Where are the Talents with a Migration Background?

Underrepresentation of Students with a Migration Background in Gifted Programs

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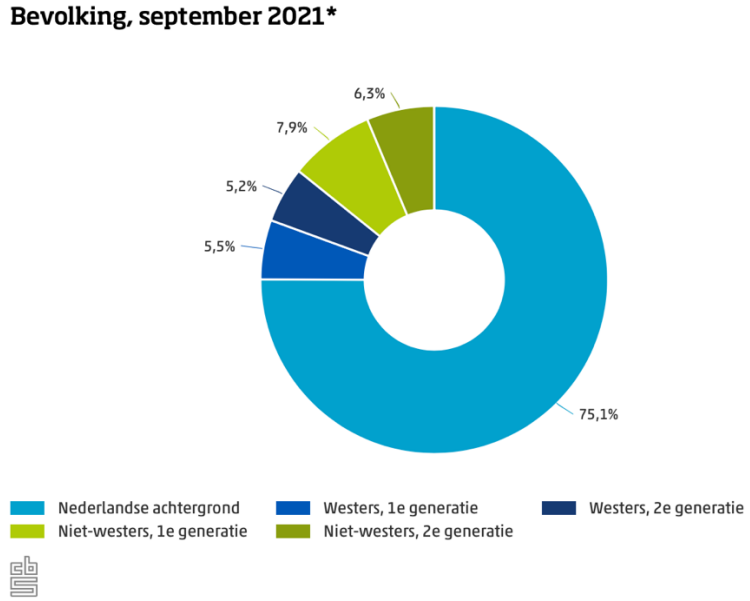
Western-/non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands

According to the Dutch *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek* (2021a), also known as the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics, on September 1st 2021 the Dutch population consisted of 4.319.781 (24.7%) citizens with a migration background. Figure 1 shows an overview of the distribution of the Dutch population. Of these citizens with a migration background, 1.867.578 (10.7%) had a Western background (origination from one of the countries from Europe (excluding Turkey), North America, or Oceania) and 2.466.806 (14.1%) of the migrant population are described as Non-Western immigrants and are originating from countries in Africa, Latin-America, Asia, or Turkey. Whether Indonesian or Japanese citizens are seen as Western or Non-Western immigrants depends on the level of the Social Economical Status (SES) of the migrating families.

Figure 1

The Dutch Population in September, 2021

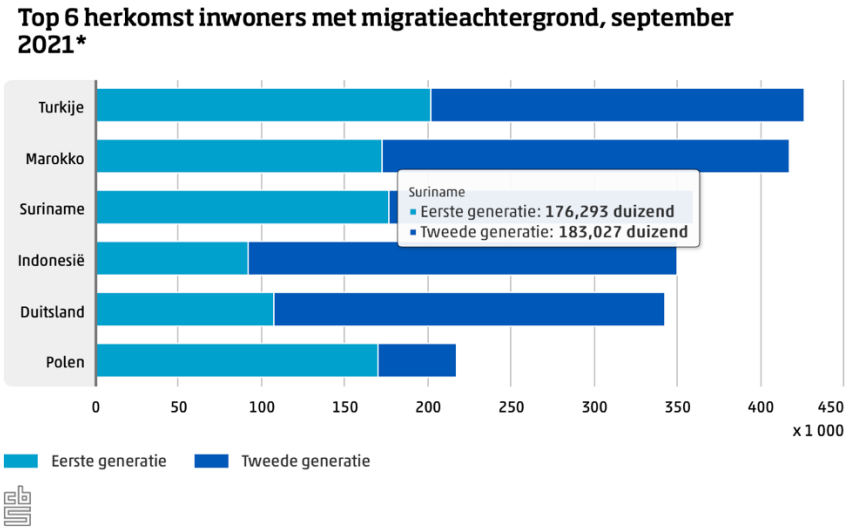


Most represented origins of immigrants in the Netherlands

Figure 2 presents the top six countries of origin of residents with a migration background in the Netherlands (CBS, 2021a). As can be seen in Figure 2, most Dutch immigrants originate from Turkey or Morocco. Immigrants from Surinam, Indonesia, Germany, or Poland are often represented in the Dutch immigrant population as well.

Figure 2

Top Six Countries of Origin of Residents with a Migration Background in the Netherlands



Distribution of children under ten years old in the Netherlands

According to the Dutch *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek* (2021a), of all the Western immigrant women, 8.3% are younger than ten years old and of the Western immigrant men, 9.4% are younger than ten years old. Of the non-Western immigrant women, 12.9% are younger than ten years old and of the non-Western immigrant men, 13.4% are younger than ten years old. Of women with a Dutch background, 9.3% are younger than ten years old and of men with a Dutch background, 9.9% are younger than ten years old. When comparing these numbers, the distribution of boys and girls younger than ten years old with a Western migration background is similar to the distribution of boys and girls with a Dutch background. Besides that, children younger than ten years old with a non-Western background cover a relatively larger part of the population compared to boys and girls with a Dutch or Western migration background.

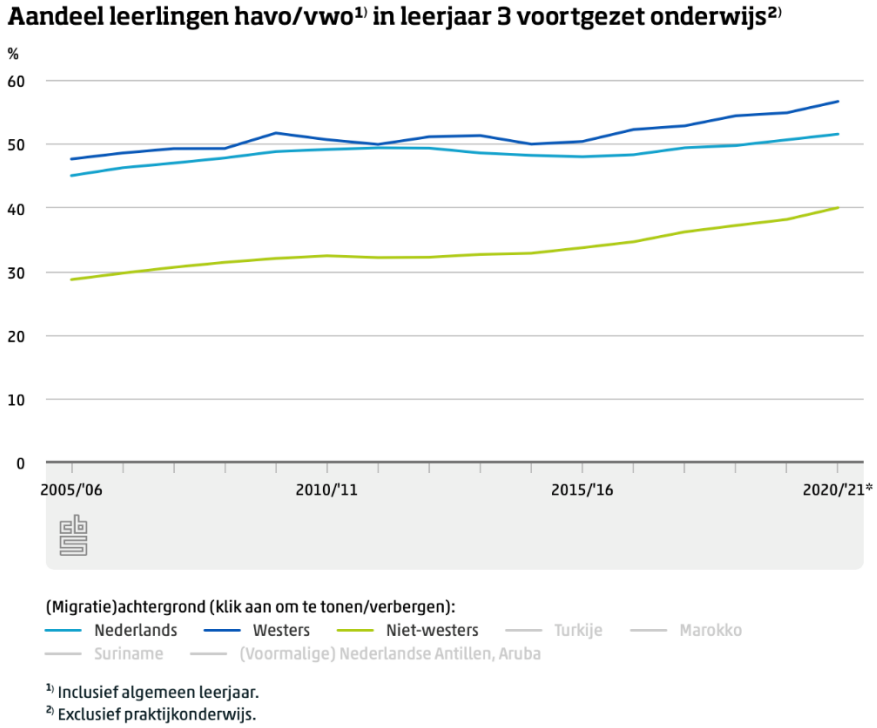
Number of students choosing 'high' secondary education

Figure 3 shows portions of students that attended havo/vwo. As can be seen in Figure 3, obtained via the *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek* (2021b), the number of students that attended havo/vwo (a higher form of secondary education) in the academic year of 2020/2021 consisted of 51,5% of all Dutch secondary students, 56,6% of all Western immigrant students and 39,9% of all the non-Western immigrant students. Even though relatively more students

with a Western migration background tend to attend high-secondary education than students with a Dutch background, it seems that the portion of students with a non-Western background is much smaller.

Figure 3

Percentages of Students in the Third Year of Havo/Vwo



Number of gifted students in the Netherlands

When using our definition of giftedness to get an image of the amount of gifted people in the Dutch population, no data could be found. However, Gerven (2002) does describe the distribution of Dutch gifted people by looking at the IQ distribution. According to this, 2.5% of all populations have an IQ of 130 or higher and are therefore gifted. When comparing this to the distribution of the Dutch population by the Centraal bureau of Statistiek (2021), we could conclude that roughly 24.689 Dutch citizens with a Western background and 61.670 citizens with a non-Western background would be considered as gifted.

Problem description

Given the information above, the Dutch population consists of many gifted people with a migration background. However, according to the PISA-report of 2018 on inequality of opportunity for children with a migration background (Aalders et al., 2020), a large number of

these people go undiscovered or do not get sufficient guidance to develop their ultimate abilities. Besides that, students with parents with a lower educational level tend to attend lower education themselves as well and seem to gain less from school courses (Wai & Allen, 2019). Based on this information, the underrepresentation of children with a migration background is a problem in the Dutch school system and change is necessary.

The Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT) by Gagné

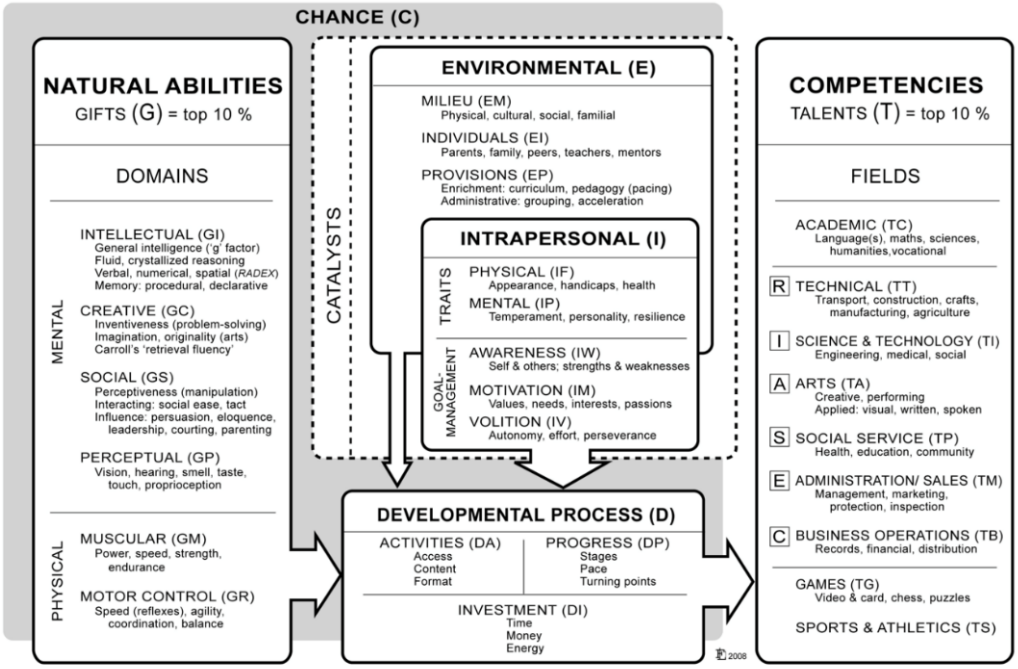
In order to clarify what is meant by giftedness in this report, the Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT) by Gagné (2004) has been used to define the concept of giftedness.

This model shows the transformation of outstanding natural abilities (gifts) into outstanding systematically developed skills (talents). According to this model, there is a clear distinction between giftedness and talent. Giftedness is seen as the possession and use of untrained superior natural abilities; they are called gifts. These abilities occur in at least one of the following competency domains: intellectual (IG), creative (CG), socioaffective (SG), and sensorimotor (MG). According to this model, talent is defined as the superior mastery of systematically developed abilities and knowledge in at least one field of human activity. For both concepts, the possessed abilities put the individual in at least the top 10% of their peers. There are three types of catalysts that contribute or hinder the talent development process: environmental catalysts, intrapersonal catalysts, and chance. It must be taken into account that each of these types of catalysts can be viewed from two dimensions: (1) strength of causal impact on the developmental process, and (2) the direction; it can be positive/facilitating or negative/hindering.

In 2007, Gagné updated the DMGT model, called the Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent 2.0 (DMGT 2.0). Figure 4 presents the DMGT 2.0. Some significant changes were made to the component natural abilities, they were clustered into six sub-components. Four of them are mental: intellectual, creative, social, and perceptual. Muscular and motor control belong to the physical abilities.

Figure 4

Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent 2.0 (2007)



The environmental factors are clearly highlighted in the DMGT 2.0 model. Environmental factors are very important to consider when identifying children with a migration background who are gifted. Sternberg (2000) emphasizes the importance of the interaction between person and environment in his Triarchic theory of intellectual giftedness. Renzulli (1990) defines giftedness as the combination of having above average general and/or specific abilities, high levels of task commitment, and high levels of creativity. Mönks (1992) expanded this model and added environmental factors to it: family, school, and peers. These models have made clear how important environmental factors are in expressing and identifying giftedness.

Importance of a broader definition

It is important to use this broader definition when identifying possible giftedness in children. There is a strong emphasis on an IQ above 130 in the current literature, but the model by Gagné (2007) has made clear that there are a lot of other important factors that influence the expression of talent. Above this, the stress on the importance of a high IQ is present in mental healthcare. By adopting a broader definition of giftedness, children are more often identified as being primarily gifted. This is important on all levels in our society: in schools, mental healthcare, government, and research.

The Dutch School System

The Netherlands has, contrary to for example the United States and the United Kingdom, a so-called early-tracking system of education (Pásztor, 2010). Schools for higher education can, in theory, be attended by every student. However, not everyone can reach the top. This is not only because of the tuition fees or the selection for the schools, but mainly due to the previous school type of the students (Pásztor, 2010). The most important decision for students is made by their teacher in the last year of primary school, at age eleven or twelve. Teachers decide to which type of secondary school the student will transfer, based on standardized test scores and their own advice (Crul, 2018; Pásztor, 2010). This is a very important decision, as it determines the future of the student. In this advice-making, students with a migration background often seem to get a lower advice than autochthonous Dutch students (Crul, 2018; Pásztor, 2010). When starting on a lower level in secondary school, it is possible to reach a higher level. However, students then have to take the 'long route', which takes several years longer (Crul, 2018). In this way, many ethnic children with a migration background are eventually able to take higher education (Crul, 2018).

Culture of C's

The Dutch school system is often seen as average, or 'a culture of C's', with no real place for people that stand out (De Boer et al., 2013). Children who are behind in school get a lot of attention. There are special school systems for underperforming children and children with several disabilities, namely special education and 'appropriate education' (Mooij, 2013, p. 111). Children who stand out in being cognitively gifted often receive less attention. According to De Boer et al. (2013), it is often believed that the Dutch educational system does not need to be focused on gifted or talented children, because these children will learn anyway and do not need extra help with their schoolwork. If the learning outcomes of these children are lower than expected, it is questioned if the child is indeed gifted (De Boer et al., 2013). However, this view is now criticized, as excellence should be appreciated (De Boer et al., 2013). As the Dutch government states: "It is important that knowledge about giftedness is increased and better disseminated, and that the offer for these students is expanded" (Rijksoverheid, n.d.).

The last few years, the Dutch government has made a lot of improvements regarding gifted education. They have provided financial support to partnerships for projects related to

gifted education, all because (highly) gifted children do not always benefit enough from the already existing offers for gifted education (Rijksoverheid, n.d.).

Developmental levels of gifted children

Mooij (2013, p. 111) stated that cognitively gifted children are different from their peers from a young age. Gifted children are often more emotionally developed and more socially sensitive. According to Kangas et al. (2017), in many gifted programs, people tend to overlook the 'whole' child. People tend to only focus on the intellectual abilities of the child, even though the social and emotional development is equally important. Gifted students have different needs in their social and emotional development than their typical peers. Gifted students develop at different rates (Kangas et al., 2017). Even before going to school, cognitively gifted children often develop themselves to the levels of children that are in second, third, or even fourth grade (Mooij, 2013, p. 111). When these children are then placed in first grade, they have to go a great step back in their development to level with their peers, which can lead to symptoms such as demotivation, behavioral problems, and fear of failure (Mooij, 2013, p. 111).

The fact that cognitively gifted children are often more socially sensitive than their peers can also lead to the risk of comparing themselves too much with other children in their class (Mooij, 2013, p. 111). This comparison can then lead to interpreting and taking over the behavior to fit in with the rest, which can lead to the start of showing symptoms such as fear of failure and too much perfectionism. Mooij (2013, p. 111) talks about this phenomenon, called 'forced underachievement': in schools, these children are held back in their development as they have to do and 'learn' things they have already been able to do for a long time.

Options for gifted children

For now, in the Netherlands there are a few options for gifted children to get the attention they need to develop well. The driving force behind providing these options is the potential economic benefits that might come from providing gifted education. This does not only happen in the Netherlands, but everywhere in the world (De Boer et al., 2013). As stated before, gifted students have different needs than their typical peers. Gifted students benefit from the encounter with like-minded children. To realize this, gifted students often have the possibility to participate in an enrichment class or a plus class. This can be a class within their own school, or a class somewhere outside of their own school. In these classes, a varied

program tailored to the needs of the students is offered. This way of education relates to approximately 5 to 10 percent of the Dutch students. Another option, next to the special classes for gifted children, is placing the gifted children into special classes for gifted students, so-called '*voltijds HB onderwijs'*. Here, the gifted students receive education that meets the specific needs of (highly) gifted students (Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling, n.d.).

Gifted education in other (European) countries

Looking into different education systems from other countries can help to reflect on the Dutch school system. It is important to continuously consider what works in the current system, what could go better, and what ideas could be applied to improve the system. We have decided to look at the school systems of Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, and Germany. Germany was chosen because of the similarities to the Dutch education system, but there are slight differences with the Netherlands in their definitions and their prevention of inequality. The other three countries were chosen because their systems are very different from the Dutch education system, which can give insight to different options that may not have been considered yet in the Netherlands. The final advice of what can be applied in the Netherlands will be given in the end.

Finland

Finland aims to support the growth of the students, which entails strengthening students' thinking and studying skills, but also ethical and esthetic education (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013). The newest curriculum in Finland focuses on individualism, which allows diverse education. It mainly focuses on the worth of students as individuals and accepting each of them as unique (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013).

The curriculum does not specifically mention gifted students and gifted education has no special status (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013; Reid & Horváthová, 2016). However, the teachers are all trained academics and differentiation is the standard from kindergarten onwards. This means that all children are educated based on their individual needs and on their own development, which is one of the core ideas of gifted education, even though it is not referred to as gifted education in their curriculum. This means that every single student benefits from the individualization of education, and not just the students that are classified as gifted or talented (Reid & Horváthová, 2016).

It is very common for parents to choose a school within their own neighborhood, but there are special elementary schools (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013). These special elementary

schools can be seen as gifted education, because of the emphasis on foreign languages and special music classes. Some of these schools specifically focus on thinking skills, mathematics, project-oriented working, computers, and art. The number of special schools keeps increasing, but they are not accessible for all. Usually, these types of schools select their students based on grade point average and they may also have additional examinations before selecting their students (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013).

Ireland

Ireland has defined giftedness as students that may be able and will demonstrate very high levels of attainment in one or more of the following areas: general intellectual ability or talent, specific academic aptitude or talent, visual and performing arts and sports, leadership ability, creative and productive thinking, mechanical ingenuity, and special abilities in empathy, understanding, and negotiation (O'Reilly, 2018).

The only formal gifted program in Ireland is the Irish Centre for Talented Youth (CTYI) (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013). This program started in 1992 at the Dublin City University and aims to identify children who reason extremely well verbally and/or mathematically. Moreover, they provide challenging work and educational opportunities through a summer program and on Saturdays during the entire school year. CTYI also provides teacher training and support to schools that participate in the program and they assist parents by providing access to information and resources. Lastly, CTYI researches and evaluates the effectiveness of the program and the curriculum (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013). More than 60.000 students between the ages of 6 and 17 have participated in the programs from CTYI. Besides this, CTYI actively tries to identify gifted students by written letters to all schools in the country, in which they ask to identify students who have scores at or above the 95th percentile on standardized tests. There has been research on this program, which shows that this program has immense benefits on gifted students (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013).

New Zealand

New Zealand has taken a new approach to giftedness, along with schools being able to define their own definitions of giftedness (Jolly & Jarvis, 2018). It usually is based along the lines of the following criteria: the recognition of multi-cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes; the recognition of performance and potential; acknowledgement of giftedness in all societal groups, regardless of culture, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, or disability; a student's giftedness or talent will emerge at their own time and in their own circumstances;

differentiated educational opportunities should be provided, including social and emotional support (Jolly & Jarvis, 2018).

New Zealand has developed a very promising program that is known as TDI; the Talent Development Initiative (Russel & Riley, 2011). This program consists of individualized and group learning that is culturally affirmative. The program is tailored to the individual needs of a student, but also to their interests. It puts the individual student at the center of education, instead of making the students fit in the regular system. It is also important to note that the impact of this program reflects the goals of personalized learning for all students, not just for the gifted. This program was developed specifically for secondary schools. However, it does contain ideas that could also be implemented in primary schools (Russel & Riley, 2011).

Germany

Germany has a similar approach to Gifted Education as the Netherlands. Germany distinguishes between acceleration and enrichment (Fischer & Müller, 2014). It is very common to combine both forms of learning. This means that gifted children finish the regular curriculum earlier and complete assignments faster than their typical peers, which entails a shortened time in school. Besides this, it also means that there are additions to the regular curriculum. This approach focuses strongly on cognitive aspects of giftedness and not yet on other areas of talents (Fischer & Müller, 2014).

In the last fifteen years, Germany has made changes in their educational system to provide children with equality in schools, because a PISA-report showed that a student's chance of success was highly dependent on their socioeconomic status (Fischer et al., 2014). One of the changes in the system was the expansion of all-day schools, also known as '*Ganztagsschule*'. The German government expected that students from at-risk groups would be better supported this way and the SES-gap in chance of success would be narrowed (Fischer et al., 2014). All-day schools offer additional support, extracurricular activities, and other assistance to help students achieve better results. By doing this, the effects of family background (social, economic, and cultural) on achievement could be prevented. In other words, the relationship between academic achievement and social background is weakened. These schools are funded by the German government (Fischer et al., 2014).

Ms. van Tricht, one of the experts that was interviewed, also mentioned these all-day schools. She mentioned that parents of children with a migration background do not always

have the financial support for tutoring or other tools to help their children achieve better in school. Besides this, there could be differences in the contribution of the parents themselves. Some parents are not able to help their children because they have to work or they do not understand the language or schooling system. All-day schools could help with this, because they offer the support that the parents may not be able to offer.

Positive aspects of the school systems of other countries

The countries mentioned above use various aspects to adapt education as best as possible to the individual child, so that education can be meaningful for all children. A classroom approach is widely used in the Netherlands, but this has disadvantages for children who underachieve and for children who excel (Van der Maas & Raijmakers, 2019). Individualization and differentiation raise the level of the underperforming group and further challenge the students who excel (Denessen, 2017). The use of individualized education could be increased in the Netherlands, and this should benefit all children. If culture is also considered, the children with a migration background will be understood better by both teachers and their classmates (Ringelheim, 2012). This allows teachers to be culturally sensitive and provide the needs of children with a migration background, thereby improving their school performance over time and combating underachievement (Ringelheim, 2012). To realize this, knowledge about the culture of children with a migration background must be disseminated through education policy, so that sufficient attention is being paid to the identity and perspectives of children with a migration background at school and in school textbooks. In addition, attention to cultures must be increased in teacher training. This could also reduce the prejudice that exists about students with a migration background and their parents, as discussed earlier.

Finally, the inequality of opportunity can be reduced if the schools themselves offer tutoring or other extra resources for free. There are a lot of differences between parents in their availability of knowledge, skills, network, and financial resources to offer children extra support when they need it (Elffers, 2020). When this is offered by the school itself, the students are not dependent on the position of their parents (Fischer et al., 2014; Elffers, 2020). In the long run, this leads to equal opportunities for success in school.

By paying more attention to these kinds of matters, the (cultural) differences between students are dealt with responsibly. Then, equal opportunities can be created for children with a migration background within education. Besides this, it is important to continuously keep

reflecting onto our education system and thinking about what could be improved. Ideas and inspiration for improvement can be taken from other countries, but also from experts within our own country.

Political aspects of gifted education in The Netherlands

At the beginning of 2019, a letter was sent from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science about promoting equality of opportunity in education (Slob & Engelshoven, 2019). In this letter, the equality of opportunity in education, the causes, and effects of inequality were discussed and the policies to promote equality of opportunity were described. Furthermore, the letter stated that promoting equality of opportunity is about enabling young people to develop their talents. If these children need to be motivated or supported to achieve these goals, it is also important that the right support is provided. Children's school success should depend solely on their abilities and commitment and not on the income or education level of their parents. Unfortunately, the Education Inspectorate has observed that children of parents with lower income and fewer diplomas are not always able to achieve the level that they can cope with cognitively in recent years (Slob & Engelshoven, 2019). This must change by promoting equality of opportunity. Thereby, it is important to connect the living worlds of the pupil: school, home, environment, civil society, and municipalities.

Gap between school and home

Children who live in less favorable circumstances experience a gap between school and home (Slob & Engelshoven, 2019). They have difficulty connecting what they experience and learn at school with the context at home. When different aspects go wrong at school, their parents do not always know the way and, moreover, they often do not have the means to organize additional support outside the regular education. To counteract inequality of opportunity, we therefore cannot only pay attention to education. It is important to involve the wider environment in which young people grow up (Slob & Engelshoven, 2019).

Gelijke Kansen Alliantie (Equal Opportunities Alliance)

Promoting equal opportunities is a broad social task and cannot be achieved through education policy alone. Therefore, it is necessary to have an integrated and systematic approach aimed at the triangle of home, school, and environment at both national and local level. The *Gelijke Kansen Alliantie* (GKA) plays an important role in achieving this goal (Slob & Engelshoven, 2019). GKA works together with schools, municipalities, and social

partners to improve equality of opportunity in education with a focus on home, school, and the living environment (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, z.d.).

Policy for promoting equality of opportunity

A few starting points for this policy are discussed in the letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in 2019, including accessibility and quality, transitions, and school and environment (Slob & Engelshoven, 2019). This letter discusses all levels of education. In this report, only the aspects related to primary education will be highlighted. First, every child has the right to education. This means that primary schools should be available freely. Also, the parental contribution should always be explicitly voluntary. Costs should never be an obstacle to participating in school. This means that if a parent is unable to pay the parental contribution, the child cannot be excluded from the activity or education program. Schools may therefore still request a voluntary contribution to organize additional activities and programs, but failure to pay this contribution should never lead to exclusion. In addition to this, primary schools with pupils who have a greater chance to fall behind, receive almost 300 million euros each year for extra resources to help these pupils (Slob & Engelshoven, 2019). The school is free to determine how these funds are spent. In November 2018, the *Tweede Kamer* (House of Representatives) was informed about the fact that advice from the primary school is very decisive for the place where a pupil ends up in secondary education. Following the PISA report from 2018, the ministry has initiated an investigation (Slob & Engelshoven, 2019).

Ms. van Tricht also referred to the *Gelijke Kansen Alliantie* in our interview. She pointed out that the last cabinet set a sum of money aside for the subject of equal opportunities and it would be favorable that the new cabinet does this as well. Ms. van Tricht also addressed the skewed distribution in the help needed by students and the income of parents. Children whose parents are able to pay for additional educational opportunities receive this support, whilst the children who need the support the most will (almost) never receive this help. According to Ms. van Tricht, it is of high importance that the government does something about this problem on a government level and it will be a good initiative. This initiative can be seen in the policy of equal opportunities, namely the money primary schools with pupils who have a greater chance to fall behind receive.

Lack of awareness

Another explanation for less known gifted immigrant students is given by Grissom and Redding (2016). According to their study, gifted students in the United States of America are normally discovered by using an informal system of referrals by parents or teachers. This means that it depends on the teacher's or parent's ability to recognize if a child might possibly be gifted, which is based on their own personal ideas of what giftedness looks like and could easily and unconsciously be biased. By using this method only, a small number of children who were discovered as being gifted had a migration background (Card & Giuliano, 2016). The study of Ford (2012) also describes that the underrepresentation of children with a migration background within gifted education could be explained by under referral and the lack of educators in being culturally responsive to the needs of possibly gifted children. Even though these studies are based on an American school system, Ms. Van Tricht stated in an interview that this situation is also applicable to the situation in the Netherlands, as while giving advice for a follow-up study, unconscious mechanisms also often play along. Besides the lack of awareness about giftedness by teachers, according to Ms. de Bruyn-Daoud and Ms. van Tricht, parents seem to lack knowledge about giftedness as well. In our interview they stated that recognizing giftedness is already hard for "highly-educated white" parents, but even harder for parents with a migration background who are not always aware of the Dutch school system. In addition, giftedness is not a subject that is often spoken about in all cultures. In these cultures, recognizing signs of giftedness might be harder, as parents do not have the knowledge about this subject or find other (culturally determined) explanations more suitable.

Lack of research in the Netherlands

During our literature study about gifted children with a migration background in the Netherlands, it was remarkable that there were not many studies to be found about the situation in the Netherlands. Most literature describes studies that have been done in the United States of America, which means it is based on the American school system and target groups. Because of these differences, according to Ms. van Tricht the situation of the United States cannot be fully compared to the situation in the Netherlands and therefore more research in the Netherlands is necessary. However, certain problems in the US, such as under referrals, are also applicable to possibly gifted children with a migration background in the Netherlands, which is supported by all our interviewees and our own observations. More

research must be done in the Netherlands to optimize knowledge about children with a migration background and how to guide them.

Talents of children with a migration background

In the interview, Ms. Boogaard (oral statement, 25-05-2021) recognized that children with a migration background may be more gifted than the general Dutch population, however, this has not been proven scientifically. She suggests that all the children of labor immigrants who came to the Netherlands in the sixties, who were mostly illiterate, have learned the Dutch language without the help of their parents and succeed in finishing their school work. According to Ms. Boogaard, this shows how much perseverance and intelligence these children have. Besides this, she mentioned that all refugees must have a level of intelligence to decide they have to flee the country to get a better and safer life for their children. Most of the refugees are highly educated, so an assumption is that their children are intelligent as well.

However, there has been very little research about the giftedness of children with a migration background relative to the general population within countries, which is why it is important to do more research about this. The only specific group that has been researched consists of refugees. Research shows that refugees have a great amount of resilience, especially when they are socially supported and using good coping strategies to deal with their traumatic experiences (Daud et al., 2008; Hooberman et al., 2010; Hutchinson & Dorsett, 2012). Research from Daud et al. (2008) shows that resilient children are socially competent, have a positive self-esteem, but also possess above average intelligence or IQ. Usually, highly resilient children do have other protective factors like problem-solving skills, faith in a higher power and social attachments to a school and/or church (Carlson et al., 2012). Some of these factors can be seen within the DMGT model of Gagné, like the intellectual domain or intrapersonal factors like motivation. However, it is possible that their intelligence and resilience are not being seen because of obstacles like their traumatic experiences or a language barrier (McBrien, 2005). This indicates that it is highly important that these children get the right support, especially from their school, so they can develop their talents to the fullest.

Intelligence tests in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, there are more than twenty different tests for measuring intelligence, both for individual testing and group testing (Hurks & Bakker, 2016). However,

the majority of these tests are not suitable for every child. Children with less developed fine motor abilities, children with visual impairments, or children with less well-developed language skills in Dutch have a backlog in these tests. The latter is often the case for children with a migration background who have not been living in the Netherlands for a long time, and therefore have had less practice in Dutch than their typical peers (Hurks & Bakker, 2016).

Intelligence tests like the WISC-V-NL, that are nowadays often used in the Netherlands, have a large linguistic aspect that determines the IQ of the child. Children who have another native language than Dutch have a disadvantage at these tests according to Ms. van Tricht. In the interview with Ms. van Tricht, the CoVaT-CHC (Magez, Tierens, Van Huynegem, Van Parijs, Decaluwé & Bos, 2015) intelligence test was discussed. This intelligence test has been used in Belgium and is known to be culturally sensitive, as it has both verbal and non-verbal components. The use of these culturally sensitive intelligence tests with not only verbal components can improve the identification of cognitive talent of children with other ethnic backgrounds than Dutch that do not speak Dutch as well as their native Dutch peers.

Advice

Advice 1: Raising awareness about giftedness

In our society, more awareness should be created about the situation of children with a migration background in higher-level or gifted education. One promising way of achieving this goal is a national general campaign about giftedness itself, but also about giftedness in children with a migration background. With this campaign, not only teachers and school directors will be informed, but also everyone else in our society. By creating awareness, the biases and the prejudices made about students with a migration background will hopefully decrease and might eventually disappear. To reduce the under referral, Mr. Grissom stated in an email to us that it is important to eliminate the gatekeeping function of classroom teachers. Also, the use of national norms for setting cut scores within giftedness tests should be exchanged for local norms that allow for within-group comparisons.

It is important to start an open conversation with teachers, police agents, caregivers and all relevant people who work or have to deal with students with a migration background who are possibly gifted. To do so, according to Ms. van Tricht it might be helpful to offer

tools to think more consciously about your own thoughts and prejudices by starting conversations and discussing why certain choices have been made.

Advice 2: More money available for research in the Netherlands

Little research is available about the situation of children with a migration background in gifted education in the Netherlands, as most studies are done in the United States of America and are based on American situations. To get a better image of the underrepresentation of gifted children with a migration background in the Netherlands, more research is needed. The Dutch government should set more money aside to make research about giftedness and underrepresentation in the Netherlands possible.

In addition to the point that more research needs to be done in the Netherlands, further research is needed about general giftedness in children with a migration background. Ms. Boogaard suggested that children with a migration background may be more gifted than the general Dutch population. However, this is not scientifically proven. Research does suggest that refugees do often show a lot of resilience and high intelligence, but very little is known about other groups of minorities. This should be investigated further.

Advice 3: *Gelijke Kansen* (Equal Opportunities)

In 2018, a sum of money was put aside for research of the policy to improve and promote equality of opportunities among school children and students in the Dutch school system. It is suggested that the new cabinet should put a great sum of money aside to continue this research and create even more equality among students in the Dutch school system. Between 2018 and 2021, primary schools with pupils who have a greater chance of falling behind received almost 300 million euros in extra resources each year to help these pupils. It is important that this money should also be partly used for guiding those children who may be gifted, especially for those who have a migration background. Also, it is important that the parental contribution is always voluntary. Children should not be excluded from education or activities because of the income of their parents. It is suggested that the new cabinet continues this initiative, so more research can be done about this important subject of equality of opportunity.

Advice 4: Adapt a broader definition of giftedness in our society

In this report, a broader definition of giftedness was briefly discussed. It is suggested that a broader definition is adapted and used on the government level. Giftedness entails much

more than only an IQ above 130. When a different definition is used, more children can be identified as (possibly) gifted and can receive appropriate support and additional educational opportunities. It is not only advised that the government will use this broader definition, but it is also advised on other levels of our society. This means on school level, mental healthcare level, and research level.

Advice 5: Learn aspects from other countries

The Netherlands should offer tutoring to children with a migration background within schools for free. This means that the government should reserve extra money to provide this. The idea of tutoring within schools is comparable to all-day schools in Germany, in which children from risk groups are being supported and offered equal opportunities by offering additional support and extracurricular activities after a regular school day.

In addition, Finland shows that there does not need to be a definition of 'giftedness' to offer the children the support and resources they need. Schools in Finland focus on the individual child, as opposed to focusing on children that fall outside the average group. Not defining 'giftedness' offers a possible solution to unequal opportunities, because every single child can benefit from an approach that is tailored to them. Defining 'giftedness' differently, or not defining it at all, could also be implemented in the Netherlands.

Finally, it is important to focus on being culturally sensitive in education in The Netherlands, which is demonstrated by New Zealand. Like Finland, they have a program where education is individualized. The education is adapted to the culture and interests of individual children, so that the needs of these children can properly be accounted for by teachers.

Advice 6: Use of both verbal and non-verbal intelligence tests

The Netherlands should use intelligence tests with both verbal and non-verbal components, instead of using intelligence tests that contain (mainly) verbal components, as children who have another native language than Dutch have a disadvantage at intelligence tests with a large linguistic aspect, according to Ms. van Tricht. Tests like the CoVaT-CHC (Magez, et al., 2015) have both verbal and non-verbal components. The use of culturally sensitive intelligence tests should improve the identification of cognitive talent of children with other ethnic backgrounds than Dutch.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that it is important to create more awareness about giftedness and the underrepresentation of students with a migration background in gifted education, among other things by adopting a broader definition of giftedness. In addition, money should be made available for improving the equal opportunities policy and for extensive research into pupils with a migration background.

In 2019, the Netherlands was in the top 5 of the knowledge economy. To maintain this position, the availability of gifted education in the Netherlands for all (potentially) talented students is of the utmost importance. Our country has come a long way, but there is room for improvement.

By following these advices, less talent will be lost. In the current system, too many talents, especially in students with a migration background, are not seen, and therefore not supported. By acquiring more knowledge and adapting the current policy, gifted students with a migration background may be seen more often and receive the right guidance. In the long term, providing the right resources and guidance leads to less frustration and less problem behaviour in this group of students. This is also of great economic importance for the Netherlands, because after all it is better to prevent than to cure.

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