areas. Nigerians therefore, rarely make an investigation into the causes of the daily occurrences in the world around them, as a result of their causal world-view that tends to explain almost all happenings in terms of the transcendental. The transcendental world is believed to be accessible only to few people like, the juju priests, sorcerers, fortune tellers and native doctors, who are sadly always unwilling to let others into the means to access this world. Thus, with the cause of an event thrown to the world of the spirits and the means to access that world closed up, and not open to everybody, an average Nigerian is scientifically incapacitated. Nigeria is therefore, not developed scientifically not because she lacks the intellectual capacity to do so; it is rather because of the cultural beliefsystem it is imbedded in.

Culture Impacts on Educational Distribution: As has been alluded to already, education too has an influence on culture. One way in which education has in the past shaped culture is in the area of distribution of education. In the past females were seen as good only for the kitchen and bed. Today they are in schools. Thus, the quantity of education has increased today, thanks to the influence of education. However, this aspect of culture has not totally died out. Though women today are not restricted to the home, but their education is still restricted by a culture that holds that too much education for a woman, would make marriage for the woman difficult. Thus, it is common to see women stopping at the Bachelor's Degree level. For example, out of the twenty students who were my classmates in my Master's Degree Programme, only one (Willie Yotakekeyu) was a woman. In my Doctorate Degree Programme, all the seven students were male.

This trend cut across almost all departments of Universities in and Nigeria. Educational distribution in , therefore, is still lopsided. The male gets more access to it than the female, because of cultural constraints. This lopsided nature of educational distribution in the country has made the female folks to fail to compete economically, politically and socially with their male counterparts. This is dysfunctional to the society, because women play an essential role in the economy of the country; if the full benefit of education is not allowed them, then their contribution to the society would not be effective. This culture that tends to limit the educational potentials of women needs to be substituted with the one that would liberate them to soar to great heights academically.

Culture and Funding of Education: The spending culture of a society greatly impacts on the amount of funds that is made available for education. Some societies especially the consumerist

IRASS Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies Vol-2, Iss-8 (August-2025): 9-14 minded ones, see billions of dollars spent on research as abhorrent and waste of money. Funding of research is a form of risk-taking and only a society that is tilted towards risk-taking would sponsor scientific research. and Nigeria as a whole, because of the supreme value attached to life, are not attuned to the taking of risks. Thus, it is almost unheard of in Nigeria, that a private investor or group of investors invested in or sponsored a scientific or educational research. It is too much risk for them to take; after all some researches come out barren with no useful outcome. Even the governments in these countries do not take delight in funding and sponsoring of researches. It is the people who help determine how their money is spent.

Thus, if the people are not interested in research and educational advancement, the government would not be moved to fund educational researches. The influence of the society on the government is clearly spelt in the recurrent strikes action of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigeria. ASUU has been able to twist the arms of the government on several occasions to improve funding of education. If the larger society has this interest and faith in research, they would be able to influence the government to fund researches, for it is only through researches that education would be advanced. It is rather unfortunate that the society is not interested in researches. A culture that is not interested in researches no matter the number and quality of infrastructures their educational system may have, would still be dwarfs, educationally. Societal interest therefore, helps determine how their money is spent and only research that they like would be sponsored. Educational research and advancement largely hinge on the cultural values and interest of the people (Akpan & Udofia 2015).

For example, a culture that largely approves of stem cell research will sponsor it or encourage government support and thereby, stimulating advances in the field. However, a society that largely disapproves of stem cell research is unlikely to undertake such a venture and will discourage politicians who provide funding for that research. In this case, research on stem cells will not be done and thereby inhibiting growth of this scientific field. Education therefore, advances as it is led by the society. It is unfortunate that in Nigeria, no research seems to be supported; she has almost totally depended on the researches done in the West and other parts of the world. The extent of funding also reveals the extent of civilization of a culture. Education therefore, cannot rise above the knowledge level of its surrounding community. For instance, it would take an enlightened society to fund scientific research on carbon dioxide mitigation or space craft. The funding of educational research on the mating habit of snails or the migration rate of birds would be greeted with mixed reactions in different societies (especially Nigerian societies) depending on their knowledge level. The knowledge level of a community therefore determines the level of growth in that area.

Culture impacts on the Quality of Education: Jibril Aminu (2021) and many others believe that, quality of education could be attained through much financing. Aminu in particular holds the belief that first class education can only be attained with first class funding. He no doubt has a point here, but finance on a

wrong culture yield no functional result. Thus, the recent clamour of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (a clamour that has led to series of strikes) for more funding of the Universities, though commendable, is nevertheless not the most potent solution to educational decay in and Nigeria as a whole. It is the underlying culture of Nigeria that a stronger campaign ought to be directed at. For when a culture that defines personhood in terms of the amount of money, the individual has in his/her possession continues, education in and Nigeria at large would continue to be detestable. In Nigeria, and in particular, a person is implicitly defined as one who has lots of money.

It explains why there is a mad rush for wealth. It also explains why corruption has plagued the country. What matters to ns is money, the means to this wealth is not important. Money is social existence in , thus everybody craves after it to exist (Bisong & Ekanem 2021). Emeka Ekwuru (2019) supports this view thus: “ns equiparates ‘being’ with ‘having.’ In this way, a man is not simply what he ‘seems to be,’ but what he ‘seems to possess.’ Being then is measured by the degrees of having, the more one has, the more he becomes, for becoming is manifested in possessing. Therefore, material acquisition and wealth are the two essential characteristic features that create the socio-cultural worth of the human person in the society”.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted descriptive survey design. This approach is considered appropriate for the study because it focuses on the collection of natural information that describes an existing phenomenon. Survey researches focuses on people and vital facts about people and their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, motivations and behaviours. This research design is therefore very relevant here since this is a peoples attitude.

Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

The population for this study consisted of thirty (30) samples, both students and lecturers in the department of Education for the Gifted and Talented, Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo. The populations were drawn through random sampling.

Research Instrument

The instrument used for the study is a self-constructed questionnaire. The questionnaire contained ten times all designed to elicit responses on the topic of the researchers.

Procedures

The questionnaire were personally administered by the researchers. The respondents were met n their lecture halls and offices respectively. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed kto the respondents and the researchers collected it for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using simple tabular presentation of responses percentage and mean score.

Results

Research Question 1: What percentage of the samples shows favourable attitudes toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?

What percentage of the samples shows favourable attitudes toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?	Positive		Negative	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	26	86.7	4	13.3

The above table shows that 26(86.7%) of the respondents show favourable attitude toward cultural belief of giftedness. This result indicates that majority of the people belief in the cultural beliefs

which however might negate the stands of gifted and talented individuals.

Research Question 2: What percentage of the samples shows unfavourable attitudes toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?

What percentage of the samples shows unfavourable attitudes toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?	Positive		Negative	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	4	13.3	26	86.7

The table is in support of the result in the research question one. It shows that negative attitude toward cultural beliefs about giftedness.

Research Question 3: What percentage of male samples shows favourable attitude toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?

What percentage of male samples favourable attitude toward cultural belief of constituents of giftedness?	Positive		Negative	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	18	86.7	4	13.3

The result in the table shows that male children are believed to have saying especially when it comes to asking questions. Male

respondents representing 18(60%) show favourable attitude towards cultural belief as constituents of giftedness.

Research Question 4: What percentage of female samples shows unfavourable attitude toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?

What percentage of female samples shows unfavourable attitude toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness?	Positive		Negative	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	18	60	12	40

The result above shows that 40% of the respondents believed that females shows unfavourable attitude toward cultural belief as constituents of giftedness.

Discussion of Result

The findings show that cultural believes greatly affect giftedness in children. This result however complements the findings of Silverman and Wasters (2000). They find out that, it is evident that majority of societies forming nation have one a more customs which contrast some of these behaviours associated with giftedness and even considering them, they are deviated from the norms.

Furthermore, it was evident in the present study that male children are believed to have saying especially when it comes to asking questions. Male respondents representing 18 (60%) show favourable attitude towards cultural belief as constituents of giftedness. This result complements the findings of Noble (1999) calimed that family characterisits can serve as flags identifying and assisting students who are at risk of not doing well in school. He further suggested that early intervention programme for at-risk students helps to increase the likelihood of their success in schools.

Conclusion

Critically looking at this kind of nurturance, one could deduce that tribal cultures and customs have implications on the development of the gifted and talented children. The reason for this is because these children possess some characteristics which mismatched some of the societal issues.

Recommendations

From the submission so far, the researchers wish to recommend thus:

- Society customs should be bend in order to accommodate gifted and talented characteristics.
- Parents should be wary of their attitude towards their children; knowing that their attitude could hamper their gifted and talented children progress.
- The teachers should device a better method of approaching the teaching of gifted children.

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