Myths about Gifted Learners from the Perspective of Teachers

Abstract

The aim of the presented paper was to find out whether Czech and Slovak teachers are affected by myths about the gifted. We selected myths concerning the nature of giftedness, its identification, social and emotional characteristics of the gifted, and their education. The myths were examined in regard to determinants regarding educators. Data from 434 teachers (350 women) were collected by a foreign questionnaire. The results showed that these educators tend to hold myths about overachievement of the gifted without special care, simultaneity of gift and creativity, and the correlation of giftedness with social and emotional problems. The group with a higher risk to be susceptible to certain myths are teachers over 40 years of age, with experience longer than 10 years, teaching in villages and having no contact with giftedness. Thus, we recommend focusing especially on further training of these high-risk groups of teachers in order to rebut their misconceptions about the gifted. The research was supported by the research grant of the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic registered under number P407/11/1272.

Keywords: myths, intellectually gifted, teachers

Introduction

The European as well as Czech and Slovak education systems have undergone a major change over the last decade. Thanks to the new legislative regulations, today this issue is no longer a matter of several dozen of specially trained teachers, as it used to be, but it has become a task and duty of all teachers. However, at the