Preservice Agriculture Teacher Attitudes Toward the Education of the Gifted

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Background

- AAAE National Research Agenda Priority 3: Preparing the 21st century workforce in agriculture (Stripling & Ricketts, 2016)
  - In 2013-2014, 6.7% of students nationally were enrolled in gifted and talented programs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018)
  - Career and technical education should be a viable option of gifted and talented students (Gentry, Hu, Peters, & Rizza, 2008)
- Agriculture classes are heterogeneous in ability level. Is agricultural education meeting the needs of all students?
Purpose & Objectives

It is unclear how much preservice teacher training undergraduates receive regarding gifted students in their future classrooms, and their subsequent attitudes toward gifted education are unknown.

1. How much training are pre-service agricultural education teachers receiving regarding gifted education?
2. What are the attitudes of pre-service agriculture teachers regarding the education of gifted students?
Theoretical & Conceptual Framework

- Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (Gagné, 2010)
  - Teachers are environmental catalysts that influence the development of the gifted student

- Beliefs about giftedness influence teaching practice (Berman, Schultz, & Weber, 2012)

- Attitudes have been found to be both positive and negative (Feake & Gross, 2008; Megan-Nespoli, 2001)
Adapted from the Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (Gagné, 2010)

Natural Abilities (i.e., Gifts)
- Intellectual
- Creative
- Social
- Perceptual
- Muscular
- Motor Control

Developmental Process
- Teachers
- Curriculum
- Pedagogy
- Grouping
- Acceleration

Competencies (i.e., Talents)
- Academic/Vocational
- Technical/Agriculture
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Methodology

- Fall 2018 Semester
- Quantitative Survey Methodology, all responses confidential and anonymous
- Preservice agriculture and technology engineering education teachers were surveyed
- Final methods class of the agricultural education teacher preparation program
- $N = 18$
Methodology

- A survey adapted from Gagné and Nadeau’s (1991) Opinions About the Gifted and their Education questionnaire on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree)
  - 30 Statements
- Additional questions to assess their preservice teacher education program
  - 4 Questions
Results/Findings

- When asked if their Education of Students with Disabilities course (SPED 4000) addressed teaching gifted and talented students ($N = 16$), **50% reported that it did and 50% reported that it did not.**

- When asked about their level of agreement with the following statement, "Utah State University has adequately prepared me to teach students identified as gifted and talented in my future classroom" ($N = 18$), **40% either disagreed or slightly disagreed.**
The 3 most agreeable statements were:

- Gifted persons are a valuable resource for the agriculture industry (M = 4.7647)
- Tax-payers should not have to pay for special education for the minority of children who are gifted (M = 4.3235)
- In order to progress, a society must develop the talents of gifted individuals to a maximum (M = 4.2647)
Results/Findings

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  - Tax-payers should not have to pay for special education for the minority of children who are gifted (M = 4.3235)
  - In order to progress, a society must develop the talents of gifted individuals to a maximum (M = 4.2647)
Results/Findings

- The 3 most disagreeable statements were:
  - The gifted waste their time in regular agriculture classes ($M = 1.6471$)
  - Gifted children are often bored in agricultural education classes ($M = 1.8824$)
  - Some agriculture teachers feel their authority threatened by gifted children ($M = 2.500$).
Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

◉ Valuable part of the agriculture industry and look positively on their future ability to work gifted and talented, but its likely that they did not receive necessary training.

◉ Limitations of small sample

◉ Additional research with in-service teachers is also needed to evaluate professional development needs.
  ○ Do preservice teacher attitudes accurately reflect the profession?
References


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Thank you
Are there any questions?

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Contact olivia.horning@aggiemail.usu.edu for any additional questions