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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED SENIOR PUPILS

Summary.

The article deals with special educational programs for gifted high school students. A significant number of such programs are devoted to providing gifted senior pupils with additional educational services. At the same time, special attention is paid to two extremely popular programs in the United States, which are called Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate. The two programs are designed to give gifted senior pupils who study at a high school a chance to take special elective courses, and these courses are credited to them as loans during college or university courses. In practice, in this case, we are dealing with the early entry of gifted high school students to colleges or universities. In addition to the general considerations, the article provides an analysis of individual programs of advanced placement and international baccalaureate studies. Such programs are implemented by separate institutions of higher education. In spite of the certain versatility of these programs, each program has a certain peculiarity. For example, there is an Advanced Placement program for immigrants from ethnic minorities. In another similar program, the emphasis is on mastering the second language. The above can also be extended to International Baccalaureate programs. As a rule, the involvement of gifted senior pupils in these programs is carried out in a remote form. However, resident programs of early admission to higher education also function. Programs Study Abroad are also widespread. Among the special educational programs for gifted students, first of all, you need to name programs of high level of complexity, development of creativity, as well as programs that provide for the establishment of advisory centers for this category of students. In addition to the above, the article presents data that relates to the analysis of academic results for the first semester of students who have early enrolled in higher education. The data of socio-emotional character concerning such students is also given. The focus is also on the importance of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs in the development of gifted individuals talent, their impact on the future prospects of such students. An important point is the assessment by gifted students of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs, including singles for boys and girls. The article concludes with the analysis by parents of gifted high school students of early admission of their children to higher education institutions.

Keywords: *gifted senior pupils; Advanced Placement program; International Baccalaureate program; special educational programs for gifted; evaluation of special educational programs for gifted.*

As school leaders face the racial, ethnic, linguistic, and economic diversity that increasingly characterizes urban areas, educators must endeavor to create scholastic environments that are responsive to varying academic and social needs of the student population. The qualitative study [1] investigates ways in which teacher and administrator behavior and the school environment contribute to the successes or frustrations of minority students in AP and IB courses. Classroom observations and interviews with 9 administrators, 4 counselors, 43 teachers, and 75 students in 3 urban high schools



revealed that consistent, broad-based support scaffolds learning experiences for students, enabling them to experience success and develop confidence to take on new challenges in college.

Radical acceleration is a successful, yet rarely utilized educational practice that assists educators in meeting the cognitive and affective needs of highly gifted students. Individual case studies and cohort studies of students who have radically accelerated are reviewed [2] regarding combinations of procedures that result in successful acceleration, variables that appear to predict success and cognitive and affective outcomes. While research supports the use of radical acceleration for the positive cognitive and affective gains that result for highly gifted students, some concerns about the process have been identified. An outline is presented of procedures that have been shown to lessen the likelihood of unfavorable outcomes. These procedures include counseling support, study skills programs, and opportunities to foster social interaction with other students. The literature concerning radical acceleration strongly supports the wider adoption of this most successful intervention.

The article [3] is the second follow-up study of the Early Entrance Program at the University of Washington. Ninety-five individuals (45 %) participated. Respondents overwhelmingly chose early university entrance because they were excited to learn; many also praised the peer group, intellectual stimulation, and faculty and staff support. Some reported feeling too young to make important academic, career, and social decisions, with more males regretting the lack of dating partners because of age differences. As the program has matured, so have students' positive experiences in it. Significant differences were found among three groups of students who entered at different points, reflecting this maturation. A wealth of open-ended comments indicated that the program continues to exert a profound and positive influence on graduates' lives.

In the article [4], the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board is described. Research studies about the academic performance of students in college classes who took AP classes in high school show convincingly that AP classes prepare students for college-level work. Information about AP Scholar programs and sources of more information about the AP Program are also given. AP classes are a viable academic option for academically talented students because they offer them opportunities to excel and earn college credits early.

By the year 2025 one in four schoolchildren will be Latino. But that minority students, including Hispanics, are often underrepresented in gifted education programs [5].

Those of us who speak "secondary" in terms of gifted education frequently are interested in the course offerings for gifted adolescents in high school. *Secondary* is almost a foreign language in many gifted programs, relegating this secondary issue for gifted adolescents to other programmatic options, most notably to Advanced Placement (AP) courses. But AP does not purport to be gifted education. In fact, AP courses are not developed with any gifted philosophy as the guiding principle behind them. Rather, they were developed as college courses offered at the high school level for motivated students [6].

Both personal narratives and research literature on gifted adolescents indicate that appropriate experiences during secondary school are crucial for the continued growth of such students. While the International Baccalaureate Organization does not regard its Diploma Program as a "gifted program", a successfully implemented International Baccalaureate Diploma Program creates a school climate and culture that is conducive to the continued academic, cognitive, motivational, emotional, and social growth of a gifted adolescent. M. E. Tookey [7] explores how the unique features of the IB Diploma Program enable the cultivation of this climate and culture.

The study [8] discusses the goals and objectives of the Advanced Academy of Georgia at the State University of West Georgia, an innovative, full-time residential early-college-entrance program for gifted and talented high school juniors and seniors. Also included is a comprehensive report of its progress, as well as entering SAT scores, academic performance, retention rates, and scores on the Dimensions of Self-Concept, which was developed to measure noncognitive factors associated with self-esteem or self-concept in a school setting. In addition to these areas, noteworthy student accomplishments are discussed, including several anecdotal comments about student achievement from the university's faculty.



While most Study Abroad (SA) programs are not specifically marketed to academically talented students, they can be an invaluable supplement to these students' educational programs. The conclusions of SA research are mixed, but they do suggest that many students who study abroad experience both personal growth and academic benefits, including increased proficiency in a second language. Practical concerns for students considering SA range from gaining academic credit for the experience to the costs of studying abroad. Fortunately, many resources are available to assist in evaluating the quality and appropriateness of the SA options now available to high school and college students [9].

Through a qualitative research design, the study [10] examined the experiences of seven gifted university students in an undergraduate honors program. The findings indicated the students as adolescents experienced a sense of isolation resulting from the differences between their abilities, interests, life goals, religious value systems, and the communities in which they lived. At the university, the participants discovered within the honors program an intellectual and social network with other gifted individuals like them. Together they recognized their strong desire for self-actualization. In advanced-level courses, they found intellectual stimulation and academic challenge. Through several components of the honors program they developed significant psychosocial growth. Throughout their experiences, the honors program director became a mentor and played an important role in facilitating experiences designed to address the diverse needs of these gifted young adults.

The purpose of the study [11] was to compare the effectiveness of a complete creativity training program to that of one element of the program, ideational skills training, in increasing creative performance. Participants were 108 undergraduate students who were randomly assigned to one of 3 conditions: creativity training, ideational skills training, and a control group. Participants completed a pretest and a posttest of divergent thinking, the figural form of the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT), as well as a manipulation check questionnaire. Multivariate analyses of covariance and comparison tests showed that both the creativity training and the ideational skills training had significant positive effects on overall TTCT scores when compared to the control condition. Analyses of covariance revealed that these 2 types of training had differential effects on the various TTCT subscores.

The purpose of the study [12] was to investigate perceptions of the counseling needs of gifted children from the perspective of parents who sought help from a fee-based counseling center for gifted students. The counseling center provided assessment and educational and career guidance, as well as family social/emotional counseling, all of which were differentiated to meet the needs of gifted children ages 4–18. Participating parents completed intake forms that included a 47-item client problem inventory and were designed to assist the counseling process. One hundred and twenty of these problem inventories were analyzed to determine which counseling needs led parents to bring their children for counseling services and whether there were any differences in perceived needs among three different developmental levels of children (preschool, preadolescent, and adolescent). Results suggested that age had a statistically and practically significant effect on parent perceptions of career and child (psychosocial) concerns and a practically significant effect on school, family, and peer concerns. For all age groups, parents perceived their child's greatest counseling need to be educational planning, followed closely by school concerns. Psychosocial concerns were also salient for parents of children older than 6. Career planning was important for parents of children older than 12. Peer and family concerns were less salient than the other categories of concern. The study suggests that gifted children do have unique needs for differentiated counseling services and that counseling services for gifted children should emphasize educational planning and be targeted to the needs of specific developmental levels.

Although the long-term impact of early entrance to college has been examined, one issue that has received inadequate attention in the gifted education literature is how students enrolled in early-entrance programs adjust during their first semester of college, which is arguably the most critical juncture for them in terms of their transition from high school. The purpose of the study [13] was to identify the unique academic, social, family, and transition issues that challenged the inaugural class



of the National Academy of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering (NAASE), an early-entrance program at the University of Iowa. Through the use of in-depth interviews, behavioral observations, and student and parent surveys, a rich picture of the students' satisfaction and challenges with their first-semester college experiences emerged. While the primary aim of this research was to examine the NAASE students' first-semester adjustment, the study also served to evaluate the effectiveness of the NAASE program from the students' perspectives.

The study [14] investigates the influence of self-concept and perceived family environment on psychosocial adjustment among early-entrance college students. Participants included 104 male and 76 female juniors at the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science (TAMS). Scholastic aptitude, previous academic achievement, and family environment were employed as latent independent variables. Self-concept, personal adjustment to TAMS, and academic achievement at TAMS were the latent dependent variables of the study. A series of regression models was used to assess the predictive utility of independent measures. The final model indicated that a combination of self-concept and family environment variables was able to predict psychosocial adjustment. Specifically, family cohesion, conflict, and expressiveness and overall self-concept were predictive of adjustment to college as measured by the total score of the Student Adjustment to College Questionnaire. For TAMS students, family cohesion, organization, control, conflict, and overall self-concept were found to predict academic achievement as measured by first semester grade-point average. It is recommended that applicant self-concept should be considered when educating students about considering early entrance to college, making program decisions, and instituting retention strategies for early-entrance college programs.

As a field, gifted education has never fully embraced or endorsed Advanced Placement programs as a viable program option for secondary gifted learners. The author [15] believes that this position is untenable, given the role that Advanced Placement (AP) options play in responding to the needs of gifted learners within specific academic and arts areas and the high regard with which these programs are viewed by selective colleges. At her own institution, now rated sixth in the country among public institutions, no student is likely to be admitted without evidence of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or dual-enrollment coursework. This standard is now fairly typical of the top 300 selective colleges in this country. In this essay, the author would like to discuss the benefits of AP work for gifted learners, establish the relationship between AP and our current understanding of the talent development process, and delineate special issues and concerns that educators of the gifted must be cognizant of in encouraging their students to participate in AP.

Fifty college students were interviewed [16] about their prior experiences in gifted programs and their perspectives on the impact of these experiences on their lives. Interview questions probed the types of experiences they remembered, including the types of instruction they had, their relations with peers, and their views about how their experiences in gifted programs affected other parts of their lives.

The Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs serve as popular choices for many intellectually gifted high school students. C. M. Vanderbrook [17] describes an aspect of a larger study that examined 5 intellectually gifted females' perceptions of their educational experience while enrolled in one of the programs. Using the phenomenological method of qualitative research, this study reports that the participants identified various challenges within the curriculum as part of the overall AP and IB experience. In addition, the participants believe that the teachers in these programs heavily influenced their perception of their experience in the program.

Although limited research exists on the appropriateness of Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs for gifted secondary learners, these courses serve as the primary methods of meeting the needs of gifted students in most high schools. The qualitative study [18] investigates how a broad range of gifted secondary students perceives and evaluates the curriculum, instruction, and environments within AP and IB courses. Interviews with 200 students in 23 U.S. high schools revealed that although students believe that AP and IB courses provide a greater level of academic challenge and more favorable learning environments than other existing high school courses, the curriculum and instruction within AP and IB courses are not a good fit for all learners,



particularly those from traditionally underserved populations. Nearly all of the students in our study indicated that AP and IB courses were the first courses in which they experienced genuine challenge, and the first academic environments in which they felt comfortable with their advanced abilities and academic interests. This indicates that many gifted students have to wait until the last few years of their school careers to encounter courses appropriately matched to their needs. Infusing greater rigor into the K-12 curriculum and allowing gifted students to spend at least part of the day with like-ability peers would go a long way in ensuring that gifted students' academic and social/emotional needs are being met throughout their school careers. Additionally, many former AP and IB students indicated that these lecture-heavy courses were not a good fit for their preferred modes of learning, suggesting a need for a broader range of gifted services at the high school level than AP and IB courses alone.

The study [19] surveyed 181 parents of students enrolled in one of two early entrance programs at the University of Washington: the Early Entrance Program for students who entered before age 15 and the University of Washington Academy for Young Scholars for students who matriculated after Grade 10. The purpose was to understand parents' perspectives on the early entrance experience, including reasons for choosing early entrance, satisfaction with their children's program, perceived advantages and disadvantages of early entrance, and the effect of early entrance on family relationships. Ninety-five parents participated, with the majority reporting great satisfaction with multiple aspects of their and their children's experience. Early Entrance Program parents expressed a slightly higher degree of satisfaction than did Academy parents. This study suggests that early university entrance is an attractive option for parents willing to follow the lead of their talented and ambitious adolescents. Early entrance programs are attractive options for parents of academically advanced students who have outpaced available secondary programs. These programs are not inevitably initially successful; however, as our study demonstrates, they benefit greatly from ongoing program evaluation and analysis. Key components of effective early entrance programs include intensive advising, community building, thoughtful selection of students, active engagement by students and faculty, and a welcoming college or university environment. Careful attention to the informational needs of parents is also important, particularly about the social and emotional transitions that they and their children are likely to experience. The University of Washington has demonstrated with two programs that early university entrance is prized by students, parents, university officials, and state education agencies. These and similar programs might well be replicated in other areas around the country given active partnerships among all concerned parties.

Conclusions

Educational practice undeniably proves expediency to create special conditions for the effective training and development of gifted individuals, including senior pupils. Taking this as a basis, higher education institutions involve gifted high school students in a number of special educational programs, including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs. Such actions are due to the early introduction of gifted to higher education institutions. Data on their mental development, academic achievements and socio-emotional adaptation indicate the possibility and feasibility of introducing these programs in a variety of gifted support facilities.

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СПЕЦІАЛЬНІ ОСВІТНІ ПРОГРАМИ ДЛЯ ОБДАРОВАНИХ СТАРШОКЛАСНИКІВ

Анотація.

У статті розглянуто спеціальні освітні програми для обдарованих старшокласників. Значна кількість таких програм присвячена наданню обдарованим старшокласникам додаткових освітніх послуг. Водночас особлива увага приділено двом надзвичайно поширеним у США програмам, які носять назви просунутого поміщення та міжнародного бакалаврату. Зазначені дві програми розраховані на те, що обдарованим старшокласникам, які навчаються в старшій середній школі, надається можливість опановувати окремі курси вищої школи, а ці курси зараховуються їм як кредити під час навчання в коледжах чи університетах. На практиці це відповідає ранньому вступу обдарованих старшокласників до коледжів чи університетів. Окрім зазначених загальних міркувань, у статті наведено аналіз окремих програм просунутого поміщення та міжнародного бакалаврату.

Ключові слова: обдаровані старшокласники; програма просунутого поміщення; програма міжнародного бакалаврату; значення спеціальних освітніх програм для обдарованих; оцінка спеціальних освітніх програм для обдарованих.

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