



Research Article

Being a parent of a gifted child: Deliberate Indifference Theory¹

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Abstract

This theoretical work aims to explain the psychological states of families with gifted children in the field of gifted education. In gifted education, research has primarily focused on the phenomenon of giftedness and the characteristics of gifted individuals. However, the topic of families with gifted children has been somewhat neglected. Especially at the beginning of the 21st century, theorists like Renzulli and Sternberg have emphasized wisdom, which has made environmental and contextual factors important in gifted education. Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration fills a significant gap in self-psychology and also draws a map to reach the social capital in Renzulli and Sternberg, especially in relation to the overexcitability condition, which is common in gifted individuals. While this is happening, the families of gifted children cannot remain passive. There has been no previous research on the psychological states that families of gifted children go through. The five-stage Grief model proposed for the families of children with autism and intellectual disabilities cannot be applied to the families of gifted children. In this article, I discuss the nine stages that I believe the families of gifted children go through, as mentioned in my previous book. These nine stages are framed as: Surprise, Anxiety About Not Being Able to Meet the Child's Needs, Facing Reality, The Euphoria of Diagnosis, Seeking Information and Help, Despair and Rebellion, Awareness and Maturity, Relaxation and Automatic Gear, The Desire to Support Others. In these nine stages, the families of gifted children experience changing psychological states due to internal and external factors. In these nine stages of parenting development for a family with a gifted child, the two psychological structures of deliberateness and indifference undergo changes, and in the final stage, 'The Desire to Support Others,' they reach a new and resolute state of mind known as 'Deliberate Indifference.' In this state, the family will make a positive contribution to the gifted child's areas of ability and wisdom development. It is recommended to increase research on the families of gifted children from the perspective of the Deliberate Indifference Theory.

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Introduction

In the education of gifted children, it can be observed that the priority of the topics focused on by researchers and educational psychologists is primarily on children and their psychology, followed by teachers (and therefore their training) and competencies, and finally on families and their attitudes. However, the issue of whether the families of gifted children undergo any changes or developments while raising them has often not been discussed. This situation, however, has been defined as the five-stage Grief model for families of children with autism or intellectual disabilities (Kübler-Ross, 2009). The lack of focus on this issue was first addressed in my book on families of gifted children, where I discussed the stages they go through (Tortop, 2020). Now, shifting the focus from gifted children to their families, I am proposing a new theory on the psychological development of families of gifted children in light of my observations

¹ A part of this study was presented orally at the 5th International Congress on Gifted Youth and Sustainability of Education (ICGYSE) on December 28, 2024.

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and experiences, based on the necessity of a supportive theory for the latest theories of two major theorists on giftedness, Renzulli and Sternberg.

I compiled 18 myths about gifted education in my book *Differentiated Instruction for Gifted Students* (Tortop, 2024). One of them is, "Let's leave gifted children to their own devices, they will succeed on their own." Families of gifted children definitely know that this is not true. It is also known that this corresponds to the "elitist" view in Gagne's (1991) scale of attitudes toward the education of gifted children. However, researcher Hanna David, who has been counseling gifted children and their families for years, mentions in her article that families come for counseling with the statement, "I just want my child to be happy" (David, 2013). However, it is known that giftedness, when coupled with another disability or dual exceptionalities, makes happiness a difficult psychological situation for gifted children.

As in many developing countries, in Turkey, an IQ score above 130 is accepted as the diagnostic criterion for giftedness. Due to the ease of some intelligence tests and ceiling effects, students categorized as Mildly Gifted and Moderately Gifted are included in support education programs according to Feldhusen's (1993) classification. These students generally do not face difficulty in their education and upbringing. In fact, children of parents with a good university education, who have good interactions with their children, usually pass IQ tests without any diagnosis in these categories. Families of children in this group are typically educated professionals such as doctors, engineers, and managers, with normal to above-average income levels. They tend to provide their children with private lessons, support preschool education, and engage their children in sports, arts, and language education. The education of highly gifted children (with IQs above 145) and children with dual exceptionalities is quite difficult and complex. Moreover, being the parent of highly gifted children in these categories is not easy at all. Even regulations regarding the diagnostic procedures for children with dual exceptionalities are insufficient (Tortop and Ilgaz, 2021). In recent research on the parenting experiences of families of gifted children, the emotional state of exhaustion has been identified as a key theme (Peebles, Mendaglio, and McCowan, 2023)

Family as an Environmental Factor in Theories of Giftedness

Giftedness theories attempt to explain how the phenomenon of giftedness occurs. In most of these theories, except for Simonton's emergent development theory, environmental factors are mentioned. For example, Tannenbaum's See Star theory (1983) and Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT) (1985). While Renzulli's Three-Ring Theory of Giftedness includes components such as creativity and task commitment, which may seem like personal traits, environmental factors also play a significant role in their development. According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory, one of the most important layers in shaping our behavior is the microsystem. All of these theories emphasize the family environment as the primary setting for the significant interactions of gifted individuals. However, a systematic analysis by Jolly and Matthews (2012) sadly highlights the lack of literature on parenting gifted children.

There are very few programs worldwide related to the education of families of gifted children. One such program is SENG (Social Emotional Needs of Gifted Children), developed in the USA. Alongside organizations like SENG (2024) that support families with gifted children, it is also necessary to develop family education programs to help these families provide the right parenting for their children. Apart from this, the family education program I developed is the *TEVAZU* (Research-Enriched Practical Program in the Context of Experience Interaction for Gifted Families). While naming this program, I used the word *tevazu* (humility) in Turkish. However, I can say that this program follows the 'Family to Family' model, where interaction and sharing are central (Tortop, 2016). The reason for this is that I discovered that families of gifted children actually develop their own personalities through interaction with one another. This development can be compared to the Theory of Positive Disintegration. Similarly, like Maslow's theory of self-actualization, both the gifted child and their family contribute to the development of their personalities."

Theory of Positive Disintegration

Dabrowski's books (1964, 1967, 1970, 1972) discuss the famous Theory of Positive Disintegration, which explains personality development in individuals. This theory has later been frequently used in understanding the concept of

giftedness and the gifted personality. In this theory, the five levels involve a process of integration and disintegration of the human ego, ultimately leading to reintegration. For an individual to achieve this, their body, and thus their brain, must be extremely sensitive. Dabrowski identified five areas of heightened sensitivity (Ackerman, 1997). These areas of over-sensitivity are: psychomotor, sensory, imaginal, intellectual, and emotional. For example, an individual may remember their experiences with an extraordinary memory, and what they set as their life ideal becomes their guiding direction. In situations where deviations may occur, their powerful memory leads them back to the signs that shape the ideal, playing a balancing role.

Dabrowski's five-stage model, which attempts to explain personality development, can also be seen in religious and mystical literature (e.g., Sufism). For instance, Nixon (1983) tried to explain the practices of sages, saints, and mystics in reaching religious personality ideals through meditation using Dabrowski's theory. He has examined in detail how the stages in Dabrowski's theory are found as similar mystical stages in Christianity (Nixon, 1989), Hinduism (Nixon, 1995), and Buddhism (Nixon, 2000). In fact, all religions share the ideal of guiding individuals through stages in the relationship between God and the Self, ultimately leading to a peaceful soul. For example, In the holy book of the Qur'an, there are stages referred to as *Nafs* (self), which include *Nafs-i Ammara*³, *Nafs-i Lawwama*⁴, *Nafs-i Mutmainna*⁵, *Nafs-i Raziya*⁶, and *Nafs-i Marziya*⁷. These stages are strikingly similar to Dabrowski's five-stage personality development. The most notable and distinctive aspect of Dabrowski's theory is his identification of the necessary 'overexcitability' areas in this development. This journey of personal growth does not encompass everyone; in fact, it is limited to individuals with specific characteristics. Many researchers who recognized this as a privileged group have incorporated this theory into giftedness studies. So, where did theories of giftedness go wrong? Initially, the theories attempting to explain 'giftedness' appear to have been influenced by the scientific and technological developments of their respective eras. For example, the invention and development of computers and the acceleration of 'creativity' research led to the shaping of many giftedness theories with these components. However, in the 2000s, efforts to revise giftedness theories with a focus on wisdom began to emerge.

Wisdom in Gifted Individuals

When looking at gifted individuals and their education throughout human history, it can be seen that nations used this human potential to gain superiority over others. During the tumultuous times of the 20th century, the education of gifted individuals became a focal point in the competition between superpower states in fields like science, space exploration, and defense (Stoeger, 2017). However, in the early 2000s, due to Sternberg's (2003) statement that "schools do not teach wisdom," the concept of gifted individuals becoming wise people found its place in theories, including Sternberg's (1998) *The Balance Theory of Wisdom* and Renzulli's concept of "Social Capital." From this perspective, the final stage of gifted individuals' personal development and their attainment of peace should be viewed in relation to their ability to contribute to humanity. When attention is given, the new revisions of giftedness theories align with Dabrowski's TPD ideal in the final stage of personality development.

Parenting Stages of Families with Gifted Children

The stages described by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (2009) in her book, Denial, Angry, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance (DABDA), are generally modeled for families of children with special needs (such as autism, emotional-behavioral disorders, or intellectual disabilities). Gifted children are legally considered individuals with special educational needs. In the higher education systems of many countries, giftedness research is placed under the department

³ It can be translated as the commanding ego, the lowest level of ego in a person, which directs the individual towards evil.

⁴ It can be translated as the blamed ego. At this level, the individual feels remorse for their bad actions and blames themselves. This stage is an important step in spiritual maturation

⁵ It can be translated as the calm and peaceful ego. In this stage, the individual has purified themselves from the desires of their ego and has entered a state of complete acceptance of goodness.

⁶ It can be translated as the satisfied, accepting ego. At this level, the individual does not object to difficulties and hardships. They surrender their ego to goodness or to God.

⁷ It can be translated as the appreciated, content ego. This stage is the level where the individual reaches the highest maturity. At this level, the individual has completely abandoned their own desires, attained absolute goodness and the will of God, and achieved complete harmony and peace.

of educational psychology. It should not be overlooked that gifted children, like other groups with special educational needs, are individuals who require special education. Therefore, the stages experienced by families of gifted children should be modeled, just as in the case of children with other special needs. However, this will differ from the five-stage Grief model, because the initial psychological states experienced by families are not anger and denial, but emotions like excitement and happiness.

During the years I worked with gifted children (2008-2016), I noticed that families go through certain stages. I first defined these stages, and presented them in my book *Raising Gifted Children: Current Problems* (Tortop, 2020). The purpose of defining these stages and setting their boundaries is to provide appropriate counseling for families. I am presenting these stages again, as I did in the book, with some revisions (Tortop, 2020: 58-60).

First Stage: Surprise

The first stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when they encounter the early signs in their child, which I described in my book as follows:

This stage covers the period starting with the child's birth. The child begins walking and talking early, and has even started to associate some symbols seen on TV. (For example, the child in Little Man Tate who notices the brand of a plate). This period of surprise is filled with bittersweet happiness and excitement. This is because the parent is confronted with a child unlike any they have seen before. The child's unique situation also tolerates their difficulty in sleeping and the lack of sleep. This stage may continue until the child is 3-4 years old (Tortop, 2020:58).

In this first stage, the internal factors affecting families with a gifted child include emotional intensity, feelings of uncertainty, and excitement, while the external factors may include comments from close relatives and feedback received from institutions.

Second Stage: Anxiety About Not Being Able to Meet the Child's Needs

The second stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when they begin to recognize the child's exceptional characteristics and experience the anxiety of not being able to meet their needs as parents. In my book, I described this stage as follows:

This stage may begin either intertwined with or immediately after the period that starts with surprise. The family tries to satisfy the child's intelligence, which absorbs everything like a sponge. Books are read, sets are bought, and if there are courses, the idea of starting them arises. During this period, due to the child's age, there may not be much depth of knowledge, and the family may manage. However, there come questions to which, even if the answers are known, the challenge of how to explain them arises. (During this process, I recommend the Thought Provoking Question Cards I have written). Seeing the child's rapid development compared to other children increases the anxiety about how to act in the future (Tortop, 2020:58).

In this stage, the internal factors affecting families of gifted children include anxiety about not being able to meet their children's needs, fear, and self-questioning, while external factors may include pressure from the education system and institutions to take action regarding their children, as well as efforts from educational systems and institutions to provide resources and support to the family.

Third Stage: Facing Reality

The third stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when they attempt to understand the reality of their child being different, special (gifted). In my book, I described this stage as follows:

The family has somehow acquired information about giftedness. They wonder if their child has this trait. Perhaps their child is indeed a gifted one. Having such a child is something to be proud of. However, there is some hesitation. The child may not be gifted after all. This causes uncertainty about whether or not to administer an intelligence test. This stage, which begins around the ages of 5-6, continues into elementary school. The family may also face pressure from teachers and psychological counselors. Many people may suggest having an intelligence test performed. At this stage, the family faces two choices: not administering an intelligence test and continuing with normal life, or having the intelligence test. (I will continue with the case where the intelligence test was administered, though I want to note that I do not recommend having the test done.) (Tortop, 2020:58).

In this stage, the internal factors affecting families of gifted children include the intensity of confronting reality and the stress created by this situation, while external factors may include increasing complaints from the gifted child's school, pressures, such as the family being urged to take action and, in particular, to have an intelligence test performed.

Fourth Stage: The Euphoria of Diagnosis

The fourth stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when the family has an intelligence test performed on their child, and the diagnosis of 'gifted child' is given. In my book, I described this stage as follows:

After the intelligence test is administered, a sweet period of euphoria begins in the family. During this time, the family takes pride in their child's giftedness, as if it were their own success. The control over the child's development, which had previously been uncertain, now seems to follow a new, clearer path. However, the family may be deceived into thinking that the path is smooth after the intelligence test, which leads to a euphoric state. In reality, the path is not smooth; it only appears to be. Even if it appears straight, it is still full of pebbles and potholes. This stage should be kept short. As in the TEVAZU (Research-Enriched Practical Program in the Context of Experience Interaction for Gifted Families), humility and boasting should be avoided, regardless of how valuable the situation may seem. We should not forget that children are not our possessions; they are gifts entrusted to us, and we are merely helping in their lives. (I suggest reading and reflecting on Khalil Gibran's poem "Your Children Are Not Your Children"). (Tortop, 2020:58). In this stage, the family should act with humility.

In this stage, the internal factors affecting families of gifted children include pride in their child's abilities and the desire to boast about their child's achievements as if they were their own. External factors may include the school of the gifted child accepting the situation and making efforts to implement measures related to the issue.

Fifth Stage: Seeking Information and Help

The fifth stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when the family is seeking information and help. In my book, I described this stage as follows:

During this period, the family searches through many websites related to giftedness. They initially assume that the information they find online is accurate. They start hearing certain names and encountering organizations that claim to support gifted children, but which are primarily established for profit. They come across individuals with a commercial approach, writers who claim to have gifted children and publish books, individuals offering educational programs but who are not educators, university-run educational programs on special education that lack a true understanding of the field, self-service training programs resembling five-star hotels, psychologists claiming to work with gifted children, private tutors who say "I've helped those kids get into the best high schools," coaches, institutions, and books and talks by academics who are not specialized in the field, among others. This stage lasts a long time, often until the child goes to university. During this time, the family is very susceptible to being misled and deceived. In this period, the family should focus on learning from the right books and articles. My advice at this stage is to access scientific and evidence-based sources. For example, the Journal of Gifted Education and Creativity. During this stage, it is important to establish non-profit connections with other families of gifted children. Sharing information and experiences with trustworthy families can be very beneficial. (Tortop, 2020:59)

In this stage, the internal factors affecting families of gifted children include their efforts to meet their children's needs and their hunger for information and experience. External factors may include the deficiencies in the infrastructure of the educational institutions, and the relentless requests from institutions such as schools or associations to contact and offer support to the family.

Sixth Stage: Despair and Rebellion

The sixth stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when they fall into despair and become rebellious, thinking that they are unable to do anything for their child. In my book, I described this stage as follows:

The phase of euphoria from previous stages has started to fade. Headaches, gaps in the search for information, and the increasing complaints from the child's teacher and classmates about the child's gradual struggles in school push the family into a state of despair. Sometimes, they hear things like, "This child has ADHD," and are pressured to start medication. Other times, they hear "He/she doesn't talk, doesn't listen in class." They wonder, "Has he/she gone into depression?" If there is high-functioning autism, serious criticisms arise about forming friendships and the child's loneliness. The family visits psychologists. Psychologists who do not have a strong understanding of giftedness

suggest interventions based on what they apply to typical children. Visiting such psychologists during this stage can harm the gifted child. Even if they are well-intentioned, putting the child through this process can wear them down. This is because a gifted child is extremely sensitive, and words from a psychologist, doctor, or psychiatrist can leave scars that will never be erased from their mind. The child will later recount the pain caused by these experiences. Furthermore, the child's intelligence can also manipulate these psychologists, which means entering into an unhelpful process is futile. My recommendation at this stage is to work with educators and counselors who have a deep understanding of gifted children and their processes. (Tortop, 2020:59).

In this stage, the internal factors affecting families of gifted children include the formation of prejudices, myths, and misunderstandings, feelings of uselessness, and a desire to try everything in a hasty manner. External factors may include the inability of institutions to fully support the gifted child (lack of resources), and the difficulty in finding a good psychologist.

Seventh Stage: Awareness and Maturity

The seventh stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when the family becomes more mature regarding gifted education. In my book, I described this stage as follows:

During this stage, families begin to come together with others who are experiencing the same challenges. The negative aspects of labeling have begun to turn positive. Information and experiences are shared. Opportunities are pursued together. Some positive educational experiences begin to satisfy both the family and the child. The child starts to show achievements. This situation has now become normal for the family. The family begins to make better and more accurate choices in their search for information, readings, and educational programs. The earlier this stage begins, the better the child's development and happiness will be. (Tortop, 2020:60)

In this stage, the internal factors affecting families of gifted children include the development of the ability to make joint decisions, the happiness of seeing their child's continued success, and the development of the discernment to choose the right resources and institutions. External factors may include institutions, environments, educational opportunities, and chances that properly develop the gifted child.

Eighth Stage: Relaxation and Automatic Gear

The eighth stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when the family feels relieved in raising their gifted child and when everything becomes easier. In my book, I described this stage as follows:

During this stage, families begin to come together with others At this stage, the family has become "ONE." The child is aware of many things. The family has become capable of comparing and selecting the most correct and best choices for the child's development. During this period, some families and children begin to think that the conditions in our country are not sufficient for a gifted child. International competitions, schools, universities, and research centers begin to attract the child's and the family's attention. Detailed investigations into the best universities and their departments in the country continue. At this stage, the ability to make accurate decisions provides relief for the family. Self-control is working well. At this stage, the family should not experience any issues in bonding with the child. They should monitor the child's choice of friends, prioritize ethical values, and not neglect character education. During this period, good research on foreign universities should be conducted, and counseling should be sought. Rash and hasty decisions should be avoided. (Tortop, 2020:60)

In this stage, the internal factors affecting families of gifted children include the full development of the ability to make joint decisions and the sense of relief from the accuracy of the decisions their children make. External factors may include the correct networks for the careers of gifted children.

Ninth Stage: The Desire to Support Others

The ninth stage experienced by the family of a gifted child is the period when the family, in a wise manner, is in a position to help others. In my book, I described this stage as follows:

During this stage, the family feels the need to share their experiences, what they have learned, and provide support to those going through similar stages. At this stage, the family should not be overly insistent for others, and should allow other families to experience certain things on their own. (Tortop, 2020:61).

In this stage, the internal factors affecting families of gifted children include an increase in the desire to help others, while external factors may include the establishment of supportive alliances with other families of gifted children.

Deliberate Indifference Theory

In 2020, at my book in which I discussed the 9 stages experienced by families with gifted children I have also observed that the parenting development in these stages occurs with certain factors and structures.

The mood of deliberateness/consciousness and indifference is in a constant state of change

Due to genetic transmission, families of gifted children also tend to have higher intelligence and educational levels. This may lead them to believe that their actions and decisions are conscious and highly aware. Even though they read and research extensively, there are many myths about the education of gifted children, as is the case with many other topics (Tortop, 2018). Furthermore, pedagogical practices or approaches typically preferred for normal individuals may not be useful, and in some cases, may even be harmful for gifted children. This is explained by Siaud-Facchin (2018) due to the psychological differences of gifted children from others. For instance, in interventions for conditions like depression, the manipulation of the gifted child may not lead to progress. This could also cause the child to enter a more negative psychological state. In this respect, families with gifted children are like sailors who, after discovering new islands, realize that the usual instructions they had read before, based on old guides, differ from their own discoveries. This leads them to constantly reach new and evolving levels of consciousness. This change, in turn, leads to the continuous perception of higher consciousness levels and the evolution of new consciousness through changed knowledge and conceptual structures as they progress through the nine stages I mentioned earlier.

In families that are able to reach the final stage, a sense of relief emerges with a genuine and determined state of consciousness. I tried to explain this relief through the concept of 'indifference.' This state of mind can be described as having a minimal level of anxiety and disinterest. It can be seen in Figure 1 that this state of indifference undergoes changes throughout the nine stages experienced by the family. The indifference present at different levels in every family before the first stage decreases until the fourth stage (The Euphoria of Diagnosis). After this stage, indifference and disengagement gradually increase, peaking at the final stage.

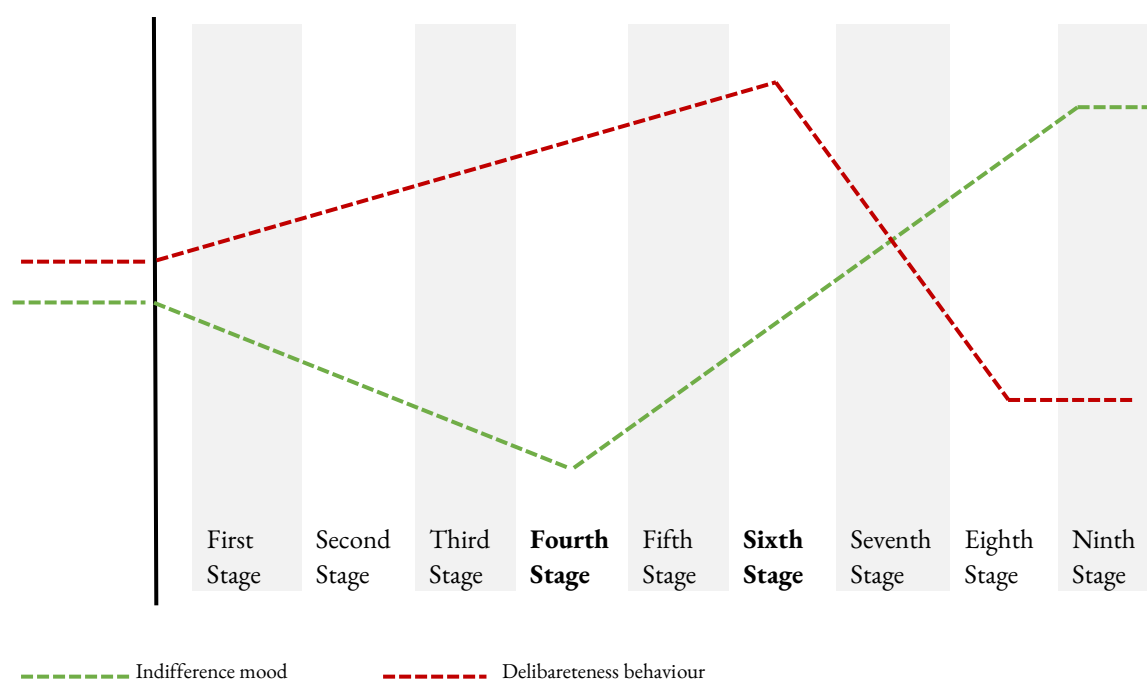


Figure 1. The change in Indifference mood and Deliberateness behavior according to the 9 stages experienced by families of gifted children

In the ninth stage (The Desire to Support Others), in this determined state, the mood explained by the concept of Indifference is accompanied by the intentional and conscious nature of its enactment. Before the nine-stage parenting developmental process, families of gifted children may have a repertoire of intentional or conscious behaviors at different

levels. However, starting from the first stage (Surprise), there is a significant increase in the actions taken by the family, sudden moves, multiple and insecure attempts, which continue until the sixth stage (Despair and Rebellion). From this stage, there is a decline until the eighth stage (Relaxation and Automatic Gear) (See Figure 1). In the ninth stage (The Desire to Support Others), some families may either stop or become determined. In others, it may reach a dimension of self-sacrifice, as seen in Sternberg's (2003) Balance Theory of Wisdom. However, with the experiences and knowledge gained in these stages, I have observed the desire to open educational or counseling institutions in many families at this level.

Deliberateness/consciousness and indifference mood are influenced by both internal and external factors in their realization

Later, by analyzing the fundamental dynamics behind the inability to experience these 9 stages, I believe that the family of a gifted child, similar to Dabrowski's personality development and Maslow's self-actualization, goes through certain stages. The mother and father figures of the gifted child show changes in the mood of consciousness and indifference during these stages. Some internal and external factors affect the emergence of these psychological states. Now, let's illustrate these 9 stages in Table 1.

Table 2. Nine Stages of parenting of gifted children and the internal and external factors at each stage

| Stage | Stage Name | Internal Factors | External Factors |
|---------------|--|---|--|
| First Stage | Surprise | * Emotional intensity (anxiety, surprise) * Uncertainty due to lack of information | * Comments and expectations from close relatives * Initial feedback from institutions |
| Second Stage | Anxiety About Not Being Able to Meet the Child's Needs | * Fear of not being able to meet the child's special needs * Parents questioning their parenting abilities | * Effort to access different sources * Guidance and pressures from the education system |
| Third Stage | Facing Reality | * Realizing the severity of the situation * Difficulty in decision-making due to stress and conflict | * Increase in complaints from the child's close social circle * Psychologists beginning interventions * Pressure to administer an intelligence test |
| Fourth Stage | The Euphoria of Diagnosis | * Pride in having a child diagnosed with giftedness * Thinking of it as their own success | * Acceptance of this phenomenon by schools and other institutions |
| Fifth Stage | Seeking Information and Help | * Effort to understand the child's needs * Experiencing a hunger for information | * Request for systemic support from institutions * Lack of infrastructure * Relentless follow-up and discomfort caused by individuals and institutions claiming to offer support |
| Sixth Stage | Despair and Rebellion | * Failure to fully grasp the situation * Deepening feelings of inadequacy and uselessness * Increased desire to try everything | * The inability of any institution to fully support the child * Difficulty finding a good psychologist |
| Seventh Stage | Awareness and Maturity | * Starting to make joint decisions with the child * Happiness in seeing the child's achievements * Ability to choose the right resources and environments | * Environments and opportunities that develop the child * Resources recommending the right interventions |
| Eighth Stage | Relaxation and Automatic Gear | * Being able to make decisions together with the child * Experiencing the comfort of allowing the child to make their own decisions | * Formation of the right networks for the child's career |
| Ninth Stage | The Desire to Support Others | * Desire to help others | * Formation of family alliances |

It is not possible for every family to reach the final stage in the 9-stage developmental parenting levels shown in Table 1 for the gifted child. The occurrence of each stage may not always be clearly defined. Both internal and external factors play a significant role in the emergence of these stages. Even if families develop the skills to control internal factors, the situation in the country, city, and the existence of evidence-based and appropriate practices for gifted children in those areas will also have a substantial impact. In the pioneering studies of the development of gifted education, teacher-centered solutions that began with attitudes toward gifted children have now evolved to focus not only on attitudes but also on the competence to educate gifted children, with environmental factors playing a supportive role.

In the realization of wisdom and social capital, the family in the final stage becomes one of the most suitable environmental settings

The nine-stage developmental parenting process experienced by families of gifted children, influenced by internal and external factors, solidifies their conscious and indifferent state. This situation evolves like the entropy state in physics, meaning the most stable state, the condition of maximum disorder and minimum energy. In this state, the family reaches the maximum level of consciousness and intentionality in their actions and behaviors, and at the same time, they reach a minimum level of indifference in raising and intervening with their child. This situation actually represents the ideal family environment and family catalyst for raising a "Wise person" or a "Socio-capital" individual, as seen in Sternberg (2003) and Renzulli and colleagues' (2026) theories.

In conclusion, the Deliberate Indifference Theory is a theory that explains the conditions under which families of gifted children raise their children with the highest level of support, describing their evolutionary development, conscious and intentional behaviors, as well as their indifference and intervention with their children, and depicting the idealized-state of achieving a stable and deliberate state.

Conclusion

In the field of giftedness research, which begins with the understanding of the characteristics of gifted children, it is observed that there has been little focus on the families of gifted children and the parenting processes. The recent revisions in the theories of two important giftedness theorists (Renzulli and Sternberg) have actually directed educators and psychologists to focus on personal and moral development, which is also related to moral development, as outlined by Dabrowski. The concepts of wisdom and social capital in these new theoretical efforts cannot overlook the environment, and thus the closest environment, the family. Families of gifted children go through different psychological stages compared to families of children with other special educational needs (such as autism or intellectual disabilities). These stages have not been modeled until now, and I have described them for the first time. In the stages experienced by families of gifted children, framed by the nine stages, two psychological conditions show changes. These have been conceptualized as deliberateness/consciousness and indifference. The deliberateness and indifference states of gifted families change through various stages, eventually reaching the final stage (The Desire to Support Others).

It may not be possible for every gifted family to reach the ninth stage. In this process, families who reach the final stage become determined in this state. For these families, this state is known as "Deliberate Indifference," which is quite an interesting condition. This determined state of the family of a gifted child can be considered a necessary parenting condition for the wisdom and social capital of the gifted child, as found in other theories. The Deliberate Indifference Theory explains the stages experienced by families of gifted children. It may be more successful in explaining phenomena in developing countries. More observations and experimental studies can be conducted in this field

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