



| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi |

Investigating Stakeholder Opinions on A Resource Room Program for Gifted Students

Üstün Yeteneklilere Yönelik Destek Eğitim Odası Programına İlişkin Paydaş Görüşlerinin İncelenmesi¹

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Keywords

1. Gifted Students
2. Education Program
3. Resource Room
4. Stakeholders opinion

Anahtar Kelimeler

1. Üstün yetenekliler
2. Eğitim programı
3. Destek Eğitim Odası
4. Paydaş görüşleri

Received/Başvuru Tarihi
04.06.2020

Accepted / Kabul Tarihi
29.12.2020

Abstract

Purpose: The present research aims at determining the stakeholders' opinion about a resource room program for gifted students in a primary school.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Structured as a case study, the research project was carried out in a primary school in the Eskisehir province of Turkey. Participants of the research consisted of the school headmaster, the teacher of the resource room, gifted students attending the program, parents of gifted students and classroom teachers whose students attended the program. Data used in the research were collected through semi structured interviews. The research data were analyzed using the systematic analysis approach.

Findings: The findings of this research revealed that the program has generally been positively perceived by stakeholders. On the other hand, the participants expressed their concerns and some problems, especially due to the program was carried out during school hours like much homework, missed out some important lessons and restriction in curriculum.

Highlights: The study showed that in order for the gifted student pull-out programs to be efficient it should be collaboration between stakeholders. It is recommended that it should be given to schools more flexibility in organizing and operating programs for an effective program.

Öz

Çalışmanın Amacı: Bu araştırmanın genel amacı bir ilkokulda destek eğitim odası kapsamında üstün yetenekli öğrencilere yönelik yürütülen programa ilişkin okul paydaşlarının görüşlerini incelemektir.

Yöntem: Durum çalışması şeklinde desenlenen araştırma, Eskişehir ilinde yer alan bir ilkokulda gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın katılımcıları ise okul müdürü, destek eğitim odası öğretmeni, destek eğitim odasına devam eden üstün yetenekli öğrenciler, bu öğrencilerin velileri, destek eğitim odasına sınıftan öğrenci giden genel sınıf öğretmenleridir. Araştırmada veri toplama araçları olarak yarı yapılandırılmış bireysel ve odak grup görüşmeleri kullanılmıştır. Araştırmadan elde edilen veriler sistematik içerik analiz yaklaşımı ile analiz edilmiştir.

Bulgular: Araştırma sürecinde elde edilen bulgular sonucunda okul paydaşlarının yürütülen programa yönelik olumlu algıya sahip oldukları görülmektedir. Bununla birlikte katılımcılar özellikle programın okul ders saatleri içerisinde yürütülmesinden kaynaklı olarak müfredatı yetiştirememeye, fazla ödev yükü, derslerden geri kalma gibi sorunları ve kaygılarını belirtmişlerdir.

Önemli Vurgular: Araştırma sonucunda üstün yeteneklilere yönelik destek eğitim odalarında etkili programlar için paydaşların görüşleri doğrultusunda düzenlemelerin önemi ve paydaşlar arası işbirliğinin sağlanması ön plana çıkmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda etkili bir program için okullara, programların düzenlenmesinde ve işleyişinde daha fazla esnekliğin tanınması önerilmektedir.

¹ This study is part of the doctoral dissertation conducted by the author under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Hasan Gürgür and was supported from Anadolu University Commission of Scientific Projects (BAP; grant number: 1601E010).

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INTRODUCTION

The education should be appropriate for students' developmental characteristics and responsive to their needs. It is of great importance that gifted children, who constitute a small portion of the population, need educational opportunities that will enable them to develop their talents and use their capacities at the highest level. The necessity of special education for gifted students is a controversial issue (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2008; Ziegler & Heller, 2000). The basis of these discussions is the fact that gifted children are developmentally and cognitively different from their peers (Davis & Rimm, 2004). Because of these differences, it is frequently mentioned that appropriate educational opportunities should be provided for them (Colangelo, Assouline, & Gross, 2004; Renzulli & Reis, 1991; Robinson & Moon, 2003). The most distinctive feature of gifted students is their high information processing speed which allows them to learn faster, process information more effectively, and generate more new and unusual ideas than their peers (Cohen, 2006; Gagné, 2003; Gallagher, 2000). In addition, gifted students stand out in general education classes for their high level thinking skills in abstract thinking (Kettler, 2014; Persson, 2010), strong memories (Alloway & Elsworth, 2012; Geake, 2008), understanding of complex concepts and relationships (Morelock & Morrison, 1999; VanTassel-Baska, 1987). As a result of these features, gifted students comprehend quickly in class, and, consequently, have different educational needs. As a matter of fact, many researchers state that the general education class programs are insufficient for gifted students and their education should be in line with a particularly more challenging program (Callahan, Moon, Oh, Azano, & Hailey, 2015; Moon, Swift, & Challenger, 2002; Peterson, 2009; Silverman, 1998).

The current education system is based on the assumption that all students of the same age have the same intellectual development. Therefore, most courses, teaching materials and practices are designed for "normal" students (Osin and Lesgold 1996; Rogers 2002). This makes the current educational system frequently insufficient for gifted students (Archambault, Westberg, Brown, Hallmark, Emmons, & Zhang, 1993; Osin & Lesgold, 1996). Many researchers argue that gifted students should be grouped with peers who have similar academic skills, albeit for a limited time (Brulles, Saunders, & Cohn, 2010; Hertberg-Davis, 2009; Kulik & Kulik, 1992; Neihart, 2007; Rogers, 2002). The insufficiency of the education provided in the regular classrooms negatively affects the academic success of these students. On the other hand, it is stated that being educated in private schools which separate them from their peers may also cause social emotional problems (Rogers, 2002). This situation highlights the application of resource room (RR) within schools as an intermediate solution.

Among the various educational opportunities for gifted students, one of the most widely used applications is RR which is considered as a pull-out program (Gubbins, 2013). In this program type, gifted students are removed from their classroom for a part of the week. During this time, gifted students participate in enriched educational activities with their gifted friends in a separate classroom or in a room at their school (NAGC & CSDPG, 2015; Rogers, 2002). It can be argued that in Turkey RR is the most appropriate education application for gifted students in public schools thanks to legal regulations and recommendations. The Ministry of National Education's (MoNE) Action Plan related to gifted students' education covering the years 2013-2017 recommends the RR for the gifted students in all education level as the basic education implementation (MoNE, 2013). Parallel to this, the number of resource rooms for gifted students is increasing.

Gifted students have been accepted within the scope of special education groups. So, education for these students is generally regulated by the same legislations related to other special education groups. In the Regulation on Special Education Services of the Ministry of National Education, RR is defined as a settlement designed to provide support education services to students with special needs who continue their education through full-time inclusion and gifted students in the areas they need [MoNE], 2018). In the 28th article of the same legislation, the administration process of the RR is regulated. The purpose of RR in the legislation is explained as providing special education support via using special equipment and educational materials for students who need special education and gifted students who continue their education in the same class with their peers in schools (MoNE, 2018).

Although RR is widely used in the education of gifted students, there is no consensus on its implementation (Gubbins, 2013). Different opinions are especially seen related to the time spent in RR, the content of the education and who will be the teacher there (Cox & Daniel, 1984; Davis, Rimm, & Siegle, 2011; Gallagher, 2000; MEB, 2015; Süel, 2017; Şahin, 2015). Even though the RRs are easy to open and low in cost, they have been subjected to various criticisms. It is stated that students benefit from these programs for a short time and it is argued that this is insufficient to meet the educational needs of gifted students (Feldhusen, 1989; Murphy, 2009; Clark, 2013). Another criticism is that these programs focus on various games and activities irrelevant to the general school curriculum (VanTassel-Baska, 1987; Renzulli & Reis, 1991; Rogers, 2002; Sak, 2014). It is stated that they are also insufficient for gifted students in providing communication and education with their mental peers; moreover, RRs might cause the development of a negative attitude towards gifted students by their classmates and teachers (Belcastro, 1987; Davis, Rimm, & Siegle, 2011).

Evaluation stands out as one of the issues that should be emphasized in education programs for gifted students. In research, stakeholder views are generally taken into account when evaluating the effectiveness of programs (Campbell & Verna, 1998; Davison, Coates, & Johnson, 2005; Dimitriadis, 2011; Dimitriadis, 2012; Tortop & Dinçer, 2016; Long, Barnett & Rogers, 2015; McCulloch, 2010; Morgan, 2007; Nar & Tortop, 2017; Pemik, 2017). The views of stakeholders play an important role in the evaluation of educational practices for gifted students. The evaluations of teachers, students, parents and school administrators provide important information about the effect of the program in evaluating the benefits of such programs especially for students. Thus, different researchers also emphasize the importance of stakeholder evaluations about the applications for gifted students

(Brighton & Wiley, 2013; Matthews & Kitchen, 2007). There are studies on parents, teachers and students' evaluations of RR-like practices for gifted students (Cohen, Duncan, & Cohen, 1994; Delcourt, Loyd, Cornell, & Goldberg, 1994; Dimitriadis, 2011; Gubbels, Segers, & Verhoeven, 2014; McCulloch., 2010; Moon, Tomlinson, & Callahan, 1995; Morgan, 2007; Ritrievi, 1988; van der Meulen et al., 2014; Yang, Gentry, & Choi, 2012). The results of these studies suggest that such programs for gifted students generally affect students' friendships positively (Cohen, Duncan, & Cohen, 1994; McCulloch, 2010; Morgan, 2007), increase their academic success (Delcourt et al., 1994; Dimitriadis, 2011, 2012; Morgan, 2007; van der Meulen et al., 2014), effect social-emotional development and attitudes towards science (Gubbels et al., 2014; van der Meulen et al., 2014), and also make positive contribution to motivation and original thinking skills (Moon et al., 1995).

Several studies were conducted in Turkey about the RRs for the gifted students (Bedur, Bilgiç & Taşlıdere, 2015, Tortop & Dinçer, 2016; Nar & Tortop, 2017; Pemik, 2017). Nar & Tortop (2017) stated that the majority of classroom teachers working in RR thought that the in-service training provided to them was insufficient in gifted education. In addition, teachers emphasized that the physical environment of the RRs' should be improved, the necessary equipment and educational materials should be provided to improve gifted students' skills. Pemik (2017) revealed that students generally played intelligence games instead of academic studies in RRs. In addition, it was stated that there were some crucial problems in the programs carried out in RR, due to the lack of curriculum and teaching plan, materials and inadequate physical conditions. Another study conducted by Bedur, Bilgiç & Taşlıdere (2015) to evaluate the RRs for gifted students shows that teachers have serious problems in developing the appropriate programs to implement in the RR. Apart from these studies, it is seen that similar results were obtained in studies related to RRs where students with different special needs attend (Çevik & Yağcı, 2017; Tunalı-Erkan, 2018; Yazıcıoğlu, 2020). In these studies, it was emphasized that the implementation of RR includes uncertainties in terms of legislation and implementation, the lack of training and knowledge of teachers, and the inadequacies of RRs in terms of material, physical conditions and equipment.

Nevertheless, it is seen that RRs have an important place in the education of gifted students. In Turkey, because of legal regulations and recommendations, it can be said that the most appropriate program for gifted students in public schools is the RR. In this context, it is important to evaluate this programs, which are actively used in the education of gifted students. However, there are insufficient studies related to the views of the stakeholders on the programs for gifted students (Matthews & Kitchen, 2007). This study is expected to contribute to the literature in the context of being a qualitative study and reflecting the views of active stakeholders during the RR process. Because RR is a new program type for gifted students in Turkey, there are disagreements about practices (Bedur, Bilgiç & Taşlıdere, 2015). So, the general aim of this research is to examine the views of the school principal, teachers, parents and students as stakeholders of school regarding the education program offered in RR for gifted students in a primary school. For this purpose, the guiding research questions included the following:

1. What are the parents' views on the gifted RR program?
2. What are the opinions of the teachers about the gifted RR program?
3. What are the opinions of the gifted students about the gifted RR program?
4. What are the views of the school principal about the gifted RR program?
5. What are the opinions of the RR teacher about the gifted RR program?

METHOD

This study has been structured as a case study, which is one of the qualitative research approaches, is generally defined as the in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2013). The bounded system expression here means that the situation can be separated from others in terms of time, place or some physical boundaries (Creswell, 2014). The case of this study is a unique gifted RR program in a primary school.

Research Environment

This research was carried out in a primary school in Eskişehir/ Turkey. The school provides full-time education between 09:00 and 14:40. The school consists of two buildings. The RR, which is the classroom for gifted students, is located on the 2nd floor of the B-block of the school. This class has a view of the garden. There are 10 single desks and tables in the classroom. This allows different seating arrangements in the classroom. RR education is conducted 4 hours per week in each grade. The course is held by RR teacher during school time.

Participants

Participants of the study were determined through purposeful criterion sampling methods. According to criterion sampling, the participants of the study should meet a predetermined set of criteria (Marshall and Rossman, 2014). Accordingly, participants were chosen between volunteers who have an interaction with the RR program at the school. In this context, a total of 33 participants, including classroom teachers who send students to the RR program (13), the RR teacher, the school principal, the gifted students who attend to the RR program (9), and the parents of these students (9), took part in the study.

The RR teacher is a classroom teacher with 8 years of experience, continuing his graduate program in the field of gifted education. The principal of the school, representing the school administration, participated in the study. The principal has 15 years

of experience in school system and he has a master's degree in "Educational Management, Inspection, Planning and Economics". There are 26 classroom teachers in the school. Among these teachers, 13 volunteer teachers who have gifted students in their class participated in the study. The characteristics of participating teachers are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the participating teachers

Characteristics	Participant	n
Gender		
Women	CT1,CT3,CT4,CT5,CT6,CT9,CT10,CT11,CT12	9
Men	CT2,CT7,CT8,CT13	4
Professional Experience		
10-15 years	CT7,CT9,CT10,CT11,CT12	5
16-20 years	CT4, CT5,CT13,	3
21- 25 years	CT2,CT6,CT8,	3
26-30 years	CT1,CT3	2

The students participating in the research are the fourth grade students who attended to RR program for two years. These students were accepted to the program as a result of the scanning using the Anadolu Sak Intelligence Scale (ASIS). Fourth grade students were selected considering that they are more experienced and will evaluate the program more accurately, since they have been attending the program for two years. The participant parents are those whose students have attended the program since the program started at school, and in this context, have experience with the program. Demographic information about students and their parents is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of the participating students and parents

Students	Characteristics	Parents	Characteristics
S1	Girl, singleton	P1	Women, Teacher
S2	Boy, one sibling	P2	Men, Doctor
S3	Girl, one sibling	P3	Women, Teacher
S4	Boy, one sibling	P4	Women, Doctor
S5	Girl, one sibling	P5	Men, Teacher
S6	Boy, one sibling	P6	Men, Teacher
S7	Boy, one sibling	P7	Women, Bank Officer
S8	Girl, two sibling	P8	Men, Shopkeeper
S9	Boy, one sibling	P9	Women, housewife

Data Collection Tool and Data Collection Processes

Semi-structured individual and focus group interviews were conducted within the scope of this research. Two focus group meetings were held with the students and individual interviews with other participants were held. Semi-structured interviews involve asking open-ended questions to the participant. Semi-structured interview technique is preferred to determine and understand the opinions of the participants on the subject by providing more in-depth data in line with the purpose of the research. In such interviews, the interviewer has the opportunity to deepen the answers given to the questions asked (Berg & Lune, 2015, p.136). The data in the study were collected in about a month. Individual and focus group interviews during the research process were conducted within the school facilities, mostly in the RR, as well as in the counselor's room and the assistant principal room. During the process, two focus group interviews were conducted with the students and individual interviews with other participants, each lasting an average of 20 minutes.

The interviews were recorded with a tape recorder by the researcher, with the permission of the participants. Before the interviews, a draft of the interview questions was prepared by the researcher. Subsequently, the draft questions were submitted to the opinions of three academicians, two of whom were experts in the field of gifted education and one of whom was an expert on qualitative research methods. After the evaluation and feedback of the experts, the last edition of interview form consists of demographic information and interview questions. Although question statements and number of questions vary according to the

stakeholder group, they are generally composed of open-ended questions that include thoughts about the program, contributions of the program, expectations from the program, problems experienced and thoughts about the RR teacher.

Analyzing of Data

The data obtained through interviews in the research were analyzed according to the steps that Creswell (2013, p. 197) suggest for the analysis process of qualitative data. Content analysis technique was used in the analysis of the data. Content analysis means gathering similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes and interpret them in a way that the reader can understand easily. The data were analyzed in four stages: 1. Coding of data; the codes were determined by evaluation of interviews. 2. Determining the themes of the encoded data; themes were created based on the answers of the in-depth interview questions. 3. Codes and themes are arranged. 4. Finally, all data obtained are reported under appropriate headings in the findings section.

Credibility of the Study and Ethic

In qualitative research, the concept of robustness is also used instead of the concepts of reliability and validity (Gürgür, 2017). For the robustness of this study, the criteria of credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), consistency (internal reliability) and confirmability (external reliability) were taken into consideration (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 2015; Yin, 2012). In this study, data was collected from different participant groups and data triangulation was achieved. Study conducted with the coordination of field experts regularly during the research process. Researcher has been in the research environment for a long time to prevent biases. The data were documented by audio recording, and some of the randomly selected transcripts of these recordings were verified by the participants. To ensure the transferability of this research, each stage of the qualitative research process is explained in detail.

In this research process, attention has been paid to ethical rules. During the data collection process, the participants were briefly informed about the research and it was stated that they could withdraw from the study at any time. While the research was being reported, the real names of the participants were not used, instead the abbreviations given were used. These abbreviations representing the participants; RR teacher: RT, Classroom teacher: CT, Parents of students: P, Students: S, School principal: SP. Participants were informed that their identities would be kept confidential and that the data obtained would only be used in scientific studies. Finally, the collected data are presented unchanged, transferred from the records as stated.

FINDINGS

In this section, the participants' answers to the open-ended questions in the semi structured interviews were analyzed and presented in themes according to the stakeholders.

Evaluation of Parents

The themes that emerged as a result of the analysis of the data obtained from the individual interviews with the parents can be seen in Figure 1.

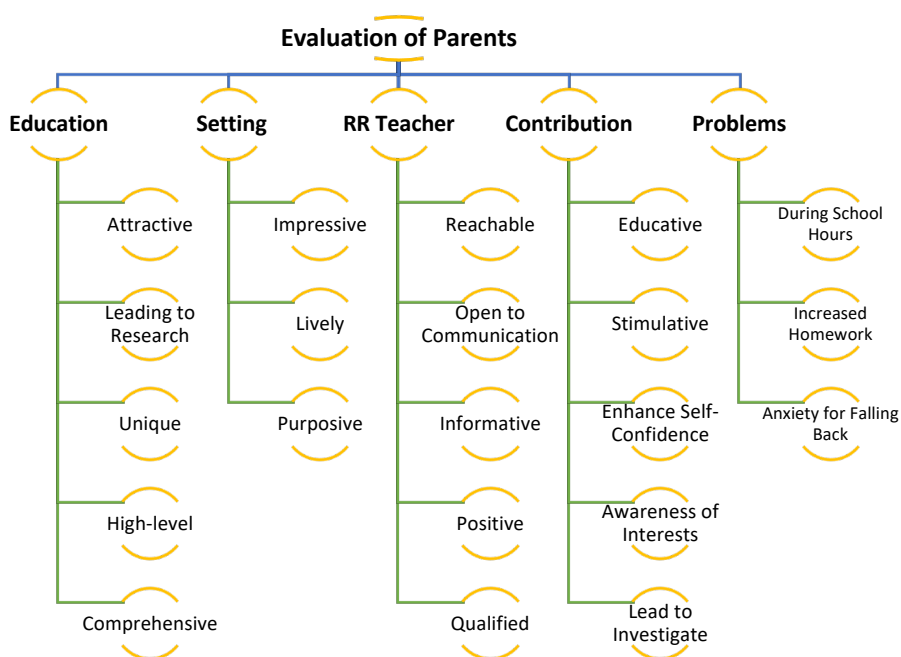


Figure 1. Themes of the evaluation of parents

Data analysis of parents' view yielded five themes as seen in figure 1. These are (1) education, (2) setting, (3) RR teacher, (4) Contribution and (5) Problems. As a result of the interviews, it is seen that the parents have a positive perception of the program

overall. During the interviews, while reflecting their views on RR, they emphasized the contribution of program to their children and willingness of their children towards to program. Accordingly, for example, one of the parents expressed their views as follows; "... my child likes to come to school that day; Monday, since it is RR day. So he would like to come to RR every day, even if it is every day." (P-3). Similarly, another parent emphasized her child's willingness towards to RR with following qouta "My daughter loves the program too much, when we are at vacation she wants to come back on Sunday, since the RR program is on Monday" (P-4). Another parent said that, "It is effective in my child's willingness to come to school, my child never said he was bored with program until now." (P-1).

Parents expressed different opinions about the education provided at RR program. However, it was emphasized that the RR program has been attracted students via conducting experiments and handling activities that differ from the general education classes. A participant referring to the sharing of his child at home explained his thoughts on the content of the lesson as; "... based on the processes he learned there, he is doing some experiments at home." (P-2). Another parent related to the education of his child received in the program said that; "The books he bought from the RR lead him to research ... There are experiments done at the secondary school and above level." (P-6). Another parent expressed his thoughts on the content of the RR program as; "I saw that it was generally based on research and learning new things." (P-3). Regarding the high level content of the education, another parent state that "It is good they learn some things in primary school which we learnt in secondary school, even in high school" (P-8).

It is revealed that the parents generally have positive thoughts about the environment of the RR. While one of the parents said "... very nice, very impressive ..." (P-9) about the RR setting, another parent expressed his appreciation with the words "it looks beautiful, fun" (P-7). Another parent emphasized the change at the setting overtime as follows "at first... there were shortcomings but later... I saw new materials being bought. A suitable classroom environment has been created for individual and group education." (P-2).

It is seen that the opinions of the parents about the RR teacher are generally positive. During the interviews, parents emphasized that they received positive comment about RR teacher from their students. Furthermore, they emphasized the importance of the teacher being accessible and providing them with satisfactory information about their students. Regarding the RR teacher, a parent stated that he has a positive dialog with students and he created an environment which student will not hesitate to ask a question over and over, and so he is a very suitable teacher for the program (P-1). Another parent emphasized that the teacher was so polite, very good at communication, gave information to them especially in case of a mishap, and she had the impression that he had a strong communication with students (P-2). Similarly, another parent related to the RR teacher's skill in recognizing students indicated, "I think the RR teacher is very skillful in exploring different characteristics of the students. He can see the features which the class teacher cannot see." (P-8). Regarding the RR teacher, another parent said, "... he was created for this job, because he does it with pleasure and knows the children very well. No matter how well I know my child, he tells me something that I do not know about him." (P-5).

Another prominent issue in the interviews with the parents is the contributions of the RR to their children. In the interviews, although they did not observe an increase in students' grades because their children were already successful academically, parents emphasized the positive change in self-confidence of students. One of the parents said about his child, "His lessons were already good, he did not change much. His self-confidence increased, he started to think differently on issues. (P-9). Another parent emphasizes the enhanced communication skills of his child regarding the contribution of the program (P-1). Another parent expressed the increase in self-confidence in her child and her sibling relationship with the following words "... my daughter was a little introverted, but now she has more self-confidence, her hand skills have also improved... she helps her twin brother especially in mathematics" (P-3). Another parent emphasizes that her child tries to solve the own problems without reflecting himself, his father or the school, and in this sense, he is a more self-confident child now (P-5). One parent who emphasized the positive change in his child's fulfillment of his duties in mainstream class after joining the RR program said, "After starting the program, he feels more comfortable in his class, what he learned here affected him. He started doing his homework on time." (P-8). Some parents emphasized contributions of RR which mainstream class cannot provide for their children. One of these parents stated that his child learned a lot from the books given in the RR, and also learned good things from the experiments they did here because they could not do these experiments in their mainstream class (P-6).

Parents generally state that their children do not experience any serious problems due to attendance at RR. Some parents emphasized that they had concerns at the beginning of the program that their children would fall behind in classroom lessons, however, their students' overall class performance did not decrease. One of the parents explained his anxiety about his child's falling behind in class lessons as follows: "... our only fear was related to his performance of mainstream classroom. Actually, I do not think he was behind academically, his exams were good too, the boy was able to take them both fondly." (P-7). Another parent stated that since the program is conducted at the school time, it forced their child to work more in completing the school homework, but this situation has decreased recently (P-1). Another parent emphasized that his child was already in front of the class schedule, that he did not have any problems with falling behind the classes in this sense, but if this program did not exist, he would be bored with the classroom lessons and this would be a bigger problem (P-4). Another parent stated that the school's solution-oriented initiatives plays an important role in not having too many problems in overlapping the lessons (P-5). Finally, a parent complained about the extra homework given and emphasized that in these cases, his child had difficulties in attending both programs, but he coped with their support, and suggest that especially the tasks based on writing should be reduced (P-8).

Evaluation of Classroom Teachers

In individual interviews with classroom teachers whose students attend the RR program, data on their opinions about RR, the contributions of the program, the problems encountered during the implementation, and their views related to the RR teacher were collected. The themes that emerged as a result of the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews with the teachers are given in Figure 2.

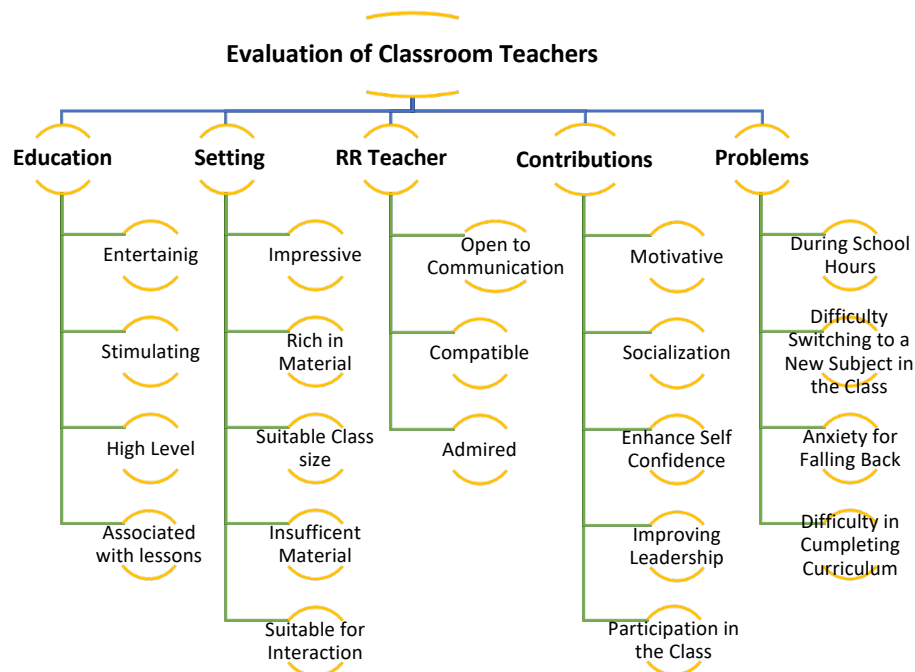


Figure 2. Themes of the evaluation of classroom teachers

Data analysis of teachers' view yielded five themes as seen in figure 2. These are (1) education, (2) setting, (3) RR teacher, (4) Contribution and (5) Problems. According to analysis of interviews, it is seen that the teachers are satisfied with the RR program although they have some criticisms in general. The most significant criticism of the program is related to the program hours, since it is conducted during school hours. Nevertheless, teachers generally approve the RR program. For example, one of the teachers expressed his appreciation of the program with this quota "The physical environment is enjoyable for the children, it is fun ... I see that they are even happier when they switch to the laboratory part." (CT-1). Another teacher described the RR program as stimulating for students (CT-2). Besides, a teacher explained his thoughts about the physical environment of the RR with the following words "There is an environment that will strengthen the interaction even more, it is rich in materials and I consider it is appropriate for education, because they also use the laboratory" (CT-6). Another teacher emphasized that the room was physically suitable, but especially the laboratory facilities should be increased (CT-8). A teacher stated that the program is successful, that his students who continue to the program are very happy, however, more students should benefit from such programs. He also stated that the RR has a nice environment that appeals to students (CT-12).

Teachers claim that the program reflects to their classroom positively, especially when gifted students share what they learned with classmates. One teacher shared the contribution of the program to the class with an experience with the following words "We worked on triangles in mathematics, they learned more there, they explained it in class, and then I explained the subject in more detail to the class." (CT-12). A teacher stated that gifted students feel better in the program because they are get bored quickly in the classroom, and they return more motivated when they come back to the class (CT-6). On the other hand, a teacher stated that the students attending the program did not carry their experiences into the classroom too much (CT-8).

During the interviews, the teachers emphasized that the program did not increase the grades of the students who attended the program because they were already successful. Nevertheless, they shared the impression that the previously timid students became more participatory in the lessons, and their self-confidence increased. For example, a teacher said, "There was no change because the children were already successful, but my shy student has socialized a lot, now he can make friendship with everyone." (CT-12). A teacher shared the impression related to his shy student as; he had been trouble making friends, but thanks to the program, he started to participate in friend groups, even, he is trying to take the leadership role in the games. (CT-2). Another teacher stated that a student, whom he described as intermediate level according to class level, became more successful academically after starting the program, and observed a remarkable improvement especially in problem solving skills (CT-5). Similarly, another teacher stated that there is a noticeable increase in the participation of her student in classes compared to the past (CT-9).

Teachers generally expressed positive opinions about the RR teacher based on both impressions from their gifted students and their own interaction with him. They emphasized that he is approachable and open to cooperation. One of the teachers stated

that the RR teacher is good in his job, he has good communication with the students, and that students love him very much. He also emphasized that the RR teacher also has a good communication with other teachers too. He also underlined the cooperation about the process of the RR program, for example, the teacher stated that he informed them about the students and he always took their opinions while setting the course hours (CT-12). Another teacher emphasized that they work in harmony with the RR teacher with following words, "We are always sharing, we share our observations in the classroom, children love their teachers very much ..." (CT-6). There were also suggestions from teachers to RR program in the interviews. For instance, a teacher stated that it would be better to take the students out of school as a recommendation for the RR teacher (CT-2). Another teacher stated that RR should include activities such as non-academic intelligence games (CT-10).

Although, teachers have a good impression related to the RR program, they also shared their opinion about the problems experienced in the process and how they were solved. During the interviews, since the program was carried out during school hours, the problems such as students 'falling behind from school lessons, teachers' inability to switch to new subjects in the classroom, difficulties in developing their own classroom programs were emphasized by teachers. For example, a teacher with following words shared his concern on the program hours, "I and the parents were also concerned about the student falling behind from the lesson." (CT-2). Another teacher expressed his thoughts about the hours of the program with the following words: "Obviously, it would be better if it is after school. Sometimes we work on new topics in the morning, even if we try to make up for it later with the student... it is not as successful as learning in the classroom." (CT-9). Another teacher stated that he could not switch to a new topic in the classroom as a problem, but he explained that he sometimes switched to a new topic and informed his student at the break in these situations (CT-1). Finally, another teacher stated that the absence of gifted students in class affected their class environment negatively because they cannot do entertaining activities in the classroom due to that they did not want the absence students to miss (CT-12).

Evaluations of the School Principal

A semi-structured interview was held with the school principal about the RR program for gifted students conducted at the school. In the interview, the headmaster stated that they had to open the program during school hours due to legal obligations. In addition, it was emphasized that the opening as RR program instead of a separate special class was also due to legal obligations. He stated that the program has been embraced more than when it first started. Additionally, the headmaster claim that the school has turned into a recognized and more attractive school based on the media coverage and increased number of students. However, the school principal emphasized that there should be a regular program with activities and training for gifted students, especially on weekends, outside of school class to prevent problems regarded to conducting in school hours.

Evaluations of Gifted Students Who Attended to RR Program

Two focus group interviews held with fourth grade gifted students attending RR program. In the meetings, the students' opinions about the RR teacher, the RR program, the contributions of the program, and the problems they experienced were taken by appropriate questions. The themes obtained as a result of the analysis of the focus group interviews with the gifted students are given in Figure 3.

During the interviews, students stated that they generally liked the RR program and even preferred it rather than their classes. Students underlined that they liked experiments, mathematics and activities that led them to think differently in the program. Regarding the hours of the program, they emphasized that coming to the RR for only one day is not very attractive. Accordingly, a student with following words: "... if it is a single day, the program ends in one day, other days we wish we could go to the RR. I wish there were more program hours." (S-3) expressed his wishes about the program hours being more. Regarding the activities, they liked in the program, another student said, "... I liked the works that goes from an event to find something different." (s-5). Another student expressed his appreciation for the RR's environment with the following words: "I think the layout of the classroom is very nice, when we enter, a different feeling surrounds us." (S-9).

In the context of contribution of the program, one of the students stated that the subjects they learned in the program were more advanced than the classroom, which gave them an advantage in the classroom like understanding subjects more easily. In addition, he emphasized that the program encouraged him to do research on subjects he is wondering, and now he starts to ask more questions (S-2). Another student said, "... I became more interested in science, and I also liked to read books more. I especially like reading about science." (S-6) explained the change caused by the education of the program. Another student expresses his changing perception especially towards science with the following words: "... I used to say what is science lesson before, I didn't like it very much, but after I came here, my favorite lesson was science. I discovered my curiosity for it." (S-4). While students stated that the program did not have much effect on their social relations in general, some students emphasized that they observed jealousy towards them in their classmates. In addition, thanks to the program, they made new friendships, and a student expressed how to overcome his previous shyness thanks to the program as; "... I was very shy at first, but after I came here, I became more talkative." (S-1).

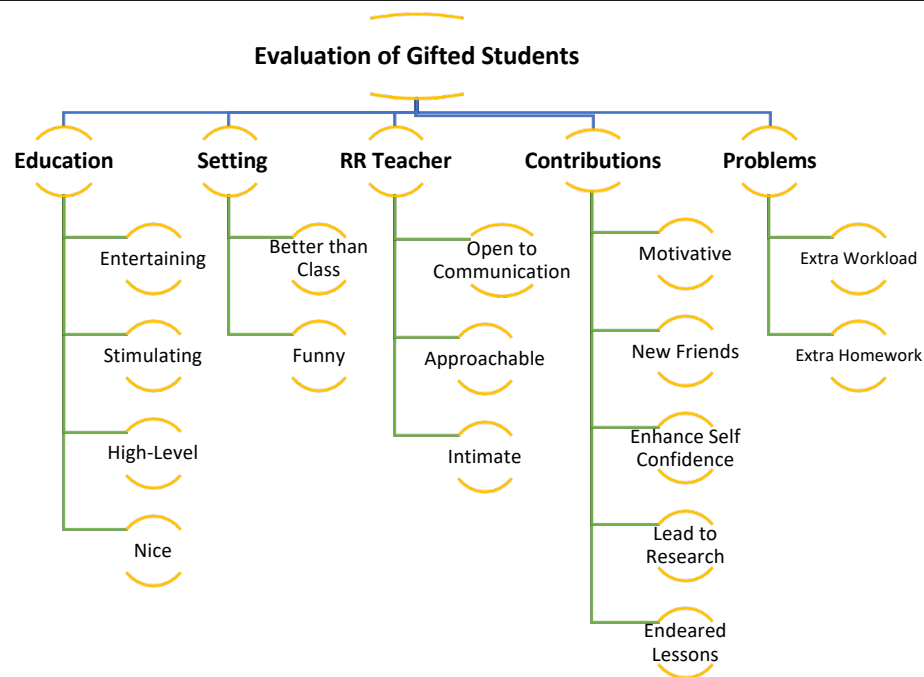


Figure 3. Themes of the evaluation of gifted students

It seems that students have positive feelings related to the RR teacher. Students stated that they were pleased with the RR teacher, he treated them warmly and sincerely, and answered the questions they asked. The students also stated that at the beginning of the program, they expected a boring classroom environment at the RR, but they have experienced very different and pleasant process. Regarding this, a student expressed his thought as following: "I thought it would be a tiny cramped classroom full of very boring, overly serious friends, even students I couldn't be friends with, but it never happened. Everything was different." (S-5).

The students stated that although their grades were not negatively affected by the problems they experienced due to attending the program, their workload increased. They emphasized that doing homework at home is boring for them. One student said, "I didn't have a problem like not understanding the subjects, but I run out of class and I don't want to do them at home, it takes my time." (S-7). Another student stated that since they attend the program, they were missing some lessons from their classroom especially new subjects. However, they responsible for the missing parts of the classroom, which means extra workload for them. (S-2). Some students stated that they received support from their family members, especially for homework that was easy for them but they had to write at length. One student related to his solution to extra homework said as following, "... sometimes my mother does the writing assignments for the subjects I know, which is very easy." (S-9).

Evaluation of the RR Teacher

An individual interview was held with the RR teacher related to RR program conducted in the school. The teacher claims that the program is getting better relative to beginning time. Additionally, he emphasizes that not only his own observations but also the increase in the demand for the school and the feedback of the teachers in the school indicate this development (RT). In the interview, the teacher stated that the students have a positive perception of the program and emphasizes that he observes different student profiles in each classroom and perhaps the demands of these different profiles should be taken into account in shaping educational content (RT). Regard to education of the RR program, he emphasized that activities based on reading texts and solving questions, which are similar to general education courses, are boring for students. He expressed the impressions that the students mostly liked the activities they learned new things and experimented with (RT). Regarding the course hours of the program, he stated that if the education for gifted students will be implemented in the RR format, this should not be more than four hours during school hours. He defended his ideas about the proper program time as following, "It is more efficient for students to have them during class hours in terms of their performances ... These children have different activities outside of school hours, and if the program conduct out of school hours, it will be a burden for students." (RT).

Regarding the benefits of the program to him, the RR teacher stated that he gained experience with gifted students and their education techniques, so these experiences would contribute a lot to him if he returned to his classroom teaching. He emphasized that the techniques used especially in the education of gifted students can also be used in enriching general education lessons (RT). However, he states gifted students cannot carry much of what they have learned at the program to their classrooms, additionally, he claims the reason for this may be the inability to provide students with appropriate opportunities in the classroom. He suggests that some activities in the program can be selected and implemented in the classroom too (RT). In the context of the contribution of the program to the students, he claims the students who were successful in their classes, benefited more from the program. In addition, he stated that among the students who are not at a very high level in their classes and attend the program,

their teachers want to see a serious change in their achievement level in a short time. Besides, he stated that attending the program affect students' social development more than their grades. He emphasizes that especially those who feel lonely in their own classes make friends more easily and adapt quickly to teamwork. (RT).

The RR teacher, like other stakeholders, claims that basic problems encountered during the program stem from timing of the program. In addition, he points to classroom teachers as the source of anxiety about students falling behind in classroom lessons. He explains the reason in the interview as follows: "Teachers oblige their students to take responsibility of the covered subjects while they are not in the classroom, even they want them to finish it during the breaks. And this worries the students and parents." (RT). Nevertheless, the RR teacher argues that most of the children attending the program are successful in their classes too.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this study, the views of school stakeholders - classroom teachers, gifted students participating in the RR program, and their parents, school principal, and the RR teacher - were examined about the RR program in a primary school. The data obtained from the interviews were gathered under five themes; education, setting, teacher, contributions, problems. Additionally, it is seen that similar sub-themes are predominant under these themes. However, since the stakeholders are affected differently from the process due to their status, there are differences between their views. For example, while the students see the increasing homework as a problem, the parents worry that the students will fall behind from the classroom lessons. Teachers, on the other hand, mostly complain about not being able to move on to a new subject when the students participating in the program are not in their classes. The findings obtained from the opinions of the stakeholders are discussed in more detail below in the context of the literature.

There are some important findings of the study. First of all, the findings of this research revealed that the programme has generally been positively perceived by stakeholders. This finding is in line with various research (Campbell & Verna, 1998; Davison, Coates & Johnson, 2005; Long, Barnett & Rogers, 2015; McCulloch, 2010; Morgan, 2007) which are on stakeholders' views about programs. Delcourt et al. (1994) and Callahan et al. (2015), as a result of their research comparing different educational programs for gifted students, state that even continuing to any program contributes positively to students regardless of the program type. The program carried out in this research is considered as an opportunity for gifted students in the school since there was not any specific program before it. Although the stakeholders express various problems and deficiencies regarding the implementation and also offer different suggestions for these students, they emphasized their appreciation for the program. The main reason for this can be considered as the fact that educational opportunities that were not available at school are now being offered. Additionally, since this program prepared with the cooperation and support of the relevant department at a university, the program welcomed and took seriously by the stakeholders. University support also eliminated the concerns mentioned in the literature (Bedur, Bilgiç & Taşlıdere, 2015; Tortop & Dinçer, 2016; Nar & Tortop, 2017; Pemik, 2017; Yavuz & Yavuz, 2016) about the education quality of the program. When evaluated in this context, the RR program can be seen as a good practice offered to gifted students, at least within the school.

Secondly, the curriculum of the program has been considered effective and useful for students. While the parents found the program generally useful in the interviews, they expressed these impressions through the contributions of the program to their children. For example, while the parents were evaluating the program, they emphasized that the students attended the program willingly. Besides since students received a different and rich content education there, these had reflections on their children such as increased self-confidence, gaining different thinking skills and recognizing their interests.

Regarding the curriculum, classroom teachers emphasize that its content is linked to the classroom curriculum, challenging and fun for students. The curriculum is consisting of enrichment and accelerated high order activities which will challenge and enhance learning outcomes for the students. These properties overlap with the features that mentioned (Belcastro, 1987; Gubbins, 2013; Hong, Greene, & Higgins, 2006; Lazzelle, 2015; McCulloch, 2010; Rogers, 2007; Yang, Gentry, & Choi, 2012) as gifted program should have in the literature. In this context, it can be said that the content of the program is effective in overcoming the problems which the researchers (Adelson et al., 2012; Belcastro, 1987; Dimitriadis, 2016; Gubins, 2013; Ritrievi, 1988; VanTassel-Baska, 2006) stated about the pull-out programs for gifted students, especially detached from the classroom program.

Studies show that students who participate in similar practices for gifted students find pull-out classes more efficient than general education classes (Dimitriadis, 2016; Hong, Greene, & Higgins, 2006; Yang, Gentry, & Choi, 2012). In this case, it is thought that the education provided in the program is appropriate to the level of the students, and the teaching of lessons with fewer students compared to the general education class is considered to be effective. In addition, the presence of activities prepared for special talents also affects the positive attitude of the students towards the program. Specially gifted students indicate that the program contributes to them in the context of academic and social development.

Thirdly, stakeholders seem teacher of the program and school administration successful and prone to cooperation. These findings are in line with other research (Baker & Friedman-Nimz, 2004; Swanson, 2007) focusing on the effects of school administration on the success of such pull-out programmes. Some researchers (Baker & Friedman-Nimz, 2004; Swanson, 2007) emphasized the effectiveness of highly motivated and caring school administrators and teachers in the success of educational practices for gifted students. Correspondingly, in this study, parents defined the RR teacher as a positive, open-to-communication

and informative person, and emphasized the solution-oriented approaches of the school administration. Additionally, classroom teachers expressed positive opinions about the RR teacher too. They stated that he works in harmony with them, is open to communication and is also liked by the students. Various studies (Dade County Public Schools, 1983; Gubins, 2013; van der Meulen et al., 2014; VanTassel-Baska, 1987), were emphasized that coordination with the general classroom teacher is important in the pull-out programs. In this sense, it is thought that the positive perception of classroom teachers towards the RR teacher is effective in providing the desired cooperation in the process. However, this positive impression was influenced by the fact that the RR teacher informs the classroom teachers about the students when necessary and also receives the opinions of the teachers about the course hours.

Another important finding is related to gifted students social-emotional features. The stakeholders agree that the program enhance these students' self-reliance, motivation and friendship relations. In this context, the results of the study are in line with the studies conducted by various researchers (Cohen, Duncan & Cohen, 1994; Delcourt, Cornell, & Goldberg, 2007; McCulloch, 2010; Morgan, 2007; van der Meulen et al., 2014; Zeidner and Schleyer, 1999). Specially gifted students state that the program contributes to them in the context of academic and social development. In particular, they emphasized that thanks to this program they make new friends, also their interest in lessons, their motivation, and their self-confidence increased, as well as the program, directs them to more scientific and inquiry-based activities.

The stakeholders seem the implementation of the program during school days as the most important problem. Teachers stated that they feel restricted in planning their regular classes since some students were taken out of classes. This situation has been emphasized in literature (Campbell and Verna, 1998; Dade County Public Schools, 1983; Ritrievi, 1988) as a drawback of pull-out programs. On the other hand, parents' concerns were mostly related to the fact that their children missed out some important lessons. This is parallel to the findings of various other research in literature (Davis, Rimm and Siegle, 2011; Morgan, 2007; Ritrievi, 1988; VanTassel-Baska, 1987). However, it is seen that the problems that students complain due to participation of program are limited to the overwhelming homework as stated in the literature (Dade County Public Schools, 1983; Davison, Coates and Johnson, 2005; Morgan, 2007; Ritrievi, 1988).

In conclusion, it can be said that the program is liked and supported by stakeholders despite various problems due to the implementation of the program during school days. This study shows that getting the support of stakeholders and the relevant departments of the universities is essential for a successful pull out gifted education program. Several suggestions can be made based on the results of this research. For gifted students' RR services there should be a detailed set of guidelines. The guidelines should permit to schools for flexible arrangement in terms of implementation time and number of students in programmes. Since this study was conducted at only one RR program at an elementary school it can be a good future research direction to replicate this study, using other possible methods, across different types of RR programmes implemented at different school stages.

Limitations of the Study

During this research process, data were collected through interviews. The meeting hours are generally arranged to suit the participants. However, as the interviews with teachers coincided with lunch break or school departure times, limited data may have been collected in some interviews. There are several weaknesses inherent in interview-oriented research, for example, participants can state opinions they think are desired rather than their real opinions (Babbie, 2013). In this study, the stakeholders may have avoided mentioning some negativities, especially since the program should be considered as a part of the school.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

This article conducted by the author with the permission of doctoral dissertation supervisor, so the author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

This work was supported by Anadolu University Commission of Scientific Projects (BAP; grant number: 1601E010)

Statements of publication ethics

All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards. Research data were collected during the 2017 Spring Term within the scope of the doctoral dissertation registered in number 520145 at the Higher Education Council's National Center. I hereby declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

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