Gifted Students’ Perceptions of Scientists

Abstract

Despite a high number of studies on students' images of scientists, there is a lack of research on gifted students' perceptions of scientists in the research literature. The aim of this study was to investigate gifted students' perceptions of scientists and stereotypical images of scientists. The participants were 42 gifted students. The Draw-a-Scientist Test (DAST) was used to collect data. The findings demonstrated that gifted students had a variety of stereotypical images of scientists. The findings also showed that students' drawings included fewer indicators of the stereotypic model on average. The drawings of fourth-grade students included more elements when compared to fifth-grade students' drawings. As a result, it was found that there are some findings different from previous research. Considering the findings obtained from this study, this study has provided findings for teachers and science educators.

Keywords: gifted students, scientist, perception of scientist

Introduction

Over the years, perceptions of scientists have become one of the most domains of research in science education. The research studies in this domain have focused on students' perceptions of scientists. Many studies have been conducted to discern what those perceptions are (e.g., Kaya, Ocal, & Dogan, 2008; Barman, 1999; Buldu, 2006; Christidou, Hatzinikita, & Samaras, 2010; Finson, Beaver, & Cramond, 1995; Fung, 2002; Koren & Bar, 2009; Losh, Wilke, & Pop, 2008; Medina-Jerez, Middleton, & Orihuela-Rabaza, 2010; Newton & Newton, 1992; Newton & Newton, 1998; Song & Kim, 1999; Turkmen, 2008). This type of research was important since the