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REVIEW

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DERLEME

Açık Erişim

## Studies on Families of Gifted Children in Early Childhood in Türkiye<sup>1</sup> Türkiye'deki Erken Çocukluk Dönemi Üstün Yetenekli Çocukların Aileleri ile İlgili Çalışmalar

Hatice Çakır, Hacer Elif Dağlıoğlu

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine research conducted in Turkey between 2003 and 2023 on the families of young gifted children. The study employed a systematic literature review method. Research articles published in Türkiye or authored by Turkish researchers between 2003 and 2023 were searched using the Dergipark, Google Scholar, and ERIC databases, and 11 studies were deemed suitable for analysis. In this study, a systematic literature review and analysis of articles were carried out in accordance with the America Institute of Educational Sciences standards. The findings indicated that the reviewed studies primarily focused on preschool-aged children, although data from families of primary school children were often collected about their children's preschool years. The studies predominantly aimed to determine families' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions. The results highlighted the necessity of informing families about the development and the education of their gifted children, emphasizing that such knowledge leads to positive outcomes. Although the studies on families of gifted children in Türkiye have increased in recent years, they seem to have focused on similar topics.

### ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, 2003-2023 yılları arasında Türkiye'deki üstün yetenekli çocukların aileleri üzerine yapılan araştırmaları incelemektir. Çalışma sistematik literatür taraması yöntemi kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. DergiPark, Google Scholar ve ERIC veri tabanları kullanılarak 2003-2023 yılları arasında Türkiye'de yayımlanmış veya Türk araştırmacılar tarafından yazılmış araştırma makaleleri taranmış ve 11 çalışma analiz için uygun görülmüştür. Seçilen bu çalışmalar, Makale İnceleme Formu kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Sistematik literatür tarama süreci Amerika Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü (IES) standartlarına uygun olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgular, incelenen çalışmaların öncelikle okul öncesi çağıdaki çocuklara odaklandığını ancak daha çok ilkökul çağındaki çocukların ailelerinden çocuklarının okul öncesi yılları hakkında veri toplandığını göstermiştir. Çalışmalar ağırlıklı olarak ailelerin algılarını, tutumlarını, inançlarını ve görüşlerini belirlemeyi amaçlamıştır. Sonuçlar ailelerin, üstün yetenekli çocuklarının gelişimi ve eğitimi hakkında bilgilendirilmesinin gerekliliğini ve bu tür bir bilgilendirmenin olumlu sonuçlara yol açtığını vurgulamıştır. Türkiye'de üstün yetenekli çocukların aileleri üzerine yapılan çalışmalar son yıllarda artmış olsa da benzer konulara odaklandıkları görülmektedir.

### Yazar Bilgileri

Hatice Çakır

Research Assistant, Gazi University, Ankara, Türkiye

[haticecakir@gazi.edu.tr](mailto:haticecakir@gazi.edu.tr)

Hacer Elif Dağlıoğlu

Prof. Dr., Gazi University, Ankara, Türkiye

[daglioglu@gazi.edu.tr](mailto:daglioglu@gazi.edu.tr)

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## Introduction

Early childhood is recognized as the most critical and rapid phase of human development. During this period, children's physical, cognitive, and social development progresses rapidly (Kuru Turaşlı, 2015; Wright & Ford, 2017). In this special and important period, children can present the first signals of their abilities and show performances that reveal their potential (Bildiren, Gür, Sağkal, & Özdemir, 2020). Early childhood is a critical period in determining whether this performance is ahead or behind typical development. Developing innate potential is only possible by identifying it in the early years and providing education opportunities accordingly (Kuru Turaşlı, 2015). In this context, early childhood appears as a much more critical period for gifted children who may advance further than others in one or more areas of development.

### Giftedness

Gifted children who perform developmentally ahead of their peers have always been subjects of curiosity from the past to the present. In line with this curiosity, each period has been defined differently. For example, while they were described as "gifted" in the early 20th century when the determination was made only through intelligence tests, this definition evolved into "gifted" and "talented" over time (Dağlıoğlu, 2015). Today, these children, who are defined as "gifted" and "special talents", are expressed as individuals with high intellectual skills, displaying superior talent in artistic and leadership fields, and therefore need a different education outside the standard education system (National Association for Gifted Children [NAGC], 2019). It is possible for gifted children to have some signals of giftedness in early childhood. These signals can be summarized as walking in the early years, being able to hold one's head up earlier than one's peers, speaking early or not speaking until full sentences, being ahead of one's peers in cognitive development, curiosity, and having an imaginary friend (Davis, Rimm & Siegle, 2011; Silverman, 2002). However, these signals may not be evident in every gifted child, and having one or more of these features should not be considered a definitive sign of giftedness, as the development of a gifted child is unique, like that of every child. However, in general, it can be argued that exceptionally talented children in early childhood developmental milestones earlier than their peers, especially in areas where their abilities and skills are high (Gross, 2004).

### The Challenges of Giftedness

As highlighted in the definitions of gifted children, the emphasis is placed on their traits that are more developed in relation to their peers. However, for teachers and families who strive to ensure that gifted children use their potential at the peak level, it is necessary to emphasize that, apart from the outstanding characteristics of these children, they may face many difficulties due to both their giftedness and the opportunities offered to them. One of the leading challenging issues for teachers and families is that children with this potential exhibit "asynchronous development" (Morelock, 1992). Asynchronous development means demonstrating exceptional performance in one or more developmental areas while performing at or below peers in other developmental areas. Research on this topic has shown that asynchronous development affects the self-image of gifted children and leads to social anxiety (Papandreou, Athinaïou, & Mavrogalou, 2023), families with such a child feel inadequate (Saranlı, 2017), and parents begin to search for meaning as a result of the advanced level of giftedness identified in their children (Guthrie, 2019).

An additional challenge encountered by educators and parents is that a gifted child may be "twice-exceptional," meaning they exhibit exceptional talents in certain areas while also experiencing challenges, including challenges related to learning, emotions, physical abilities, sensory processing, or development (Assouline, Foley Nicpon & Huber, 2006; Gierczyk & Hornby, 2021). This indicates that gifted children may also present with features such as cognitive disorders, learning difficulties, sensory-motor challenges, conditions like autism or Asperger syndrome, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, or social maladjustment (King, 2022; Rizza & Morrison, 2007). Children with these types of characteristics often have their own learning styles, contrary to popular beliefs. In twice-exceptional children, their learning styles may not be noticed by teachers because this existing disability of children who have not been determined to be gifted may mask their gifted potential (Trail, 2022). In this context, while the education of children defined as twice-exceptional is carried out with programs designed for gifted students, it also requires the inclusion of approaches for working with children who have learning disabilities or disorders in this process (Lee & Olenchak, 2015). Therefore, at this point, it is crucial that parents and teachers are conscious as well as establishing healthy communication between them. As a matter of fact, studies conducted in the field emphasize that teachers feel inadequate in supporting twice-exceptional children in the educational process and establishing qualified communication with their parents (Rowan & Townend, 2016) and that there are many problems in identifying these children (Wormald, 2011).

It can be thought that another challenging situation for teachers and parents is the determination of gifted children. Although gifted children have innate high-level talent(s), revealing and supporting these talents and taking the necessary special educational measures in this context should be considered a 'challenge'. At this point, the first step is to identify the gifted child. Identification of giftedness has been carried out by using different evaluations together (Sternberg, Todhunter, Litvak, & Sternberg, 2020). These evaluations include multiple measurement tools such as intelligence and ability tests, special ability exams, teacher observation reports, parent observation reports, portfolios, and achievement tests (Clark, 2002; Peters, Ottwein, Lee & Matthews, 2020; Pfeiffer, 2018; Sternberg & Ambrose, 2021). Research shows that parents and teachers frequently play a crucial role in identifying gifted children, especially during early childhood. However, it has been found that their decisions become more accurate when guided by an expert in the field. (Dağlıoğlu & Suveren, 2013; Smuthy, 2000).

### **Gifted Education in Türkiye**

Considering what has been stated so far, the most challenging situation at this point for teachers and families of gifted children is the limited availability of appropriate educational opportunities in the country where they live. It can be said that the education of gifted children in Türkiye dates back to the "Enderun Schools" established during the Ottoman Empire (Akkutay, 1984). However, today it can be said that we do not have an education policy regarding the education of gifted children, and that, unfortunately, not many opportunities are offered except for the Science and Art Centers (SAC), established by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) specifically for early childhood periods, where children receive support training according to their abilities and interests outside the education process, and some private schools. Children identified as having exceptional abilities in areas such as intellectual skills, visual arts, and music are selected for SACs from among those in the first three years of primary school, based on a schedule determined by the Ministry of National Education, taking into account their age and grade level. Later, children who are determined to be specially talented as a result of the exams and tests performed receive education in SACs outside the hours they receive formal

education during primary, secondary, and high school periods (MoNE, 2016). However, even though it is stated in the directive containing the working and functioning principles of SACs, especially in the preschool period, which is the first stage of the education process, SACs will be used in preschool education, it appears that no such practice has been implemented to date. In this context, it can be said that appropriate educational and developmental support for gifted children is quite inadequate for families and teachers in early childhood.

### **Families of Gifted Children**

As emphasized before, it is crucial for the families of gifted children, especially in early childhood, are in constant communication and act together with teachers, school administrators and other professionals throughout their entire educational life, from the identification stage to the education stage. In this context, it can be said that gifted children need a differentiated education with social support since they are not a homogeneous group (Sisk, 2009). It is necessary to provide relevant resources to gifted children so that they can become academics, artists, and athletes of the future (Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Worrell, 2011). In order to ensure continuity in education by providing these environments that gifted children need, it is necessary to determine their educational needs and educational goals, knowing that the development of each gifted child is different from others. Since families are one of the basic components of this process, parents have a great place in the education of gifted children. Many studies have shown that more successful results are achieved in children's development when the school and family cooperate in the preschool period (Van Voorhis, Maier, Epstein & Lloyd., 2013; Yang, Liu, Li, & Li, , 2022). While studies on families of typically developing children in early childhood can be frequently found in the literature, it is noteworthy that limited research has been conducted on the families of gifted children in this period.

Systematic literature reviews or systematic compilations involve the regular examination of relevant literature (Uman, 2011). Systematic literature review studies are carried out to provide a theoretical background for subsequent studies, to learn the scope of past studies, to learn what current studies offer on the subject of interest, and to answer practical questions (Okoli & Schabram, 2010). Reviewing these studies at regular intervals provides researchers, educators, and teachers with the opportunity to engage in scientific discussion and inquiry. The reason for this is that examining studies at regular intervals and determining their trends provides guidance for researchers for future studies in the relevant field (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Gifted children are the locomotive minds of a country. Due to their developmental differences, they need to be provided with opportunities suitable for their performance both at home and at school. For this reason, this study was carried out in order to reveal the studies carried out on the families of gifted children in early childhood in Türkiye in the last 20 years and to draw a road map for future studies in this context. In line with this view, answers to the following questions were sought in this research.

Studies on families of gifted children in early childhood in Türkiye in the last 20 years:

- (1) In which index was it published?
- (2) In which city was it held?
- (3) In which educational institutions was it conducted?
- (4) What are the subjects of the studies?
- (5) In what design were the studies conducted? Who constitutes the sample/study group of the studies?
- (6) By what method were the data of the studies collected and analyzed?

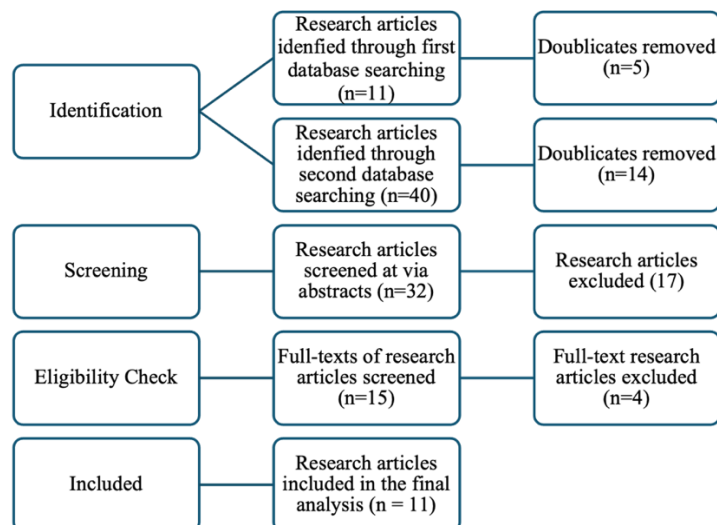
## Method

In this study, the SLR (Systematic Literature Review) method was used to find answers to the research questions. The five-step strategy recommended by IES (Institute of Educational Sciences) (2020) was used to conduct the systematic literature review. These strategies are:

- (1) Development of the review protocol,
- (2) Identification of relevant literature,
- (3) Screening the literature,
- (4) Reviewing the articles,
- (5) Reporting the findings.

### Data Collection

Data collection was carried out between April 24, 2023, and June 11, 2023, through TR Index, DergiPark, ERIC, and Google Scholar databases. The data collection process took place in two stages. In the first stage, criteria, including the review protocol for the articles found suitable for analysis were determined. The criteria specify that the study must involve families of gifted children during the early childhood period, should be conducted in Türkiye and by Turkish researchers, and should be a research article or full-text paper. In accordance with these criteria, a Boolean such as “gifted OR special intelligence OR special talent and preschool OR early childhood and family or parent” was used, and DergiPark (n=3), ERIC (n=3), Scholar (n=5) articles were accessed. The accessed studies were uploaded to the EndNote Reference Management Tool. Following the initial screening and review of the articles, six studies were found suitable for data analysis. Then, the Boolean "giftedness or superior intelligence or special talent and preschool or early childhood and family or parent" was used, and 40 studies were accessed in the DergiPark database. It was reloaded into the EndNote Reference Management Tool, and the matches with the first screening were removed. After removing the matches, 32 studies were reached. Summaries of the studies were reviewed, and studies that were not conducted with families of gifted children in early childhood were eliminated. Following the latest review, 11 articles were found suitable for review. Figure 1 shows the flowchart of the screening process.



**Figure 1.** Screening process flowchart.**Data Analysis**

To analyze the data, the "Article Review Form" developed by the researchers was used, based on the Paper Classification Form (Sözbilir & Kutu, 2008). The headings included in the form are:

- Name of the article
- Published index
- Method of the study
- Study group
- Data collection tool
- Data analysis

**Reliability**

In this study, the inter-coder reliability formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1984) was employed to ensure the study's reliability. Initially, the first five articles in the data set were examined separately by two researchers, and then the formula Reliability coefficient = number of terms in agreement / (number of terms in agreement + number of terms in disagreement) X 100 was used to evaluate the consensus between coders. As a result of this calculation, the inter-coder reliability of this study was determined as 95%.

**Findings**

Studies conducted in Türkiye and by Turkish researchers over the last 20 years on parents of gifted children in early childhood were analyzed, and the findings are discussed below, respectively, in line with the research questions.

Firstly, 11 studies deemed suitable for analysis through the Article Review Form were examined, and it was determined that 9 of these studies were published as articles and two as Full Text Proceedings. The index distributions of the articles and the types of studies are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Bibliographic Information, Type, and Index Information of the Studies

<b>Bibliographic Information</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Index Information</b>
Şimşek, F. ve Şahin, M. (2021). Özel yetenekli öğrencilere ve eğitimlerine yönelik ebeveyn algıları [The Perceptions of Parents Towards Gifted Students and Their Education]. <i>Gazi Üniversitesi Gazi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi [Gazi University Journal Of Gazi Education Faculty]</i> , 43(1), 475-496.	Article	TR Index, H.W. Wilson
Leana-Taşçılar, M. Z. L. T., Özyaprak, M., & Yılmaz, O. (2016). An online training program for gifted children's parents in Türkiye. <i>Eurasian Journal of Educational Research</i> , 16(65), 147-164.	Article	ESCI, ERIC, Scopus
Karaman, Ö. (2017). Üstün zekâlı öğrencilerin seçimi ve velileri ile ilgili betimsel değerlendirme [Descriptive evaluation of the	Article	Index not specified

selection of gifted students and their parents]. *Klinik Tıp Aile Hekimliği Dergisi [Journal of Clinical Medicine Family Medicine]*, 9(5),21-24.

Kaçar, M. (2016). Üstün yetenekli çocukların ailelerinin okul öncesi eğitim hizmetlerine ilişkin görüşleri [Parents' perspectives on preschool education services for gifted children]. V. Sakarya'da Eğitim Araştırmaları Kongresi [V. Sakarya Education Research Conference]. Tam Metin Bildiri kitabı [Full Text Proceedings Book] (pp:45-51)

Full Text -  
Proceeding

İpek, Y. (2019). Okul öncesi dönemde özel yetenekli çocukların ailelerinin gözlemleri ve karşılaştıkları sorunlar [Observations and challenges faced by families of gifted children in preschool period] IGATE 19, Bildiri kitabı [Proceeding Book] (pp:33-43).

Full Text -  
Proceeding

Afat, N., & Konik, A. K. (2018) Üstün zekâlı çocuğu olan ebeveynlerin farkındalıkları: Bir ölçek geliştirme çalışması [Awareness of parents with gifted children: a scale development study]. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi [Journal of National Education]*, 47(220), 79-104.

Article TR Index,  
Scopus,  
EBSCO

Afat, N. (2013). Çocuklarda üstün zekânın yordayıcı olarak ebeveyn tutumları [Parental attitudes as predictors of giftedness in children]. *Journal of Hasan Ali Yücel Faculty of Education/Hasan Ali Yücel Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi (HAYEF)*, 10(1).

Article TR Index,  
EBSCO, H.W.  
Wilson

Aydın, Y. E., & Buğa, A.. (2020). Özel yetenekli çocukların ebeveynlerinin akılcı olmayan inançları ve ebeveyn yetkinliklerinin incelenmesi [Examining irrational beliefs of parents of gifted children and parenting competencies]. *OPUS International Journal of Society Researches*, 15(22), 1373-1407.

Article TR Index,  
EBSCO

Dağlıoğlu, H. E., & Suveren, S. (2013). [examining the consistency of teacher and parent perspectives with children's performance in identifying gifted children in the preschool period]. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 13(1), 431-453.

Article TR Index

Saranlı, A. G. (2017). Eş zamanlı olmayan gelişimin üstün yetenekli çocuklardaki görünümü üzerine bir örnek olay çalışması [A Case Study on the Manifestation of Asynchronous Development in

Article TR Index, ESCI

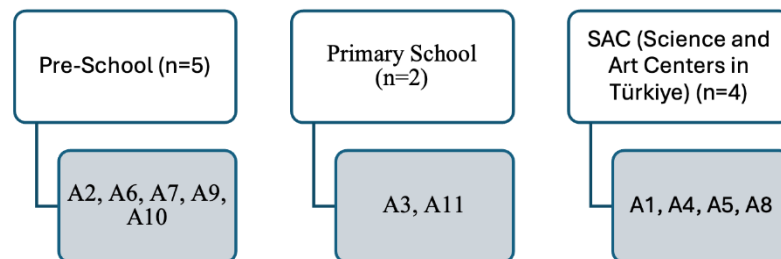
Gifted Children]. *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Özel Eğitim Dergisi [Ankara University Faculty Of Educational Sciences Journal Of Special Education]*, 18(01), 89-108.

Oğurlu, Ü. (2016). Üstün yetenekli çocuğa sahip ailelere yönelik eğitim programının ailelerin ebeveyn öz-yeterliliklerine ve farkındalıklarına etkisi [The impact of an educational program for families of gifted children on parents' self-efficacy and awareness]. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi Dergisi [Journal of National Education]*, 45(209), 144-159.

Article TR Index, Scopus, EBSCO

In Table 1, it can be seen that the index of one of the studies examined is not specified. The journal where the study with unspecified indexing was published has ceased publication, and therefore, the indexing information for the study could not be accessed. However, it has been determined that studies related to families are mostly published as articles, with only one of these articles indexed nationally, while the remaining articles are published in internationally indexed journals such as Scopus, H.W. Wilson, ERIC, and ESCL.

In this study, the institutions in Türkiye where the research was conducted were also analyzed. Figure 2 presents the institutions where the studies were conducted and their frequencies.



**Figure 2.** Institutions where the studies were conducted.

Looking at Figure 2, it can be seen that 5 of the studies were carried out in kindergartens, 4 in SAC, and 2 in primary schools. In addition, it was found that the studies carried out at SAC were mostly conducted with the families of primary school children. The findings related to the research question "What are the topics and results of the studies?" are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Topics and Results of the Studies

Study Code	Topic	Result
A1, A6, A8	Determining Perceptions/Attitudes/Beliefs/Irrational Beliefs and Opinions (n=5)	Parents' Parents believe that their gifted children should receive special education rather than formal education. It was found that parents were not aware of their children's giftedness during the preschool period and, therefore, did not know what kind of educational services would benefit them, and had difficulties finding materials for their children. An increase in irrational belief levels among parents was found to positively

		correlate with an increase in parental competencies. It was also found that parents of gifted children adopt democratic and protective attitudes.
A2, A11	Family Education (n=2)	In both studies, it was found that the educational programs applied to the families of gifted children resulted in significant differences in pre-test and post-test data.
A5	Problems of Parents of Gifted Children (n=1)	Parents did not know the concept of "gifted child" before their children in the preschool period were identified as gifted. They made efforts to develop their children's abilities but were not sure if these efforts were sufficient.
A3, A9	Identification of Gifted Children (n=2)	The study revealed that teachers and parents successfully identified gifted children at a rate of 44.3%, with parents demonstrating greater accuracy in recognizing giftedness compared to teachers.
A10	Asynchronous Development (n=1)	It was found that the gifted child in the study group exhibited asynchronous development.

When examining the topics of the studies presented in Table 2, it was found that there were more articles focusing on determining parents' perceptions/attitudes/beliefs and opinions (n=4). Other topics included: family education (n=2), identification of gifted children (n=2), problems of parents of gifted children (n=1), irrational beliefs about giftedness (n=1), and asynchronous development (n=1). When examining the results of the studies, it is observed that families need information and awareness regarding the development and education of their gifted children, and that highly effective results are achieved when they receive training on this topic.

The findings regarding the research question "In what design were the studies conducted? Who constitutes the sample/study group of the studies?" are presented in Figure 3.

Methods	Sample / Study group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantitative Pattern (n=5)</li> <li>• Qualitative Pattern (n=6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child parents of 3-6 years old (n=3)</li> <li>• Child parents of 6-8 years old (n=6)</li> <li>• Parent, teacher and child (n=1)</li> </ul>

**Figure 3.** Study methods and sample/study group.

Figure 3 shows that six of the studies were conducted with a qualitative design and five with a quantitative design. When the sample/study group of the studies is examined, it is seen that three studies were conducted with parents of 3–6-year-olds, one study was conducted with parents of 0-8-year-olds, six studies were conducted with parents of 6-8-year-olds, and the study group of 1 study was conducted with teachers, parents, and children. It was determined that four of the studies involving the

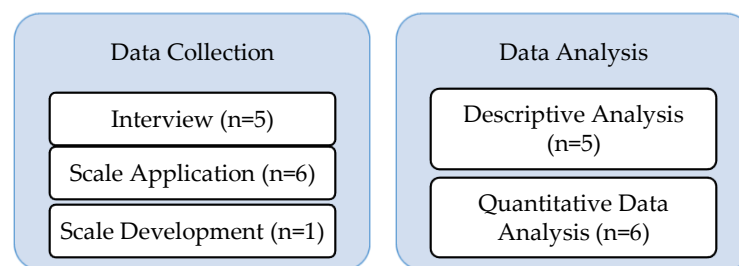
families of gifted children in preschool were conducted to reveal the past experiences of the parents of gifted children currently attending primary school regarding the preschool period.

The study groups of the studies conducted with parents of children aged 3-6 are as follows; parent of 13 children identified as gifted at ages 3-6 (A5), parents of 127 children identified as gifted by the Stanford Binet Intelligence Test aged 6 (A6), parents of 87 children identified as gifted by the SBIT aged 6 (A7).

The study groups of the studies conducted with parents of children aged 6-8 are as follows; Parents with children identified as gifted (A1, n=18; A2, n=40; A3, n=104; A4, n=35), Parents of primary and secondary school children attending SAC (A8, n=273), Parents of 2nd grade students who continue the "More Genius Children" project carried out by Istanbul Ümraniye Municipality (A11, n=43).

It seems that the studies conducted with the families of preschool gifted children are retrospective studies conducted with the parents of children who attended primary school and were identified as gifted.

The findings regarding the research question "By what method were the data of the studies collected and analyzed?" are presented in Figure 4.



**Figure 4.** Data collection and data analysis.

As seen in Figure 4, it was found that the analysis of the data was carried out with descriptive analysis (n = 5) and quantitative data analysis methods (n = 6). Data were collected through "interviews" in qualitative studies (n=5). In studies conducted with a quantitative design, the scale was applied (n=6). However, in one study, both teacher and family opinions were consulted, and also a scale application was carried out. One study is a scale development study. The scales used are personal information forms, teacher observation form, family observation form, Stanford Binet Intelligence Test, and attitude scales. It was observed that advanced statistical analysis methods were not used in the analysis methods used in quantitative studies. The most frequently used designs in these studies were single-group pretest-posttest and the relational survey model. Samples generally consisted of parents of gifted children, and scales and questionnaires were preferred as data collection tools. Statistical methods such as t-test, ANOVA, correlation, and regression were used in the analysis. The findings show that parent training programs have positive effects on awareness and self-efficacy, and that parental attitudes are determinant in children's development.

## Conclusion and Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the research conducted on families of gifted children in Türkiye over the past 20 years and to develop a roadmap for future studies. Based on the findings, it is observed that a large portion of the studies were published as articles, with all but one of these articles being published in the national index of Türkiye, TR Index, and most of them also being indexed in

international databases. Considering that Web of Science and Scopus are two of the leading databases worldwide (Zhu & Liu, 2020), journals indexed in SCI-E, SSCI, and AHCI by Thomson Reuters are regarded as the most prestigious, most cited, and those with the highest impact factors in the fields of health, science, and education (Hu, Tian, Xu, Zhang, & Wang 2018; Liu, Tang, & Hu., 2020; Martín-Martín, Orduna-Malea, Thelwall, & López-Cózar, 2018). Scopus monitors these journals, followed by those indexed in Index Copernicus, EBSCO, and other similar databases (Li, Rollins, & Yan, 2018; Zhu & Liu, 2020). In this context, the most prestigious and high-impact factor journals internationally are those covered by SCI-E, SSCI, and AHCI, followed by journals indexed in ESCI, Scopus, Index Copernicus, EBSCO, etc. The research found that while there were no publications in SSCI, SSCI-E, and AHCI-indexed journals, there were articles published in journals indexed in ESCI, Scopus, Index Copernicus, and EBSCO. Thus, it can be said that there is a need for higher-quality research specifically focusing on families of gifted children.

Research on families of gifted children in early childhood primarily focuses on children identified as gifted at the age of six, who are already in primary school, rather than those still in preschool education. It was concluded that studies conducted at SACs mostly involve families of children at the primary school level. According to MoNE SAC (2016), SACs can admit and educate specially talented children across various educational levels, ranging from early childhood to secondary education, through specific screening and identification stages. However, there is currently no application within SACs for gifted children who are still in preschool. Therefore, it explains why some of the studies on families of gifted children in Türkiye during early childhood involve parents of primary school children enrolled in SACs. In this context, it can be said that SACs are a significant data source in Türkiye due to the lack of many institutional structures or programs for these children. Considering that the field of preschool education became a new area for our country following the restructuring of education faculties under the basic education framework by Council of Higher Education in 1998 due to the extension of compulsory education to 8 years, it can be said that studies related to preschool education became more comprehensive and varied after this date (Dağlıoğlu & Genç, 2018; Deretarla Gül, 2018). Although it seems that there was a deep-rooted system related to the Enderun Schools during the Ottoman Empire, it is observed that studies on the education of gifted children in Türkiye started after the 1990s and focused more on teachers rather than families of gifted children (Leana-Tascilar, Özyaprak, & Yilmaz, 2016; Sak, 2017). This situation particularly explains the scarcity of studies on gifted children in the preschool period.

Given that parents have a significant impact on their children's emotional, psychological, and social development, and that parents are responsible for supporting their children in these areas, how families of gifted children should interact with their children can be seen as an essential issue (Colangelo & Assouline, 2000). Studies have indicated that gifted children tend to excel both at home and in school when they receive proper support from their parents, which helps them reach their full potential (Cross & Coleman, 2005; Hassall, Rose, & McDonald, 2005). Research has shown that consistent support offered to parents helps children recognize their talents, enhance their productivity, foster personal development, and fully realize their potential (Hassall et al., 2005). Furthermore, it has been found that both parents and teachers are more accurate in their decision-making when guided by an expert in identifying these children. Early identification of children with unique developmental traits, along with early educational interventions, is regarded as a fundamental principle of special education (Metin, 2012; MoNE, 1997). Therefore, studies on gifted children and their families, especially during the preschool period, are gaining increasing importance. However, it is clear from the conducted studies

that more effort needs to be made in this area (Chamberlin, Buchanan, & Vercimak 2007; Dağlıoğlu & Çerezci, 2024; Jolly & Kettler, 2008; Koshy & Robinson, 2006).

Globally, studies on the families of gifted children first began with Galton in 1890, followed by Terman's (1925) longitudinal study on gifted individuals and their families, and gained momentum with Goertzel and Goertzel's (1962) study examining the effects of parents and home environments on the development of special talents. Colangelo and Dettmann (1983) conducted a review of two decades of literature on the parents of gifted children, organizing the studies into seven key themes: family characteristics, parental attitudes and values, challenges encountered by families of gifted children, success and failure, the role of parents in identity development, parental support and enhancement activities, and the relationship between parents and schools. Studies exploring parents' perceptions and understanding of giftedness up to the early 2000s included concerns from specific cultures, parents' perceptions of giftedness and talent, attitudes towards gifted programs, and views on non-traditional services (e.g., Jarosewich & Stocking, 2003; Karnes & Marquardt, 2000; Shumow, 1997; Strom, Johnson, & Strom, 1990). Since the 2000s, studies on giftedness and families have focused on identifying parents' perceptions, attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, and competencies related to giftedness (Göçen, İncelioğlu & Aydemir, 2024; Johnson, Rinn, Mun, & Yeung, 2024; Kim, Ryoo, & Lee., 2024), evaluations of parental involvement in their gifted children's development and education (Alfaiz, 2024; Phillipson, Alamer, & Phillipson, 2024), and identifying family needs (Souza Fleith, Vilarinho-Pereira, & Muniz Prado, 2024). In Türkiye, when considering studies specifically on early childhood, it is observed that the research has focused more on primary school-aged children, with studies related to gifted children and their families during this period primarily concentrated on determining families' needs, problems, and basic attitudes and perceptions, in other words, situational assessments. For instance, a study conducted by Bucaille et al. (2022) showed that only six out of fifteen examined studies included children in the 6-year age group. Another study examining intervention programs designed to reverse academic failure found that only one out of ten empirical studies included primary school-level children in their study group (Steenbergen-Hu, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Calvert, 2020). In this context, although many studies have been conducted on various topics related to children and families with gifted potential, the number of studies specifically related to early childhood is notably low both in Türkiye and globally, which is believed to be due to the relatively new development of preschool education and giftedness fields in Türkiye.

Although most studies have been conducted using quantitative designs, it has been observed that a significant portion of them employed descriptive and basic level analyses, without utilizing advanced analytical methods or including variables related to giftedness (such as motivation, self-regulation, etc.) in the analysis process. In contrast to this finding in our study, a literature review examining 53 studies on parents of gifted children revealed that research from the early 1990s predominantly used mixed methods with large sample sizes, whereas more recent studies have increasingly employed qualitative methodologies with smaller sample sizes (Jolly & Matthews, 2012). However, looking at studies conducted in Türkiye, especially those focusing on families of children in the SACs or those entering this process from the primary school age, and the limited number of studies including preschool children, it is clear that there is a need for various types of research, whether qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods, to address the needs of families and support the development of their children. Particularly, studies designed experimentally to address the challenging characteristics of gifted children, which help parents acquire necessary knowledge and skills, and

research examining the effectiveness and sustainability of these interventions through longitudinal studies, are thought to significantly benefit families.

It has been noted that the research focuses on families of children who have been diagnosed using standardized tests long before the process of identifying gifted children. Generally, the identification process for gifted children involves systematic and multiple assessments conducted sequentially. This assessment process includes family and teacher observations, portfolios, evaluations related to the child's special talent area, developmental tests, and intelligence tests (Clark, 2002; Heller, 2004). This process can sometimes be quite lengthy. For example, in a study by Gubbins et al. (2021) comparing strategies for identifying gifted children in two different states in the USA, it was noted that both states used various methods and employed a long-term process of multiple evaluations. In Austria, although there are criteria such as nominations by teachers or families and the application of standard tests, it is also observed that schools specialized in gifted education establish their own criteria in the identification process (Mönks & Pflüger, 2005). According to Potential Plus UK (n.d.), multiple evaluations are conducted in Britain, including cognitive ability, achievement, and socio-emotional skills. As seen, the identification of gifted children varies by country, but a systematic evaluation procedure is generally followed. In Türkiye, it is also evident that a systematic process is followed for identifying gifted children, especially at primary school age. Researchers in Türkiye predominantly work with the families of children who are eligible for education under the SAC program or those undergoing the diagnosis process. Due to the time-consuming nature of this identification process, it is observed that researchers prefer to study families of children who have already received this diagnosis (and in some cases, retrospectively on topics such as developmental characteristics, identification, and family education during the preschool period).

In some of the studies, the research design and how the data analysis was conducted are not clearly stated. In these studies, the design and data analysis were inferred by the researchers through examining the data collection and presentation processes. Among these studies, it can be said that only two of them performed robust analyses such as ANOVA, Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, and t-tests. Gifted children exhibit a range of distinct characteristics and features. Although these features vary according to theorists, they can be summarized as common attributes such as motivation, general ability, specific ability, and creativity (Sak, 2017). To evaluate these characteristics, it is thought that using advanced statistical methods, such as multiple regression, factor analysis, or two-way ANOVA and covariance to examine the relationships between variables, or to compare groups (Pallant, 2016), could yield more robust results.

Studies involving families of gifted children in early childhood have primarily focused on elementary school-aged children and aimed to determine the families' needs, views, perceptions, and attitudes. Although giftedness may appear to be an individual condition, it can significantly impact the family. Moon and Hall (1998) emphasize that giftedness can be a stressful situation and thus affect family dynamics. Research in this area shows that family dynamics and parenting styles can positively or negatively influence the academic, social, and skill development of gifted children (Olszewski-Kubilius, 2018; Pilarinos & Solomon, 2017). Literature review studies conducted in the past have also highlighted the importance of family dynamics and parenting attitudes on gifted children (Papadopoulos, 2021; Yıldız & Altay, 2021) and have shown that family education programs targeting family dynamics and parent-child communication lead to positive developments in gifted children. In parallel, research findings show that providing family intervention programs for parents of gifted children results in parents having more effective parenting strategies and improvements in their

children's social adjustment and behavior (Morawska & Sanders, 2009). This indicates that parents need support to effectively fulfill their roles in helping their children realize and develop their potential. Furthermore, conducting needs analyses in family-oriented studies and connecting families with relevant professionals to identify what type of support would be beneficial is also highlighted as guiding (Dingeç, Bayar, Kılıçarslan, Tamul, & Ünal, 2023; Ogurlu & Yaman, 2013).

Currently, both globally and in Türkiye, studies involving families of gifted children in early childhood are increasingly focusing on family education programs (Bildiren, 2018; López-Aymes, Acuña, & Damián, 2014; Sankar-DeLeeuw, 1999; Souza Fleith, Muniz Prado, & Vilarinho-Pereira, 2023; Wilson, 2015). For instance, Wellisch (2021) carried out a study with Australian mothers of gifted children and found that parents struggled to find information about giftedness, felt that their children's intellectual support was inadequate, and noted that advanced development could restrict socialization and potentially increase maternal depression. This highlights the significance of parental support for gifted children, regardless of age. Reviewing research conducted in Türkiye over the past 20 years, it is noted that only one study focused on identifying the problems faced by families, while two studies included family education. Although there has been an increase in research on families of gifted children in recent years, both globally and in Türkiye, it can be said that early childhood gifted children's families are among the least studied groups.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study covers articles and full-text papers published about the families of children identified as gifted in early childhood in Türkiye in the last 20 years. However, the studies in question are limited to studies scanned in DergiPark, ERIC, and Google Scholar and conducted in Türkiye and by Turkish author(s). Based on these limitations, studies examining postgraduate theses can be conducted in order to determine the trends of studies on families of gifted children in Türkiye in more detail. It was observed that there were no advanced statistical studies. Based on this limitation, studies that include advanced statistical studies can be conducted.

Additionally, studies conducted around the world and studies in Türkiye can be examined comparatively. The publication of studies in high-impact factor journals at the international level can be supported to ensure that they become apparent and valuable articles internationally. In systematic literature review studies on families of gifted children, a more comprehensive perspective can be adopted that includes reports and systematic reviews prepared by international institutions/organizations in addition to research articles. In Türkiye, while there is a need for programs specifically aimed at the education of gifted children in the preschool period, it is also clear that there is an equal need for support and guidance for the families of these children, which is one of the fundamental components of education. Additionally, from the perspective of studies to be conducted with families, it is recommended to prepare experimental and mixed-design programs to help families cope with the challenging characteristics of gifted children, address the home environment, and similar issues, and to examine the effectiveness of these programs through pre-test and post-test applications. Additionally, longitudinal studies can be conducted to investigate how the needs of families are met. In addition, by considering the characteristic features of giftedness, studies in which families, teachers, and children participate together can be planned, and research can be planned to obtain strong results that can be generalized to the population through advanced statistical analyses such as variance, covariance and multiple regression, which reveal the relationship between the variables determined for gifted children in early childhood.

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In this study, the authors' contributions to the research process are equal.

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### Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

### Ethical Statement

This article does not require an ethics committee decision as it is a systematic literature review study.

### Geniřletilmiř Özet

#### Amaç ve Arařtırma Soruları

Bu çalıřma, son 20 yılda Türkiye'de erken çocukluk dönemindeki üstün yetenekli çocukların aileleri üzerinde yapılan çalıřmaları ortaya koymak ve bu bağlamda gelecekteki çalıřmalar için bir yol haritası çizmek amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiřtir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, bu arařtırmada ařağıdaki sorulara yanıt aranmıřtır.

Türkiye'de son 20 yılda erken çocukluk dönemindeki üstün yetenekli çocukların aileleri üzerine yapılan çalıřmalar:

- (1) Hangi endekste yayınlanmıřtır?
- (2) Hangi řehirde düzenlenmiřtir?
- (3) Hangi eğitim kurumlarında yürütölmüřtür?
- (4) Çalıřmaların konuları nelerdir?
- (5) Çalıřmalar hangi tasarımda yürütölmüřtür? Çalıřmaların örneklemini/çalıřma grubunu kimler oluřturmaktadır?
- (6) Çalıřmaların verileri hangi yöntemle toplanmıř ve analiz edilmiřtir?

### Özgün Deęer

Bu çalıřmada, Türkiye'de 2013-2023 yılları içerisinde erken çocukluk dönemindeki üstün yetenekli çocukların ailelerine iliřkin yapılan arařtırmalar gözden geçirilmiř ve gelecekteki çalıřmalara öneriler

sunulmuştur. Literatür, erken çocukluk döneminde tipik gelişim gösteren çocukların aileleri hakkında sıkça çalışma içerirken, üstün yetenekli çocukların aileleri hakkındaki araştırmaların bu dönemde sınırlı kaldığını belirtmektedir. Bu sistematik derleme, tam da bu sınırlı alana odaklanarak, geçmiş çalışmaların kapsamını öğrenme, mevcut çalışmaların sunduklarını belirleme ve pratik sorulara cevap verme imkanı sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, üstün yetenekli çocukların gelişimsel farklılıkları nedeniyle evde ve okulda performanslarına uygun fırsatların sağlanması gerektiği görüşünden hareketle, belirlenen trendleri ve eksiklikleri ortaya koymaktadır.

## Tasarım ve Yöntem

Bu çalışmada araştırma sorularına yanıt bulmak amacıyla Sistematik Literatür Taraması yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Sistematik literatür taramasını yürütmek için, Amerika IES (Institute of Educational Sciences) (2020) tarafından önerilen beş aşamalı strateji uygulanmıştır. Bu stratejiler şunlardır: (1) Derleme protokolünün geliştirilmesi, (2) İlgili literatürün belirlenmesi, (3) Literatürün taranması, (4) Makalelerin incelenmesi ve (5) Bulguların raporlanması.

Veri toplama işlemi 24 Nisan 2023 ile 11 Haziran 2023 tarihleri arasında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Kullanılan veri tabanları TR Dizin, DergiPark, ERIC ve Google Scholar'dır. Veri toplama süreci iki aşamada yürütülmüştür. Birinci aşamada, analize uygun bulunan makaleler için bir derleme protokolünü içeren kriterler belirlenmiştir. Bu kriterlere göre, çalışmanın Türkiye'de yapılmış olması, Türk araştırmacılar tarafından yürütülmüş olması, okul öncesi dönemdeki üstün yetenekli çocukların ailelerini içermesi ve bir araştırma makalesi veya tam metin bildiri olması gerekmektedir. Bu kriterlere uygun olarak ilk aşamada "gifted OR special intelligence OR special talent and preschool OR early childhood and family or parent" şeklinde bir Boolean kullanılmıştır. Bu taramada DergiPark'tan 3, ERIC'ten 3 ve Google Scholar'dan 5 makaleye erişilmiştir. İlk tarama ve incelemenin ardından altı çalışma veri analizine uygun bulunmuştur. İkinci aşamada ise DergiPark veri tabanında "giftedness or superior intelligence or special intelligence or special talent and preschool or early childhood and family or parent" Boolean'ı kullanılarak 40 çalışmaya erişilmiştir. İlk tarama ile eşleşen çalışmalar çıkarıldıktan sonra 32 çalışmaya ulaşılmıştır. Bu çalışmaların özetleri incelenmiş ve okul öncesi dönemdeki üstün yetenekli çocukların aileleriyle yapılmamış olanlar elenmiştir. Son incelemenin ardından 11 makale derlemeye uygun bulunmuştur.

Veri analizinde, Sözbilir ve Kutu (2008) tarafından hazırlanan Makale Sınıflama Formundan yararlanılarak oluşturulan "Makale İnceleme Formu" kullanılmıştır. Formda yer alan başlıklar makalenin adı, yayınlandığı dizin, çalışmanın yöntemi, çalışma grubu, veri toplama aracı ve veri analizidir.

Çalışmanın güvenilirliğini sağlamak için, Miles ve Huberman (1984) tarafından önerilen kodlayıcılar arası güvenilirlik formülü kullanılmıştır. Veri setindeki ilk beş makale iki araştırmacı tarafından ayrı ayrı incelenmiştir. Güvenirlik katsayısı = Anlaşılan terim sayısı / (Anlaşılan terim sayısı + Anlaşılmayan terim sayısı) X 100 formülü kullanılarak yapılan hesaplama sonucunda, bu çalışmanın kodlayıcılar arası güvenilirliği %95 olarak belirlenmiştir.

## Sonuç ve Tartışma

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'de erken çocukluk dönemi üstün yetenekli çocukların aileleri üzerinde son 20 yılda yapılan araştırmaları incelemek ve gelecekteki çalışmalar için bir yol haritası geliştirmektir. Bulgulara göre, çalışmaların büyük bir kısmının makale olarak yayınlandığı, bu makalelerin bir tanesi hariç tamamının Türkiye'nin ulusal indeksi olan TR Dizin'de, çoğunun ise uluslararası veri tabanlarında indekslendiği görülmektedir. Araştırmaların daha çok okul öncesi dönemdeki üstün yetenekli çocukların ailelerinden ziyade, genellikle ilköğretim çağındaki ve Bilim ve Sanat Merkezlerine kayıtlı çocukların ailelerine odaklanıldığı belirlenmiştir. BİLSEM'ler bu alanda önemli bir veri kaynağı olmasına rağmen, şu anda okul öncesi dönem için bir uygulama bulunmamaktadır. Bu nedenle, okul öncesi dönemle ilgili çalışmaların sayısının hem Türkiye'de hem de küresel olarak oldukça düşük olduğu söylenebilir. Erken yıllarda üstün yetenekli olarak belirlenme ve erken eğitim müdahaleleri özel eğitimin temel prensibi olmasına rağmen, mevcut çalışmaların genellikle ailelerin ihtiyaçlarını, görüşlerini, algılarını ve temel tutumlarını (durumsal değerlendirmeler) belirlemeye yoğunlaştığı görülmüştür. Üstün yetenekliliğin bireysel bir durum olmasına karşın aileyi önemli ölçüde etkilediği ve stres yaratabileceği söylenebilir. Ebeveyn desteği, çocukların potansiyellerine ulaşmalarına yardımcı olduğundan hayati öneme sahiptir. Ancak, yapılan çalışmaların çoğunun nicel tasarımlı olmasına rağmen, gelişmiş analitik yöntemler kullanmak yerine daha çok betimsel ve temel düzey analizlerle sınırlı kaldığı tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, araştırma tasarımlarının ve veri analiz yöntemlerinin net bir şekilde belirtilmediği durumlar da mevcuttur.

20 yıllık literatür incelendiğinde, yalnızca bir çalışmanın ailelerin sorunlarını belirlemeye odaklandığı ve sadece iki çalışmanın aile eğitimi içerdiği görülmüştür. Yapılan araştırmalar, ailelerin bilgi ve beceri kazanmasına yardımcı olacak deneysel tasarımlı müdahale programlarına ve bunların etkinliğini inceleyen boylamsal çalışmalara olan büyük ihtiyacı ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bulgular, üstün yetenekli çocuk ailelerine yönelik araştırmaların, nitelik, çeşitlilik ve özellikle erken çocukluk dönemi odağında artırılması gerektiği sonucunu desteklemektedir.

## Sınırlılıklar

Bu çalışma, son 20 yılda Türkiye'de erken çocukluk döneminde üstün yetenekli olarak tanımlanan çocukların aileleri hakkında yayınlanmış makaleleri ve tam metin bildirimleri kapsamaktadır. Ancak söz konusu çalışmalar DergiPark, ERIC ve Google Akademik'te taranan ve Türkiye'de Türk yazar(lar) tarafından yürütülen çalışmalarla sınırlıdır.

## Öneriler

Üstün yetenekli çocuk aileleri üzerine yapılacak sistematik derlemeler, sadece makaleleri değil, uluslararası raporları, lisansüstü tezleri (Türkiye ve dünya) ve karşılaştırmalı çalışmaları da içermeli, daha kapsamlı bir bakış açısı benimsemelidir. Türkiye'de okul öncesi dönemde üstün yetenekli çocukların eğitimine yönelik özel programlara ihtiyaç duyulurken, eğitimin temel bileşenlerinden biri olan bu çocukların aileleri için de destek ve rehberliğe eşit derecede ihtiyaç duyulduğu açıktır. Bu nedenle üstün yetenekli çocukların zorlayıcı özellikleriyle başa çıkmalarına, ev ortamına ve benzeri sorunlara yönelik deneysel ve karma desenle kurgulanmış araştırmaların tasarlanması önerilmektedir. Ayrıca ailelerin ihtiyaçlarının nasıl karşılandığını araştıran boylamsal çalışmalar yapılabilir. Bununla birlikte, üstün yetenekliliğin karakteristik özellikleri göz önünde bulundurularak, aileler, öğretmenler

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ve ocukların birlikte katıldıđı alıřmalar planlanabilir ve erken ocukluk dneminde stn yetenekli ocuklar iin belirlenen deđiřkenler arasındaki iliřkiyi ortaya koyan, ileri istatistiksel analizlerle poplasyona genellenebilen gl sonular elde etmek iin arařtırmalar planlanabilir.