

THE GAP BETWEEN COMPLEX MODELS OF GIFTEDNESS AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED CLIENTS IN COUNSELING



DIE
ENTWICKLUNG
EIGENER
POTENTIALE

Tillmann Grüneberg
Leipzig University, Germany



**Zentrum für
Potentialanalyse &
Begabtenförderung**

AGENDA

- Highly Gifted Counseling (in Germany)- a field description
- Study/ Method
- Theoretical models vs. Practical identification
- Additional findings: Target group and topics, Career Counseling
- Provocative Summary

FIELD OF HIGHLY GIFTED COUNSELING

- First gifted counseling centers in the USA in the 1950s (*Colangelo 2003, pp. 373-375*)
- Since the mid-1980s, Germany has steadily developed the field of highly gifted counseling (*Grassinger, 2012*)
- Politically supported revival of the concept of giftedness-> greater attention in recent years (*Heller, 2007*)
- Variety of Counseling Institutions: university counseling centers, counseling centers of ministries of education, school psychology, counseling centers at schools for the gifted, counseling centers of parent organizations and associations as well as private/independent counseling centers (*Grassinger 2009, p. 30; Hannig und Koop 2016*)

RESEARCH ON HIGHLY GIFTED COUNSELING

- State of research still very fragmentary (*Grassinger 2009; Grassinger 2012; Jacob & Koop 2015*)
- Few evaluations and studies about theoretical foundation (*Elbing & Heller 1996; Holling et al. 1999; Hany 2000; Elbing 2000; Mönks, Heller, & Passow 2000; Wittmann 2003; Pruisken & Fridrici 2005; Preckel & Eckelmann 2008; Ziegler et al. 2012; Hannig & Koop, 2016*)
- Lack of comparative studies and evaluations analyzing the effectiveness of counseling beyond satisfaction analyses (*Heller 2008; Hannig & Koop 2016*)

DEFINITION OF THE FIELD OF HIGHLY GIFTED COUNSELING



- No agreement on the specifics of what sets highly gifted counseling apart as a field of counseling
- Depends on: understanding of giftedness, objective, target group or concern description
 - performance–excellence approach -> goal of counseling is “expertization”/expertise development,
 - IQ approach -> learning and educational counseling are based on cognitive advantages
 - multifactorial models -> specialized and comprehensive learning and educational counseling

DEFINITION OF THE FIELD OF HIGHLY GIFTED COUNSELING



A possible summary:

Highly gifted counseling serves as support to overcome obstacles in competence development.

- Distinction:
 - disorder- and problem-oriented educational and learning counseling (coping with obstacles to competence development)
 - decision-oriented career counseling (optimizing competence development)
- Both are important aspects of educational counseling, under which the counseling of highly gifted students can be classified as a client-specific form.

STUDY AND METHOD

- Online questionnaire (closed and open questions)
- 114 counseling centers (March 2017): databases of two German institutions supporting the gifted: the private Karg Foundation and the registered association Bildung & Begabung (Education and Talent)
 - n=64 (not all questions were always answered n=19–64)
 - survey response rate between 16–56 %
- Survey results were evaluated quantitatively
- Answers to open questions were brought into quantifiable category systems with the help of qualitative content analysis (*Mayring, 2010*)
 - *Answer-Unit->Paraphrase->Abstraction->Categorisation (Test->Second Abstraction-> Second Categorisation)*
 - *First and Second Rater (Interrater-Reliability with Cohen's Kappa)*

THEORETICAL MODELS VS. PRACTICAL IDENTIFICATION



- Essential characteristic of highly gifted counseling is the definition of a specific clientele
- An analysis of the concepts of 12 counseling centers (*Grassinger, 2012, p. 275*):
 - 6 multifactorial-interactive
 - 3 single-factorial to multifactorial-additive
 - 1 multifactorial-additive
 - 1 systemic
 - 1 varying, depending on the counseling purpose
- Study showed that these basic concepts are sometimes used eclectically
 - > Opportunity to indicate several understandings in survey

THEORETICAL MODELS

Which definition of giftedness do you use? (n=45)	responses	percentage of n
Systemic (Actiotope Model, e.g. Ziegler)	9	20.0
Single-factorial (IQ, e.g. Rost)	13	28.9
Multifactorial-additive (Three-Ring Model, e.g. Renzulli, Mönks)	17	37.8
Multifactorial-interactive (Munich Model, e.g. Heller, Perleth, Fischer, Gagné)	33	73.3

EXCLUSIVE AND MIXED USE OF MODELS

- Only 14 out of 33 use the multifactorial-interactive model exclusively
- Only 2 out of 17 use multifactorial-additive models exclusively (mostly combined with interactive models)
- Only 5 out of 13 use the simple IQ understanding exclusively (despite the yet rather exclusive character, mostly combined with multifactorial models)
- Only 2 of 9 use the systemic model exclusively (mostly combined with multifactorial models)

OPEN QUESTION

“In your opinion, what are necessary and sufficient criteria for your identification of giftedness?”

IDENTIFICATION

Identification criteria (n=31; kappa 0.89)	Percentage of N
Intelligence (diagnostics)	83.9
Anamnesis (biography, development)	17.7
Other	11.3
Behavioral observation	9.7
Beneficial environment, system	8.1
Emotional/Social intelligence	6.5
Creativity/Unusual thinking	6.5
Performance	6.5
Motivation	6.5
Anamnesis (clinical pictures)	4.8
Anamnesis environment (teachers, parent judgments)	4.8
Detailed knowledge	3.2
Personality (diagnostics)	3.2

IDENTIFICATION MODELS

Model assignment (n=31; kappa 0.9)

**Percentage of
N**

Single-factorial (IQ, e.g. Rost)	59.7
Miscellaneous (Kuhl, Dabrowski, general impression, etc.)	21.0
Multifactorial-additive (Three-Ring Model, e.g. Renzulli, Mönks)	8.1
Systemic (Actiotope Model, e.g. Ziegler)	6.5
Multifactorial-interactive (Munich Model, e.g. Heller, Perleth, Fischer, Gagné)	4.8

IDENTIFICATION

- The psychometrically measurable aspect dominates in the practice, and thus primarily intelligence.
- Other criteria such as performance, creativity and motivation are only additional factors.
- Very few answers reflect an interactive relationship of a multitude of factors and moderators or even a systemic understanding.
- In contrast to the model groups of the closed question mentioned above, the open-ended answers also show, at best, a clear reference to other models which, like Kuhl and Dabrowski, can be classified as part of personality psychology.

CONCLUSION

- Mismatch between theoretical positioning and practical implementation
 - Multifactorial models are more of an abstract commitment to the complexity of human talent development
 - In practice, only intelligence diagnostics makes it possible to identify giftedness

- Questions:
 - What are the practical benefits of complex models?
 - Which diagnostic tools are needed and require further development?
 - Is the main focus of highly gifted counseling on the identification of giftedness or on guidance of biographical decisions?

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Four major causes and counseling concerns (*Hannig & Koop, 2016; Pruisken & Fridrici, 2005; Koop & Preckel, 2015; Wittmann, 2003; Preckel & Eckelmann, 2008; Fridrici, 2014; Amrhein et al., 2014; Elbing & Heller, 1996*)
- frequency assessment (n=60):

	always	often	rather often	rather infrequently	infrequently	never
diagnostics of giftedness	<u>16,4</u>	<u>49,2</u>	<u>13,1</u>	<u>9,8</u>	<u>8,2</u>	<u>3,3</u>
advice on promotion of the gift	<u>20,3</u>	<u>47,5</u>	<u>23,7</u>	<u>1,7</u>	<u>1,7</u>	<u>5,1</u>
school performance and/or motivation problems	<u>5,0</u>	<u>58,3</u>	<u>30,0</u>	<u>5,0</u>	<u>1,7</u>	<u>0,0</u>
problems in social behavior or social problems	<u>5,0</u>	<u>40,0</u>	<u>35,0</u>	<u>15,0</u>	<u>3,3</u>	<u>1,7</u>

- In addition to these main categories, educational difficulties and other concerns from the psychosocial field were mentioned.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Based on
 - the indicated duration of the individual appointments (mean value approx. 68 min, N=64)
 - the number of appointments (median 3 appointments, N=64),
- An average consultation duration of slightly more than 3 hours can be estimated, which is distributed over an average of 3 appointments.

- This corresponds to the occasionally reported values between 2 and 17 hours (*Hannig & Koop 2016, p. 337; Reimann-Bernhardt, 2015, p. 40; Amrhein et al., 2014 p. 28–29; Grassinger, 2009, p. 15*)

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Funding (n=49)
 - client fees (51 %)
 - public funds (30.6 %)
 - donations (8.2 %)
 - private foundations (4.1 %)
- Distortions in the clientele
 - High socio-economic status of the parents (*Pruisken & Fridrici, 2005, p. 112; Wieczerkowski, & Prado, 1991, p. 63*)
 - 50 % of the parents have university degrees (*Preckel & Eckelmann, 2008, p. 19*)
 - Parents are usually university graduates and financially stable (*Hannig & Koop, 2016, p. 36*)
- Only about 30–40 % of the clientele can be classified as highly gifted from a psychometric perspective (*Hannig & Koop, 2016, p. 36; Preckel & Eckelmann, 2008, p. 19; Amrhein et al., 2014, p. 30*)
- The “non-highly gifted” are more frequently advised on behavioral and performance problems, while the subjects of boredom/motivation and promotion possibilities are more focal for the “highly gifted”.

CAREER COUNSELING AS DEVELOPMENTAL POTENTIAL OF HIGHLY GIFTED COUNSELING



- Considering the age structure and key topics, it is not surprising that career and study choice play a rather minor role
 - rarely (35 %) to rather rarely (26.7 %)
- This applies both to
 - offers in the field of counseling highly gifted students (*with a few exceptions, such as the counseling center at the University of Würzburg: Schneider, Stumpf, Markert, & von der Linden, 2015*)
 - and to research on this age group within the research context of giftedness (*Holling, Preckel, Vock, & Wittmann, 1999*).

CAREER COUNSELING AS DEVELOPMENTAL POTENTIAL OF HIGHLY GIFTED COUNSELING



- Multipotentiality and possible decision-making problems (*Achter et al., 1996; Rysiew et al., 1999; Colangelo, 2003; Sparfeldt, 2007; Heller et al., 2007; Grassinger, 2009; Dresel, 2011*)
- Many interviewees see anomalies of highly gifted students:
 - in the study and career choices (67 %, n=55)
 - as well as in the striving for knowledge (88 %, n=50)
- Practitioners also state that the phenomenon of multiple giftedness/multipotentiality:
 - does exist (64 %, n=47)
 - and occurs relatively frequently in highly gifted individuals (77 %, n=26).
- This contradicts a negation of the phenomenon due to psychometric definitions (*Achter, Benbow, Persson, & Lubinski, 1997*)

CAREER COUNSELING AS DEVELOPMENTAL POTENTIAL OF HIGHLY GIFTED COUNSELING



- The main concerns (open question, n=19, kappa .91) are:
 - decision-making difficulties and problems in self-management (57.9 %)
 - social problems (47.4 %)
 - questions on funding opportunities (scholarships, early studies) (34.2 %)
- Differences to the “normally” gifted (open question, n=32, kappa .94) are:
 - high personal and external expectations with regard to studies and career (39.1 %) -> strong focus on research and the desire to avoid highly rigid routines.
 - Decision-making difficulties are rooted in the pressure of specialization (29.7 %)
 - 25 % of respondents did not find any specific differences between highly gifted and normally gifted individuals concerning career choice.

DESIDERATA

- Controlled studies on the effect of counseling remain an essential desideratum in the field of counseling in general and highly gifted counseling in particular
- Lack of further comparative and methodologically comprehensible evaluation studies of counseling centers for the highly gifted.
- General gap in practice and theory of giftedness development in young adulthood. Phenomenon of multipotentiality?

PROVOCATIVE SUMMARY

- Incongruity between the theoretical use of models of giftedness (mostly multifactorial) and the practical identification (single-factorial with intelligence).
 - Should we stop discussing complex models or should we start developing new tools for diagnostics?
- Evaluations of concerns, target groups, financing and setting lead to the question whether highly gifted counseling is mostly “normal” educational counseling for academic and wealthy parents.
 - Should we start to be honest with ourselves or be more open for “hidden” giftedness?
- Innovation and Excellence is mostly shown later in the career, but gifted counseling focus on young pupils. Career Counseling is mostly neglected.
 - If we shift from a disorder- and problem-oriented to a decision-oriented view on counseling, we should raise the issue of career counseling for the older gifted and their potential specific problems.



CONTACT

For further Information, Comments and Discussion:

tillmann.grueneberg@uni-leipzig.de

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