



High abilities and giftedness of children and young students

Altas habilidades e superdotação de crianças e jovens estudantes

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ABSTRACT

This study discussed opinions about high abilities in students. We sought to understand the universe of individuals with high abilities/giftedness (HA/DS) through the qualitative method with bibliographic and exploratory research in several databases such as Scielo and Google Scholar. The theme has complex reflections due to the heterogeneity of this group. Children and young people with high abilities and giftedness may have different educational and affective needs, resulting from their cognitive complexity, greater intensity of response, emotional sensitivity, among other factors. They may demonstrate worrisome behaviors such as social maladjustments and insecurity that, when not worked on, can cause socio-emotional risks. It is important to understand the cognitive, emotional, affective, and social world of gifted individuals, in order to reduce their vulnerabilities and understand their way of acting in the world.

Keywords: High abilities, Giftedness, School, Family.

1 INTRODUCTION

In Ancient Greece, 5th century B.C. C., education was lived in three periods: Homeric, Civic and Hellenistic. In the Civic Period the two best-known cities were Sparta and Athens. In Sparta, children were judged on their potential for military profile. Nowadays, in the face of several studies, high abilities/giftedness are understood as a potentiality of the individual (RANGNI; COSTA, 2014). Thus, children continue to be differentiated by their abilities and stimulated to success, and other perspectives have even emerged, such as stigmas of depreciation in relation to these individuals who, due to lack of knowledge of the subject, are framed as "normal and abnormal".

Students with high abilities have aroused the interest of scholars in recent decades about differential treatment, but this concern is not something recent. Plato, millennia ago, had already thought and reflected on these outstanding individuals in the educational context. According to Alencar (2001, p. 120), Plato, more than 2,300 years ago, defended the idea that individuals with superior intelligence "should be selected in their early childhood and their skills cultivated for the benefit of the State, trained for leadership, calling them 'golden children'".

However, although the recognition of children with high abilities occurred more than two millennia ago, today few have the opportunity to stand out, according to their superior ability to the other students in a regular classroom. What is found in most school institutions is the action of skipping cycles, that is, the gifted child will live with older children, who have more experience of school. There can be two problems with this: the child camouflages his or her giftedness; and develop psychological problems that will reflect throughout their lives (BAHIENSE; ROSSETTI, 2014; ALCÂNTARA, 2020).



Giftedness is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon. Thus, the identification of this condition and the pedagogical care provided in this context require specialized knowledge. Today, Brazilian legislation ensures specialized educational assistance (AEE) for students with high abilities/giftedness (AH/SD), preferably in the regular school system, in accordance with the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB) (BRASIL, 1996). This process involves adapting curricula, methods, resources, and organization to meet the needs of these students, as defined by CNE/CEB Resolution No. 02/2001 (BRAZIL, 2001).

The objective of this work is to discuss perspectives related to the individual with high abilities/giftedness, through the qualitative method with bibliographic and exploratory research to several databases such as Scielo and Google Scholar, to understand some concepts and notes. Initially, it is important to clarify that a good education for all does not mean an identical education for all (ALENCAR, 2007). Alencar (2007, p. 15) mentions that because of this recognition, the need has been observed "for the teacher to be equipped to provide a good quality education, taking into account individual differences and encouraging the development of diverse talents, skills and abilities". Students with high abilities/giftedness (HA/DS) have been mobilizing the interest of educators from different countries, in which educational proposals have been implemented, promoting better conditions for the identification, development and expression of these students (ALENCAR, 2007).

2 IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH AH/SD

The school environment is a space conducive to the identification of students with high abilities/giftedness (HA/DS). However, the process of identifying students with HA/DS requires the effective participation of teachers, parents and professionals from specialized areas, such as psychologists – who collaborate, for example, with the application of standardized tests and descriptive observation reports. Teachers contribute by collecting data from the learning process based on diagnostic assessment and direct observation. As far as parents are concerned, they cooperate with reports of the development of these students outside the school context (BRASIL, 2001).

The main reason why children with HA/DS should be identified is so that they can have a democratic education, which involves recognizing specific educational needs, providing curricular adaptations and activities that meet the demands of students, and subsidizing actions to create public policies that reach this public. Monte and Santos (2004, p. 11) point out that "a democratic



education must take into account individual differences and, therefore, offer learning opportunities according to the students' abilities, interests, learning styles and potential."

According to Almeida (2022), discussing high abilities/giftedness, some stories arise that do not actually describe what high abilities/giftedness is. What can be seen is that the description of a child in this condition is often seen as a nerd (that child who exercises intellectual activity inappropriate for his age), a child who dresses in outdated clothes, in short, a person outside the standards required by society. Unfortunately, this behavior of society leads these children to suffer discrimination and emotional suffering.

There are six specific areas that are divided into high abilities/giftedness, they are according to Virgolim (2007, p.28):

General Intellectual Ability - involves speed of thought, heightened comprehension and memory, capacity for abstract thinking, intellectual curiosity, exceptional power of observation; Specific Academic Aptitude - involves attention, concentration, motivation for academic subjects of your interest, ability to produce academics, high scores on academic tests, and exceptional performance in school; Creative or Productive Thinking - refers to originality of thought, imagination, ability to solve problems differently and innovatively, ability to perceive a topic in many different ways; Leadership Ability - refers to interpersonal sensitivity, cooperative attitude, ability to solve complex social situations, power of persuasion and influence in the group, ability to develop a productive interaction with others; Special Talent for the Arts - involves high performance in the fine, musical, dramatic, literary, or performing arts (e.g., facility to express ideas visually; sensitivity to musical rhythm; facility in using gestures and facial expression to communicate feelings); and Psychomotor Ability - refers to superior performance in sports and physical activities, speed, agility of movements, strength, endurance, control, and fine and gross motor coordination. (VIRGOLIM, 2007, p.28).

Since they differ from others, often by their physical appearance, subjects with high abilities/giftedness end up being bullied and with this the emotional sensitivity becomes great, causing the behavior to worsen in the issue of sociability (VIRGOLIM, 2021), for example.

According to Gardner (2005), gifted children have a high level of raw intelligence, that is, they are those who have in themselves the promise of superior development in a given intelligence, even before being exposed to activities aimed at developing it.

Gardner believes that these children, when exposed to content specific to the intelligences in which they have potential, as well as opportunities to explore such content, have a real chance of becoming exceptional in fields of activity that depend on the intelligences in question. (GAMA, 2006, p. 40)

Among the various spaces that individuals with HA/DS circulate, we find the school environment that is quite diverse and has students with similar characteristics. This fact draws the attention of teachers to a future pedagogical investigation leading to the adaptation of the curriculum and/or the construction of new learning strategies.



3 STUDENTS WITH AH/DS IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Generally, at school, children with major learning difficulties are soon seen by the pedagogical team and referred to specialized professionals according to diagnoses. Those who have gifted traits and high abilities are praised for their resourcefulness in front of others, sometimes without adequate care for their specificity.

Often, students with AH/DS are underestimated or even neglected, which can lead to emotional and self-esteem issues. Therefore, it is critical for educators to be attentive to these children and provide a learning environment that values their unique abilities. The identification of students with HA/DS is the first step towards pedagogical work aimed at stimulating high potentials and training individuals who reach their full development.

However, the pedagogical work with talented students faces several obstacles, ranging from the difficulty of education professionals in identifying the above-average potentials, since they can easily be confused with disinterest or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, to the absence of actions, despite having the rights guaranteed by laws. At school, a specialized educational service project needs to be developed based on the needs of the public for which it is intended, considering the particularities of each student. Therefore, there are no pre-established formulas that apply to the training of individuals with HA/DS.

It is important to emphasize the need to inform students that giftedness does not mean superiority. Interaction with diverse peers is important, because the social groups in which they will be inserted throughout life will always be heterogeneous and living with diverse peers allows for enriching contact with multiple abilities.

Parallel to the pedagogical work and the contact with other students in the school environment, the partnership between the family and the school is fundamental for the educational and emotional success of individuals with high abilities. This involves open communication, information sharing, active participation, access to resources, educational goal setting, emotional support, flexibility, and conflict resolution. This collaboration creates a supportive environment that allows these students to reach their potential in a balanced way.

It is important to remember that every day there is a need to adapt teaching to meet the specificities of these students and that there is collaboration between professionals from different areas. That said, and in partnership with the family, it is possible for the student to develop better and better both cognitively and emotionally.

If we go even further, and want to think about the quality of life of all people with High Abilities/Giftedness, the time has come to delve into the origins of these children that we are already thinking about today, helping their parents, uncles, grandparents, teachers and



other adults and the elderly to identify, recognize and value them as people with High Abilities/Giftedness as early as possible so that they can have a true education throughout their lives. (FREITAS, PÉREZ, 2010, p. 116).

Guenther (2006) points out that, in childhood, the family's expectations about the child who presents skills early at his age is very high. When this child ceases to excel in the talents he or she had at a younger age, suggestions and beliefs rooted in common sense arise to explain the "disappearance" of the talent. Thus, the author classifies the main most frequent erroneous ideas about precocity, such as: "the school destroyed the child's capacity"; "they 'burn' their potentiality and become normal"; "the 'middle' didn't help"; "there was 'overexposure'"; and "there was a lack of a 'special school.'"

Oliveira (2014) emphasizes the importance of parents' observation of signs that anticipate the characteristics of precocity, thus avoiding behavioral problems, contributing to the quality of life of children and families.

With the whole panorama pointed out to students with HA/DS, there are some questions that arouse attention, requiring further investigations: How to signal and identify students with precocity in Early Childhood Education? How to provide care to the student identified early? What is the importance of acceleration? How do you develop an identification and care procedure in a cross-functional resource room? What is the role of the school in the process of inclusion of students with high abilities/giftedness? How is the participation of parents? What is the teachers' conception of having a student with high abilities/giftedness in the school?

4 FINAL THOUGHTS

The article presented the importance of recognizing high abilities in children to facilitate attendance both at school and in the family.

In the face of all the obstacles faced by people with HA/SUP, we are slowly seeing results, as more people show interest in conducting research in the area. However, there is little investment in public policies in the area.

Due to the lack of greater investments, the care of students with high abilities/giftedness in Brazil has been a concern of researchers in the area and the government, which is reflected in the interest of implementing public policies that favor an integrated action improving the practice and performance of the teacher, to facilitate the learning of this student. It also includes the best performance of the family in the correct procedures to deal with the situation.

Particularly in schools, seeking strategies aimed at providing more challenging and profound learning opportunities for students with exceptional abilities should be a constant in



pedagogical work. It is not possible to guarantee that a gifted student will be a successful citizen, since human development is a complex process that depends on several factors. However, it is the role of the school to identify talents and offer adequate and stimulating educational conditions so that the student achieves his or her best performance, thus contributing so that high potentials are not lost.



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