

**FACULTY**: **EDUCATION**

**COURSE UNIT: HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

**COURSE CODE: EDU1201**

**LECTURER’S NAME: MR. MIYINGO ANTHONY**

**STUDENT’S NAME: LUGAYAVU EPAPHRADITO**

**REGISTRATION No.: 18BSCE1468**

**COURSE WORK: Individual**

**DUE DATE: 18th February 2019**

**QUESTION:**

1. **(a) What is precocity?**

**(b) Indicate the causes of precocity among children.**

**(c) What are the indicators/manifestations of precocity?**

**(d) How does precocity impact the teaching and learning process?**

**(e) As a teacher, solicit for viable solutions to the predicament.**

**(f) As a teacher, how can you help learners undergoing precocity?**

**Introduction:**

Precocity originates from a Latin word, *praecox*, which means "maturing early," which comes from *pre*, "before," and *coquere*, "to ripen or cook." Precocity describes smartness or skill that's achieved much earlier than usual but in general, precocity is applied to any organism be it plants or animals as a long as there is development taking place. A *precocious* individual is considered to have the quality of *precocity*. The alternative is *precociousness*, which means a person is way ahead of the curve in ability or intelligence. Examples of precocity include; learning to read at the age of three, starting college at the age of fifteen, calculating huge mathematical problems at the age of five, writing a musical masterpiece at age six, among others. In other words, precocity means the kind of intelligence achieved far ahead of normal developmental schedules of a living being.

There is also what is called precocious puberty which is the development of puberty signs in an individual at an early age which is brought about by numerous biological factors as the individual grows.

Gottfredson and Linda S (1997) defined intelligence as a very general mental capability that, among other things, involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly and learn from experience. It is not merely book learning, a narrow academic skill, or test-taking smarts. Rather, it reflects a broader and deeper capability for comprehending our surroundings—"catching on,""making sense" of things, or "figuring out" what to do.

According to Lewis (1905), precocity can be categorized into the following sections, first, race disparities, and are therefore allowed to speak of race precocity. Second, we have natural disparity in the rate of development between individuals of the same race, and can therefore speak of individual precocity. Third, we have a totally different sort of thing which could perhaps better be denominated "prematuration," a state that results always from outside interference. In its wide range, it will include such facts as the following: pruning a tree to hasten its fruit, dieting an animal to bring it to early maturity; forcing on a child the activities of the adolescent and upon the adolescent the activities of the adult; in short, every conceivable example of forced culture.

**Causes of Precocity among Children**

There are not so many causes of precociousness among children; however, precocity may be caused by the following;

The main cause of precocity among children is biological. The genes inherited from the parents may be the principle cause of precocity [Intellectual Precocity]. According to Claudia(2003), many children of intellectual scholars and professionals posses IQs above 125. This is because they inherit special genes from their parents which lead to early mental development.

Precocity can also be nurtured by the environment in a child during his or her growth and development. Claudia suggests that some children are precocious because their parents forced them to be. Claudia also continues to say that precocity can be brought about by the teachers or the people in direct contact with the children through exposing them to different problems beyond their age hence bringing out the potential in them.

Lewis (1905) said that some external conditions like pressure from the parents or teachers may lead to a child’s mental capability to be stretched beyond the normal.

On the side of the precocious puberty, Bouvattier and Pienkowski (2015) say that early puberty and sexual development may be caused by central nervous system abnormalities, family history of the disorder, certain rare genetic syndromes, tumors of the pituitary gland or brain among others.

**Indicators/Manifestations of precocity**

According to Spencer Brown (1956), a teacher and a parent, the following are the indicators of precocity at different levels of development of precocious individuals.

During childhood, a precocious baby walks and talks sooner than the others. This is because these babies tend to have a drive to try out everything that they see and learn. Their brains tend to process information at a higher rate and eventually, they figure out the process of walking and the art of connecting sounds to form words.

Precocious children tend to ask more and better questions. They are always curious and eager to learn new things at this age. They ask their parents a lot of questions as a way to comprehend all things surrounding them.

They cultivate their hobbies more intensely and profoundly. Precocious children usually develop and perfect their hobbies sooner than other children for example, precocious child who loves to play with train-sets tends to develop a profound interest in them and does everything possible to get to know how the trains work.

Precocious children learn to read sooner and more widely. They discover the art of reading different materials at an earlier age and they tend to read a wide range of material in their search for knowledge about their surrounding environment.

Precocious children have a Higher IQ (Intelligence Quotient – the ratio between mental age and chronological age) which is above 125 going up to 180. The IQ can be measured using different scales including the Stanford-Binet scale, the Wechsler-Bellevue Test, among others.

Besides the high IQ of the precocious individuals, they have speed in performing different activities. During the young age, the children who are precocious tend to finish their given tasks sooner than their counterparts.

Precocious children have a broader attention span, and more ability to generalize on their information. These children can pay attention for longer hours and they grasp all that has been progressing. They tend to hold a lot of information in a general form and they can usually reproduce it in its originality.

According to Spencer (1956), in school, these individuals have greatest superiorities are in reading. They can recognize different patterns in reading materials and easily connect the sections with ease.

They also have a good use of language in literature and other language related subjects because of their ability to read widely which in most cases exposes them to numerous language formalities.

Precocious individuals usually posses higher arithmetical reasoning capacities and more oriented to science-related subjects that require the use of their reasoning capabilities. However, they are also good and capable of being the best in the arts fields.

Precocious children exhibit great ability in arithmetical computation, spelling, and memorizing of factual information for-example, precocious individuals are usually the best in spelling bees, mathematical competitions, and memorization competitions.

Precocious individuals are more uneven in their accomplishments than the ordinary children and are less inclined to boast for their accomplishments.

They are less likely to be tempted to cheat and they are more altruistic in his social attitudes. Most of them usually care about the well-being of others.

Even though many children at different stages may exhibit some of these manifestations, it should be noted that intellectual precociousness among individuals is a rare occurrence among people all-over the world. This means that people should not rush in categorizing youngster as precocious before carefully studying their behavior all-round.

**How Precocity Impacts the teaching and process**

Students who are precocious present different challenges to the teachers, parents and the community who, in conjunction, contribute to the teaching and learning of these precocious children. The positive impacts may include the following;

The precocious children usually help other children in the same level of education or sometimes beyond their levels in learning by providing a more elaborate explanation to the concepts of the study which lightens the burden of teachers.

These children and individuals at different levels are easy to teach because they respond quickly to the stimuli of knowledge and posses a unique drive towards knowledge acquisition. This is in the favor of the educators like, teachers and parents.

Precocious individual push educators to always be alert and updated about the different concepts because they usually go an extra mile in carrying out research in order to spark the knowledge of the precocious learners.

Since precocious learners are so inquisitive and are always in search for knowledge, they contribute to the knowledge body of the education system through the invention of new approaches and mechanisms of information delivery and the new ideas which can see the progress of the education system.

However, on the other hand, these precocious children can be a menace to the educators especially those who cannot cope up with them. The negative impacts may include the following;

Some precocious individuals go beyond the comprehension and levels of the educators in that it could appear as though the learner should be teaching the educator instead of the reverse. This is because, these persons sometimes posses IQs way beyond their educators and it may shame the educator if the learner asks something beyond his or her intellect among other learners.

Fellow learners to these precocious learners always feel as though they are left out because some teachers tend to lead by the speed of the precocious individuals and leave out the slow learners before they could comprehend what is being taught.

Teachers to the precocious students tend to neglect them thinking that they may know everything not knowing that some precocious students may be good in some areas and terrible in others.

Parents who are responsible to teaching these precocious children social skills tend to neglect them with a notion that these children are adults in mind. Precocity may not help an individual to develop social skills of social interaction which makes these children feel left out and lonely.

Precocity on the side of early development of body parts known as precocious puberty leads to stigmatism among young learners because of the feeling that they do not fit with their counterparts of the same age. This leads to isolation and social withdrawal of these learners which prevents them from learning from other of the same age.

**Solutions for the Predicament**

As a teacher, I suggest the following solutions to the predicament of precocity;

Teachers and other educators like parents and the community members should always consider these precocious individuals as other people in terms of social interaction and social training. This helps them develop social skills which are important development. These youngsters also need adult guidance.

Educators and persons responsible for the education process should devise means of formulating different curricula for the precocious learners in order to utilize their potential and be able to benefit from their ability by providing them with the education that matches their speed.

Precocious learners, who are undergoing early development of body parts should always be put under critical observation and given proper guidance and counseling to enable them feel comfortable during the learning process when they are among peers.

**How to help learners undergoing precocity**

As a teacher, I would help the learners who are undergoing precocity in the following ways;

Provide extra-time for precocious Learners. This enables them move the pace with which they are comfortable with since they are in most cases a head of the other learners.

Encourage precocious learners to assist the other learners in discussions. By engaging them in discussions with other learners, the precocious learners are kept occupied and they would feel comfortable in share their knowledge keeping them in control in terms of knowledge acquisition.

Provide counseling to the learners undergoing precocious puberty in order to make them fit in with their peers. I could offer counseling in general to all the other learners and have some extra-time to discuss with the precocious learners on how to handle themselves.

Offer extra reading materials and exercises to the precocious learners. This is done in a way of keeping them busy but yet gaining more knowledge through practice and extensive reading.

Talk to parents to discuss the fate of the precocious learners. I would discuss with the parents of these precocious students to find ways of helping them realize their full potential. I could provide alternative to the normal education system and point them to the fields that would lead to the learners realize their full abilities, for-example, making these learners jump some classes to cope up with their speed.

**References:**

### Claire Bouvattier, ‎Catherine Pienkowski (2015). *Early Puberty: Latest Findings, Diagnosis, Treatment, Long-term Outcome.* Springer

Claudia Jankech-Caretta (2003). The characteristics of precocious intellectual children Psychologue FSP-Lausanne

Gottfredson, Linda S. (1997). *Mainstream Science on Intelligence (editorial)* Intelligence

Lewis M. Terman (April, 1905). A study in Precocity and Prematuration The American Journal of Psychology Founded by G. Stanley Hall in 1887 VOL. XVI

Spencer Brown, (June, 1956). How to educate gifted Children? The Problem Of Precocity. Writing as a teacher and a parent, in this survey of current technique for spotting and then educating