

A design of gifted personality traits scale

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Abstract

This study aimed to design the 'gifted personality traits scale'. The dimensions of this scale are determined in the following personality traits: motivation, emotional stability, positive self-esteem, internal control and deep learning style. A scale of (62) items was applied on (54) gifted students of the secondary level in order to extract the psychometric properties. The statistical analysis revealed (45) distinct items. The indicative correlation coefficient of the scale validity (by using split half) reached (0.881). As for the reliability, the alpha coefficient rate of the internal consistency reached (0.873). At last, we consider this scale as a valid tool to identifying gifted students at Algerian secondary school.

Keywords: Scale, gifted, traits, students,

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1. Introduction

Measurement is an aspect of getting knowledge. One of the important issues in giftedness research field is discovering and implementing policy care for gifted students. Without any doubt, human resources are the real and durable richness of society. In this context, this study tries to design a valid instrument which can detect gifted personalities for the benefit of the Algerian institutes.

1.1. Previous studies

The Psychological Measurement Movement has been active in a policy frame to support gifted children in various aspects. This brought an insight from the researcher's part to investigate personality and mental traits of the gifted students through the scale of Rézulli, known as 'the rating scale of behavioral characteristics for talented children', which includes specific personality traits in nine dimensions which are: capacity of learning, motivation, leadership, technical skills, musical skills dramatic and artistic skills, ability to communicate and linguistic expressing and planning. Also, Rimm (1983) developed a rating scale to detect gifted children in pre-school, known as the PRIDE and a collective scale to detect gifted children known as GIFT for the primary stage and another scale to detect gifted students at intermediate and high school (as cited in Rousan, El batch & Qatami, 1990).

As well as, the list designed by Johnson, Silverman, rating scales known as: the Scale for Identifying Gifted Students and The Gifted Rating Duke, scale designed at Duke University. While Colangelo and his colleagues designed a test for students of the tenth grade, it measures the high level of thinking, the ability to solve problems the process of understanding embedded meaning, construct conclusions, evaluate ideas the ability to judge, high reading capacity, solving math problems and the application of scientific thinking steps (as cited in Al-Zubaidi, 2010).

Each of Feldhusen, Hoover and Salyer developed rating scales for the gifted young people in middle and high schools. Furthermore, academic Rating Purdue scale was designed to allow the measurement of: mathematics, English, social studies and foreign language; as well as the professional scale Purdue, which measures: Agriculture, business, home economics, commercial and industrial crafts. This measurement allows evaluation for teachers to choose talented students enrolled at high school stage (as cited in Saada, 2008).

As in the Arab world, researchers exerted efforts in a number of measurements such as those provided by Atallah (2006) designed a list for detecting talented students for the second primary grade which showed valid indications, and the stability of the list has been primarily achieved through internal consistency with alpha Cronbach's coefficient that reached (0.75), then by split-half reliability between the two halves of (0.96).

And in another study, Atallah (2005) attempted to regulate the circles test from Torrance Creative Thinking battery for children aged between 8 and 12 years. The results revealed that the test validity value ranged between 0.88 and 0.96; stability was verified by two ways: the stability of the correction where the coefficient dimensions ranged Ouda (2004) developed 'The Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students (Sages)' to detect talented students in Jordan for the age group (9–15 years). The results indicated that the test has high indicators that reached (0.90) using the coefficient alpha Cronbach. Results has also shown that there are substantial differences in performance on the test as a whole among ordinary students sample and gifted students samples which emphasises the validity of discriminatory test.

between 0.78 and 0.93 and the re-test, the coefficient that ranged between 0.77 and 0.97. Also, Al-Zubaidi (2010) where it aimed at rationing *Gates* scale to detect talented students in grades 5–10 in the Sultanate of Oman.

Furthermore, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation has presented a 'rating list of gifted students traits in primary education', which has been applied in Egypt Iraq, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Sudan (as cited in Atallah, 2006).

El Manssi and al-Banna (2002) conducted a study aimed to determine methods and measures that can be used in the detection of talented and creative people among students of general education and university. The results indicated the possibility of detecting the talented personality in various stages of education through the features of talent. As well as, the existence of common factors those appear in each stage, and each educational level (as cited in Kassas, 2006).

Also Rousan et al. (1990) developed Jordanian version from the PRIDE measure (Preschool and Kindergarten Interest Descriptor, 1983) to detect gifted preschoolers. The results reached valid indications in terms of another test called the Jordanian McCarthy scale for cognitive capacity, with the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.76$), whereas the correlation coefficient connotations estimated by teachers for student achievement reached ($r = 0.76$), and the way of the internal consistency reached ($r = 0.48$) and the re-test mannner reached ($t = 0.83$).

Moreover, Ayub (1988) prepared a meausre of creative personality traits directed to students of the third grade high school in Jordan. The scale contains (69) paragraphs which covered 21 dimensions: self-confidence, independence, leadership, risk-taking curiosity and the spirit of fun, humor, artistic and aesthetic sense. This scale achieved valid indicators, as for detecting reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was evaluated and its value reached ($r = 0.92$) (as cited in Roussan, 2006).

Also, Abu Alia in 1983 prepared a measure personality traits and mental health of Jordanian creative student. This scale consisted of 75 items distributed on seven key dimensions which are: capacity of handling ambiguity, independence of thought judgment, flexibility in thinking, originality of thinking, reflective thinking and the ability to exchange and openness to experience. The researcher checked the reliability of the scale and indications of her content validity (as cited in Rousan, 2006).

1.2. Problem of the study

Interests have been increased to promote 'talent and creativity' in Arab societies in order to realise 'human development' in the context of 'knowledge and society achievement'. However, there is a scarcity of scientific research concerning talented students in the Arab world that take into consideration cultural specificity of talented Arabs. Most of the measurement tools that are used in the Arabic scientific Research are designed for communities with other cultural particularities; Elsser (2005) described quantitatively the topics that were discussed in the period (1980–2005) and he mentioned that the number of Arabic research that aimed at the issue of detecting the talented child is only 23 studies. According to the researcher, this figure is an expression of the lack of research regarding the detection of talent. Also, it refers to the suffering of the Arab educational institution of the unavailability of 'appropriate' tools to measure talent.

Moreover, a research conducted by renzulli showed that 70% of teachers did not receive special training to promote talent (they are unfamiliar of the likely characteristics of gifted children and they can not identify them.) Also, Torrance in his reasearch about qualities sought by teachers and parents to confirm among pupils and after having made a quality list of the gifted child; results have shown that parents and teachers affirm the neutral characteristics and shift away from talent's characteristics (as cited in Aaseer, 2010).

On the other hand, Renzulli mentioned that the only strategy in identifying gifted student which is used by himself and that he recommended to be used by educators with students at high school is self-nomination strategy (as cited in Saada, 2008).

In this respect, the researcher is convinced that gifted children self-assessment of personality traits can be more 'useful' to explore giftedness; as well as, there is no doubt in the scientific community that measures intelligence and other special abilities that restricts this category and decreases the number of these gifted children who did not receive a suitable educational environment along with quality of courses.

This confirms the findings of Torrance that measures intelligence overlooked 70% of gifted students. Also, Renzulli did not find a significant difference about a real performance goal of creative production between a group of students who fall on the top of 5% of the distribution and the performance of their peers who fall on the range of 15%–20% (as cited in Aaseer, 2010).

In this context, the researcher adopts self-report method in the design of the current tool.

The question summed the main problem of the current study is: Does the designed tool which cover the five dimensions identified procedurally by a researcher as: motivation, emotional stability, positive self-esteem, internal control and deep learning style; express behavioral indicators of gifted traits personality.

In other words, does the designed tool provide a satisfactory evidence of validity and reliability?

1.3. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the current study are as follows:

1. To design the paragraphs based on specific dimensions through operational definition proposed by the researcher for the personal attributes of the gifted students. These paragraphs are as follows: motivation, emotional stability, positive self-esteem, internal control and deep learning style.
2. To reach a satisfactory validity and reliability indicators.

1.4. The importance of the study

This study seeks to provide a tool for detecting gifted students. There is a need among all the professional educators to explore the gifted students that provide them with appropriate educational programs, orientation and guidance. Gomes (2004) indicated that 50% of gifted students find themselves in a position of study failure at the age of 14-year old when professional educators do not provide them with pace of learning and an adapted environment in line with their special characteristics, also Kramer (1991) revealed that detecting gifted students is a living problem ranked 12 of 29 in the ranking list of the problems suffered by educational experts (as cited in El Khalifa, 2010).

This study is also important in providing an easy tool for detecting gifted students, where the researcher adopted the phenomenological trend which can be achieved through self-report method.

This study also comes in response to local realities, where in educational institutions in Algeria, there are no personality measurement tools for gifted students that are compatible with the social and cultural variables of the Algerian society. Thus, the researcher hopes that this measure serves the Algerian schools in particular, and the whole Arab world in general to explore gifted students at the secondary level.

1.5. The idiomatic definition of giftedness

The Fourteenth International Conference of the World Council for Gifted and creative Children held in Barcelona in 2001 defined giftedness as 'a human feature formed from a general mental ability creative thinking ability, high academic achievement, in addition to behavioural traits'. The researcher adopts that definition and focuses on behavioural traits as a specific aspect of giftedness.

Operational definition of:

3. **Gifted personality traits** are the traits that define the gifted student personality as traits encompassing the socio-emotional aspects which are determined by the researcher in the current study such as: motivation, emotional stability, the positive self esteem, internal control and deep learning style. All the previous traits are tested to obtain a score by a designed measure the researcher.
4. **Gifted students** are defined as high school students who achieve a high academic level equal to/or greater than 90% in mathematics and science (Academic achievement as giftedness indicator).

1.6. The limits of the study

The current study was limited to high school students (second and third level) in Tlemcen city, Algeria, who obtained an average equal to /or greater than 90% in mathematics and science during their previous academic years.

1.7. Theoretical background

Gagné (1991) suggested through his model that the giftedness is an ability that covers: mental, creative emotional—social and psychomotor aspects of personality. In this context, the researcher chooses the emotional—social aspect, to highlight the personality traits of the gifted students. This traits which were defined by Hassan (2002) in his study 'Arabic Survey Research about the identification of gifted and ditinguished students 1990 to 2002' indicates that all those studies agrees that gifted students personality characterised by emotional stability, high-level of morality, self-confidence, the ability to adjust with others and deep learning style.

In his part, Saada (2008) presented traits that characterise the gifted students derived from a number of Arab and foreign studies as: early linguistic ability, intellectual maturity, logical thinking, and early capabilities in mathematics and technical fields, perseverance and high motivation. He adds that researchers range into two trends where Terman claims that the gifted students are socially adjusted. However, Hollingworth believes that they need from time to time, rehabilitation due to maladjustment, especially those who score above 180 degrees on IQ tests.

In addition, the gifted students record a low degree of social self-esteem and high scores of self-concept, while they equate other ordinate students in the level of social self-concept .There are also other social characteristics that distinguish them, such as the desire to appear and gain respect between people, and the pride on the expense of social pressure (resulted from others look to them to the extent that the gifted person would wish not to be gifted).

They are also highly sensitive, emotional, enthusiastic and grow up to become addicted to work. They are spontaneous and feel less happiness. Moreover, they are characterised by self-confidence and a tendency towards independency; they develop a high concept of the ability to self-control their destiny and a sense of responsibility both towards what is entrusted to them of tasks or towards their success or failure in life. Therefore, they attribute their failure to themselves, and specifically to the lack of effort, so they benefit from their mistakes and failures in a constructive way to modify their activity or their attitudes or their level of competence.

Also, they tend to possess sense of humor and optimism, but in return they feel frustrated and unhappy when they do not materialise their high goals and feel that they are not on the average as compared to their personal hopes (as cited in Saada, 2008)

In this context, a number of Foreign Studies (Boujaoude & Giuliano, 1991; Caldwell & Ginthier, 1996; Shannon, 2001; Shemck, 1982) and Arabic ones (Abbatioramadan, 2000; Abdul Ghani, 1996) indicate that students with high achievement are using deep learning style (as cited in Jadid, 2010)

Jadid (2010) confirmed that achievement scores increase when talented students adopt deep learning style, while they score less grades when they don't adopt it. Other traits are observable with using deep learning style, such as: The ability to persevere, focused attention and inquisitiveness.

From the previous presentation of the studies results, the researcher adopted in her tool design the following dimensions: motivation, emotional stability, positive self-esteem, internal control and deep learning style.

Furthermore, it was proposed by Gagne that academic excellence is one of giftedness's indicators; it is considered as an expression of the individual's mental and functional aspects; 'it is of the most widely used methods in detecting excellence in the United States of America; where the student is considered to be gifted if s/he surpasses 90%' (El Sherbini & Dastreet, 2002, p. 269).

Due to the lack of academic achievement tests published in the Arab world, it seems necessary for those in charge of gifted education programmes to take advantage of the results of academic achievement as reflected in students' grades in various subjects or in subjects related to the type of experiences provided by the program; if the results of achievement tests are available at the end of the study level, it can be used to identify talented students (Jerwan, 1999, p. 172).

Also, Hassan (2003) concludes that academic achievement in both science and mathematics (85%–90%) can be considered as indicators to identify talented students in the Arab world; in the current study, the researcher chooses excellence achievement indicator to explore targeted sample.

2. Methodology and procedures

- I. **Measurement method used:** the researcher used the self-report method to construct the current tool, 'this method depends on a phenomenological trend that is based on the individual's self-report of his behavior measurement as he realises his feelings, motives and thoughts; since that behavior is determined and can be only understood by his inner world' (Abu Hatab, Othman & Sadek, 1986, p. 428).
- II. **The sample:** the sample represents students at high school second grade and third grade in Tlemcen, Algeria. It was selected intentionally to address all the students who have received during the previous school year achievement rates equal to/or exceeds the average 90% in math and science; the sample contains (54) students.
- III. **The construction of the research tool:** the construction of any objective measurement relies on methodological procedures. According to Allen and Yen (1979), they are as follows: 'Determine the method of the measurement; Formulation of paragraphs of each area; Determine the validity of the paragraphs and the scale instructions; exploratory study of the scale; Scale application to analysis its paragraphs; Find validity and stability scale indicators' (pp. 112–119).

The researcher followed the later methodological procedures in her construction of the tool; after adopting the conventional definition of the Fourteenth Congress of the World Council for Gifted and Talented children held in Barcelona in 2001, it has been suggested the following paragraphs that covers the mentioned dimensions (motivation, emotional stability, positive self-esteem, internal control and deep learning style).

The appropriate alternative responses were as follows: Always, often, sometimes, rarely and never. Rated as follows: 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1.

The scale in its initial construct was presented to the inter-rater judges in order to identify its validity in the measurement of the paragraphs that are designed for the measurement. Paragraphs that got the approval of 80% or more were kept, i.e., 62 paragraphs were accepted.

Finally, the researcher developed general instructions to explain how to answer the scale. Also, the instructions affirmed the confidentiality of the response, where the researcher pointed out that the

information will be used only for the purposes of scientific research, which relief the respondents and contribute to overcoming the social acceptance factor (Allam, 1986, p. 44).

2.1. Initial exploratory study

The researcher has applied the scale on a sample of 10 students; the purpose was to find out the extent and clarity of instructions and paragraphs in terms of formulation, meaning, the extent of respondents understanding of the scale and alternative paragraphs. The pilot study confirms that the instructions and paragraphs were clear, understandable and did not need any further explanation.

2.2. The psychometric properties of the scale

The scale (62) paragraphs was applied on the sample ($N = 54$) in order to extract the **psychometric properties of the scale**; Software package used for statistical analysis SPSS edition 17 was used to conduct a statistical analysis the paragraphs.

2.3. Indicators of validity

The American Society for psychological measurement has classified validity into three types: the content, construct and criterion-related validity (Abou Hatab, Othman & Sadek, 1986). The researcher verified two types of validity for the current scale which is enough to achieve **validity** of this scale.

2.3.1. Validity content

'The **validity** content is achieved through the analysis of the scale content with the assistance of the inter-rater judges' (Zaher, Teemerjian & Jaoudet, 1999, p. 134) This kind of **validity includes** two subtypes: Face validity and Logical validity; the later is verified by judging the representation of the test of the phenomenon through the dimensions and paragraphs composed for each dimension, and this is done by defining the dimensions of the scale and through logical design of the paragraphs to cover each dimension of the scale (Allen & Yen, 1979). Therefore, the researcher analysed literatures about gifted personality to be able to determine the dimensions of 'A self-report measure of the personality traits for gifted students' and formulated paragraphs to cover each dimension of the specific dimensions of the scale after defining it procedurally as mentioned above; thus, this kind of **validity** is confirmed.

'Face **validity** is realised through the consensus estimates of the trustee on the validity of its paragraphs' (Ouda, 1998, p. 370). This has been achieved in the current measure through the presentation of paragraphs to determine their suitability according to the agreement of (80%) of the inter-rater judge's validity.

2.3.2. Construt validity

Refers to the extent to which it can be decided that the measure is based on dertermined theoretical construct. Anastasi believesthat 'finding the internal consistency coefficient is one of the most important kinds of validity of personal measures' (Anastasi, 1985, p. 154).

Thus, the paragraphs has been under statistical analysis in order to calculate the correlation coefficients of each paragraph and the total score at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). The researcher adopted 'Michell criterion which indicates that every paragraph under coefficient (0.30) should be excluded' (as cited in El Anssari, 2000, p. 68) As a result, 14 pparagraphs out of 60 appeared to be not discriminated and were omitted, they are as follows: 1, 4, 5, 9, 12, 22, 25, 37, 41, 44, 46, 49, 55 and 58.

Also, coefficient paragraphs less than 0.30 were omitted, these paragraphs are as follows: 3, 21 and 27.

Last, 45 paragraphs have composed the scale 'self-report measure of the personality traits for gifted students'.

2.3.3. Reliability

'The concept of reliability is a crucial concept of measurement that should be confirmed to be used' (El Imam, Abdel-Rahman & El Ojaili, 1990, p. 143). 'It is also an important condition to confirm the validity of the test' (Thorndike & Hagen, 1989, p. 85).

In order to verify the reliability of the current scale, the researcher calculates the coefficient alpha for internal consistency that shows consistency in the performance of the individual from a paragraph to another; this translates the average coefficients resulting from the fragmentation test in different ways (El Ansari, 2000). The coefficient alpha for the current scale reached **(0.873)**.

Also, the reliability of scale was verified by calculating split- half coefficient which reached the value **(0.881)**.

At last, all of the validity and reliability of the scale are satisfactory, which make the scale useful to detecting the gifted students (See Appendix: Gifted student personality traits scale).

3. Proposals

The researcher proposes to expand the sample to a larger size towards a standardizing this tool through extracting its standers from Algerian community.

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Appendix. Gifted student personality traits scale.

N	ITEMS	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	No one can make me angry to the point that I lose control over myself					
2	I feel an inner power that pushes me forward					
3	Any decision I make is taken after a long reflection period in order not to be surprised with popping out problems					
4	I am very optimistic of what I will achieve in the future					
5	I believe that my disappointment are often the result of laziness and ignorance and not for my incompetence					
6	I Look carefully for purposes of what I’m reading then I try to reach a conclusion					
7	I insist on achieving my goals in spite of all the difficulties that I face					
8	I am a lovable person					
9	I take my final decisions that are related to my studies by myself					
10	I feel something inside me that pushes me to study					
11	I control myself in tensed situations					

- 12 I take my own decisions because I am sure that no one knows better than me in what I need
- 13 I do not believe in luck in achieving ambitions but in competence
- 14 I find most of the new lessons interesting and I often spend extra time to get a lot of information about them
- 15 I am convinced that man makes his own destiny
- 16 I can control my feelings when I really want to
- 17 My goals in life are clear
- 18 I feel good about myself in general
- 19 I am trying to actually understand things deeply
- 20 I always try to present any work done by me in a perfect way
- 21 People don't bother me easily
- 22 I am not pessimistic because I am convinced that the way to success is hard work and perseverance
- 23 I enjoy works that make me productive
- 24 I have the ability to do work better than many people
- 25 I do not easily get angry with others
- 26 I choose my friends, I do not believe in coincidence in that.
- 27 I always link my experiences of the past with present in various life situations especially at school
- 28 I am pleased to make the maximum effort in the performance of my school work
- 29 I have the right to be proud of myself
- 30 I am convinced that my success is due to my efforts and not because of luck
- 31 My ambition does not decrease because of people's failure around me
- 32 I often benefit from my mistakes
- 33 I go to school with a lot of questions that need answers.
- 34 I always think of consequences of my actions
- 35 I have many good behaviors or values
- 36 Failure to me is a temporal period of time that I will overcome
- 37 When I read an article or a book I try to specify the author's intentions
- 38 I only get satisfied with perfect work
- 39 I always plan for my daily life
- 40 I usually recall previous knowledge when witness similar situation
- 41 I enjoy a large scale of abilities, even if I do not use them all.
- 42 When I learn something new I try to understand how all ideas are related to each other

- 43 I can keep conducting a work for a long period of time even if I face some difficulties
 - 44 Not in my nature to accept things as they are said to me, but rather I think about them by my self
 - 45 I Look for cause and effect in my understanding of scientific facts
-