

Teachers' Views about the Education of Gifted Students in Regular Classrooms

Üstün Yetenekli Öğrencilerin Normal Sınıflarda Eğitimine İlişkin Öğretmen Görüşleri

Neşe Kutlu Abu¹, Çiğdem Akkanat² & Murat Gökdere³

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate classroom teachers' views about the education of gifted students in regular classrooms. The sample of the study is composed of ten primary school teachers working in the city of Amasya and had gifted students in their classes. In the present study, phenomenological research design was used. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed descriptively in the QSR N-Vivo package program. The findings showed that teachers did not believe a need for differentiating curriculum for gifted students; rather they expressed that regular curriculum was enough for gifted students. Based on the findings, it is clear that teachers need training both on the need of differentiated education for gifted students and strategies and approaches about how to educate gifted students. Teachers' attitudes towards gifted students in regular classrooms should be investigated so that teachers' unsupportive beliefs about differentiation for gifted students also influence their attitudes towards gifted students.

Keywords: gifted students, regular classroom, teacher perceptions

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Bilim ve Sanat Merkezi'ne devam eden öğrencilerin normal sınıflarda eğitiminin sınıf öğretmenleri bakış açısıyla değerlendirilmesini yapmaktır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu Amasya ilinde görev yapan ve sınıfında üstün yetenekli öğrencisi bulunan on sınıf öğretmeni oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden olgu bilim deseni kullanılmıştır. Veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmış ve QSR N-Vivo paket programında betimsel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda, sınıf öğretmenlerinin üstün yeteneklilerin eğitiminde herhangi bir farklılaştırma yapılmasının gereksiz olduğunu ve var olan müfredatın üstün yetenekli öğrenciler için yeterli olduğunu düşündükleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Öğretmenlere üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin eğitimi ile ilgili olumsuz tutum ve inançlarının giderilmesi hususunda hizmet içi eğitimler verilerek farkındalık düzeyi artırılabilir. İleriki çalışmalarda, sınıf öğretmenlerinin derslerdeki uygulamaları ve üstün yetenekli öğrencilerle etkileşimleri gözlemlenebilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: üstün yetenekli öğrenciler, normal sınıf, öğretmen algıları

Introduction

When giftedness is examined in a conceptual framework, it can be clearly seen that the definition of this concept shows differences from society to society, from time to time and person to person (Sak, 2013). In the Marland Report (1972), giftedness was expressed as individuals who have a high level of performance in one or more fields such as general mental ability, special academic ability, creative and productive thinking, performance based arts, or psychomotor ability. Renzulli (2016), on the other hand, defines giftedness as a combination of

¹Correspondence Author, Res. Asst., Amasya University, Amasya, Turkey; nese_ktl@hotmail.com

²Phd student, Amasya University, Amasya, Turkey

³Prof. Dr., Amasya University, Amasya, Turkey.

ability, creative thinking, and task responsibility. In some of the definitions made, the individual characteristics of giftedness are portrayed and environmental factors are emphasized. In some other definitions, it is noted that giftedness is influenced by cultural values and social politics (Trail, 2011). A study on the definitions of giftedness over the past fifteen years was made by Carman (2013). In this study, it was revealed that the definition of giftedness is more related to intelligence in most research, and in some research there are definitions based on the methods of diagnosis. It has also been found that in most studies there are no detailed descriptions of student groups who are recognized as gifted (Carman, 2013).

In general terms, characteristics of gifted children differ not only from the cognitive aspects of their peers but also from social and emotional characteristics. Ethical judgements of some gifted students are more developed than their peers (Hökelekli & Gündüz, 2004), and their inner appearance and emotional awareness can be higher than their peers (Ward, 1985). Gifted students may experience some social and emotional problems due to complexities of their thoughts and densities of emotions. Examples of social and emotional problems of these children include the difficulties to develop friendship relations such as being friendly or the weakness of social skills (Özbay & Palancı, 2011, Ogurlu & Yaman, 2010). In addition to these social and emotional problems, some undesirable behaviours of gifted students can be observed. In the classroom, teachers play a major role in eliminating negative behaviours that students are exposed to, in supporting gifted students to work with their peers in a compatible and productive way and in developing their social skills. Sezer (2015), who studied views of teachers about the negative behaviour and management of gifted students in the classroom, specified that the negative behaviours displayed by gifted students in the class environment appeared to disturb the learning environment and that the teachers resorted to methods of supporting and sanctioning them.

Teachers with gifted students in their classrooms need to teach them according to their individual characteristics. Teachers should have a deep knowledge of the models, strategies and techniques used in the education of these students. When the relevant literature is examined, it is revealed that special education is not necessary for the gifted and it is thought that giving a different training to gifted students will not be advisable for equality of opportunities (Gökdere & Ayvacı, 2004).

VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh (2005) reported negative teacher attitudes as one of the biggest hurdles to providing a suitable education for gifted students. It was also suggested by Eyre and Geake (as cited in Geake & Gross, 2008) that negative teacher attitudes prevent professional development and cause inappropriate differentiation for these children. Akar and Şengil Akar (2012) pointed out that teachers did not have enough knowledge about the gifted students. Tortop (2014) argued that prospective teachers are at a level of instability in their attitudes towards education of gifted students. In Ekinci's (2002) study of primary school students in terms of teachers' perceptions of the availability of gifted education, most of the teachers indicated that there was no education for these children and that they did not

do any special application for their development. Şahin and Çetinkaya (2015) found that primary school teachers who were trained in the identification of gifted students were more effective and productive. However, in their study of prospective teachers' attitudes towards the education of gifted students, Metin, Şenol and İnce (2017) found significant differences in favor of primary school teachers who did not take courses on mainstreaming education upon comparing the primary school teachers who did and did not receive such courses. Therefore, even being trained in this area may be inadequate in some cases to positively affect attitudes positively. Certainly, teacher attitudes, perceptions and beliefs are crucial in revealing the gifted students' multifaceted interests and different talents, or in developing their potentials and social skills.

The Science and Art Centres (BILSEM) were established in our country in 1990s by the Ministry of National Education to meet specialised educational needs of the gifted students (Gökdere, Küçük & Çepni, 2003). Through BILSEM, gifted students are educated at times after school in many provinces. Studies on how these institutions operate show that, despite some problems (Keskin, Samancı & Aydın, 2013), they are close to realizing their targets as an institution. Yumuş and Topbaş (2011), for example, examined the proper functioning of these institutions through their teacher's views and determined that these teachers had the opinion that they did enough to make the cognitive and affective development of the students. It is quite clear that the numbers of these institutions are increasing with each passing day and that the education in these centres must be supported with different applications. In this context, besides the education given in the centres of science and arts, supportive education studies including the gifted students in regular schools are carried out (MoNE, 2012). In this increasingly widespread practice, the main purpose is to provide special education services for the students with certain disabilities, or gifted students by providing special tools and educational materials for them. Tortop and Dinçer (2016) examined the views of teachers on this practice and determined that the in-service trainings of teachers who provided training to gifted students in supportive classrooms were inadequate and that the training materials were insufficient, but still they were pleased with the application.

When the national literature is examined, it is striking that there are few studies on the attitudes, perceptions and beliefs of teachers who work in regular schools and in BILSEM on education of the gifted students, and most of these studies are carried out with a quantitative methodology. In a study by Kunt (2012), it was found that science teachers have uncertain attitudes toward the education of gifted students. In a study examining teachers' views on supportive education teacher applications, it was stated that teachers may be in the opinion that it is not possible to allocate extra time to these students (Bedur, Bilgiç & Taşlıdere, 2015). Consequently, no study on the attitudes and perceptions of primary school teachers towards the education of gifted students in primary schools could be found.

Given that the desired success in the programs launched for the gifted children in Turkey is not achieved and the related laws cannot be utilized sufficiently (Özmen & Kömürlü, 2013),

the perceptions of the primary school teachers regarding the training of the gifted students in the regular classrooms are of great importance because primary school teachers are those with the best understanding capability of students throughout the primary school period, apart from parents. It is believed that primary school teachers' attitudes and beliefs about gifted students' education in regular classrooms (such as family, special educators, gifted and talented specialists and cooperating with other psychologists) will affect teachers' relationships with other components of the teaching process and thus the efficiency of the teaching process. It is considered that this study will contribute to the related literature in terms of examining, evaluating and presenting the present situation of the training of the gifted in the regular classrooms in a specific perspective of the teacher.

The aim of the study in this direction is to evaluate the education of the students attending BILSEM in regular classroom environments and who are recognized as being gifted by the Ministry of National Education from the point of view of the primary school teachers.

Method

Study Design

Phenomenological design as a type of qualitative research methodologies was used in this present study to examine the views of primary school teachers of gifted students with different characteristics. The objective of phenomenological design is to find out and interpret perceptions and perspectives of a person or people towards a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 1998).

Study Group

The study group consisted of 10 primary school teachers working in Amasya City (6 women and 4 men) who had gifted students in their classrooms. Since the teachers participating in the study were required to have at least one gifted student, criterion sampling method was used to determine the participants. Six of the teachers had bachelor's degree while four had master's degree. Four of the teachers had 11-15 years of experience and 4 of them had 21 year or more experience. One teacher had 16 to 20 year of experience and one teacher 1 to 5 year of experience. T1, T2, T3, T4, T5 were between the age of 30-39. T7, T8 and T10 were between the age of 40-49. T6 and T9 were over 50 years old. T1, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10 teachers participated in a seminar or in-service training in the education of the gifted but T2, T3, T4, T5 teachers had no training about gifted education. Majority of the teachers participating in a seminar or in-service training program reported that they participated the seminars organized by the Ministry of Education or Counseling and Research Centers. However, teachers stated that these seminars included too much theoretical knowledge, and were short termed and were not very efficient. The subjects they considered themselves as the least competent are English, Social and Science disciplines. The subjects they considered themselves as the most competent are Turkish and Mathematics. Table 1 include the teachers' self-assessments

about the level of knowledge on special teaching methods and techniques in the education of the gifted.

Table 1. Teachers' Self-Assessments about the Level of Knowledge on Special Teaching Methods and Techniques in the Education of the Gifted

	Teachers	Methods and techniques used
Insufficient	T1,T2,T3,T4,T5,T7,T8,T9	Brain storming, problem solving
Moderate	T6	Brain storming, drama, visuals, question answer, reporting
Sufficient	T10	States as sufficient but does not mention any methods or techniques

Data Collection Tool and Application

To collect data, a semi-structured interview form was developed by the researchers. A detailed literature review was conducted while preparing the semi-structured interview form and interview questions were prepared in line with the aim of the study. The views of a field expert on the education of the gifted were taken in order to ensure whether these questions were suitable for the objective of the study. The field expert studies on the gifted education teachers. In addition, two teachers' views were taken about whether the questions were comprehensible or not. After the necessary regulations were made, the interview questions were finalized.

Before the interviews, permissions were taken from the Ministry of National Education. In the study, face-to-face interviews were made with the ten teachers. Voice records were taken from the teachers who gave permission to voice records being taken, while written records were taken from the teachers who did not give permission to voice records being taken.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the study were coded in QSR N-Vivo package program by using descriptive analysis. The consistency percentage of the themes and codes was found to be 0,78 by the researchers.

Results

The interviews with the teachers were coded as T1, T2, T3, and the like. Question 1: When the teacher views on question "Do you think that the individual, social and academic needs of students attending BILSEM are met in regular classrooms? Why?" were analyzed, it was found that 7 teachers thought that regular classrooms did not satisfy the individual, social and academic needs of gifted students. Figure 1 gives the codes that regular classrooms do not meet the individual, social and academic needs of gifted students.

When Figure 1 is examined, it can be seen that the seven teachers thought regular classrooms did not satisfy the needs of gifted students because the learning speed of gifted children

were not taken into consideration in these classrooms.

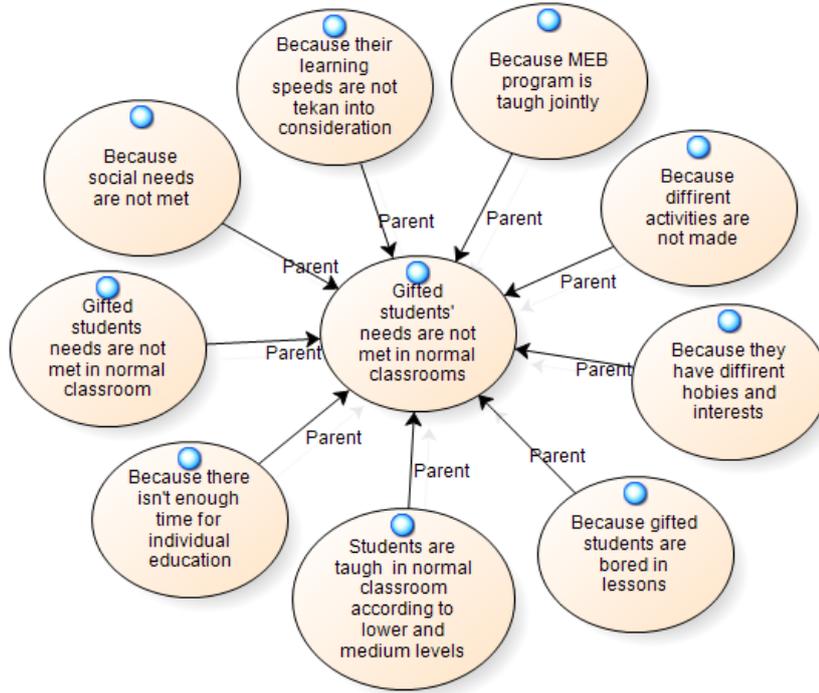


Figure 1. Primary school teachers' views about reasons why gifted students' needs are not satisfied in regular classrooms

Moreover, most of the teachers thought different activities were not made for gifted students. Below are the teachers' views about the codes under this theme.

"I think that individual, academic and social needs of gifted children are not satisfied in regular classrooms because Ministry of National Education program is common for students of all cognitive levels. I have a gifted child in my classroom. Unfortunately, we are trying to teach in accordance with a common curriculum. This student is sometimes bored in the classroom and I can realize that some subjects are easy for him." (T2)

"...when we think about the level of National Education schools, the gifts of many students are wasted in the classroom. They are bored in the classroom because of the easy instruction. They are even alienated from school. However, since the levels of students in private schools are already above a specific level, maybe the students can find a competitive environment for themselves." (T4)

"Classrooms do not meet the needs of these students. They need to be educated individually in BILSEM. They have problems when they are in traditional classroom environment; as a result, it becomes a problem for them. We cannot deal with them individually. Thus, we cannot contribute to their academic developments. There is no supplementary practice for them in regular classrooms in terms of their social developments. We can contribute to interaction with each other or only being with their peers." (T6)

"I think that even if we can meet their academic needs in regular classrooms, we cannot claim that we satisfy their individual needs. With children like themselves, they can be better and they can develop themselves more. We cannot do practices for the interests and characteristics of each one. We cannot give different programs to each one. They were not socially excluded; however, they had difficulties in communicating with the other children. Thus, I can say that we cannot meet their social needs, either." (T9)

"We cannot meet their needs. The Ministry of National Education should need to devise education platforms for gifted children in each school at specific times during the week. Not only nothing is done for the individual and social development of these children, but also they are not taught academically in line with their learning speed. Classrooms should be organized according the nature of the subjects like chemistry classroom and physics classroom, where they can do researches and spend their time. These classrooms should have a different program where these students can develop their upper level abilities and creativity. These students' leadership abilities should be developed. They should be given counselling services. They should spend more time with children like themselves." (T10)

The results showed that three teachers thought that academic, social and individual needs of gifted students were satisfied in regular classrooms. They thought that the students' needs were met since they had the opportunity to express themselves in the classroom and since they actively participated in the lesson. T8 said the following about these expressions:

"I think that all their needs are met. Schools have everything they need and they are free to reach these whenever they need. If their needs were not met, their parents would consider private schools as alternatives."

Question 2: The results of the question "Do the students attending BILSEM in your classroom ask for different resources from their peers?" are given in Table 2.

Table 2. The Views of Primary School Teachers about Gifted Students in their Classrooms

Gifted students do not ask for different resources	Gifted students ask for different resources
T1, T7, T8, T9	T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T10

When Table 2 is analyzed, it can be seen that 6 of the teachers stated that students attending BILSEM asked for resources different from their peers. 6 teachers reported that gifted students asked for question banks about the subjects and they asked for resources for different learning activities.

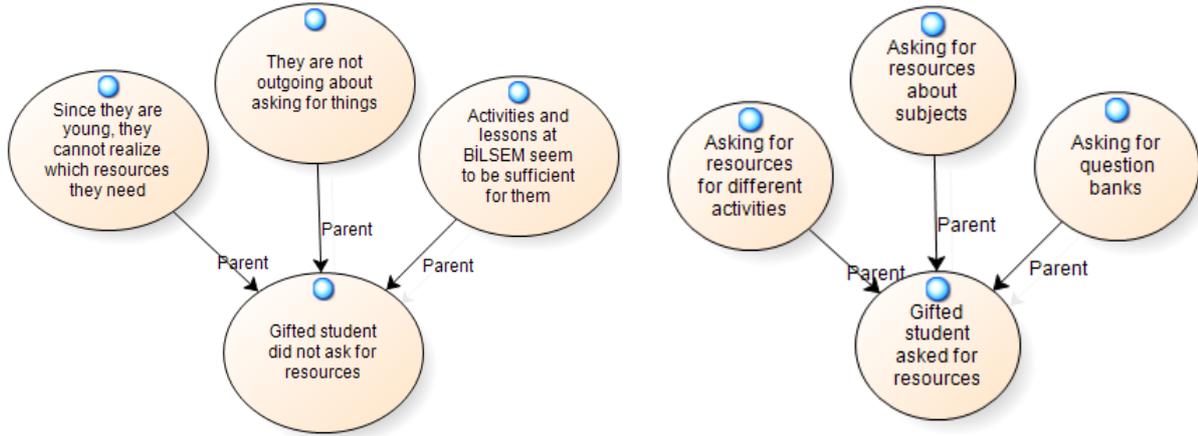


Figure 2. The codes of the primary school teacher's responses related to the second question

For example, T5 said: "Yes, they do. After the text book is taught, they want questions from different resources as homework". 4 teachers in the study group reported that gifted students did not ask for different resources. When they were asked about the reason of this, they stated that gifted students did not ask for resources because the activities and lessons at BILSEM seemed to be enough for them (T7), gifted students were not outgoing about asking for something (T8), they did not realize which resources they needed because they were young (T9). Teachers' responses to the question are given below.

"They did not ask for anything. The activities and lessons at BILSEM seem to be enough for them. We use the same resources in lessons in the classroom. They did not ask for any extra resources so far." (T9)

"I have one gifted student in my classroom right now. He does not ask for any resources. My gifted students in the past did not ask for such things, either. They are curious children, they show that they are different; however, I cannot say that they are outgoing about asking for things." (T7)

Question 3. The views of teachers to the question "Do you have any problems in finding resources (books, materials, lesson activities) suitable for the grades of your students attending BILSEM?" are given in Figure 3.

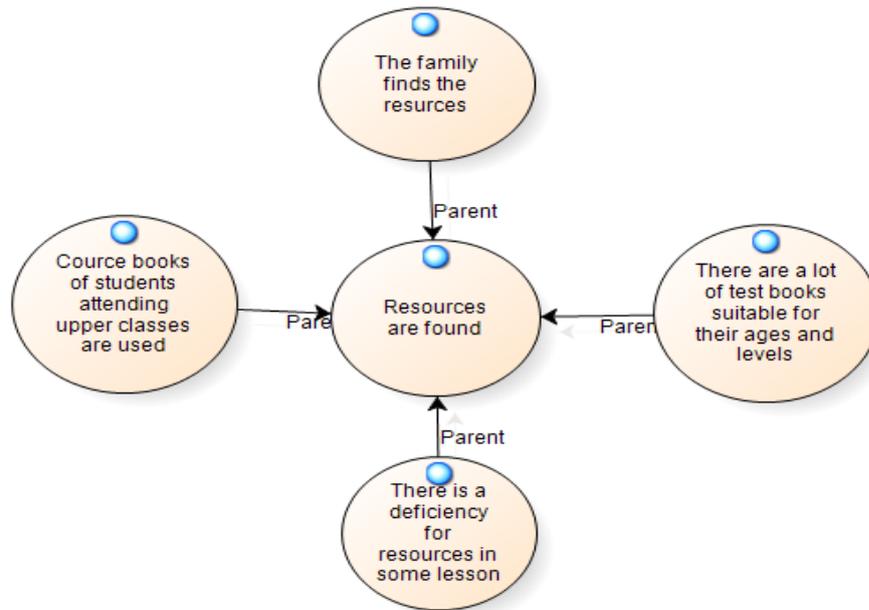


Figure 3. Primary school teachers' views about finding resources (books, materials, lesson activities) suitable for the levels of students attending BILSEM

8 of the teachers in the study reported that they did not have any problems finding resources (books, materials or lesson activities) suitable for the levels of students attending BILSEM (T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T9 and T10). The teachers stated that most of the resources were provided by the families and the textbooks of students attending upper classes were used when necessary. Some teachers stated that there were resources but for some lessons it was difficult to find resources suitable for their level. T6 reported that he did not have any problems finding resources since there were lots of test books suitable for the ages and levels of gifted students.

"I did not have any problems. I requested my friends who own bookshop and they were provided in a short time. I did not have any problems since the books found were mostly test books. There are lots of books suitable for their ages and levels." (T6)

T8 stated that he could not find resources suitable for the levels of students attending BILSEM because the classrooms were crowded and there was a problem of time.

"I cannot say that I use materials suitable for the level of my gifted student. I prefer the materials I use to appeal to all the students in some way because we have time problem. Classrooms are crowded " (T8)

"I do not have any problems because there is no need for resources suitable for our students attending BILSEM. These children learn anyway." (T1)

Figure 4 are given teachers' views about finding resources (books, materials, lesson activities) suitable for the levels of students attending BILSEM.

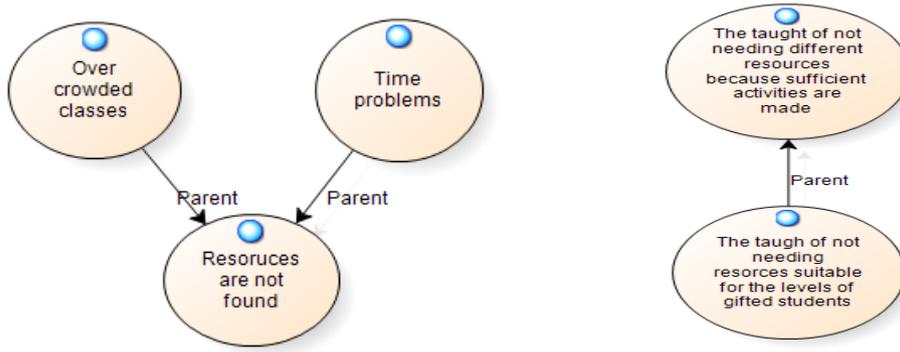


Figure 4. Primary school teachers' views about finding resources (books, materials, lesson activities) suitable for the levels of students attending BILSEM

Question 4: Teachers' views on the question "Are there any special preparations that you make before the lesson for your students attending BILSEM? If yes, what are these preparations? How much time do you allocate to these preparations?" are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Primary School Teachers' Preparations for Gifted Students before Classes

Makes preparations before the lesson (T6)	<i>I have some special preparations. I bring slides, visuals, encyclopedia or different books. The time I spend for these preparations depends on the kind of the activity. Generally, it takes 1-1.5 hours but sometimes it can take 2-3 hours to prepare a presentation. (T6)</i>
Does not make preparations before the lesson (T1,T2,T3,T4,T5, T7,T8,T9,T10)	<i>I don't allocate any time to prepare extra subject for the student attending BILSEM because I think that the education he gets and the time he spends in there is enough. (T1)</i>
	<i>I don't make special preparations before the lesson. (T2)</i>
	<i>I don't make special preparations before the lesson for students attending BILSEM. (T3)</i>
	<i>I don't make any such preparations because I don't do anything special in class for that student. In the classroom, the lessons are generally taught in line with the students' level. I just provide support as additional resources for the student attending BILSEM. Other students perceive this differently when I make a different activity with this student. It causes some students to feel bad. Thus, it is better to deal with these students outside the classroom. (T4)</i>
	<i>I don't make special preparations. We continue with the curriculum. (T5)</i>
	<i>I did not have to make any special preparations because students who go to BILSEM are good at understanding. There are some studies we conduct for low-level students. Those attending BILSEM do not require special preparations since they can learn easily. (T7)</i>
	<i>I don't make special preparations before the lesson for these students. I organize lessons and materials according to normal level. (T8)</i>
	<i>I can allocate time for guidance; however, I can't say it is enough because it is only during breaks. Gifted students do not need this. (T9)</i>
	<i>I don't make special preparations for gifted students since I think about the class as a whole. I don't have the opportunity or time to do this. I think ministry should plan these. (T10)</i>

When Table 3 is analyzed, it can be seen that one of the teachers reported that he made prep-

arations about gifted students before the lesson while 9 reported that they did not make any preparations.

Question 5: The findings of the question “Can you allocate time for guiding and advising your students attending BILSEM apart from regular classroom hours in school guidance services? Do you think that this time is enough? Why?” are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Time Allocated by Teachers for Gifted Students

Does not/cannot allocate time (T1, T4, T5, T6, T7, T9, T10)	<p><i>I don't allocate any time because I think that the education he gets and the time he spends at BILSEM is enough. (T1)</i></p> <p><i>I can't say that I can allocate too much time. (T4)</i></p> <p><i>We can't allocate enough time, but we take care of extra situations. (T5)</i></p> <p><i>They come to me in the breaks to ask questions or just to talk. However, this is not enough because it is just the break. Regular education is not enough for them. They need more detailed teaching with more contact. (T6)</i></p> <p><i>Unfortunately, we don't have too much time for students attending BILSEM. In the classroom, we have to deal with all the students and their problems. We don't have enough time to deal with all of them one by one. This time may not be enough. When they have very big problems, I make them see the school counsellor. What I can do is generally very limited. (T7)</i></p> <p><i>I can allocate time for counselling but I cannot say that it is enough since it is only in the break times. I can't deal with them especially in class individually. Actually, they don't need this because they are gifted. (T9)</i></p> <p><i>These students sometimes need support. Especially, they can have communication problems. On such occasions, I take deal with them in breaks. However, this is not enough since it is a limited time. (T10)</i></p>
Allocates time (T2, T3, T8)	<p><i>Of course, I do. I think it is enough. (T2)</i></p> <p><i>At study times in our school, we solve different kinds of questions. (T3)</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes he comes to me to talk outside classroom hours. Sometimes he comes in the break times to ask some questions. We discuss the subjects he cannot understand for 10-15 minutes. Considering that we cannot allocate so much time to each student in general, I think the time I allocate for him is enough. (T8)</i></p>

Question 6: The findings of the question “Do you think that being labeled as gifted influence students in your class who attend BILSEM? How does this influence them? How is this reflected in the classroom?” are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Primary School Teachers' Views on Labelling

Influenced	<i>Families of the students attending BILSEM are very happy. Thus, if they over reflect this pride on the child, the child can have too many expectations. Similarly, if the teachers take the credit for these children's success and reflect this on the student, the student may not be able to pull these expectations up. I try not to reflect this on the students in my class. (T10)</i>
	<i>.....we are not influenced. (T1)</i>
	<i>There is no big influence because there are students better than the chosen ones. Thus, they are not on the forefront in our classroom. (T2)</i>
Is not influenced	<i>No, they don't consider themselves as gifted right now. (T3)</i>
	<i>This is not discussing in the classroom. (T5)</i>
	<i>Their attending BILSEM did not influence them much because I did not mention this. I did not want them to feel different from or superior to their friends. (T8)</i>
	<i>They were not influenced negatively. They were not spoilt. Sometimes they shared the things they learned there with their friends. They did not act different. (T9)</i>
Somehow influenced	<i>I don't think that he is too influenced. Like I mentioned before, attending BILSEM and being gifted does not show that the student has to be interested in every lesson. While the student is very good at some lessons, he may not be as successful in some lessons the other students are good at. Thus, students do not think that he will always be good. Passive and unsuccessful children and those who are not self-confident develop a different complex against the student attending BILSEM. These types of students commonly have the thought that he knows everything and that he is successful in everything. (T4)</i>
	<i>Yes, being labeled as gifted causes the students attending BILSEM to consider themselves special or better than other students at first. This changes a while later. (T6)</i>

Question 7: The findings of the question "What do you think are the factors (working, socio-economic level, etc) that influence the learning levels of the students attending BILSEM?" are given in Figure 5.

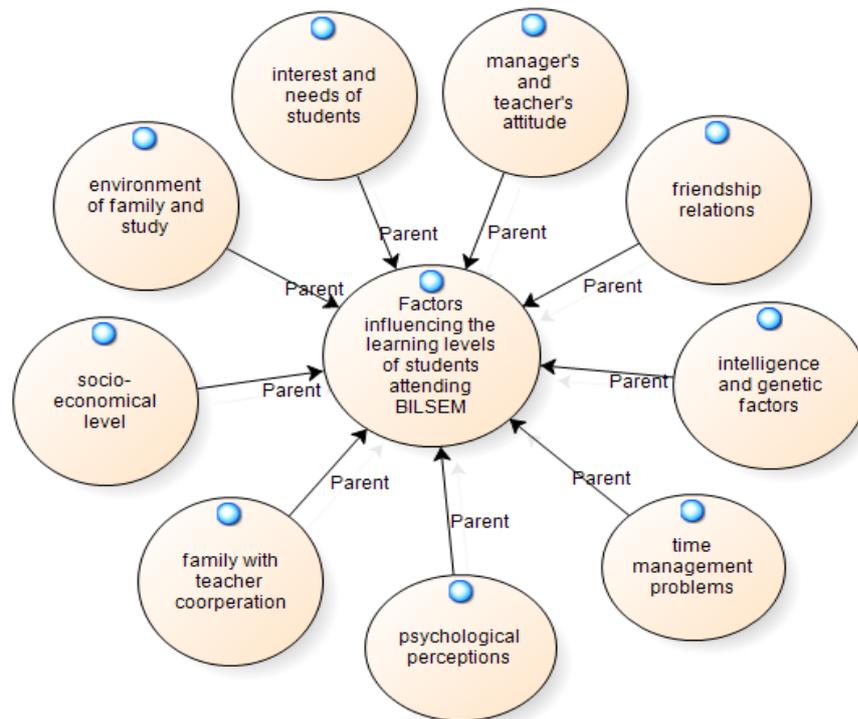


Figure 5. The codes of primary school teachers' views on the factors that influence the students' learning levels

Question 8: The findings of the question "Do your students attending BILSEM ask questions outside the curriculum unlike their peers? Do you think that you can answer these questions enough?" are given in Table 6.

Table 6. Primary School Teachers' Views on Gifted Students' Questions

Sometimes I have difficulties in answering the questions of gifted students	<p>Yes, sometimes there are questions I have difficulties in answering. For example, in the subject of solid, liquid and gas, the student asked whether a matter I never heard of before was solid or liquid or gas. I had difficulty in answering this question. Even if I answered whether it was solid, liquid or gas, I'm sure the questions more complicated would follow. (T3)</p>
	<p>He has questions and I sometimes have difficulties in answering them but I try not to reflect this on the student. (T7)</p>
	<p>He does. Sometimes I have difficulties in answering them. At those times, I say 'let me research for this question, then I'll give you the answer' and I try to tell the answer after researching for it. Sometimes I get help from my friends working in middle school or high school. (T8)</p>
	<p>They do, and I have difficulties. Sometimes we referred to branch teachers. If we could not find the answer, we searched for the answer. (T9)</p>

Table 6 (continued). Primary School Teachers' Views on Gifted Students' Questions

	<i>Yes, sometimes they do. If the questions they ask are questions that may confuse their friends, I prefer to answer them during the break. Sometimes the questions they ask can be more enlightening. Then, I elaborate on the question and answer the question he asked. I think that I'm sufficient. (T4)</i>
I think that I can answer sufficiently.	<i>The students ask too many questions outside the curriculum. I think that I can answer sufficiently. When I have difficulties, I say come and let's research together. We go to the computer room together and research together there or I lead the student to answer the question. (T6)</i>
	<i>They do. There is nothing for them in the curriculum. Thus, sometimes they push us. The teacher must have a quick wit because these students like to put the teacher in a position of not being able to answer. The teachers who use their logic well can deal with this. I think that I answer sufficiently. If I don't know the correct answer to the question, I try to research for the correct answer for the next day and tell them the answer. (T10)</i>
	<i>They don't ask questions outside the curriculum. (T2)</i>

Question 9: When the primary school teachers' answers to the question "Do your students attending BILSEM take part in regular classroom activities enough?" were analyzed, it was found that 9 of the teachers stated that the students attending BILSEM took enough part in classroom activities.

The teachers who stated that participation was in the form of question and answer think that gifted students participate in the lesson more than normal students because they are too self-confident (T3, T5, T6, T10), because their verbal skills are more developed (T2, T8), and because they are more intelligent and practical (T1, T7, T9). T4 stated that the participation of students attending BILSEM differed according to their interests by saying:

"Depends on their interests. They participate in some lessons more while they do not participate in some at all. In such situations, you should intervene, make the student get up, ask him questions and attract the student's attention."

Question 10: The views of teachers to the question "Do you make changes in the teaching program for the students attending BILSEM? If you do, what kind of changes do you do? If you don't, why not?" are given in Figure 6.

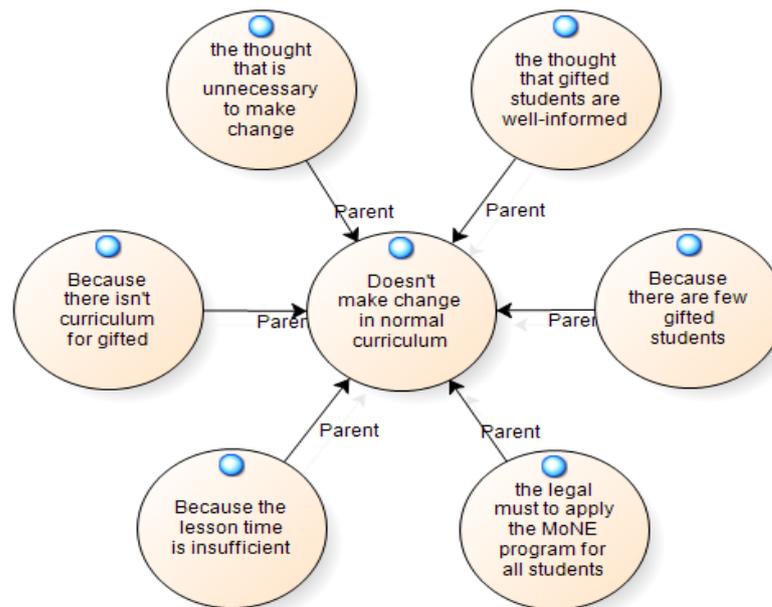


Figure 6. Primary school teachers' views on making changes while applying the teaching program for students attending BILSEM

A great majority of the teachers in study group think that changes are not made during the teaching program because Ministry of National Education program should be applied for all children, gifted children are already good, small in number and do not need a different education. T4 reported that he did not make any changes since there was no curriculum developed for gifted children. Teachers' responses to the question are given below.

"No, I don't because there is one student in the classroom attending BILSEM. Because an additional resource is not followed and because the student is not perfect about every subject, there is no need to make changes in the teaching program." (T4)

"I never changed the program, I did not feel the need to. I believe that it will be something like breaking the child off the classroom. Even if we want to, we do not have the chance to apply different programs to everyone in our classrooms." (T6)

"I do not make any changes during the program because the time is not enough. There are different students in the classroom. I generally teach at a moderate level." (T7)

"I do not make any changes during the program. I teach according to the general level. There are other students like him in the classroom, however, I do not see big changes. There are hardworking students in the classroom who get higher marks than him in the exams. His thought system, dreams and approach are different. Thus, I think that I do not need to make any changes in the program." (T8)

"I do not make any changes during the program. I just make them study on different questions. For maths, I give them some questions upper classes can solve to answer at home. I give them different experiments to conduct at home and report the results for sci-

ence lesson; however, I have many inclusive students in the classroom. I do not have extra time for the students attending BILSEM. Thus, I can't make additions to the program in the classroom." (T9)

"I can't make changes because other students in the classroom will be ineffective then. Students attending BILSEM can as well learn things by themselves. Thus, I lead them to learn by themselves." (T10)

Question 11: Findings related to the responses of the "What do you think is the most important problem about the education of the gifted? Ratings from the most important (5) to the least important (1) are given in Table 7.

Table 7. Problems Rated by Teachers Related to the Education for Gifted Students

	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	Total
Identification	2	5	5	5	5	3	2	1	4	4	36
Education process	4	1	2	3	1	1	4	2	1	1	20
Curriculum and teaching techniques	3	4	3	1	-	4	5	5	3	3	36
Teacher training	5	-	4	-	-	5	3	4	5	2	28
Counseling	1	-	1	2	-	2	1	3	2	5	17

Question 12: The findings of the question "When all of the above problem areas are considered, what kind of suggestions can you make for the solution of the problems in the education of the gifted?" are given in below.

Primary school teacher's views on suggestions to solve the problems encountered in the education of gifted students;

- Primary school teachers who receive education about the gifted should teach these children.
- Primary school teachers should be informed about gifted students.
- Experts should make diagnoses with more reliable diagnostic tools.
- Counseling services should give the necessary service about gifted students.
- A separate group can be formed for gifted students.
- Curriculum should be developed for gifted students.
- Special schools should be opened for gifted students.
- Flexible study program should be prepared for gifted students.
- Families should be educated.
- A gifted education teacher can teach gifted students in the class.

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

In the research, primary school teachers stated that the common education curriculum does not satisfy the academic, social and individual needs of the gifted students. As a reason for these ideas, they generally refer to the gifted students' speed of learning, the level differences

in the class and the inadequacy of class activities. In the literature, there are supporting researches about this finding, which have been carried out on the primary school teachers and the students (Kahveci & Akgül, 2014, Bedur, Bilgiç & Taşlıdere, 2015, Kaya, 2015). Primary school teachers generally perceive themselves as inadequate in Science, Social Sciences and English. The reason for these perceptions may be primary school teachers' knowledge and attitudes towards these lessons. As a matter of fact, many researchers have found that they have attitudes and knowledge levels which are influenced by different factors related to these subjects (Genç & Kaya, 2011; Türkmen, 2008, Hamurcu, 2006). Primary school teachers stated that gifted students are not sufficiently pushing because of their small age and that they are not in the demand for resources due to the lack of such needs. Undoubtedly, primary school teachers have important tasks in this regard. It is supposed that, when primary school teachers help students improve their research skills in the resources they need for their own learning, they will be better able to design what they need and will be able to request more consistent resources.

When gifted students in their classes want new sources to study, some teachers stated that they have problems in finding suitable ones for their levels. Some mentioned that they do not use a particular source, and as a justification for this situation, it was expressed that the classes are crowded and that there is not enough time. In addition, it was found that participant teachers in the survey generally do not have special preparations for gifted students. While only one of the interviewed teachers stated having made a special preparation, the other teachers stated that they did not have any special preparations for these students. These teachers touched on the fact that the time left is sufficient, that these learners easily learn and that there are no special needs and that there is no time and opportunity for such preparation. This may be due to the inadequacies of the teachers in preparing individual training plans for the students.

Tike Bafra and Kargın (2009) found that primary school teachers' self-efficacy for preparing an individual training plan was low. Bedur, Bilgiç and Taşlıdere (2015) found that 36% of the teachers who provide supportive education services to gifted students have difficulty in preparing the Individual Training Plan (ITP), 19% do not know how to prepare the ITP and 5% could not get support in this issue. In a way that overlaps with teacher's ideas, researches in the literature have also findings that support this research. Talas, Talas and Sönmez (2013) have examined the problems that gifted students have experienced in school. Gifted students have complaints that teachers are indifferent, that they are bored because they do not have time for them, that the teaching materials are inadequate, and that school administrators are also indifferent. Another reason is that teachers may have negative perceptions and attitudes towards gifted students, which is found in many researches (Kunt, 2012; Tortop, 2014). This is in line with the findings of teachers in our research.

In our research, primary school teachers stated that the education given at BILSEM was sufficient and that they could not spend enough time on these children because of their high class density. When the relevant literature is examined, it has been pointed out that in some countries various activities have been carried out together with teachers for the integration of gifted students. Educators need to explore the sources of curriculum for gifted students to gain experience in enrichment-acceleration activities. The resources include high-level reading skills, a senior-level curriculum, and staff who can assist content experts in a given period (VanTassel-Baska, 2005). According to VanTassel-Baska, primary school-level educators should be engaged in finding appropriate sources at a higher level in the discussion topics appropriate for their age. First, it is necessary for them to spend time to find these sources and help the students in using these. Often educators believe that gifted students have the skills necessary to use appropriate sources and that they do not need to be able to learn the sources independently or with any external support. Such beliefs are often misbeliefs (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2005). Even if gifted students learn to work independently, if they do not need to communicate with the teacher while fulfilling their responsibilities, then educators should reconsider reevaluating difficulty of the tasks, and complex tasks from more in-depth and more different sources should be given.

In the related literature, it has been mentioned that the majority of teacher and teacher candidates do not receive the necessary training and support concerning gifted students (Westberg et al., 1993; Westberg & Daoust, 2004). Furthermore, it has been noted that the creation of higher-level questions, enhancement of interrogative and critical thinking, implementation of diagnostic learning and pre-assessment, problem-based learning, and interdisciplinary connections are not typically used for gifted students (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2005). It has been shown that when pedagogical models and strategies at the top level are used by educators, a significant increase in the success of gifted students occurs (VanTassel-Baska, Bass, Reis, Poland, & Avery, 1998; VanTassel-Baska, Zuo, Avery, & Little, 2002). Therefore, there is a continuing need for modelling and training of relevant pedagogical skills in a specific discipline or disciplines; including how and when the educators will implement different strategies.

Most of the primary school teachers expressed the problem of having time to give guidance to their gifted students. In general, the problem they are addressing is about time. Primary school teachers have difficulty in allocating time for these students. However, it is stated in the literature that these students need intensive guidance. In his study, Akar (2010) examined the guidance needs of gifted students from the perspective of their parents and teachers at the Centre of Science and Arts, and revealed the gifted students' needs for academic and social guidance services. As a matter of fact, Saranlı and Metin (2012) stated that many social-emotional problems such as stress, depression, perfectionism, social isolation and suicide that gifted people can experience are observed in them.

Reflections of the labelling of gifted students to them and to other students in the classroom

have been examined in the survey. While labelling can have positive effects on children, such as self-confidence and self-esteem increase, increase in social contribution, and positive environmental expectation; it can also have negative effects as social exclusion, unrealistic self-esteem, anxiety about respectability, excessive environmental expectations and the development of adult child behaviour (Sak, 2013). There is no doubt that teachers and parents have important duties in taking measures to prevent these negative effects in the classroom setting. Teachers should pay particular attention to the possible adverse effects of the gifted label, but not only to pupils' interaction with their friends, but also to whether the emotions and expectations of adults in this regard have changed or not (Moulton, Moulton, Housewright & Bailey, 1998).

There are many factors that affect learning of gifted students according to the participant teachers. These are intelligence, psychological perceptions, family, study conditions, environment, friendship, interest and needs of students, socio-economic status, inability to manage school, teacher and time. Although giftedness and failure may seem like distant concepts, the unexpected failure is one of the risks that a majority of gifted students experience (Neihart, Reis, Robinson & Moon, 2002). In this context, it is very important for primary school teachers to be aware of the risk of failure in gifted students, to be aware of the signs of failure early, to take action against the facilitating factors in cooperation with the parents and the school administration, and to intervene in the process when necessary.

Another situation that emerged in the survey is the difficulties primary school teachers experience in addressing questions posed by gifted students. Some of the teachers stated that they had a difficulty in answering the questions they were asked by gifted students, while others had problems in this regard, and had to get help from teachers in other branches. A large majority of teachers participating in the survey stated that they did not make any changes in curriculum when teaching gifted students. They expressed that they were involved in this action because of the limitedness of time, the lack of willingness to make changes according to only one student in the classroom, and because of these students' abilities of learning individually. When teachers go through changes in curriculum or teaching, they tend to focus their efforts on students who have a learning disability in the classroom, with the belief that gifted students do not need differentiation (Brighton, Hertberg, Callahan, Tomlinson & Moon, 2005). Underlying this belief, there is a fairly widespread misconception among teachers about gifted students being able to learn on their own (Bain, Bliss, Choate & Brown, 2007). Moon, Tomlinson, and Callahan (1995) reported in their study with middle school teachers, that, as they did not see any reason, 50% of teachers did not differentiate according to students' readiness, interest, or learning profile. Westberg, Archambault, Dobyns and Slavin (1993) found that 84% of 3th and 4th grades in America did not undergo any educational or curricular differentiation in their learning experiences. Another reason may be that teachers see current workloads or differentiation as extra loads. As a matter of fact, Endepohls-Ulpe and Thömmes (2014) stated that German primary school teachers have no

clear judgement on how to apply this information at school, despite the fact that they have a positive hold on gifted students and adequate knowledge, and they found a negative correlation between the workload of teachers and the frequency of using differentiation strategies in their classes. When it comes to students, there is research supporting this finding in the literature. Kahveci and Akgül (2014) found that gifted students' perceptions of the differentiation of lessons decreased as the class level increased. There is also a decrease in their perception of positive classroom climate and their finding the lessons challenging as the class level increases.

In our research, it was found that the school administration supported the primary school teachers in activities like excursions. In order to be able to identify what gifted and special education students need in an inclusive and self-sufficient environment, school administrators must be able to identify and understand the practices necessary for effective teaching to these students (Boscardin, 2005).

Primary school teachers have stated that the most important problem encountered in the education of the gifted is the recognition. Some cases have been discussed in the literature. Zorlu, Kahraman and Tanrikulu (2016) presented a phenomenon in which giftedness was mistakenly regarded as attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. Tarhan and Kılıç (2014) emphasized the necessity of using the data obtained from different sources in the determination of the gifted students and pay attention to the fact that the tests used in the diagnosis and the non-test methods are current, valid, reliable and useful.

In our study, some situations related to the perceptions and attitudes of the primary school teachers who have students who are continuing to Centre of Science and Art in addition to their classes have been revealed and the teachers' solution suggestions have been presented. In our research, we only use primary school teacher views as a source of data, and the absence of in-class observations, which is among the major limitations of the research, and as it is a qualitative study, its generalisability is low. Although the findings obtained in our study are not generalizable, it reflects on what we actually experience about the education of gifted students in schools.

Future research may refer to in-class observations to explore these problems in more depth. In order to reach the findings on this topic in general terms, quantitative methodological researches can be carried out with a comprehensive population that can sample primary school teachers in Turkey. In-service trainings can be given to the primary school teachers so that the misbeliefs about the education of the gifted students can be eliminated.

References

- Akar, İ. (2010). *İlköğretim kademesindeki üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin rehberlik gereksinimlerinin ebeveynlerin ve öğretmenlerin görüşlerine dayalı olarak belirlenmesi*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey.

- Akar, İ. & Şengil-Akar, Ş. (2012). Primary school in-service teachers' perceptions of giftedness, *Kastamonu Education Journal*, 20(2), 423-436.
- Bain, S. K., Bliss, S. L., Choate, S. M., & Brown, K. S. (2007). Serving children who are gifted: Perceptions of undergraduates planning to become teachers. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 30, 450-478.
- Bedur, S., Bilgiç, N. & Taşdere, E. (2015). An evaluation of educational support for students with special abilities. *Journal of the Hasan Ali Yücel Faculty of Education*, 23, 221-242.
- Boscardin, M. L. (2005). The administrative role in transforming secondary schools to support inclusive evidence based practices. *American Secondary Education*, 33(3), 21-32.
- Brighton, C., Hertberg, H., Callahan, C., Tomlinson, C., & Moon, T. (2005). *The feasibility of high-end learning in academically diverse middle schools* (Research Monograph No. 05210). Storrs, CT: National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.
- Carman, C. A. (2013). Comparing apples and oranges: Fifteen years of definitions of giftedness in research. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 24(1), 52-70.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ekinci, A. (2002). *İlköğretim okullarının üstün yetenekli çocukların eğitimine elverişlilik düzeyi ile ilgili öğretmen görüşlerinin değerlendirilmesi*. (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Dicle, Diyarbakır, Turkey.
- Endepohls-Ulpe, M., & Thömmes, N. (2014). Chances and limitations of implementing measures of differentiation for gifted children in primary schools: The teachers' part. *Turkish Journal of Giftedness and Education*, 4(1), 24-36.
- Genç, G. & Kaya, A. (2011). Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yabancı dil derslerine yönelik tutumları ile yabancı dil akademik başarıları arasındaki ilişki. *Balıkesir University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 14(26), 19-30.
- Geake, J. G. & Gross, U. M. (2008). Teachers' negative affect toward academically gifted students: An evolutionary psychological study. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 52(3), 217-231.
- Gökdere, M. & Ayvacı, H. Ş. (2004). Sınıf öğretmenlerinin üstün yetenekli çocuklar ve özellikleri ile ilgili bilgi seviyelerinin belirlenmesi. *Journal of the Ondokuz Mayıs Faculty of Education*, 18, 17-26.
- Gökdere, M., Küçük, M., & Çepni, S. (2003). Gifted science education in Turkey: Gifted teachers' selection, perspectives and needs. *Asia-Pacific Forum on Science Learning and Teaching*, 4(2), 5.
- Hamurcu, H. (2006). Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının fen öğretimine yönelik öz-yeterlik inançları. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 24, 112-122.
- Hökelekli, H., & Gündüz, T. (2004). *Üstün yetenekli çocukların karakter özellikleri ve değerler eğitimi*. I. Türkiye Üstün Yetenekli Çocuklar Kongresi, İstanbul, Turkey.
- Kahveci, N. G. & Akgül, S. (2014). Gifted and talented students' perceptions on their schooling: A survey study. *Gifted & Talented International*, 29(1), 79-91.
- Kaya, F. (2015). Teachers' conceptions of giftedness and special needs of gifted students. *Education and Science*, 40(177), 59-74.
- Keskin, M. Ö., Samancı, N. K. & Aydın, S. (2013). Bilim ve sanat merkezleri: mevcut durumları, sorunları ve çözüm önerileri. *Journal of Gifted Education Research*, 1(2), 78-96.
- Kunt, K. (2012). *Fen ve teknoloji öğretmenlerinin üstün yeteneklilik ve üstün yetenekli eğitimi ile ilgili görüşlerinin incelenmesi*. (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Bülent Ecevit, Zonguldak, Turkey.
- Marland, S. P. (1972). *Education of the gifted and talented*. Report to the Congress of the United

- States by the U.S. Commissioner of Education and background papers submitted to the U.S. Office of Education.
- Ministry of National Education (MoNE). (2012). *Özel eğitim hizmetleri yönetmeliği*. Ankara: Ministry of National Education and Head Council of Turkish Education and Morality. Retrieved April 5, 2017, from https://orgm.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2012_10/10111226_ozel_egitim_hizmetleri_yonetmeliği_son.pdf.
- Metin, N., Şenol, F. B. & İnce, E. (2017). Öğretmen adaylarının üstün yetenekli çocukların eğitimine yönelik tutumlarının belirlenmesi. *Journal of Theoretical Educational Science*, 10(1), 95-116.
- Moon, T. R., Tomlinson, C. A., & Callahan, C. M. (1995). *Academic diversity in the middle school: Results of a national survey of middle school administrators and teachers* [Research Monograph 95124]. Charlottesville: University of Virginia, National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.
- Moulton, P., Moulton, M., Housewright, M. & Bailey, K. (1998). Gifted and talented: Exploring the positive and negative aspects of labeling. *Roeper Review*, 21, 153-154.
- Neihart, M., Reis, S.M., Robinson, N.M., & Moon, S.M. (Eds.). (2002). *The social and emotional development of gifted children: What do we know?* Waco, Texas: Prufrock Press, Inc.
- Ogurlu, Ü. & Yaman, Y. (2010). Üstün zekâlı/yetenekli çocuklar ve iletişim. *Pamukkale University Journal of Education*, 28, 213-223.
- Özbay, Y. & Palancı, M. (2011). Üstün yetenekli çocuk ve ergenlerin psikososyal özellikleri, *The Journal of SAU Education Faculty*, 22, 89-108.
- Özmen, F. & Kömürlü, F. (2013). Türkiye’de üstün zekâlı ve yetenekli öğrencilerin eğitimine ilişkin politika ve uygulamalar. *Inonu University Journal of the Faculty of Education*, 14(2), 35-56.
- Renzulli, J. S. (2016). The three-ring conception of giftedness. A developmental model for promoting creative productivity In S. M. Reis (Ed.). *Reflections on gifted education* (pp. 55-86). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.
- Saranlı, A. G. & Metin, N. (2012). Üstün yetenekli çocuklarda gözlenen sosyal-duygusal sorunlar. *Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences*, 45(1), 139-163.
- Sak, U. (2013). *Üstün zekâlılar: özellikleri, tanınmaları, eğitimleri* (3th Edition). Ankara: Vize Press.
- Sezer, Ş. (2015). Teacher opinion related to disruptive behaviours of gifted students in classroom and managing them. *International Journal of Turkish Education Sciences*, 3(4), 317-333.
- Şahin, F., & Çetinkaya, Ç. (2015). Üstün zekâlıların tanınmasında sınıf öğretmenlerinin etkililik ve verimliliklerinin incelenmesi. *Turkish Journal of Giftedness and Education*, 5(2), 133-146.
- Talas, S., Talas, Y. & Sönmez, A. (2013). Bilim sanat merkezlerine devam eden üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin okullarında yaşadıkları problemler. *International Journal of Turkish Education Sciences*, 1(1), 42-50.
- Tarhan, S. & Kılıç, Ş. (2014). Üstün yetenekli bireylerin tanınması ve Türkiye’deki eğitim modelleri. *Journal of Gifted Education Research*, 2(1), 27-43.
- Tike Bafra L. & Kargın, T. (2009). Investigating the attitudes of elementary school teachers, school psychologists and guidance research center personnel on the process of preparing the individualized educational program and challenges faced during the related process. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 9(4), 1933-1972.

- Tortop, H. S. (2014). Öğretmen adaylarının üstün yetenekli ve çok kültürlü eğitime ilişkin tutumları. *Journal of Gifted Education Research*, 2(2), 16-26.
- Tortop, H. & Dinçer, S. (2016). Destek eğitim odalarında üstün/özel yetenekli öğrencilerle çalışan sınıf öğretmenlerinin uygulama hakkındaki görüşleri. *Journal of Gifted Education Research*, 4(2), 11-28.
- Türkmen, L. (2008). Sınıf öğretmenliği programında öğrenim gören birinci sınıf düzeyinden dördüncü sınıf düzeyine gelen öğretmen adaylarının fen bilimlerine ve öğretimine yönelik tutumları. *Kastamonu Education Journal*, 16(1), 91-106.
- Trail, B. A. (2011). *Twice exceptional gifted children: understanding, teaching, and counseling gifted students*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.
- Ward, V. S. (1985). Giftedness and personal development: Theoretical consideration. *Roeper Review*, 8, 6-10.
- Westberg, K. L., Archambault, F. X., Jr., Dobyms, S. M., & Salvin, T. J. (1993). *An observational study of instructional and curricular practices used with gifted and talented students in regular classrooms* (Research Monograph 93104). University of Connecticut, Storrs: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.
- Westberg, K. & Daoust, M. E. (2004). *The result of the replication of the classroom practices survey replication in two states*. Retrived February 22, 2017, from University of Connecticut Web site: <https://nrcgt.uconn.edu/newsletters/fall032/>
- VanTassel-Baska, J., Bass, G. M., Reis, R. R., Poland, D. L., & Avery, L. D. (1998). A national study of science curriculum effectiveness with high ability students. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 42, 200-211.
- VanTassel-Baska, J. (2005). Gifted programs and services: What are the nonnegotiables? *Theory into Practice*, 44(2), 90-97.
- VanTassel-Baska, J., Zuo, L., Avery, L. D., & Little, C. A. (2002). A curriculum study of gifted student learning in the language arts. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 46, 30-44.
- Yumuş, A. & Topbaş, V. (2011). Bilim ve sanat merkezlerinin amacına uygun işleyişinin değerlendirilmesi. *Mersin University Journal of the Faculty of Education*, 7(2), 80-88.
- Zorlu, A., Kahraman, S. & Tanrıkulu, T. (2016). Üstün yetenekleri çocukların dikkat eksikliği hiperaktivite bozukluğu olarak tanılanması sorunu: Bir olgu sunumu. *Journal of Gifted Education Research*, 4(1), 27-33.