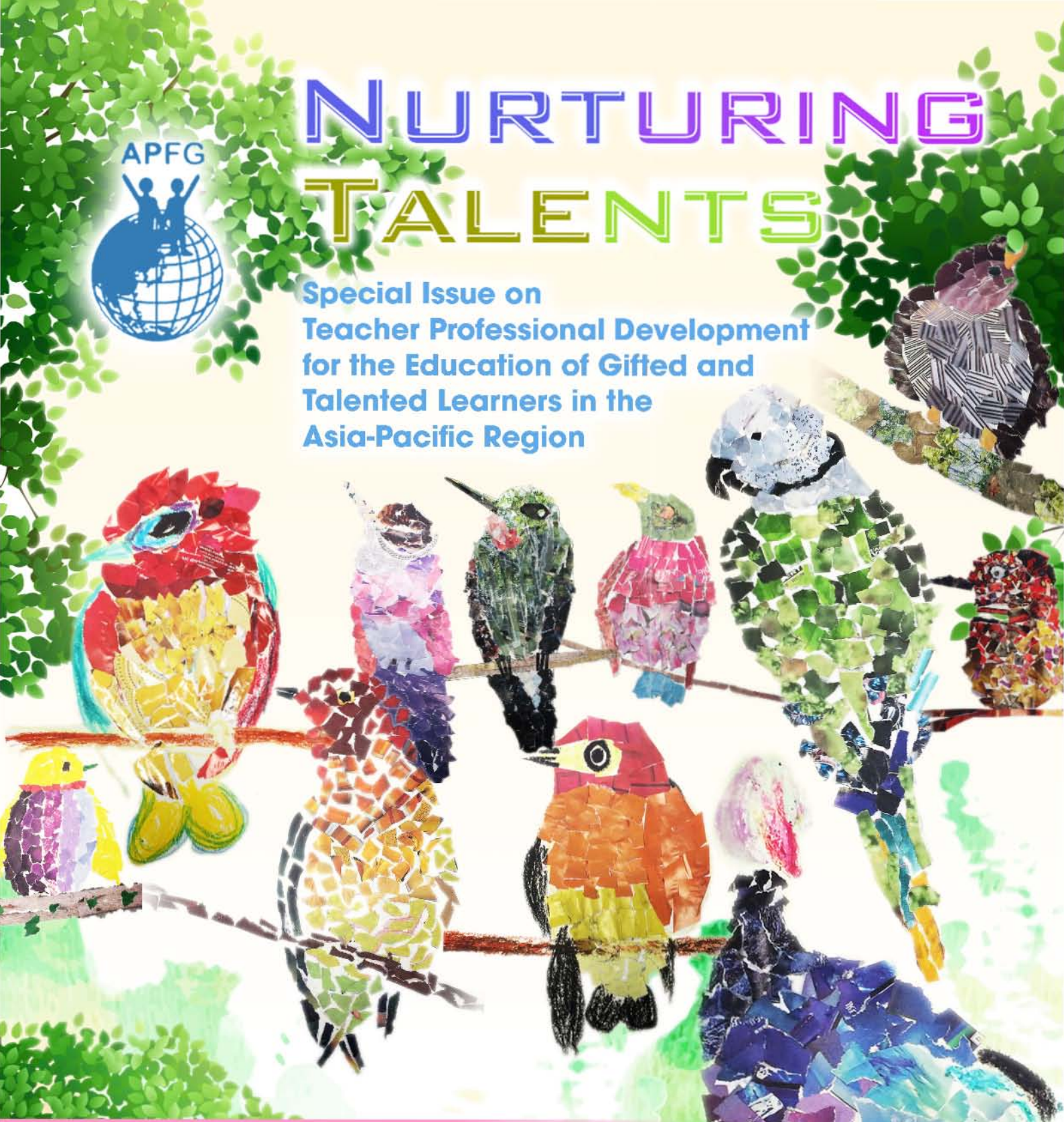
Nurturing Talents

Special Issue on Teacher Professional Development for the Education of Gifted and Talented Learners in the Asia-Pacific Region



APFG Newsletter 2024 Issue 11 No. 2

Editors:
Suzannie Leung, Serene Chan, Mantak Yuen

Published by
Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness
ISSN: 2709-4049

Nurturing Talents

APFG Newsletter 2024 Issue 11 No. 2

Published by Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness

Editors: Suzannie Leung, Serene Chan, and Mantak Yuen

Table of Contents

Kaveri Gifted Education and Research Center: Triumphs and Milestones (Academic Year - 2023-2024)

Dr. Devasena Desai
Associate Director
Kaveri Gifted Education and Research Center, Pune
Email: devasena.desai@kaveri.edu.in

This year marks 10 years of Kaveri Gifted Education and Research Center's existence. We witness KGERC's efforts gaining recognition through several national-level initiatives.

An invitation was received from the Indian Ministry of Education to review a draft of 'Dhruv- Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Programme' (PMILP)—which stated programs to nurture talent in mathematics, science, performing arts, and sports; this project was a feather in our cap. KGERC acted as a consultant to the policymakers and Mrs. Malati Kalmadi (Founder Director) joined the team in New Delhi as an active contributor among a group of about 15 experts from the field of gifted education across the country.

KGERC was also invited by National Council for Educational Research and Training's (NCERT) regional division R.I.E in Bhopal to consult on the revision of the Global Citizenship Education Handbook. This is certainly a clear indication of the impact we have had at national level.

We are currently associated with Prof. Dr. János Győri, from Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Institute of Intercultural Psychology and Education, Hungary for a research project on 'shadow education and its impact,' associated with Dr. Madhuri Chittewar of Junior college.

KAVERI GROUP OF INSTITUTES | Kaveri Gifted Education and Research Center (KGERC)

www.kaveri.edu.in/kgerc

Kaveri Gifted Education and Research Center: Triumphs and Milestones (Academic Year - 2023-2024)

Research

The KGERC team presented two papers at the Annual Virtual Conference organized by World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC) in August 2023. *The first paper, titled "The Kaveri Gifted Nurturing Model - elicited from the Panchakosh,"* addressed the holistic nurturing of gifted individuals. The second paper was on the topic of *"Parental concerns of highly gifted children in India: An indicator for parental awareness and training"*.

It can also be reported that KGERC plans to publish the *Kaveri Gifted* Observation Scale for early identification of pre-primary and primary school students. This scale will aid teachers in identifying gifted students, monitoring their progress, and providing them with appropriate enrichment activities.

Programs and Services for Gifted and Talented

We have been awarded the 'Born to Shine' project, which is funded by Zee Entertainment Ltd. and Give India. Under this project we are nurturing and supporting families of 30 girls from 11 states and 3 Union Territories across India who show talent in specific areas of performing arts, such as classical or folk dance and music. Under this ongoing 2-year project we have made in-person visits to 15 of these families, conducted an overnight camp, and developed profiles to understand the girls' talent development needs and psycho-social well-being.

KGERC collaborated with expert performers and teachers in varied areas of performing arts (music, theatre, art, dance) and mathematics with a vision of establishing a 'talent hub' in schools. The insights shared by these experts can be implemented in the schools such that young talent can be identified and nurtured in collaboration with the parents.

The Parent Support Group (PSG), which is a local community initiative for parents of gifted children aged 5 to 20, was initiated last year and is flourishing, with groups now active in two locations in the city. The PSG has also enabled parent-led-initiatives where gifted children across age groups meet and participate in activities. This has helped to develop a stronger voice of the parents such that they can advocate more effectively for the needs of their children in schools and in the community at large.

Kaveri Gifted Education and Research Center: Triumphs and Milestones (Academic Year - 2023-2024)

Training, Outreach and Advocacy

KGERC has been offering a hybrid certificate course in gifted education, for which educators, psychologists and parents can participate from across India. This year we even had a participant from the U.A.E. who needed to equip herself with relevant strategies for gifted students in her classroom.

An indication of the growing influence of KGERC is that we were invited by international and national forums (and by respected colleges in India) to raise awareness of giftedness and to advocate for the gifted individuals' needs.

Dr. Desai visited the European Talent Support Network (ETSN) in Hungary this year where she was invited to share the remarkable journey of KGERC since its establishment in 2014. Here is the link to the KGERC journey video: https://youtu.be/TU7wUiXOT4Q?si=jSHdSSFZQyPN1tKB

We continue to develop online resources including podcasts, youtube videos, newsletters and other content which is accessible to all through online platforms. This will surely enable more parents to gain knowledge and understanding about giftedness and have access to support and resources when required.

Celebrating 10 years of KGERC!

To mark our 10th year, we are happy to announce an international conference exclusively for parents, educators and researchers in the field of gifted education across India. The conference will be organized by the Kaveri College of Science, Arts and Commerce on **18th and 19th October** 2024 with the theme- ***'Illuminate India: Creating connections among gifted education stakeholders'.*** Hoping to initiate more dialogue among Indian educators and enable parents to be stronger advocates such that we are able to help gifted children achieve their full potential.

International Conference on Gifted Education (ICGE) 2024 Brochure 24 April-1.pdf

Teacher Training and Professional Development Policies and Practices in Hong Kong China, with Particular Reference to Guidelines on Enhancing Gifted Learners' Wellbeing

Professor Mantak Yuen PhD
Laboratory and Program for Creativity and Talent Development
Centre for Advancement in Inclusive and Special Education
Faculty of Education
University of Hong Kong
Email: mtyuen@hku.hk

International Symposium Kagawa University 2023 Dec 10 Sunday

Teacher training and professional development policies

Appropriate education of gifted learners has always been a crucial aspect of fostering their personal development and a bright and innovative future. In Hong Kong China, significant efforts have been made to develop and implement teacher training and in-service professional development policies and practices aimed at supporting gifted learners in schools. Teachers are responsible for supporting gifted learners in regular classrooms and also for nominating gifted learners for school-based and out-of-school programs and activities. Gifted education coordinators and staff development teams collaborate to organize professional development workshops for teachers.

The Hong Kong SAR Education Bureau (EDB) has established a Gifted Education Section, which offers Professional Development Programs for Gifted Education Coordinators and subject teachers. These programs focus on a Targeted, Evidence-based, Practical, Adaptable, and Sustainable approach (TE-PAS).

In addition to the efforts by the Hong Kong SAR Education Bureau, the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education (HKAGE) organizes annual Hotung Lectures, biannual Gifted Education Teacher Conferences, and thematic talks and workshops. Universities in Hong Kong also contribute to the development of pre-service teacher preparation, in-service teacher professional development, school-university partnership projects, and advanced degree programs focused on gifted education and talent development.

Despite the progress made in this area, there is still scope for improvement. More collaborations among HKAGE, EDB Gifted Education Section, non-government organizations, private businesses, and universities could strengthen professional development programs, in-service programs, school networks, and conferences.

School-based support for gifted and talented learners: Three-Tier Implementation Model

The Education Bureau recommends adopting a Three-Tier Intervention Model to effectively support gifted and talented students. This comprehensive approach comprises three levels:

1. Level 1 - School-based whole-class teaching: This level emphasizes the incorporation of high order thinking skills, creativity, and personal-social competencies into the curriculum for all students. This level also includes differentiation for outstanding performers and talent searches for Level 2 and Level 3 programs.

2. Level 2 - School-based pull-out programs: These programs cater to students with specific talents and/or outstanding performance, providing them with focused learning opportunities.

3. Level 3 - Off-school support: This level offers specialized assistance for exceptionally gifted learners, helping them reach their full potential. Options at Level 3 include off-campus talent development programs, and the opportunity for using mentors with particular expertise.

This comprehensive approach also comprises the following three core elements in gifted education (Hong Kong SAR, EDB, 2022):

1. Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOT)
2. Creativity
3. Personal-Social Competencies (Social Emotional Learning SEL)

These core elements are seamlessly integrated into the whole-school curriculum, ensuring that gifted and talented students receive the support and guidance they need to excel academically and personally (Yuen, 2023).

Guidelines for supporting gifted learners' well-being

In addition, guidelines to ensure the wellbeing of gifted learners, focusing on fostering a supportive environment and addressing their unique needs have been developed (Yuen et al., 2024). The ten recommendations in the guidelines are:

1. *Environment*. Provide a supportive, well-resourced, and nurturing environment that fosters the development of the learner's talents and abilities.

2. *Communication*. Encourage open communication between teachers and students, and promote active listening to help a learner feel heard, understood, and able to ask questions.

3. *Positive Self-esteem*. Foster a student's positive self-esteem, self-awareness, and autonomy by celebrating the learner's achievements and encouraging the individual to pursue their passions.

4. *Balanced Lifestyle*. Help the learner develop a balanced lifestyle by encouraging physical activity, healthy eating habits, mindfulness, and healthy sleep habits.

5. *Life Outside of School*. Encourage the learner to pursue their interests and passions outside of school through extracurricular activities, hobbies, and membership in community groups.

6. *Interaction with Other Gifted Learners*. Provide opportunities for the learner to interact with other gifted learners to create a sense of community and provide mutual support.

7. *Challenges*. Encourage the learner to embrace intellectual, social and creative challenges and to take risks in these three domains, providing support and guidance as necessary.

8. *Self-Directed Learning*. Provide opportunities for the learner to engage in independent learning and self-directed projects.

9. *Growth Mindset*. Foster a growth mindset in the learner by encouraging them to embrace challenges, learn from failure, and persist in the face of obstacles.

10. *Social Connectedness*. Encourage the learner to develop and maintain positive relationships with peers, family, teachers, and other supportive adults.

There is also a need for comprehensive guidelines on identifying and supporting gifted learners at any developmental stage, ensuring that their unique needs are met. Professional development for teachers is crucial, including coverage of best practices to foster gifted students' wellbeing. By providing educators with the necessary tools and resources, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for gifted learners to thrive.

References

Yuen, M., Chan, S., Zhang, J., & Datu, J. A. D. (2024). Student well-being. In J.Y.Jung, M. Yuen, & C.C Kuo (Eds.). *Gifted education guidelines: Suggestions for supporting gifted students' development*. (pp.71-82). Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness.

RECIPIENTS OF 2020-2024

NURTURING TALENTS RECOGNITION AWARDS

The editors have meticulously reviewed the articles published in the Nurturing Talents APFG Newsletter in 2020-2024 and have selected the following pieces for the Nurturing Talents Recognition Awards due to their innovative content and profound depth.

[2020 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] Teaching Gifted Students in Queensland, Australia: Embedding Professional Development into Practice

Michelle Ronksley-Pavia PhD
Professional Experience & Special Needs Lecturer,
Griffith University
Sandra Odger, Indooroopilly State High School
Email: m.ronksley-pavia@griffith.edu.au , sodge7@eq.edu.au

Introduction

It recently dawned on the second named author of this article, how many new and in-service teachers do not really understand the characteristics and needs of gifted leaners. This realization happened during a recent enrolment interview for a gifted child entering high school in Queensland. Australia. As a teacher in a secondary school, the second author had just finished her usual preamble to parents about how 'the school's main focus is to keep learners switched on rather than criticize them for not always achieving high marks [and] we know that gifted students learn at a faster rate, so for them staying motivated and enthusiastic about learning is the most important thing.' The father and mother exchanged glances and smiled. They explained that keeping their son motivated was all they had ever wanted. Although their son had an IQ above 145, he was not necessarily a high-achiever in every subject area; and in other schools they had been told that because every single box in the learning 'statement of achievement' had not been ticked, their son was not really 'gifted'. They were saddened that although their son's teachers had been enthusiastic and passionate educators, they did not understand the idiosyncrasies that went with being gifted.

Within the Australian education system, gifted education is not a top priority, although some states do make more provision than others. Australia has long adhered to what is termed the 'tall poppy syndrome'...meaning that highflyers need to be 'cut down to size'. "Individuals who blossom ahead of their chronological peers are not encouraged to bloom but held back until all can bloom together" (Robinson, 1992, p.206). The desire to achieve fairness in all things (particularly in schooling), can unfortunately result in failing to nurture individual potential and talent so that everyone is 'equal'. In Australian culture, gifted education that provides acceleration and extension for some students is sometimes viewed as elitist, because it is seen to contradict the Australian value of 'a fair go for all' (Ronksley-Pavia, Grootenboer & Pendergast, 2019).

The conception of giftedness accepted in the six Australian states and two territories is underpinned by Gagne's Developmental Model of Giftedness (DMGT) (2012). This model has influenced how giftedness is represented in the Australian National Curriculum. Gagne's definitions for 'giftedness' (related to a student's potential) and 'talent' (related to achievement and actualization of potential) are used by education departments across the country. Gagne's definitions are:

- Giftedness designates the possession of outstanding natural abilities in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places an individual at among the top 10% of age peers;
- talent designates outstanding mastery of systematically developed abilities (knowledge and skills) in at least one field of human activity, to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of age peers.

[2020 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] Teaching Gifted Students in Queensland, Australia: Embedding Professional Development into Practice

The Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2020a) states that gifted learners should be catered for by teachers through instructional differentiation that adapts curriculum content, objectives, teaching method and resources to take account of learners' ability and readiness, interests, and rate of learning. Instructional differentiation is thus at the core of personalizing learning for gifted students (Ronksley-Pavia, 2019). Differentiation is, of course, the approach needed to cater for the diverse range of learning aptitude present in today's inclusive classrooms. However, the application of these principles and practices are much more nuanced and complex when working with gifted and talented students in schools. The Australian Curriculum student diversity statement, Meeting the Needs of Gifted and Talented Students (ACARA, 2020b) states that gifted and talented students are themselves a diverse group, with very different strengths, interests, and levels of motivation. The statement primarily focuses on Gagne's model, suggesting that schools should identify students' who are gifted and provide opportunities for them to develop their talents.

Yet, we must ask, is this provision happening? In some schools, it certainly is. For example, special state high schools in Queensland are accepting students who meet specific criteria – with the aim of enabling 'like minds' to learn together. Unfortunately, these special enrolments are not open for all gifted learners, and selective entry via an exam emphasizes the focus on proven talent (achievement), rather than on giftedness (potential). The Queensland Department of Education (DoE) has three 'top-performing' state high schools (called Queensland Academies), that offer selective competitive entry for highly-capable students. Enrolled students complete the International Baccalaureate Diploma program in their senior years, while students attending schools in the rest of the state complete a different final year qualification. The three academies offer specialist areas at each campus: Academy for Health Sciences (Years 10-12), Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology (Years 7-12), Creative Industries Academy (Years 10-12).

However, despite the advent of selective entry high schools such as the Academies, there is still a huge need to equip teachers in all other mainstream schools to support their gifted students in developing their talents. Of the 12 universities in Queensland offering initial teacher education courses, only three offer electives in gifted education. In terms of opportunities to learn about supporting and understanding gifted students in Australian classroom, formal programs of education are severely limited. In this respect, there is an urgent need to improve pre-service and in-service teacher education to give greater attention to practical strategies that all teachers can employ to supporting the development of gifted students.

In Queensland, pre-service teachers do not have any compulsory courses in gifted education throughout their degree program. All universities in Queensland should require their education students to undertake compulsory courses in supporting students with all types of special needs through differentiated instruction. The courses typically offered at the moment in some universities do not address gifted education but focus more on inclusive education in terms of students with disabilities. Some courses even neglect the fact that gifted students may also have disabilities (e.g. physical) and learning disabilities (e.g. dyslexia which may affect evidence of reading and writing ability) that characterizes them as 'twice-exceptional'.

[2020 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] Teaching Gifted Students in Queensland, Australia: Embedding Professional Development into Practice

The Queensland Department of Education outlines the requirements for curriculum provision for gifted and talented students in the P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework (DoE, 2020b). Gifted and talented students are also captured in the Inclusive Education Policy (DoE, 2018), which recommends that teaching and learning strategies be adjusted to meet students' individual needs. We have no doubt that our talented and passionate teachers work very hard at this... but outside the university course or elective they are seldom provided with opportunities to learn firsthand about how to implement these practices.

A separate Curriculum Provision for Gifted and Talented Students (DoE, 2020a) included the Department's definition of gifted and talented (using Gagne's model), covering identification, curriculum provision, documentation, reporting to parents, characteristics, and acceleration practices. These practices all need adequate teacher training to support their implementation and ongoing application at school level. Implementation also needs strong school leadership with appropriate knowledge, understanding and willingness to advocate for gifted students and classroom. This is not an issue specific to Queensland and persists as a concern across the country, due to the limitation in initial teacher education courses and in ongoing professional development.

A big event in Queensland for teachers interested in gifted and talented learners is the annual Queensland Association for Gifted and Talented Children in two-day conference, but attendance at this event is at the discretion of each school principal. Apart from this, there are occasional professional development workshops on offer, but there is no guarantee that the person running the session is actually trained and experienced in the gifted and talented field. In 2019, Griffith University's Gifted Education Symposium (McIntyre, 2019) attracted over 50 school leaders and teachers from across Queensland's east coast, offering a welcome opportunity for educators to come together and learn about and share their experiences about pedagogies and practices for supporting gifted students. Often, these types of sessions are the most readily accessible... and arguable the best for teachers. Also accessible for professional development are the online forums offered by a few noteworthy groups that share information and build capacity. These can be readily accessed by teachers and usually provide timely responses to issues and can act as a platform for sharing best practice across schools and regions. The majority of the time, professional development happens when passionate teachers identify a need and actively seek these groups or develop their own opportunities through collaborative groups of professional practice across schools. This is often undertaken in teachers' own time and at their own expense.

When one talks to gifted learners, they will often tell you that they hve had good teachers and not so good ones. When asked what the difference is, most will say, "they kept me interested," or "they understood me." This is likely the same answer that the majority of learners would offer. When one talks with teachers, many will say that they already implement differentiation practices and strategies to support their gifted students. Yet, the students frequently disagree. It is certainly true that differentiation is not easy for any teacher; it demands skill and creativity, as well as excellent classroom management. Differentiating for gifted students is particularly challenging because giftedness is complex and multifaceted. With no two gifted

learners being alike. In high school settings, teachers can have anywhere up to 125 students each year, making it challenging to get to know the abilities and potential of each individual. It is easy, for example, for a twice-exceptional student to go undetected and unsupported. This problem can be addressed to some extent by offering teachers more professional development opportunities presented by suitably qualified and experienced instructors. As Henderson and Jarvis (2016) remarked: "Without professional learning in gifted education, teachers are ill-equipped to understand, identify and provide for gifted students" (p.60). There needs to be an understanding that gifted and talented students are not all naturally high achievers and are not equally strong in all areas of performances. They need understanding and a sensitive approach.

References

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). (2020a). *The Australian Curriculum Student Diversity Statement*. Retrieved 20 May 2020 from http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/student-diversity/

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). (2020b). Student Diversity – *Meeting the Needs of Gifted and Talented Students*. Retrieved 20 May, 2020 from http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/student-diversity/meeting-the-needs-of-gifted-and-talented-students

Gagne, F. (2013). The DMGT: Changes within, beneath, and beyond. *Talent Development & Excellence, 5(1), 5-19*.

Henderson, L., & Jarvis, J. (2016). The gifted dimension of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers: Implications for professional learning. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education,* 41 (8), 60-83.

McIntyre, A. (2019). Inaugural gifted and talented symposium. *Griffith News*. Retrieved 20 May, 2020 from http://news.griffith.edu.au/2019/11/04/inaugural-gifted-and-talented-symposium/

Queensland Government Department of education (2018). *Inclusive Education Policy Statement*. Retrieved May 20, 2020 from http://education.qld.gov.au/student/inclusive-education/Documents/policy-statement -booklet.pdf

Queensland Government Department of education (2020a). *Curriculum Provision for Gifted and Talented Students*. Retrieved 20 May 2020 from http://education.qld.giv.au/curriculums/Documents/policy-gifted-talented.pdf

Queensland Government Department of education (2020b). P-12 *curriculum, assessment and reporting framework*. Retrieved 20 May 2020 from http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/Documents/p12-carf-framework.pdf

Robinson, M. (1992). A vision splendid: Gifted education in Australia. *Roeper Review,* 14, 206-208. Doi: 10.1080/02783199209553431

Ronksley-Pavia, M. (2019). Personalized Learning: Disability and gifted learners. In D. Pendergast & K.Main (Eds), *teaching Primary Years: Rethinking Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment* (pp.422-442). Allen & Unwin: Crows Nest.

Ronksley-Pavia, M., Grotenboer, P., & D. Pendergast. (2019). Privileging the voices of twice-exceptional children: An exploration of lived experiences and stigma narratives. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted,* 42(1),4-34. Doi 10.1177/0162353218816384

[2021 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] Social and emotional wellbeing of high-ability students in India during the COVID-19 pandemic: Gender differences

Anyesha Mishra
Jnana Prabodhini's Institute of Psychology, Pune, India
Email: anyesha.mishra@gmail.com

Dr. Paromita Roy
Jagadis Bose National Science Talent Search, Kolkata, India
Email: paromitar@gmail.com

Anyesha Mishra

Paromita Roy

In almost all parts of the world, the devastating Covid-19 pandemic has greatly impacted students who are struggling with education and mental wellbeing during this period. Uncertainty looms over the future of millions of students, because many education institutions shut down intermittently, and academic calendars have gone haywire. In developing countries, the pandemic has exacerbated an achievement gap between the rich and the poor, between the majority and the minority, between males and females, and between high and low ability students. India, a nation with nearly 25% of its population younger than 30 years, is facing a crisis of unknown proportions.

During the pandemic, isolation and social distancing are strategies introduced to protect physical health—but their impact on mental health can be detrimental. According to Santini et al. (2020), social connection is an evolutionary characteristic of humans that relates to survival, while isolation appears to increase vulnerability to depressive symptoms. Similarly, Amend et al. (2020) say that social distancing, staying at home, and online schooling all tend to increase anxiety in children of high ability, because these changes to normal life patterns leave them with intense feelings of fear for their family and themselves. This is despite the fact that they can easily comprehend virus-related factual information.

[2021 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] Social and emotional wellbeing of high-ability students in India during the COVID-19 pandemic: Gender differences

It is reported that teenagers and adolescents tend to be more prone than adults to suffer psychologically to negative effects of stress, and to display more vulnerability (Zhang et al., 2020). It also seems that anxiety may lead children and adolescents of high ability to avoid sharing their worries as a way to protect others (Dalton et al., 2020). Their effort to confront these feelings alone can result in intensification of emotions, with negative results such as unusual behaviour, eating and sleep disturbances, anger, withdrawal, depression, and excessive worrying about the health of others (Amend et al., 2020; Boonstra, 2020).

Under these stressful conditions, it is relevant to wonder if males and females react differently. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), psychological distress generally increases during crises, with depressive symptoms being more common among women than men. Similarly, a study by Moghe et al. (2021) found that female students appear to be more prone than male students to psychological issues such as feelings of uncertainty and helplessness about health and the future. Male students appear more likely to exhibit an increase in need for solitude, withdrawal, and self-harm.

This article highlights challenges faced by 472 male and 206 female science students of high-ability in India. Students came from all socio-economic levels and across urban to rural areas. They were in the 17 to 20 years age range, identified by India's talent search organization Jagadis Bose National Science Talent Search, Kolkata, India. The students responded to an online survey in May and June 2020, amidst a strict lockdown in India due to the pandemic. The survey was designed to provide information on the effect of the pandemic and lockdown on students' lives.

Participants in the survey were asked to rate the degree of financial, academic, and psychological suffering, taking into account the possible factors or issues listed below:

a. uncertainty about future, domestic violence, financial crisis, family troubles, health worries, isolation from peers, disrupted schedule at home, inability to concentrate
b. manifestations like worry, anxiety, depression, anger, confusion, resignation, hope, alternative planning, frustration, withdrawal, disrupted sleep and eating patterns, humanitarian involvement, and pursuit of a hobby.

A chi-square analysis was performed on collected data to help reveal any gender differences in academic, financial, and psychological suffering, and their causes and manifestations. Results suggested a significant gender difference in academic and psychological suffering, with females experiencing these sufferings more than males. Gender differences were also seen in perception of uncertainty about the future and worrying about health, with females reporting these causes of suffering more than males. A similar pattern emerged in manifestation of anxiety, implying that females were more affected by anxiety over the pandemic than males. Males however, surpassed their female counterparts in manifestations of confusion and loss of appetite.

Factors that particularly increased anxiety for females were uncertainty of the future, family troubles, domestic violence, and inability to concentrate, while males were seen to be more hopeful than females when addressing these same factors. Interestingly, even though females responded more strongly to anxiety, worry and depression, they were seen to be more helpful towards others.

The results obtained were not unexpected, considering that anxiety and unpredictability have become the "new normal" in life in many countries. For males, who thrive on agency, the pandemic has tended to render them powerless, and they are struggling to achieve intended goals through different actions. Yet, this agency that they value and have cultivated throughout their lives seems to have kept them more hopeful and optimistic than females.

For females, reduced social contact and being unable to explore alternate avenues during the pandemic, has led to increased anxiety, feelings of loss, isolation, and depression. Also, most young girls aged 17-23 years in India, face stereotypical conflicts related for example to being compelled to take lifelong decisions about marriage and career. The effects of the pandemic on social and family life have strengthened these stereotypes, with millions of girls from low-income families defunded from pursuing their education. This outcome was corroborated by several respondents in this study.

The conclusion from this study in India is that both young men and women of high ability are undergoing high levels of negative emotions due to the isolating effects of Covid-19 and are desperate to find solutions to deal with this crisis. They have been left feeling compromised in terms of developing their talent and achieving their academic targets. A year after this survey was conducted, the situation in India has worsened exponentially, with truly alarming daily rates of infection and death, and it is a matter of extreme concern that many young adolescents in India stand at the precipice of a mental health pandemic.

References

Amend, E. R., Koehler, J., Peters, M.P., Joerg, M., Nilles, K. (2020). *Supporting your gifted child during COVID-19*. National Association for Gifted Children.

Boonstra, K. (2020). *COVID-19 and Anxiety in Gifted Children*. National Association for Gifted Children.

Dalton, L., Rapa, E., and Stein, A. (2020). Protecting the psychological health of children through effective communication about COVID-19. *Lancet Child Adolescent Health, 4,* 346–347.

Moghe, K. & Kotecha, D, & Patil, M. (2021). COVID-19 and Mental Health: A Study of its Impact on Students. *medRxiv*.

Santini, Z., Jose, P., York Cornwell, E., Koyanagi, A., Nielsen, L., & Hinrichsen, C. (2020). Social disconnectedness, perceived isolation, and symptoms of depression and anxiety among older Americans (NSHAP): A longitudinal mediation analysis. *Lancet Public Health, 5,* 62–70.

WHO (World Health Organization) (2020). *Mental health in emergencies*. 11 Jun 2019 [cited 20 Jul 2020]. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-in-emergencies

Zhang, C., Ye, M., Fu, Y., Yang, M., Luo, F., Yuan, J. & Tao, Q. (2020). The psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teenagers in China. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 67*(6), 747-755.

Acknowledgments:

The authors wish to thank Jagadis Bose National Science Talent Search, Kolkata, India and the survey respondents.

[2022 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] Global Principles for Professional Learning in Gifted Education

Dr. Eleonoor van Gerven
Secretary, Executive Committee
World Council for Gifted and Talented Children
Email: eleonoorvangerven@slimeducatief.nl

Every year, all over the world, conferences on gifted education take place. Some initiatives aim for an international audience while others focus on a local audience. These conferences are well attended with contributions varying from a strong focus on educational research and individual case studies to an emphasis on educational (best) practices. The wide variety in topics and attendees makes evident a growing demand for information about gifted education. Yet, educators worldwide still receive relatively little input on practical pedagogical-didactical strategies for educating gifted or highly-able learners. The locally available information differs per country and depends on local politics and strategic decisions about the position of gifted education (WCGTC, 2021). This situation motivated the executive committee of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC) to create a global committee that featured 24 educator experts from 19 countries to develop ten overarching principles for professional learning in gifted education. The WCGTC wants to contribute to the global optimization of professional learning in gifted education by developing these ten overarching principles

A brief history

A call was sent to members of WCGTC to express their interest in participating on this committee (November 2019). Finally, a committee of more than 20 members was appointed, chaired by Dr. Norma Hafenstein. Committee members first provided information about gifted education in their respective countries, and then explained how knowledge in gifted education is embedded in their pre- and post-service teacher education programs in their countriy. In the next stage, committee members joined virtual focus groups to provide constructive feedback on the first drafts of the document. A writing team produced a revised version that was presented to the WCGTC executive committee. After their feedback was processed, the paper was ready for its release. The Global Principles for Professional Learning in Gifted Education were released at the 2021 Virtual WCGTC World Conference.

Respecting regional differences

Developing overarching principles proved to be complex, since school education, teacher education, and professional learning differ by country. For example, countries have different perspectives on what should be part of teacher preparation in general and what might be part of on-going and in-service professional learning for educators.

Perspectives on giftedness differ as well. In some countries, the word gifted is not used at all—instead, terms including 'highly able' or 'able learners' are used. In those countries, using the word "gifted" might even be misunderstood and counterproductive. It also became clear that not all countries place gifted education high on the agenda, depending on their socio-cultural, political, and economic differences. It was also evident that gifted education is not necessarily seen as different or distinct from education in general in all countries. In some countries, seeing gifted education as distinct might even be perceived as contradictory to the inclusive approach that their governments prioritize.

Hence, in the way the ten principles are stipulated, WCGTC has aimed to provide ample opportunities for each country to interpret the principles to match their own philosophies and respect local values within their unique socio-cultural, economic, and political context.

The document and a poster version can be downloaded from the WCGTC website: https://world-gifted.org/gp-professional-learning. You may also request from the website for hard copies to be mailed.

Global Principles for Professional Learning in Gifted Education

Global Principle 1: Tiered Content

Comprehensive professional learning programs recognize that all educators work with gifted students, so all educators need some degree of professional preparation to support the education and growth of gifted children, although the amount and type of content may vary according to each educator's role.

Global Principle 2: Evidence-Based

A quality professional learning program is based on best-practice and research, including the ways in which gifted students are uniquely different from other students as a core rationale for differentiated services.

Global Principle 3: Holistic

Professional learning in gifted education should address the whole child, including academic, social, and emotional needs.

Global Principle 4: Broad

A thorough professional learning program includes information about different levels of giftedness, different forms of giftedness, varied methods of identification, different program models, and options for curriculum and instruction.

Global Principle 5: Equitable

Professional learning programs in gifted education should address the needs of students from different racial, cultural, ethnic and indigenous groups; genders; sexual orientations; and socio-economic statuses. Recruiting and retaining educators from representative diverse backgrounds should be a priority.

Global Principle 6: Comprehensive

Many school personnel affect the lives of gifted children, directly or indirectly. A plan for professional learning in gifted education must therefore include provisions for educating administrators, counselors, psychologists, special educators, and others about the needs of gifted students.

Global Principle 7: Integral
Professional learning should present gifted education in the context of an entire school program, emphasizing that gifted students are the responsibility of the whole school community and not just the educators charged with specific responsibilities for serving gifted students.

Global Principle 8: Ongoing
A professional learning plan in gifted education should provide ongoing opportunities to refine and extend existing knowledge and skills through in-service programs and other professional learning experiences throughout a career.

Global Principle 9: Sustainable
Professional learning in gifted education should be built into the educational policy of the state, region, province and/or country. Programs should be monitored regularly, and accountability systems should be in place. Collaboration between all stakeholders–policymakers, school authorities, community members, higher education faculty, and others–is actively encouraged.

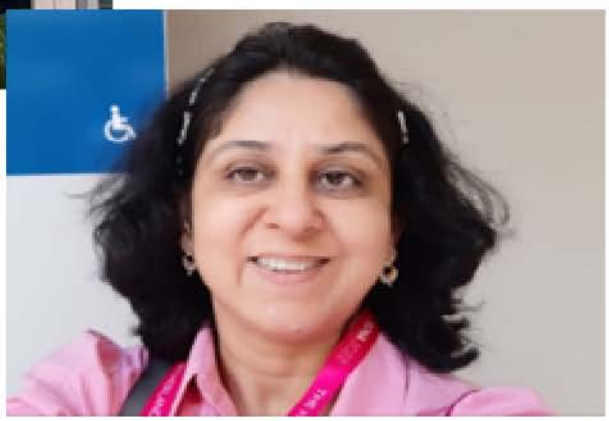
Global Principle 10: Empowering
Professional learning in gifted education should prepare educators to be effective supporters, promoting gifted students and the services they require.

Final Note
The WCGTC Global Principles guideline invites educational leaders, education authorities, and policymakers—whether presenting an international perspective or a view from a specific country or state—to invest in professional learning to benefit gifted education. The principles are interdependent, interrelated, and indivisible. The starting point depends on the educational policies and practices for gifted learners in a specific country/state. Education authorities and policymakers may adopt the WCGTC guideline to mandate the inclusion of gifted education in teacher education programs at national, regional, and global levels.

Reference
World Council for Gifted and Talented Children. (2021). *Global principles for professional learning in education.* https://world-gifted.org/professional-learning-global-principles.pdf

[2023 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] Indian conception of giftedness and a nurturance program for gifted students

Jyoti Sharma PhD
Professor in Education, Cluster Innovation Centre,
University of Delhi
Email: jsharma@cic.du.ac.in



The recently launched National Policy on Education 2020 in India is built upon principles of equity, accessibility and inclusion, with values derived from the ancient Indian Knowledge System of Jnan, Pragyaa and Satya. The Indian education system today strives for the complete realization of self and human excellence, with emphasis on the 'panchakosha' concept of education development encompassing sharirik vikas, pranik vikas, manasik vikas, baudhhik vikas and chaitsik vikas. The concept of human excellence is not new to India. We can trace it to the sacred Hindu text 'Bhagwat Gita' or to the philosophy of Vivekananda, where education aims to nurture human potential and achieve excellence.

In the present context, India is the most populous country, and the youngest nation in the world, with a median age of 32.4 years (Neill, 2023). The number of school-going children from K-12 is 265.2 million (Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, 2021-22). The country has a vast potential to nurture talents into abilities and achievements.

The concept of 'gifted children' was not evident in the traditional Indian education system and policies, but was used for the first time in the current National Education Policy (NEP)-2020. The policy recommended:

> "There are innate talents in every student which must be discovered, nurtured, fostered, and developed. These talents may express themselves through varying interests, dispositions, and capacities. Students who show particularly strong interests and capacities in a given realm must be encouraged to pursue that realm beyond the general school curriculum. Teacher education will include methods for recognizing and fostering such student talents and interests." (NEP 2020; para 4.43, pp-19).

[2023 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] Indian conception of giftedness and a nurturance program for gifted students

Prior to NEP 2020, there had been a few talent identification programs, particularly in science. For example, a National Talent and Search Scheme (NTSS) had been operated since 1963 by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), a national-level autonomous organization under the Ministry of Education, Government of India. The scheme aims to identify and support academically talented students through scholarships and nurturance programs. Every year 2000 students studying in grade 10 are selected through a two-stage process. Similarly, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) under the Ministry of Science and Technology also identify bright and talented science students from grades 11 and 12 through a highly competitive scheme, Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana (KVPY). Navodaya Vidyalayas are schools for academically bright students from rural backgrounds.

Within the existing talent search schemes, the Office of Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India initiated a national-level project to identify and nurture gifted students in mathematics and science. The project (2010-19) was carried out in different locations and by three project teams to address the vast demographic divide of the country. The project successfully developed identification tools for urban, rural, and tribal populations (Kurup et al., 2015; Sharma, 2016). The research team at Cluster Innovation Centre, University of Delhi (https://cic.du.ac.in/) developed a university outreach program to mentor the identified gifted students. The mentoring program included weekend sessions, summer camps, block mentoring, and an interactive monthly newsletter provided to all identified students (Sharma & Bapat, 2015).

A dedicated team of university professors designed activities and research-based mentoring programs. Detailed learning profiles of participating students were prepared. WISC-IV intelligence test was also administered, and a correlation was calculated to validate the identification process. An activity kit was developed based on cognitive milestones to identify children in their early years (3-7 years). The learnings from the project provided valuable insights into policy-level support for gifted students in scholastic and co-scholastics domains. The Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Program DHRUV has been launched to identify and encourage gifted and talented students under the guidance of able mentors.

The country has desired physical and academic infrastructure and a logistic roadmap to lay down an inclusive and localized gifted identification and mentoring program. The challenge remains of operationalizing giftedness potential within the diverse demographic and educational population of school-going children. Teachers' sensitization and pedagogic skill development is also a challenge the country needs to address.

India has produced great scholars like Brahmagupta, Chanakya, Madhava, Patanjali, Panini amongst others who have contributed enormously to world knowledge in fields including mathematics, astronomy, architecture, yoga, and fine arts. We hope that the efforts to help and promote gifted students will enable the nurturance and preservation of such potential talents of tomorrow. Establishing mentoring networks and investing in high-quality research in gifted education will help gifted students and raise the education standards for all.

References

Department of School Education and Literacy. (2021-22). *Unified district information system for education*. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics-new/udise_21_22.pdf

Department of Science and Technology. (n.d.) *Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana*. https://dst.gov.in/scientific-programmes/scientific-engineering-research/kishore-vaigyanik-protsahan-yojana-kvpy

Kurup, A., Sharma, J., Basu, A. & Chandra, A. (2015). *Identification and mentoring gifted children Age 3 - 15 years (with special focus on Maths and Science)*. National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru. http://eprints.nias.res.in/938/1/R37-2016-Anitha-Kurup.pdf

Ministry of Education. (2020). *National education policy*. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

National Council of Educational Research and Training. (n.d.) https://ncert.nic.in/

Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti. (n.d.) https://navodaya.gov.in/nvs/en/Home1

Neill, A. O. (2023). *India: Average age of the population from 1950 to 2100*. https://www.statista.com/statistics/254469/median-age-of-the-population-in-india/

Sharma, J & Bapat, K. (2015). Mentoring young minds: Responding the needs of gifted students. International Journal of Science and Research, 4(5). 2891-2892.

Sharma, J. (2016). Developing context-specific processes to identify and mentor gifted children in India. *International Education and Research Journal,* 2(2), 18-23.

[2024 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition: Fostering Innovation and Empowering Gifted Youth

Dr Jiahong Zhang* & Professor Mantak Yuen**
Laboratory and Program for Creativity and Talent Development
Centre for Advancement in Inclusive and Special Education
Faculty of Education
University of Hong Kong
Email: zjh2021@hku.hk, mtyuen@hku.hk

* In this article, the authors have made equal contributions to the research and writing process.

**To prevent any potential conflicts of interest, Mantak Yuen recused himself from the selection process for the 2024 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award.

Introduction

One of the most promising areas of development for gifted youth today is the field of artificial intelligence (AI). With its potential to transform industries, improve lives, and solve complex global challenges, AI has become a key driver of innovation and progress.

Recognizing this immense potential, the University of Hong Kong's Common Core Program has initiated the Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Hackathon for Social Good Competition in September 2023, aimed at empowering talented youth to create AI-driven solutions for social and environmental issues. Five themes are considered —education and lifelong learning, social inequality and justice, sustainable development and climate action, public health and well-being, as well as diversity, equity and inclusion.

Overview of the GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition

The GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition is an interdisciplinary event designed to bring together talented students from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) computer science, engineering, design, business, education, medicine, and social sciences. The competition provides a platform for all undergraduate and postgraduate students to collaborate and develop innovative AI-driven solutions that address real-world challenges and contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

[2024 Nurturing Talents Recognition Award] GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition: Fostering Innovation and Empowering Gifted Youth

The competition has three stages:

1. Ideation and Team Formation: Students form interdisciplinary teams and brainstorm ideas for AI-driven solutions that address social and environmental issues related to the UN SDGs.
2. AI Training and Development: Teams receive guidance and resources to develop their ideas, including access to AI tools, datasets, and mentors with expertise in AI, design, and social impact.
3. Presentation and Evaluation: Teams present their AI-driven solutions to a panel of judges who evaluate the projects based on their innovation, feasibility, impact, and alignment with the UN SDGs.

The GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition is open to all students from the University of Hong Kong and partnering institutions, fostering a diverse and inclusive environment for innovation and collaboration. The competition encourages students to think critically and creatively about the potential applications of AI to address pressing global challenges.

By promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, the competition empowers participants to leverage their unique skills and perspectives to develop innovative solutions that may not have been possible within the confines of traditional academic disciplines. Moreover, the competition's emphasis on the UN SDGs helps to ensure that the AI-driven solutions developed by participants are aligned with global priorities and have the potential to generate meaningful social and environmental impact.

Empowering gifted youth

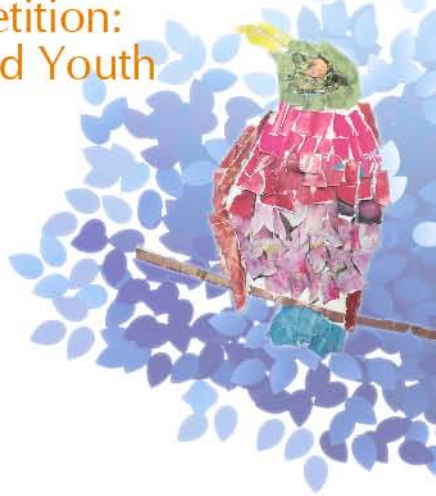
The GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition provides gifted students with an opportunity to apply their talents to real-world problems, gain hands-on experience with AI tools and techniques, and develop valuable skills in problem-solving, teamwork, and communication. By participating in the competition, students can connect with like-minded peers who share their passion for social innovation and AI. Moreover, they build confidence in their own abilities to make a positive and lasting impact on the world.

In addition, the competition helps to raise awareness concerning the potential of AI to address social and environmental challenges and inspire a new generation of AI innovators who are committed to using their talents for the greater good.

Success stories and future outlook

Since its inception, the GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition has attracted numerous talented participants and generated a range of innovative AI-driven solutions. Some notable projects include, but are not limited to: AI solution converting education materials for visually impaired students; AI app teaching Cantonese to English-speaking ethnic minorities; virtual teaching assistant aiding deaf students by facilitating speech comprehension; and a portable personal mental health recorder empowering individuals with ADHD.

As the competition continues to grow and evolve, it is expected to attract even more talented participants and generate increasingly sophisticated and impactful AI-driven solutions. By providing talented youth with a platform to develop their skills and apply their talents to pressing global challenges, the GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition is playing a crucial role in fostering innovation, empowering youth, and driving progress towards the UN SDGs.



Concluding remarks

The GenAI Hackathon for Social Good Competition is an inspiring example of how AI can be harnessed to create positive change and address pressing global issues. By fostering a spirit of innovation, collaboration, and social responsibility among talented youth, the competition is not only empowering the next generation of AI innovators but also paving the way for a more sustainable, equitable, and inclusive future. With its continued success, the competition is poised to make a lasting impact on both the development of artificial intelligence and the pursuit of social good in the Asia Pacific region and beyond.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to extend their gratitude to ChatGPT, an AI language model developed by OpenAI, for its invaluable assistance in the preparation of this article. The insights and information provided by ChatGPT have significantly contributed to the quality and comprehensiveness of the article, demonstrating the potential of AI to support and enhance human creativity and knowledge generation.

References

OpenAI. (2020). ChatGPT: A powerful tool for natural language understanding and generation. https://openai.com/research/chatgpt

The University of Hong Kong Common Core Program. (2021). Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Hackathon for Social Good Competition. https://commoncore.hku.hk/genai-hackathon-for-social-good-competition/

United Nations. (2015). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda

The Executive Committee 2022-2024

The Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness (APFG)
affiliated with The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

The APFG consists of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, the immediate past President and 2 more Delegates. The following Executive Committee Members were elected by the delegates on July 8, 2022 for a two-year term from 2022 to 2024:

President Professor Ching-Chih Kuo
National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan

Immediate Past President Dr. Usanee Anuruthwong
Association for Developing Human Potentials and Giftedness, Thailand

Vice-President Professor Mantak Yuen
The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong China

Secretary Dr. Quek Chwee Geok
Ministry of Education, Singapore

Treasurer Professor Kyungbin Park
Gachon University, South Korea

Executive Committee Member Professor Jae Yup Jared Jung
The University of New South Wales, Australia

Executive Committee Member Professor Manabu Sumida
Ehime University, Japan

APFG Delegates 2022 to 2024

Country/Region	Delegates
Australia	Jae Yup Jared Jung Victoria Poulos Rebecca Napier Amanda Harper
Canada	Andree Therrien
Hong Kong China	Mantak Yuen Ricci Fong Serene Chan Joe Tsui
India	Paromita Roy
Indonesia	Fitriania Lubis
Japan	Manabu Sumida Erkki T Lassila
South Korea	Kyungbin Park Ryu Jiyoung Jaeho Lee Kim, Jiseon
Singapore	Quek Chwee Geok Letchmi Ponnusamy
Taiwan	Ching Chich Kuo Hsiao-Ping Yu Tsai Ming-Fu Chien-Hong Yu
Thailand	Usanee Anuruthwong Apichart Pholprasert Arunee Viriyachitra Vararom Pachimsawat
Turkey	Ugur Sak Ibrahim Tasdemin Sule Gucyeter

The above delegates were approved on July 8, 2022 for a two-year term from 2022 to 2024.

Meetings and Conferences in Brief

18th Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness (APCG)

17-20 August 2024, Takamatsu, Japan
https://apcg-japan2024.org/

19th ECHA Conference

28-31 August, 2024,Thessaloniki, Greece
https://echa2024.gr/

26th WCGTC® World Conference

29 July – 2 August, 2025, Braga, Portugal
https://world-gifted.org/Conferences/wcgtc25/

Membership

If you are already a member we thank you for your support.
If your membership has expired (or is soon to expire) please remember to renew.
If you are not yet a member, we invite you to become part of APFG.
Membership is open to individuals who support the purpose of the APFG. An individual seeking membership will be accepted as a member upon submission of the required application and fees.

To apply for membership, please send the completed application form to **Dr. Quek Chwee Geok** (Quek_Chwee_Geok@moe.gov.sg), our secretary who will update memberships, and **Professor Kyungbin Park** (kbpark@gachon.ac.kr), our treasurer who will prepare the receipts to be issued when payment is made.

Kindly pay the membership fee at the APFG Conference. If you are unable to attend, you may ask a friend attending the conference to pay your membership fee on your behalf.

By joining or renewing your APFG membership, you will enjoy benefits such as:
- A biannual newsletter
- Opportunities to expand your expertise and broaden your horizons
- Preferential member rates for our biennial APFG conference, featuring keynote speeches, parallel presentations, and workshops
- A voice within the organization

We deeply appreciate your continued support and look forward to seeing you at the APFG conference.

Contacting APFG

President, **Professor Ching-Chih Kuo**
Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness
c/o Department of Special Education, National Taiwan Normal University
162, Heping East Road, Section 1, Taipei 10610, Taiwan
Email: kaykuo@ntnu.edu.tw

APFG website https://www.apfggiftedness.org/
APFG Email apfg2014gifted@gmail.com

Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks to the graphic designer, Suzannie Leung, and our contributors for this issue: Devasena Desai, Jiahong Zhang, and Mantak Yuen.

ASIA-PACIFIC FEDERATION ON GIFTEDNESS

APFG MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

First Name _____ Last Name/Surname _____
Preferred correspondence Address _____
City _____ Postal Code _____
State / Country / Region _____
Tel. (work) _____ Fax (work) _____
Email _____

Organization:

Organization _____

Position	Position	☐ Professor	☐ Assoc. Professor	☐ Assist. Professor
☐ Lecturer	☐ Lecturer	☐ Researcher	☐ Principal	☐ Teacher
☐ Administer	☐ Administer	☐ Coordinator	☐ Consultant	☐ Counselor
☐ Student	☐ Student	☐ Assistant	☐ Others: _____	

Membership: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

☐ 2 year- individual （USD 40.00） **2024–2026**
☐ 4 year- individual （USD 80.00） **2024–2028**

Signature of Applicant	Date

For Official Use Only

Received by	Date Received	Fees Received	Official Receipt No.
		US$	