

Sensitivity of Gifted Students at University

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Abstract

The study aimed to determine the degree of hypersensitivity of gifted students at Al Ain University and how it differs regarding variables of gender (male, female) and class (fifth, seventh). The study sample comprised (62) male and female students. (30) male students (13 fifth grade and 17 seventh grade), and (32) female students (19 fifth grade and 13 Seventh grade). The study used the descriptive method through a questionnaire prepared by the two researchers to collect data. The findings showed that the degree of sensitivity of gifted students was average or high. The findings also showed that there was a difference with statistical function attributed to gifted students in favor of males and that there were no differences with statistical function attributed to class variable (fifth, seventh). The study came up with several recommendations.

Keywords- Sensitivity of Gifted Students

Introduction

Developed countries has recently realized that the gifted and distinguished students constitute one of the pillars of development that is why they paid great attention to them. Therefore, they created educational programs that fit and develop their potentials. The countries also looked into the qualities of the gifted

problems, and the ways in which they were brought up. The countries also paid greater attention to the methods of caring for them educationally, psychologically, socially, and vocationally. Like the developed countries which showed great interest in the gifted and distinguished, Arab countries also paid greater attention to this group of people as seen in the numerous programs created for them and demonstrated in Arab Strategy for talent and creativity 2009 (Sroor, Al-uweidi, 2013). In the United Arab Emirates, teaching the gifted is one of the foremost priorities, though such a kind of teaching is relatively new in the Emirates. Despite this, a need for programs for the gifted in the Emirates is essential. The national plan of sponsoring the talented might be considered an ideal framework for programs planning and implementing in the coming five years. The national plan for sponsoring the talented in the country was based on the most recent practices in teaching the talented. It might be a referral framework that orchestrates all practices and efforts to reinforce and sponsor the talented (National plan for Sponsoring the talented, 2018). Several problems related to the talents of the gifted might lead the most threatening issue their feelings such as frustration, social alienation and extreme fear. The researchers will tackle in what follows some emotional and social problems from which the talented suffer and might eventually lead to their disappointment, ability regression, or talent perish. Thus, such problems have to be identified in order to assist in understanding the talented and the way of offering suitable help to them (Maureen Neihart, 2002).

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Gifted children are one of the groups that are more susceptible to psychological and social problems. Such problems and challenges start the minute the talent is discovered in children or adults. Therefore, the need to determine such social and emotional problems become urgent and important (Renzulli, 1991). Several studies on education unravelled terrible scientific facts caused by neglecting such talented. Al-Suroor study (2001) pointed out that 20% of such students suffer from psychological and emotional problems. Literature on education has been concerned with these problems. Jarwan (2013) sorted out problems of the talented into three categories: cognitive, Vocational, and emotional from which hypersensitivity emerged. In general, talented students show hypersensitivity toward family, school, and social environment. They very often show sorrow or joy in situation which sound normal to ordinary students. Most of the talented react in a very severe emotional way in response to situations to which they are exposed. Consequently, they suffer from problems in school, home, and with colleagues. Feeling just that they are different arouses in them doubts about their being right, especially when the behaviour goes beyond norms for it might be interpreted as delinquent or unreasonable. The stronger and more sensitive emotions of the talented person are, the more sneering the colleagues and teachers will be (Jarwan, 2007).

Significant Problems:

1.2.1 Hypersensitivity: The gifted student suffers from self-criticism; he is a keen observer of his deeds and behavior. He psychologically suffers when he commits mistakes and always bears the burden of mistakes done by others. Sometimes the talented might feel to be unjustly treated by the society. Worse than that, they feel that the society ignores them exposing them to a high level of disappointment (Maureen Neihart, 2002). Which reflects one of the most apparent aspects which reflects behavioral hyper-sensitivity is the emotional development of the talented and the distinguished. Satisfying the emotional needs such as: withdrawing from a certain situation, showing respect for others' feelings, fear from the unknown, anxiety and depression, sinful feeling, selfpunishment, and feeling of inefficiency, are essential for the guidance of the talented and distinguished. This is an important process for the sound emotional development which help prevent emotional problems from affecting their talent (Al-Iqbali, 2018).

1.2.2 Idealism and Search for Perfection: The quality of perfection for the talented is similar to the erection of a multi-dimensional building. This quality of perfection is composed of compound ideas and behaviors associated with the high expectations the talented students expects from himself and from others. The search for perfection leads to misadaptability of the talented who put for themselves sublime norms and expectations that don't match with their capabilities to achieve such high levels. They always wish to achieve the perfect and distinguished which creates for them cases of anxiety that mostly lead to frustration (Gross, 2000). The

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search for perfection maybe considered a type of behavior represented through a reckless search to achieve the impossible. Here, the talented measure their identity value by what they achieve. Their search for distinction might be viewed as a tool for self-punishment which leads to grievous consequences, being one of the most serious factors leading to frustration (Al-Lala, 2013).

1.2.3 High Expectations: Parents of the talented always expect their sons to excel in several fields of achievement. Such a thing perplexes the talented and hinders their development. In addition, the pressures enforced by the family lead to other pressures resulting from the feeling of the talented that they couldn't meet their parents' requirements of high performance. This, in turn, leads to an exaggerated feeling of failure, in addition to a negative evaluation of their achievements.

1.2.4 Social Isolation: Social isolation of the talented is often associated with those sufferings from gloomy moods mostly lead to frustration levels of social isolation. These are usually higher with those enjoying high levels of talent, as classified by Hollingroth who determined intelligence average to be more than 160. The gifted are exposed to several social problems, the most significant of which is social isolation, specifically when such gifted were exposed to acceleration programs for ages between 4-9 (Gross, 2000). What preceded emphasizes the importance of meeting the psychological and social needs of the gifted. These can be achieved through educational programs, in addition to ones for guidance to meet such needs. Eventually, they will be protected from the problems to which they might

be exposed. There are programs which proved to be effective (programs for: teaching thinking, Self-development, communication skills, and ones for leadership, etc.). All these support development of personality of the gifted. They also help them to socially adapt themselves to others side by side with academic programs. All the previously mentioned programs qualify the talented person to be an active member in the society, selfsatisfied, and live in harmony with the world around him. Thus, the support that the gifted student receives from the surrounding environment (his family) or the outside (the school) help him to play an active role in reducing intensity of frustration to which he has been exposed and help him as well in adaptation. Therefore, educators and researchers must take serious and constant steps to reinforce relation between family and school. This secures support for the talented in different contexts that fulfill their emotional and social needs. They also qualify them to proceed toward success and achievement.

1.3 Problem of the Study

The concern with the gifted and distinguished increases day by day as they are one kind of human wealth. The increasing need to discover this group, take care of it, guide it in order to develop their abilities and benefit their societies (Jarwan, 2013). Psychological studies reveal that the gifted have certain qualities: physical, mental, social or emotional. Undoubtedly, recognizing these qualities help the concerned to identify their talents and distinguish them from their peers. They

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also help in creating the suitable environment to develop their abilities (Zaitoun&Ellala, 2019). Like other societies, the Emirate society is rich with talented students. This required people in charge of educational process to put down programs that develop and consolidate their abilities and provide them with the best surfaces via programs executed throughout the school year. The researcher, being a supervisor, trainer and teacher of the gifted students, noted that through direct training and discussions aroused by them they were more sensitive and more emotional than ordinary students. Most of them react with excessive emotions against the stances they encounter. To the knowledge of the two researchers, no such study that discussed the level of hypersensitivity of the gifted students in Ein City was conducted. Due to our belief that the talented should be given comprehensive services, we conducted this study. Thus the problem of the study lies in its attempt to determine the degree of hypersensitivity of the talented students in the fifth and seventh grade from the perspective of the students themselves by means of answering the following questions: 1.4 Questions of the Study: 1. What is the degree of hypersensitivity that the gifted students at Ein city have? 2. Are there differences with statistical significance at the function level ($\alpha \leq 0.5$) in the level of hypersensitivity for the gifted at Ein city attributed to gender variable (male, female)? 3. Are there differences with statistical significance at the function level ($\alpha \leq 0.5$) in the level of hypersensitivity for the gifted at Ein city attributed to class variable (fifth,

Seventh)? The objectives include the following: 1- To identify hypersensitivity of the gifted students at Ein city and whether the talented children actually have hypersensitivity and of what size is it? 2- To identify the difference of hypersensitivity between the talented with regard to class variable (fifth, seventh). 3- To identify the differences of hypersensitivity of the gifted at Ein with regard to the variable of gender (male, female).

- Time limitation: the study was conducted during the second semester 2019 – 2020.
- Space limitation: the study was confined to public and private schools at Ein City, UAE

1.7 Terminology of the Study:

- Gifted student: he is the one who is academically distinguished in school and scored 90% or above in more than four successive semesters, in addition to his teacher's attitude that the student is gifted.

- Hypersensitivity: it is the instigator of the talent characterized by a set of characteristics the foremost of which is sentimental participation extreme love or hatred, clinging to ideals, self-awareness, and enthusiasm in performing duties with full indulgence. It consists of five bases: (psychological, dynamic, sensational, mental, and imaginary). It is called excessive psychological excitement whose significance is seen in mental activation away from the customary (Dakhil, 2015). Procedure wise it is defined as the total degree the respondent gains through answering the paragraphs set to be measured.

2. Literature Review:

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Al-Iqbali (2018) investigated the degree of hypersensitivity for the talented at Al-Laith governorate with regard to the variables of study level and gender. The study used the descriptive method via a questionnaire prepared by the researcher for collecting data. The sample comprised (120) of gifted students. The results showed that the degree of sensitivity for the gifted students rated average; they also showed that there were no differences with statistical significance pertaining hypersensitivity relevant to study level and gender. The study of Hawwash (2012) aimed to determine, from the perspective of the gifted students, in Aqaba city, the level of problems they encounter. It also aimed to determine the influence of such problems on the variables of gender and age. The study comprised (107) male and female students of that city. The results showed that the syllabus was not challenging for the gifted students; the problems related to high expectations of the students came next, then problems of inadaptability to schools, and the problems related to fear of failure came last. Zahlooq (2001) in a field study investigated the status, problems, and needs of the gifted at Damascus university. The sample of the study comprised (311) male and female students: (155 gifted and 156 non-gifted). The results showed that there were differences related to specialization of science major and gender in favor of females. In addition, the results revealed a higher cultural, social, and economic levels for families of the gifted when compared to those of the non-gifted. The results also showed that the gifted were in need for special things the top of which was scientific achievement.

The study of Mansi (2003) aimed to determine the most important health problems from which students with high creative abilities at the intermediate level suffer. The sample comprised (500) male and female students. The results showed that there were special problems related to the creative students (isolation, introversion, absent mindedness, uncommon and unacceptable ideas, feeling of frustration for failure, skepticism, perplexity, and mistrust). Mahasni (2001) conducted a study on a sample consisting of (1499) male and female distinguished students-ten graders and first secondary-joining programs for the distinguished. The results showed that the most important needs and problems of the distinguished were: procrastination, and non-challenging courses. The findings also showed that there were differences with statistical function in the needs and problems between the distinguished students joining educational programs for the distinguished and the non-distinguished in seven fields and in the overall grade. The differences were in favor of the non-distinguished in seven fields: fear of failure, parents' inability to take decisions, and self-understanding. As for the search for perfection and the non-challenging courses, these were in favor of the distinguished. Garland Study (1991) aimed at determining the emotional and behavioral problems of the gifted youngsters with high mental abilities. The results revealed that the scores of talented adolescents, according to measurements of emotional and behavioral problems, were good. They also

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showed that the gifted with high mental abilities had fewer problems than the gifted with average mental abilities.

Recommendations

- To care for the psychological health of the gifted through activating the role of the education supervisor in schools of the gifted and normal schools which provides programs for the gifted.
- To hold establishment workshops for teachers to tackle qualities of the gifted (social, psychological, and educational) so as to deal with them in a scientific and correct manner.
- To hold workshops for families of the gifted to tackle their qualities and ways of dealing and to interact with them in a positive manner to reinforce elements of might and to treat their weaknesses.
- To show concern with curricula given to the gifted and to provide database to enrich school topics to which the gifted resort to increase their knowledge of the subjects they need.

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