

PARADIGMS, PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES  
IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

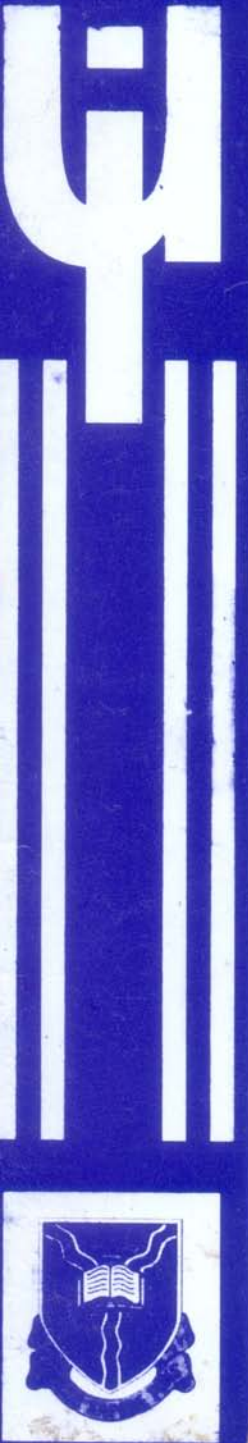
AN INAUGURAL LECTURE, 2009/2010

By

IKECHUKWU A. NWAZUOKE

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**PARADIGMS, PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES  
IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION**

*An inaugural lecture delivered  
at the University of Ibadan*

*on Thursday, 20 May, 2010*

By

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**UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN**

Ibadan University Press  
Publishing House  
University of Ibadan  
Ibadan, Nigeria.

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Ibadan, Nigeria

*First Published 2010*

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ISBN: 978 – 978 – 8414 – 16 – 2

*Printed by: Ibadan University Printery*

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### **Preamble**

I feel greatly honoured to be given the privilege to deliver this inaugural lecture on behalf of the Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan. Our Department of Special Education was established in 1976. Today's lecture is the first to come from that department since its inception. My journey into the field of special education was an unplanned one. In 1978, I left University of Nigeria, Nsukka, as a graduate of English. At the completion of the mandatory national youth service year in August, 1979, I was employed by the Federal Ministry of Education, Lagos and posted to Federal College of Education, Kotangora, Niger State where I taught African Poetry as well as Language and Stylistics. Barely three years into my stay at the college, student union elections which held in 1983 were massively rigged by a section of the student populace.

This did not go down well with the students who lost out in the elections. The matter, unfortunately, assumed ethnic and religious coloration. Some of the aggrieved students went on a rampage. Ironically, lecturers' houses, cars, books and other personal effects were torched. The degree certificate I had acquired a few years earlier, my collection of poems and other items were burnt by the rampaging students. Following the submission of the report of an administrative panel of inquiry instituted by President Shehu Shagari in March, 1983, the Federal Ministry of Education acted promptly on the recommendations of Justice Ambrose Allagoa who headed the panel, and re-posted academic staff to other Colleges of Education nationwide. I was asked to report at the Federal College of Education (special) Oyo without my degree certificate and manuscripts. I assumed duty in the Department

of English. However, a voice within me kept telling me that I was operating without a certificate. The idea of returning to school therefore became urgent. Unfortunately, upon enquiry I was informed that the Department of English of this university, had stopped enrolling students for the degree of Master programme for the 1983/84 session. I then gave up the idea of returning to school for that session but that voice within me grew louder each time our teaching staff in the college at Oyo had occasion to meet. Each time our academic staff met, the voice would remind me unobtrusively:

*Do you know that you are the only one in this gathering without a degree certificate?*

To quieten that voice, I confided in my friend Dr. Olufemi Adeniyi (the current provost of the Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo) who was already enrolled for the degree of Master in the Department of Special Education and he advised me to discuss the issue with his Head of Department, Professor C.A Bakare. I reluctantly accepted the counsel because I was convinced that it was a remote possibility. The following day I was in the university to see Professor Bakare quite unsure of how to defend my belated arrival for an on-going programme. So when the Departmental secretary ushered me into the Head of Department' office, a conversation like this ensued:

**HOD:** Young man, where are you coming from?

**Ike:** From a disturbed zone.

**HOD:** Disturbed? We don't deal with people from disturbed zones here. By the way, why have you come to see me?

**Ike:** I came to see if you could admit me into the Master's programme.

**HOD:** What's your educational background? What certificate do you have at the first degree level?

**Ike:** I don't have a certificate.

Fortunately, for me the secretary who was already in the HOD's office for a different purpose, cut in and explained to the Head of Department what the problem was, having been briefed earlier by me. The HOD then told me that what was required was a transcript from my University and not a certificate. He then gave me a note to the Postgraduate School to enable me purchase a form since the PG school had stopped the sale of forms for that session. Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, that was how my journey into the world of Special Education began. Today, I have a certificate, in fact, in Special Education.

### **Introduction**

The Dean of the Faculty of Education informed me some nine weeks ago that I was the choice of the Faculty to present the next inaugural lecture on behalf of the faculty. Though taken aback by the suddenness of the invitation, I then surmised that the proper thing to do was to dwell almost exclusively on my researches and my view of the landscape of special needs education. After all, Isidore Okpewho asserted in a 1989 inaugural lecture in this university that every inaugural lecture is a piece of autobiography which helps the scholar to trace his random gropings in a terrain of interest into a chart of specialized focus (Okpewho 1990). But on second thought, I realized that it was an opportunity for me to clarify some of *the many wrong notions and misconceptions lay individuals* have about special education. To achieve this goal, I intend to take the audience on an excursion to the vast field of special needs education just for them to have a panoramic view of the special needs education landscape. Finally, the audience will be brought home to my area of specialization in special needs education – creativity and giftedness, to appreciate the fact that special needs education is not about DISABILITY alone.

The term "Special Education" immediately conjures up in the mind of the lay public the education of the "Deaf and Dumb", the "Blind", and the "Physically Disabled". In the larger society, disability is an identification mark. People tend

to see the disability in the individual rather than his person. Hence it becomes easy for members of the public to describe persons with disabilities pejoratively using terms such as the blind man, the deaf guy, the one with one and a half legs, etc, even when such people being described have names that are easy to pronounce. It is usually a thing of surprise to a convocation audience if a student with disability makes Second Class Honours, Upper division or even First Class. The reason for this is that society generally has lower expectations of students with disabilities. Smith (2005) observed that the goals for special education are implied not specific. According to her, many policy makers are unclear about their expectations of special education. This unclear expectation has all along affected a whole gamut of school life including curriculum process, pedagogy and social interactions. It is perhaps impossible to quantify the waste of productivity caused by the failure of the school system (and society) to develop the potential ability of children with disabilities. In different countries of Africa such as Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Ghana, children with disabilities for different reasons are unable to benefit from appropriate special needs education services due to lack of support services in regular schools, negative societal attitudes, weak education policies, ignorance, poverty, superstition, low motivation for teachers and poor working conditions (Nwazuoke 2007). In the pre-Christian era, persons with special needs experienced varying degrees of trauma which not only completely dehumanized them but also devastated their psyche.

It should be pointed out that prior to the coming of the Christian missionaries, society was largely ignorant, and superstitions held sway. Because man in the pre-Christian era had no scientific basis for explaining the causes of disabilities, it became conventional to look in the direction of witches, devils, past evil deeds of the parents, other gods and sometimes bad neighbours as the probable causes of the disabling conditions. And since nobody in his good senses

would naturally want to consume the products of witches, it became logical that such products be moved out of the way. Many of them were secretly put to death by their parents, relations or other significant members of their society. In some cases, they were left at the mercy of ferocious animals, inclement weather or abandoned in evil forests in the hope that the devil who resided in them knew quite well how best to deal with them (NERDC 1989).

The main point of emphasis here is that during the pre-Christian era, individuals with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities were viewed as less than human. They could therefore not be deserving of any meaningful education from the same society that denied them their reality of existence. This situation was not true of Nigeria alone. For example, in the great city-state of Sparta, the major concern was to protect the city-state from invaders. The idea then was to raise healthy children. The Spartans had tremendous respect for warriors but had no sympathy for individuals with disabilities: hence, it was normal in Sparta either to eliminate children with disability or expose them to die at the top of Mount Taygetus. Such children were expected to die painfully and slowly.

In some parts of Europe, individuals with disabilities were further debased by the nobility. They were used as royal clowns or jesters to entertain the nobility whose sense of humour was fast diminishing (NERDC 1989). In some cases, the individuals with disabilities were made to have a foretaste of the food meant for the nobility as a way of guaranteeing that they were not contaminated. It is therefore safe to assume that during the pre-Christian era in Nigeria, persons with special education needs existed but their needs were not addressed by the society because it was then thought that they had less than human character. Fig. 1 shows the vacant looks in the eyes of a child with disability who lives and works in deplorable conditions. There are no parents or relations in sight to protect him whenever his Rights are trampled on. Ignorance and superstition appeared to be the major factors



that influenced the negative attitude of the society towards persons with disabilities. In technical terms, therefore, no special educational provision, even in the form of care-giving, was made for persons with disabilities in the pre-Christian era.



Fig. 1: Many children with disabilities are forced to live and work in deplorable conditions (adapted from Smith, D.D. (2005))

However, in Nigeria, despite the existence of social classes in the traditional society, there was no clear cut line of demarcation between the societal response to normal individuals and its response to those whose disabilities were not severe. In other words, the typical Nigerian extended family of old tolerated persons whose conditions were not too disabling. That meant that such individuals participated in farm work or other domestic chores as were applicable to the community. Whatever steps taken by Nigerians to confront the issue of disability were moderated by the pervasive superstition and ignorance in the environment. In many Nigerian communities, as in other lands, it was strongly believed that disabling conditions were either caused by certain deities or resulted from the irresponsible behaviours of

individuals. The Holy Bible is replete with references made to persons with disability.

For example John 9 1-3 reads thus:

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth, and his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered "it was not that this man sinned, or his parents but that the works of God might be made manifest in him.

In Mark 7:32, it is written:

They brought to him a man who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech and they besought him to lay his hand upon him.

(These two passages have been lifted from the Catholic Edition of the Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible)

Abosi and Ozoji (1981) reported that among the Kudus from Kano, Nigeria, if a man looked at a woman's vagina during sexual intercourse in the afternoon, the man himself risked becoming blind. Because of lack of information on the aetiology of disabilities in many Nigerian communities, some pregnant women avoided making bodily contact with persons with disability for fear that the unborn baby might become disabled. Pregnant women in some communities felt that it was not safe to behold masquerades or black cats. The fear of masquerades among pregnant women still lingers till today. In the coastal region of Nigeria, some communities believe in the existence of water spirits. These spirits, they claim, have the capability of taking human form in the womb of a woman, to be born as an "Ogbanje" or "Abiku", that is, spirit child. Such children may be born with impairment or, even where they are born normal, their life expectancy is believed to be short (Adima 1985).

Adima observed however that the coming of Christ represented the dawn of a new era and hope for persons with

disabilities. And so, things changed with the coming of the missionaries. The darkness that enveloped persons with disabilities in the pre-Christian era began to give way with the coming of missionaries. Christianity preached compassion for the less fortunate ones in the society. It has been observed that in spite of the position adopted by the Christian missions, clergymen such as Martin Luther and John Calvin held the view that persons with disabilities had no souls (see Adima 1985). I hasten to add here that the two clergymen spoke for themselves not the church.

### **Special Needs Education and Special Education – Two Sides of the Same Coin?**

The historical perspective just narrated has provided the evidence that in all places—Europe, Middle East, Africa, and others, children with disability suffered the same fate. The child was rejected and in some cases put to death. Different countries adopted different terminologies for describing the same idea or concept. All the terminologies portrayed negativity. Terms like Deaf, Dumb, Mute, Blind, Idiot, Imbecile, Moron, Mentally Derailed, Stupid, Handicapped. Sometimes a child with intellectual disability is called *Ewu* (Goat). The animal, goat, is associated with stupidity. It is strange that members of the public who recognize that *Ewu* connotes stupidity, eat goat meat, sometimes as “*isi ewu*” (goat head) with obvious relish.

A little over seven years ago, a new term was added to the growing list of Special Education Terminologies in Nigeria. The term is **PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED**. The term, physically challenged, in Nigeria is interpreted to mean a child/person with disability. It is disturbing to note that the term appears in Nigeria’s Labour Bill, just as the Federal Ministry of Education in its National Policy on Education (2004) uses the term “The Disabled” to describe children with special needs.

The term physically challenged, is anathema to special needs education professionals for the simple reason that it does not portray the full range of special needs which children typify. Special need may express itself as sensory,

neurological, behaviour disorders, intellectual disability, learning difficulties, mental disability, lingual difficulty, or psychological difficulties. These special needs listed above are in no way physical.

Every discipline has its own register/jargon which may or may not make sense to somebody outside the field. Professionals in special needs education consider the term "physically challenged" as strange. Persons who use it do so outside the special needs education context. In any case, who is not physically challenged? A tall person may not easily manage the little space which a diminutive person handles with contemptuous ease.

A world conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality was held in Salamanca, Spain in June, 1994. One of the issues the conference considered was the need to standardize terms internationally. The Salamanca Conference considered "special education" to be limiting especially in the light of the world-wide education reforms which brought in its wake inclusive education. What is more, special education is suggestive of a "special" programme which is carried out in a segregated school environment. This runs counter to the ideals of inclusive education whose main thrust is to bring all children together in the same learning environment. Special needs education on the other hand, places emphasis on the fact that some children have special needs which can be accommodated in an inclusive learning milieu. So, while special education negates the principles of inclusion, special needs education enhances inclusive practice.

It is conventional in international usage to address children (who have disabilities) as children with special needs. Another salient fallout of the Salamanca Conference was that the "person" should be mentioned first before the disability, hence person with visual impairment; child with hearing impairment. The editorial committee of our *Africa Journal of Special Needs Education* aptly captured the decision of the Salamanca Conference as shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Terms to Use or Avoid**

What to avoid	What to use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>disabled/handicapped/deformed persons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persons with disabilities (PWDs)/persons with sensory/mental/physical disabilities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The dumb/the mute/the deaf/the blind or no vision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persons with hearing impairment/severe/hard of hearing or total hearing disability; persons with total visual impairment /those with low vision</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The mad/imbecile/the menially derailed/ the mentally retarded/ the demented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persons with mental disability/ learning difficulties</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the crippled/the lame, those with cerebral palsy; epileptic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persons with motor or physical disabilities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing countries/ underdeveloped countries/third world countries /poor countries/low income countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Countries of the South (as opposed to those of the North) or simply as an African or Latin American or an Asian country</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>other undesirable terms include: the emotionally maladjusted/ the stutters/language disorders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those with behavioural/ lingual/psychological difficulties</li> </ul>

In Nigeria, inclusive education as a concept is a largely unexplored social frontier in education. This is because most academic discussions bordering on inclusive education here have tended towards abstract ideological positions rather than focusing on the practical details on how to operate it given our peculiar circumstances. It is interesting to note that the general advocacy for inclusive education was made by groups who were more concerned about human rights and social justice than any educational theory. Here in Nigeria, for instance, a stakeholders' meeting on "Legislating for Persons with Disability" (PWDs) was held in the House of Representatives, National Assembly, Abuja on 11th-12th June, 2001 (Nwazuoke 2002). No member of the National Council for Exceptional Children (NCEC) attended that meeting in spite of the fact that its major thrust was to promote, protect and facilitate the enforcement of disability rights and issues. The then Deputy Speaker of the House of

Representatives, Chief Chibudom Nwuche as well as some of his colleagues in the House went ahead with the meeting not minding the absence of members of the NCEC. So, the notion of inclusion has been propagated largely by advocacy groups who want to ensure that PWDs have uninhibited access to education. Inclusion could therefore be said to have its roots in principles of social justice.

The significant benefit mankind derived from the world conference on Special Needs Education, which held in Salamanca in 1994, was the unwavering position taken by the world conference that inclusive education should be floated for all children with disabilities. The conference in adopting unanimously The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, was guided by the principle of inclusion, that ordinary schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic, or other conditions (UNESCO 1999). The conference also advocated in its Article 19 (Salamanca Framework for Action) that educational policies should be formulated at all levels stipulating that children with disabilities should attend neighbourhood schools, that is, the school that would be attended if the child did not have the disability.

The idea behind inclusive education is consistent with article 2 of the 1990 document on “World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to meet Basic Learning Needs”. Article 2 of the “World Declaration on Education for All” focuses on the following five elements in the “expanded vision” of education:

- Universalizing access and promoting equity
- Focussing on learning;
- Broadening the means and scope of education
- Enhancing the environment for learning;

The world conference on ‘Education for All’ which took place in Jomtien, Thailand, from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> March, 1990, had

earlier reiterated the United Nations position that “everyone has a right to education”. To achieve the goal of ‘Education For All’, the Jomtien conference called on each nation to take immediate steps to implement the recommendations contained in the Documents on ‘World Declaration on Education for All’. Nigeria responded immediately by, first, determining the status of basic education in the country through a Situation and Policy Analysis (SAPA) project. UNICEF and Nigeria were partners in this project. The main thrust of the project which was coordinated by Professor E.A Yoloye, was to diagnose the underlying factors, including socio-cultural and economic issues affecting the growth of basic education in Nigeria (FGN/UNICEF 1993). One of the issues highlighted by the SAPA report submitted to the Federal Government of Nigeria was that basic education was being equated to nine years of continuous schooling, that is, six years of primary schooling and three years of junior secondary scholarship. Another issue highlighted by the report was absence of data/information on children with special needs in some states of the federation (see figure 2).

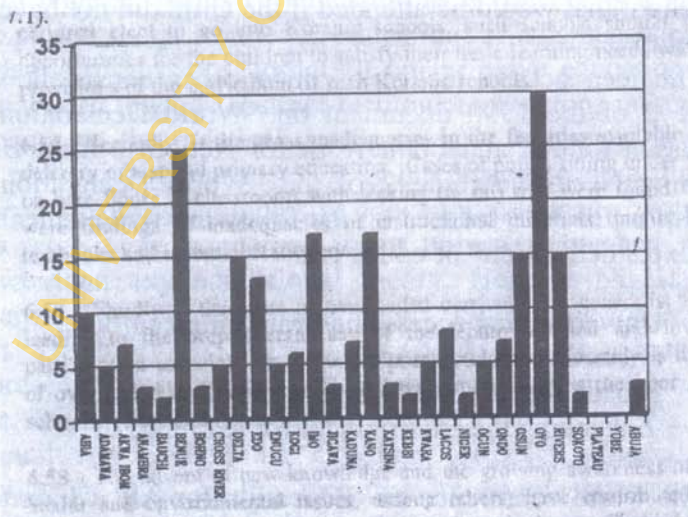


Fig. 2: Population of Special Needs Children by State  
Source: FGN/UNICEF SAPA Project: 1993

The SAPA report which pointed out that persons with disabilities did not have equitable access to basic education recommended that

the integrated school approach to the education of the disabled which is advocated by the National Policy on Education should be more effectively implemented by the provision of trained special education teachers and equipment in all primary schools. (p. 175)

It could therefore be inferred from all this that the SAPA report made a strong case as well as prepared the ground for inclusive education and the 9-year Universal Basic Education scheme in Nigeria.

### **Inclusive Education in the Context of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria**

The democratically elected Federal Government of Nigeria which came into being on May 29, 1999, undertook to implement the major recommendations of the SAPA report which underlined two cardinal principles namely, access, and promotion of equity. In launching the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 1999, government's avowed intention was to make equal educational opportunities available to all Nigerian children of school age and to gradually eliminate illiteracy and ignorance in the society (Nigerian Tribune 2000). However, as Nwazuoke (2000) has pointed out, the greatest challenge government might face in its UBE programme is perhaps how to administer inclusive education within the framework of Universal Basic Education, given its avowed intention of universalizing access for all Nigerian children, conditions of life notwithstanding. The SAPA report of 1993 which government accepted, strongly recommended the effective implementation of the integrated school approach (or inclusion) which the National Policy on Education advocated. Though the goal of inclusive education



is to allow children with disabilities access to neighbourhood schools, Kristensen (1997) observed that there are some children who cannot participate in ordinary classroom teaching with optimal benefit. His argument is that while it is true that all children have the same needs and rights for development, some children would require only a little support while others require more substantial assistance because of the nature and degrees of their disabilities. Such children should however be instructed in special classes in a regular school. The experience of Denmark that embarked on large-scale integration of children with disabilities into regular schools is worth noting. In Denmark, their integration efforts were not successful in the case of “totally deaf children”. Such children are now instructed in separate classes in Denmark within the regular school framework (Skjorten 1997). In the thinking of Nwazuke (1999), children who have profound hearing loss should be given additional assistance in form of special education. This is because any intervention short of special education would be inhibitory rather than facilitative for them in a learning environment. In a study of academic and social problems faced by hearing-impaired students in integrated settings in Imo State, Nigeria, Nwazuke (1993) found that the integration exercise did not benefit the students with hearing impairment academically. This was attributed to the fact that the regular teachers in the integrated schools studied were ill-equipped for the specialized task of teaching students with hearing impairment. As Brown, Odom Li and Zercher (1999) put it, “inclusive settings may be a supportive context for effective intervention strategies (e.g. peer mediated interventions, observational learning), they are not necessarily sufficient to address the behavioural and developmental needs of children with disabilities.

In Nigeria, integration of children with disabilities into the school system has only taken place in a few schools at the secondary school level (e.g. Girls' High School Akabo, Imo State, Emekuku Boys' High School, Emekuku, Owerri, Imo

State, Ijokodo High School, Ijokodo Ibadan, Oyo State). With the introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) whose underlying principle is to promote equity and universalize access, many children with disabilities in Nigeria, along with the normal ones will task the pedagogical skills of teachers especially at the primary school level. The question that arises at this point is; How prepared is the primary school system to receive children with disabilities in large numbers? A more helpful question would be, What measures would guarantee successful implementation of inclusive education programme in the light of UBE in Nigeria? Government can only succeed in the implementation of UBE if it looks beyond the question of universalizing access, to improve teaching and learning conditions. What will it profit a child with disabilities if he finds himself in a learning environment where prior provision has not been made for education appropriate to his learning needs?

Appropriateness is the key word here. For inclusive practice to succeed within the framework of UBE in Nigeria, instructional procedures, learning experiences, instructional facilities and utilities, and the use of technology must be strictly geared towards meeting the learning needs of all children whether they have special needs or not. Special schools in Nigeria are not adequately equipped with relevant technology in special needs education. What is available in special schools in Nigeria may either be obsolete or underutilized. Figure 3 shows the pattern of utilization of the facilities in the Eastern states of Nigeria. Teachers are critical to the success of the UBE. Unfortunately, the lecture method is the most prevalent instructional strategy in both primary and secondary schools in Nigeria for the simple reason that many teachers are yet to take full advantage of the options and possibilities offered by the computer.

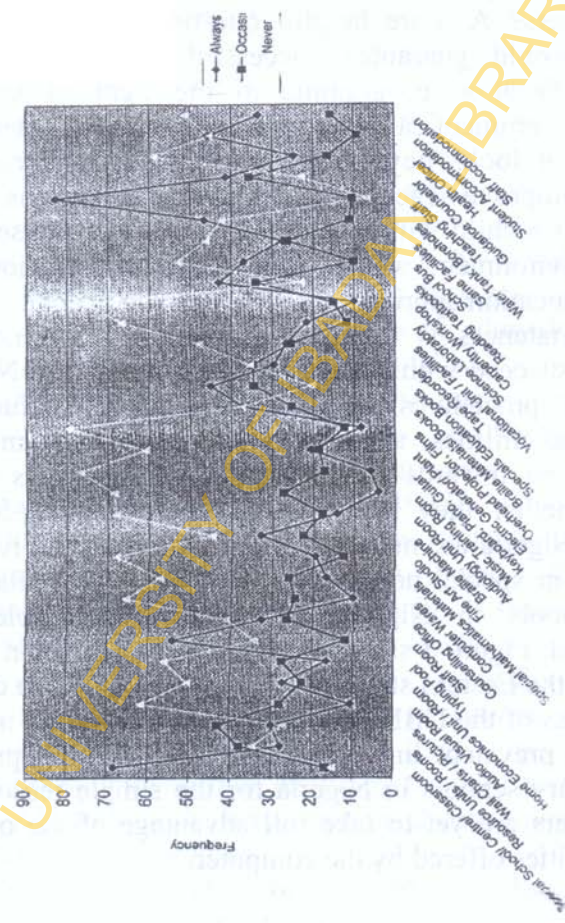


Fig. 3. Pattern of Utilization of Facilities by the Teachers

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, Bamiro (1995) in considering the place of the computer in the classroom in this information age pointed out that

the pattern and mode of lecturing are changing in the world due to the incursion of information technology. The change is towards increasing teaching effectiveness even in the face of increasing class size and the volume of materials to be disseminated.

The impact of the computer which has revolutionized the art of teaching and made classroom procedures very interactive is yet to be felt in the UBE classroom.

Since teachers have lost the initiative to utilize the computer to achieve teaching effectiveness, youths in countries of the South seem to have been able to amuse themselves utilizing deft computer skills to engage in activities that have doubtful academic value. The result today is that youths have successfully ploughed resources meant for fruitful academic outcomes into uncanny abilities to predict the outcome of football matches, between say Chelsea and Manchester United football clubs in England.

Any school system that plays down on the importance of information technology in the teaching-learning process today will produce students that may not have a good chance of maximizing their achievement potentials. In the area of visual impairment for instance, learning can be greatly facilitated if the children are provided with JAWS (Job Access with Speech). Various softwares are now available to enable persons with visual impairment to use telephones, clocks, and computers. They are screen readers and they have speech or voice. These ones are not available in the UBE classroom. It is doubtful if the Millennium Development Goals will be achieved by the year 2015.

The Federal Government of Nigeria admitted in 2003 that

presently, there is no special provision in the UBE programme for mainstreaming the disabled in regular schools. There are equally no adequate data for planning and addressing the provisional needs of the disabled in the country. All these call for an urgent research to focus on the extent to which disabled persons can benefit from the UBE programme. Cultural factors have continued to retard female enrolment in the north. There is also an increasing unemployment rate which reinforces negative perceptions of the relevance and, value of education provision. The school environment still remains unfriendly in most states, with poor infrastructure and facilities. Above all, resource allocation to this sector has not matched the vision and scope of primary education in the country. (p.41)

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, has the situation changed significantly in 2010 to enable inclusive education take place in the context of UBE? if you ask me, I would say – not to my knowledge.

The Nigerian Disability Decree, 1993, Section 5 (Now ACT) states (inter alia)

- (1) Disabled persons shall be provided for in all public education institutions, free education at all levels.
- (2) Government organs and authorities shall ensure
  - adequate training for personnel to cater for the educational development of the disabled in educational institutions and
  - vocational training to develop skills of persons with disability

- (3) Government organs and authorities shall
- take into consideration the special needs and requirements of the disabled in formulating policies and programmes;
  - ensure structural adaptation of all educational institutions to the needs of the disabled as much as possible (ramps or lifts in place of a staircase);
  - focus on specialized institutions that will facilitate research and development of education of the disabled.
- (4) Government shall promote
- improvement of facilities and equipment in educational institutions especially to facilitate the education of the disabled.

The Federal Ministry of Education has responsibility for coordinating special education activities in Nigeria in collaboration with relevant ministries and non-governmental organizations and international agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, WHO, etc),

- (a) The Federal and State Ministries of Education shall, in collaboration with appropriate bodies, provide special programmes for gifted and talented people e.g.:
- (i) early age identification and nurture.
  - (ii) early age admission into primary, secondary and tertiary institutions;
  - (iii) early completion of educational programmes at the three educational levels.
- (b) The education of children with special needs shall be free at all levels,

- (c) All necessary facilities that would ensure easy access to education shall be provided; e.g.
- (i) inclusive education or integration of special classes and units into ordinary/public schools under the UBE scheme;
  - (ii) regular census and monitoring of people with special needs to ensure adequate educational planning and welfare programme;
  - (iii) special education equipment and materials e.g.
    - Perkins braille, White mobility cane/brailled textbooks, abacus, braille, talking watch;
    - audiometers, speech trainers, hearing aids, ear mould machines etc;
    - educational/psychological toys, for the educational use of the mentally retarded. Calipers, prostheses, crutches, wheel chairs, artificial limbs, etc, for the physically handicapped;
    - standard library; audio-visual equipment, internet facilities, etc, for the gifted and talented children.
  - (iv) Special education training e.g.
    - braille reading and writing;
    - mobility training; use of regular typewriter: for the visually impaired.
    - total communication technique-speech, sign-language, the 3 Rs etc, for the hearing impaired;
    - daily living activities or skills for the mentally retarded.
  - (v) Special training and re-training of the personnel for capacity building and to keep abreast of latest teaching techniques, for the various categories of disabilities, the gifted and talented. The

teacher/pupil ratio in special schools shall be 1:10.

- (d) Federal, state and local governments shall fund these programmes within their areas of jurisdiction.
- (e) Architectural designs of school buildings shall be barrier free i.e., they shall take into account special needs of the handicapped e.g. ramps instead of steps; wider doors for wheel chairs, lower toilets, etc.
- (f) Schools shall be required to arrange regular sensory, medical and psychological screening assessments to identify any incidence of handicap.

I do not see how inclusive education will succeed in Nigeria, in the light of poor infrastructural facilities, poor funding for special needs education, inadequate preparation of personnel for the UBE programme, absence of vital assistive technological devices in our schools, and denial of scholarships to students with special needs.

To address all these, government and all those who have a stake in the education of Nigerian children should be prepared to invest financially in the education project. It should be recalled that the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme which was formally launched in Nigeria in 1976 ran into problems because of the inability of the Federal Government to shoulder the huge financial responsibilities over the years. In 1979 (that is three years after the scheme took off), the federal government decided that financing the UPE should be shared between the federal government, the state governments and the local governments. What followed was that teachers were owed salaries for months, and the morale of the work force became very low. In some states, public primary schools were permanently closed down. The issue here is that UBE like UPE is a huge financial



investment which the federal government of Nigeria can handle through good management of funds and planning.

### **Implications of Inclusive Education in Nigeria**

Inclusive education in Nigeria has far-reaching implications for personnel preparation, pedagogy, curriculum, learning environment, funding, conditions of service, school management structures, monitoring and evaluation.

Personnel preparation is a critical factor which planners of the UBE must pay adequate attention to if the goals of inclusive education are to be realized. It is not enough for government to embark on massive recruitment of teachers to handle the increase in pupil enrolment as a result of the introduction of UBE. The UBE will no doubt bring together, in the same classroom, children with mixed ability as well as children with disabilities. The implication is that efforts should be made to bring in teachers who are able to respond appropriately to the challenges posed by the children in the classroom. Capacity building in support of inclusive education should therefore involve the training of regular teachers to acquire at least basic skills in special needs education (Nwazuoke 2000).

To make the pre-service training programme effective, the enrolment figures for students training in special needs education should be increased in the institutions offering special education. Government should also move in the direction of establishing model special schools to take care of cases that may not be adequately handled in regular settings. In some states of the Federation, Special Education is virtually non-existent. Table 2 shows special schools and their owners in the Eastern states. In Nigeria special education programmes are established at the University of Ibadan, University of Jos, Bayero University Kano, University of Calabar, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna, and Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo. By extension, therefore, training facilities in these institutions should be expanded to take care of the

number of people to be trained. Nwazuoke's suggestion that teachers' handbook and manual on special needs education be written by a team of experts on special needs education to serve as a basic reference text for school teachers nation-wide is noteworthy. What is more, the development of human resources as a way of facilitating inclusive education is a sine qua non, for as pointed out in Article 40, Salamanca Framework for Action, "Appropriate preparation of all educational personnel stands out as a key factor in promoting progress in inclusive schools" (UNESCO 1999 p. 15).

**Table 2: Special schools/centres in eastern states Nigeria (Ownership of the special school/centres by state)**

State	Some special education schools/centres by State	Ownership of the school
Abia	Special Education Centre (Umuahia) Special Education Centre (Deaf & Mentally Retarded) Umuahia Special Education Centre (Deaf & Mentally Retarded) Aba Government College (Integrated System) Umuahia Nkwana High School (Integrated system) Aba	Government Government Government Government Government
Abuja	St. Louis Special School for Epileptics Special Education Centre, Uyo	Religious Org. Government
Anambra	Special Education Centre, Nnamchi Aguata Special Education Centre, Inio, Oranaba Special Education Centre, Ozobulu Vincentia Fadi's special education centre, Orlite Christ the King College, (Integrated system) Denis Memorial Grammar School (Integrated system), Okishin	Government Government Government Religious Org. Government Government
Bayelsa	Special Comprehensive School for the handicapped, Yenegoa	Government
Cross River	Special Education Centre, Calabar St. Joseph Centre, Obudu Good Shepherd Centre, Opaja	Government Religious Org. Religious Org.
Ebonyi	Tezoboka school for the Blind and Deaf, Boko	Government
Enugu	Special Education Centre, Enugu Special Education Centre, Oji-River Therapeutic Day care Centre, Enugu St. Joseph Institute for youth and the Handicapped Model school for the Deaf, Enugu Government Secondary school for the Deaf, Ogbese Enugu College of Immaculate Conception	Government Government Government Private Private Government Government
Imo	Special Education Centre, Owerri Special Education Centre Orlu Secondary School for the deaf, Ordo Holy Ghost College (Integrated system) Owerri Egbo Girls Secondary School, Egbo, Owerri (Integrated system)	Government Government Government Government Government
Rivers	School for the Handicapped, Creek Road, Port Harcourt The Child (Catholic Mission School) Port Harcourt Christine Home, Creek Road, Port Harcourt Suzanna Maria School, Port Harcourt. (Catholic Mission) Ogana Integrated School, Port Harcourt	Government Government Religious Org. Religious Org. Religious Org. Private

Source: (State Ministries of Education, 2004)

The Federal Government of Nigeria working through the Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council has successfully modified the 9-year Basic Education Curriculum for children with visual impairment. Active pedagogy is critical to the success of inclusive education and its wider context, the UBE. Except children with disabilities are effectively assisted to maximize participation in the teaching-learning process, the idea of inclusive practice in schools will be defeated. To ensure that children with disabilities participate actively in classroom practices, Kristensen (1997) has suggested that efforts be made to include differentiated activities in the classroom adjustment, of educational materials adjustment, in the organization of activities, and the introduction of co-teaching. This is noteworthy because as Nwazuoke (1993) observed earlier, a teacher's teaching approach can either enhance or mar the progress of the child with special needs. Nwazuoke (1993) found in his investigation that some of the regular teachers talked facing the chalkboard and at times stood at an angle that made it difficult for the child with hearing-impairment to lip-read. Nwazuoke further observed that if a hearing impaired child asked a question, the regular teachers did not know that it was necessary to let the integrated pupils know what question was asked. Unmindful of the incalculable harm this measure would bring to the child with hearing impairment, regular teachers go ahead to offer explanations to questions while the pupil with hearing impairment looked on helplessly. Since no one teacher has expertise in all the areas of special needs education, inclusive collaboration in teaching and problem solving should be greatly encouraged.

The present curriculum of the regular school system in Nigeria should be reviewed in the light of inclusive practices for all categories of children with special needs and not only for those with visual impairment. Curriculum designers should therefore plan the learning experiences in a way that the unique needs of the children are adequately addressed. The roles of supportive staff such as sign language

interpreters for children with hearing impairment and other ancillary staff should be spelt out. It should be pointed out that large classes should not be encouraged given the fact that children with special needs benefit more from individualized educational programmes. Unfortunately, government has not put in place necessary structures for running inclusive education in Nigeria. Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, So what has taken place now is exclusion rather than inclusion.

What is more, supportive staff assisting a teacher in an inclusive situation would achieve more with fewer children in a class than in a large class of say fifty children. The point being made here is that the school must make conscious attempts within the framework of the curriculum to address in a differential manner, the learning needs of each child. As Corbett (2001) puts it, differentiation means using many teaching styles and sharing specialist skills. The reason for this is that children learn as well as obtain information in a multiplicity of ways. While some prefer oral stimulus others opt for visual cues. This assumes that in a learning environment, resources (human, and material) and instructional strategies benefit each child differentially. By extension, this means that inclusiveness brings together both the teaching processes and the learning process. This is consistent with the ideas expressed by Mittler (2000), that inclusion and exclusion begin in the classroom. His position is that no matter how committed a government may be to inclusion, it is the day-to-day experiences of children in classrooms that define the quality of their participation in the vast array of learning experiences organized by a school. Mittler insists for instance that teachers should teach the knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that not only suit their pupils' abilities but also constitute suitable learning challenges for the pupils. This, according to him, may mean choosing knowledge skills or understanding from earlier or later key stages. He outlined the three key principles for developing a more inclusive curriculum as:

Setting suitable learning challenges;

- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Inclusive education goes beyond merely placing pupils in schools in their neighborhoods. It involves instead the designers of the curriculum making opportunities universal through teaching approaches, and utilizing appropriate assessment procedures to indicate the extent to which programme goals have been achieved. Periodic assessment should be conducted at each stage of programme implementation to provide a sound basis for packaging appropriate learning experiences for the pupils. The success or otherwise of inclusive practices in schools depends largely on how well the curriculum content is implemented. Though this inaugural lecture has consistently made reference to persons with disability, it should be pointed out that gifted and talented children stand to benefit tremendously from inclusive practices.

The environment in which children learn exerts a tremendous influence on them. Inclusive practices can only be effectively carried out in supportive environments. The present state of most public regular schools in Nigeria is a far cry from the ideal. Most public schools in Nigeria would score very low in aesthetics. For many, the infrastructure, furniture and fittings are in very bad state. Regular schools here generally lack resource rooms, good libraries, recreational facilities and more importantly, adequate personnel to facilitate the teaching-learning process. One implication of placing children with disabilities in regular schools is that arrangements should be made to take care of factors which may either impede their free movement within the environment or slow down effective learning process. For example, ramps should be constructed to assist students who are wheelchair bound. School buildings should be constructed in such a way that children with visual impairment can easily find their way in and out of them.

Library resources should be enriched with brailled versions of the prescribed texts. In Nigeria, Nigerwives—an association of foreign women married to Nigerians—has been doing a lot in the area of braille material for children with visual impairment.

It should be pointed out that since the main thrust of inclusion is to make schools more responsive to the needs of all children, it follows that those who plan the programmes should not lose sight of vocational education and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities. There are individuals in the school system whose disability may be of such a degree as to interfere with their ability to go beyond the primary school level. This, perhaps, underscores the reason why Mba (1995) suggests that it is necessary for special schools in Nigeria to provide prevocational education to children early enough in the primary school. The aim is to get the child acquainted with the different types of job skills and job opportunities, which are open to persons with specific disabilities. Schools for the vocational training of persons with disabilities should utilize inclusive practices as already suggested in this lecture. The provision of a support system is the key to progress in this endeavour.

Mittler (2000) notes that both the teachers and other support staff (such as those who assist those with hearing or visual impairment) should ensure that all pupils take very active part in the lessons and that they have ample opportunities to interact with the teacher and other pupils. It is necessary to heed the standing rule of the international labour organization which says that vocational training of the person with disability should continue until such a person (with disability) can compete on equal terms with his counterpart without disability.

The success of the UBE scheme would depend largely on the classroom teachers and other support staff in the system. Government will do well to pay attention to the issue of adequate remuneration for teachers. More importantly, the total welfare of teachers and other workers in the scheme

should be looked into. Efforts should be made to pay salaries as and when due. To sustain the UBE scheme, it is important that teachers are highly motivated and committed. This can only be so when the employers of teachers respond meaningfully to the rational demands of teachers.

The UBE scheme which will bring in its wake inclusive education, will make demands on the existing management structure of our schools. With the anticipated population explosion in the schools and the presence of children with disabilities, the management structure should be reviewed. Teachers to be appointed to head sections of the school should be exposed to in-service training workshops to equip them for the tasks. A co-ordinator should be appointed for the purpose.

Since inclusive education is going to be organized for the first time in Nigeria within the framework of UBE, it is important to monitor and evaluate the scheme from time to time. Monitoring and formative evaluation will be very helpful in determining the areas of strength as well as the areas of weakness of the scheme. Inspectors of education from the Ministry of Education, to be saddled with this responsibility, should be knowledgeable in the area of inclusive education, and if properly handled, inclusive education will foster wider access and quality education for children with disabilities.

### **The Discipline called Special Needs Education**

Special needs education is generally perceived as a sub-discipline within the general framework of education. The popular notion about special education is that, it is education offered to children or persons with disability. The truth however is that there are myriads of children or persons with learning difficulties or behaviour problems who do not manifest any outward signs of disability. These children incidentally are in the majority in our primary schools. It is common knowledge among professionals that the problems of the majority of the children in regular primary schools

remain largely unattended because such children manage to get along and pass school examinations. They are, however, unable to maximally reach their achievement potentials.

Most children with behaviour and/or learning problems generally improve substantially when professional intervention is initiated very early in the child's school life. Special needs education services are offered in the following subfields:

1. Hearing impairment: This is a unit in the department that focuses on the education of children/persons whose hearing loss may range from mild to profound. It focuses also on the physiology and process of normal hearing.
2. Audiology: is the field that handles the management of hearing and hearing disorders. Numerous studies by Professor Bakare have shown that high intensity recreational sounds pose a potential threat to the hearing of today's generation. According to Bakare in his investigation of *juju* and disco music as causes of cochlear pathology, with continuous exposure, hearing acuity is bound to deteriorate. More than 70% of the subjects exposed to loud music suffered from a mild hearing loss, particularly in the regions of the cochlea that respond to high frequencies (see Bakare 1980, 1993).
3. Behaviour disorders: Most children with behaviour disorders are found in the regular school system. Any behaviour which deviates consistently from age appropriate behaviour and which is unacceptable to the society is behaviour disorder. A 60-year old man or woman who dresses like a 20-year old to attract social gains to himself or herself may be suffering from behaviour disorders. What they seem to be suggesting by their behaviour is that 20-year old



should regress to the level of a 2-year old child. Behaviour disorders sometimes take the form of selective mutism, eating disorders, talking too much and unnecessarily during meetings, attention deficit disorder, stealing, lying.

4. Visual impairment: This unit of the department handles issues related to the education of persons who experience vision loss in any form. Children with low vision do not have to go to the school for the blind. With magnifiers and telescopes, they can see the chalkboard as well as read their books in a regular school.
5. Mental retardation/Intellectual disabilities: Children with intellectual disabilities are vulnerable and need special educational management strategies and instructional techniques for them to be able to handle routine procedures
6. Learning disability: Sometimes, children experience persistent failures in basic subjects such as mathematics, reading, writing, spelling and social studies. These take the form of dyslexia, acalculia etc. Professor Ekhaguere in his April 2010 inaugural lecture at the University of Ibadan rightly identifies the problem as phobia for mathematics, but probably forgot to indicate that remedial measures for such phobias are available in our Department of Special Education. Other areas include speech disorders, autism, physical disability, giftedness and creativity.

Creativity is a very complex subject. Its complexity is underscored by the fact that psychologists, philosophers, writers, poets, and researchers have expressed widely divergent views on its nature. Psychologists and researchers have been known to use it synonymously with such terms as originality, imagination, innovation, novelty, intuition, exploration, invention, unusualness, divergent thinking, venturesomeness, ingenuity, newness, discovery and uniqueness. In addition, creativity has been contrasted with conformity in thinking.

One way of appreciating the lack of consensus among educators and workers in the field of creativity is to compare it with the elephant in the story of the six blind men with each attempting to describe it from his own limited perception. The difficulty in arriving at a consensual definition of creativity also explains the difficulty in determining an objective criterion for assessing creative products. Assessment of creative products is often coloured by the assessor's value orientation, experimental background, prejudices, cultural context and the amount of information on the product available to the assessor. In spite of the difficulty in arriving at a clear, unambiguous position on the concept of creativity, psychologists and researchers in the field of creativity accept that for a society to make the much needed progress, creativity is the tool to use. Life itself would have been a terribly boring affair if man did not engineer creative adaptations to his environment.

At the very root of human civilization and progress is creativity. To stifle creativity is to remove romance from life. The conditions of modern day living characterized by bad leadership, poor management of resources, depressed economy, complexity and interdependence, global threats to world peace, ill-health, hunger, inappropriate curricula in schools as well as dwindling resources call attention to the need for enhanced levels of creative responses to the problems of the day (Nwazuoke 1996). If creativity is highly valued and appreciated in the society, is it not strangely ironic

that we do not deliberately foster creative behaviour in our students? On the contrary, we tend to prescribe standards of behaviour for students and by so doing, deny them opportunities to act creatively.

The main issue here is to concern ourselves with conditions that correlate with creativity. Is the conflict in the environment critical to creative output? Is conflict the genesis of creativity?

### **Psychoanalytic Paradigm**

The psychoanalytic theory of creativity was one of the first theories of creativity to emerge. Klein (1971) has pointed to "the more widely accepted psychoanalytic position that the origin of creativity resides in the unconscious". While Jung (1966) accepts Freud's position that unconsciousness is the main spring of creativity, Kubie (1967) postulated that preconscious processes are very important for creativity. Beyond the issue of the unconscious, Freud (1949) had earlier contended that conflict was the genesis of creativity in creative people who had the unusual capacity of ploughing their libidinal energy into outcomes that were satisfying to themselves and the society.

Sublimation is said to have taken place if cultural achievement becomes contingent on displacement (Hall & Lindzey 1970). Creative behaviour is thought by psychoanalysts to be an overt manifestation of sublimation. Sublimation is the unconscious taking of a forbidden impulse and through secondary processing turning it into a related, yet socially acceptable activity that still gratifies the basic impulse. Freud (1957) for instance has noted that Leonardo da Vinci's painting of Madonnas was a sublimated longing for a mother from whom he was separated early in life. Creative behaviour is satisfying to the individual because it serves as a substitute for the avoided hard reality. The hard reality derives from the fact that efforts to satisfy the sexual drives are repeatedly frustrated. Extreme intellectualization and perhaps other ego defence reactions could also be a function

of sublimated libidinal psychic energy. Klein (1971) has pointed out that on the average, Freud viewed creative persons especially artists as having an unusual capacity to arrive at sublimation.

Freud also asserted that imagination, like daydreaming, was a continuation and substitution for childhood play. His contention was that creative individuals shifted from reality to fantasy where their erotic desires were given free play. If the shift from reality to fantasy was successful, the creative individuals began to mould their fantasies into new reality which was termed a creative product. The creative process in psychoanalytic framework originated from within and its basis is biological. Creation is simply an outward manifestation of the unconscious imagery pre-sensored by the rational ego. According to Freud (1957) and Taylor (1975) the creative product (i.e, the outward manifestation) mirrors unconscious images which have been processed into socially acceptable forms by the ego.

In spite of the fore-going, the Freudian viewpoint still holds that mental illness and creativity have identical origins in the sense that both of them arise from conflicts within the unconscious. Freud also thought that the psychoanalysis of creative persons would reveal a blend of productive ability and neurosis (Taylor, 1976).

### **Humanistic Paradigm**

In developing their own theory of creativity, the humanists chose to tap the positive areas from the psychoanalytic model. They generally adopted the self-actualization concept of the neo-Freudians as the motivating force for creativity. They have a positive view of human nature and insist that the creative potential resides in every person. Though the humanistic psychologists reached the consensus that the bid to self-actualize was the factor that led man to creative pursuits, they seemed to have differed in their conceptual view of the issue.

Maslow feels that the concept of creativeness and the concept of the healthy, self-actualizing, fully human person may turn out to be the same thing (Maslow 1971). Maslow also adopts the Jungian position which holds that the creative process is one of "integration: end resolution of dichotomies and the fusion of the primary and secondary processes" (Maslow, 1959). The creative person, he continues, "has the ability to be childlike at one time when appropriate, grown up, rational and critical". In his view, true creativity depends upon the utilization and integration of both primary and secondary processes in the personality. Maslow's observation of self-actualized persons reveals that they are bold, courageous, free and spontaneous, perspicuous, self-accepting, independent, autonomous and self-directed. Maslow's position is that motivation or desire for self-actualization is universal. This reasoning is informed by his conclusion that probably most people are capable of temporary states of integration, even of self-actualization and therefore of self-actualizing creativeness.

Though Murray accepts the role of unconscious determinants of behaviour including Freudian defence mechanisms such as repression and resistance (a psychoanalytic model), he developed a theoretical model which allows for continual growth toward self-actualization and creativity. He also goes further to suggest that some degree of creativity is required for adaptation to novel situations. According to him, the individual may not develop normally if he/she lacks this capacity to adapt to novel situations (Murray 1951). Rogers' approach to the theory of creativity is an approximation of the self-actualization model of Maslow. Rogers (1959) suggests that

the mainspring of creativity appears to be the same tendency which we discover so deeply as the curative force in psychotherapy - man's tendency to actualize himself, to become his potentialities.... It is this tendency which is the

primary motivation for creativity as the organism forms new relationships to the environment in its endeavour most fully to be himself. (p.140)

### **Cognitive Paradigm**

Psychologists of this school of orientation insist that creativity is associated with higher mental processes. Their thinking is that creativity lies within the domain of intelligence. To the gestaltists, creativity is a function of gestalt reconstructions. On his own part, Wertheimer (1959) posited that productive thinking requires a restructuring of the problem. In the thinking of Wertheimer, structural features and requirements of a problem normally get up stresses and tensions in the thinker. A follow-up of these stresses leads the thinker in directions which both reduce the stresses and alter the thinker's perception of the problem. This kind of restructuring occurs continuously until a solution emerges.

Cognitive theorists have reached the consensus that creativity involves "thinking, perceptual re-organization, cognitive flexibility and perceptual openness and achievement of insight"(Akinboye 1976). Basing his approach on this paradigm, Wallas (1926) proposed that new thought is achieved through a number of sequential but interacting stages Viz: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. At the preparation stage, the mind of the creative individual becomes saturated with available information that seems relevant to the problem which has been recognized. The incubation stage on the other hand is a "time out" in which the problem may not be worked on consciously but is supposedly thought about even during sleep. Illumination is the point at which the solution to the problem occurs to the creative individual. It is often described by cognitive psychologists as the "aha" experience.

Finally, the verification stage is the critical and often "empirical evaluation of the solution including the making of needed modifications. The four stages occur in an interactive fashion but may not always be as clear-cut as the listing

implies. Coleman (1979) has pointed out that in dealing with a complex problem for instance, there may be many partial illuminations, testings, further incubations and further illuminations, verifications and evaluations before the solution is complete. While Dashiell (1951) linked insight with inspiration, Ghiselin (1956) reasoned that insight results from the activity of the mind to create. In a slightly broader context on the issue of insight, Tasman (1976) identified two phases which would normally ensure the emergence of creativity. According to him, the individual must have a certain openness to external stimuli and also possess the ability to form intra-psycho representation and constructs of the inter-relatedness of the various sets of stimuli. The second phase which he says must occur is the process of breaking down and reorganizing the internalized (see the first phase) constructs into new and novel ones.

### **Physiological Paradigm**

This theory propounded by Katz (1978) is an approximation of the proposition of the cognitive theorists. Bogen's (1969) suggestion is that the left cerebral hemisphere is specialized for thought patterns which emphasize perception, synthesis and the holistic re-arrangement of ideas.

Others hold the popular speculation that the partition of the creative act can be co-ordinated with these differences in hemispheric processes: the perceptual insight into a problem is presumed to be due to an increased participation of processes by the right hemisphere whereas the logical elaboration and verbal communication of this insight are more intimately tied to left hemispheric processes (see Bogen and Bogen 1969; Ornstein 1972; Garret 1976). What the theorists or researcher's seem to be saying above is that the two hemispheres of the brain are specialized for different styles of processing data or information.

But there is also the thinking that both hemispheres can, in combination, produce creative acts. The proponents of this view believe that both hemispheres have the potentiality of

evolving creative behaviour (Ornstein 1977; Bogen 1975). According to them, the two hemispheres differ only in the cognitive mode of processing information. It would seem from the foregoing that the relationship between creative behaviour and hemispheric specialization is complex. The current view about creativity and the hemispheric specialization is exciting since it may represent a means of categorizing many of the diverse areas of creativity. For example, regression in ego functioning, divergent thinking processes and the prevalence of cognitive flexibility can be conceptualized as varied aspects of the same underlying right-based cognitive style.

Torrance (1980) being more definitive has however indicated that it now seems reasonably clear, at least among the adult population, that the cerebral hemispheres have independently specialized their functions. These specialized functions of the cerebral hemispheres according to Torrance seem to represent two different modes of processing information. The left cerebral hemisphere seems to be the locus of logical, analytical, abstract, digital, linear, sequential temporal, verbal operations and prepositional thought. It is the seat of almost all language, order and time sense (see Ornstein 1973; Samples 1975, 1976; Brandwein & Ornstein 1977; McCallum & Glynn 1979).

The underlying assumption here is that the left hemisphere controls certain skills which are necessary for school achievement. The skills include the 3 R's - Writing, Reading and Arithmetic computation. Based on the foregoing, it could be argued that the inability of the school system to turn out large numbers of creative children is a function of its undue emphasis on left hemisphere-based skills.

In contrast, the right hemisphere seems to be the locus of visuospatial and oppositional thought and imagination. It is also specialized for aesthetic, analogic, concrete, holistic intuitive and spatial functions (Gazzaniga 1975). It has been pointed out "that the right hemisphere exerts a strong



influence on skills that are pertinent to the "arts" such as the production of music, painting and sculpture. The right hemisphere often makes itself known through dreams and fantasy. By implication, therefore, it seems to process information non-linearly, simultaneously handling a variety of kinds of information, relating and associating bits of information, rather than logically and sequentially.

All told, verbal and analytic abilities are ascribed to the left hemisphere while non-verbal creative abilities are said to be right hemisphere based in many right handed people. This theory of creativity has been described as the two-mode model by Torrance (1980) since it focuses on the left and right hemispheres of the brain.

### **Trait-and-Factor Paradigm**

While some theorists were concerned with the portion of the human brain that influences creative behaviour, some others were interested in the traits or characteristics of creative individuals. Theorists of this school of thought rely primarily on factor analysis. Taylor (1975) described the theory as "trait factorial". The trait-and-factor model of creativity is a product of the factor analytic study of creativity. Guilford (1950) had earlier noted that cognitive abilities are involved in the recognition of information; productive abilities which include convergent and divergent thinking.

Factor analytic theorists (Guilford 1967, 1971; Guilford, Hendricks & Hoepfner 1968; Biondi & Parnes 1976) have identified factors such as divergent thinking mode, verbal fluency, semantic spontaneous flexibility, figural spontaneous flexibility, associational fluency, expressional fluency, symbolic adaptive flexibility, originality, semantic redefinition of problems. These factor analytic theorists were greatly inspired by Guilford's structure of intellect model (1959, 1967). The model has three dimensions: Operations, Contents and Products. In the model, the operations are the major kinds of intellectual activities or processes that an individual does with the raw materials or information. The first

operation variable—cognition—includes discovery awareness, recognition, comprehension or understanding (Torrance, 1980). The second operation variable—memory—refers to retention or storage with some measure of availability of information. This operation dimension has two types of productive thinking in which something is produced from what has been cognized and memorized. The two are divergent production or the generation of new information from given information where emphasis is upon variety and quantity of output from the same source and convergent productions or the generation of information where emphasis is upon achieving conventionally accepted best outcome (i.e. the given information fully determines the response).

The fifth and last operation variable is evaluation. This involves making decisions or judgements concerning the correctness, suitability, adequacy, desirability, and the like of information in terms of criteria of identity, consistency and goal satisfaction. These five operation variables act upon each of the kinds of content (figural, symbolic, semantic and behavioural) and each of the kinds of products (units, classes, systems, transformations and implications). Guilford's model theoretically has 120 different kinds of mental ability or what could be termed 120 traits. Each trait is defined as a "distinguishable, relatively enduring way of functioning" (Sprinthall & Sprinthall, 1976). A group of traits, makes up what Guilford calls a factor. In other words, a factor is a cluster of traits all interacting. This is aptly captured in figure 4.

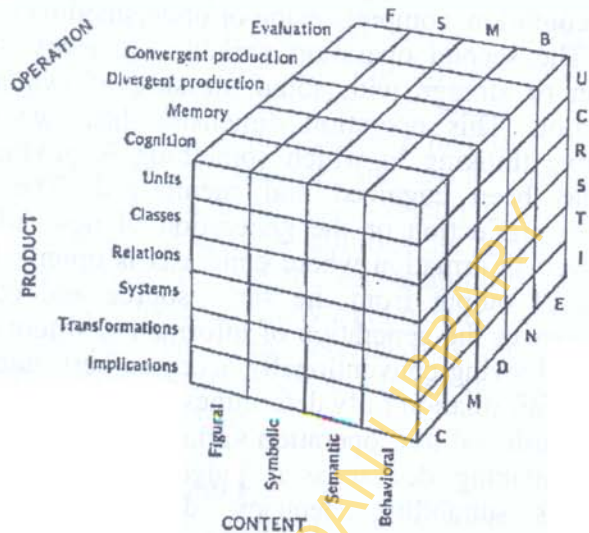


Fig. 4: Guilford's structure of the Intellect (1959)

Simply stated, Guilford's theory (which inspired the trait-and-factor model) is that creativity is a function of the interaction of a series of traits called fluency, flexibility and originality. These traits involve divergent thinking and elaboration. The trait and factor approach considers the dimension of creativity as being very important. This theoretical approach has inspired the multivariate study of creative products. All that Guilford's model seems to be suggesting is that intellectual abilities are organized along three dimensions. These include the content, the product and operations. Content refers to the kinds of information which the human mind contains or makes use of. Product is the form of the information while operations have to do with the way the mind processes the information. In this theory, many cognitive functions are linked to creativity. Under the operations dimension, however, "divergent production" is

taken to be especially necessary and critical for creative behaviour.

### **Behavioural Paradigm**

Some of the theories like the psychoanalytic, the cognitive, the humanistic etc. theories of creativity have tended to concern themselves with the personality of the creative person. The behaviourists or behaviour theorists moved away from the "personality" concerns of the other theorists and focused instead on environmentalism. The behaviourists reason that every behaviour manifested by the individual is a function of the interaction between the individual and the environment. The behaviourists seem to be saying that environmental influences are crucial to the emergence or otherwise of creative behaviour. In effect, human behaviour is learned. Cropley (1970) a behaviourist explains that human behaviour is essentially a question of building up links or bonds between stimuli and responses. Cropley's thesis is that instrumental conditioning which involves building the appropriate S~R bonds in the child could lead to the desired creative responses.

One of the objectives of special education as captured in the National Policy on Education (2004) is to

provide opportunities for exceptionally gifted and talented children to develop their talents, natural endowment/traits at their own pace in the interest of the nation's economic and technological development.

Given this premise, it became necessary to investigate factors or conditions that may foster creativity or giftedness in children. Nwazuoke, Abosi and Ozoji (1992) investigated sex and birth order differences in creativity among Nigerian Junior Secondary School students. The results showed that sex is a predictor variable as the males had a higher mean score than the females. One plausible explanation for this is

that within the framework of our cultural nuances and child rearing practices in most parts of Nigeria, female children are not usually provided enough latitude to express their talents freely. Often, they are inhibited by societal norms. The girl-child was "taught" not to question authority. In Iboland (in the past) it was said that women were to be seen not heard. Such cultural practices found in parts of Nigeria are detrimental to the cause of creativity and giftedness.

Another study which looked at environmental factors as predictors of creativity among senior secondary school students in Oyo State called attention to the need for improving the learning environment at home and in school (cf. Nwazuoke, Olatoye and Oyundoyin, 2002).

The study found that parental academic attainment, parental occupation, family library and class size significantly predicted creativity. Nwazuoke's (1996) investigations of the correlates of creativity in gifted Nigerian children showed sex and age working together to produce higher creativity scores ( $F = 8.18$ ,  $df = 1,560$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In this study, some children never got started on some of the items until the 3 minutes given them for the exercise were over. It is known in psychology that undue pressure or stress can inhibit performance in some people. By extension, it implies that a rigid conventional curriculum might hurt the creative talents of gifted children.

It became obvious in our researches that government probably erred in utilizing a regular educational facility like a federal government academy to search for and nurture gifted children. There is no one-to-one correspondence between high academic achievement and creativity/giftedness. Most discoveries, inventions and breakthroughs in the world were not brought about by people in the academia. Two options are open to the Nigerian government. First, government should reposition the gifted school at Suleja, Niger State by way of modifying the curriculum, and instructional procedures. This means that government has to incorporate best practices in gifted education in running the school.

Otherwise, 100 years after the establishment of the school, we may still not be in a position to attribute breakthroughs to products of the school. The second option is for government to go beyond the confines of the school to search for creatively gifted children in the larger society. Such children, when identified, can be placed in an academy specifically designed for nurturing talented minds in different areas of human functioning. Government should take necessary steps to implement the provisions of the National Policy on Education (special education section) as well as those of the Nigerian Disability Act. This will go a long way towards developing special needs education in Nigeria.

It is unfortunate that most children with learning difficulties are not identified early enough in this country. Parents and teachers often get to know that there may be a problem when the child begins to exhibit behaviour deficits either in the classroom or in social settings. The reason is that Nigeria does not have a single assessment centre where children with special needs can be screened early in life and corrective measures taken to save the child. Our University of Ibadan is the only University in Nigeria that has the full complement of an Audiology Laboratory manned by skilled international staff such as Professor C.A Bakare. If the university in partnership with state governments undertakes assessment of school children for hearing/learning problems even before they enrol in formal primary schools, a lot of academic and productive lives will have been saved. If hypothetically, each child, the client, is made to pay as low as ₦50 for assessment, the university is guaranteed billions of naira from each state. To make this practicable, there is the need to recruit more staff and assist those on ground to update their skills.

### **Acknowledgment**

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, it is fitting at this point to pay tribute to all those whose profound influences helped me to attain my achievement potentials. I must begin by thanking

Almighty God who in spite of the severe storms I ran into in the course of my career (journey) ensured that I would be alive to witness this momentous occasion. To God be all honour and Glory for He hath made this day and I am indeed glad in it.

I am particularly grateful to the University of Ibadan for giving me the enabling learning environment that challenged my creative instincts. Because of the numerous opportunities which the university opened up for me and I made use of, I have decided to remit a percentage of my workshop earnings to the Bursary through the Vice-Chancellor's office. This has been on for about four years now. In the same vein, I express gratitude to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor O.A. Bamiro who has been very supportive of our academic programmes especially our partnership programme in Abia State. I thank God for providing his enabling grace which made it possible for the following academic and non-academic staff of the Department to be recruited through me—Dr. Julilus Ademokoya, Dr. Tolu Eniolorunda, Dr. Femi Fakolade, Dr. Stella Kanu, Dr. Adebomi Oyewumi, Dr. Isaiah Elemukan and all 5 support staff—Mr. Adewumi, Mrs. Ifeoma Onyereze, Joy Akande, Tosin Adewoyin and Friday Azanor.

It is difficult to quantify the amount of work my teachers and mentors did to raise me. I remember particularly Professor Babatunde Ipaye, Professor Sunday Harrison Umoh, Professor Adeyemi I. Idowu, Professor Chinua Achebe, Professor Hans G. Jellen (Southern Illinois University, USA), Dr. Klaus K. Urban (University of Hannover, Germany), Dr. Peter O. Mba, Dr. E.E. Adima, Professor V.A Nottidge, Professor Ebo Ubahakwe, Professor Vero Igbanugo, Professor Domingo Okorie who at various times and in many different ways inspired my ascent to the heights.

I thank in a special way my former Head of Department and teacher, Professor C.A. Bakare who graciously offered me admission late in the day, to run a degree of master programme (Special Education) even when I came from a

“disturbed zone”. I happen, by the grace of God to be his first product to be elevated to the rank of Professor and more so to present an inaugural address. My gratitude goes to my acting Head of Department, Dr. G.B. Ojo and other staff of the Department (academic and non-academic) for their constant support. The inaugural lecture committee set up by the Head of Department is also appreciated for its commitment to the success of this lecture. The committee involved the entire department with Drs. John Oyundoyin, Femi Fakolade and Adebomi Oyewumi as arrowheads. I thank in a special way Mr. Olugbenga Isaiah, Mr. Stanley Idemudia, Mr. Adedokun Adewale and Mr. Salaudeen for assisting the committee. I want to thank publicly three of my former doctoral students who have continued to uphold the values I instilled in them. They are Dr. Babatunde Oduwole, Dr. Obi Agomuo and Dr. Segun Oyundoyin. I remember with thankfulness the constant pastoral care of my resident parish priest Rev. Fr. Ade Ezekiel Owoeye and that of Rev Msgr. Professor Felix Adeigbo, Rev Prof. Kenny, Rev Fr. Felix Obialo, Rev Fr. Cyriak, Rev Fr. Kistler and members of the Schoenstatt Community in Ibadan. I thank also the unknown Ministry of Education official that re-posted me from Kontangora in Niger State to Oyo in Oyo State. The decision to repost me to Oyo State remotely gave birth to this inaugural address.

Many thanks to the Dean of Education and the Faculty Inaugural Lecture Committee for giving me the opportunity to deliver this lecture. I recognize and appreciate the following people for stepping in when I needed them most: Professor Ayodele Falase, Professor V.A. Nottidge, Professor G.A Alegbeleye, Professor Evans J. Ibeagha, Dr. Ken Nwalo, Dr. S.O Popoola, Professor Terese Tchombe (Cameroon), Professor E. Olabode Lucas, Professor Avoke Mawuto (Ghana), Dr. M.M Umukoro, Professor M.A. Akintayo, Drs. Kolawole and Babarinde, Tom Iroegbu and Barrister Bashiru Danlami (a blind lawyer), Dr. Remy Oriaku, Dr. Obododinma Oha and Mrs. Anthonio.



I treasure the love and tremendous respect my students and colleagues (within Nigeria and outside) have for me in spite of my very ordinary nature. I thank you all especially for your stimulation. Thank you Olajumoke Ajisefinni for typing this manuscript. Though Professor Biola Odejide (former DVC- Academic) and Professor A. Olayinka Idowu (former Dean – PG School) have already received awards at the national level for their great passion and love for our students with special needs, I want to publicly thank them for facilitating the employment of four INTERPRETERS (support staff) during my tenure as Head of Department. Many thanks to my teacher Professor Clement Bakare and my friend Dr. Remigius Oriaku of the Department of English who edited the manuscript.

My parents – Chief Sir Mark Nwazuoke and Lady Regina Ojingwa Nwazuoke gave up a lot of personal comfort that all 8(eight) of us, their children, might receive university education. That mission was accomplished. This inaugural lecture is therefore dedicated to them.

I am greatly indebted to my seven siblings for their profound love and kindness to me over time. They include Rev Sr. Mary Ikechukwu Nwazuoke, Chief Ibeh Nwazuoke, Mr Candy-Carole Ohajunwa, Mrs Chidinma Igbokwe, Barrister Chymeke Nwazuoke, Engineer Jerry Nwazuoke and Mrs Chinenye Angie-Okiyie.

My children – Ifechinyerem, Chibueze, Chizorom and Chigozirim are bundles of joy to me. I thank you for your understanding especially during periods of my absence from home. To my wife, Ugonma, for whom family life is a vocation, I thank God for making her available to me. She represents a model to be emulated by others especially in the creative way she makes a relationship of many years look as if it has just begun: *Ugo Imeela*.

I thank you all for coming and for your attention.

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## **BIODATA OF PROFESSOR IKECHUKWU AMBROSE NWAZUOKE**

Professor Ikechukwu Ambrose Nwazuoke was born in the railway town of Muchia, Zaria on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1956 to Sir and Lady Mark Ikeadiuwa NWAZUOKE. He attended St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Aggrey Road, Port Harcourt and Sacred Heart Secondary School, Aba. He enrolled at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka from 1974 to 1978. He had Federal Government Scholarship for his undergraduate education. Professor Nwazuoke enjoyed Federal Government Staff Development Award for his postgraduate studies. He served the mandatory National Youth Service Year (NYSC) in Egbe Teachers' College (old Kwara State) from 1978 to 1979. Professor Nwazuoke began his working career at Federal College of Education, Kontagora but was later transferred to Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo where he came into contact with Special Education.

He returned to the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, for his Master's degree programme in Special Education in the 1983/84 session. He was at the University of Ilorin from 1985 – 1989 where he studied counselling and creativity for his doctoral work.

He joined the Department of Special Education, University of Ibadan in 1990/1991 session as Lecturer II. In 1992, he was appointed Lecturer I. He rose through the ranks until he became a Professor of Special Education in October, 2000.

Professor Nwazuoke has served the university in different capacities at different times. He was among others: Co-ordinator (undergraduate programme in Special Education (1991 – 1993); Co-ordinator (Postgraduate programme in Special Education (1993 – 1997); Sub-Dean (Postgraduate) Faculty of Education (1997 – 1999); Acting Head, Department of Special Education (1999 – 2000); Member of University Senate (1999 to date); Member Senate Curriculum Committee (2003 to 2005) and Head of Department (2005 – 2008). He also served his Department and Faculty of



Education in many committees. These include: Editorship of Faculty of Education publications and Faculty Curriculum Review Committee (1995 – 1997). He has been member of Board of Studies of the Faculties of Agriculture and Forestry and Arts. He was an active member of the committee that reviewed the English Language Curriculum for Colleges of Education in Nigeria (1984 – 1985).

Professor Nwazuoke served as consultant to the Federal Government of Nigeria on Education Sector Analysis (Special Education) (2003 – 2005). He was also consultant to International Labour Organization (Nigeria chapter) on Child Labour Organization (2004 – 2006). He was President, National Council for Exceptional Children (Nigeria) (2004 – 2008) and Editor of the council's publications for 10 years (1991- 2001).

He served on the committee that developed Blueprint on Guidance and Counseling for Educational Institutions in Nigeria (in 2000). He was a member of the Curriculum Development Committee (for Education) for BOWEN University, Iwo Nigeria.

Professor Nwazuoke has been a consultant: to the Federal Government of Nigeria on Gifted Education (1993 to date); Abia State Government on Inclusive Education (2006 to date). He is currently a visiting Professor of Gifted Education to the Department of Special Education, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. He has also been a visiting Professor of Inclusive Education to University of Buea, Cameroon in Central Africa. Out of the 60 presentations (PACE SESSIONS) to be made at this year's International week of Creativity and Innovation fixed for 20 – 25 June, 2010 in Buffalo, New York, Professor Nwazuoke's submission titled "Reconstructing Creative Management of Behaviour Disorders in the Workplace" is the only paper selected from the African Region.

Professor Nwazuoke has been a recipient of many honours and distinctions. In 1997, the International Society of Poets based in Maryland, USA voted him the Poet of the Year. He won the Emmanuel Aguma Scholarship which he

utilized for his Secondary Education. This means that he relieved his parents the burden of school fees early in life

He belongs to many professional and learned societies. Some of these include: National Association of Special Education Teachers; Social and Educational Research Organization; National Association of Educational Psychologists; National Council for Exceptional Children; Counseling Association of Nigeria; Special Education Research Group (of which he was Chairman).

Professor Nwazuoke has to his credit over 83 publications. He is married to Mrs. Ugonma Grace Nwazuoke and the marriage is blessed with children.

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