



Improving the Cognitive Domain of Slow Learners: An Instructional Leadership Concern

Ibiye Ekpenyong Patrick
Department of Educational Management
Faculty of Education
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria
ibiyepatrick.e@gmail.com

Abstract

Over the years, much attention has been given to fast learners, brilliant and very smart students, consequently leading to the direct or indirect neglect of slow learners in the class. The ability of instructional leaders and teachers to consider the different categories of learners is paramount to the overall achievement of educational objectives. Learning cannot be said to have been achieved if the learner does not properly assimilate what was taught. It is on this premise, that this paper discusses on improving the cognitive domain of slow learners: an instructional leaders' concern. The concepts of education, slow learners, learning and other theories relevant to the subject matter were reviewed. The different classes of learners and their peculiarities were also viewed as a key towards improvement of their endeavours. The paper concluded that, slow learners also exist in every learning activity, hence, the need for instructional leaders and teachers to set proactive goals, improve the curriculum and strategize on effective ways to allocate relevant instructional resources that can improve the academic outcome of slow learners at all levels of education. The paper suggested among other things, that educational and instructional leaders should ensure that proper supervision is done to curb the abnormality of neglecting the needs of slow learners, and most importantly, more lecture time be allotted to learning to improve the cognitive abilities of slow learners at all levels of education.

Keywords: Cognitive Domain, Slow Learners, Instructional leadership, Concern.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Patrick, I. E. (2022). Improving the cognitive domain of slow learners: An instructional leadership concern. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 15(1), 93-107.

Copyright © 2022 IJSRE

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of education is to improve and develop the individual's potentials intellectually and character development. The individuals' activities, knowledge, attitude, technical and professional skill ought to be fully developed for them to attain their highest potentials and contribute socially, economically and culturally to the society. However, the responsibility of shaping and building the individual's cognitive, psycho-motive and affective domains rest on the shoulders of the lecturers, who are considered instructional leaders. My observation has

shown that overtime, teachers and/or lecturers have given too much attention to smart and fast students who are considered brilliant and intelligent in the class, neglecting the needs and plight of slow learners, who learn at a slower pace compared to their classmates, and this without any iota of exaggeration can be considered a concern in education. This continued neglect and ignominy by lecturers have spelt doom for slow learners who have remained unimproved, and have performed poorly in their academic outcomes in many institutions of learning.

Patrick (2020) found out that, challenges of poor academic goals, insufficient allocation and management of instructional resources, ineffective teaching methods, half-baked curriculum, poor assessment and evaluation of teachers and students' performance, improper supervision and monitoring of teaching/learning activities among other factors have been observed as the inherent factors responsible for the poor academic performance of slow learners in tertiary institutions. All these aforementioned factors are supposedly the roles of instructional leaders, sadly, they have been perceived to be found wanting in living up to their responsibilities of raising academic standards in schools through excellent performance of students. It is pertinent to note, that student's academic performance is a very potent variable for measuring the academic exploits and standards of educational institutions. Therefore, slow learners who have been observed to be taking the lead in their poor academic performance are not considered for a paradigm shift academically.

Conceptual Elucidation

The key concepts of the paper were discussed under these sub headings, to give an in-depth understanding of the subject under review.

Concept of Learning and Cognitive Domain of Slow Learners

Learning involves acquiring and modifying knowledge, skills, strategies, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. People learn cognitive, linguistic, motor, and social skills, and these can take many forms. At a simple level, children learn to solve $2 + 2 = ?$, to recognize y in the word daddy, to tie their shoes, and to play with other children. At a more complex level, students learn to solve long-division problems, write term papers, ride a bicycle, and work cooperatively on a group project. The focal point of every learning activity is the learner, because to some reasonable extent, it is the learner that will determine what is to be learned. Schunk (2002) describes learning as an enduring change in behavior, or in the capacity to behave in a given fashion, which results from practice or other forms of experience. Going further, he outlined the following as criteria for learning: learning involves change, learning endures over time and learning occurs through experience.

Cognitive Domain

Learning can generally be categorized into three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The affective domain deals with the learners' emotions, feelings and attitudes while the psychomotor domain deals with developing motor skills and coordinating them. However, this section is centered on the cognitive domain of learners.

The cognitive domain according to Hoque (2016) contains learning skills predominantly related to mental (thinking) processes. Learning processes in the cognitive domain include a hierarchy of skills involving processing information, constructing understanding, applying knowledge, solving problems, and conducting research. There are six levels of cognitive complexity: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis,

synthesis, evaluation. The cognitive domain includes skill clusters that organize a complete, concise, and complementary listing of the learning skills most critical for each process. The cognitive domain involves the development of our mental skills and the acquisition of knowledge. The six categories under this domain are:

- **Knowledge:** Knowledge is the ability to recall data and/or information. Example: A child recites the English alphabet.
- **Comprehension:** Comprehension is the ability to understand the meaning of what is known. Example: A learner explains a theory in his own words.
- **Application:** Application is the ability to utilize an abstraction or to use knowledge in a new situation. Example: A nurse intern applies what she learned in her Psychology class when she talks to patients.
- **Analysis:** The ability to differentiate facts and opinions. Example: A lawyer was able to win over a case after recognizing logical fallacies in the reasoning of the offender.
- **Synthesis:** Synthesis the ability to integrate different elements or concepts in order to form a sound pattern or structure so a new meaning can be established. Examples: A therapist combines yoga, biofeedback and support group therapy in creating a care plan for his patient.
- **Evaluation:** Evaluation is the ability to come up with judgments about the importance of concepts. Examples: A businessman selects the most efficient way of selling products (Hoque, 2016).

How Does Learning Occur?

Behavioral and cognitive theories agree that differences among learners and in the environment can affect learning, but they diverge in the relative emphasis they give to these two factors. Behavioral theories stress the role of the environment, specifically, how stimuli are arranged and presented and how responses are reinforced. Behavioral theories assign less importance to learner differences than do cognitive theories. Two learner variables that behavioral theories consider are reinforcement history (the extent to which the individual was reinforced in the past for performing the same or similar behavior) and developmental status (what the individual is capable of doing given his or her present level of development) (Schunk, 2002). Thus, cognitive handicaps will hinder learning of complex skills, and physical disabilities may preclude acquisition of motor behaviors.

Cognitive theories acknowledge the role of environmental conditions as influences on learning. Teachers' explanations and demonstrations of concepts serve as environmental inputs for students. Student practice of skills, combined with corrective feedback as needed, promotes learning. Cognitive theories contend that instructional factors alone do not fully account for students' learning (Pintrich, Cross, Kozma, & McKeachie, 1986 in Schunk, 2002). What students do with information, how they attend to, rehearse, transform, code, store, and retrieve; it is critically important. The ways that learners process information determine what, when, and how they learn, as well as what use they will make of the learning.

Categories of Learners in the School

Regardless of perspective, most learning theories share principles that are predicted to enhance learning from instruction. One principle is that learner's progress through stages or phases of learning that can be distinguished in various ways, such as in terms of progressive skill levels: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, expert (Shuell, 1990).

Processes and behaviors often used in such classifications include speed and type of cognitive processing, ability to recognize problem formats, proficiency in dealing with problems that arise, organization and depth of knowledge structures, and ability to monitor performance and select strategies depending on personal and contextual factors.

Slow learners are one of the special needs students who require special education services in school inclusion. Special education services are needed for students to slowly learn to face some learning problems, such as: (1) difficulty understanding abstract concepts; (2) have a limited vocabulary; (3) has a low learning motivation; (4) require more time to understand a material than a normal student of his/her age; and (5) requires repetition in the explanation of the material.

Slow Learners

A slow learner is a student who learns at a pace a little behind others of their age and grade level. Slow learners are not always learning disabled, and may have ordinary lives outside of the classroom (Shuell, 1990). However, academic subjects are a challenge for them. To help slow learners, take a variety of approaches to teaching important subject matter. Get support for the students inside and outside the classroom. Most importantly, encourage slow learners by working with them patiently and by celebrating their successes. Slow learners are learners with below average IQ levels. Seems like a lifelong tag suggesting that such children are non-achievers.

On the other hand, slow learners are a part of regular schools, thus only proving that they are not physically or mentally disabled but only pace disabled. The only problem with them is that they learn concepts and achieve developmental milestones at a pace slower than their peers. Teachers and parents play pivotal roles in a slow learner's life. Their support and motivation go a long way to help such children overcome their hurdles. This duly signifies that teachers and parents have added responsibility from schools and society toward them. Creating a healthy and conducive environment for a slow learner is of utmost importance to improve their pace. Often teachers who have a slow learner in their class face grave problems: keeping up with the term syllabus, fear of losing empathy toward such students, and many others.

Factors Responsible for Slow Learning

Some experts pointed out that there are many factors that can be responsible for slow learning. Reddy et al. (2006) argues that poverty, parental intelligence factor and the number of family members, emotional factors and personal factors (including physical abnormalities, condition of the body are diseased, impaired vision, hearing, and speech, absenteeism in schools and the lack of confidence) are the four factors that are responsible for slow learners' syndrome. Slow learners have certain characteristics that distinguish it from normal learners. Reddy et al. (2006, pp. 6-18) described four characteristics of slow learners, in terms of contributing factors, as follows:

- Lack of cognitive capacity includes managing to resolve the situation of learning and thinking abstract, having difficulty in operating complex thinking, the process of developing the concept or idea underlying generalizations school assignments, particularly language and mathematics, is low, and cannot use both cognitive strategies that are essential for the retention process.
- Memory or low memory due to lack of attention to the information submitted so that the child cannot store information in the long term.

- Disruption and lack of concentration, attention span of a slow learner is relatively short and low concentration power. A Slow learner cannot concentrate on learning verbally delivered lessons for more than thirty minutes.
- The inability to express ideas, they have difficulty in finding and combining words, emotional immaturity and shyness makes a slow learner unable to express the idea that others express easily, rather prefers the use of body language than spoken language.

In addition, Munawir (2005, p. 111) identified some of the symptoms of slow learners' characteristics:

- The average learning achievement is low, usually less than six;
- Often late in completing academic tasks, when compared to their classmates;
- The grasp of the lesson is slow; and
- Once lived classes.'

Slow learner child experiencing some problems in learning due to causes that cannot be observed immediately (unobservable) (Mumpuniarti, 2007). The cause is related to the power of thinking and learning ability. Malik, Rehman and Hanif (2012, p. 136) in research outlines some of the learning problems of slow learners from a variety of sources:

- Has a learning pace that is slower than normal or fast learners;
- Requires more stimulation to perform simple tasks; and
- Having problems of adaptation in class because they have ability to do tasks that are lower than their classmates.

In addition to learning problems, slow learners children also face behavioral problems; some of such problems are caused by the limitations of psychological skills:

- A limited mechanical skills,
- Low self-concept;
- An immature interpersonal relationships;
- Communication problems; and
- An understanding of the social role that is not appropriate (Malik et al., 2012: 136).

Characteristics of Slow Learners

- **Developmental:** May have immature language patterns or speech problems
- **Social:** Poor judgement, immature social behaviour, prefers company of younger children
- **Personal:** Frustration, aggression, anxiety
- **Academic:** May show proficiency with particular tasks rather than a subject areas, poor memory, difficulties understanding several steps in a task
- **Learning:** Needs to have new information linked to old, difficulties transferring information learned in one situation to other situations.
- **Physical:** Perceptual motor difficulties, visual perception difficulties, poor visual decoding, general coordination deficits (balance, eye -- hand), poor auditory memory (difficulty following sequence of directions), attention deficit, mixed dominance (hand, foot, eye), lack of adequate eye movement control.

- **Psychological:** Emotional instability (violent reactions), difficulty learning by ordinary methods, low social acceptance (disturbed peer relations), low self-concept/self-esteem, general disorganization (time and actions).

Concept of Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership is generally defined as the management of curriculum and instruction by a school principal. This term appeared as a result of research associated with the effective school movement of the 1980s, which revealed that the key to running successful schools lies in the principals' role. However, the concept of instructional leadership is recently stretched out to include more distributed models which emphasize distributed and shared empowerment among school staff, for example distributed leadership, shared leadership, and transformational leadership (Wikipedia.com). Instructional leadership according to Ogoni (2020) is an aspect of educational leadership that places the responsibility of supervision of instruction and inspection of instructional materials on the school head for the main aim of achieving pre stated school goals.

Olonubi (2018) noted that instructional leadership focuses on leaders (principals) influence on student achievement: how they positively affect teachers and the outcomes of teaching, and raises learner performance. Current research by Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) and Waters, Marzano and MacNulty (2003) cited in Mafuwane (2011) emphasizes the role of the principal as an instructional leader in setting directions, developing the educators on matters of instruction, and generally making the school work.

Both 20th and 21st century commentaries on instructional leadership emphasize the view that instructional leadership encompasses those actions that a principal takes, or delegates to others, in order to promote growth in student learning (Mafuwane, 2011). The instructional leader in secondary schools bears the title principal, however, in the case of tertiary institutions can be called the Rector or Provost in colleges and polytechnics, and the vice chancellor in universities. According to Wildy and Dimmock (1993, p. 144) cited in Mafuwane (2011), “a principal must be able to define the purpose of schooling, set school-wide goals and implement strategies to achieve those goals. They must provide educators and learners with all the resources necessary for effective learning to occur; supervise and evaluate teachers in line with the performance of their learners; initiate and coordinate in house staff development programmes; and create and nurture collegial relationships with and among teachers”.

In concert with the above scholars' views and assumptions about instructional leadership, Elmore (2000; 2005) and Daresh (2007) cited in Mafuwane (2011) maintain that all primary activities undertaken by a school's leadership should be tightly coupled to the core technology of schooling, which is teaching and learning. This view implies that a principal's primary role is instructional leadership and, as such, he/she must direct changes in terms of teaching and learning. Demonstrating leadership to others in the school (teachers, heads of departments and deputy principals) is included in the role of the principal as an instructional leader. Similar to the above views, Daresh (2007) and Elmore (2000) in Mafuwane (2011) propose a definition of instructional leadership that differentiates it from school leadership in general. They suggest that instructional leadership is a type of leadership that should guide and direct instructional improvements associated with learner performance (Mafuwane, 2011). This presupposes that the learners' domain is a factor of consideration in the responsibilities of school principals who are educational leaders.

Instructional leadership is a guiding process channeled at helping people to achieve a purpose set out to be achieved. In order to make a mark, an instructional leader must have acquired a lot of experiences that will help him take various steps in managing his

subordinates. He must have undergone through the rigors of teaching in various capacities and must have acquired the characteristics of a good leader. Maturity has a great part to play when it comes to instructional leadership (Amanchukwu, 2018).

Basic Skills of Instructional Leaders

Inherent in the concept of instructional leadership is the notion that learning should be given top priority while everything else revolves around the enhancement of learning. Instructional leaders need to know what is going on in the classroom. Without this knowledge, they are unable to appreciate some of the problems teachers and students encounter. That is why, on any given day, teachers and students ought to see the instructional leader walking the halls, praising students' work, and acknowledging what teachers are doing. Instructional leaders need to work closely with students, developing teaching techniques and methods as a means for understanding teacher perspectives and for establishing a base on which to make curricular decisions.

Whitaker (1997) cited in Jenkins (2009) identifies four skills essential for instructional leadership:

- Effective instructional leaders need to be resource providers. It is not enough for principals to know the strengths and weaknesses of their faculties; they must also recognize teachers' desires to be acknowledged and appreciated for a job well done. From my experience, teachers seek only tiny morsels of praise and the assurance that I am there to support them as a resource provider.
- Effective instructional leaders' need to be instructional resources. Teachers count on their principals as resources of information on current trends and effective instructional practices.
- Instructional leaders are tuned into issues relating to curriculum, effective pedagogical strategies, and assessment. For example, teachers come by my office daily to seek suggestions on the best way to reach a child who is not grasping concepts.
- Effective instructional leaders need to be good communicators. They need to communicate essential beliefs regarding learning, such as the conviction that all children can learn.
- Effective instructional leaders need to create a visible presence. This includes focusing on learning objectives, modeling behaviors of learning, and designing programs and activities on instruction.

Educational Objectives and the Role of Instructional Leaders in Cognitive Improvement of Learners

The overall objective of education in Nigeria is to provide high and quality standard education to all and sundry. This is evident in the philosophy and goals of Nigerian education, contained in the National policy on education, section 8, which states thus; In consequences, the quality of instruction at all levels of education has to be oriented towards inculcating the following value, (a) respect for the worth and dignity of the individual, (b) faith in man's ability to make rational decisions; (c) moral and spiritual principle in interpersonal and human relations; (d) share responsibility for the common good of society; (e) promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; (7) acquisition of competences necessary for self-reliance (FRN, 2004).

In achieving the aforementioned objective, the learner becomes the focus or center of educational leaders. For the learner to be adequately shaped, built and transformed morally, spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially and psychologically to make rational decisions that will ultimately help to build an egalitarian society, the instructional leader, has indispensable roles to play. The learner here refers to the pupils/students at all levels of education.

The core business of schools is teaching and learning in order to give students' quality education. As an affirmation on the above, it is stated that; "one of the indicators of quality education being provided is cognitive achievement of learners" (Kimani, Kara, & Njagi, 2013, p. 2). It has been said previously that school leaders, teachers and parents have a critical role in providing quality education for students, but it can be argued that for quality education to prevail all education stakeholders should take part in the translation, interpretation and implementation of policies regarding achievement of high standards of education, including students (MolokoMphale & Mhlauli, 2014).

MolokoMphale and Mhlauli (2014) opine that, the success of any educational institution is measured by the performance of its students in both academic and non-academic tests. This position was supported by Ajao (2001) who maintained that the quality of education and performance of students depend on the teachers as reflected in the discharge of their duties. Students' academic performances both in internal and external examinations had been used to determine the effectiveness of teaching (Ololube, 2006, 2007).

In light of the above, the constant improvement of the learner's academic performance must be the priority of teachers who are seen as instructional leaders, saddled with the responsibility of improving curriculum, creating climate of high expectations for staff and students, evaluate test results and make recommendations for improvement and provide resources to improve instruction and motivate staff and students on a regular basis (Heaven & Bourne, 2016). Recently in Botswana, teachers have been blamed for low students' performance and unjustified professional misconduct (The Botswana Gazette, 2013). This was the case because teachers' effectiveness may be determined by the grades the students obtain in their examinations. It is unheard of to dissociate teachers from their student's performance because they are responsible for interpreting and implementing policies.

While other authors contend that there is insufficient evidence to support the relationship between school leadership and students' academic performance (Witziers, Bosker & Kruger, 2003). However, the majority of studies carried out about school leadership has revealed that school leadership quality directly impact the school success, teachers effectiveness and students' academic performance. The School Head is an overseer of all activities taking place in a school and answerable to activities within the school compound. Their core business is the success of the school by making teaching and learning enjoyable and more effective. It is the wish of every School Head to be trusted, respected and praised by the community he serves.

One of the factors that make school leaders to be belittled is when the school performs badly; and as such it is an area which the School Head will try to avoid at all cost. In order to sustain academic performance the leadership will have to create an academic achievement ethos, organize instruction throughout the school spectrum and aims to attain the target set by the supervisory department, thus becoming instructional leaders. There are several ways in which school leaders have an impact on the students' academic performance. One of the ways is the school leader being an instructional leader.

Instructional leadership involves setting goals, managing curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, allocating resources and evaluating teachers regularly to promote student learning and growth (Concordia University, 2013). An effective instructional leadership is

able to build the culture of learning, provide resources needed for quality teaching, and structure the classroom environment to stimulate teachers and learners motivation. Effective instructional leadership behaviour of the school leader has been shown to be the most crucial role to improve teachers' performance and students' academic achievement (Strauss, 2013). Using his supervisory role the head should have time to check what happens in the classroom. He should spare some of his time to observe teachers teaching. After lesson observation his duty should be that of advisory than castigation. He should give feedback on the teachers' strong and weak points. Always giving praise for the good work makes teachers valued and motivated to work an extra mile. Where proper advice is given, it makes teachers happy and they will then work on their weakness to enhance their performance.

Theoretical Construct

Mastery Learning Model

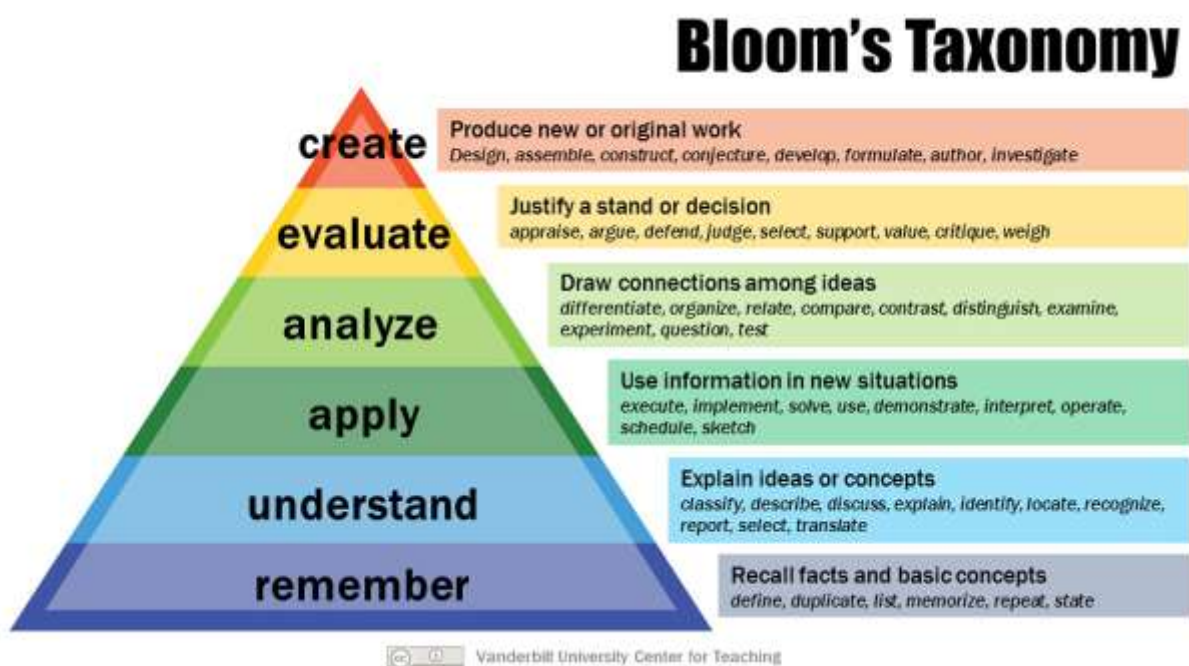


Figure 1: Framework for categorizing educational goals: Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. (Armstrong, 2010).

Bloom and his collaborators in 1956 heavily influenced mastery learning model. Naming this theory as “school learning”, Benjamin Bloom et al. (1956) in Armstrong (2010) investigated the reasons of individual differences that were seen in the schools where mass learning took place and tried to explain the necessary measures needed to be taken in order to minimize these individual differences for the benefit of student, school and society (Schellhase, 2008; Guskey & Gates, 1986). In other words, school learning or mastery learning theory claims that when all the students are provided with additional time and learning opportunities, they can get the new behaviors that are desired to be taught at schools (Senemoğlu, 2005).

According to Bloom et al., there are hereditary crucial differences in terms of mental capacities among people. However, these differences remain as a tiny detail besides the inequalities and injustices that emerged during the education process. The quality of the teaching activities that take place at schools is among the most important variables that determine the level of learning (See figure 1).

Bloom's model depends on the assumption that "if they are provided with an equal, fair and adequate learning opportunity, all of the students can learn". Bloom's views focuses on the quality of teaching activities at schools, the reasons of the individual differences among the students, and how to iron these reasons out through effective teaching methods (Zimmerman & Dibenedetto, 2008).

Although there are crucial factors like other students, printed materials, the physical features of the classes, family, counseling, peer groups, the features of teachers and the education opportunities (Erden, 2001), provided by the teacher besides "inner conditions" like the general health status of the individuals, prior knowledge, level of intelligence, motivation and self-confidence while implementing the basic objective of education, that is, acquiring behavior, it is possible to see the varieties of mastery learning in the existing applications. The same ideas underlies at the bottom of all of these applications: These ideas are: to help those who are suffering from learning difficulties by providing a sensitive and planned teaching service, to determine a "mastery learning" criteria for them and to be able to develop a high level learning power (Norjihan et al., 2006).

There are many evidences proving the learning differences among the individuals. In spite of the evidences proving that there are differences among students in terms of school learning and these differences are permanent, he believes that the major part of this variable that is springing from these differences can be linked with the conditions of home and school environment. Most of the differences seen in school learning are innate and cannot be changed and these can be seen as man-made differences. There are two independent variables that are affecting the level of students' learning, in other words, learning outcomes.

The first of these two variables is the student's entry characteristics at the very beginning of teaching-learning process; the other one is the quality of instruction. During the implementation of the teaching activities, if these two variables are taken into control, planned and implemented properly, "mastery learning" can be achieved among students. As stated above, it is expressed that the social factors like home and school environments play an effective role on the level of learning differences among people.

Many factors affect school learning. Some of these factors like intelligence (general ability), the characteristic features of the teacher, and the socio-economic status of the family cannot be directly changed via teaching-learning process. On the other hand, the factors like the prior knowledge of the students, their interests, attitudes, belief in success and the quality of instruction can be changed via teaching-learning process.

The main function of the schools is to popularize the school, to complete students' lack of learning, draw their attention to the topics, to increase their belief in success, to improve the quality of instruction etc. If schools can make positive changes in the changeable characteristics that affect the learning process of the students and in the teaching-learning environment, then they can make contributions to students' self-realization. Carroll's "School learning model" is based on the view that "there are fast and slow learners".

According to Carroll, when the appropriate time and learning opportunities are provided, all of the students can reach the desired learning objectives. Learning level is the function of the ratio between elapsed time in active learning and the time needed for learning. Time is the most important variable while explaining the "School learning" model. The other components of the model are: ability, ability of benefiting from teaching, patience/diligence, opportunity, and the quality of instruction.

Ability

Carroll explains ability as the time needed for mastery learning. When appropriate time is provided, students can learn a specific subject at desired level. Students can need more or less

time for learning due to their abilities. Carroll argues that 90% of students have medium level ability and 5% of students have high-level ability, 95% of the group can learn at high level. As for the 5% of students have lack of ability on certain subjects. Instructional design should separate the differences between the abilities and should be organized without constituting ability categories.

Ability of Benefiting From Instruction

In order to learn a subject, it is necessary for students to have the adequate ability and do the essential things for learning. Not only prerequisite conditions but also general abilities (e.g. reading comprehension, logical thinking abilities etc.) acquired beforehand are more crucial. It shows the level of having the facilitating prerequisite learning conditions needed for learning new knowledge units.

Patience/Diligence

The time spent for learning by the willing/motivated student.

Opportunity

It includes the arrangement of self-learning time instead of a stabilized, standard time at schools.

The Quality of Instruction

It means teaching without need for additional time. It can be thought that let alone ability, if teaching requires additional time, it is unqualified but if it doesn't, then it is qualified. Although teachers are pretty sure of them, some of the students will learn slower and some of them will learn faster, because they are lacking in some qualifications that couldn't be acquired due to inadequate time. For example, teachers can give appropriate materials to the students according to their personal needs or they can let them study at their own level.

According to Bloom et al. (1956), it is necessary to prepare reinforces, cues, student participation, feedback and correction activities in accordance with characteristics (cognitive and affective) of the students and aims of the learning unit. No matter what method or technique is used, all of these four variables should be implemented effectively. The use of this model will improve the cognitive ability of slow learners who require motivation from teachers to learn at a faster pace and perform better academically.

Strategies for Improving the Cognitive Domain of Slow Learners

Educational experts have a view that slow learners learn better in regular schools. This is understandable because the slow learner has little difference from normal learners in their intellectual development. Slow learner placement in regular schooling can have a positive effect, both for the slow learner itself and for normal learners in the regular school. Slow learners learn to interact with normal students, increase participation in groups, and learn to adjust to social life. In addition, the normal student can change the view and eliminate the negative view of disabled children (Arjmandnia & Kakabarae, 2011).

Based on learning strategies for all learners presented by Hidayat (2009), teachers should use learning strategies that are based on the diversity of learning ability of each student. In this

case, appropriate learning strategies for slow learner in inclusive schools can be applied by adjusting the learning abilities of slow learner with goals, time allocation, rewards, tasks, and assistance in the learning process. His views focuses on the quality of teaching activities at schools, the reasons of the individual differences among the students, and how to iron these reasons out through effective teaching methods.

In choosing the right learning strategy for slow learner, a teacher needs to consider several aspects. Hamzah and Nurdin (2011, p. 4) argued that in general, the selection of learning strategies based on: (1) the formulation of learning objectives; (2) analysis of needs and characteristics of students generated; and (3) types of learning materials. The third component is further adapted to media and learning resources are available and may be used (Hamzah & Nurdin, 2011, p. 4), so that it can take an idea those electoral considerations learning strategies for slow learner include:

- Learning objectives;
- Learning materials;
- The characteristics and needs of slow learner;
- Professional ability of teachers;
- Time allocation;
- Availability of media and props;
- Classroom and school environment or educational institutions; and
- Other considerations related to learning strategies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the definition of slow learner and learning strategies described earlier, it can be concluded that the learning strategy of slow learner is the most important and effective way to help slow learner to learn to achieve certain learning objectives, so the teacher became a teacher in planning and organizing slow learners activities. In planning and implementing slow learner learning strategies, a teacher needs to pay attention to the slow learner abilities differently from other normal students. These involves: giving concise, one-task-at-a-time instructions, trying to avoid passive learning activities such as copying notes from the board in favor of more active things like games and puzzles, trying to find ways that the subject areas of learning converged with the students' personal interests, finding what the students were good at and drawing on these competencies, and using a lot of repetition when teaching difficult concepts.

Teachers and learners need to understand the hierarchy of processes and skills within the cognitive domain so they appreciate prerequisite skills for learning as well as the way these skills need to be transformed to master more complicated elements of specific concept. Development of learning skills should never be taken for granted in teaching or learning new content. Skills associated with lower-level processes should be introduced in foundation courses and elevated in intermediate-level coursework. All students do not learn at the same pace, some are slow, average while others are fast learners. Bloom asserted that there are hereditary crucial differences in terms of mental capacities among people. However, these differences remain as a tiny detail besides the inequalities and injustices that emerged during the education process. Bloom's model depends on the assumption that "if they are provided with an equal, fair and adequate learning opportunity, all of the students can learn". From the plethora of literature reviewed in this paper, it can be clearly seen that that cognitive domain of slow learners could be often ignored, neglected and not taken seriously, which calls for urgent concern and proactive steps to be taken by educational stakeholders to remedy the situation.

Suggestions

In view of the discussions and conclusions of the paper, the following suggestions were made:

- Instructional leaders (Deans, HoDs, Principals) should ensure that the curriculum of the school gives room for the improvement of slow learners by encouraging teachers/lecturers to give them close attention and extra time allotted to them while teaching.
- School goals and objectives should be set in such a way that it captures the teeming needs of students with learning disabilities/challenges in order to carry everyone along.
- The extent to which teachers lessons are supervised will determine their level of efficiency, hence, teachers should be supervised through classroom visits by instructional leaders to ensure teaching gaps are covered.
- Students friendly instructional resources should be allocated to assist slow learners grasp complex concepts and instructions, for example multimedia screens can be used to display audio and visual elements to make learning more interesting and enjoyable.

REFERENCES

- Amanchukwu, R. N. (2018). Instructional leadership and effectiveness in higher education. In N. P. Ololube (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management* (pp. 52-66). Pearl publishers.
- ARCS (2013). <http://edutechwiki.unge.ch/en/ARCS>
- ARCS Model of Motivational Design (2008). <http://teachinglearningresources.pbworks.com/w/page/19919538/>
- Arjmandnia, A. A., &Kakabaraee, K. (2011). The investigation of parents' attitude toward inclusive education for slow learners. *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications*, 2(4), 88-95.
- Armstrong, P. (2010). Bloom's Taxonomy. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>.
- Bloom, B., Engelhart, M. D., Furst, E. J., Hill, W. H., Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals*. Vol. Handbook I: Cognitive domain. David McKay.
- Botswana Gazette. (2013). *Poor junior certificate examination results*. The Botswana Gazette
- Concordia University's (2013). Concordia university's CRC and CFI strategic research plan:2013-2018. https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/vprgs/docs/Strategic_Research_Plan_2013-2018.pdf
- Erden, M. (2001). *Öğretmenlikmesleğinegiriş*. İstanbul.
- Guskey, T. R., & Gates, S. L. (1986). Synthesis of research on the effects of mastery learning in elementary and secondary classrooms. *Educational leadership*, 43(8), 73-80.
- Hamzah, B., Uno danNurdinMohamad. (2011). *Belajardengan Pendekatan PAILKEM: Pembelajaran Aktif, Inovatif, Lingkungan, Kreatif, Efektif, Menarik*. BumiAksara.
- Heaven, G. & Bourne, P. A. (2016). Instrucitonal Leadership and It's effect on students' Academic Performance Public Administration & Management. 4(197). doi:104172/2315-7844.1000179.

- Hidayat, T. (2009). Model dan Strategi Pembelajaran ABK dalam Setting Pendidikan Inklusif. Workshop “Pengenalan & Identifikasi Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus (ABK) & Strategi Pembelajarannya” Balikpapan 25 Oktober 2009. Balikpapan: Tempat Terapi untuk Anak HARAPAN KU, Ruko Kimia Farma Klandasan Lantai 2, dan Parents Support Group (PSG).
- Hoque, E. (2016). Three domains of learning: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. *The Journal of EFL Education and Research (JEFLER)*, 2(2), 25-35.
- Jenkins, B. (2009). What it takes to be an instructional leader. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234594862>
- Kimani, G. N., Kara, A. M., & Njagi, L. W. (2013). Teacher factor influencing students’ academic achievement in secondary schools in Nyandaruk country, Kenya. *Journal of education and research*, 1(1), 22-44.
- Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning*. The Wallace Foundation.
- Mafuwane, B. M. (2011). *Contribution of instructional leadership to learners’ performance*. Ph.D Thesis, Published, Pretoria: Department of education management and policy studies, faculty of education, University of Pretoria Press.
- Malik, Najman Iqbal, Ghazala Rehman, dan Rubina Hanif. (2012). Effect of academic interventions on the developmental skills of slow learners. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, 27(1), 135-151.
- Moloko Mphale, L., & Mhlauli, M. B., (2014). An investigation on students’ academic performance for junior secondary schools in Botswana.
- Mumpuniarti, L. (2007). *Pendekatan Pembelajaran bagi Anak Hambatan Mental*. Kanwa Publishers.
- Munawir, Y. (2005). Pendidikan Bagi Anak dengan Problema Belajar. Department Pendidikan Nasional Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Direktorat Ketenagaan.
- Norjihan A. G., Norhana, H., & Noor Irmayanti, I. (2006). Applying mastery learning model in developing e-tuition. *Science For Primary School Students*, 3(2), 43-49.
- Ogona, I. K. (2020). Educational leadership and equality of indigeneship education in Rivers state. *International Journal of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management*, 2(4), 653-678.
- Ololube, N. P. (2006). Teachers job satisfaction and motivation for school effectiveness: an assessment, *Essays in Education*, 18, 1-19.
- Ololube, N. P. (2007). Professionalism, demographics, and motivation: predictors of job satisfaction among Nigerian teachers. *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership*, 2(7), 1-10.
- Ololube, N. P. (2018). Education law, institutional leadership and management (ILM): Staff-personnel promotion in Tertiary Education in Nigeria. In N. P. Ololube (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of institutional leadership, policy and management* (pp. 334-368). Pearl Publishers.
- Patrick, I. E. (2019). *Instructional leaders roles in the improvement of slow learners academic performance in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education*. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. University Press.
- Phon, D. N. E., Ali, M. B., & Halim, N.D.A. (2014). Collaborative augmented reality in education: A Review. *Paper presented at the International Conference on Teaching and Learning in Computing and Engineering LaTiCE*, Kuching, Malaysia.
- Reddy, G. Lokanadha, R. Ramar, dan A. Kusuma. (2006). *Slow Learners: Their Psychology and Instruction*. Discovery Publishing House.
- Schellhase, K. C. (2008). Applying mastery learning to athletic training education. *Athletic Training Education Journal*, 3(4), 130–134.

- Schunk, D. H. (2002). *Learning theories: An educational perspective*. 6th Ed. Pearson Publishers.
- Senemođlu, N. (2005). *Geliřim, ÖğrenmeveÖğretim: Kuramdan Uygulamaya*. GaziKitabevi. (12.Baskı).
- Shuell, T. (1998). Teaching and learning in a classroom context. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. Doi:10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/02449-9.
- Strauss, S. (2013). A call for a multidisciplinary approach to the scientific study of teaching: Inspirations from Howard Gardner. In M. Kornhaber & E. Winner (Eds.), *Mind, work, and life: A Festschrift on the occasion of Howard Gardner's 70th birthday, with an introduction and comments* by Howard Gardner.
- Witziers, B., Bosker, R., & Kruger, M. (2003). Educational leadership and student achievement: The Elusive search for an association. <http://lst-iiep.iiep-unesco.org/cgi-bin/wwwi32.exe/>
- Zimmerman, B. J., & Dibenedetto, M. K. (2008), Mastery learning and assessment: Implications for students and teachers in an era of high-stakes testing. *Psychology in the Schools*, 45, 206-216.
- Zimund, W.G. (2013). *Business research methods* (7th ed.). Boaton Publishers.