Comparing the personality traits of moral evolution, altruism and social self-efficacy among gifted and ordinary students of Ahwaz high schools

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Abstract

This study aimed to compare personality characteristics of moral evolution, altruism and social self-efficacy in gifted and ordinary students in Ahwaz high schools. For this purpose, 320 gifted students of Shahid Beheshti high school and 345 students from ordinary schools were randomly selected. The research tools consisted of two questionnaires: social self-efficacy and moral judgments. A comparative study was performed. For the data analysis, the multi-variable variance analysis was used at alpha level 0.05. Results showed that there is a significant difference between personality traits of social self-efficacy and moral judgment.

Keywords: social self-efficiency, moral judgment, altruism, gifted.
Introduction

In today’s complicated world that we see the intensive competitions of various communities, achieving superior technology, as the main source of power, gifted and creative individuals and owners of new ideas and divergent thinking are the most valuable assets of each community and nation because creativity is considered a tool to unlock deadlocks and shake hands with tomorrow. The word gifted is interpreted differently by various people. In fact, there is no general consensus about the definition of gifted children and this is mainly because of the diversity of talents and different aspects of human intelligence. The first condition considered for a gifted, is IQ over 130. Along with such IQ, creativity and ability to argue and also his initiative to do things must be considered. The talent prematurity and desire to compete with older children consisted of the indicators that can be seen in gifted children (Afrouz, 1377). It should be noted that, in the definition of gifted children, gifted child is first a child and then a gifted child. Intelligence has many aspects and its certain forms appear under certain circumstances and aspects. There are obvious differences among gifted children in the various fields so that a child may be outstanding in a series of works and other children are entirely different in some different work; while both are leader but in various fields. A group of experts contribute the term leader to a group with a great power in the vast and various aspects of mental abilities. Namely, they do not consider child excellence in one of two fields as intelligence and believe that gifted child is someone who is leading in almost all of development aspects; such child is more advanced than other children. While others believe that gifted child is someone who is just competent in one of mind aspects. Gifted children should be identified and educated in separate schools and different ways than normal children. Because there is much evidence that some gifted students drop out of school due to lack of coordination with the situation of normal schools, lack of consistency with other children, and lack of enough motivation. Some are finally misguided. Most cognitive development models emphasizes of the influence and importance of child presence in the challenging environment for the intelligence development. According to Piaget theory, an individual adjusts the new experiences with internal structures. When existing internal model of realities and new experiences differ from the previous internal model, internal structures change to consider and observe new experiences (harmony). When the two are compatible with each other (there is no mismatch), harmony occurs. It is sorrowful for all communities not to identify gifted children and actualize their potential capacities. Genius, gifted children are resources and social benefits playing a major role in the growth and development of culture and civilization of nations. The world needs intelligent and competent children, those who shine in life, can apply their potential capacities with their attempt in all areas, and show themselves in every corner of this vast world, if having the opportunity to grow and develop properly. It is estimated that half of intelligently-born children do not reach their possible potential due to lack of proper environment for training. Special facilities are required in free community for the growth and prosperity of gifted children. In fact, special abilities and talents cannot alone lead to prosperity (without proper motivation). Research proves that not only the lack of appropriate conditions cause to feel insecure and anxious for some gifted children, but also this leads them to retardation, poor concentration, withdrawal, aggression and even extreme inactivity and passivity (Abbaszadeh, 1993). Revolution has different dimension. Individual’s moral evolution is one of
the most important one. Darwin is the one who included the biological and moral evolution in psychology issues and considered empathy as the cornerstone of morality in human. He also found social instinct in non-human animals. As a result, he concluded that the sympathy grows in intergroup ethics. Therefore, ethics and moral development of any individual is determined by a group in which a person has evolved. Since Darwin’s time until now, many definitions have been proposed for ethics and factors affecting its formation (Descioli and Kurzban, 2009). Most research in the field of ethics evolution is inspired Piaget and Kohlberg theories and methods. Both psychologists believe that achieving cognitive evolution is the necessary for moral evolution. Passing from the beginning ethical levels to higher stages depends on the child's cognitive development (Kodiver, 2011). The main question outlined here is as follows: is there a significant relationship between the moral evolution, altruism and social self-efficiency among gifted and ordinary students in Ahwaz high school?

Method
The statistical society, sample and research implementation method: the number of students of gifted high school is 320 in Shahid Beheshti of which 170 were at first-grade and 150 at second-grade. The number of high school students was 345 in Shahid Sayad Shirazi of which 118 were in first-grade and 227 at second-grade. Applying Cochran’s formula, the sample size consisted of 92 first-grade and 127 second-grade. The statistical society consists of all gifted boy students in Shahid Beheshti high school and normal Shahid Sayyad Shirazi high school.

Measuring tools
Social Self-Efficiency Scale: teens social self-efficiency scale was devised by Kennelly in 1989 to measure teens’ self-efficiency level. This scale is a self-report tool which has 25 statements. Participants must determine to what extent each test statements represent their personality in a 7-point Likert scale (from 1=impossible to 7=oversimplified). Teens social self-efficiency scale has five subscales: social determination (5 statements), functioning in social situations (5 statements), participating in social groups (5 statements), aspects of friendship and intimacy (7 statements) and helping or getting help (3 statements). Total scores ranged between 25 and 175. Higher scores indicate high levels of subject’s social self-efficiency. Way of scoring is as follows: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the whole test is 0.90 in the first group, 0.92 in the second group, and 0.95 in the third group. The reliability, obtained from the retest method in the first group within two-week, was reported 0.94. Also, the reliability coefficient, obtained from retest method, was reported 0.86 for men and 0.86 for women. Teens’ Social self-efficiency scale construction validity was proven through some self-concept and consistency scales. A significant positive correlation was seen between teens’ social self-efficiency scale scores and their perception profiles scale (Harter, 1982) in first and second groups. There is also a significant correlation between scores on this scale and consistency scale to assess the group survey of high school students (Prints et al., 1978).

Moral Judgment Test
Moral judgment test is based on a general intelligence test that includes argument questions, cognition potential, best answers, etc. The difference lies in the fact that all questions have moral
content. Moral judgment is the ability to evaluate moral situations and affairs as right or wrong based on awareness of ethical criteria (Warma, 1967). Therefore, the test is composed of a number of questions that the child should make moral decision about them, categorize the background of ethical work in the comments, establish the relationship between words with a moral sense, and evaluate a specific action. He should logically argue against moral problems and select appropriate standard of moral values. The test questions have been especially designed for 14 basic common values in Hindi culture. In fact, this test consisted of 81 questions. For data analysis, Harper, Gunta and Senegal chart (1962) was employed. The test was conducted among 370 boys and girls aged 6 to 11 years old. The 27% from top and down of scores was used. Diagnostic value and level of difficulty of each question was calculated. While selecting the questions, high detection level and minimum 50 problem indicator were considered the preference. To select other questions, 35 detection level, and 40 problem level index were employed. Accordingly, 31 questions were removed after question analysis, and 50 questions remained. In the study conducted by Marashi et al. (2010), reliability and validity of moral judgment was determined as follows. The study was conducted on a sample of 60 subjects. Also, Ostovar and Razavieh (2003) confirmed three-factor structure of this scale on a sample of Iranian teens.

Findings

Table 1: The results of Lavigne test to check homogeneity of variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Levin index</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moral evolution</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social self-efficacy</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results presented in Table 1 show that the homogeneity assumption of variances was fulfilled for ethical evolution (F- 0.26, P-0.62), altruism (F-0.18, P-0.51), and social self-efficiency (F-0.21, p-0.56). This means that, with regard to insignificance F, it can be claimed that there is no significant difference between the variables. Variances are homogenous.

Table 2: The results of Pilaei effect test for ordinary and gifted students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Student type</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Freedom degree</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
<th>Eta square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilaei effect</td>
<td>Gifted</td>
<td>5.586</td>
<td>1 and 2</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ordinary</td>
<td>1.430</td>
<td>1 and 2</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biggest root</td>
<td>Gifted</td>
<td>1.765</td>
<td>1 and 2</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>test on</td>
<td>Ordinary</td>
<td>1.354</td>
<td>1 and 2</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From above table, it is concluded that there is significant relationship between two groups of ordinary and gifted students in at least one of tested constructs. We separately analyze each dependent variable to identify the observed difference in one of variables using univariate-variable variance analysis.

Table 3: one-way ANOVA related to moral evolution to compare students in gifted and ordinary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes source</th>
<th>S S</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>M S</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intergroup</td>
<td>16242150.125</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16242150.125</td>
<td>10.01</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intragroup</td>
<td>321080509.750</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>1621618.736</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>337322659.875</td>
<td>345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the amount of f, the obtained freedom degree and significance level (f = 10.01, Sig=0.002, df= 344) in the above table, we can claim that there is significant difference between moral evolution average in students’ families of gifted and regular schools. According to the results presented in table 3 and higher average of students’ families of gifted schools, a significant difference is found in favor of students’ families of gifted schools. This means that the moral evolution average is higher in students’ families of gifted schools than ordinary students. Therefore, the first hypothesis is confirmed.

Table 4: one-way ANOVA related to altruism to compare students of gifted and ordinary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes source</th>
<th>S S</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>M S</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intergroup</td>
<td>15068.480</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15068.480</td>
<td>103.43</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intragroup</td>
<td>28844.240</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>145.678</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43912.720</td>
<td>345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the amount of f, the obtained freedom degree and significance level (f = 103.43 Sig=0.001, df= 344) in the above table, we can claim that there is significant difference between altruism average in students’ families of gifted and regular schools. According to the results presented in table 4 and higher average of students’ families of gifted schools, a significant difference is found in favor of students’ families of gifted schools. This means that the family performance average is higher in students’ families of gifted schools than ordinary students. Therefore, the second hypothesis is confirmed.
Table 5: one-way ANOVA of social self-efficiency to compare students of gifted and ordinary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes source</th>
<th>S S</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>M S</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intergroup</td>
<td>1270.080</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1270.08</td>
<td>79.715</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intragroup</td>
<td>3154.700</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>15.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4424.780</td>
<td>345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the amount of $f$, the obtained freedom degree and significance level ($f = 79.715$ Sig= 0.001, df= 344) in the above table, we can claim that there is significant difference between social self-efficiency average in students of gifted and regular schools. According to the results presented in table 5 and higher average of students’ families of gifted schools, a significant difference is found in favor of students’ families of gifted schools. This means that the family performance average is higher in students’ families of gifted schools than ordinary students. Therefore, the third hypothesis is confirmed.

Discussion
According to Disiuly perspective (2009), the evolution has various dimensions. Moral evolution in person is one of the most important ones. Darwin is the one who imported biological and step-by-step evolution into psychology and considered empathy as the cornerstone of morality in human. He also found social instinct in non-human animals. As a result, he concluded that the sympathy grows in intergroup ethics. Therefore, the results of present research is consistent with studies conducted by of Disiuly (2009), Karimi (2006), Olson (2010), Kanjeh (1979), Giddens (1995), Bandura (1991), Hergnhan Valson (2005). Jean Piaget (1932) was the first psychologists who studied altruism and moral evolution. He says that altruism and moral evolution occurs during cognitive development stages. The first stage is from 4 to 7 years in a wide range of inconsistent and contradictory ethical thinking originated from outside. In this stage, individual thinks that moral rules are fixed or unchangeable. Inconsistent morality later manifests as two other consecutive moral stages: initial cooperation and autonomous cooperation. In initial cooperation-based moral stage, which is revealed in 7 to 10 years old, children's games take social status and they learn game’s rule and play the game based on their knowledge about these rules. They still think that the game’s rule is unchangeable. Therefore, the results of present research is consistent with the studies conducted by Disiuly (2009), Karimi (2006), Olson (2010), Kanjeh (1979), Jean Piaget (1932), and Kohlberg (1995,1987, 1986). According to Bandura (1971), the self-efficiency is the self-concept elements of each person from a set of beliefs and expectations about his ability in connection with effectively carrying out duties and meeting the needs. He has called this component self-efficiency. Bandura believes that the one’s special expectations about his ability to carrying out certain affairs are effective in one’s attempt to do an action, stability in doing it, and making proper motivations. The self-efficiency has positive relationship with individual past prosperities. According to Madah’s (2010) perspective, it can be said that the conceptualized self-efficiency not only reduces the fears and expectative obstacles, but also increases the probable success on one’s attempt through expectation. The results of present study is consistent with the results of previous ones including: Costa and McCrae (2013),
Digman (1990), Mahmudi et al. (2013), Ahmadi et al. (2011) and is inconsistent with the research results of Rezai et al. (2014), Dastgheyb et al. (2014) and Arefi et al. (2009). Therefore, the existence of positive characteristics mentioned about gifted students makes their personality traits more growing such as self-efficiency. On the other hand, according to Digman (1990), gifted students are more self-efficient and desire to earn higher scores and do extra-curricular assignments. As result, these positive characteristic in gifted students justifies the lack of difference in the students. In total, clarifying the hypothesis consistent with Petrich and Di Grought findings; according to Kareshki (2008), there may be the lack of self-efficiency difference which is observed in students of 7th grade ordinary schools due to using different self-regulating and self-cognitive learning strategies and self-efficiency strategies.
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