

Cognitive and Affective Characteristics of History Students of the University of Cape Coast

Charles Adabo Oppong

Department of Arts & Social Sciences Education
University of Cape Coast, Ghana
kindtheman@yahoo.co.uk
c.oppong@rocketmail.com

Abstract- Cognitive and affective attributes are the key in any educational endeavor. They seek to give an indication of the extent to which a learner would succeed in a given subject. Given this, the paper examined the cognitive and affective characteristics of History students of the University of Cape Coast, using primary data collected via focus group discussions with a sample of History students selected through random sampling technique. Discussions were transcribed into written text and coded into themes and sub-themes. Commonalities and differences in the key themes have been presented. The study revealed that knowledge traits characterized students' cognitive abilities. The study further found that students have a negative attitude and lack of interest towards History. The results from this study calls for the need to improve the transaction of the History curriculum in the University. It is, therefore, recommended that teachers adopt and use appropriate implementation strategies that would help students develop higher intellectual abilities and the right affective attributes for the subject.

Index Terms- Cognitive, Affective, History, Curriculum, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

The factors influencing students' learning and academic success are many and varied. To understand and make useful conceptualisation of how students learn and succeed in the classroom, it is necessary to classify these variables into manageable categories. These categories have broadly been known as the cognitive and affective characteristics. This general formulation suggests the complex interrelationship between the cognitive characteristics and affective characteristics that affect classroom learning.

Emphasis has centred on cognitive processes in the past and recent years. The many curriculum development and reform projects are based on a cognitive approach (Ripple & Rockcastle, 1964), which have also tailored classroom implementation in that focus. There are many voices being raised in recent years warning against an exclusive concern with cognition. For example, practically all assessment done in colleges and universities is cognitive bias (Saxon, Levine-Brown & Boylan, 2008). It is also to say that few efforts are made to examine students' affective characteristics such as motivation, attitudes toward learning, autonomy, or anxiety. According to a recent study by Gerlaugh, Thompson, Boylan, and Davis (2007), although almost all community colleges assess students'

cognitive skills, only 7% assess students' affective characteristics. As in other areas of academic achievement, research on achievement has focused primarily on the cognitive determinants. Undoubtedly, intelligence has a significant influence on academic achievement. For example, a vast body of research has provided consistent evidence for the link between Intelligent Quotient (IQ) and academic achievement (e.g. Jensen, 1998a; Matarazzo, 1972; Snow & Yalow, 1982). Yet as Snow recognized, cognition alone presents too narrow a view of students' achievement. First, a typical mean correlation between IQ and academic achievement reported in the literature is about 0.50 (Jensen, 1998a). This implies that IQ accounts for about 25% of the variance in achievement, and that about 75% of the variance is explained by factors other than IQ. Second, academic research has focused on cognitive characteristics other than students' affective characteristics, which equally play a significant role in determining how students are able to succeed in the classroom.

This lack of attention on the affective characteristics of students represents a serious weakness in the whole enterprise of helping to develop students holistically. However, studies have shown that cognitive preferences, learning achievements, and students' affective characteristics are interrelated (Tamir, 1985). This blend is critical in the face of the fact that it helps direct teachers and curriculum developers in general to focus on all factors that encourage students to develop as holistic beings (Zohar, 2004). The argument is that the limitations of the cognitive view underscore the need for moving beyond cognitive factors in accounting for how students learn in the classroom. This is to note that the cognitive and affective domains are interdependent. For this reason, focusing on cognitive constructs to the exclusion of affective construct in History lessons can only unavoidably lead to an incomplete educational experience for History students and this has been the situation in History education for a long time. The implication of this, among other things, is that we have History students for example with an advanced knowledge in the subject and with no great abilities as well as little or no regard for the subject they study or the ethical standards that govern the subject. This lacuna presents the need for a study of the cognitive and affective characteristics of History students.

This study, therefore, seeks to enhance the discourse and our understanding of conjoint relevance of cognitive and affective characteristics of students, as the interplay of these variables becomes critical for classroom learning. This study is,

however, limited to History students in the University of Cape Coast and it is the hope of the researcher that other interested researchers on this discourse will replicate this in other subject areas or institutions.

In the subsequent sections, the researcher discusses the definitions of cognitive and affective characteristics and the various theoretical perspectives, followed by an analytical framework, and an outline of the research methodology used for the study. This is followed by the results and discussion and, lastly, the conclusion and implications of the findings.

Definitions and Theoretical Perspectives

Cognitive characteristics

The cognitive domain involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills (Bloom, 1956). This includes the recall or recognition of specific facts, procedural patterns, and concepts that serve in the development of intellectual abilities and skills. In a sense, cognitive characteristics are features that exhibit the working of a human mind. In the view of Piaget and Inhelder (1973), cognitive characteristics are mental skills and broadly range from memory skills to procedural skills, and from language skills to thinking skills. In general, the cognitive characteristics can be categorized into lower order cognitive skills such as recalling and listing; and higher order cognitive skills such as problem solving, hypothesis testing, decision making, evaluating, and self-reflecting (Sternberg, 1998). That is, the characteristics of cognition include the following: verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, abstract reasoning, and short term memory. Verbal reasoning is the ability of reasoning using concepts framed in words. It aims at evaluating the ability to think constructively, rather than at simple fluency or vocabulary recognition. This underscores the fact that students who intend reading History must possess verbal reasoning skills, in order to help them appreciate the subject History, considering its abstract nature. Quantitative reasoning is the application of mathematical concepts and skills to solve real-world problems, and it requires reasoning based on mathematical properties and relations, with a low demand on computation and high demand on reasoning with numbers, operations, and patterns. Quantitative reasoning cycle begins with the individual engaging in the act of quantification by identifying objects, their attributes, and assigning measures so as to understand it in numerical terms. It is not far from right by indicating that the mathematical aspect in History is obviously the dates in the subject, hence the need for quantitative reasoning in the study of History at any level in education. Research suggests that understanding time is heavily bound up with knowledge in mathematics. This presents difficulties for young people because of the wide range of systems used to describe time. A mapping exercise of any History textbook reveals a complex network of dates or time terms and markers that learners need to navigate in order to make sense of the History subject matter. Many of these terms and markers constitute the mechanics of time and are used to measure and reference events in the past (Taylor & Young, 2003). Quantitative reasoning also enables students to look at statistical tables and, knowing the broader historical contexts, draw conclusions from the raw data.

Abstract reasoning is the ability to analyze information and

solve problems on a complex, thought-based level. Abstract reasoning ability is important because it enables students to apply what they learn in complex ways. Since the subject History is abstract in nature, it is important for students of History to acquire an abstract reasoning ability in order to appreciate the subject. Another way to look at cognitive skills is to use Bloom's taxonomy: lower level skills are related to knowledge and comprehension, and higher level skills are related to synthesis and evaluation. In general, cognitive characteristics has to do with the emergence of the ability to think and understand issues.

Affective characteristics

Birbeck and Andre (2009) rightly point out that the affective domain is a vague concept that could relate to so many aspects of teaching and learning. This is because most definitions of the affective area are grappling with important psychological traits such as motivation, self-esteem, and socialization. For example, Byrne (1984) reports that self-esteem is closely related to academic achievement; however, it was not clear which factor was the cause and which was the effect. Bloom (1956) contends that defining the affective domain involves a taxonomy that includes changes in interest, attitude, and values, as well as the development of appreciation and adequate adjustments. Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia (1964) developed a similar classification system for affective characteristics. In his view, affective behaviours exist along a continuum of internalization, from initial awareness of a phenomenon to a pervasive action-oriented outlook on life. Krathwohl's et al. taxonomy was based on a concern with the degree of internalization (i.e. the degree to which an attitude, value, or interest had been incorporated into the personality). Anderson (1981) also proposes that the affective dimension of students could be categorised by the characteristics of values, academic self-esteem, anxiety, interest, locus of control, attitude, and preferences. Anderson further suggested that these affective characteristics must: (a) include essential features of involved feelings and emotions, (b) be typical of the thoughts or behaviours of the person, (c) have intensity of strength of feelings, (d) have a positive or negative direction or orientation of feelings, and (e) have a target for which the feeling is directed. In all these conceptualisation, it is obvious that affective features characterize the emotional area of learning reflected by beliefs, values, interests, and behaviours of learners (Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964; Smith & Ragan, 1999; Gronlund & Brookhart, 2009). That is, the affective domain includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes. These thematic areas have been arrived at because Miller (2005) has indicated that affective learning is concerned with how learners feel while they are learning, as well as with how learning experiences are internalised so they can guide the learner's attitudes, opinions, and behaviour in the future. It is also important to further clarify the concepts of attitude, interest and value since these words appear to be the hub of the conceptualisation of the affective characteristics. Attitudes are lasting pattern of beliefs and opinions which predispose reaction to objects, events, and people. Attitude serves as brief composites of ones beliefs. These attitudes with regard to learning can be either positive or negative and each has an influence on learning. For instance, a learner who has a negative attitude towards

reading as a result of fear for reading will not have any interest in choosing a programme of study in the humanities, which include History. In a similar vein, a History student's attitude will have an influence on how he/she learns the subject as Huberman (1983) observes that the psychological state of a person can have either positive or negative effect on an implementation process.

Values as characteristics of affective in general are the important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what is good or bad. With respect to learning, values are the ideals that learners view as important to learning and will have a bearing on their lives after studying that particular subject of study. This variable becomes critical in History education because how students value History will inevitably relates to the inputs they make in the learning of the subject. It has been reported severally that students do not value History because of perceived lack of job opportunities for History graduates (e.g. Dwarko, 2007; Cobbold & Oppong, 2010). Interest, on the other hand, describes the cognitive and affective (attitude) relationship between a student and a particular subject in relation to its subject matter. This therefore means that a learner's performance in History could be based on the interest that the learner has for it and the effort that one will make towards the study of History.

On the basis of the foregoing definitions and conceptualisation of cognitive and affective characteristics In summary, Bloom's (1956) and Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia (1973) conceptualisation of cognitive and affective domains deemed relevant to this study. It is thus employed as the analytical framework for the study. The choice of the two-dimensional taxonomies was informed by two main reasons. First, the choice was made against background of the nature of the discipline (History). History by its nature is more cognitive focused, which demands low and high order thinking skills to enable a learner understand and appreciate the issues involved. Secondly, the interest and attitude of those who study the subject as well as how they value the subject affect the inputs that they make towards the subject. That is, the cognitive and affective domains provide a framework for teaching, assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of lesson design and delivery, and also the retention and its effect on the learner.

Analytical Framework

Bloom's (1956) and Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia (1973) Taxonomies of Learning Domains – Cognitive and Affective Domains - is adopted to guide the study. The various theoretical underpinnings discussed below form the basis of analyses in this paper.

Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain which emphasizes intellectual outcomes is divided into categories or levels. The key words used and the type of questions asked may aid in the establishment and encouragement of critical thinking, especially in the higher levels (Bloom, 1956).

Level 1: Knowledge – Knowledge is defined as the remembering of previously learned material. This involves the recall of a wide range of materials, from specific facts to complete theories, but all that is required is for the student to bring to mind the appropriate information.

Level 2: Comprehension – Comprehension is defined as the ability to grasp the meaning of materials. This is usually shown by translating material from one form to another (words to numbers), by interpreting material (explaining or summarising), and by estimating future trends (predicting consequences or effects). These learning outcomes go one step beyond the simple remembering of material, and represent the lowest level of understanding.

Level 3: Application – Application refers to the ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations. That is, solving problems by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way. This level is mostly used in the History subject to test students' mastery of various topics treated. In this case, students are usually required to demonstrate how a past event has come to affect present generation.

Level 4: Analysis – Analysis pertains to the ability to break down material into its component parts so that its organisational structure may be understood. This includes the identification of the parts, analysis of the relationships between parts, and recognition of the organisational principles involved. Learning outcomes here represent a higher intellectual level than comprehension and application because they require an understanding of both the content and the structural form of the material. This level is very useful in the study of History, in that History students are required to analyse historical happenings and throw more light on the causes and effects of the past. Since historical happenings or events are past and gone, their reasons and motives are unknown to those studying it in the present. It is, therefore, the place of the History student to make inferences and come out with the reasons or motives behind those past happenings.

Level 5: Synthesis – Synthesis is concerned with the ability to put parts together to form a new whole. This involves the production of a unique communication (theme or speech), a plan of operations (research proposal), or a set of abstract relations (scheme for classifying information). Learning outcomes in this area stresses creative behaviours, with major emphasis on the formulation of new patterns of structures. This level is essential in the study of History for the very reason that the past is reconstructed through the use of different sources and information. This level becomes critical as students need the ability to put different information together to make interpretation and meaning.

Level 6: Evaluation – Evaluation, the last of the six, is concerned with the ability to judge the value of material (statement, novel, poem, research report) for a given purpose. The judgments are to be based on definite criteria. These may be internal criteria (organisation) or external criteria (relevance to the purpose), and the student may determine the criteria or be given them. Learning outcomes in this area are highest in the cognitive hierarchy because they contain elements of all of the other categories, plus conscious value judgments based on clearly defined criteria. History as a subject is very subjective (Burston, 1927). This is because historical materials are written by people who have different philosophy and from diverse backgrounds and these backgrounds as well as philosophical orientations tend to affect their perspectives on the historical events that they write. It is, therefore, the place of the History student to recognise these subjective tendencies by comparing several historical materials

on any event that they study. Evaluative skills therefore become critical.

Affective Domain

Krathwohl et al., (1964) proposed a five level taxonomy of the affective domains which is also arranged in a hierarchy according to complexity.

Level 1: Receiving – Receiving refers to the learner's awareness of the topic, stimuli, event or issue and is willing and ready to learn about it or respond to it. That is, the learner's willingness to attend to particular phenomena of stimuli (classroom activities, textbook, music, etc.). From a teaching standpoint, it is concerned with getting, holding, and directing the learner's attention. Learning outcomes in this area range from the simple awareness that a thing exists to selective attention on the part of the learner. It follows therefore that in order to progress in the taxonomy; a learner must be aware of and attend to the issue or event in question. Where the learner fails to receive information, progress on affective hierarchy becomes stocked. A common example of this level of affective learning is History class attendance and concentration during classes at school. During the process of “receiving”, the learner comes across new ideas and makes effort to understand them.

Level 2: Responding – Responding is concerned with the active participation on the part of the learner. At this level he or she does not only attend to a particular phenomenon but also reacts to it in some way. Learning outcomes in this area may emphasize acquiescence in responding (reads assigned material), willingness to respond (voluntarily reads beyond assignment), or satisfaction in responding (reads for pleasure or enjoyment). For example, a History student obeys class rules and regulations, complies with teacher's instructions and participates in History class activities as required.

Level 3: Valuing - Valuing is associated with the worth or value a student attaches to a particular subject, object, phenomenon, or behaviour. Valuing is based on the internalisation of a set of specified values, but clues to these values are expressed in the student's overt behaviour (Olatunji, 2013). At this level, the learner voluntarily manifests behaviours that are consistent with certain beliefs. For example, when a learner demonstrates kind gestures towards others, comes punctually to school, does and submits assignment as and when due. Students demonstrate “valuing” when they consistently prioritize time effectively to meet academic obligations (Gronlund & Brookhart, 2009). This variable becomes critical in History education because how students value the subject History will inevitably relate to the inputs they make in the learning of the subject. It has been reported severally that students do not value the History subject because of perceived lack of job opportunities for History graduates (e.g. Dwarko, 2007; Cobbold & Oppong, 2010).

Level 4: Organisation - Organisation is concerned with bringing together different values, resolving conflicts between them, and beginning the building of an internally consistent value system. Thus, the emphasis is on comparing, relating, and synthesising values. Learning outcomes may be concerned with the conceptualization of a value (recognises the responsibility of each individual for improving human relations) or with the organisation of a value system (develops a vocational plan that satisfies his or her need for both economic security and social

service).

Level 5: Characterisation - Characterisation relates to a value or value set” and this occurs when a student's behaviour is consistent and predictable as if it has been adopted as a life-style (Gronlund, 1991). In other words, the student has internalised the values to the extent that they characterise him or her as the person's attitude. The individual has a value system that has controlled his or her behaviour for a sufficiently long time for him or her to develop a characteristic “life-style.” Thus, the behaviour is pervasive, consistent, and predictable. Learning outcomes at this level cover a broad range of activities, but the major emphasis is on the fact that the behaviour is typical or characteristic of the student. The issues discussed in the analytical framework informed the discussion of the results.

Methodological Approach

This study was conducted on the qualitative research paradigm. The basic inputs for analysis in the study were data collected from selected level Four hundred (400) students in the University of Cape Coast. The use of these students was informed by the fact that they have studied the subject History for long, and were, therefore, in a position to share opinion on all the levels in the analytical framework more than level One (100) or Two (200) hundred students would share. Random sampling technique was used to select 16 (8 males and 8 females) students into focus groups. The proceedings of the fora were recorded as audio tapes and transcribed for making meanings for the discussion.

Results and Discussion

The discussion is done within the framework adopted for the study.

Cognitive Characteristics

In terms of the variables specified in the analytical framework, the study revealed that knowledge traits, to a large extent, characterised students' cognitive abilities. According to the discussants involved in the study, they are more comfortable with issues or questions that demand recall of facts, with few indicating that they prefer application questions that allow them to apply what they have learnt. Though the discussants acknowledged the existence and importance of the other levels of cognition, it became evident that their preference has been occasioned by a number of reasons. These reasons have been described in two ways. The first is related to the nature of the subject which discussants expressed makes them memorise facts for recalling. The following quotes communicate the reason: “The History subject is too abstract that I find it difficult so I always memorise whatever is taught in class”. “The subject involves a lot of dates and factual statements that make me memorise for recalling, especially in examinations.” The second reason was related to pedagogy. According to the discussants, the pedagogical practices of History teachers do not enhance any interactive class sessions that enable them to participate during instructional time. This, they noted, do not allow them to ask questions to further clarify issues they do not understand. One discussant summarised this as: “The History lecturers always lecture, give notes for us to copy and do not allow us to even ask questions. So the things we are taught are not understandable so

we just memorise for examination.” This implies that the nature and the methods of teaching the subject have made them appreciate recalling of information at the level of the taxonomy. As Larsson, Booth and Matthews (1998) indicate students engage in note taking for the purpose of passing the examinations which, certainly as far as History is concerned, is the regurgitation of factual knowledge. As a follow up question, they were asked how they saw and handled examination questions that demanded application, analysis and evaluation of certain historical information. To confirm their earlier submission, they noted that the kind of questions that were asked in their examinations further made them memorise whatever they were taught for recalling. A discussant was very emphatic: “You know what, the questions they [lecturers] ask only ask you to reproduce what they taught you. Any attempt to write them the way you understand them, I bet you they would mark you down.”

One could reasonably argue that students’ cognitive abilities are dependent or shaped by conditions outside them [students] which relate to the subject being studied and classroom practices. Thus, the students felt that the single most important factor that influences their cognitive characteristics is shaped by the subject and its teaching. One could reasonably conclude that, the use of small groups and other appropriate methods for instructional purposes are rare and student presentations are limited. Classroom proceedings focus on the teacher, who elaborates at length in a final lesson. The blackboard is used to enhance teacher explanation and to aid note taking by students. Few questions are raised by either teacher or students (Rohlen & Le Tendre, 1996).

The finding on this issue further contributes to the debate on the discourse that History is learnt by memorisation (Oppong, 2013). This suggests that there is no difference in students’ opinions in the study and what the literature says on how students study History. Contrary to the ubiquitous optimistic belief that History as a subject demands higher order thinking skills such as application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, it appears that History students in this study seem to operate at a lower cognitive level with regard to historical reasoning. If these students view the study of History mostly as memorisation and recalling, then they are operating at what Hallam (1970) describes as the concrete operational level of thinking in Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory. According to Hallam, such students possess the ability to give organized answers, yet very often their responses are limited to what is immediately apparent in the text. Given this, it means that History students deny themselves of the development of other important intellectual skills, such as critical thinking and imaginative skills that the study of History seeks to give to those who study it. In a similar disposition, the relevance of the other higher levels as conceptualised in the framework for the study of History would also be missing in appreciating the past. It is necessary, therefore, that teachers guide students beyond this threshold to the point where they could move past historical dates to engage in deeper probing about the meaning of the events associated with historical dates and places (Joseph, 2011). This would help History students develop high intellectual abilities for the study of History, and also apply them in their later lives. This is because History makes significant cognitive demands on young people. It requires students to explore time scales longer than

their own lives, connect with complex political and religious ideas, and immerse themselves in lifestyles far removed from their own experiences (Taylor & Young, 2003).

Affective Characteristics

The focus group discussions show that affective characteristics also play critical roles in the study of History. For instance, on the element of receiving, the results show that the History students used in the study admitted their awareness of the History topics to be treated on semester basis but attendance at lectures and concentration are not appreciable in their case. They noted that this position is triggered by instructional practices related to teaching. This quotation is illustrative:

“We are given course outlines at the beginning of the semester and that gives us an overview of what we are going to treat for the semester. But some of us don’t attend lectures often, however, when we attend concentration is not all that good. The reason is that, how the History lecturers teach is so boring that you don’t wish to go for lectures. They just lecture and dictate notes which don’t make the class exciting for concentration.”

Obviously, this attitude of students is worrying.

In relation to responding, the discussion revealed that the students show commitment to certain activities required of them relative to institutional requirement. The following quotes are explanatory: “I do class assignments, quizzes, exercises because these would be used for grading,” “I participate in those activities that would be used for determining my grade.” It is obvious from these responses that students’ actions at this level of the affective domain are not voluntary but dependent on University’s policies and how it would affect their academic progress. It means that certain class activities that are not considered as part of scoring points for students are not participated by students. It is against this situation that some educationists have suggested that other class activities such as discussions, conduct, among others, must be scored. This, they believe would shape students’ attitude towards their profession in their later lives (Oppong, 2013).

With respect to valuing, the results showed that students do not have internalised values that reflect in their overt behaviours towards the subject. Respondents indicated that they do not place any value to the study of History. This assertion was made in comparable terms with other subjects they study. It was evident that they attached much seriousness to other subjects more than History because of earlier reasons articulated. “I like studying my other courses more than History because after all History is not so much important to me,” “Because of how the subject is and how it is being handled I don’t really attach any seriousness to it and it is obvious.” These observations indicate that the learners noted mainly the nature of the subject and how the subject is being delivered in class as reasons that do not make them value History. This finding corroborates several studies and comments that the nature and instructors practices regarding History make the subject not appealing to students (e.g. Marwick, 2001; Cobbold & Oppong, 2010; Dwarko, 2007).

The issue of organisation of students’ affective characteristics was not different from the responses on valuing. Clearly, the respondents did not demonstrate anything, during the discussions, in relation to organisation as conceptualised in the

framework. Indeed, there was a clear admittance that they do not accept responsibility for their own behaviour. This is because they explain that their behaviour towards the subject have been as a result of factors related to the subject and its implementation. It also emerged that the students did not prioritise time effectively to meet the needs of the subject, which demands extensive reading from many sources. Finally, responses on characterisation as captured in the framework show that History students in the study rely on lecture notes when studying History. Group studies were noted as something that was practised. The following quotes communicate their intents: “my style has been that I read only the lecture notes for exams and so I don’t go for any group discussion,” “The lecturers expect us to reproduce what they have given, so I rely only on the lecture notes.” These imply that the value system that controls their behaviour is what they are expected to do in an examination which has become characteristic of the students.

Conclusions and Implications

Following the discussion in this paper, it can be deduced that History students' cognitive characteristics relative to their study of the subject is identified at the level of knowledge as captured in the framework. This suggests that the students are likely to be engaged in recall of historical facts without examining historical facts as it requires of them. The affective characteristics of the students could be summarised as not appreciative since it was evident that their approach and how they value the subject History is not what is expected. Obviously, the students do not have a favourable attitude or interest, and do not value the subject. However, Popham (2011) argues that the reasons such affective variables such as students' attitudes, interest and values are important are because they typically influence future behaviour. He highlights further that it is necessary to promote positive attitudes towards learning because students who have positive attitudes towards learning today will be inclined to pursue learning in the future. This means that such students are likely to drop the subject in their later years in school.

There is a clear assumption that affective learning is a by-product of cognitive learning. The reason is that students' articulation that they memorise whatever they are taught for examination purpose and not necessarily for proper understanding for later use is a confirmation of how they feel and behave towards the study of the History subject. For this reason, it is argued that affective learning outcomes do not need to be indicated, taught, or assessed separately. Furthermore, it is maintained that there are in fact, close parallels between Bloom's taxonomy for the cognitive domain and Krathwohl, et. al's taxonomy for the affective domain (Smith & Regan, 1999) and because of this, special attention should not be given to the affective domain. The crux of the argument is that within a learning environment, if the implementing agents adequately process the inputs into the system, the desired output can be attained.

On pedagogical practices, the call here in this paper is not different from several others on History instructional practices articulated by many scholars in History education (e.g Marwick, 2001; Cobbold & Oppong, 2010; Dwarko, 2007,

Shemilt, 2000). It became clear from the results that students' cognitive characteristics have been occasioned, largely, by how the subject is taught, which does not engage students actively. This implies that students would be more involved in the use of higher order thinking skills if the curriculum is transacted more interactively, which would allow students to question historical facts and further engage in analysis and evaluation of historical events. Regarding assessment, the conclusion and the two-dimensional taxonomy emphasizes the need for assessment practices to extend beyond discrete of knowledge to focus on more complex aspects of learning and thinking. Such assessment practices will not only discourage memorisation in History but it will also help students to develop higher intellectual skills, which the disciplinary canons dictate.

REFERENCES

1. Anderson, L.W. (1981). *Assessing Affective Characteristics in Schools*. Ally & Bacon, Boston
2. Birbeck, D & Andre, K (2009). *The affective domain: beyond simply knowing*. ATN Conference, RMIT University.
3. Bloom B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay Co Inc.
4. Burston, W. H. (1972). *Principles of history teaching*. London: Methuen Education.
5. Byrne, B. M. (1984). The general/academic self-concept nomological network: A review of construct validation research. *Review of Educational Research*, 54, 427 – 456.
6. Cobbold, C. & Oppong, A. C. (2010). Re-echoing the place of History in the school curriculum. *International Journal of Educational Leadership* 3(3).
7. Cobbold, C. & Oppong, A. C. (2010). Assessing instructional resources and methods of teaching history in senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana. *International Journal of Educational Leadership* 3(3).
8. Dwarko, D. A. (2007). History-The ailing subject: The need for revival in the 21st century. In D. E. K. Amenumey (pp.167-178). *Challenges of Education in Ghana in the 21st Century*. Woeli Publishing Services. Accra.
9. Gerlaugh, k. Thompson, L. Boylan, H and Davis, H (2007). National Study of developmental education 11: Baseline data for community colleges. *Research in Developmental Education*, 20 (4), 1-4.
10. Gronlund, N. E., & Brookhart, S. M. (2009). *Writing instructional objectives* (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
11. Hallam, R. N. (1970). Piaget and thinking in history. In M. Ballard (Ed.), *New movements in the study and teaching of history* (pp. 163–178). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
12. Huberman, A. M. (1983). School improvement strategies that work: Scenarios. *Educational leadership*, 41(3), 23-27.
13. Jensen, A. R. (1998a). Adoption data and two g-related hypotheses. *Intelligence*, 25, 1–6.

14. Joseph, S. (2011). What are upper secondary school students saying about history? *Caribbean Curriculum* 18, 2011, 1–26.
15. Krathwohl, D.R., Bloom, B.S. & Masia, B.B. (1964). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook 2: The Affective Domain*. London, Longman, Green and Co Ltd.
16. Larsson, Y., Booth, M & Matthews, R. (1998). Attitudes to the teaching of history and the use of creative skills in Japan and England: A comparative study. *A Journal of Comparative Education*. 28(3).
17. Marwick, A. (2001). *The New Nature of History: knowledge, evidence, language*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.
18. Matarazzo J. (1972). *Wechsler's Measurement and Appraisal of Adult Intelligence*. 5. New York: Oxford University Press.
19. Miller, M. (2005) "Learning and teaching in the affective domain", in Orey, M. (Ed.) College of Education eBook University of Georgia, Athens
20. Olatunji, M. O. (2013). Teaching and Assessing of Affective Characteristics: A Critical Missing Link in Online Education. *Middle Eastern & African Journal of Educational Research*, 3(2), 14-27
21. Popham, W.J. (2011). *Classroom Assessment: What teachers need to know*. Boston, M.A: Pearson.
22. Ripple, R.E. & Rockcastle, V.N. (Eds.) (1964). *Piaget rediscovered. A report of the conference on cognitive studies and curriculum development*. Cornell University: School of Education.
23. Rohlen, T.P. & LE Tendre, G.K. (Eds) (1996) *Teaching and Learning in Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
24. Saxon, D. P., Levine-Brown, P. & Boylan, H. R. (2008). Affective assessment for developmental students, part 1. *Research in Developmental Education*, 22(1), 1-4.
25. Shemilt, D. (2000). The caliph's coin: The currency of narrative frameworks in History teaching. In P. N. Stearns, P. Seixas, & S. Wineburg (Eds.), *Knowing, teaching, and learning History: National and international perspectives* (pp. 83-101). New York: New York University Press.
26. Smith, P.L., & Ragan, T.J. (1999). *Instructional design*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc
27. Snow, R.E. & Yalow, E. (1982). Education and intelligence. In R.J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Handbook of Human Intelligence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
28. Sternberg, R. (1993). *Thinking and problem solving: Handbook of perception* (2nd Ed.). Burlington, MA: Academic Press
29. Tamir, P. (1985). A meta-analysis of cognitive preference and learning. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 22, 1-17.
30. Taylor, T & Young, C. (2003). *Making history: A Guide for the Teaching and Learning of History in Australian Schools*. Australia: Curriculum Corporation
31. Zohar, A. (2004). *Higher order thinking in science classrooms: Students learning and teachers' professional development*. Nether land: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

AUTHOR

Charles Adabo Oppong– BEd (Hons), MPhil (curriculum Studies), University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana, kindtheman@yahoo.co.uk, c.oppong@rocketmail.com
+233244566764