

TALENTED PIONEER CENTERS IN JORDAN

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Abstract

Conscious communities make talented environment before looking for talented students. Taking care of the talent is an important part that cannot be separated from other school educational functions, Talented Students started to receive educational services at the talented Pioneer centers in Jordan in the late 1996s. This paper reviews the model of talent in Jordan which are the pioneer centers for gifted and talented students, this paper concludes with a review of the mechanism of action and acceptance conditions of gifted and talented students in these centers.

Keywords: Talented Pioneer centers, Talented theory, Concurrent thinking theory

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Introduction

Gifted students are often surprised with classic routine-like teaching methods that turn them into blank pages receiving information and imitating others. This condition is one reason why teaching strategies and training programs should be reconsidered to upgrade and improve teaching material content, objectives, and the methods by which the message is delivered to the student (Jamal,2014). Some researchers have suggested focusing on training materials to connect students with the surrounding environment and to remedy the current situation. Alaweida (2014), indicated that training on creativity has a positive effect on teachers and students, especially on conceptual and perceptive capacities, out of the box thinking, creativity, and educational achievement. Training creativity will also provide a good effect on the emotional and affective domain (e.g., the concept of “self,” interests, and creativity-related characteristics).

Daniel (2006), explained the important role of training programs in helping students find the most successful and creative methods and in developing their thinking skills in comparison, analysis, fluency, flexibility, and originality to solve the problems they face in their daily lives. Creative thinking is particularly referred to by most researchers as important. Supporting creative thinking through stimuli of curricula, training programs, and methods is important (Al-Mashrefi & Enshirah, 2005).

In light of the preceding discussion, training programs and courses that rely on various effective teaching strategies in developing creative thinking are necessary to advance people in life. The effect of such training is evident in research on education, psychology, giftedness, and talent. Training programs focus on a number of strategies that stimulate creative thinking (e.g., conceptualization, encoding, organizing, brainstorming, imagination, discussion, and repetition), which are basic to many training programs (e.g., CORT) that rely on (breadth) organization,

interaction, information, action, the six thinking hats based on the encoding strategy, Triz, and other programs.

2. Definition of talent

The Arabic and English dictionaries agree that the word “talent” means exceptional ability or the inherent and unusual willingness of an individual. The word “superiority” either comes synonymous with talent or denotes the inherited or acquired ability, whether mental or physical. Some sources have identified the term “gifted students” as the children or youth who are characterized by a distinct ability to perform in the areas of creative and technical capabilities and leadership or in certain academic fields. Gifted students need services and activities that are not provided by the school but are necessary to develop such capabilities to their maximum. As regards the relationship between talent and intelligence rates, the previous definitions of talent focus on an individual’s IQ or school performance, where the minimum rate was 130. Such definitions excluded students who show a distinct talent in other areas, such as music, arts, sports, and driving. Guilford (1981), developed a definition of intelligence to include a variety of mental and creative abilities. The previous concepts were then expanded to include the talents of creativity and performance. Renzulli et al. (1987), defined “talent” as an interaction between three features (i.e., smarter than average, strong commitment to performance of functions, and high level of creativity).

3. Talented theory

There are many theories that discuss talent aspects, Its as Guilford’s theory of structure of intellect(1950), Taylor’s model of multiple talents(1967), Renzulli’s Three-Ring Model of Giftedness(1978), Monks’ triadic interdependence model for talent(1992), Feldhusen’s talent

identification and development in education model(1994) , Gardner's multiple intelligences(2003), Tannenbaum's who, what, and how of giftedness(2003), Sternberg's successful intelligence(2010), Abdeen's concurrent thinking(2014).

4. Talented Pioneer centers in Jordan

Pioneer centers are schools equipped with suitable educational facilities and with administrative and teaching staff qualified to receive and train outstanding students in the elementary eighth stage (grade) according to special standards. Lessons in these types of schools occur outside school hours (2:00 PM to 5:00 PM), where students are given different experiences in science, mathematics, English, and Arabic, in addition to creative activities and interests, particularly in the field of computer, music, art, scientific visits, and laboratory tests. The number of these centers has grown to 19 in 2011, namely, in Amman, Irbid, Alramtha, Kourah, BaniKenanah, Al-Zarkaa, Al-Raseefa, Al-Salt, Ain Al-Basha, Karak, MazarJanoubi, Tafileh, Mafraq, Ajloun, Jerash, northern Jordan Valleys, and Aqaba. The Ministry of Education has been implementing this program since 1996/1997. According to 2010/2011 statistics, approximately 3323 male and female students are currently benefiting from the program, and nearly 289 teachers are working in this field. The ministry seeks to develop a leading center in each directorate of education in the next 5 years (JMOE 2010/2011).

The general objectives of the leading centers are as follows: expand the awareness of students with basic knowledge by implementing and developing enriching programs in Arabic, English, mathematics, and computer science; highlight and develop the talents of students; create appropriate educational opportunities through elective developmental activities that focus on developing excellence and creative and critical thinking. The other objectives of these centers

include helping students develop their understanding of themselves and training them on effective communication skills to create conscious leaders. This training is conducted by providing educational experiences that enable them to have cognitive, emotional, and motor growth, develop and deepen a holistic view of the future, and plan this future properly in a scientific manner (Ghanim, 2013).

Outstanding and talented students should be identified at an early age to protect them from exposure to any factor that may affect their superiority and reduce achievement. Early care helps exploit their potential to the maximum, thereby enabling them to show their abilities and helping them to better serve their community. The importance of adopting the programs of the leading centers is presented in the discussions that follow. The auspices of a category of students help raise the scientific literacy and cultural level in the country, bridge the gap in the educational system, improve the mental and creative abilities of talented students (which will lead to increased spirits), and address the need of these outstanding and talented students of educational programs, thus enabling the development of appropriate behavioral skills. Gifted or talented students belong to unique categories. These types of students remarkably differ from their peers in terms of capabilities, talents, tendencies, and psychological and social maturity.

Gifted students are sensitive to a school environment that focuses on the average student. This sensitivity makes them susceptible and frustrated and may result in them trying to integrate into the school community while hiding their mental superiority to get accepted (Ministry of Education, 2013). The huge changes witnessed in this millennium in the fields of science and technology and the methods of production and social organization, public relations, and other fields urgently stress the importance of preparing the individual to understand the essence of these changes, live with them, and subject them to control while being creative. Our society is

facing many challenges that are related to keeping pace with scientific, technical, other developments under globalization.

Meeting such challenges requires the concerted effort of the potential government and private investments to create the best opportunities that will enable them to commence finding solutions. Everyone is expected to obtain equal educational opportunities according to his/her potentials and capabilities if the strategy of equal educational opportunities is considered. Thus, talented and gifted students deserve special educational opportunities such as that offered by leading programs (Ministry of Education, 2013).

These centers include rooms in the proposed school that comprise a minimum of four rooms. One of these rooms should be allocated for the center's director and other administrative directors. One room should be allocated for the use of guides, and the other is for teachers and educational materials. Halls, bathrooms, workshops, and facilities, which can be scientific or laboratory (e.g., laboratory for chemistry, physics, and biology and a computer hall), should be installed in the school. Toilets, yards, and courts should also be made available. Achieving such strategies comes with the agreement on the role of the Directorate of Education in the leading center. The director is responsible for providing full- and part-time qualified teachers that will work with outstanding students according to specific bases, in addition to choosing who among the students will join the center according to the agreed conditions and ensuring the transportation from the gathering places to the center and vice versa (Ministry of Education, 2013)..

The students in the talented student programs are chosen from the seventh class at the end of May in each academic year according to some dimensions (e.g., academic achievement. Students with averages above 90% in the basic subjects of the sixth and seventh classes are

selected by their schools. Approximately 50% of this dimension is allocated for achievement. Another dimension is the behavioral characteristics filled up by the class teacher, in addition to the teachers of basic subjects, the educational guide, and the schoolmaster. Such characteristics account for approximately 20%. The whole summative achievement test is another dimension that is allocated with approximately 20%. The last dimension is the distinguished products and individual abilities of students, which account for approximately 10%. The personal interview is conducted by the interview committee in the leading center (Ghanim, 2013).

The teaching and administrative staff for the centers is selected on the basis of the following:

- a. The academic qualification should not be less than a bachelor's degree; a master's degree in the specialty is preferable, in addition to an educational qualification (e.g., diploma in special education).
- b. He should be among the highly distinguished students during his four years in college.
- c. He should have adequate experience in teaching and preferably have previous experience in teaching outstanding students;
- d. He should have distinguished products and activities in his specialty; (E) he should have various interests, such as reading and participating in artistic, cultural, and poetic activities.
- e. He should have deep and minute knowledge in his field.
- f. He should have positive trends or orientations toward the students and the profession and distinguished curriculum vitae including his academic achievements (Ministry of Education, 2013).

The achievements of students in these centers are summarized in the following:

1. Most leading centers have internet connections and the Globe Program to conduct studies and standards on the surrounding environment. This practice allows leading centers to

attain many achievements in terms of serving the environment and gaining international attention.

2. Exhibitions that show student projects concerning scientific tools and aids, in addition to the students' patented achievements;
3. Participation in the National Olympics held by the Ministry of Education and some other institutions, in addition to participation in the International Olympics in mathematics and physics and achieving impressive results;

Scientific and entertainment camps for students with special needs at the end of the academic year, where such scientific, humanistic, and entertainment activities are conducted, and participation in international carnivals and exhibitions basically held for outstanding students. These centers include rooms in the proposed school that comprise a minimum of four rooms. One of these rooms should be allocated for the center's director and other administrative directors. One room should be allocated for the use of guides, and the other is for teachers and educational materials. Halls, bathrooms, workshops, and facilities, which can be scientific or laboratory (e.g., laboratory for chemistry, physics, and biology and a computer hall), should be installed in the school. Toilets, yards, and courts should also be made available. Achieving such strategies comes with the agreement on the role of the Directorate of Education in the leading center. The director is responsible for providing full- and part-time qualified teachers that will work with outstanding students according to specific bases, in addition to choosing who among the students will join the center according to the agreed conditions and ensuring the transportation from the gathering places to the center and vice versa (Ministry of Education, 2013).

Conclusion

First, this article presents in-depth perception of reality pedagogical Talented Pioneer centers in Jordan . Finally, the paper describes about a review of the mechanism of action and acceptance conditions of gifted and talented students in these centers

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