



Research Article

Determining self-efficacy levels of the English language teachers for the education of gifted students¹

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Abstract

Gifted student education has been the centre of many studies until now. Even though there was an amount of studies examining gifted education there was limited amount of studies related to self-efficacy levels of English Language Teachers for gifted students. Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the self-efficacy levels of English Language Teachers towards gifted student education and examining teachers' age, professional seniority levels and gender variables. This study was carried out with 352 volunteer English Language Teachers (291 women, 61 men) who worked in the 2020-2021 academic year in the Educational Institutions related to the Ministry of National Education in Turkey. As a result, it was found that self-efficacy beliefs of English Language Teachers towards education of gifted students in both sub-dimensions and total scores of the scale were around 80 out of 100. Therefore, it was revealed that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs were high. Also, the results of the analysis showed that self-efficacy beliefs of English Language Teachers towards the education of gifted students increased with the age variable. In addition to these results, it was found that the self-efficacy beliefs of English Language Teachers increased as their teaching Professional seniority levels increased. Lastly, there was no significant difference in the whole scale and its sub-dimensions related to gender variable. In addition to that, literature review of the studies about teachers' professional seniority and gender variables revealed that, a consensus could not be reached. In order to eliminate this ambiguity, further studies are needed on this subject. On the other hand analysis of the scale revealed that items with the lowest average on the scale showed that, self-efficacy scores of English teachers in subjects such as behaviour control, implementation of the Individual Education Program and classroom control were lower than the other items.

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Introduction

To this day, many definitions have been made by academicians to explain the word gifted. According to the literal meaning, the word “gifted” refers to individuals that are bestowed special talents by God (Akarsu, 2004). In a more academic context, gifted student is an individual who demonstrates above-average skills in one or more of the physical, social, emotional or cognitive contexts compared to their peers (Stephens & Karnes, 2000). Education of gifted individuals is one of the issues that have been emphasized both in Turkey and abroad in recent years. The concept of gifted individuals doesn't only cover academic success thus a gifted individual may have talent in art, leadership, sports or many other fields (Reynolds & Birch, 1988).

Giftedness can manifest in more than one area; Talent above the average in areas such as perception, analysis skills and language skills, which develop under the influence of environmental factors and the mental characteristics that an individual brings with heredity, may indicate giftedness (Baykoç, 2010). Throughout history, studies on the education of gifted individuals have attracted the attention of researchers (Karnes, Stephens, & James, 2000). It is also important to consider the education of gifted individuals within the framework of foreign language education.

In the international academy context, the concept of gifted individuals have been defined as individuals who have superior skills compared to their peers, have talents or abilities in multiple areas such as creativity, art, academic and leadership, and can analyze information faster than their peers (Renzulli, 1986; Wagner & Sternberg, 1982). Studies that examine gifted education revealed gifted individuals need special training to support their development. Therefore, review of the educational context mentions the qualifications of the educational staff involved in the education of these individuals are also important (Piske, Stoltz, & Machado, 2014).

The adequacy of normal education programs in meeting the educational needs of gifted individuals is questioned since the education programs for gifted individuals should be versatile and have features that will support the mental development of these individuals; so that gifted individuals can use their skills more effectively (Steiner & Carr, 2003). Knowledge and competencies of educators are considered just as important as education programs for gifted education. The concept that expresses teachers' knowledge and competencies is associated with self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is expressed as an individual's ability to direct his behaviours towards a determined goal to be successful. Bandura (1993) stated that individuals with high self-efficacy have more strategically flexible, cognitively skillful and motivational functions compared to other individuals. Studies have revealed that individuals who have the ability to successfully cope with various stressful situations are individuals with high general self-efficacy; therefore, they perform their duties more effectively (Schwarzer, 1992). Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, and Malone mentioned (2006), that there is a relationship between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and student satisfaction. Thus, educators with higher general self-efficacy levels can complete challenging tasks more effectively (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008).

The concept of teacher self-efficacy has been defined as specific to the field, task and context rather than a general self-confidence structure (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Although studies have been conducted in different disciplines related to teacher self-efficacy, it has been observed that there are limited amount of studies on the self-efficacy of English teachers regarding the education of gifted students.

Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, and Osher (2020) stated that when children are supported within all areas of their development, individuals improve their abilities, confidence and motivation. This finding supports the idea that when the language skills of gifted individuals are supported, their linguistic abilities will improve.

Considering the effect of teachers' self-efficacy on the quality of teaching process, it is important to determine the professional self-efficacy of English teachers for the education of gifted individuals. Examining the professional skills and abilities of teachers in foreign language education is of great importance in the training of these students so that gifted individuals who represent us in many global and local areas do not have foreign language problems in their future lives.

Problem of Study

- What is English Language Teachers' level of self-efficacy regarding gifted students?

Sub-problems

- What is English Language Teachers' level of self-efficacy regarding gifted students according to age variable?
- What is English Language Teachers' level of self-efficacy regarding gifted students according to professional seniority variable?
- What is English Language Teachers' level of self-efficacy regarding gifted students according to gender variable?

Method

Research Design

In order to examine the general perceptions of English teachers regarding the education of gifted individuals, this study was carried out in survey method. Survey method is preferred to investigate the relationship between two or more variables in the same population (Karasar, 2011; Leedy & Omrod, 2010). To add more to this study was conducted to investigate English Language Teachers' perceptions on gifted education according to gender, age and professional experience.

Participants

Questionnaire items were added to the prepared scale and it was opened to the participation of English teachers via e-survey. The scale was presented to the participation of teachers between 27.05.2021 and 04.06.2021 and the analysis was carried out with the data obtained from 352 people.

The participants of this study took part in this study on a voluntary basis. Since the data were collected over the internet, it was obtained by simple random sampling. The scale developed by the researchers, "The Self-Efficacy Scale for Gifted Students for English Teachers", was used to collect data. The stages of preparation of the scale are presented below.

Data Collection Instrument

Self-Efficacy Scale for Education of Gifted Students-English Teachers (SESEGF-ELT)

In this study, "Self-Efficacy Scale for Gifted Students" developed by the researchers was used to collect data. Scale consists of two dimensions; Preparation (4 items) and Classroom (4 items) and a total of eight items (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). For the validity analyzes of the scale two data sets obtained by randomly dividing the data obtained from 352 individuals by approximately 50% is used. The two-factor structure obtained by Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was subjected to Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with the other data set. As a result of the analysis, $\chi^2/sd=2.94$, TLI=.92 and CFI=.95 values were obtained. Accordingly, the model is within acceptable limits (Brown, 2006; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Schumacker and Lomaks, 1996; Sümer, 2000). ; Thompson, 2004). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients calculated from the EFA data set of the scale for Preparation, Classroom and the whole scale are .89, .83 and .88. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients calculated from the DFA data set of the scale for the Preparation, Classroom and the whole scale were found to be .86, .78 and .87. These values show that the internal consistency coefficient is acceptable (Özdamar, 2004).

Data Analysis

In the study, the mean and standard deviation of the items, dimensions and the overall scale were calculated. In order to interpret the self-efficacy levels of the teachers towards the gifted, the average of the dimensions and the scores obtained from the total scale was interpreted by dividing it by the number of items. In this study, teachers' self-efficacy was examined in terms of age, seniority and gender variables. No grouping was made for age and seniority. For this purpose, the mean and standard deviation of both variables were calculated. For the age variable, the mean was 37.16 and the standard deviation was 8.09. The standard deviation was considered as the cutoff point. Ages between 1 standard deviation below the mean ($37.16-8.09=29.07$) and 1 standard deviation above the mean ($37.16+8.09=45.25$) were identified as "medium", those below 1 standard deviation (less than 29.07) were identified as "young" and ages above the standard deviation (over 45.25) were identified as "advanced age".

A similar situation was also applied for the seniority variable. For descriptive statistics, the distribution of the total scores according to the variables of the study was examined, and normality tests were evaluated depending on the group

size. Kruskal-Wallis test was used when one-way analysis of variance was not provided in the seniority variable in cases where normality was provided. In order to find the source of the significant difference in the analysis of variance, LSD was used if the variance was homogeneous, and Tamhane test was used when it was not. In order to find the source of the significant difference in the Kruskal-Wallis test, Bonforonni correction was made and the Mann-Whitney U test was performed. The Mann-Whitney U test was performed when the t-test was not provided in cases where normality was achieved in the gender variable. A significance value of .05 was accepted in all analyzes. The effect size Cohen d coefficient (Lenhard & Lenhard, 2016) was calculated for the results that were significant.

Findings

In order to obtain data about the general distribution of teachers' self-efficacy, descriptive statistics of each item were made and presented in the table.

Table 1

English Language Teachers' Self-efficacy Levels for Gifted Education According to SESEGF-ELT Items

Items	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
I can notice my gifted student in English classes.	352	50.00	100	86.40	13.27
I can prevent the negative behaviours of my gifted student that disrupt the positive classroom atmosphere in the English lessons.	352	20.00	100	78.42	15.93
I can make my gifted student value learning English.	352	40.00	100	83.90	14.28
I can eliminate the situations that cause my gifted student to not be in harmony with his/her classmates in English class.	352	30.00	100	77.10	16.04
I can differentiate the forms of assessment for my gifted student in English class.	352	10.00	100	82.59	17.42
I can prepare an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for my gifted student.	352	10.00	100	83.43	19.59
I can apply the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that I have prepared for my gifted student.	352	10.00	100	80.33	19.31
I can develop teaching materials for my gifted student in English class.	352	20.00	100	82.41	17.86

As seen in Table 1, first three items with the highest mean in the scale emerged as item 1, item 3 and item 7. On the other hand, the items with the lowest average were determined as the 2nd item, 5th item and 8th item. When these items were examined, it was found that the self-efficacy scores of English teachers in subjects such as behaviour control, implementation of the Individual Education Program and classroom control were lower than the other items. Therefore, these issues can be addressed in the future as an in-service training for English teachers.

Table 2

English Language Teachers' Self-efficacy Levels for Gifted Education According to SESEGF-ELT Scales Sub-Dimensions

Sub-scales of SESEGF-ELT	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Total Item Numbers
Classroom /Instruction Dimension	352	166	400	325.82	47.32	81.46
Instructional Preparation Dimension	352	100	400	328.77	63.01	82.19
SESEGF-ELT Scale Total	352	340	785	654.60	97.75	81.82

According to Table 2, it is seen that the self-efficacy beliefs of English teachers towards the education of the gifted are around 80 out of 100 in both sub-dimensions and total scores of the scale. Therefore, it can be stated that teachers' self-efficacy belief scores are high.

In order to determine whether the self-efficacy beliefs of English teachers for the education of the gifted differ significantly according to age groups, it was examined whether the groups met the normality assumptions. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the normality assumptions were not met. Therefore, the Kruskal-Wallis test was applied and the results were presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3
English Language Teachers' Self-efficacy Levels According to Their Ages

Sub-scales	Age groups	N	Rank Average	Chi-square
Classroom	Young	57	161.94	5.251
	Middle Aged	247	174.19	
	Advanced Aged	48	205.67	
Preparation	Young	57	150.73	4.401
	Middle Aged	247	181.03	
	Advanced Aged	48	183.77	
Total	Young	57	152.79	5.095
	Middle Aged	247	177.99	
	Advanced Aged	48	196.98	

As seen in Table 3 self-efficacy beliefs of English teachers towards the education of the gifted increased with age in terms of both sub-dimensions and the average rank of the total scores. As a result of the analysis, no significant difference was found between the mean rank of the groups.

In order to determine whether the self-efficacy beliefs of English teachers for the education of the gifted differ significantly according to professional seniority, it was examined whether the groups met the normality assumptions. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the normality assumptions were not met. Therefore, the Kruskal-Wallis test was applied and the results are presented below.

Table 4
English Language Teachers' Self-efficacy Levels According to Their Professional Seniority

Sub-scales	Seniority Groups	N	Rank Average	Chi-Square
Classroom	Low Seniority	55	169.18	4.758
	Middle Seniority	254	172.75	
	High Seniority	43	207.99	
Preparation	Low Seniority	55	155.23	3.418
	Middle Seniority	254	178.62	
	High Seniority	43	191.20	
Total	Low Seniority	55	158.54	4.681
	Middle Seniority	254	175.87	
	High Seniority	43	203.17	

As shown in Table 4, it is seen that the mean ranks in both sub-dimensions and total scores increase with the the level of seniority. However, as a result of the analysis, no significant difference was found between the groups.

In order to understand whether there is a significant difference between self-efficacy scores according to gender, the normality assumption was checked and it was determined that the entire scale and its sub-dimensions did not meet the normality assumptions. As a result, Mann-Whitney U test was performed and the results are given in below.

Table 5
English Language Teachers' Self-efficacy Levels According to Gender

Sub-scales	Gender	N	Rank Average	Row Sum	Mann-Whitney U Values
Classroom	Female	291	175.23	50990.50	8504.5
	Male	61	182.58	11137.50	
Preparation	Female	291	180.45	52512.00	7725
	Male	61	157.64	9616.00	

Total	Female	291	178.08	51820.50	8416.5
	Male	61	168.98	10307.50	

As seen in Table 5 examination of class sub-dimension revealed that while the average rank of the men is high, the mean rank of the women in preparation and total is higher. As a result of the analysis, no significant difference was found according to gender in the whole scale and its sub-dimensions.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the level of self-efficacy beliefs of English teachers towards the education of gifted students and the differences according to age, professional seniority and gender were examined. his study was carried out with the participation of 352 volunteer English teachers working in Turkey in the 2020-2021 educational. In this study with the survey method, the data was collected with the scale "English teachers' self-efficacy in teaching gifted students" that researchers developed.

The study first aimed to determine the level of self-efficacy beliefs of English teachers towards gifted education. As a result, teachers' self-efficacy perceptions were determined high in terms of items, dimensions and in the whole scale. Considering that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs positively affect their classroom management skills (Poulou, Reddy, & Dudek, 2018), it can be said that the high self-efficacy beliefs of English teachers regarding gifted students are related to teachers' ensuring that gifted students are successful.

Studies show that teachers with high self-efficacy levels experience professional satisfaction more compared to other teachers; moreover, it was also stated that teachers with high self-efficacy levels experienced lower levels of work-related stress (Caprara, Scabini, & Barni, 2011). Considering the positive effects of supporting and increasing teachers' self-efficacy levels on both teachers and students, teacher self-efficacy still emerges in the field as a subject that needs to be studied (Bandura, 1977).

To add more, studies related to literature mention that variables such as age and professional experience are among the factors that determine teachers' self-efficacy (Shaukat, Vishnumolakala, & Bustami, 2018). As the second aim of the study, the self-efficacy values of English teachers were examined in the light of the age variable. As a result, it was determined that as the age of the teachers increased, their self-confidence scores towards self-efficacy beliefs also increased. Considering these findings, it can be said that the self-efficacy of English teachers increase as they get older.

Third aim of the study was to examine the professional seniority of teachers. As a result of the analysis, no differentiation was observed between self-efficacy scores according to seniority levels. In a previous study, it was stated that teachers' self-efficacy is in a non-linear relationship with professional experience (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). As defined by Wolters and Daughtery (2007) when teachers' professional experience increases, their self-efficacy levels also increase. Studies on the relationship between professional experience and teacher self-efficacy show that a clear consensus on the subject has not been reached. Therefore, further investigation on this subject should be done in the future.

The final purpose of the study was to examine teachers' self-efficacy scores according to the gender variable. As a result of the analysis, it was seen that there was no significant difference according to gender groups. These findings are similar to the study of Odanga, Raburu, and Aloka (2015).

Limitations and Recommendations

In previous studies, it has been stated that supporting students academically, emotionally and socially contributes to their abilities, their confidence and motivation (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, & Osher, 2020). The results obtained in this study show that these students can have a significant support in their abilities, confidence and motivation, since they indicate that teachers have high self-efficacy and therefore have a high potential to support gifted individuals academically, emotionally and socially. It is thought that this study, which was prepared to determine the self-efficacy levels of English teachers, may be effective in preventing the inadequacies that may be experienced in the education of gifted students. Identifying the subjects teachers show low self-efficacy scores and providing in-service training on these subjects can play an important role in the education of gifted students.

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Appendix 2

Self-Efficacy Scale for Education of Gifted Students-English Teachers (SESEGF-ELT) – Turkish Version

İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Üstün Yetenekli Öğrencilere İlişkin Özyeterlikleri Anketi ve Ölçeği												
Yaşınız: Cinsiyetiniz: Kadın () Erkek () Meslekte Çalışma Yılıınız:.....												
Açıklama: Bu ölçek İngilizce öğretmenlerinin üstün yeteneklilere ilişkin öz-yeterliklerinin belirlenmesi amacıyla geliştirilmiştir. Aşağıda üstün yeteneklilere ilişkin öz-yeterlik seviyelerini içeren bir dizi cümle yer almaktadır. Her bir cümleyi okuyup yeterliliklerinizi tanımlama oranını bırakılan boşluğa yazınız. Oranları aşağıda verilen ölçekten yararlanarak saptayabilir ve istediğiniz sayıyı yazabilirsiniz. Aşağıdaki durumlarla ilgili olarak kendi durumunuzu oran(%) olarak yazınız.												
		Asla			Bazen				Her zaman			
		%0	%10	%20	%30	%40	%50	%60	%70	%80	%90	%100
No	Maddeler											Yüzde
1	İngilizce dersinde sınıftaki üstün yetenekli öğrencimi fark edebilirim.											
2	İngilizce dersinde sınıftaki üstün yetenekli öğrencimin olumlu sınıf atmosferini bozan olumsuz davranışlarını engelleyebilirim.											
3	Üstün yetenekli öğrencimin İngilizce öğrenmeye değer vermesini sağlayabilirim.											
4	Üstün yetenekli öğrencimin İngilizce dersinde sınıf arkadaşları ile uyum içerisinde olmamasına neden olan durumları ortadan kaldırabilirim.											
5	İngilizce dersinde üstün yetenekli öğrencim için değerlendirme biçimlerini farklılaştırabilirim.											
6	Üstün yetenekli öğrencim için Bireysel Eğitim Programı (BEP) hazırlayabilirim.											
7	Üstün yetenekli öğrencim için hazırladığım Bireysel Eğitim Programını (BEP) uygulayabilirim.											
8	İngilizce dersinde üstün yetenekli öğrenci için öğretim materyali geliştirebilirim.											

Appendix 3

Ethical Committee Permittance


T.C.
TRAKYA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER ARAŞTIRMALARI ETİK
KURULU

Oturum Sayısı: 2021/05
KARAR NO: 2021.05.35
Karar Tarihi: 26.05.2021

Akademik Danışmanlığımı Üniversitemiz Eğitim Fakültesi Öğretim Üyesi Doç.Dr. Gökhan ILGAZ'ın yaptığı, Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İnterdisipliner Engelli Çalışmaları Anabilim Dalı Engelli Çalışmaları Bölümü Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi İrem GIRGİN tarafından, Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'nda değerlendirilmek üzere gönderilen "İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Üstün Yeteneklilerin Öğretimine İlişkin Özyeterliklerinin Belirlenmesi" başlıklı araştırma dosyası incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın gerçekleştirilmesinde etik bilimsel standartlar açısından sakınca bulunmadığına mevcut an oy birliği / oy çokluğu ile karar verilmiştir.


Prof. Dr. Ayhan GENÇLER
Başkan
Araştırma ile ilişkisi var yok
Toplantı Katılım evet hayır

Prof. Dr. Rıdvan CANIM
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Edebiyat Fakültesi
Araştırma ile ilişkisi var yok
Toplantı Katılım evet hayır

Prof. Mehmet UZUN
Üye
Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi
Araştırma ile ilişkisi var yok
Toplantı Katılım evet hayır

Prof. Dr. Gökhan ILGAZ
Üye
Roman Dili ve Kültürü Arş.Enst.
Araştırma ile ilişkisi var yok
Toplantı Katılım evet hayır

Prof. Ahmet Hamdi ZAFER
Üye
Devlet Konservatuarı
Araştırma ile ilişkisi var yok
Toplantı Katılım evet hayır

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Toplantı Katılım evet hayır

