

IDENTIFICATION OF AND TALENTED LEARNERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN WARENG DISTRICT, UASIN GISHU COUNTY, KENYA

Mary Cheptanui Sambu
Moi University
cheptanuisambu@yahoo.com
Address: P.o Box 4913-30100, Eldoret

Prof Karugu Geoffrey Kamau
Department of Special Needs Education
Kenyatta University

Dr. Warkach Kipkorir Tonu
Department of Geography
Kenyatta University

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to establish the methods teachers use to identify learners who are gifted and talented in Primary schools in Wareng district, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Wareng district was purposively selected for the study because of its good performance in academics and sports. Other objectives of the study included establishing the characteristics of gifted and talented learners. The research study adopted mixed method approach design. In total, the study sampled ten schools through purposive sampling techniques and using performance status as a criteria. Ten head teachers were purposively picked and ninety teachers selected using simple random technique, generating a sample size of one hundred respondents. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected using questionnaires and interview guides for teachers and head teachers respectively. Descriptive statistics in SPSS such as frequency tables, percentages, graphs and charts were used to analyse quantitative data while thematic texts were used to analyse the qualitative data. The data were then triangulated to generalise conclusions on the findings of the study. The results of the findings showed that observation was a widely used method of identifying gifted learners. Major characteristics of gifted and talented included a child's active participation and level of aggressiveness, and outstanding performance. The study recommended that teachers be in-serviced and trained to equip them with knowledge and skills on proper methods of identification and programmes of gifted and talented. There is a need to develop a standardized identification assessment tools.

Keywords: Gifted, Methods, Talented, Teacher, School

Introduction

Gifted and talented students are found in all ages and class levels within a school system. They come from all levels of society, from all races and nationalities, and from both sexes in about equal numbers (Ofsted, 2001). Stephens and Karnes (2000) define gifted and talented children as “children and, whenever applicable, youth” who give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership ability or in the performing and visual arts and who by reason thereof require services not ordinarily provided by the school.

Early studies of gifted children and adults tended to be largely anecdotal and descriptive (Lewis & Doorlag, 1983). In ancient period, in Sparta, soldiers were respected and given importance to the extent that the skills to fight showed strength in wars, outstanding leadership qualities became the criteria of giftedness. Plato labeled men and women gifted on the basis of intellectual abilities and were in favour of identifying the most able youths so that they could receive education and show their leadership qualities (Sharma, 2006). In Rome, only men could receive higher education, but doors were opened also for some really gifted women such as; Roman Matron Cornelia (Good, 1960). Gifted artists, poets, writers, architects were rewarded in Europe, for example, Leonardo da Vinci, Dante, Michelangelo, Bernini and Boccaccio (Sharma, 2006).

According to Tsuin-Chen (1961), China had principles of contemporary gifted education that accepted a multiple-talent conception of giftedness, valuing literacy ability, leadership, imagination, reading speed, reasoning and other talent. In Japan during the Tokugawa period (1604-1868), children from poor families were taught only about obedience, loyalty, diligence and submissiveness while Samuran children were taught subjects like calligraphy, history, composition, Confucius classics, marital, arts, etiquette, morality, and character values (Sharma, 2006).

In America, schooling was available to all children, however some specific arrangements were made for gifted children such as; St. Louis in 1870, started the system of passing eight classes in a shorter duration. Elizabeth of New Jersey in 1886 started a different system in which the gifted child was allowed to complete the studies more rapidly in comparison to other children. “Double Tillage Plan” was started in 1887 by Woburn in Massachusetts. In this system the child was promoted to second semester of second grade only after passing the first semester of first grade. This system was open only for bright children and they were taught by special tutors. In 1916, 1919 and 1922 special classes for the gifted children were started at different places in America (Sharma, 2006).

In the 1990's, USA federal support for gifted education emphasized serving educationally disadvantaged students (Castellano & Diaz, 2002) and US department of education established the National Research Center on the gifted and talented in 1990, allowing a consortium of

universities to address research needs in the field. In 1993, this agency published National Excellence; a report that updated the definition of giftedness, noted the importance of nurturing gifts and talents in all students, and renewed attention on the need to identify and serve students from diverse groups (Swanson, 2002).

Currently, most African countries are yet to establish any type of educational or other relevant programmes for the gifted and talented students (Wallace & Adams, 1993). However, recently in Kenya, people from various walks of life have expressed the need for the identification and subsequent provision of educational and other appropriate services for this category of children (Kamau, 2005). This is well expressed in two commissions of inquiry into the Education System in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 1988 & 1999) and professional seminars (East African Regional Conferences for the Gifted and Talented in the 1990s; Abilla, 1990; Karugu, 1991 as well as contributors of scholars such as Kamau – Kang’ethe, 1992). To date these recommendations have not been implemented.

The Republic of Kenya Sessional Paper No.1 of 2005, additionally, outlined policy guidelines for all education subsectors, including special needs education and further underscores the government’s commitment to ensuring that learners with special needs and disabilities are a major challenge to the education sector. The National education system has been characterized by lack of systems and facilities that respond to the challenges faced by learners with special needs and disabilities.

In Kenya, Special Needs Education has mainly catered for four categories of children for a long time; those with hearing impairments, mental handicaps, visual impairments and physical handicaps (RoK, 2003). Currently, the other categories have been embraced and efforts to assist them are being put in place to cope with their needs. However, so far, learners who are gifted and talented have been left behind without a curriculum to address their needs (RoK, 2009)

Research Objectives and Questions

The major concern was therefore, to study and establish the methods teachers employed to identify learners who were gifted and talented in primary schools in Warend district of Kenya. Other objectives of the study included identifying the characteristics of learners who are gifted and talented. The research questions in this study were;

1. How do teachers identify learners who are gifted and talented?
2. What are the characteristics of learners who are gifted and talented?

Theoretical Framework

One theoretical model of intelligence that has been translated into instructional practice is Gardner’s (1983) multiple intelligences theory. Gardner argues that intelligence cannot be reduced to a single dimension reported by a test score but notes that at least nine types of intelligences (Friend, 2008) can be identified and that students may excel in any one or several

of these: verbal/linguistic system, visual/spatial, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinaesthetic, musical system, intrapersonal, interpersonal, naturalistic and lastly existentialist which involves the ability to look at the “big picture” of human existence, often in philosophical questions.

Gardner notes that many students have relative strengths; that is, in a self-comparison they have more ability in some intelligence than in others. The theory of multiple intelligences has the potential to fundamentally reshape schools. Instead of just presenting information in words through texts or lectures, teachers use physical and social experiences, music, and engagement with the natural world (Tumbull, Turnbull, & Wehmeyer, 2007). A child should be provided with the opportunities for cultivation of any particular type of intelligence.

Therefore, the theory of multiple intelligence, laid a strong foundation on the establishment of methods teachers employ to identify gifted and talented learners based on their varied characteristics and abilities.

Methods of Identifying Learners who are Gifted and Talented

Gifted is not as a result of only one factor but rather a combination of many. Therefore, it cannot be measured and identified by using only one or two factor tests. Combinations of different types of techniques are suggested for identification and assessment purposes (Sharma, 2006). Assessment tools often used to identify students as gifted and talented include; intelligence tests, achievement tests, aptitude tests, grades, teacher nominations/observation, parent nomination, self-nomination, peer nomination, extracurricular or leisure activities (Friend, 2008; Heward, 2006). Types of qualitative assessment include portfolios, interviews, and observations. Observations can be made to find students who are demonstrating characteristics that indicate giftedness (Heward, 2006). Interviews of peers and parents can also indicate potential talent. Teachers often overlook gifted children when asked to select them, although teacher observation is a widely used method for identification of gifted children (Sharma, 2006). Experts in education have rated the individual intelligence test as the best method of identification, but in practice this method is not widely used (Heward, 2006).

To protect against discrimination, researchers advocate using more than one means of evaluation (Dickson, 2003; Gallagher, 2002). They advise balancing IQ test results against other documentation criteria such as creativity tests, behaviour rating scales, samples of artwork or creative writing or other material from parents or teachers (Tumbull, et al., 2007). DISCOVER (Discovering Intellectual Strengths and Capabilities through Observation while allowing for Varied Ethnic Responses) is a performance-based, research-reliable, and research-validated assessment for identifying giftedness in students from diverse backgrounds (Maker, 2001; Sarouphim, 1999, 2001). It requires the student to undertake problem-solving tasks in six of Gardner's domains of intelligences: spatial, logical-mathematical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. The tasks increase in complexity and openness as the assessment progresses. By using DISCOVER instead of other approaches, educators identify as gifted and talented a higher proportion of students from diverse ethnic, socioeconomic, and linguistic backgrounds (Castellaño, 2003; Maker, 2001; Sarouphim, 1999).

Most special education programmes for gifted students use a combination of aptitude tests, teacher ratings, nominations, and scholastic records to help identify eligible students (Heward, 2006).

Figure 1; Gender and population of Respondent (N=93)

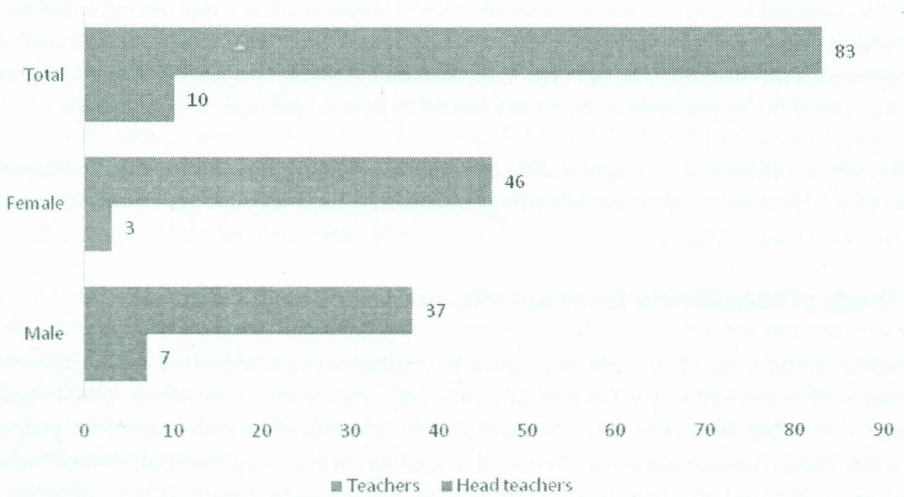


Figure 2: Education level of respondent (N=93)

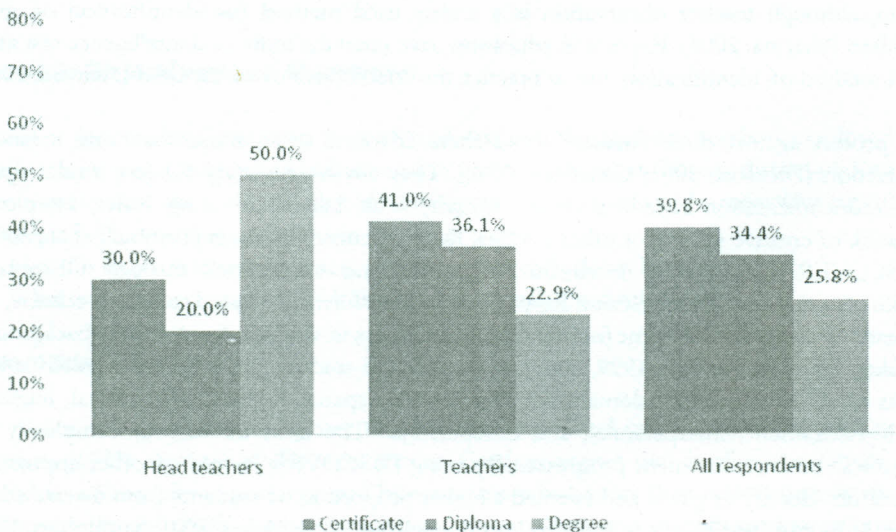


Table 1: Teaching Experience(N=93)

Years	Head teachers	Teachers	Total	Percentage
1-5	1(10.0%)	10(12.0%)	11	11.8%
6-10	0(0.0%)	14(16.9%)	14	15.1%
10-15	0(0.0%)	19(22.9%)	19	20.4%
16-20	6(60.0%)	22(26.5%)	28	30.1%
>21	3(30.0%)	18(21.7%)	21	22.6%
Total	10(100.0%)	83(100.0%)	93	100.0%

Figure 3: Methods of identifying Gifted and talented learners

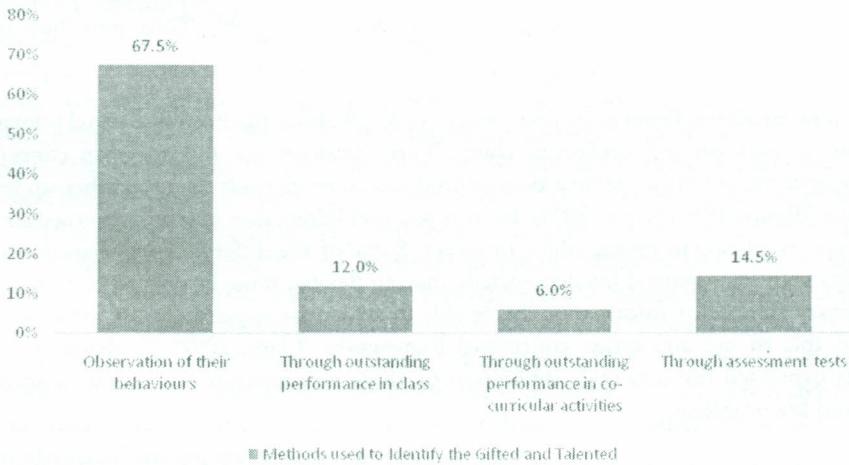


Table 2: Characteristics of Gifted and talented (N=83)

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding Performance	13	15.7
Creative Productive Thinkers	12	14.5
Leaders-brave & Courageous	8	9.6
Inquisitive	15	18.1
Social & Outgoing	5	6.0
Active & Aggressive	17	20.5
Easily get bored	11	13.2
No Response	2	2.4
Total	83	100.0

Characteristics of Learners who are Gifted and Talented

Programs and services for students who are gifted and talented are based on studies of those students' characteristics (Callahan & Miller, 2005; Colangelo & Davis, 2003).

It is difficult to identify the characteristics of all people who are gifted and talented, although (Kamau, 2005) in a study on measures of identification of gifted and talented learners in Kenya, Central Province Primary schools found out that teachers nominate students who perform highly well in academics. Indeed, "no one profile exists of a gifted child or a gifted education program. Gifted children are a diverse group, and therefore, there's need to move beyond a "one – size – fits – all' conception both for identification and programming" (Rizza & Gentry, 2001, p. 175). Nevertheless, those who are gifted share these traits: high general intellect; specific academic aptitude; creative, productive thinking; leadership ability; and visual and performing artistry. Paradoxically, high – ability students may have language, hearing, visual, physical, or learning disabilities but they also may have a specific aptitude in another area, such as the visual and performing arts (Baldwin & Vialle, 1999). Thus, giftedness may co-occur with disability.

High general intellect: From its earliest conceptions, giftedness has been associated primarily with students' high general intellectual ability. These students are able to grasp concepts, generalize, analyze, or synthesize new ideas or products far more easily than can other students of their age (Bloom, 1956; Noble, 2004). Even as young children, they may be concerned about issues or events relating to values, ethics, or justice. Some of the differentiating characteristics of students with high general intellect include; having flexible thought processes, having an extraordinary amount of information, being able to synthesize large bodies of information, and being able to use and create conceptual frameworks (Clark, 2002). Students' general intellect is expressed through their application of these characteristics to various academic subjects and life problems.

Specific academic aptitude: Students with exceptional ability may have an unusual aptitude in specific scholastic areas such as verbal or mathematical reasoning (Tumbull, et al., 2007). According to Gardner (1993b, p.51) "giftedness is a sign of precocious bio psychological potential in whichever domains exist in a culture", whereas, "prodigiousness is an extreme form of giftedness in a domain". In other words, a gifted individual shows unusual promise in a specific task or domain, but a prodigy surpasses unusual promise to being unmistakably extraordinary (Morelock & Feldman, 1997).

Individuals who have specific aptitude are high academic achievers, study purposefully and attain high academic grades in their work. They undertake specific projects and become experts in them. They are often on honour rolls; receive academic and extra – curricular awards (Ndurumo, 1993).

Creative, Productive thinking: Educators have long regarded creativity as a defining trait of gifted and talented students (Torrance, 1964). Creativity is often associated with the visual and performing arts, but students can express it in other ways. Researchers agree that creativity

correlates with higher – order cognitive thinking, intrinsic motivations, and a sheer love of creating (Amabile, 1990; Mumford, 1998; Piirto, 1998). It is impossible to think of Einstein's creation of the theory of relativity without seeing the characteristics of his creativity; independence, risk taking, originality and intuition surely were all part of the process (Karolyi, Ramos – Ford, & Gardner, 2003). Creatively gifted individuals are creative, spontaneous in their imagination; free from concrete expectations, original, philosophers, theoretical, illuminators etc.

Children who are creative and productive thinkers are also high academic achievers and possess high intellectual ability. They tend to have a science and mathematics bias although some of them are philosophers and fall into the soft science and general arts domain (Ndurumo, 1993). Thus, in the classroom, creative productive children can be found who excel in specific academic excellence with creativity to contribute something tangible to society.

Leadership ability: One recent model describes leaders as those who emerge in situations in which there is not a designated leader (Guastello, 2002). Four indices of emergent leadership are being a role model for others, inspiring or motivating others when they are unsure about what action to take, affirming others' perspectives and ideas, and assigning tasks to people with corresponding strengths. One of the most important characteristics of leadership is “wisdom in spontaneity – the ability to assess situations quickly and step forward or backward in taking direction for the benefit of the group” (Tumbull, et al., 2007). The behaviours most attributed to emerging leaders are keeping the group focused, offering compromises that are accepted by the group, being listened to and respected by group members, and eliciting agreement from others. Another type of leadership involves taking action related to values, ethics, and/or justice. Renzulli (2002) described characteristics of people who “mobilize their interpersonal, political, ethical, and moral lives in such ways that they place human concerns in the common good above materialism, ego enhancement, and self – indulgence” (p. 25). Their characteristics are optimism, courage, avid interest in a topic or discipline, sensitivity to human concerns, physical/mental energy, and vision/sense of destiny.

Visual and Performing arts: The visual and performing arts are media in which students show many of the traits associated with creativity, general intellect, and specific academic aptitude, including rapid mastery of a subject matter. In addition, they may have highly developed non-verbal communication skills; physical coordination; exceptional awareness of where they are in relation to other things and people; or specific skills in music, dance, theatre/acting and mime, story-telling, drawing, or painting (Gardner, 1993).

Behavioural characteristics: Some students who are gifted behave well, and some behave poorly. Some have a strong sense of humour or unquenchable curiosity that can be a distraction in class. Indeed, these students are not any less well adjusted than their so – called typical or not – gifted peers (Neihart, Reis, Robinson, & Moon, 2002). Some may have fewer friends or try to hide their talents so that they will be more accepted by their typical peers (Neihart et al, 2002; Obiakor, 2007; Sharma, 2006). Some may experience perfectionism or it's opposite, the tendency to underachieve (Reis & Mc Coach, 2002; Schuler, 2002). Females who are gifted and talented may believe that it is socially unacceptable for them to achieve at high levels

(Reis, 1998). Although students with these characteristics can be perfectionists, they are easily distracted by external stimuli, unable to maintain attention, or have difficulty controlling their impulses, they also have a positive view of others, are sensitive, have a forgiving nature, and are able to produce work of significant quality when motivated and valued (Wallace, 1999/2000).

Social and emotional abilities: One of the most common misconceptions about students with gifts and talents is that they are socially inept and emotionally unstable (Obiakor, 2007). Although some of them may feel different, misunderstood, and socially isolated, most are healthy, self – sufficient, emotionally well adjusted, independent, stable, sensitive and insightful. Even though they are generally well liked by their peers (Hallahan& Kauffman, 2003) some hide or camouflage their gifted need to be more socially acceptable to their peers. Additionally, they tend to show advanced level of moral behaviour and a keen sense of justice. They are quick to question authority, respond to perceived injustices to themselves and others when they perceive those in authority as illogical, irrational, erroneous or unjust; have a strong sense of pride, self worth, and strong leadership ability (Sharma, 2006). Sometimes they tend to be hypersensitive, highly emotional, empathetic, and impulsive; and they get upset and display maladaptive behaviours when they feel they are discriminated against and prevented from realizing their full potentials (Hallahan& Kauffman, 2003; Obiakor, 2007; Sharma, 2006).

Methodology

Research design

This study employed mixed methods approach design which is an aspect of both quantitative and qualitative procedures (Creswell, 2003). This method emanates from the conviction that neither quantitative nor qualitative approach is self-sufficient. The concurrent procedures; a mixed method strategy, was applied whereby quantitative and qualitative data were converged in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

Location of the study

The study was conducted in Wareng District in Uasin Gishu County in Kenya. The district is located in North-West of Kenya at a distance of 312 Km from Nairobi, the Kenya`s capital city. Wareng district, a high potential district of Kenya covers an area of 989.1 Km² and had a population of 239,362 people according to 2009 National population census (KNBS, 2010). The district has an airport; Eldoret International Airport. The main economic activities carried out include agriculture and micro finance activities. Institutions of higher learning found in the district are Moi University, Catholic University (GABA Campus), Mount Kenya University(Eldoret Campus) and Eldoret Polytechnic. Wareng District was purposively selected for the study because it is a well-known area that produces quite a good number of national and international sports champions. Secondly, the primary schools in the district perform well in national examinations and send quite a good number of students to national secondary schools. Thirdly, there exists Government or public primary schools and private run primary schools. Within the district, there are two educational divisions: Kapseret and Kesses.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used in this study to determine the suitable size for the study. The simple random sampling technique used was lottery technique whereby ballot papers of equal size, same colour and texture, were cut. Only eight pieces of these papers out of the others were labelled. Then they were placed in a container, mixed well, and then the teachers were allowed to pick one piece at a time. Those teachers who picked a labelled piece of paper were automatically selected for the study. Purposively ten head teachers and ten top performing public schools in the district during 2005 – 2009 were selected following the criteria of performance status in national examinations and co-curricular activities. The schools which scored an average mean of 295.75 and above for the last five years consecutively were selected for the sample.

Sample Size

There were one hundred respondents for the study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) a sample with a minimum number of one hundred (100) respondents is essential for descriptive statistics. Purposively ten (10) head teachers from each of the ten (10) public primary schools were selected and using simple random sampling procedure nine (9) teachers were randomly selected from each of the ten (10) primary schools yielding a random sample of ninety (90) teachers as respondents to questionnaires.

Research Instruments

Questionnaires and interview schedules were developed by the researcher and were used as a guide for getting information used towards the building of the findings of the study. There were eight open ended questions and twenty closed ended ones for teachers to respond on and interview schedule had a total of nine questions for the head teachers. The structured and the unstructured questions combined facilitated narratives/description that provided in-depth information on methods of identifying learners who are gifted and talented and their characteristics.

Data Analysis

Data in this study were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative analysis involved making inferences and conclusion from teachers' responses from open-ended items in the questionnaires and responses from the interviews. Quantitative data were derived from questionnaires using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics for each and summary were compiled. Results were presented in form of mean, frequency, percentages and tabulation to show an analysis of methods used by teachers to identify learners who are gifted and talented. Both qualitative and quantitative data on the objectives of the study were then triangulated to generalized conclusion on the finding of the study.

Results and Discussions

Demographic Characteristics

A total of 83 teachers completed the questionnaires out of the 90 who were sampled giving an 89.2% return rate. This number was sufficient to give the desired results for the study. The return rate of the sampled 10 head teachers interviewed was 100%.

Insert Figure 1: Gender and population of respondents (N=93)

Figure 1 above shows that of the 83 respondents who filled the questionnaires, 37(44.6%) were males and 46(55.4%) were females showing that there were more female respondents than their male counterparts. Of the 10 head teachers interviewed, 70.0% were males and 3(30.0%) were females.

Figure 2 : Education Level of respondents (N=93)

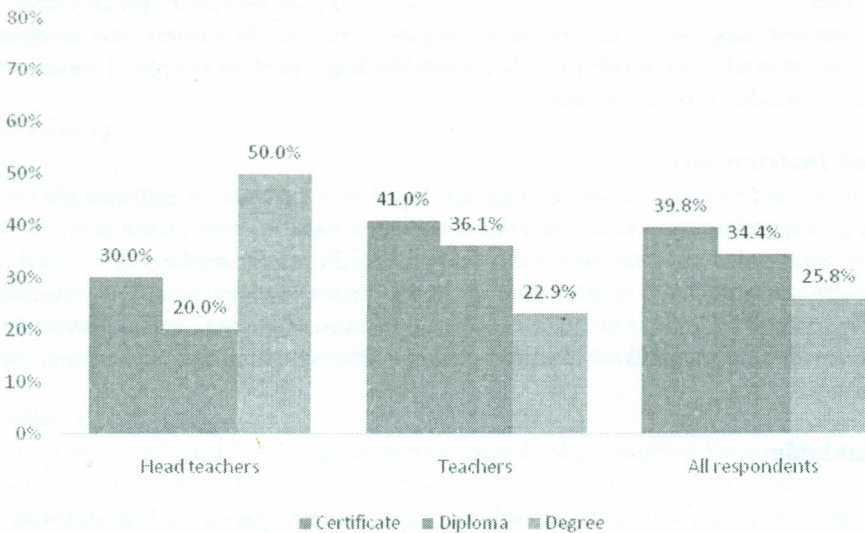


Figure 2 shows that in terms of education level, 24(25.8%) out of 93 respondents had attained degrees in regular education while 37(39.8%) had certificates and the rest had diplomas. This indicated that the respondents were qualified professionals and had enough knowledge to teach in regular schools. Only 23% of the teachers had a university degree, while majority of them (41%) had a certificate. In contrast, majority of the head teachers (50%), had a university degree.

Table 1: Teaching Experience(N=93)

Years	Head teachers	Teachers	Total	Percentage
1-5	1(10.0%)	10(12.0%)	11	11.8%
6-10	0(0.0%)	14(16.9%)	14	15.1%
10-15	0(0.0%)	19(22.9%)	19	20.4%
16-20	6(60.0%)	22(26.5%)	28	30.1%
>21	3(30.0%)	18(21.7%)	21	22.6%
Total	10(100.0%)	83(100.0%)	93	100.0%

Table 1 reveals that 30.1% of the 93 respondents indicated that they had worked for a minimum of 16 years and a maximum of 20 years. Only 11.8% of the respondents had less than 5 years' experience teaching. Majority of the respondents had taught for more than 10 years hence they had enough experience and knowledge in teaching. Ninety percent of the head teachers had taught for more than 16 years, as compared to 48% of teachers who had taught for the same number of years.

Identification of Learners who are Gifted and Talented

Figure 3: Methods of identifying Gifted and Talented Learners (N=83)

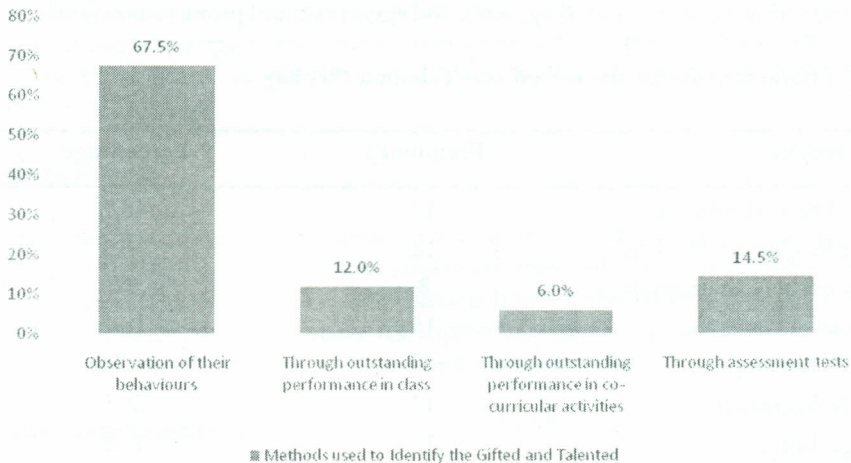


Figure 3 above shows various methods teachers used to identify gifted and talented learners. Out of the 83 respondents, 67.5% of them identified them through observations. Only 14.5% used assessment tests, while a minority (6%) did through outstanding performance in co-curricular activities. These findings show observation was amongst the most widely used method to identify gifted and talented learners. Similar findings were recorded by Kamau (2005) and Sharma (2006) who also found observation to be the most common used method used by teachers to identify the gifted and talented.

The respondents interviewed in this study also mentioned observation, academic performance and assessment tests as methods they used to identify gifted and talented learners. Remarks made by these respondents indicated gifted learners performed above average in class work and even co-curricular activities. The respondents felt that these children were fast learners and scored very high marks and were among the best in assessment tests. The use of different methods to identify gifted children is applicable in most special education programmes which use a combination of aptitude tests, teacher ratings, nominations, and scholastic records to help identify eligible students (Heward, 2006). Therefore, no single method can be used to identify or measure giftedness and talentedness of learners in schools since the probability of ignoring other areas is high. Teachers should therefore use a combination of different methods. Researchers also advocate the use of more than one means of evaluation in order to protect against discrimination, (Dickson, 2003; Gallagher, 2002). This also ensures that the results are more valid and accurate.

Characteristics of Learners who are Gifted and Talented

In addition to identification, the research sought to establish the characteristics that respondents used to identify the gifted and talented children. A list of the traits that respondents gave was categorized into 7 broad groups: outstanding performance, creative and productive thinkers, leaders, inquisitive, social and outgoing, active and aggressive, and prone to boredom.

Table 2: Characteristics of the Gifted and Talented (N=83)

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding Performance	13	15.7
Creative Productive Thinkers	12	14.5
Leaders-brave & Courageous	8	9.6
Inquisitive	15	18.1
Social & Outgoing	5	6.0
Active & Aggressive	17	20.5
Easily get bored	11	13.2
No Response	2	2.4
Total	83	100.0

Table 2 above shows the characteristics of the gifted and talented children and the corresponding figures that indicate which characteristic a respondent used. Majority of the respondents (20.5%) of the respondents believed that children who are gifted and talented were very active and aggressive while 15.7% of them indicated that the children had very high and outstanding performance. Only 2.4% of the respondents did not list down any characteristics of gifted and talented children.

The respondents interviewed also gave similar characteristics. However, they revealed that not all learners were gifted and talented in academics. Majority of them were gifted and talented in sports, athletics, music, drama, leadership, dancing, creative arts, and many other areas. The respondents also mentioned that some learners were only gifted in specific subjects like mathematics, sciences, and languages and performed below average in social studies.

The above findings are supported by Rizza and Gentry (2001) who also establish that gifted and talented children are a diverse group and share traits such as high general intellect, creativity, have specific academic aptitude, and are leaders among others. Additionally, Baldwin and Vialle (1999) reveal that high-ability students may have language, hearing, visual, physical or learning disabilities and may also have a specific aptitude in areas such as the visual and performing arts. Thus, giftedness may co-occur with disability therefore, teachers need to be keen and knowledgeable enough to be able to identify the gifted and talented learners so to apply appropriate instructional strategies.

Policy Implications

The study recognised and analysed identification of gifted and talented learners, as well as their characteristics. The results obtained are useful to provide a guide for policy makers when laying strategies on effective and robust teaching instruction for gifted and talented learners so that they are noticed, so that they realize their potential in the long term; in their education pursuit and have impacts on national developments. Furthermore, the education of the gifted in the whole country should be stepped up for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2015 to be achieved.

Conclusion

It is clear from the study that teachers identified gifted and talented learners through observation, their outstanding performance and assessment tests with the most preferred method being observation. The findings also established that learners who are gifted and talented had diverse characteristics such as being active and aggressive, outstanding performance, creative, leaders, inquisitive, critical, boredom, disruptive and noisy when idle.

Recommendations

The study recommends that, the Ministry of Education should in-service and train all teachers so as to equip them with the knowledge and skills on how to identify gifted and talented children and how to deal with them. A curriculum needs to be adapted by Kenya Institute

of Education to cater for the needs and interests of diverse groups of gifted and talented learners. Lastly, early identification from pre schools need to be done by teachers so as to tap talents and provide for gifted and talented children effectively hence developing the child's gifts and talents as early as possible.

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