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SCHOOL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ROLE TOWARD
DEVELOPING TALENTED CHILDREN

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Abstract:

Potential characteristic of a gifted and talented personality is influenced by social supports, environment, mentoring methods and educational structure. Children with exceptional talents need platforms and conducive vicinities to grow and develop these gifts. Proper education and professional counselling services could help talented children contribute to their respective communities. The absence of proper educational programs and professional counselling services may lead to loss of academic development, creative potential, appreciable performance, enthusiastic learning success, and substantial social contributions. The variety of services needed to meet the needs of talented children form an important basis of the current study. While there are numerous studies on talented children, no study combines the help of regular classrooms and community toward developing extraordinary talented children. The arguments that many talented children are assisted by school and community are reasonable but defeasible. The study attempts to weigh the contribution of both school and environment towards the development of talented children since a certain number of successful children use their skills, work ethics, and home training to perform excellently in various fields.

Keywords:

Talented, Gifted, Social Supports, Counselling Services

Introduction

Talent management is one of the most powerful investments in recent times in human minds, and it requires monitoring and development for optimal use. This is evident in what could generally be seen as a widespread prevalence in schools, universities and educational incubators. Among the groups of society that affect its growth and renaissance are those who have special preparations and innate characteristics that enable them to think with a deeper dimension than others and reach higher levels than others if they have the opportunity to do so. The talented individuals have the greatest role in the advancement of societies, and possess special characteristics that need environmental support to provide care, guidance and support towards stimulating potentials to achieve the highest possible benefit from the capabilities.

Different challenges enable children to match effort with achievement. Talented children identification has been challenging because of several diversities found among gifted children. Certain characteristics including motivation, intense unusual interest, highly expressive communication skill, effective problem-solving ability, excellent memory, curiosity, swift grasp or insights, logic and reasoning skill, imagination or creativity skill and humour sense skill represent a gifted and talented person (Frasier and Passow, 1994). Talented individuals are extraordinary in leadership, application and problem-solving attributes.

Competition and quality of decision making have increased the interest in talented children studies. Talented children are mostly observed during the childhood stage (Akarsu, 2004), and the probability of losing talented qualities if not properly guided along the adulthood stage is high. The general purpose of schools is to discover each child exceptional qualities in a certain period, hence, children need a higher and greater platform and environment to develop their talented skills.

Talented children need a school and environment that engage them in constructive dialogues toward reviewing and expressing their ideas. The children deserve effective and developing classroom and environmental settings most especially when the available structure and standard ridicule the children needs and expectations. The lack of facilities in the school or environment in providing opportunities for the development of talented children capabilities are factors that prevent the manifestation of talented capabilities. Proper understanding of talented children needs is a debate that provides useful information to teachers, parents, administrators and psychologists. Hence, it is worth considering how environmental and educational programs can develop the potentials, creativity and skills of these children.

The concept of talent is one of the difficult concepts to define in a specific definition, due to the correlation of the concept and its formation according to the values and extent of the progress of societies, and the nature and complexity of their culture. Tannwnbaum provided a complex definition of talent that takes into account social or environmental factors as well as psychological factors. The definition states that "a gifted child is that child who has the willingness or ability to become a product of ideas (in all areas of activities) that would support human life morally, mentally, socially, materially and aesthetically". Hence, it can be said that a talented person is a person who has different capabilities and characteristics from his peers, and who has preparations to be a product of ideas, an actor in society, with an impact and effectiveness.

Characteristics of Talented Person

The talented person is distinguished by a set of characteristics and features that distinguish them from other peers. Cognitive or mental characteristics is one of the most important criteria that distinguish a talented person from others, as talented students have a high mental ability that can appear through obtaining high scores in intelligence tests and achievement tests, they are more attentive and have a higher ability than others in solving problems, they also have more linguistic outcomes than ordinary individuals (Kwaveh and Abdel Aziz, 2015, 42).

Some cognitive characteristics are frequent in the specialized references and include awareness of symbolic systems and abstract ideas, curiosity, independence, focus power, memory strength, fancy reading and interest diversities (Jarwan, 2016). As for the physical characteristics, studies have shown that the talented person often enjoys good health and other physical characteristics such as height and weight above average, as well as a degree of medal and less susceptible to disease compared to other peers (Khasawneh and Al-Khawalidah, 2013).

As for the social and emotional characteristics, researchers such as Hollingworth revealed in their study the social and emotional characteristics of the gifted-talented individuals according to the Stanford-Binet scale that gifted people enjoy early moral exudation, sense of humour, humour, leadership, extreme sensitivity, emotional sharpness, and perfectionism (Jarwan, 2016). They are also committed to carrying out the tasks assigned to them, and talented people are sensitive to the feelings of others and enjoy life and take advantage of their time effectively as they are multi-interest and they are more popular and loving than others (Khasawneh and Al-Khawalidah, 2014, 276 - 275).

Methods

The research aimed to expose the role that could be played by school and environment toward developing talented children. The research used qualitative and phenomenological approaches to gather the materials needed for the study. A qualitative approach was adopted since social situations and particular individual behaviour are involved (Sugiyono, 2011). The phenomenological approach assisted in understanding the targeted individuals. The gathered data in the study include the views and understanding of schools' perspectives toward developing children's multiple talents. Phenomenology studies help describe the situation of individuals (Creswell, 2008), thus was introduced in the current study.

Services Needed from Schools, Teachers and Professionals on Gifted and Talented Person

Catering for gifted and talented children in classrooms is supposed to be a priority in educational provision. While many schools include the needs of gifted and talented students as a policy, they find its implementation challenging (Munro, 2013). Schools are best equipped to realise policy in this area when they implement a multifaceted professional learning program that is referenced on how gifted and talented students learn in the regular classroom (Munro, 2016).

Having a high capacity to learn in and of itself is not sufficient for developing talented outcomes (Munro, 2017). Effective provision for gifted and talented students involves recognising the diversity of gifted learners in terms of the multiple ways of being gifted in the classroom and implementing pedagogy that takes account of this (Munro, 2017). Therefore,

schools must provide opportunities to foster talent development for gifted and talented students for these students to be engaged in learning and to realise their potential.

The identification of high ability students and the implementation of effective classroom provisions that cater to their needs are both strongly related to teacher knowledge and attitudes (Kronborg & Cornejo-Araya, 2018). The first step in evaluating a school's capacity to provide learning opportunities for gifted and talented students is for the school leadership to identify what teachers know about gifted learning and teaching, how they cater for gifted and talented students, and what they need to learn about it (Munro, 2017). Teachers may need up-skilling to identify how these students know and think in the classroom and to modify their teaching and curriculum provision (VanTassel-Baska, & Stambaugh, 2005). This is because professional development opportunities at school will consider what constitutes gifted knowing and thinking, how to assess this, the multiple ways in which students can be gifted, and how to skillfully differentiate teaching and provide appropriate learning opportunities (Munro, 2017).

Contemporary theories of giftedness from a talent development perspective note how the student's learning environment and culture affect whether they form talented outcomes. Recent talent development models (e.g. Gagné, 2010; Perleth & Heller, 1994; Ziegler & Phillipson, 2012) consider the influence of culture on the conversion of a gifted learning capacity to talented outcomes. School leaders who are interested in shaping their schools as "talent developing" organisations need to know how to implement the conditions that can facilitate the talent development process (Munro, 2017). Munro (2017) submitted that teachers need to support the social and emotional development of gifted students.

Despite teachers having an awareness and understanding of some characteristics that they expect to see for gifted students, these do not always consider the multiple ways in which students can be gifted (Munro, 2017). When students strengths or ways of learning are not well understood, this can lead to underachievement and disengagement from classroom learning (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2014). Schools need to provide professional learning opportunities for staff to understand the multiple ways of being gifted to improve identification procedures. Identification procedures will target students who can extend what is taught at school and can make links with ideas beyond what is taught. Therefore, it could be suggested that teachers and school leaders should recommend a psychologist when it is suspected that a student might be twice exceptional.

The Needs of Talented Children

The talented children needs are different from their peers due to their different characteristics, and those needs have been mentioned by many studies, and this is what (Al-Surur, 2018, Jarwan, 2016) indicated that talented people have the most important needs: psychological needs which include the need to recognize their talents, unconditional acceptance, respect for their questions and ideas, and self-understanding, as well as social needs, including the need to form relationships, social integration and interaction with others, acquiring consensual skills and how to deal with stress, educational needs that underlie the need for thinking, experimentation and discovery, self-learning skills, and the need for a special study program. This has expanded the specialized studies in the search for the needs of the various talented people, which are the gateway to talented care institutions to formulate proportional programs and meet those needs.

Guidance for Talented People

Once a talented person moves to the school's arms, it became an obligation to the school to take care of the talented individual following its talent, to be able to develop it to solve problems that the talented might encounter as a result of the talented difference from peers in characteristics and needs, and among the care that the talented person needs, is the guidance that is provided by the family or the school.

Studies have defined mentoring of talented people as a constructive process that aims to help the talented person to understand himself, study his personality, know his experiences, find his problems and develop his capabilities in light of his knowledge, desire, education and training, to achieve goals, personality, educational, professional, family, school and environmental compatibility. It is also known as assisting the talented person in adapting to himself, the curriculum, peers and the community in which the person lives (Qatany and Maadat, 2018, 75).

When a talented person travels among different environments, from a school, home, and community, a talented person must engage and adapt to these environments, in a way that ensures talent growth and protects fading or decay, hence the guidance of talented people, which aims at several things arrive, where studies have sought to shed light on the most important ones, including what was mentioned by (Abu Asaad, 2018, 49-50; Jarwan, 2014, 29) that mentoring the talented individuals seek to develop their self-concept to be more motivated and positive, develop the concept of human relations to be able to engage in society, and also seeks to educate parents about the characteristics and needs of their talented child and how to deal with the talented child. It also seeks to develop the leadership skills of the talented individual, and improve the level of academic and non-academic achievement, and develop skills of problem-solving, decision making, and anxiety reduction techniques.

This indicates that the guidance of the talented person stems from a deep knowledge of the talented characteristics, and that must be built upon sound methods in dealing with it, whether by the administration, environment, teachers and students inside the school or by parents, brothers and relatives at home.

Affective Component of Talent

Talent natural abilities including intelligent, creative, socio-affective and sensorimotor require systematic development. Affective factors are essential elements that determine the excellent performance of individuals (Gagne, 2010). Factors shaping achievement consists of personal and behavioural dispositions brought by individuals to the actual performance. Affective component deliberate over non-intellectual attributes and how it influences an individual's performance. The affective component considers the environment, the relevancy of individuals to the environment, compatibility of individuals to the environment and wants of individuals residing in the environment (Lubinski & Benbow, 2000).

Motivation to invest energy and interest to delve into passionate activities are integrals of the affective component of talent. Renzulli (1986) argued that three major clusters such as general or special high ability, task commitment and motivation forms the concept of talent. Motivation influences willingness, capacity and preference to involve in a particular practice (Bailey & Morley, 2006). Identifying interesting areas to invest energy is also a plausible element to perform excellently (Lubinski & Benbow, 2000). Vocational psychologists categorized

'interest' as the main component of talent that produces extraordinary performance for individuals (Arnold & Cohen, 2008).

Educational Programs Suitable for Talented Individuals

Talented children need different instructional and curricular practices appropriate for their unique nature and skills. The educational system could contribute alongside providing necessary opportunities to talented children in the community. Insufficient knowledge of teachers and academic mentors about the emotional, cognitive and social development priorities of these talented children incapacitates teachers from possessing the expertise of knowing their needs, thus subsequently categorize these talented children as naughty, unsocial or hyperactive children.

A considerable and standardized curriculum beyond the level of other normal developed children would as well promote the children skillfully, productively and professionally. An incompetent, unqualified and unspecialized teacher may be a stumbling block to talented children development. Teachers may use a humanistic approach such as individual needs and goals, differences, cognitive, physical and psychological factors to transform, deepen and expand the curiosity of talented children in the classroom. Teachers may also consider creative task commitment, cognitive and personal social attributes to enhance the learning performance of talented children.

Environmental Contribution towards Developing Talented Children

The current study posits that not all environments would be conducive for nurturing talented individuals since an individual's interest, passion, attitude and ability play a major role in realizing effective results. The performance of every talented individual varies depending on the environment that hosts them. The environment can support talented children by providing activities that boost their motivations and interesting areas.

Socio-economic contexts that form and destroy talent development need to be understood. Poverty can be a significant factor that can delay the realization of talented children. Minority children and poor children may have limited access to social resources, thus negatively affects talent development. Poor and minority children may lack knowledge about how to develop and realize their unique talented gifts because they possess low economic strengths to tap from social supports. Meanwhile, one of the best approaches to support poor and minority talented children is to provide more practical and accessible items. Hence, talent development and academic achievement can be the result of school programs and environmental inputs.

Concluding Thoughts

The present study provides evidence that talented children can be supported through school programs and environmental facilities. The concept of talent was justified, and the most important qualities and needs of talented people were analyzed. The concept and importance of counselling talented children and the most important methods were highlighted. The importance of talented individuals in the community, their role in the development and progress of nations, and the responsibility accrued to the societies for the care of the talented person were analyzed. This pushes the concerned institutions to facilitate the task of instructing school and the environment on the importance of talented children to societal and national growth. This advisory task branched out to reach all who have a direct relationship with the talented children, to invest and activate the talent in a way that reflects on environmental development.

This research also recommends the role of school and environment towards developing talented children in society.

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