

The Degree of Teachers and Parents Meet The Special Counselling Needs of Gifted Students in the State of Kuwait

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Abstract

The current study aimed to assess the degree to which teachers and parents meet the special counseling needs of talented students in the State of Kuwait. The study included 50 parents and 50 teachers. To achieve the goal of the study, the researchers developed a scale of meeting the special needs, and it was presented in two versions, one for parents and the other for teachers. The validity and reliability have had been verified. The results of teachers indicated that meeting academic counseling needs ranked first, while meeting family needs ranked last. While the results indicated that the parents' ranked family needs in the first place, and the psychological needs came in the last place. The study recommended the importance of raising awareness of meeting the special needs of gifted students.

Key words: Degree of teachers and parents meet the special counseling needs; Gifted students; The State of Kuwait

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INTRODUCTION

Gifted is the term that most students use to describe students' possession of high abilities or advanced skills

that appear in performance. Gifted students are found in all cultures and in all types of families. Gifted students are born with natural abilities that are much higher than average for their age. Students can be gifted in any area of academic or visible performance abilities, meaning that talent can appear in more than one area. For example, a student may be creatively and intellectually gifted. Or they may have above average physical arts, leadership, music, and memory, or they may have more social and emotional maturity than other students their age. Students can be gifted at different levels as well (Raising Students Network, 2023).

McClain and Pfeiffer (2012) described gifted students as those who possess advanced or high intellectual capacity or have extraordinary performance and achievement. There is still a difference in the procedures for identifying gifted students, as these procedures often differ according to the educational systems, laws or legislation adopted. For example, within the United States students are identified as gifted in different ways (Kennedy and Farley, 2017).

Gifted and talented students are characterized by emotional, behavioral, and personality traits, in addition to mental characteristics that distinguish them from others with average intellectual abilities at an early stage of their development. These characteristics include everything related to the cognitive, personal, social, emotional or emotional aspects. Although the emotional aspect is closely linked to the cognitive aspect, we find that educational programs focus on meeting the educational and cognitive needs of gifted students more than on the psychological, social, and emotional dimensions, which leads to the conclusion that achieving advanced levels of mental and cognitive development for the gifted student may not be accompanied by similar progress in emotional development (Al-Rihani, 1998).

Gifted students with high abilities need a kind of counseling services, because the difficulties they suffer from in the social and emotional dimension. Silverman

(1993) provides a list of the most important problems that gifted students suffer from, most notably depression, boredom, self-isolation, intense competition, and an excessive sense of responsibility. The reality is that some gifted students may suffer from difficulties resulting from the nature of the characteristics they possess and the conditions of daily life in which they live. It is important to take into account that the majority of these students do not suffer from these difficulties (El-Zraigat, 2012; Al-Rihani, El-Zraigat and Tanous, 2018).

Guiding and counseling gifted students and their families is one of the most challenging jobs of a counselor. Gifted students have tremendous diversity not only in their cognitive ability, but in their emotional development. The work of school counselors is to help young students find out who they are, make decisions and develop their potential. Therefore, gifted students need help, and psychological and educational counselors can provide it Colangelo (2002). Also, the role and participation of parents in the decision-making process regarding special education is crucial. It is important to ensure they participate in an active role as a member of the IEP team that determines the student's path (Logsdon, 2021).

Yeo and Pfeiffer (2018) indicated that depending on counseling, the special needs of the gifted can be met. Maree (2019) found that career counseling can be used to help gifted learners identify key life themes that can help them find meaning and a sense of purpose in their career choices. Minor and Duchac (2020) maintained that one element of the comprehensive school counseling model is support for students who have been identified as gifted and for the unique social, emotional, and behavioral problems they may be experiencing. The results of the Onal and Buyuk (2021) study recommended that gifted students should be provided with an enjoyable scientific learning environment to make them active, have fun while learning, conducting experiments, and developing projects.

THE RATIONALE OF STUDY AND ITS QUESTIONS

Gifted students are a heterogeneous group, and although they may not display any more or worse psychological, social, or developmental challenges than their peers, they are not immune from these challenges either. Moreover, the nature of their talent may influence both the way they face a challenge and how the mentor best supports them (Kennedy and Farley, 2017). It is believed that this group of students may experience a range of social and emotional difficulties, including isolation, stress, anxiety, depression and perfectionism. There is a positive relationship between poor social and emotional development and poor academic achievement of gifted

students. In addition, there is limited understanding of how these variables affect each other (Blaas, 2014).

Indeed, meeting the diverse counseling needs of gifted students differs from one school to another. The educational services provided to them may suffer from challenges that prevent them from being provided in a manner that meets the special counseling needs of these students. In order to have an effective and inclusive educational system, it is important for gifted students that requires a lot of interventions. The main arrangements consist of teacher training, curriculum adaptation, teacher assistants, change of negative attitudes, and so on. The role of parents is important as they must raise the awareness of teachers and society about the rights of their students (Balli, 2016).

The primary responsibility of any teacher is to create a good conducive learning environment and a good teacher-student relationship. Good cooperation and healthy social interaction will enhance learning, creativity and leadership skills. When students feel safe, valued, encouraged, and reinforced in their efforts to excel in their studies, this will enhance their talent, abilities, and achievement (Okoye, 2013). The current study sought to answer the main question: What is the role of teachers of gifted students and parents of gifted students in meeting the special counseling needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait?

Specifically, the study answered the following two questions:

To what degree do teachers meet the special guidance needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait?

To what degree do parents meet the special guidance needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait?

Objectives of the Study

The current study aimed to identify the role of teachers of gifted students and parents of gifted students in meeting the special counseling needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait. It also aimed to provide recommendations to the authorities responsible for the education of gifted students in the State of Kuwait.

Participants

The study included 50 teachers of gifted students and 50 parents of gifted students in the State of Kuwait for the academic year 2020/2021.

STUDY TOOL

The researchers developed a scale for the role of teachers and parents in meeting the special counseling needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait by reviewing previous studies and relevant theoretical literature such as: Casino-García, Llopis-Bueno, and Llinares-Insa (2021); Hastiani and Hariko (2018); Ishak and Abu Bakar (2010); and Yoo, and Moon (2006).

The scale was presented in two versions, one for parents and the other for teachers. The scale included 36 items divided into five dimensions:

- Meeting academic counseling needs: This is specific to meeting the needs of academic problems at school
- Meeting needs for social interaction: This includes interacting with companions, establishing social relationships, and communicating with others.
- Meeting family needs: This includes dealing with family problems
- Meeting psychological needs: This includes meeting the behavioral, emotional, social, and psychological needs of gifted students
- Meeting the needs for career planning and the future: This includes directing talented students to plan and deal with their professional future.

Validity of the Scale

To extract the indications of the construct validity of the scale, the correlation coefficients of each item and the total score, and between each item and its connection to the field to which it belongs, and between the fields to each other and the total degree, were extracted in an exploratory sample from outside the study sample, which consisted of (20) from outside the study sample, and the coefficients ranged The correlation of the items with the tool as a whole ranged between (0.48-0.79), and with the range (0.56-0.91).

Reliability of the Scale

To ensure the reliability of the study tool, it was verified by the test-retest method by applying the scale, and re-applying it after two weeks on a group from outside the study sample consisting of (20), and then the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between their estimates in the two times.

The reliability coefficient was also calculated using the internal consistency method according to the Cronbach alpha equation, and Table 1 shows the internal consistency coefficient according to the Cronbach alpha equation and the repetition reliability of the domains and the total degree. These values were considered appropriate for the purposes of this study.

Table 1
Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient and repeat reliability of the domains and the total score

Dimensions	Test-retest	Internal consistency
Meeting academic counseling needs	0.87	0.70
Meeting needs for social interaction	0.82	0.77
Meeting family needs	0.84	0.74
Meeting psychological needs	0.86	0.78
Meeting the needs for career planning and the future	0.85	0.78
Total	0.88	0.87

STUDY METHODOLOGY AND STATISTICAL TREATMENT

To answer the study questions, the descriptive survey method was used. The means and standard deviations were calculated for the study tool items.

THE LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study include: the time of application of the study, the place where the study was conducted in Kuwait, and the study participants and their characteristics, namely the teachers of the gifted students and the parents. In addition to the accuracy of the response of the individuals participating in the study on the study tool.

RESULTS

This part presents the findings of the study and is organized according to its questions:

To what degree do teachers meet the special guidance needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait?

To answer this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations were extracted for the degree of teachers' fulfillment of the special counseling needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait, and the table below shows this.

Table 2
The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the degree of teachers' fulfillment of the special counseling needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait are arranged in descending order according to the arithmetic means.

Rank	No.	Dimensions	Means	St.D.	Dgree
1	1	Meeting academic counseling needs	3.60	.303	high
2	5	Meeting the needs for career planning and the future	3.42	.522	high
3	2	Meeting needs for social interaction	3.29	.557	high
4	4	Meeting psychological needs	3.21	.495	high
5	3	Meeting family needs	2.90	.670	middle

Table 2 shows that the arithmetic means ranged between (2.90-3.60), where meeting academic counseling needs came in the first place, while meeting family needs came in the last place.

To what degree do parents meet the special guidance needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait?

To answer this question, arithmetic means and standard deviations were extracted for the degree to which parents meet the special guidance needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait, and the table below shows this.

Table 3
Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the degree to which parents meet the special guidance needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait, arranged in descending order according to the arithmetic means.

Rank	No.	Dimensions	Means	St.D.	Dgree
1	3	Meeting family needs	3.68	.360	high
2	1	Meeting academic counseling needs	3.64	.307	high
3	2	Meeting needs for social interaction	3.62	.464	high
4	5	Meeting the needs for career planning and the future	3.48	.466	high
5	2	Meeting psychological needs	3.45	.506	high

Table 3 shows that the arithmetic means ranged between (3.45-3.68), where meeting the family needs came in the first place, while meeting psychological needs came in the last place.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results indicated that meeting academic needs ranked first from the teachers' point of view, while meeting special family needs ranked last. It also came after family needs on average. This may be because teachers responded to the counseling needs of gifted students, especially in light of the Corona pandemic, which has spread globally and imposed restrictions and limitations in providing services. Teachers are also the group that may communicate most with gifted students and know the nature of their special needs. Therefore, the estimates were relatively high, and this may also reflect the importance of special needs and their satisfaction for gifted students. Also, perhaps the cooperation between teachers and families was not at a high degree due to the nature of home quarantine and reduced interaction between parents and teachers. Therefore, teachers may not have been highly aware of the nature of how to meet the counseling needs of gifted students by parents.

The results indicated that meeting the family's special needs ranked first with the highest arithmetic mean, while meeting the psychological needs came in the last rank. This is probably because the conditions of the pandemic have prompted parents to understand the special needs of their gifted students and respond to counseling needs, especially in light of the Corona pandemic, which has spread globally and imposed restrictions and limitations in providing services. While parents showed less concern about meeting the emotional needs of their gifted students, this is because meeting the nature of these needs requires more specialization and a deeper understanding of them, and this may not be sufficiently available to parents. In

light of the Corona pandemic and due to restrictions and quarantine, parents are perhaps the ones who communicate most with their students and know the nature of their needs. Therefore, the estimates were relatively high, and this may also reflect the importance of special needs and their satisfaction for gifted students.

Based on the results, the researchers recommend:

- Raising awareness of the importance of meeting the special needs of the gifted.
- Activating the relationship between school and home to meet the special needs of the gifted.
- Improving collaboration between teachers and parents.
- Educating parents about the importance of meeting the emotional needs of their gifted students and its effects.
- studying the special counseling needs of gifted students in the State of Kuwait from the point of view of the students themselves.

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