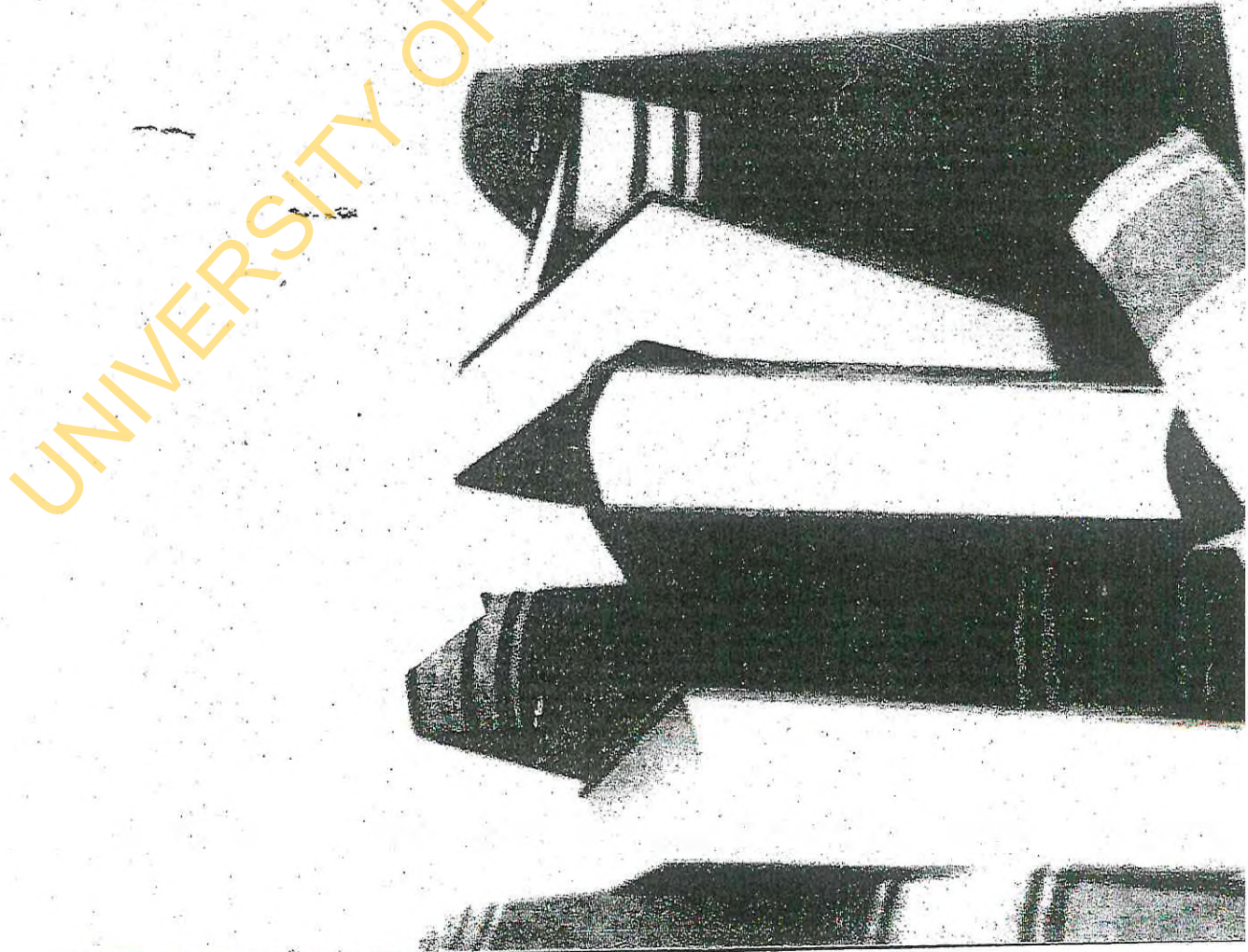


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**Editorial Comments**

Volume 11, 2014 of the Ibadan Journal of Educational Studies publishes articles in various areas in the field of education. This current edition has eighteen (18) articles, most of which are research-based.

Among the articles in this volume are: Towards an effective and creative teaching of social studies in secondary schools; School environment factors as correlates of students' academic performance in Ejigbo Local government Area of Osun State, Nigeria; Demographic factors as predictors of functional National Population Policy for sustainable national development in Nigeria; Unique curriculum for gifted and talented persons: For what?; Demographic factors, attitudes and students' academic performance in Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria; An investigation of dyslexia among public primary school pupils in Ibadan, Nigeria; Instructional and assessment accommodations for students with reading disabilities in inclusive classrooms; Mentoring, self-efficacy and family involvement as predictors of career aspiration among in-school adolescents in Ibadan, Nigeria; Effects of school environment, culture, parental involvement and student-teacher relationships on achievement motivation among senior secondary school students in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria; Effects of enhanced explicit teaching (Explicit teaching + peer-tutoring) strategy and gender on students' achievement in basic science in southwestern Nigeria; Building and developing theoretical and conceptual frameworks; Dispositional and contextual factors influencing academic achievement of senior secondary school students in south-west Nigeria; Strategic positioning for quality Thesis/Dissertation supervision. Other articles in this volume are: Pupil characteristics and parents' involvement as determinants of academic performance in primary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria; Neighbourhood, demographic and psychosocial factors associated with tobacco and alcohol use; Implications for non-communicable diseases; Preference of STIS prevention method among undergraduates in the university of Ibadan, and Comparative study of teachers' and students' attitude to the introduction of sex education into secondary schools in Ibadan.

**Prof S.O. Salami**

Editor-In-Chief

Ibadan Journal of Educational Studies



## **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES FOR IBADAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION STUDIES (IJES)**

The editorial board of Ibadan Journal of Educational Studies (IJES) is seeking articles for the next edition of the journal. The guidelines for submission of research and position based article in all areas of education would be as follows:

1. The manuscript should be precise and not more than 12-15 typewritten pages in double space A4 white paper and should include quoted materials and references.
2. The article must be preceded by an abstract of not more than 150 words typed single-line spaced.
3. Separate cover paper should indicate author's/authors' name, status and contact address.
4. Table and figures should be closed and logically presented and be included within the 12-15 pages A4 paper.
5. The reference should be in APA (American Psychological Association) format e.g.
  - Ogundele, B.O. and Folarotimi, A.A. (2008). Effectiveness of Health Education Intervention on Knowledge of Strategies for Reducing HIV/AIDS related Stigma and Discrimination among Student Nurses in Lagos State. *Ibadan Journal of Educational Studies*. 5(1), 1-17.
  - Hameed, T.A. and Adebukola, K.T. (2008). Psychosocial Risk Factors as Predictors of Youth Violence among In-Secondary School Students in Minna, Niger State. *Ibadan Journal of Educational Studies*. 5(2), 1-27.
6. Titles of Journals should not be abbreviated.
7. Materials submitted for publication in IJEES should not be submitted for another journal.
8. Articles which do not conform to the above specification will be returned to the author(s).
9. Submitted articles must be accompanied with a sum of **Five Thousand Naira (#5000.00)** as assessment fee.

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10. Articles are accepted throughout the year but published twice a year- January and June.



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# Unique Curriculum for Gifted and Talented Persons: for What?

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## Abstract

The National Planning Committee (1986) prepared a Blueprint on Education for the gifted and talented persons in Nigeria. In the Blueprint the Committee made a recommendation that the curricula for the gifted programme should be similar to the regular curriculum being provided in the 6-3-3-4 system of education. This paper tries to highlight how inadequate regular curriculum is to the gifted and talented persons and enumerates the reasons why it should be replaced with a unique curriculum.

## Introduction

Every society without exception is often engaged in the quest for economic and technological advancement and improvement in the overall standards of living of the generality of the people. It has been observed that in any society only a minute proportion of the total population does contribute significantly to the realization of this goal. That minute proportion is made up of those who are intellectually gifted with cognitive power which if properly harnessed may become high level innovators, evaluators, problem solvers, inventors, leaders or perpetuators in the society in which they live. In view of the enormous contributions made towards the advancement of the society, conscious and systematic efforts should be made to put in place the appropriate type of curriculum for the gifted and talented persons (Adewole, 2010).

The way and manner Maryland committee appointed by the United States Office of Education (1972) described the gifted and talented persons further shows that there is an urgent need to make provision for a unique type of curriculum for them. While describing the gifted and talented persons, the committee maintained that:

Gifted and Talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons, who by virtue of outstanding abilities, are children who require differentiated educational programme and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular programme in order to realize their contributions to self and society.

The implication of this aspect of the report is that for the gifted and talented to make use of their outstanding capabilities to contribute to the development of themselves and their societies, they need a separate curriculum, which is different from the regular one being used for the ordinary school population.



Adesokan and Odukoya (2008) also stressed the importance of unique curriculum for the gifted and talented person. According to them, the needs of the typically gifted child, like most exceptional children, are unique. More than anything, he requires individual attention. Usually, he would want to learn of things and events that are out-of the ordinary through out-of-ordinary methods. He may not take kindly to being structured by the regular classroom activities. Somehow, he just wants to do things in his own way. However, when wisely facilitated this way, he comes up with unique product(s). In order to allow for the self-actualization of these intellectual wizards, for their potentials to be fully tapped there is an urgent need for the development of a special curriculum that is tailored to suit their peculiar needs and capabilities (Nwazuoke, 1989).

In the Blueprint on Education for the gifted and talented persons in Nigeria prepared by the National Planning Committee (1986), a recommendation was made that the curricula for the gifted programme should be similar to the regular curriculum being provided in the 6-3-3-4 system of education. In the light of this, before a position is finally taken, the writer considers it absolutely necessary to highlight a few things about the regular curriculum being recommended by the committee thereby bringing out more clearly the reasons why it should be replaced with a unique curriculum for the gifted and talented persons.

### **Regular Curriculum**

According to Nwazuoke (1995) regular curriculum is being used in such a way that all students running the same academic programme are expected to graduate from it on the same day, implying that students who could have completed the programme in less time are made to wait till the prescribed duration (of the programme) is up. Secondly, the regular curriculum is specifically designed for the normal school population thereby making no provision for high levels of abstraction and conceptualization.

Furthermore, Sprinthall and Sprinthall (2006) have observed that most classroom instruction has been organized to promote convergent thought. According to them, there is often a single correct answer to a history question; a single proper approach to long division, a single correct spelling for a word and a single proper outline for book reports. Such a school system, which is what we largely operate, would only benefit those who conform to the cognitive styles of the teachers, who reason in convergent modes. In other words, such a curriculum, which stresses normal behaviour will ultimately narrow down the perception of the learner.

Moreover, in the regular curriculum provisions are not made for different dimensions of learning such as creativity, in-depth analysis, higher levels of problem definition, wider varieties of learning, tasks and so on. In addition, the regular curriculum is out-moded and does not encourage imaginative and creative thinking as well as the needs of the society. Again, no provision is made for individualized instruction in a regular curriculum (Maker, 2002).



Therefore, in view of the fact that the basic curriculum requirement for the education of the gifted is individualized instruction coupled with all the inadequacies that are in the regular curriculum as enumerated above, the writer is taking a position that a special type of curriculum is an ideal one for the gifted and talented persons.

### **The Writer's Position**

The writer is hereby taking a position that "unique curriculum" should be used for the gifted and talented persons because of the reasons enumerated below.

Firstly, a typically gifted and talented person learns in much less time than the ordinary school population. The talented persons typically learn rapidly, have a vast storage of information and have little difficulty in grasping new ideas consequently, most curricula are too easy for them (Passow, 2002). These learners have the ability to juggle several ideas at once. In effect, the gifted and talented see the world differently and understand phenomena in a qualitative different way from their less able contemporaries. They are not just smarter or faster than the ordinary school population, they are different or as Sternberg emphasizes in his research:

We believe that what primarily distinguishes the intellectually gifted in their performance is not that they are faster, but that they are better in their insight problem solving skills (Davidson and Sternberg, 2004)

A unique curriculum is therefore needed which would reflect leaps in conceptualization and which may not keep the gifted and talented persons to a lockstep sequence of learning.

Furthermore, it was suggested in a publication that activities of gifted student should differ from those in the regular programme in depth, breadth, precision, place and kind (Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1984). This suggestion is very reasonable and logical but it could only be followed if a unique curriculum that will take the above mentioned suggestion into consideration is used.

It must also be pointed out that educational goals and objectives of the gifted education programme should be established on the unique characteristics, which the gifted child brings to the learning situation. Studies of the gifted highlight their unusual characteristics and capabilities, for example, their ability to think abstractly and to generalize widely, their creative abilities, and their leadership performance just to mention a few. In order to help the gifted and talented to display all the above mentioned characteristics the use of a unique curriculum is inevitable.

Fourth, as stated in the Blueprint on Education for the gifted and talented persons in Nigeria (1986) "Curriculum being a means towards the optimum development of the individual in particular and the society in general, it is expected that the curricula for the gifted programme will effectively evoke and nurture the unique intellectual, academic, leadership, creative, visual and



performing arts characteristics of the gifted. It is also expected that the curricula will be able to groom their attitudes and value system". The type of curriculum that can make all these goals realizable should be a unique one, which is different from those used in the regular programmes.

Moreover, in order to achieve both the long-term and the short-term curricula objectives from the gifted programme as recommended by the National Planning Committee for Education of Gifted and Talented Children (1986), a unique type of curriculum is needed.

While stating the long-term curricula objectives, the committee said that "the gifted programme is expected as a long-term goal to develop the identified potentials of individual children to the maximum". Secondly, the committee stated that the programme is to hasten the process of blossoming of individual potentials.

According to the committee, the immediate objectives include identification of specific learning needs of the gifted children, and impartation of specific body of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in relevant disciplines. The committee went further to say that it is to develop general intellectual, academic, leadership, creative, visual and performing arts potentials. Finally, it is to provide an orientation for critical analysis of society's problems, aid the development of fore-sight and acquire competencies, both actual and potential, of serving as change agents for a better society of the future.

Finally, Nwazuoke (1995) observed that though different definitions of giftedness have been advanced in the literature, psychologists have reached the consensus that the gifted learner usually excels in one or more areas of functioning. According to him, it follows logically that any curriculum, which does not provide for the multi-dimensional areas of functioning of gifted children, would certainly bore the gifted learner. The point the writer is making here is that since it is only a unique curriculum that makes provision for the multi-dimensional areas of functioning of gifted and talented persons the advantages which gifted learner derives from its use cannot be overemphasized.

### **Conclusion**

Today, in Nigeria, and in the world at large, we are all engaged in the quest for economic and technological advancement and improvement on the overall standard of living of the generality of our people. Since this improved quality of life that we hope to achieve could only be brought about by that very small portion of the population whom we label as the gifted, therefore this potential social value of the gifted must drive us to seek them out and educate them in a manner we believe to be the best.

So, the writer's position is that the gifted must be helped to realize and use their potentials so that they and our nation can attain greatness. The society's needs and individual needs are violated whenever we fail to truly challenge our most able students. The gifted have a right to free and appropriate educational curriculum so that they can experience maximum challenges and full development of their basic



potentials. The gifted and talented persons are important human resources, and as such, their development is important to this nation and to the world at large. They have made, and will continue to make, great contributions to the society. Therefore, these potentials must be tapped and utilized through carefully prepared unique curriculum.

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