

**PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE IN OUR SCHOOLS
AMONG STUDENTS IN INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING IN ANAMBRA
STATE**

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Abstract

This study investigated pedagogical content knowledge (learning) in our schools among students Anambra State. Learning is holistic which some students claimed that they have achieved but it is one sided. In the developed countries, a simplified and holistic learning process have been developed and use in all their institutions of learning. In the developed countries learning is everything about a person. They emphasized about physical or skill acquisitions and theories but Nigerians talk more about theories. This is why we have problems in our various institutions of learning among students. The reason is that students talk more of certificates more than what they learnt. This study therefore tends to bridge the gap about wrong notion of learning among students. A theoretical approach has been used in this study and practical approach of various regions of this country has also been reviewed. The study tackled different stages of learning such as process of learning and types of learning. The study concludes with the notion that learning is holistic. It involves physical, theoretical, social, psychological and intellectual developments of a person. Lack of facilities, poor quality of teachers and lack of funds could hinder effective learning process. The study therefore recommends that proprietors of various schools should monitor closely the activities of teachers, provide facilities, recruit quality teachers and organize seminars for teachers and students. Students should also be exposed to various institutions such as companies, industries and skill acquisition centres to practice what they have learnt.

Key words: Pedagogical content knowledge.

Introduction:

When one is talking about learning, three things must be remembered such as the learner, the learning process (instruction) and technique or method. These three things are what educational psychologists are interested in. The essence of all educational processes centred on the way students acquire certain skills and behave in a way that they had not behaved. Saljo (1979) uphold that learning is act of acquiring facts, skills and methods that can be retained and used as necessary. However, learning is a basic and central component of the distinctive activities that constitute the subject matter of psychology. Learning cannot be directly

observed but can manifest itself in the activities of the individual. Thus, Gopnik (2016) affirmed that children learn by watching and imitating the people around them. Psychologists call this observational learning. Human beings more than all other living organism have the greater capacity to learn in all ways and through language, we can learn things we have neither experience nor observed. In other words, we can learn through adaptation. Hoyer et al (2013) said that adaptation of individual organisms to their environment during the lifetime of individual matters in learning. Students in Anambra State should adapt to their environment while learning.

Definition of learning:

Learning refers to the change in a subject's behavior to a given situation brought about by repeated experiences in that situation, provided that the behavior change cannot be explained on the basis of native response tendencies, maturation or temporary states of the subject (fatigue, drug, and alcohol), (Hilgard and Bower 1975). This entails that learning is acquisition of skills and attitude that leads to a change in behavior. Learning therefore involved a change in the behaviours of the individual as a consequence of his or experience. Dewey (1929) affirmed that experience is complex of all learning which is distinctively human. It is vital and hence growing and stands at the centre of educational endeavor. The business of education might be defined as an emancipation and enlargement of experience. This can manifest in the way the individual thinks (cognitive), acts (psychomotor) or feels (affective). The change of behavior must not be due to such transitory conditions caused by taking drugs or alcohol and must not be due to maturation.

In order to make learning possible we must consider the following areas:

1. Human Growth and development: we have to understand their capabilities, what they already know, how they think and host of others. So, the various facts of human development such as physical, intellectual, linguistic, moral, social, cultural, religious are very important. We must also consider environmental factors of development as well.
2. Learning and instruction: educational Psychology is concerned with the general nature of the learning process, the factors that influence learning, how and when different types of materials are learnt. Their interest also is how to ensure that knowledge acquired in school is transferred to life outside school not just immediately it is learnt but several years after the students have left school.
3. Personality and adjustment: educational psychology is interested in how people develop and maintain healthy personalities and attitudes towards students and teachers. Social relationships and how students adjust to the

school situation make friends and interact with everyone in the educational setting as well as character formation.

4. Psychological measurement: educational psychology is interested in measuring those psychological characteristics on which individuals differ example intelligence, learning ability, and aptitude and in the applications of the results of the measurements to enhance and development.
5. Research, techniques and methods the scientific study of educational problems and practices are of interest to educational psychologists. The implementation of research findings and techniques in the classroom settings is also of primary importance.

For psychologists, learning is said to take place, if the following criteria is met.

- 1) There must be the element of change in behavior overtly or covertly.
- 2) The change in behavior as result of fatigue or other transitory conditions such as use of drugs or alcohol do not constitute learning.
- 3) The change in behavior must be based on exposure to the environment (learning situation or any situation that allows one to gain some experience.

Basic characteristics of learning

1. Learning has to change behavior.
2. The change should be relatively permanent.
3. The change should be as a result of experience.
4. Learning is an internal process.
5. Learning occurs under conditions of directed attention and deliberate effort.
6. Learning is distinct from biological maturation and imprinting.

How human beings learn

1. Behaviorist Associationist: learning as resulting from the forming of connections between stimuli and observable response.
2. Cognitive Gestaltists: they believe that learning resulted from the re-organization of perception and the forming of a new relationship. Learning is seen as the understanding of a total. Meaningful relationship and the only acceptable approach to the study of learning is the cognitive one.
3. Information- processing approach: contemporary theories of human learning and memory propose that the stimulation encountered by the learner is transformed or processed in a number of ways by internal structures during the period in which the changes identified as learning take place. Human beings are viewed as a processor of information in which the stimulation from the environment is actively processed through the memory system. The information processing approach is based upon computer models. The

encoding, storage and retrieval components correspond to input, storage and output stages of computer processing.

Stages of learning

Learning is a process and it often occurs in stages. Ambrose et al (2010) in support said that learning is a process that leads to change which occurs as a result of experience and increases the potential for improved performance and future learning. Psychologists have identified three stages in learning. The stages are interrelated and in succession. They are: acquisition, retention and recall.

Acquisition: information is received by the learner as stimulus. The process of receiving information by the learner is called acquisition.

Retention: the information received by the learner may be stored in the memory. This is the stage where mental processing begins in terms of meaningfulness, interpretation and encoding. Retention could be in short term memory (STM) or long term memory (LTM). Short term memory: the function of this storage system is to process information that had been stored which are immediately needed. Long term memory: information which is not immediately needed are processed and pushed out of the short term memory into the long term memory. This implies that only information that is needed over a long period are stored in long term memory. In line with this Saljo (1979) affirmed that learning is storing of information that can be reproduced.

Recall: this is process whereby information that had initially been acquired and retained is subsequently retrieved. If for any reason, acquired information cannot be recalled something may be wrong with retention that has not made learning possible. It is important to note that learning completes its circle when information acquired is retained and are subsequently retrieved or recalled.

Types of learning

Bloom (1956) divided learning into three major categories.

Cognitive learning which emphasizes the intellectual endowment such as learning of facts and problems –solving.

Affective learning emphasizes development of attitudes and emotion.

Psychomotor learning is concerned with skills development such as walking, writing, swimming, knitting.

They are other types of learning such as signal learning or classical conditioning, stimulus response learning, stimulus response or operant conditioning, chain learning, verbal association, multiple discrimination, concept learning, learning of principle and problem solving.

Conclusion

The study investigated the pedagogical content knowledge among students in Anambra state. Hilgard and Bower (1975) said that learning is change in a subject's behaviour to a given situation brought about by repeated experiences in that situation, provided that the behaviour change cannot be explained on the basis of native response tendencies, maturation or temporary states of the subject (fatigue, drug and alcohol). Students graduated from secondary schools and Universities not able to implement what they have learnt for six to ten years show that objective of learning are yet to be achieved. Mkpa (2005) observed that it is at the implementation stage that many excellent plans of learning and educational policies are seen without any doubts. Poor quality of teachers, truancy of some teachers in teaching, poor attitudes of some principals, lack of equipment for effective teaching and learning, indiscipline among students, lack of infrastructural facilities, lack of motivation or reinforcement by the proprietors and government contribute to mar the learning process. These and many other problems if handled properly will help students to embrace holistic learning or pedagogical knowledge.

Recommendations

1. The learning process should not be compromised such as curriculum and personnel qualifications (teachers) teaching students should be intact.
2. Stages of learning in a learner should be maintained such as time, growth and duration of learning should be highly encouraged.
3. The proprietors of centres of learning should provide learning facilities and suitable environment for learning.
4. Government should occasionally provide grants to various schools and centres of learning.
5. Students should be exposed to various centres of learning such as Cinemas, companies and industries.
6. Regular seminars should be organized for teachers and students.

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