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ACADEMIC FUNCTIONING OF GIFTED STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

ABSTRACT

Objectives: This research examines the academic functioning of gifted children in foster care in Eastern Poland.

Material and methods: The research was carried out in two phases from April to December 2018. The first phase was quantitative, involving surveys with directors of childcare centers. The second phase used case studies.

Results: The results indicate that gifted students in foster care receive different levels of support depending on their living environments. Children in urban environments had more opportunities to develop their interests than children in rural environments. The financial situations of foster care facilities were also important, as not all facilities could pay for additional classes or tutoring.

Conclusion: The research demonstrates numerous difficulties with cooperation because some educational institutions treat foster care children differently. Teachers did not understand the difficult situations children faced in foster care. Additionally, no classes were offered for gifted children. Teachers were not prepared to work with them and often created artificial pedagogical issues or treated gifted students as a problem.

KEYWORDS: *foster care, gifted children, Eastern Poland, education system, support for foster children*

INTRODUCTION

This project analyzes the experiences of gifted students in institutional foster care in Poland and the factors potentially affecting their skills and talent development. The study explores actions undertaken by foster care institutions to develop the athletic, artistic, mathematical, and other talents of students in pedagogical environments and to identify and explain the differences in the support provided to gifted children based on their environment. A review of Polish literature shows four definitions of ability: efficiency or proficiency; actual or potential ability to do something, the maximum level of achievement; a relatively permanent feature of cognitive processes that determines the highest possible level of an individual's achievement; individual properties of the personality of an individual, through which habits, skills, and abilities can be formed (Dyrda, 2012; Ledzińska, 2010; Limont, 2010).

For the purposes of this research, it has been assumed that talent is a characteristic of an individual that relates to a specific narrow or wide area of activity and manifests itself in an above-average level of behavior or task performance that is an observable expression of that activity (Muszyńska, 2019). Activity can refer to the specific fields of an individual's functioning: cognitive, language, math, sports, music, art, and others (Limont, 2010).

In Poland, gifted students can pursue individualized study courses within any of their compulsory classes. Individual study courses allow these students to complete their schooling earlier than others. During the school year, gifted students can complete curricula for at least two classes, be released from compulsory attendance for certain classes, and attend select higher-level educational courses to meet their own curricula. The documents that regulate issues related to the content, methods, and forms of education of gifted students are the Act of 14 December 2016 on Educational Law and the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 9 August 2017 on the Conditions and Procedure for Granting Permission for an Individual Program or Course of Study and the Organization of an Individual Program or Course of Study. An application for an individual form of education may be submitted by a parent, teacher, the student's tutor, or the students themselves with the consent of their parents. These applications, together with

an opinion on the student's potential issued by a psychological-educational counselling center, are submitted to the school principal. The educational institutions are supervised by the Board of Education, which hears appeals of unfavorable decisions made by the principal.

Much research has been devoted to the social functioning of gifted children. Talent may present challenges in building relationships with peers (Cross, 2012) and contribute to the failure of gifted individuals to reach their potential (Dyrda, 2007). In addition, pressure to perform well imposed by adults and peers, as well as jealousy and peer rejection, cause some students with gifts and talents to hide their abilities or to conform to peer behavior and to have only a few close friends (Cross et al., 2019). The rapid development of gifted children in comparison to their peers makes them interested in the world and gives them the ability to learn quickly. They are at risk of developing emotional difficulties and problems in peer and sibling relationships, possibly because of the dynamic interplay between interpersonal, intrapersonal, and environments factors (Callahan et al., 2004). The researchers investigated the issue of gifted children from different perspectives; however, the studies mentioned above refer to gifted children growing up in natural family environments.

There is a notable lack of studies concerning gifted children in foster care, both in Poland and in a global context. In Poland, Ruszkowska (2018) explored the interests and functioning of gifted children in foster care. However, this study focused on a very small research group, covering only children living in three foster care institutions, which may only identify certain problems. Outside the Polish context, Kothari et al. (2021) have studied indicators of educational resilience (i.e., the increased likelihood of school success despite adverse conditions) among youth in foster care. This prospective study expanded the existing literature by examining key individual and contextual factors associated with educational resilience outcomes among school-aged youth in foster care. Along similar lines, Medlin and Jaeger (2021) found that educational attainment remains exceptionally low for the population of foster care alumni, and their postsecondary educational experiences are woefully understudied. This narrative study of foster care alumni described their lived experiences of persisting and achieving academic success. Due to the limited number of research publications on gifted children in foster care, this article provides further research and analyses in this area.

Gifted students adapt more easily to these requirements, especially when they receive support from relevant education and nurturing family environments. Unfortunately, foster care students lack the latter (especially those under institutional care). They also constitute a pedagogically and educationally neglected group, need mental support (Marriott, 2018) because they exhibit behavioral problems caused by their family situation (Brännström et al., 2020). The biological families of these children often lack proper development conditions; the parents neglect their children's needs or do not provide them with security and acceptance (Dworsky, 2015; Ruszkowska, 2013). In the process of talent development, parents play an important role consisting in creating a stimulating environment and posing new challenges (Gwiazdowska-Stańczak, Sękowski, 2018; Olszewski-Kubilius et al., 2014). The task of parents is also to meet the needs of children and provide safe conditions for development and accompanying children at its various stages (Brännström et al., 2020; Kelemen, 2020; Olszewski-Kubilius et al., 2014). The implementation of parental functions to this extent is not possible in the case of children placed in foster care (Clemens et al., 2018; Dumaret, Rosset, 2005). The lack of support from the family, foster environment and school means that the abilities of these children are limited (Schelbe et al., 2019; Trout et al., 2008). Additional limitations in developing talents result from the lack of access to extracurricular activities, which is particularly noticeable in children living in rural areas (Zawistowska, 2012). Despite unfavorable living conditions, adversities, and traumatic events, some students in foster care manage to develop their talents.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A sequential mixed study procedure (Creswell, 2013; Tashakkori, Teddlie, 2003) was used in this research, which was carried out in two phases. Using quantitative methods allowed the collection, arrangement, and generalization of results concerning how gifted children function in foster care. In the first phase of the research, survey research was conducted using the categorized interview technique with principals and childcare center

coordinators. The surveys in three regions: Lubelskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, and Świętokrzyskie. An analysis of official documents was carried out as a supportive technique (Bogdan, Biklen, 2003) to examine the statutes of the care and educational facility and its organizational regulations. The analysis of the documents provided general data on the characteristics of the facility, including the number of pupils; places in the facility; and educators, psychologists, social workers, and therapists working with the children. The method used in the second phase was a qualitative case study with qualitative semi-structured interviews.

PHASE I

In the first phase, the researchers surveyed students over 10 years of age (according to the binding regulations, care-education facilities in Poland are only for children aged 10 years and above) in care-education facilities by institution type, along with the coordinators and the principals of these education facilities.

Researchers from two scientific centers visited 34 childcare homes and interviewed pupils and facility principals. This initial phase of the research provided information on the children's interests and the forms of their talent development, including their participation in contests, quizzes, thematic contests, and sports competitions. This was based on the method of identifying gifted children through the assessment of their parents (Dyrda, 2007; Huff et al., 2005), or in this case, their educators and principals, as parents are often the first to identify gifts in their children (Gwiazdowska-Stańczak, Sękowski, 2018). This study investigated the judgments of the educators or principals of the facilities who substituted for absent parents. Another criterion used was self-nomination (Gwiazdowska-Stańczak, Sękowski, 2018; Mönks, Pflüger, 2005), or the method of nominating oneself and identifying one's own educational needs. Additionally, the more measurable criteria of gifted children's successful participation in contests (Dyrda, 2007; Tallent-Runells, Candler-Lotven, 2007) and the scholarships they were awarded (Gwiazdowska-Stańczak, Sękowski, 2018) were investigated. None of the students in the survey had obtained scholarships. Only a select few were successful in thematic, artistic,

and sports contests. However, taking into consideration the opinions of the educators or principals, as well as the measured criteria, the researchers selected nine gifted students.

PHASE II

The second phase of the study was treated as complementary and related to the selected cases of gifted pupils. Gifted children and young people were identified based on psycho-pedagogical criteria: parental nomination (in this case, the appointment of educators and principals in the institution), autonomination, and more measurable criteria, namely participation and success in Olympiads, contests, and competitions, as well as interests in school and extracurricular activities focusing on certain areas. The method used in the second phase was a qualitative case study. A qualitative interview with an educator or psychologist indicated by the headmaster of the institution was conducted. Selected pupils with both general and directional abilities were analyzed. Qualitative analyses were conducted only for those students that were identified by the educators; identified themselves as gifted (autonomination); participated in Olympiads, contests, or competitions; developed interests; and obtained the most positive answers in determining a given general or directional ability.

RESULTS

THE INTEREST OF STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

Interests in early life are important for self-growth and self-education throughout life. They are significant determinants of an individual's life path and may also stem from a child's particular aptitudes or skills. The data collected on the student participants' interests are presented in Table 1. They confirm that the development of interests was mainly influenced by age, gender, and the conditions in which young people were raised.

Table 1. *Types of interests*

Interest type	Lubelskie Region		Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region		Świętokrzyskie Region		Total	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Sports	63	51,6	73	58,4	32	47,0	168	53,3
Music	15	12,2	21	16,8	10	14,7	46	14,6
Arts-technical	16	13,1	11	8,8	7	10,2	34	10,7
Biology-chemistry	3	2,4	5	4,0	4	5,8	12	3,8
Mathematics	1	0,8	4	3,2	3	4,4	8	2,5
Humanities	3	2,4	4	3,2	3	4,4	10	3,1
Others	22	18,0	13	10,4	7	10,2	42	13,3
I have no interests	28	22,9	23	18,4	5	7,3	56	17,7

The facilities available for the students were an important factor in their participation in various activities, because facilities located in rural areas did not provide children with access to additional activities. The school environment also played a significant role, as schools need to prepare children and youth to participate in social and cultural life by organizing different types of additional classes and activities. A rural environment is far less beneficial for gifted foster children, as rural schools rarely offer additional classes and activities, and if they do, they are of a poor quality. Participation patterns of students in foster care in thematic, art, vocal, and sports competitions are presented in Table 2. Contests and sports did not necessarily lead to success, and one principal claimed that only a few students participate in the thematic contests and succeed in them.

Table 2. *Participation in competitions and contests*

Type of action	Lubelskie Region		Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region		Świętokrzyskie Region		Total	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Participation in thematic contests	7	5,7	10	8,0	4	5,8	21	6,6
Participation in art contests	2	1,6	4	3,2	1	1,4	7	2,2
Participation in vocal contests	3	2,4	7	5,6	2	2,9	12	3,8
Participation in sports competitions	18	14,7	29	23,2	16	23,5	63	20,0

CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED STUDENTS

The case studies demonstrate that gifted children showed their interests in early childhood. With the appropriate support of a teacher, they developed their talents. They were hardworking and expanded their knowledge through their own initiative. They absorbed information quickly and had good memories. Gifted children also encountered difficulties in social functioning, adapting to applicable social norms, and developing skills requiring financial expenditure, because of the lack of support from their biological families and because they had to stay in a care-education facility.

Some gifted students cannot cope with peer relationships and this influences their behavior at school and in their facilities. They are often involved in conflict, and in many cases, the school does not know how to deal with these problems, and the resources of the facilities are also limited.

The development and refinement of skills and talents depend on environmental factors. In adverse conditions, the development of capacities and talents can be partially or completely suppressed. According to educators and principals interviewed in this study, academically gifted children in foster

care are a rarity, but children with athletic, vocal, or artistic talents are more common. An educator from a foster family care facility stated that in her 14 years of experience working with children, there was “only a single case of a gifted child who managed to obtain a doctoral degree” (Educator, Lubelskie Region, October 1, 2018, urban environment). This was also confirmed by the director of a care-education facility in the Świętokrzyskie Region, who noted that in her 10 years of experience, she had not encountered “any gifted children in the facility; however, several talented children emerged, mainly with musical or athletic talents.” A principal from a care-education facility in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region made a similar remark: “No gifted child was ever identified here. Cases of gifted children, most frequently in relation to sport, occur now and then, though” (October 17, 2018, urban environment).

ISSUES RELATED TO THE FUNCTIONING OF GIFTED CHILDREN IN FACILITIES

Developing the passions and interests of gifted children is expensive. For example, if a child reveals a gift for sport, developing it often includes high costs for training, sportswear, shoes, equipment, and sports camps. Training musically gifted children requires the purchase of musical instruments; nurturing artistic talent requires specialized materials and accessories; and any type of talent is associated with participation fees for extracurricular activities. Legal regulations in Poland do not stipulate that financial support should be provided to develop children’s expensive passions, interests, or talents. Institutional care is often supported by nongovernmental organizations functioning in support of foster care-education facilities and less frequently by sponsors (private individuals and private companies). Facilities run by religious organizations receive significantly greater external financial support from various children’s aid organizations (e.g., a Canadian organization supports institutional care by Catholic nuns), charity foundations, and private donors, among others.

Another important issue is the availability of classes to help develop the passions and interests of children. According to principals, coordinators, and educators from care-education facilities located in rural environments, neither schools nor local providers have offered classes that were sufficient to

develop the passions and interests of gifted children. There is often an issue with commuting if a child wants to stay after school to participate in additional classes. Sometimes, children are uninterested in participating in classes, even if they are offered, as the schools may approach children from the facility differently and perceive them as coming from dysfunctional families. These situations mainly occur in facilities located in rural environments. Often in such cases, children lack the motivation and willingness to undertake any activity. Moreover, teachers conducting development classes do not have adequate preparation to work with gifted pupils, and they are unable to meet their needs, which causes boredom and lack of interest in the activities. Cities have many more resources to offer, both in terms of school facilities and various types of clubs, cultural centers, and parishes.

As indicated by one educator in a particular case, the school failed to apply any sort of innovative methods when working with gifted students generally, and one specific gifted boy was perceived through the prism of the facility's specialization. Despite his mathematical talents, the student was never invited to participate in thematic contests. Only after the intervention of the educator from the facility was the boy allowed to participate in the mathematical contest (Educator, Lubelskie Region, September 4, 2018).

Behaviors related to the failure of students in foster care to use their intellectual, creative, and other skills and talents may be the result of both personality and family factors, including low academic motivation, susceptibility to discouragement, laziness, low self-esteem, emotional problems, a difficult adolescence, and incessant self-criticism. All of these are reflected in their learning outcomes, and their curiosity and cognitive activities may decline. However, an atmosphere of support and acceptance may result in increased self-esteem, enhanced willingness to cooperate, increased stamina, and skill development.

SUPPORT OFFERED TO GIFTED STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

According to the Regulations of the Minister of Labor and Social Policy on Institutional Foster Care, a foster child must have access to pedagogical and therapeutic assistance in addition to access to educational support for learning (for example, educators who can help children with their homework

or translate difficult exercises) and, in particular, homework coaching (2011 Journal of Laws, No. 292, item 1720). Legislators assume that only children with particular types of deficits or problems, including educational shortfalls, will remain in institutional foster care and that classes for developing skills or talents of students are provided by law.

The Organization Regulation of Educational Care Centers (e.g., in the Lubelskie Region) assumes that students will participate in their areas of interest in the city, town, or school in which they live, which is extremely difficult in rural areas or small towns where both the school and local environment have little to offer. An example is a gifted student from Lubelskie Region. As the coordinator said, the 17-year-old male student was “planning to apply for studies in construction at the Lublin University of Technology, as neither the school nor the facility situated in the countryside can offer any extra activities, and it is difficult for him access the classes in the town which is far away” (April 4, 2018, rural environment).

According to the educators interviewed in this study, in a situation where gifted students are in foster care, the facility supports them. The following forms of support were identified:

- Purchasing scientific aids: Lubelskie Region (homes where the students were preparing for medical studies).
- Providing tutoring classes for students to prepare them for the final high school examination and entrance examinations: Lubelskie Region (“Classes of this type were extremely important because our student was preparing for the extended Matura exam in mathematics and entrance exams for technical studies”; Educator, April 4, 2018, urban environment).
- Purchasing musical instruments: Świętokrzyskie Region (As the principal of the facility stated: “We have gifted children so rarely that when someone shows up, we do everything to develop their passions and skills”; November 8, 2018, rural environment, home run by a religious organization).
- Purchasing sporting equipment and financing training costs: Świętokrzyskie Region; Lubelskie Region (In all these facilities, there were children gifted in sport, who played football in local sports clubs and achieved success

in this field. Their futures were in sports, and therefore, the principals of the facilities helped them to develop their skills).

- Ensuring adequate local conditions for learning (e.g., a single room, although this was rare, as not every facility could offer this): Lubelskie Region; Warمیńsko-Mazurskie Region (“A single room has been designed for a very gifted student who wants to become a lawyer, but they have major problems in social functioning and establishing relationships with the other residents of the facility”; Educator, October 17, 2018, urban environment).
- Recruiting volunteers to work with gifted students (e.g., a volunteer provided tutoring in chemistry and mathematics in order to prepare a student in Chełm who wanted to apply to study medicine; meetings with a voluntary programmer to assist a 12-year-old boy in a care-education facility in Lublin who wanted to become an IT specialist). Teachers from local schools, retired teachers, or teaching students volunteer, but this situation only applies to urban environments. Volunteers work with selected gifted pupils who need support in learning certain subjects, such as chemistry, mathematics, computer science, and physics. The assistance takes the form of tutoring in these subjects; moreover, they prepare pupils for their exams and final exams. The problem of the lack of tutoring provided by volunteers in rural areas could be solved by virtual tutoring; however, there is a problem with access to computers in educational institutions, as there is only one computer for every five children.
- Obtaining funds from sponsors and financing scholarships for gifted students: Lubelskie Region (“For our gifted pupil, we obtained a scholarship from the Children’s Aid Committee in Canada, because we came to the conclusion that for hard work, huge efforts, and everyday efforts to be improved, she should be rewarded with the possibility of financing her dreams, e.g., covering the costs of a course for a skiing instructor”; An educator from a foster family care facility, October 1, 2018, urban environment).

Among the surveyed facilities, gifted students were provided with usually one (and sometimes, two) of these forms of support. The greatest difficulties were encountered in facilities that were located in rural environments, both in terms of accessing various developmental classes and recruiting volunteers or tutors. Facilities run by religious organizations offered a higher quality of care over other forms of foster care, as each student had an individual nun assigned to them who was responsible solely for that particular child. Nuns were available day and night and had various degrees of education (e.g., in Catholic institutions in Lublin, one nun had a Master of Arts in pedagogy and another had a Master of Science in biology) that allowed them to support the children's various interests. The care-education facility run by religious organizations in Pacanów engaged both nuns and secular people in work with the children. While the facility was run by nuns, non-ordained teachers were also employed there.

DISCUSSION

Children who participated in the research did not have the support of their parents; however, parents play a fundamental role in the development of gifted children, providing them with a stimulating environment and the possibilities of new challenges through conscious and supportive parental activities (Gwiazdowska-Stańczak, Sękowski, 2018; Olszewski-Kubilius et al., 2014; Papadopoulos, 2020). Academic motivation is shaped by internal personality traits and the social environment, such as school, peer group and family (Mammadov et al., 2018), foster care pupils do not receive any support from their parents because they come from educationally neglected environments (Ruszkowska, 2013; Dworsky, 2015) with fewer opportunities for educational support; they are often from rural environments where there are additional limitations in the educational development of children. Taking an interest in their children's problems, meeting the needs of their children (that is, a sense of security and need for acceptance), assisting their children at each stage of their development, supporting their children's activities, and developing their children's interests are some of the different forms of parental

assistance (Brännström et al., 2020; Kelemen, 2020). According to some foster care researchers, these activities cannot be fully substituted by other forms of care (Clemens et al., 2018; Dumaret, Rosset, 2005; Kothari et al., 2004).

The situation of gifted children staying in foster care is difficult not only because of the lack of support from their biological parents or families but also because they do not receive the necessary support to develop their talents at school (Schelbe et al., 2019), and they are rarely provided with support from their foster care facility (because of various limitations, such as lack of access to development activities in rural areas and lack of financial support from the state for developing talents). In these centers, developmental activities are often organized by the educators themselves, provided that there are people with some talents among them. In some of the institutions surveyed, there were teachers with vocal, artistic, or sporting talents who worked with gifted children. Meanwhile, these children often also need mental support (Marriott, 2018). The problem also involves expecting the Polish education system to take an individual approach to gifted children. In reality, these actions are rare, especially in post-communist countries where the development of the individual was perceived as contrary to the ideology of the time (Dockal, 2015). Unfavorable family circumstances, the lack of care from biological parents, poor early cognitive experiences, and living within foster environments do not create conditions in which children can develop their talents (Kääriälä, Hiilamo, 2017; Trout et al., 2008) and these children often have a low level of education (Medlin, Jaeger, 2021), especially in rural environments where opportunities to participate actively in social and cultural life are limited. The present research demonstrates that school teachers often look at foster care children through the prism of the institution in which they live, while treating these children as inferior because they are brought up outside the family home (Czykwin, 2007). However, despite unfavorable circumstances, some foster care pupils manage to achieve success. Gifted children remain in foster care despite difficult experiences and unfavorable circumstances. They possess the capacity to rebound from adversity and failure to realize positive outcomes, progress, and increased responsibility (Luthans, 2002), and sometimes develop their talents (Ruszkowska, 2018). This was also confirmed by Subotnik et al. (2011), who argued that children who grew up in difficult conditions

in dysfunctional families can develop their gift better because of the traits they developed in their unstable environments while they experienced emotional trauma. People have the ability to overcome all sorts of risk factors, develop resilience, and overcome pain (Green et al., 2004). It becomes possible when children establish a relationship with a caring educator who supports them in their development and satisfies their needs for support and care. It is one of the factors influencing the ability to overcome difficulties and develop despite functioning in unfavorable conditions (Bernard, 1993) , even though one of the risk factors is the provision of childcare by institutions (Rutter, 2006).

This study demonstrates that gifted students are rare in foster care facilities, though they often have characteristics similar to those of gifted students from other families. However, gifted students in foster care distinguish themselves with greater curiosity, diligence, and independence, because in many cases, they have to pursue their objectives alone without support from their parents or assistance from the school environment (Subotnik et al., 2011).

Educators, psychologists, principals often have sufficient knowledge and skills to assist gifted students. While gifted students have positive traits, they also exhibit behavioral problems, which are caused, to a large extent, by their family homes (through insufficient parental care, educational deficiencies, difficulties and problems in peer relationships, and emotional instability; Brännström et al., 2020; Callahan et al., 2004; Cross, 2012; Schelbe et al., 2019). According to some statements by our respondents, tutors take action to punish these students for their behavior because they fail to understand the children's problems and emotions. Sometimes, someone has the idea to remove the pupil from the facility, if there is such an opportunity, although these are relatively isolated cases. Both the schools and facility tutors perceive the students through their behavioral difficulties and do not pay sufficient attention to the development of their talents. Some researchers (Van Holen et al., 2021) have drawn attention to the fact that people working with children from foster care should be better acquainted with the problems posed by the stay of a child in foster care in order to undertake activities that support the educational process of those children. They should also be educated in the area of psychosocial development in order to be able to better support the students in developing their talents (Cross T., Cross J., 2017).

Our study also illustrates how these children manage life outside their family environment. The environment in which children live is one of the factors that determines the failure of students in using their intellectual abilities. Children from rural environments face a greater number of difficulties regarding the development of their talents because they do not have access to extracurricular activities (Subotnik et al., 2011) and schools in rural areas often do not provide extra classes (Zawistowska, 2012). The financial resources of the facilities should also be taken into consideration when discussing opportunities to support gifted children. The more the employees of the facility search for funding, the more opportunities they can create to develop the talents of their students. Religious facilities received the most financial support and were, in turn, able to provide more support.

The research presented in this article reveals environmental differences that affect the possibilities of supporting pupils in the development of their talents. Institutions located in rural environments have limited opportunities to support their pupils due to insufficient extracurricular activities for gifted children and the lack of properly prepared teaching staff working with gifted children. Additionally, if there are activities, they are often less attractive than in urban environments, where the possibilities are greater, for example, due to the number of offers targeted at gifted students. Despite being brought up in dysfunctional family environments, experiencing emotional traumas, and the inadequate resources (material, financial, and human) of foster institutions to support their talents, pupils in foster care can independently undertake activities aimed at developing talents because of psychological independence, self-sufficiency, the ability to cope with stress, and the willingness to take on challenges (Subotnik et al., 2011).

This study also has some limitations. The results must be interpreted carefully because this study focused on a limited demographic and the data are not nationally representative. Therefore, in future research, additional geographic areas. Children with emotional, health, and educational deficiencies often receive support from foster care facilities. A great deal of attention is paid to compensating for deficiencies in biological families where education is not considered the most important value. The work with foster care students focuses on both educational and development deficiencies, and how to solve these problems, which stem from the legal regulation of the foster care system.

CONCLUSION

The results of this research provide useful information on gifted students who live in foster care facilities. School teachers, educators in foster care facilities, and governing institutions can use this study to understand and assist these students better, by building a support network, creating conditions to stimulate talents, establishing caring relationships with the pupils in order to build their resilience and shape their ability to deal with injustice. The school environment is important for the well-being of gifted children, ensuring access to activities targeted at developing their passions and interests. This is especially true in the case of a school that cooperates with families (such as the cases surveyed above that involve care-education facilities). The research demonstrates numerous difficulties with cooperation because some educational institutions treat foster care children differently. Teachers did not understand the difficult situations children faced in foster care. Additionally, no classes were offered for gifted children. Teachers were not prepared to work with them and often created artificial pedagogical issues or treated gifted students as a problem. One of the predictors of gifted students is the presence of interests and passions, and the circumstances around the development of a child affects these interests. The conditions in which a student is raised were demonstrated to have a major impact on the development of interests among the young people involved in this study. The location of the facility in which the respondents were based turned out to be significant. Facilities located in rural environments do not offer didactic classes or development activities, and thus affect students adversely. The financial situation is also important, as not all facilities could afford to offer paid additional classes or tutoring. In many institutions, supporting gifted children is not possible because the state does not allocate funds for developing their interests and talents, and principals of the institutions are not always successful in obtaining finance from sponsors. Overall, schoolteachers and facility tutors in the surveyed regions of Poland manage gifted students insufficiently, and any future changes to teacher training programs need to address this. These children are often educationally neglected; exhibit numerous emotional problems in relationships with peers, they are easily discouraged; they need motivation and support from specialists

who are not employed in institutions; and they also lack financial support for developing their interests and passions. Educators in institutions and teachers at schools working with gifted students should be prepared to work with them, especially in terms of diagnosing abilities and methods of working with gifted children, as well as in terms of knowledge of their psychosocial development.

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