

## Identification And Support of Gifted Children and Youth as The Key Priority of Educational Policy

By

**Gulnara Faritovna Gali**

Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

Email: [gulnaragali@mail.ru](mailto:gulnaragali@mail.ru)

**Irina Zinovievna Shakhnina**

Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

**Elena Nikolaevna Zagladina**

Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

### Abstract

**Purpose of the Study:** The relevance of the problem under study is due to the fact that the problem of identifying gifted students is one of the most difficult and interesting aspects of modern pedagogy. The purpose of the article is to identify various types of effective forms and methods of early identification of gifted children and youth.

**Methodology:** The leading approach to the study of this problem is the method of historical and logical analysis of regulatory documents of Russian and foreign governments and research papers of leading scientists connected with educational issues of gifted students' education. In the research a number of social, political, and psycho-pedagogical works are considered. **Results:** The article reveals the role of early identification to help gifted children and youth realize their ability to self-actualization, to the effective realization of their opportunities in the future, and mature professional activity. The author theoretically describes the approaches and methods of the research; the point of view is presented fairly consistently. The results and conclusions are sufficiently substantiated. **Application:** The materials of the article can be useful for teachers, educators, students and a wide range of readers who are involved in the system of working with gifted students. **Novelty/Originality of this study:** In this research, the detailed analysis of identification of gifted children and youth is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

**Keywords:** education, students, identification, giftedness, problem.

### Introduction

Identifying, teaching and developing gifted students, creating conditions for the development of their unique potential has become one of the main directions of education system of any country. Work with gifted students today appears as an important and priority area of educational policy around the world. Particular attention is paid to identifying and developing gifted children and youth, with the ability to build competent forecasts and effective ways to correct the problems that gifted children face (Gali, Shakhnina, Mukhametzyanova, & Chugunov, 2017).

All over the world there are organizations and national associations that develop programs for gifted children, run training courses for teachers with an emphasis on the specific characteristics of gifted children, conduct various activities to identify creative abilities, help children and their parents, coordinate work with gifted children and young people, their parents and teachers. These organizations also test students and monitor training

organizations. Also, the organizations provide financial assistance to gifted children and youth.

The identification of the gifted is one of the key priorities in the field of education in Russia. Nowadays, new talent development centers are opening, new models of mobile children's technology parks are being launched, early vocational guidance projects are being implemented, competitions for young researchers are being held, and much more. In many countries and Russia there are state and public centers for working with gifted (talented) children and youth. These organizations implement the programs and develop recommendations for teachers and parents. Competitive events, Olympiads in various educational subjects, creative thinking contests are held to identify talented young people.

The relevance of the study lies in the early identification of giftedness, and as a result, the creation of optimal conditions for gifted children, taking into account the peculiarities of psychosocial development.

## **Methods**

The methodology used in research is theoretical. The author used methods of analysis of government regulations and generalization of pedagogical experience, collecting data, description and processing the results of research. The research focuses on the following key areas: early identifying of gifted children that involves holding competitive events, tests, Olympiads; conducting surveys for gifted children/youth and their parents; evaluating the results to comprehensively explore the advantages and disadvantages of teaching gifted students.

## **Results**

To develop the abilities of gifted children in the educational process, various teaching methods are used. The most effective method is considered to be individual work. Profile classes are also popular, allowing teachers to use various forms and technologies.

Interactive resources also affect early identification of gifted students. According to the researchers, "the tools that we use in the learning process have changed and multiplied; computers, the Internet, interactive and educational resources and technologies have begun to be autonomous and other ones have emerged" (Abrosimova, Kondrateva, Voronina, & Plotnikova, 2019).

Different methods can be used to observe gifted children and students: "special psychodiagnostic trainings; expert assessment of student behavior by teachers, parents, educators; conducting "trial" lessons in special programs, as well as the inclusion of students in special game and subject-oriented classes; expert assessment of specific products of students' creative activity by professionals; organization of various intellectual and subject Olympiads, conferences, sports competitions, creative competitions, festivals, shows, etc" (Moiseva, 2020).

As mentioned previously, it is very important to identify gifted children in a timely manner. It allows educators to create the conditions for the development of their unique potential. It should be noted that gifted children meet many problems that "they cannot solve without the help of qualified specialists, teachers and psychologists, as well as their parents" (Shcheblanova, 2003). Among such problems are the following: "overcoming learning

difficulties; overcoming the difficulties of personal development, expressed in the problems of communication with peers; insufficient formation of volitional qualities and self-regulation skills, which leads to significant difficulties in professional development” (Moiseva, 2020). The family plays a great role in identification and development of gifted children. Gifted children differ in their behavior and must be understood by their parents. “Parents need to properly understand and provide psychological support” (Dedov, Korobanova, & Krylov, 2019).

Noteworthy is the questionnaire proposed by Andreeva, Yakovleva, Konurkina, Zakharkina and Zhiltsova. To identify gifted youth, the first/second year students were asked questions on the following points:

1. Originality of thinking - the ability to put forward new, unexpected ideas that differ from the widely known, generally accepted, commonplace.
2. Flexibility of thinking - the ability to quickly and easily find new strategies for solving problems, establish associative connections and pass (in thinking and behavior) from one kind of phenomena to others, often differing in content.
3. Productivity, or fluency, of thinking is usually seen as the ability to generate a large number of ideas.
4. Ability to analyze and synthesize. Analysis - linear, sequential, logically accurate processing of information, implying its decomposition into components. Synthesis, on the contrary, is its synchronization, its integration into a single structure.
5. Classification and categorization - mental processes that are of decisive importance in structuring new information, involving the unification of single objects into classes, groups, categories.
6. A high concentration of attention is usually expressed in two main features of the psyche: a high degree of immersion in the task and the possibility of successful "tuning" to the perception of information related to the chosen goal.
7. Memory - the ability to memorize facts, events, abstract symbols, various signs - the most important indicator of giftedness. However, the advantage in creativity is not the one who has more memory, but the one who is able to quickly extract the necessary information from memory.
8. Enthusiasm for the content of the problem, when it is stimulated not by a sense of duty, not by the desire to receive an award, to win a competition, but, first of all, by an interest in the content.
9. Perfectionism is characterized by the desire to bring the products of any activities to meet the highest requirements.
10. Social autonomy - the ability and desire to resist the opinion of the majority.
11. Leadership - dominance in interpersonal relationships, in joint affairs.
12. Competitiveness - a tendency towards competitive forms of interaction. The experience gained as a result of victories and especially defeats is an important factor in the development of personality, tempering character.
13. The breadth of interests. Diverse and time relatively stable interests are not only evidence of giftedness, but also great opportunities and universalism. A breadth of interests is the basis of a diverse experience.
14. Humor. Without the ability to see the funny in a variety of situations, it is impossible to imagine a creative person (Andreeva, Yakovleva, Konurkina, Zakharkina, & Zhiltsova, 2012).

For the assessment the authors use the method of polar points. Each characteristic of a student's potential is assessed on a five-point scale:

- 5 -the assessed personality trait is well developed, clearly expressed, often manifested in various types of activity and behavior.
- 4 - the property is noticeably expressed, but it manifests itself inconsistently, while the opposite property is manifested very rarely.
- 3 - the evaluated and the opposite personality traits in behavior and activity balance each other.
- 2 - personality trait opposite to the one being evaluated is more developed and more often manifested.
- 1 - clearly expressed and often manifests a personality property opposite to the assessed one, it is fixed in behavior and in all types of activity.
- 0 - there is no information to assess this quality.

The method of A.I. Savenkov (2002) is addressed to parents (can also be used by teachers). Its task is to assess the general giftedness of the child by his/her parents. The technique should be considered as additional to the set of techniques for specialists (psychologists and teachers). In this methodology, it is proposed to assess the level of formation of nine characteristics usually observed in gifted children: curiosity, hypersensitivity to problems, ability to predict, vocabulary, ability to assess, ingenuity, ability to reason and think logically, persistence, exactingness to the results of their own activities. The results are evaluated on a 5-point scale and a graph is drawn.

Another technique that deserves attention is the questionnaire proposed by A.A. Loseva (1999) can be used to assess the students' giftedness by teachers and parents. The questionnaire includes the characteristics of 10 spheres where students can show the following abilities: intellectual, academic achievement, creative, literary, artistic, musical, technical, motor, artistic, social. The experts are invited to evaluate the characteristics of these spheres of giftedness manifestation using a four-point system (Loseva, 1999).

Thus, the analysis of research on the problem of diagnostics and development of gifted children and youth showed that "the identification should be associated with the tasks of their education and upbringing." (Grishilova, 2017).

## **Discussion**

It cannot be denied that the specificity of gifted education needs a detailed analysis of upbringing and development of gifted children. Often gifted children are misunderstood and the reaction of parents and teachers to the active cognitive abilities of the child is negative. Active creative abilities can cause neuropsychic excitability, which leads to disorders of appetite, sleep, frequent headaches, restlessness, etc. Untimely medical and psychological correction of these manifestations leads to the development of neuroses and other psychosomatic diseases (Grishilova, 2017).

Even E. Torrens (1962) noted that about 30% of those expelled from schools for inability and academic failure are gifted and super-gifted children. "According to statistics of recent years, the academic performance of 55% of gifted schoolchildren in New York did not correspond to the high level of their cognitive abilities, and 19% of high school students expelled for academic failure were gifted. Later it was revealed that the number of gifted adolescents expelled for academic failure in different states reached 15-30%" (Shcheblanova, 2003). Similar data were published in Canada, Germany, Hungary, Israel, etc.

Many scientists studied the problem of gifted students' identification and

development. In recent years a great amount of research works has been done in this field. Various aspects of the problem of gifted students' identification, development and education are reflected in the scientific work of Russian and foreign researchers: A.A. Kardabnev, N.S. Leytes, D.B. Bogoyavlenskaya, V. Panov, A.I. Savenkov, E.I. Shcheblanova, T.N. Shcherbakova, S. Gardner, G. Harrison, T. Bennett, R. Nordin, M. Mazzocco, C. Weber, L. Stanley and others.

## **Conclusion**

Identifying gifted children is a long-term process that involves not only primary diagnostics, but also an analysis of educational activity (creative process) and its result. The search system for gifted children has its own distinctive features. It is not possible through a one-time testing procedure. It requires using an integrated approach.

The educational process involves not only identifying gifted students, but also taking into account the interests and educational needs of children. For this purpose, a survey of students and parents is carried out in educational institutions.

It is very important to note that the process of identifying gifted children has an ethical aspect. The identification of a child as "gifted" or "not gifted" presupposes some kind of interference in his or her fate, predetermines his or her subjective expectations in advance. Psychological evidence suggests that such labels can have a very negative impact on a child's personal development in the future.

The earlier the identification takes place, the more opportunities to determine the appropriate direction of the child's development. Early detection allows the specialists to avoid or provide timely qualified assistance in psychological development, as well as in adaptation in society. Not only gifted children face with difficulties in the process of growing up, but also their parents, who often react incorrectly to unusual behavior or do not know how to help in difficult situations.

In addition to identifying gifted children, it is also extremely important to pay attention to the special training of teachers. Knowledge of psychological and behavioral characteristics, extraordinary abilities, criteria for socialization in society helps teachers to respond correctly and develop the creative abilities of gifted children.

Consequently, the problem of identifying gifted children should be closely related to the problem of creating conditions for the intellectual and personal growth of students in schools and institutions of additional education.

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