



The Effects of the SENG Parent Education Model on Parents and Gifted Children

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is investigating effects of the SENG (Social Emotional Needs of Gifted Children) Parent Education Model on gifted children and their parents. The participants of this study were parents of 3rd, 4th and 5th grade gifted children attending Yasemin Karakaya Science and Art Center in Ankara, Turkey and the children themselves. The research design was pre-post test, experimental and control group design. There were 20 parents in each of the experimental and control groups and the training lasted 10 weeks. The results of the program were assessed by Hacettepe Emotional Adjustment Scale, and the Social Support Appraisal Scale. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test and Mann Whitney U Test were used to analyze the data. The results showed that the effects of the SENG Model on the emotional adjustment levels of gifted children, evaluated from their parents' perspective, are positive and statistically significant. However, no significant effects from the support program were identified in gifted children's perception of social support from their parents.

Keywords

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Introduction

The field of gifted children and their education, a recent focus of attention in our country, has started to be discussed by different circles and dealt with as a field of study with its various aspects. However, there are not sufficient studies focusing on the role of parents, one of the most important parameters of this field, towards understanding and satisfying the needs of children who undergo a different developmental process and resolving the challenges they encounter. Even though parents have a lot of different demands and needs with regard to understanding and supporting their children (Eriş, Seyfi and Hanoz, 2008; Kurtulmuş, 2010), the issue of parents has been one of the least-studied fields among research-based studies conducted on gifted children in our country (Metin et al. 2007). The deficiency in this matter was mentioned several times in the Education of the Gifted in Turkey and Practice Strategy Plan 2013-2017 of the Ministry of National Education. "Lack of a parent guidance program tailored for the gifted" has been argued to be an important weakness regarding the gifted in Turkey (MEB, 2013: 10, 12). Targets and indicators related to satisfying the needs of gifted children and their parents were presented in several sections of the strategy plan in order to fill this gap. For instance, "the importance of informing the parents about the characteristics and education of gifted individuals, and making them assume an active role in education of the gifted" was emphasized in Target 2.1.2.

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Studies intended for the education of the parents of gifted children are not sufficient in Turkey and it is clear that proper education of parents is necessary to ensure the happiness of both parents and gifted children (Akarsu, 2001; Ataman, 2004; Davaslıgil, 2004; Metin et al., 2007; Kurtulmuş, 2010). It is seen in the study conducted by Eriş, Seyfi and Hanoz (2008) on the parents of 31 gifted Turkish children coming from 23 parents, that parents report several needs such as selection of schools and the future of their children, how to make use of their children's potential, the challenges in their children's relationship with their teachers and the society, lack of education materials, unhealthy functioning of institutions, etc. In fact, complete solutions to this problem remain elusive not only in Turkey but also abroad. While parents of children with certain handicaps see extensive support and understanding from the society, parents of gifted children feel alone (Applebaum, 1998; Porter, 2005). It is hence clear that parents of gifted children who face such challenges need to be educated. It is well established that various parent education and counseling programs have been useful in improving family communication, conveying knowledge, and supporting the family. Nevertheless, the focus of all these well-known parent education programs covers primarily either normal children or children who have development retardation, as well as their parents. Such programs do not cover the special conditions experienced by gifted children and their parents (Applebaum, 1998). Consequently, parents of gifted children state that existing education programs do not satisfy their needs (Morawska and Sanders, 2009). Encountering various difficulties in raising their children, parents of gifted children need education and guidance groups that consist of similar parents who are more likely to understand them. Such groups also have the potential of raising the confidence of parents regarding the roles of parenthood, and making them notice that what they experience with their children are also experienced by other parents who also have gifted children, and that there are many common problems to which common solutions exist. Their attendance to different parent education sessions will help them overcome many of the difficulties they experience in performing their parental duties and enable them to feel sufficient in this respect (DeVries and Webb, 2007; Fornia and Frame, 2001; Moon, Kelly and Feldhusen, 1997; Porter, 2005; Silverman, 1993).

Both national and international literature in this field reveal very few parent education programs prepared specifically for the needs of the parents of gifted children. It can be seen that programs conducted abroad include those that focus only on the educational needs of gifted children themselves (Hertzog and Bennett, 2004), models that are still being created and are currently incomplete (Morawska and Sanders, 2009), studies that lasted for a very short time and did not evaluate the effects of the program (Applebaum, 1998; Conroy, 1987), or practices wherein many parenthood strategies were taught but a final evaluation was not conducted (Shaughnessy and Neely, 1987). In addition to education programs that seek to provide parents of gifted children with fundamental knowledge about being gifted (Conroy, 1987; Davis-Simons, 1995), there are also efforts to adapt education programs tailored for the general public to the parents of gifted children. However, these programs have not yet reached their predicted levels of success (Morawska and Sanders, 2009).

As far as Turkey is concerned, the issue of the education and counseling needed by gifted children and their parents is a relatively new field of research. A parent education/counseling method with proven benefits, prepared in a coherent and systematic manner specifically for the parents of gifted children, has not yet been implemented in our country. Examples of such programs one can encounter in this field usually consist of a single session, or only a few sessions of non-continuous education/conference, focusing on a limited set of issues and are offered in associations established for gifted children and their parents, some private schools and institutions within relevant universities where programs intended for gifted children are organized. There are also parent education activities organized by the individual efforts of school counselors working for the counseling centers in Science and Arts Centers. In a study conducted by Kurtulmuş (2010), which is the first scientific example in this area, the parent education activity conducted by meetings in person and providing information on a web page was found to have positive effects on the ability of the parents and their children in the experimental group to better perceive family relationships and on the characteristics of perfectionism in children.

Today, it has become necessary to prepare and practice education and counseling programs properly differentiated for the different needs of the parents of gifted children as soon as possible. Starting from this need and goal, this study aims to satisfy the needs of the parents of gifted Turkish children for information and support by using the "SENG Parent Education Model", which was developed specifically for the parents of gifted children and has been used abroad for a long time.

The SENG Education Model for the Parents of the Gifted

This program is intended for the parents of gifted children and has been used in many countries, primarily the United States, for 25 years. The primary purpose of the program is to understand the social-emotional needs of gifted children and satisfy these needs through a parent education program, based on the idea that parents are the first and the most important teachers of their children. SENG Parent Education groups aim to prevent social-emotional problems that may be experienced by gifted children before they emerge, and to provide parents with group-specific information that they may need in raising their children, thus reducing their related anxieties (DeVries and Webb, 2007). Further information about the content and functioning of the program is detailed in the "Method" section.

Based on the information mentioned above, the purpose of this study is to study the effects of using the "SENG Parent Education Model" on the thoughts of parents on the psychological adaptation level of their children and the level of social support that children perceive from their parents. The problem statement of this study based on its primary purpose can be expressed as follows: "Does a parent education program developed specifically for the parents of gifted children have any effect on the thoughts of parents regarding the psychological adaptation level of their children and the level of social support that children think that they receive from their parents?" It is expected that positive views of parents taking part in the education program regarding the psychological adaptation of their children would increase and the thoughts of children regarding the social support they get from their parents would improve as a result of the program.

Method

Population and Sampling

The population of this research includes 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students recognized as gifted, attending the Science and Art Centers (Bilsem) affiliated with Turkish Ministry of National Education, and their parents. The sampling group chosen to test the effects of the Parent Education Program developed to be applied to the parents of gifted children was formed using the "purposeful sampling method". Purposeful sampling is a non-randomized sampling approach that allows picking information-rich circumstances and conducting in-depth research (Balci, 2007; Büyüköztürk et al., 2008). The sampling group of the research was gathered from Yasemin Karakaya Science and Art Center located in Ankara. The reason why the sampling was gathered from this Center of Science and Arts was that, compared to other Science and Art Centers in Ankara, the number of students in this center provided a sufficient number of parents to also create a control group. The experiment group included 15 mothers (75%) and 5 fathers (25%), and the control group included 15 mothers (75%) and 5 fathers (25%). Among parents in the experiment group, 12,5 % were high school graduates, 57,5% were university graduates, 20% had a Master's degree, and 10% had a PhD. and a Master's degree. On the other hand, among parents in the control group, 20% were high school graduates, 62,5 % were university graduates, 10% had a Master's degree, and 5% had a PhD. and a Master's degree. 12 (60%) of children in both the experiment and control groups were male, and 8 (40%) of them were female. Ages of the children vary between 8 and 11 years and their grades range from 3rd grade to 5th grade.

Formation of the experimental and control groups

In forming the experiment and control groups for the study, parents were first informed by posters, leaflets and emails containing information on the content of parent education groups, dates and places of the education as well as conditions for participation. A list of volunteer parents was created following these announcements and notifications. Parents in this list were then assigned to experiment and control groups, making sure that all 24 parents in each group had a one-to-one match in the other

group on the basis of their educational background and the grades of their children attending Yasemin Karakaya Science and Art Center. Correspondence of the educational backgrounds of parents as well as the class grades of children among the groups were taken into consideration during the formation of experiment and control groups. The number of parents within each group was chosen as high as 24 in the beginning to compensate for potential loss of subjects that may occur during the experiment process.

Research Pattern

This study is designed in a semi-experimental pattern with a preliminary test, education and a final test applied to the experiment and control groups. The reason why a semi-experimental pattern was used, was that parents who took part in the experiment were volunteers and were not randomly assigned to the groups. In this study, volunteers were chosen among the parents of 3rd, 4th and 5th grade children attending Yasemin Karakaya Science and Art Center and assigned to the experiment and control groups ensuring a one-to-one match based on the educational backgrounds of parents and class grades of the children.

Data Gathering Instruments

Hacettepe Psychological Adaptation Scale (HRUÖ): Developed by Gökler and Öktem (1985), this scale consists of 32 items that inquire the psychological health of children. Each question has the choices of "None", "Little" and "Much". Scores are calculated by taking the sum of 0, 1, 2, which correspond to these three choices. Scoring 13 and more in the first 24 questions indicates a psychological adaptation problem. The first 12 questions survey "Neurotic Problems", and the next 12 survey "Behavioral Problems". There are 7 more questions under the last factor named "Other Problems". Questions with odd numbering indicate neurotic problems, and questions with even numbering indicate behavioral problems. Points up to the 25th item on the total scale are summed up. Scoring thirteen and above is interpreted as "it is possible to say that there is a psychological problem". The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was $r = 0,86$ for the whole of Hacettepe Psychological Adaptation Scale. In the analysis, Guttman Split-half reliability coefficient was 0.85, Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient was 0.87, first half alpha value was 0.78, second half alpha value was 0.69, and the correlation between two halves was 0.77. Total item correlations were above 0.20, which was found to be sufficiently high. Two halves that are made up of odd and even numbered items were consistent and their individual reliabilities were also found to be high. Very high internal consistency coefficients of the scale suggests that the scale is reliable to use (Sunal, 2002).

Social Support Appraisals Scale for Children (ÇSDÖ): Social Support Appraisals Scale for Children was developed to evaluate the perceptions of children regarding the support they get from their parents, friends (close friends and classmates) and teachers. The highest score of the scale, which consists of 41 items, is 205. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale is .93 (Gökler, 2007; 2008). The adaptation of the scale to children over the age of nine and adolescents was performed by Gökler (2007). Basic components were analyzed through the Varimax axis rotation method for the structural validity of the Turkish form. As a result, the items of the scale were collected under three factors that explain 40,22% of the total variance. The resulting factor structure is consistent with the original results of the scale, and the items are under the factors that they aim to measure as is the case in the original scale. Sub-scales are named 'Support from Friends', 'Support from Parents', and 'Support from Teacher'. The correlation between the total points from the scale and the Scale of Depression for Children was taken as a reference for determining the validity of the scale. A significant correlation in the negative direction was found between the points obtained from two scales ($r = -.62$; $p < 0.01$). Information related to the reliability of the scale was obtained through the Cronbach-alpha internal consistency coefficient, test-retest technique, two-half reliability and item-test correlation methods. The Cronbach-alpha internal consistency coefficient for the entire test was found to be .93. Even though all three sub-dimensions of the scale were implemented and the outcomes of these dimensions presented in the Findings section to avoid violating the integrity of the scale, the Discussion section includes only comments related to the parental sub-dimension as the primary focus of this study

The Content of the SENG Parent Education Program for the Gifted

In this research, the SENG Parent Education Model for the Gifted was considered to be adapted and implemented to the field of study for a variety of reasons including the fact that it has consistently and successfully been used abroad for many years, the specializations of the developers of the program in both scientific and practice regarding the gifted, as well as positive results from academic studies conducted abroad. The first author of this research became qualified to perform this educational program after participating in the SENG Education certificate program abroad, and then translated relevant materials and the program itself into Turkish. After the translation, the program was submitted to four specialists in the areas of Psychology, Psychological Counseling, Education of the Gifted, and Child Development for their opinions, and the program was given its final form based on their assessments. In the program, circumstances that gifted children are likely to experience in social-emotional and other developmental domains were addressed under ten different titles for a total of ten weeks. Each session lasted 1,5 hours. The main titles in the education program were "The Characteristics of Gifted Children; Key Subjects in the Communication between Gifted Children and their Parents; Motivation and Academic Failure in Gifted Children; Facilitating Discipline in Gifted Children and Teaching Them to Organize Themselves; Sensitivities; Perfection and Stress in Gifted Children; Idealization, Unhappiness and Depression in Gifted Children; Friends, Peers and Social Environment of Gifted Children; Gifted Children Who Have Siblings or Raised as the Only Child; Traditions and Uniqueness; Difficulties of Successful Parenthood in Gifted Children".

The Process of Implementing the SENG Parent Education Program for the Gifted

Sessions within the Parent Education Program for the Gifted were scheduled on Sundays to enable working parents to participate easily. As the Science and Arts Centers are closed on weekends, an alternative place in a central location, easily accessible by all participants was chosen. An educational environment was created, wherein the participating parents and the educator were seated in a U-shaped arrangement so that they could all comfortably see each other and actively participate in the discussions. The content of the 10-week program continued according to the original topics suggested by the SENG Model, also maintaining the same ordering. Instructions such as the purpose and time of the program and the rules to be followed were given and all participants were asked to sign the "Group Rules Agreement" that contained all these instructions. In addition, videos of each session were recorded with written permission from all participants.

In each session, the group counselor (first researcher) requested parents to share their knowledge related to the topic for that week, situations that they had encountered at home and in social environments, their common experiences and anxieties. The group counselor and the parents contributed to the process with their comments, suggestions and guidance. At the end of each session, the group counselor asked every mother and father to share their ideas and suggestions that they considered useful for the topic of discussion and that they can practice in their own lives. Again, at the end of each session, a homework that encouraged the parents to practice with their children things that they learned in the corresponding week's topic of discussion, at home, in the school or in social environments. The following session started with listening to the parents who wanted to share their experiences from completing the homework of the previous week and its results.

Some members had to leave the group for a variety of reasons (e.g. health issues, parent issues, assignment to a duty outside the province, etc.) before the end of the 10-week period was finished. In order to maintain equality among the groups, 20 parents from both the experiment and control groups were paired as closely as possible to each other, and were included in the evaluation. Only the parents who participated in at least 70% of all sessions were included in statistical analyses. This restriction was enforced as it was thought that the parents who took part in fewer than 7 sessions out of 10 would not be able to experience and express the true effects of the program. Parents who were below this threshold were allowed to participate in the sessions, but the forms they filled in were not included in statistical analyses.

Analysis of Data

Since the preliminary test scores from the experiment and control groups did not show a normal distribution for both scales, non-parametric tests were used in this study to analyze the data. First, the preliminary test scores that the parents got in Hacettepe Psychological Adaptation Scale (HRUÖ) and Social Support Appraisal Scale for Children (ÇSDÖ) were analyzed to understand whether the parents in the experiment and control groups are equivalent to each other. To this end, the Mann-Whitney U non-parametric test was used. This test is used to check whether scores obtained from two unrelated samples differ significantly from each other (Büyüköztürk, 2009). Then the Mann-Whitney U test was also used on the final test scores of the experiment and control groups for both scales in order to understand whether there was a difference between the final test scores of the experiment and control groups. Finally, the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was used to identify the significance of the difference between the preliminary and final test scores for the experiment group. The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test is useful for testing the significance of the difference between the scores of two related measurement sets. This test takes into consideration the difference scores of two measurement sets as well as their directions (Büyüköztürk, 2009). Even though only the results of the "Parents" sub-test are within the scope of this research, the results from all sub-tests of the "Social Support Appraisal Scale for Children" are provided in the Findings section in order to avoid violating the integrity of the scale.

Results

The findings of the research are presented in Tables 1 to 4.

Table 1. Pretest Results of the Mann-Whitney U Test for Parents in the Experimental and Control Groups from the "Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale" and "The Social Support Scale for the Assessment of Children"

Measure	Sub Test	Group	n	\bar{X}	SS	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
HRUÖ Pretest	Neurotic Problems	Experiment	20	3.8	3.2	18.6	372	162	.301
		Control	20	4.6	3.3	22.4	448		
	Behavioural Problems	Experiment	20	5.0	3.0	19.95	399	189	.765
		Control	20	5.2	3.4	21.05	421		
		Total Score	Experiment	20	8.7	4.6	19.38		
		Control	20	9.7	5.7	21.62	432.5		
ÇSDÖ Pretest	Friends	Experiment	20	33.3	11.2	21.7	434.5	175.5	.507
		Control	20	32.7	12.8	19.3	385.5		
	Parents	Experiment	20	15.1	3.1	19.7	394	184	.662
		Control	20	16.3	5.6	21.3	426		
	Teachers	Experiment	20	15.3	3.7	21.3	426.5	183.5	.654
		Control	20	17.1	8.4	19.7	393.5		

Table 1 shows Mann Whitney-U test results for pre-test scores of parents in the experimental and control groups from the Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale's Neurotic Problems sub-test (U: 162, $p > .05$), Behavioral Problems sub-test (U: 189, $p > .05$), and total score categories (U: 177.5, $p > .05$). With the help of these results, it can be said that there was no significant difference in the scores from Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale's subtests between the experimental and control groups before the parent training began. Similarly, Table 1 also shows Mann Whitney-U test results of for pre-test scores of children in the experimental and control groups in The Social Support Scale for the Assessment of Children Friends sub-test (U: 175.5, $p > .05$), family sub-test (U: 184, $p > .05$), and the Teacher sub test (U: 183.5, $p > .05$) at the Table 1. With the help of these results, it can also be said that there was no significant difference regarding children's subtest scores from The Social Support Scale for the Assessment of Children between the experimental and control groups before the parent training began. These findings indicate that the parents' pretest scores in the experimental and control groups

from the Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale and its subtests and the childrens' pretest scores from The Social Support Scale for the Assessment of Children and its subtests were not different prior to the training sessions, and these groups (experimental and control) were similar to each other at the beginning of the study.

Table 2. Post-test Results of the Mann-Whitney U Test for Parents in the Experimental and Control Groups from the "Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale"s Sub-Tests

Measure	Sub Test	Group	n	\bar{X}	SS	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
HRUÖ	Neurotic Problems	Experiment	20	2.0	1.6	16.4	328	118	0.024*
		Control	20	4.3	3.5	24.6	492		
	Behaviour Problems	Experiment	20	3.5	1.5	15.65	313	103	0.008*
		Control	20	5.8	2.7	25.35	507		
	Total Score	Experiment	20	5.5	2.2	15.12	302.5	92.5	0.004*
		Control	20	10.1	5.3	25.87	517.5		

*p<.05

Table 2 shows Mann Whitney-U test results for the post-test scores of the parents in the experimental and control groups from the Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale's Neurotic Problems sub-test (U:118, p<.05), Behavioral Problems sub-test (U:103, p<.05) and total score categories (U:92.5, p<.05). With the help of these results, it can be said that there is a significant difference regarding parents' Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale's subtests between the experimental and control groups after the parent training ends.

Table 3. Post-test Results of the Mann Whitney U Test for Children in the Experimental and Control Groups from the "The Social Support Scale for the Assessment of Children "s Sub-Tests

Measure	Sub Test	Group	n	\bar{X}	SS	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
CSDO	Friends	Experiment	20	33.2	11.5	21.0	419.5	190.5	0.797
		Control	20	34.0	14.9	20.0	400.5		
	Parents	Experiment	20	14.9	3.1	20.8	416.5	193.5	0.858
		Control	20	15.0	3.7	20.2	403.5		
	Teachers	Experiment	20	14.9	4.8	20.7	413	197	0.935
		Control	20	16.5	8.3	20.4	407		

Table 3 shows Mann Whitney-U test results for the post-test scores of children in the experimental and control groups from the The Social Support Scale for the Assessment of Children "Friends Sub-test (U:190,5, p>.05), Parents Sub-test (U:193.5, p>.05) and Teachers Sub-test categories (U:197, p>.05). With the help of these results, it can be said that there is not a significant difference regarding children's subtest scores from The Social Support Scale for the Assessment of Children between the experimental and control groups after the parent training ends.

The difference between pre-test and post-test scores of parents from the Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale were identified and reported in Table 2. In order to check whether this difference is meaningful, the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was applied to the pre and post test results of the experimental group. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests applied to the pre-test and post-test scores of Parents in the Experimental and Control Groups from the "Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale"

HRUO Sub-tests		n	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Neurotic Problems	Negative Rank	12	9.416	113	-2.343*	0.019*
	Positive Rank	4	5.75	23		
	Ties	4				
Behaviour Problems	Negative Rank	13	9.269	120.5	-2.105*	0.035*
	Positive Rank	4	8.125	32,5		
	Ties	3				
Total Score	Negative Rank	16	11.062	177	-2.695*	0.007*
	Positive Rank	4	8.25	33		
	Ties	0				

*Based on Negative Ranks

Analysis results for the experimental group scores from the Neurotic Problems Sub test ($z=-2.343$, $p<.05$), Behavioral Problems Subtest ($z=-2.105$, $p<.05$), and the Total Score ($z=-2.695$, $p<.05$) show that there is a meaningful and positive difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. When the mean ranks and sum of the ranks of all sub-tests are considered, there is a difference in favor of the post-tests. In terms of the control group, there are no significant and meaningful differences between the pre-test and post-test scores from both the Hacettepe Psychological Adjustment Scale and the Social Support Scale for Children. According to these results, it can be said that the parent education group conducted in this study had a positive effect of parents in the control group about their opinions of the psychological adjustment levels of their children. However, no significant effects from the support program were identified in gifted children's perception of social support from their parents. Further discussion of these results are available at the "Discussion" section.

Discussion

The purpose of this study is to survey the effects of the "SENG Parent Education Program" developed for the parents of gifted children on the psychological adaptation of gifted children and the level of social support perceived by the children. At the end of the study, it was seen that positive thoughts of parents who participated in the experiment group of the parent education program regarding the psychological adaptation of their children increased, while their children's thoughts on the social support they think they get from their parents remained unchanged. Although the number of studies related to the education of parents of gifted children is very limited, it was seen that the outcomes of this study are similar and consistent with results in the literature (Conroy, 1987; DeVries and Webb, 2007; Fornia and Frame, 2001; Moon, Kelly and Feldhusen, 1997; Kurtulmuş, 2010). It was seen that some studies in the literature are particularly consistent with our study in terms of the results they share. For instance, whether child raising attitudes of parents changed depending on the training was examined in a training program provided to the parents of children with African and Latin origin, and a lower socio-economic level, who have the potential to be gifted, and it was observed that parents started to ask more questions intended to encourage their children to discover more and gave more importance to the cognitive development of their children (Davis-Simons, 1995). At the end of the education intended for raising the knowledge and self-confidence of parents regarding their gifted children, improving their attitudes towards their children, and reminding them of their duty of educating their children, the increase of parents' knowledge and confidence with respect to the gifted was significant (Conroy, 1987). It is apparent in both of these studies that the education of parents of gifted children has positive outcomes for the parents. Furthermore, in this study, it has been possible to see positive developments at the end of the education that were in line with the purpose of the research, which we also observe in the results of various studies conducted to study the effects of the SENG Parent

Education Model in particular (Adler, 2006; Raymond et al. 2010). Adler (2006) obtained positive results that were supported with both qualitative and quantitative data for all three research questions at the end of the study in which he analyzed the changes in the knowledge of information about gifted children, intra-family communication, and parental skills of parents who took part in groups of SENG Parent Counseling. For instance, it was found that parents who participated in the SENG Model were able to easily distinguish cognitive and social-emotional characteristics specific to their gifted children and that their level of knowledge about this issue increased. Moreover, their oppressive attitudes which forced their children to be successful also decreased relative to the control group. The study of Raymond et al. (2010), inquiring the effects of the SENG Model revealed that the perspectives of parents, particularly towards the maladaptive development and perfectionism in their children, changed after their participation in SENG group sessions.

In the small number of scientific studies conducted on educational programs for the parents of the gifted (Conroy, 1987; Davis-Simons, 1995) and in the two scientific inquiries in the literature studying the effects of SENG Model (Adler, 2006; Raymond et al., 2010), certain changes were observed in the behaviors of parents and their perspective towards their children consistent with an increased level of knowledge. Findings of these studies in the literature and the results of this research both point towards a similar process in which parents realize that the characteristics in their children they previously considered psychological maladaptation could actually be natural characteristics of the gifted as a result of the rise of their awareness at the end of the education, leading to an eventual significant difference in their psychological adaptation scores. Based on previous findings, it is possible to argue that the way parents view their gifted children undergoes a positive change once their knowledge and awareness is increased through education.

Interpretation of these results in greater detail suggests that it would be useful to take into consideration structural properties of instruments of measurement that were used. Hacettepe Psychological Adaptation Scale used for measuring the effects of the education in this study is an instrument of measurement filled in by parents to identify problems in psychological adaptation they think that their children might have. Therefore, this instrument of measurement does indeed reflect personal perceptions of parents regarding the psychological adaptation of their children. The most important point to consider in discussing the findings of the research is the potential of the parents of gifted children to think that some typical behaviors specific to being gifted in their children are problematic and maladaptive behaviors and state that such behaviors are psychologically maladaptive. At this point in the discussion, it would be beneficial to mention some common behaviors of gifted children that result from their natural characteristics, and how such behaviors are perceived by their parents. It was observed that parents conceive their children as "stubborn", "disputative", "patronizing", "living in his/her own world", "judgmental", "perfectionist", "self-critical", "hard to cope with", "having strong desires" or "persuasive" as their thinking and behavioral patterns differ from what is considered typical from early ages, and this was identified by several researchers (Davis and Rimm, 2004; Delisle, 2006; Webb et al., 2006; 2007). In addition, while the curiosity, sensitivities, idealism, and their skill level are relatively high for their age group, these strengths may also turn out to be the characteristics that sometimes worry their parents (Delisle, 2006; Walker, 2002; Webb et al. 2006). On the other hand, as parents of gifted children are not informed about developmental issues that affect their children, they can neither decide how to react when faced with such behaviors from their children nor correctly interpret these behaviors (Solow, 1995). Based on the findings of this research, it is fair to say that, after gaining the necessary knowledge and skills in the SENG Parent Education Model with regard to the social-emotional developmental features observed in gifted children and the psychological risks that they are likely to be experience, parents in the experiment group start to see from a more objective point of view the situations that they considered psychological maladaptation prior to the education. Thus, parents have noticed that situations which they previously considered social-emotional problems or psychological maladaptation should be considered typical behaviors of a group that can be defined as gifted at some point.

Another issue related to the reason for the positive change at the end of the study in the psychological adaptation of the children of parents participating in the education is primarily the purpose behind the model and the topics it covers. The purpose of the program as defined by Webb, Gore, Amend, and Devries (2007), who are the creators of SENG Model Parent Education Program, is likely to provide further insight into this issue: "The primary purpose of the program is to understand the social-emotional needs of gifted children and satisfy them through a program that is intended for the parents, based on the notion that parents are the first and most important teachers of their children. All sessions focus on facilitation of positive development of the parents in order to prevent the emotional and behavioral problems of gifted children" (Webb et al., 2007).

As it can be seen here, social-emotional characteristics of the development of gifted children and ways to support this development are in the focus of the topics that the SENG Model tries to communicate to the parents. The fact that a parent education program, which intensively presents information about social-emotional development of gifted children provides parents with a positive perspective regarding the psychological adaptation reveals that the version of SENG adapted to our culture for this research serves its purpose. The fact that the SENG Model provides parents with the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills about the social-emotional development of gifted children and causes positive changes in this respect is also apparent in the findings of different researchers studying this issue (Adler, 2006; Raymond et al. 2010). As stated in the studies of Eris et al. (2008), the parents in Turkey clearly express their desire to receive education that would satisfy their needs regarding their gifted children and to obtain current and intensive knowledge and skills in this respect. They particularly need programs which provide in-depth information about social-emotional development of gifted children and potentially risky social-emotional situations. Taking this need into consideration explains why the SENG Parent Education Model on Parents of Gifted Children yielded positive outcomes in its first adaptation in Turkey.

To sum up the outcomes above, it is fair to say that the first factor behind the success of the SENG Model in improving the psychological adaptation scores of this research is that it enabled parents to see their children from a different point of view by raising their awareness among in different and positive ways due to the measurement of the effect of the program on children on the basis of the opinions of parents. The second factor is that the purpose of the program's content is already to provide parents with knowledge and skills that support social-emotional development of gifted children.

This study did not yield any statistically significant differences at the end of the program with regard to the social support that the children of the parents in the experiment group think that they receive from their parents. Despite the fact that this study examines whether there is a difference between the preliminary and final tests with regard to the social support received by the children from their parents, the results of all sub-dimensions were presented to avoid violating the integrity of the scale. When we think about the reasons for the lack of statistically significant differences in children of the parents who were subject to the SENG with respect to the social support received from their parents, which were the actual subject of this research, we come up with the fact that the active participants of the program were not children themselves but their parents. It can hence be thought that, since the parents take active part in all practices following the sessions to gain knowledge and skills, and children were never actively subjected to any practices by the researcher, the program did not lead to any direct effects on children with respect to relevant sub-dimensions on the scale. Observation of the effects of the intervention performed on the parents to the children might require a longer period of education, more frequent observations and measurements, and further interventions such as homeworks in which the child may also participate. In other words, observing at the behavioral level the changes which arise at cognitive and affective levels inevitably requires time and further implementations.

Results and Suggestions

The outcomes of this study reveal that parent education programs implemented on the parents of the gifted have certain benefits with regard to providing the parents with knowledge and skills, raising awareness on social-emotional and psychological adaptation of children, and providing support. Analyses show that the SENG Model has proven effective in supporting the psychological adaptation of gifted children by changing the perspective of their parents. It is undeniable that parents play a very important role in the education of gifted children just as is the case for children undergoing normal development. It is also apparent that the number of studies intended to understand and satisfy the needs of these special type of families is relatively low compared to the very large actual need in this respect. This study tries to fill this gap by adapting to our culture a parent education program that is able to satisfy some of these needs.

One of the primary suggestions that may be developed as a result of this study is the necessity to deeply analyze the effective and ineffective points of programs adapted from foreign sources once the study has been completed, and to use these results in development of domestic resources. In this study, it was seen during the adaptation of the SENG Parent Education Model to the Turkish culture that it is a program that can effectively be applied to our culture to a large extent. In addition, it is also evident that parent education programs prepared specifically for our culture and developed based on an analysis of culture specific requirements would have a greater impact.

This study did not yield any differences with respect to the support that the children of the parents who attended the parent education program think that they receive from their parents, which brings to mind the necessity of including the children in the process. Another suggestion that can be developed on the basis of this finding is to make children continue with another education program intended for enabling them to recognize, understand and accept themselves, either simultaneously with their parents or as part of a subsequent program. This will make it possible to address parents and children as a whole, and enhance the potential effects of the program. In the event of difficulties organizing this kind of a program, supplementing the counseling provided to the parents with activities that can be engaged in with children at home will increase the program's benefits in practice as they will include the gifted child in the process as well.

Parents of 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade gifted children were the subjects of this study. However, various aspects of being gifted reveal themselves in much earlier ages. On the other hand, the number of education programs that parents of potentially gifted children may attend is very small in Turkey. Likewise, parents of adolescents who are diagnosed as gifted have to cope with various differences and changes resulting from both being gifted and being an adolescent. Based on these observations, it is clear that parent education groups intended for different age groups and different needs would be very beneficial to gifted children and their parents.

As can be inferred from the results of this study, there is a great need for programs that present parents through appropriate methods with in depth knowledge and skills they cannot obtain from their environment alone. Increasing the prevalence of parent education programs must be among principal goals in our country for creating policies about gifted children and their parents in the medium and long term, in order to increase the benefits of such groups such as preventing many problems before they arise and helping parents deal better with problems that they do encounter.

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