

Factors affecting the education of gifted children and the role of digital technologies

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Abstract: Gifted students have certain characteristics, clearly visible most of the time, which differentiate them from the average of their classmates, since having different educational needs, they seek special care and support from their school environment. The school can stand next to these students and differentiated teaching is the most important step in promoting them to pursue their interests, in their socio-emotional development, but also in the utilization of their abilities. The school, although oriented towards the average student, can support gifted students, through differentiated teaching, the use of new technologies and the formation of working groups, to develop their creative and critical thinking and integrate them into the school community.

Key-words: gifted, education, teacher, school, family.

1. Highlights

- The education of the gifted children needs qualified teachers
- The environment plays a crucial role in the education of gifted children
- The role of teacher, school, state and family is important in the education of gifted children

2. Introduction

Charismatic children with special or educational needs have some particular features that are distinct, and therefore, they need a proper and timely diagnosis and the right approach by the teacher himself who is directly involved in the educational process and is in continuous interaction with students. This need is imperative but at the same time complicated when the classroom teacher is confronted with the demands of the environment and has to do everything to draw "effectiveness" of all his students (Trail, 2022).

Charismatic children learn more quickly, deeply and widely than their peers. They can learn to read early and go on the same level as regular children who are older. Charismatic pupils also tend to exhibit a high capacity of reasoning, creativity, curiosity, great vocabulary and excellent memory. They can also understand concepts with a few repetitions. They are perfectionists and often question power. Some pupils have difficulty in communicating with their classmates because of differences in the size of the vocabulary (especially in the early years), personality, interest and motivation. As children, they may prefer the company of older children or adults (Parker & Mills, 1996).

Charismatic students need a space where they can be themselves and feel safe and protected. They need opportunities to learn at their own pace, to deal with things that interest them beyond their knowledge, to go beyond the basics, to study abstract data that require more than just thinking, to work with their peers who share the same interests and abilities, to participate in projects that connect learning to the 'real world'. They need an educational environment that will give them greater freedom of choice and personalization of teaching. They need the opportunity to manifest and fully develop their intellectual potential. Ultimately, they need the greatest opportunities for self-realization (Vouglanis et al., 2022).

Charisma is often not evenly distributed in all intellectual spheres. A charismatic pupil can excel in solving logical problems but has a low linguistic performance. Another may be able to read and write at a very high level, but to have difficulties in math. It is likely that there are different types of talent with their own unique characteristics, as there are different types of developmental delay (Singer et al., 2016).

Charisma can be obvious in people at different developmental points. While early development (i.e. speech or reading at a very young age) is usually associated with charisma, it is not a determining factor (Kitsantas et al., 2017). Finally, both the genetic material of the child and the environment within which the child grows, contribute to the development of charisma.

3. Education of charismatic / gifted children

Observing the course of education over the last hundred or so years at a global level, one can find out that one of the main goals it has been to alleviate class differences and discrimination by providing educational opportunities to all social and economic classes. It was this tendency that led to the introduction of school curricula aimed at single education, but which remain rigid and inflexible in the individual differences, particularities and needs of each child (Rizos, 2011).

Educational issues require a different approach than the one applied in the past. Any educational design needs to take into account modern neuro-physiological and cognitive data as well as data from everyday educational practice (Rizos, 2011). At a European level, initiatives to promote and implement charismatic child support programs have already been launched. Under a 1994 directive, the European Council urges the European Union Member States to implement supportive courses to support these charismatic / gifted children (Sękowski & Łubianka, 2015).

One of the key questions related to the education of charismatic children is whether any extra educational care for these children is in line with the democratic ideals of education (Begin & Gagne, 1994). Educational benefits for gifted children, although moving in a spirit of respect for individual differences, often raise a number of reactions. There is a view that individuals who excel in the mental, aesthetic or psychosocial field will develop their own abilities alone and still have a strong belief that education is the easiest way for them to achieve success, high social status and other benefits. Perhaps this explains the fact that the values that constitute the criteria for shaping educational benefits usually give priority to the average physiologist. This misguided reasoning, despite the dominant educational-social tendency for equal opportunities in education and in life, contradicts the individual rights of gifted and talented children.

The idea of the possibility of education to alleviate any genetic or environmental deficiencies and to balance the differences in experience, preparedness, language, cultural background with the ultimate goal of general equality seems rather ambitious and to a lesser extent responds to what is actually happening. Hopkinson (1978, in Davazoglou-Simopoulou, 1999) on the right of gifted children to develop and utilize their abilities and talents highlights: "The differences between children in learning ability are life events. The differences in children's desire for learning are no less evident. Our feelings about the basic principles of equality, however rich and powerful, must be reconciled with the requirement, which comes from common sense and the concept of justice, that gifted children must be supported to reach the limits of their spiritual horizon. Equality does not derive from educational policy alone, and the essential learning required by justice can be promoted guided by the principle of differentiation of type and degree of talent" (p. 169).

Charismatic children, through systematic processes of harnessing their potential, can easily become active citizens and become valuable human resources that will contribute actively to addressing and resolving critical problems that plague modern society (Renzulli, 1998; Matsagouras, 2008). To this end, the evaluation of a child as charismatic, or non-charismatic, should not function as a perceived performance, but as a predisposition to action and educational action should be directed towards the development of charismatic behaviors by

all children and in particular of those with the greatest potential (Renzulli, 1998). In addition, international experience shows that schools that support charismatic pupils are more effective for all pupils. As Renzulli typically mentions "when the tide goes up, it drifts every boat away with it" (Loxa, 2004, p. 4).

4. The role of the teacher

Initially, the role of the teacher and its contribution to its cultivation of charisma is "protagonist", as it has been mentioned in international literature. Yet, there have been problems in identifying students with some skills, so they can be "stifled" and students stay indifferent to the educational process. For this reason, they need special attention and proper treatment on the part of the teacher, who should have a good knowledge and understanding of specific features. In addition, the academic programs of universities and vocational training help to strengthen those teachers in order to become more flexible and effective (Polychronopoulou & Ranios, 2003). Modern reality, in terms of the academic diversity of all students, comes to add an even greater amount of responsibility to teachers. This is observed because the role of teachers, in general, is critical in classroom management, in mobilizing students in learning processes and enhancing behaviors that contribute to cognitive and socio-emotional development (David, 2011).

The above view is also confirmed by the students of the pedagogical departments who become teachers without, however, paying particular attention to requirements and difficulties and the opportunities they offer to enable them, to properly prepare them to interact effectively with all students are very limited. For this reason, it is advisable for teachers to redefine their role, not to "rest" but to recognize successfully discerning or not discerning students. Then, teachers can implement differentiated programs tailored to individual knowledge, skills and abilities (Veeman, 1984). The above is important, as according to researchers it has been proved that charismatic -creative children make up 2% of the total student population.

Therefore, there are many questions related to the position of the teacher in the classroom, the decisions they have to make depending on what they will teach, the alternatives ways of learning and teaching they must apply at all times. Although these, opinions have been expressed that support the experience that each teacher gains helps them to properly perform educational process and learning. Thus, in order for the teacher to be able to identify the characteristics of students, he must be educated both in and through universities and the school itself. The stimuli they receive from the quality of knowledge, critical thinking and decision making is enough to identify the characteristics of their students in a regular classroom. This presupposes continuous training of teachers to identify timely and validly, after evaluation, the characteristics that charismatic students display, be aware and accept students with special gifts, So long as each teacher recognizes the characteristics of the students he should adopt an independent approach to teaching and learning, so as children not lose interest in the classroom, and are kept "Alert" and spark their interest through creative practices (Piske, 2017; Sayi, 2018).

Further, to develop "flexible strategies" with a view to creating appropriate groups, and most importantly, reward the student for patience, perseverance and the strength, as it is difficult to coexist in a normal classroom. It is important to understand how teachers understand the special needs and potential abilities and skills of students with different academic requirements, and then intervene with them using appropriate educational practices. Indeed, the way the teacher addresses the student, the types of activities he / she will choose as well as the learning environment he creates, are shaped through the mental models that work in the teacher himself (Weber,1999).

At the same time, it is noted that the role of the teacher is very important multi-dimensional, as has been observed from the above. It is based on the ability of the teacher to recognize the child's abilities and to select appropriate programs for their qualitative and comprehensive development. The teacher also has to create a climate of teamwork and personalization teaching, depending, of course, on the requirements of the students in order to

guide them equally and not just provide learning experiences. Very important, in addition, is to develop students' critical and creative thinking, intervene in Joint Curriculum and modify it in terms of content, activities, methods, and teaching context, helping in this way gifted students. Also, the teacher needs to encourage and support their developing students' competences and skills so that they alone can develop and improve as much as they want and can. Finally, it should never be forgotten that children are members of the class and that they need equal treatment of their needs and interests. In this way the teacher understands the students' "human skills" and treats them equally, applying flexible experiential-communication activities. The role of the teacher is basically guiding as well as through all of the above practices leading the student to identify their talents by themselves and, through appropriate activities, to develop their abilities as much as they can (Laine & Tirri, 2016).

5. The role of the school

But the teacher will not be able to do all of the above if he does not have the support of the school. In essence, education systems play their role as far as gifted students are concerned. Primarily, their purpose should be to respect students with certain characteristics and identify ways of dealing with them, providing them with equal learning opportunities and knowledge. At the same time, it provides incentives with alternative ways of learning, working with the classroom teacher, tailoring activities to students' needs and interests. Still, it is very important to create and form groups of students according to the abilities they will themselves want to conquer. Of course, the use of new and technological means is becoming necessary and intentional as students will have the opportunity to deal with creative activities (Hackney, 1981).

Under no circumstances should interdisciplinary intervention be used to enrich the material, because it will be as if the result is a comprehensive development of students' skills. Also, the school has to adapt the educational processes for the purpose of developing students' capabilities. Another important proposal already implemented in some areas - and even in Greece - is the various extracurricular activities during summer, such as camps, that are thematically tailored to the aspects, interests and students' needs, and lastly, it includes independent lessons (Winner, 1996).

The cultivation of students' charisma is also achieved through the state, which must create a flexible legislative and institutional framework to create interdisciplinary groups for gifted students, diagnosing the particular characteristics of students or their talents - and most of all - of course, to provide the appropriate support to teachers and school with the common goal of achieving the cultivation of charisma (Gallagher, 2000).

6. The contribution of the family

At this point it should be noted that all of the above are not to be achieved to the maximum extent possible if one does not yet contribute the key to the happiness of gifted children. The reason for that is the family of each student with a special talent or gift. More specifically, the main concern of parents is to help their child identify a particular interest or gift, a certain inclination and aptitude, as well as quirks that he or she presents and encourage them not to be let drown.

On the contrary, to guide them in such a way as to manifest, cultivate, develop and exploit it in every possible way. Sure, a very important part of this process is the social position of each family and whether the parents themselves can provide for their children the supplies they need. Then, the family should take immediate action working with the entire educational community to provide opportunities to their child (Olszewski-Kubilius et al., 2014).

7. Conclusion

Finally we underline the importance of the digital technologies in education domain and gifted education that is very productive and successful, facilitates and improves the assessment, the intervention and the educational procedures via Mobiles which brings educational activities everywhere [28-37], various ICTs applications which are the core supporters of education [38-73], AI, STEM & ROBOTICS which raise educational procedures into new levers of performance [74-93], and games which transforms the education in a very friendly and enjoyable interaction [94-97]. Additionally the enhancement and combination of ICTs with theories and models of metacognition, mindfulness, meditation and emotional intelligence cultivation [98-142] as well as with environmental factors and nutrition [24-27], accelerates and improves more over the educational practices and results, especially in gifted education domain.

By no means should we forget that charismatic children are children too, who need equal educational opportunities with all students in a class. Indeed, as many researchers have found, the timely detection of these pupils' abilities and their subsequent cultivation can lead to a successful and happy life of these children. Still, one element related to the aforementioned view is that one's personality is influenced by better learning experiences.

In summary, we must not forget that gifted children and, in particular, students are a category of the population with special abilities, educational needs and requirements. That's why they need appropriate factors, acceptance, motivation and encouragement to be able to develop their skills and abilities to the level where they themselves can, and most of all, want to become citizens with values and responsibility.

8. References

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