



IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS THROUGH THE LITERATURE

K. Ketheeswaran, S. Kugamoorthy, K.D.R.L.J. Perera, B.G.H. Anuruddhika, H.D.C Priyadharshani, D.M.G. Ranasinghe, Rajeeka Jenorge, K.A.C.Alwis, Anoma Ariyaratne*

Faculty of Education, The Open University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

INTRODUCTION

In Sri Lanka, the school system gives attention to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). But unfortunately, the school system does not pay enough attention to gifted and talented students in the classroom who are also considered SEN students. Teachers and educators think since they are gifted, they are able to be successful on their own. Therefore, teachers do not consider gifted and talented students as children with SEN. However, the literature on gifted and talented indicates that, although it is perceived by the wider community that these students are strong enough to survive on their own, many students labeled gifted do not make it on their own. This is because intellectual development is a dynamic process between the interaction of genetic patterns and environmental opportunities. Therefore, the gifted students, like all other students, need challenges presented to them by their educational experience at a level appropriate with their ability and development (Clark, 2008). Issues such as inadequate curriculum, unsupportive educators, social and emotional difficulties, peer pressures, and inadequate parenting can extinguish the potentially high accomplishment of gifted children and adolescents (Lassig, 2009). Finally, such children may end up as school dropouts. Thus, gifted, and talented students should be considered as SEN. Therefore, the importance of identifying and supporting them to develop their full potential in their early years of school is very much important. As such, the long-term main aim of this study is to get in-depth information on how to adapt developed screening tools to use in the Sri Lankan context to identify gifted and talented students in primary classrooms by reviewing literature.

METHODOLOGY

Aim of the Study:

The long-term aim of this study is to get in-depth information on how to adapt developed screening tools to use in the Sri Lankan context to identify gifted and talented students in primary classrooms.

The Objectives of the Study:

There are two specific objectives of this study.

To identify the nature of gifted and talented students and

To identify the theoretical models of giftedness

Accordingly, document analysis was followed to conduct this study. The first phase of the study was mainly based on the literature review data collection. Accordingly, the literature review was conducted from sources such as Books, e-Books, Journals, e-Journals, and nationally and internationally accepted documents, etc. The collected literature was analysed using the content analysis technique. The analysed data is presented in a descriptive manner.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Characteristics of Giftedness



Generally, identified characteristics of gifted students appear to be positive by nature. Those indicators mostly show positive facets of a student's aptitude, such as explaining their ability to produce original ideas, be self-directed, pose original ideas and questions, and so forth. However, sometimes extreme examples of characteristics can be viewed less favourably in different social or educational situations.

Cathcart (2005) has adapted a list of characteristics of exceptionally able children as distributed by the US Office of Education. The list includes a wide range of behaviours and abilities, each beginning with the phrase "exceptionally able children often: ..." (p. 17). Many of the skills are comparative with students who are not gifted, for example, gifted students learn basic skills better and with less practice; they are better able to handle abstract ideas or are better at working independently and sustaining concentration for longer periods.

Moltzen (2004) has compiled lists of characteristics according to six major domains, including general intellectual, creative, leadership, specific academic, visual, and performing arts, and psychomotor abilities. The general intellectual abilities list is divided into two domains, reflecting both cognitive and affective characteristics.

Moltzen (2004) suggests that schools use a list compiled by McAlpine and Reid (1996) as a starting point for defining the characteristics of gifted children. The author clearly states that "no one gifted student is likely to possess all the following characteristics. It would be possible for a student to show clear evidence of all, or nearly all, the behaviours in one category but few in another". This trend to move away from defining giftedness in terms of a single category acknowledges a more diverse range of special abilities. The five-factor scale encompasses: learning characteristics, social leadership characteristics, creative thinking characteristics, self-determination characteristics and motivational characteristics (McAlpine & Reid, 1996).

Theoretical Models of Giftedness

Renzulli's Three Ring Conception of Giftedness: It is based on the interaction between three basic clusters of three human traits, being above average ability, a high level of task commitment, and a high level of creativity. The model was developed from studies examining the traits of highly successful adults in different fields of achievement (Renzulli, 1986).

Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences: The term 'intelligence' refers to a special ability, talent, or skill which allows a person to maximise their potential by building on the particular strength they demonstrate. The multiple intelligences strongly parallel preferred learning styles or proclivities (Gardner, 1999)

According to Gardner's multiples intelligences theory, every child possesses aspects of all eight intelligences and can develop them to a high level of competence. By the time a child begins school, they will have established ways of learning which tend to favor some intelligences more than others. (Armstrong, 1987)

Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent: The differentiated model of giftedness and talent assumes that the terms 'gifted' and 'talented' are not synonymous and cannot be used interchangeably (Gagné, 2003). Analyses of this model, including dialogue by Page (2006), suggest that it is more a theory of talent development than a definition of giftedness. Sometimes considered as an extension or development of Renzulli's (1986) Three ring model of giftedness, Gagné (1993) argues that a child's natural abilities in a range of domains constitute 'giftedness'.

It was repeatedly stated in the above literature that gifted and talented children from various disadvantaged groups (such as students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, minority cultures, ethnical minorities, or other special students who do not demonstrate their giftedness in classroom situations) who are commonly referred to as "gifted underachievers" could not be



properly identified by the normal identity. As a result, the literature on the nature of underachievement, reasons of underachievement, distinct types of underachievers, and ways for identifying them will be examined and analysed in this part.

CONCLUSION

The theoretical data analysis found the definition of giftedness, the characteristics of giftedness, identification of giftedness, identification strategies of giftedness and talented, and common methods in the identification of gifted and talented students such as tests, achievement tests, nomination, and rating scales, etc. Three theoretical models in relation to gifted and talented students have been found through the literature review. Namely, Renzulli's Three-Ring Conception of Giftedness, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, and Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent. It could be concluded that the literature review is the primary strategy for the development of the identification tools for gifted and talented students.

REFERENCES

- Armstrong, T. (1987). *Multiple Intelligences in the classroom*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Cathcart, R. (2005). *They're not bringing my brain out: Understanding and working with gifted and talented learners* (3rd ed.). Hodder Education.
- Clark, B. (2008). *Growing Up Gifted* (7th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Gagné, F. (1993). Constructs and models pertaining to exceptional human abilities. In K. A. Heller, F. J. Mönks, & A. H. Passow (Eds.), *International handbook of research and development of giftedness and talented*, (pp. 233-251). Pergamon Press.
- Gagné, F. (2003). Transforming gifts into Talents: The DMGT as a developmental theory. In N. Colangelo & G. A. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of gifted education* (3rd ed., pp. 60-74). Allyn and Bacon.
- Gardner, H. (1999). *Intelligence reframed: Multiple intelligences for the 21st Century*. Basic Books.
- Lassig, C. (2009). Teachers' attitudes towards the gifted: The importance of professional development and school culture. *Australasian Journal of Gifted Education*, 18(2), 32-42. <https://doi:10.21505/ajge.2015.0012>
- McAlpine, D., & Reid, N. (1996). *Teacher observation scales for identifying children with special abilities*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research, and Palmerston North: Massey University ERDC Press.
- Moltzen, R. (2004). *Characteristics of gifted children*. In D. McAlpine & R. Moltzen (Eds.), *Gifted and talented: New Zealand perspectives* (2nd ed., pp. 67-92). Kanuka Grove Press.
- Page, A. (2006). Three models for understanding gifted education. *Kairaranga*, 7(2), 11-15. <https://doi:10.54322/kairaranga.v7i2.60>
- Renzulli, J. (1986). The three-ring conception of giftedness: A developmental model for creative productivity. In R. J. Sternberg & J. E. Davidson (Eds.), *Conceptions of Giftedness* (pp. 51-92). Cambridge University Press.